

**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: A STUDY OF
SPOKEN DISCOURSE IN AN INFORMAL,
SYMMETRICAL SITUATIONAL CONTEXT**

Helen Gay FitzGerald

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National
University

Date of submission for examination: 3 April 2000

Except where otherwise indicated this thesis is the original work of the author.

H G Fitzgerald

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Tony Liddicoat for his most helpful suggestions and thorough supervision of this thesis, as well as his encouragement and support for my work over a number of years.

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the spoken discourse of immigrant professionals and native speakers interacting in discussion and problem solving groups and dyads in order to see how different cultural values and communication styles affect such discourse. It is believed that intercultural communication is inherently problematic as a result of these differences. However, a key aspect of these interactions is the situational context in which they occurred: an informal, non-competitive context in which relations were symmetrical and there were no repercussions arising from the talk. Overall, the evidence from this study suggests that such a context fosters more successful communication. A large number of video or audio taped interactions, seventy six in all, comprising forty hours of talk and involving one hundred and fifty five non-native speakers and six native speakers comprise the data for this study. The participants come from all continents, from one hundred and four different countries. Comprehensive overviews of the literature on cultural values and communication styles precede the analysis of the data and provide a frame of reference for this analysis. Three critical aspects of communication style: discourse organisation and rhetorical strategies; turn-taking patterns and the distribution of talk; and attitudes towards the assertion of opinion, disagreement and conflict are examined in detail. The extent to which any findings correlate with, or diverge from, those widely accepted in the literature is noted. However, the influence of the particular situational context on the communicative behaviour of the participants is stressed, as is the fact that findings from one context cannot be extrapolated to other dissimilar contexts. Finally, both intercultural and linguaculture-specific communicative competencies are discussed and evidence provided that training can develop some of these competencies. The implications for language teaching and workplace training suggested by this study are noted and a case argued for cross-cultural awareness and intercultural communication training for both native and non-native speakers in a multicultural society like Australia.

CONTENTS	Pages
Chapter One	1
Introduction	
Thesis statement	
Outline of content	
Definition of terms	2
Rationale	
Theoretical background and relevant research areas	6
The problematic nature of intercultural communication	11
<i>Different schemata, frames and communication styles</i>	
<i>Face and hierarchy</i>	
<i>Feelings and attitudes</i>	
<i>Non-native speakers</i>	
 Chapter Two	 15
The Data	
The nature of the data	
The participants	
The procedure for the data collection	17
The procedure for the data analysis	19
General features of the sample interactions	21
<i>The situational context</i>	
<i>The types of speech activities</i>	
<i>The speech acts</i>	
<i>Accommodation and convergence</i>	
<i>Rapport and humour</i>	
 Chapter Three	 28
Cultural Value Systems: A Review of the Literature	
Definitions of culture and cultural values	
Cultural value systems: three frameworks	30
<i>Hofstede's four dimensions</i>	
<i>Trompenaar's seven dimensions</i>	
<i>Schwartz's seven culture-level value types</i>	
Individualism and collectivism	34
Power distance	35
Masculinity versus femininity	36
Problem-solving and decision making	37
Interpersonal relations	
Modernisation and convergence	39
Discussion	
 Chapter Four	 43
Data Analysis: Cultural Values Reflected in the Discourse	
Introduction	
Evidence of values reflected in the discourse: recurring patterns	
<i>The collective before the individual, hierarchical values: Group A</i>	

<i>The collective before the individual, the importance of educational qualifications, attitudes to sexual morality: Group B</i>	
<i>The collective before the individual, hierarchical values, attitudes to sexual morality: Group C</i>	
<i>The collective before the individual, hierarchical values: Group D</i>	
<i>The importance of educational qualifications: Group E</i>	
Different values, unshared world knowledge: problematic interactions	55
<i>A lack of shared knowledge and values: Dyad (a)</i>	
<i>Culture clash: Group F</i>	
<i>Unshared values, a failure to explain: Group G</i>	
Productive diversity	70
<i>Meeting needs in a culturally diverse society: Group H</i>	
<i>Finding culturally appropriate solutions: Group I</i>	
<i>Providing alternative perspectives: Group J</i>	
Discussion	80
Chapter Five	82
Communication Styles: A Review of the Literature	
Introduction	
Frameworks of communication styles	84
<i>Hall's high and low context styles</i>	
<i>Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey and Chuas' four stylistic modes</i>	
<i>Clyne's four styles</i>	
Discourse organisation and rhetorical strategies	90
Turn-taking patterns and the distribution of talk	95
Assertion, disagreement and conflict	104
Chapter Six	114
Data Analysis: Discourse Organisation and Rhetorical Strategies	
Introduction	
A direct, linear style (an East Asian): Group A	115
Inductive organisation (a South Asian): Dyad (b)	116
Inductive organisation (a South Asian) contrasted with a deductive approach (an Eastern European): Group K	120
Inductive organisation to present an opposing view (a Southeast Asian): Group B	122
Inductive organisation (a Southeast Asian challenged by an East Asian): Group L	124
Three types of discourse organisation: Group M	125
Inductive organisation in an opening argument (a Middle Easterner): Group N	129
Rhetorical strategies reflecting first language preferences (Middle Easterner): Group F	130
Rhetorical strategies reflecting first language preference (a Middle Easterner and a South Asian): Group O	132
Discussion	135
Chapter Seven	137
Data Analysis: Turn-taking Patterns and the Distribution of Talk	
Features of the data	
<i>Types of speech activity</i>	

<i>General patterns</i>	
<i>Definition of terms</i>	
Aspects discussed in the analysis	140
High-involvement and high-considerateness styles: Groups B and P	
Two contrasting groups (round turn and free-for-all type floors): Groups M and Q	145
Dominating individuals (example one): Groups R and S	151
Dominating individuals: examples two, three and four	157
Discussion	158
Chapter Eight	163
Data Analysis: Assertiveness, Disagreement and Conflict	
Introduction	
Strong disagreement (an East Asian man): Group A	165
Assertiveness and disagreement (a Southeast Asian woman): Group P	169
Assertiveness and direct disagreement (an East Asian and Southeast Asian woman): Group T	173
Conciliatory disagreement (a Southeast Asian man): Group B	178
Conciliatory but direct disagreement (A Southeast Asian man): Group U	
Handling conflict	183
Handling potential conflict: Groups V and W	
Discussion	188
Chapter Nine	191
Developing Communication Competencies: Intercultural and Linguacultural	
Introduction: what competencies should be taught	
Evidence of the development of competencies in the interactions	200
Pre-training: Group I	201
Mid-training: Group O	205
Post-training: Group X	208
Chapter Ten	215
Conclusion	
The key role of the situational context	
General findings	216
<i>The influence of cultural values</i>	
<i>Communication styles</i>	
<i>Gender, humour and the role of non-native speakers</i>	
Indications for teaching and training	221
References	225
Appendix A	248
Appendix B	250

Transcribing Symbols

The symbols in the transcripts are based on those used by Du Bois, Cumming and Schuetze-Coburn (1988) with some modifications and additions.

Symbol	Gloss
{ n }	overlap/simultaneous speech: n = number of overlaps in the extract
x x	unintelligible words: number of xs suggests number of unintelligible words
<u>word</u>	underlined word = incorrectly used word
---	section of transcript omitted
word	word in bold type = example of type of concept being discussed
the noun 'laughter' is used to describe shared laughter and the form 'laughing' to describe laughter only by the person currently speaking	
WORD	word in upper case = a heavily stressed word
pauses	. . . = a short pause = a longer pause
_____?	possible word

Note: in the text, single quotation marks are used for terms and phrases and double marks for quotations

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Thesis statement

Intercultural communication is inherently problematic. Different cultural values and communication styles constitute the underlying causes of the difficulties common in this type of communicative interaction: the aim of this study is to identify their influence in an examination of spoken discourse. However, the situational context in which the communication occurs plays a significant role in determining the nature of such interactions and whether they are successful or unsuccessful. Overall the evidence from this study suggests that such communication can often be successful in the informal, symmetrical type of situational context in which this data was collected. At the same time, such a study identifies problems that can be addressed in language classes and intercultural training courses and further demonstrates the need for such training.

Outline of content

In this chapter, the form of the present study will be briefly outlined first and an argument made for the need for more understanding of the nature of intercultural communication in a variety of situational contexts. Then, current views about the nature of the communication process will be discussed and the main discipline areas that have informed this study briefly outlined. Finally, the factors which contribute to the difficulties evident in intercultural interactions will be reviewed.

In the second chapter, the procedure for data collection and analysis will be outlined, and the nature of the situational context in which these interactions took place described. Some comments of a general nature will be made about the interactions.

This will be followed in chapter three by an overview of the literature which discusses different cultural value systems. This overview will provide a frame of reference for the examination of the data. The aim will be to see to what extent the participants act out the cultural roles the literature assigns them and the influence this has on the interactions. The way in which cultural diversity can be of value in problem-solving discussions will also be examined. In chapter four, examples from the data will be analysed for these purposes.

Chapter five will comprise an outline of the literature on communication styles, looking in particular at cultural variations in three key aspects of communication: discourse organisation, turn-taking patterns and attitudes towards the expression of opinion and disagreement. This outline, which aims to integrate various frameworks and findings into a coherent overview, will again serve as a frame of reference for the analysis of the data in the following three chapters. The objective will be to see where participants exhibit the communication style said to be typical of their culture and where they deviate. The reasons for any deviation will be proposed. It will be in relation to this that the impact of the situational context will be examined. Chapters six, seven and eight will examine the data in relation to the three aspects of communication style mentioned above.

Chapter nine will discuss both intercultural and linguacultural-specific communicative competencies, demonstrating how training can develop some of these competencies.

Any practical applications indicated by the findings will be discussed. The final chapter will provide a summary of the findings and present some conclusions.

Definition of terms

Before discussing the need for studies of this type of communication, it is useful to define the terms used to describe it. The terms 'cross-cultural' and 'intercultural' are often used interchangeably in the literature and in everyday usage. A commonly accepted distinction is that cross-cultural refers to the comparative study of the value systems and communication patterns of different cultural groups with the emphasis upon identifying similarities and differences, whereas intercultural refers to the study of people from different cultures interacting together (Irwin 1996, Knapp & Knapp-Potthoff 1987). Irwin (1996) argues that cross-cultural communication is only possible at a macro-level where government leaders, diplomats or other representatives of a nation communicate on behalf of the members of their culture. Intercultural communication, however, can be defined as "a symbolic, interpretative, transactional, contextual process in which people from different cultures share meanings" (Lustig & Koester 1993: 25). Such communication involves people from different national cultures and/or from the various ethnic or racial subcultures within societies. Cross-cultural communication studies have significant practical applications in helping understand such communication and in suggesting ways of making it more effective (Irwin 1996, Lustig & Koester 1993).

Clearly, in terms of these definitions, what is being studied here is intercultural communication. However, to the extent that the data is examined to find differences and similarities between the communicative behaviour of different cultural groups, it is working in the field of cross-cultural communication studies and, certainly, it is drawing on findings from this field to aid in the study of these interactions. As far as possible these terms will be used as defined above, but in some instances it may be difficult to make a clear distinction, and when quoting from other sources, it will be necessary to repeat whichever term has been used.

In regard to other labels such as 'interethnic', 'international', 'interracial' and 'intergroup', Kim (1986) and Lustig & Koester (1993) argue that the term 'intercultural' is wide enough to subsume all of these.

Rationale

What is the purpose of analysing spoken interactions involving people from diverse cultural backgrounds? Clearly a main purpose must be its applied significance because of the heterogeneity of most societies, the increasing internationalisation of fields such as commerce and education, the advances in communication technology and the intercultural nature of many personal relationships in today's global village. Indeed at no other time in history has there been this level of interdependence, yet at the same time there is evidence of the aggressive assertion of ethnic and national identity in many areas. A study such as the present one can have social relevance if it can uncover or confirm, even in some small way, communicative sources of problems between people in multicultural societies and in international dealings.

This type of research is also useful as a supplement to other forms of research on cultural variation in relation to values and communication style. Much of this other research involves self reports of attitudes and communication behaviour, not observation of actual behaviour. Research that examines talk between people can be of

use in confirming findings from other types of research. It is also true that discourse analysis or interaction-oriented approaches can discover problems that other approaches have not discerned and can provide alternative views to the very broad generalisations made from a sociocultural or social psychological perspective in some of the literature. Much of this literature does tend to ignore individual agency and portray people as cultural automata whose behaviour is programmed according to their group membership (Blommart 1991, Banks et al 1991, Willing 1992).

What is the purpose of studying the particular type of intercultural communication involved in this study? The fact that the data represents an extensive sample of participants who were similar in terms of variables such as age and level of education, in symmetrical relationship with each other, engaged in very restricted types of speech activities, in relatively relaxed settings, does produce conclusions that can be compared with those reached about different types of intercultural interactions involving other kinds of participants, activities and settings. The extensive nature of the sample also enables more comprehensive conclusions than were able to be reached from much smaller samples (Byrne & FitzGerald 1994, FitzGerald 1996).

It is also of value to get some evidence about the extent to which young, well-educated professionals and students with reasonably proficient English subscribe to the values and beliefs of the society they grew up in, and the extent to which they continue to manifest the communication style of their first language in intercultural encounters in a second language. Some understanding of this is important in a multicultural society like Australia where people from many different cultures live and work together.

At the same time, in today's global village, English has become the lingua franca for communication in multinational business, diplomacy, international institutions, scientific education, aviation and tourism as well as in many different types of multicultural societies ranging from India to Australia. In fact, there has never before been a single language which has been used for these purposes over most of the world as is true of English in this century (Kachru 1982). For this reason any increased understanding of how it is used in interactions and how it might be better taught is of value. Participants in many intercultural encounters using English have varying degrees of proficiency in the language and speak different varieties of English: it is useful to see to what extent this impedes communication. The more that is known about the way English is used by non-native language speakers in intercultural interactions, the better teachers can address problem areas.

Any study of what contributes to successful intercultural communication can also be of use if it helps further understanding of what constitutes intercultural communication competence. Some excellent studies have been done identifying the requirements for communicative competence in English (Canale & Swain 1980, Bachman 1990) but this is not exactly the same thing. To what extent can non-native speakers be expected to become competent in linguacultural-specific terms and to what extent in terms of intercultural competence? For instance, it is necessary to keep in mind the fact that English is not a culture-free language, not some supra-ethnic language, and as Loveday (1982:33) argues "a de-ethnicised *lingua anglica* seems unrealistic". He suggests that all native speakers should be taught how to communicate with those who speak their language as a second language. But he admits it is not likely that these native speakers would "relinquish their often inexplicit perceptions of identity to successfully integrate others". At the same time it can appear like cultural imperialism if teachers aim only to

teach native-like communicative competence to learners. As Clyne et al (1991) point out, this is not appropriate in multicultural societies as it incorrectly presupposes, first, that it is not necessary for native English speakers to learn about the way other cultural groups communicate and, second, that the only people learners will have problems communicating with are native speakers: that such miscommunication is minimal when 'ethnic' Australians from different backgrounds interact. Indeed, the reality is that the Australian workforce is one of the most culturally diverse in the world. Over eighty five percent of workplaces in Australia now have four different nationalities represented and twenty eight percent have more than eleven (Byrne 1999). As Clyne's (1994) research shows, there can be clashes of style and misinterpretation of intentions between non-native speakers from various backgrounds using English as a lingua franca. Yet, as Meeuwis (1994) points out, there have been only a very limited number of studies of this type of communication. In fact, what is needed is intercultural communication training for both native and non-native speakers to help them understand and appreciate the positive aspects of each communication style in certain situations and, ideally, extend their own repertoire of styles.

At another practical level, studies of newly arrived immigrants problem-solving in small groups may provide helpful information about what further training they need to prepare them for the Australian workplace. The restructuring of the workplace has made good communication, problem-solving skills, teamwork and meeting skills priorities. For example, a team-based structure is now common from the boardroom down to the factory floor. There are leadership teams, management teams, continuous improvement teams, quality circles, autonomous work groups, project teams and focus groups (Byrne 1997). Communicative competence in such a context is not based only on linguistic accuracy: task completion and successful management of an interaction are also criterion (Mawer 1992). Yet the abilities required to follow and effectively participate in such activities are considerable. Immigrants must negotiate widely used culture-specific processes, for example, brainstorming and fishbone analysis (cause and effect analysis) as well as sociocultural factors such as perceived hierarchies and culture bound views on the right level of assertiveness and participation. In fact, the ability to work in teams to identify problems and co-operatively arrive at solutions is regarded as a key communicative competency in the professional workplace (National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition 1992). While problem-solving discussions are such a predominant feature of white collar work, this area has been identified as one where professionals from culturally diverse backgrounds are disadvantaged (Willing 1992). Good, research-based teaching can help overcome this and assist immigrants to become more aware of the realities and expectations of the workplace. According to Millen, O'Grady and Porter (1992), immigrants are disproportionately under represented at higher levels in the Australian workplace. They believe this situation is perpetuated because of the cumulative effect of interactions where misunderstandings occur because of different cultural expectations and communication styles. Training for all concerned could help overcome this situation and the skills of immigrants could be more fully utilised for the benefit of both the individuals concerned and the nation.

Moreover, this more demanding workplace is no longer confined within domestic boundaries. Australians, both native and non-native speakers, may be working in multinational companies, international organisations, joint ventures and strategic regional partnerships involving international as well as national e-mails, faxes, teleconferences and face-to-face meetings. Again, all Australians involved in this type of communication can benefit from intercultural communication training.

Another reason for such studies of intercultural communication is their practical application in intercultural awareness, knowledge and skills training. Real examples are useful to illustrate general points and the analysis of short transcripts of problematic communication can bring the difficulties to life and help generate strategies for overcoming them. The need for such training is becoming increasingly accepted, for both native and non-native speakers. For example, it is widely accepted that multicultural teams are more innovative and productive than homogeneous teams because they avoid the limitations of 'groupthink', the tendency of people from similar backgrounds to think along the same, rather limited, lines. However, they are only really effective if the group members have had training which alerts them to possible problems; otherwise diversity is believed to cause process problems involving stress, mistrust, misunderstanding and lack of cohesion, all of which reduce productivity (Gudykunst 1991, Adler 1991, Watson et al 1998, Cox & Blake 1991). Indeed, researchers take the view that the only ways in which interpersonal communication across cultures can be improved is for people to know as much as possible about those with whom they are communicating and to be aware that misunderstandings are the only thing certain about this type of communication (Scollon & Scollon 1995, Sarbaugh 1979, Smith 1987). Tannen (1981) also notes the need for such knowledge when she points to the difficulty of evaluating personality characteristics in such communication. Unless one knows the standards being applied, one cannot assess the divergence from them.

An approach which stresses cross-cultural literacy (Luce & Smith 1987) avoids the dangers implicit in an assimilationist approach in any training program. Such literacy or learning requires that all citizens, native born and immigrant, learn how culture influences all behaviours. It enables individuals to become aware of the salient points of their own cultural identity and at the same time to realise that their ways of doing things are just one among many possibilities. It also facilitates and enhances communication if, as well as knowledge, it practises the skills required for effective communication with people from different backgrounds. Knowledge without skills is socially useless but skills in turn require the cognitive ability to diagnose situational demands and constraints. For any country in today's global village such learning or literacy is important. For a country like Australia, which is among the most multicultural in the world and which is dependent in economic terms on countries with very different cultures, such literacy or learning is not just important, it is vital for all the community. To mention just two areas where this literacy is crucial, there is the dependence on international students in educational institutions (Byrne & FitzGerald 1998b) and the fact that the great majority of our tourists now come from very diverse cultures and we can only provide excellent service if aware of their different preferences and needs (FitzGerald 1998). While the need for this type of training is beginning to be more widely accepted in Australia, there are still big gaps in the knowledge that is required to make the training really effective. Any research which can contribute even in a small way to the knowledge needed for cross-cultural literacy is of value.

A further reason is that there has been some concern to establish whether social factors or more directly linguistic factors cause the most difficulties in intercultural communication. When variables such as power, prejudice and a competitive context are not present, as is the case at an overt level in this study, it is possible to get a clearer idea of what the problems are when these are absent or at least not prevalent. It has been well established that social factors of this type do play a part in such communication.

For example, Clyne (1994:158) notes that in intercultural communication in the Australian workplace, power relations and social distance “play an important part in determining the nature of the discourse”.

Finally, many researchers have pointed to the need for more studies of spoken discourse involving people from different cultural backgrounds. Loveday (1983:187), for example, asserts. “Certainly a great deal more data about discursual activity in and across cultures must be gathered”. Willing (1992:206) also argues the need, saying there are many “broad-perspective sociocultural and cultural-psychological explanations” of the cause of problems in intercultural communication but examples of actual, concrete interactions are rarely studied. Clyne and Ball (1990) believe that such research is particularly necessary in a country like Australia where approximately a quarter of the population has a mother tongue other than English. Moreover, as they point out, Australia provides an opportunity to study the interactions of cultural groups who have no previous history of interaction and who have communication styles that they do not share with one another or with native speakers. Gudykunst (1991) supports this in general, asserting a need for data-based studies of language usage in varying situational and relational contexts, involving different clusters of cultures.

Theoretical background and relevant research areas

A major difficulty in any study of intercultural communication is the fact that so many disciplines are involved in the area. As Agar (1994: 222) notes, the literature on intercultural communication is “huge, diverse, without any agreement or any particular unifying focus”. Furthermore, there are a number of theoretical perspectives which provide different models for the analysis of spoken language data in general, including intercultural communication. There is no generally accepted, consistent framework for the analysis of intercultural communication (Knapp & Knapp-Potthoff 1987). As a result, this study has been informed by research from a number of different fields. Indeed, the views held today about the nature of the communication process itself have been formed by contributions from a wide range of discipline areas. According to Wetherell and Potter (1988:168), work in areas such as sociology, philosophy and literary theory on language function, as well as in discourse analysis in areas such as speech act theory, ethnomethodology and conversational analysis “has shown that language is a social practice and is functional at all times”. This view of language use forms the basis of the present study and is summarised below. This summary is followed by a brief outline of the discipline areas which have had most influence on the approaches taken or have contributed to the identification of the cultural values and communication patterns that form the frames of reference for the data analysis.

In the past, spoken communication was seen as a process in which one person had a thought and then put it into words in order to transfer the thought to others: it was sent in the same way a package might be. Any person who knew the language would be able to effortlessly understand the message (Green 1989, Reddy 1979). This assumption is now seen as a mistake of major proportions, and the communication process viewed as infinitely more complex. Researchers such as Brown & Levinson 1987, Scollon & Scollon 1995, Candlin 1976, 1981, Riley 1989, Erickson & Shultz 1982, Tannen 1989, 1993a, Gumperz 1978, 1982a, 1992a, 1996) now see spoken discourse as a joint production: everything that occurs results from the interaction of all participants. Context is constituted and roles created by talk and action. The meanings exchanged by speaking are not given in the words alone but are also constructed partly out of what the listeners interpret them to mean. Moreover, there are layers or levels of meaning. Any

utterance can have a first layer of notional meaning referring to the basic semantic categories of time, place and quantity. A second layer is the referential meaning of the utterance. Thirdly, the utterance must be spoken by a particular person in a particular context, which gives it sociolinguistic meaning: it acquires illocutionary or pragmatic force. The final layer is its contextual meaning, which is affected by the utterances which precede and follow it. Thus interactants must continually make judgements at these simultaneous levels, through the inferential process, which involves both interpreting what has been said and generating expectations about what is going to come.

The process is always situated in a social context. People have to make informed guesses about the physical setting, other participants, their backgrounds, their roles and status relationship and how the present situation relates to previously experienced activities. These initial suppositions have to be constantly modified as the interaction proceeds. Participants have to agree at least to some extent on the nature of the speech activity in which they are engaged in order to create expectations about likely goals or outcomes and how to behave at the interpersonal level. The following description sums up the collaborative nature of the process. It is a process in which "individual subjective worlds are meshed, however, fleetingly, into a world of intersubjective meaning (Riley 1989:241).

According to Clyne (1994) discourse analysis has been greatly assisted by psycholinguistic research on language and cognition which has established that the knowledge people draw on to make inferences and interpretations in a communicative interaction is not held in the mind in a random fashion. Rather, it is organised in the form of knowledge structures. The concepts of schemata and frames have come from this research. These terms are used in various ways, sometimes interchangeably (Willing 1992, Tannen 1979, Calavanti 1983), but among the most helpful are the descriptions of schema and frame by Roberts, Davies and Jupp (1992). Schemata is described as the accumulated cultural and social knowledge and structured experience that people bring to an encounter. Some of it is knowledge of facts about the world but much of it is made up of beliefs, values and patterns of communicative behaviour learned through growing up, living and working in a particular culture and society. Frames refer to the intentions the speaker intends to convey and the interpretations made by listeners. This notion of frame covers the way schemata may be changed and modified in interaction, the way people may adjust their ideas or shift their frames as they work to make sense of one another. Roberts et al see schema and frame operating together. If people are not sharing the same schema or do not agree about what frame they are in, the misunderstanding in one dimension affects the other.

This notion of knowledge structures is very helpful when analysing intercultural communication as is the understanding that these structures are influenced by culture. Other theoretical perspectives which are helpful have come from the field of pragmatics. Work in this field (Levinson 1983, Leech 1983) has added to an understanding of how speakers and listeners try to make sense of what is going on, particularly the way the individual is related to the general and systematic. They claim that, while it is only possible to interpret meaning within a particular context, at the same time this can only be done because the necessary processes of inferencing are based on general principles or maxims. Grice (1975) set out maxims of cooperation. According to his cooperative principle, it can be assumed that a speaker is obeying four maxims. These maxims are (1) quantity: only make your contribution as informative as

is necessary, (2) quality: try to only say what you believe is true (3) relation: be relevant, and (4) manner: be lucid, brief, unambiguous and orderly. If a listener believes one of these maxims has been violated, they look for a reason. This process of searching beyond the speaker's apparent intention is called implicature (Grice 1975).

While these notions of cooperation, violation of the principles and implicature have added to the understanding of the way people use their reasoning abilities in the interpretative process, other studies have questioned their validity. Brown and Levinson's (1987) study on politeness and facework has demonstrated how people are motivated by these considerations as well and will frequently flout the maxims of quality, quantity and manner when they want to be polite. Furthermore, studies of other societies have questioned the universality of these principles and maxims (e.g. Ochs 1976, Rosalda 1990, Wierzbicka 1997a). Wierzbicka (1997a: 120-121) writes that she came to the conclusion that the differences between Anglo 'rules' 'maxims' and 'principles', which are presented in the literature as universal and, for example, Polish, "were not superficial, but reflected differences in deep-seated, subconscious attitudes, which were fused with the core of a person's personality". People from other cultures have different views about many of these ideas, such as what is relevant or the degree of explicitness required. In intercultural interactions, wrong inferences can easily be drawn. Nevertheless, this Gricean model has provided a basis for comparison and extension. For example, Clyne (1994) has extended it to allow for a cultural perspective and to propose maxims which can be applied to intercultural communication.

A group of researchers in the field of pragmatics, who Wierzbicka (1991:69) describes as "cross-cultural pragmatists", have made a significant contribution to our understanding of both the cultural premises for performing interaction and the cultural knowledge that helps people understand that behaviour (Banks et al 1991). Some of these researchers have analysed and compared similar interactions in two very different cultures (e.g. Clancy 1986, Yamada 1992), while others (e.g. Wierzbicka 1991, Sohn 1983, Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper 1989) have examined features of language such as speech acts and particles to show how the language of a culture reflects the values identified by researchers in other fields. Wierzbicka (e.g. 1985b, 1986, 1991, 1996) and colleagues such as Goddard (e.g. Goddard & Wierzbicka 1997) have made a unique contribution by formulating cultural rules for speaking outlined in cultural scripts using simple lexical universals or near-universals, that is, a culture-free semantic metalanguage based on semantic invariants. The great advantage of comparisons of cultures employing these cultural scripts is that they are language independent and therefore eliminate the bias inherent in language. Pragmatic studies in second language acquisition and production (e.g. Kasper 1984, Thomas 1983, Tarone & Yule 1987) have also contributed to the understanding of intercultural communication.

A range of research is being undertaken in Australia in different areas of spoken discourse, including intercultural interactions in the workplace (Clyne and Slade 1994). The most comprehensive and useful of these is Clyne's (1994) study of interactions mainly in the blue collar workplace, between people from a number of diverse backgrounds, in particular European and Asian. Clyne's aim was to explore the role of verbal communication patterns in successful and unsuccessful communication and to integrate and develop frameworks for a linguistics of intercultural communication incorporating cultural value systems. In addition to examining the different ways in which particular speech acts, such as complaints, apologies and directives, were realised by the various groups and the misunderstandings which resulted, Clyne identified a

number of different communication styles and described three in detail. Willing's (1992) analysis of problem-solving interactions in the professional workplace, involving native and non-native speakers, is also most helpful. Willing took a different approach. He concentrated on identifying the interactive skills needed to deal with intercultural and pragmatic communication difficulties as they arise.

A discourse analysis approach which has concerned itself with intercultural communication (much of this work has involved inter-ethnic communication) has been described as micro-ethnography (Erickson & Shultz 1982) or interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1982a, 1992a, Tannen, 1984b, 1994a, Scollon & Scollon 1995, Young 1994). Tannen (1993a:4) uses the phrase 'frame theory' to describe the idea that participants need to know which frame or speech activity they are participating in. In this approach, framing devices (linguistic and paralinguistic) convey metamesages to indicate what is going on - what frame of interpretation to apply. Gumperz (e.g. 1978, 1982a, 1992a & b, 1996) uses the notion of 'interpretative frames'. A 'frame' in this meaning is a set of expectations based on previous experiences, and the 'interpretative frame' is a method of matching expectations with what is occurring moment by moment in conversation. In Gumperz's theory these interpretative frames are signalled to other participants by means of 'contextualisation cues'. The interpretation of these signalling devices or cues is called 'conversational inference'. This is the process by which participants arrive at context-based interpretations of what is going on at any point and on which they base their responses. The notion of contextualisation cues covers any verbal or nonverbal sign that helps speakers hint at or clarify meaning, and listeners to make inferences. The meanings of these cues are implicit: they are almost never talked about out of context in the way the meaning of words often are. Tannen's (1993a) 'metamesages' or 'metacommunication moves' are close to Gumperz's contextualisation cues - both are signalling devices. Research in this field shows how cultural differences in expectations of linguistic behaviour, interpretative strategies and signalling devices can cause problems and even communicative breakdown. These researchers identify systematic misunderstandings, for example, about whether questions are being asked or arguments being stated, as well as different perceptions as to whether people are being rude or polite, completing a turn or interrupting. Their methodology is to analyse naturally occurring situations and then get the participants to provide their interpretation.

One of the other valuable areas of research into the nature of spoken communication, conversational analysis, has been carried out by sociologists, often called ethnomethodologists, for example, the work of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) and collections such as those edited by Psathas (1990) and Heritage and Atkinson (1984). The focus of this work is on the structure of conversation and how it is linked with wider social structures. In fact, according to Hopper, Koch and Mandelbaum (1986:169) "conversational analysis is the search for patterns in the mode of the natural sciences". It aims to "understand the structures of conversational action and members' practices for conversing". Conversational analysts stress the sequential nature of conversation and the way in which meaning is dependent on the listeners' response. In these ways, they emphasise the joint nature of talk, the way in which speakers collaborate in a systematic manner. In their methodology, the analysis is based only on the actual data. They identify the context-free features of turn-taking patterns before they address other elements such as background information and content. The extent to which their findings are universally applicable is questionable. Even if the underlying rules are universal, there is evidence that the ways they are realised vary in different

cultures (Tannen 1984b, Scollon & Scollon 1990, Duranti 1985). On the other hand, there is some support for their findings across cultures (Barraja-Rohan 1994, Astbury 1994, Moerman 1987). For example, Moerman (1987) concludes from his study of Thai conversations that with respect to features such as the occurrence and negotiation of simultaneous talk and of repair, the system of co-ordinating turn-taking is essentially the same in Thai as in English.

Researchers in the fields of cross-cultural anthropology and management studies have also made important contributions to the field of intercultural communication. Hall, a cultural anthropologist, has written several seminal works on contexting and non-verbal communication in different cultures and cross-cultural situations (Hall 1959, 1966, 1976, 1983). In these works, Hall explains contexting in terms of the amount of information transmitted verbally and the amount conveyed implicitly by other means. Hofstede (1980, 1991, 1997), perhaps the most widely quoted and influential researcher across the disciplines, describes his research identifying different cultural value systems as rooted in anthropology (Hofstede 1997). Another researcher who has used surveys to identify cultural values, Trompenaars (1993), is a leader in the field of cross-cultural management training.

A further area which has generated a huge amount of research on the values and norms of different groups and which has shed light on their behaviour is the field of social psychology, in particular cross-cultural psychology or cultural psychology (e.g. Triandis 1995, Berry et al 1992, Smith & Bond 1999, Schwartz 1991, 1994). These psychologists question the view of western (particularly American) psychology, which presumed both the universality of the experimental method as a truth-generating device and the universality of its theories and findings. They point to the arrogance of the assumption that studies done on Americans could be taken to have universal application and have expanded the concept of individual and group differences to include culture, in some cases working to indigenise psychology.

A great deal of relevant research has also been done in the field of communication studies (e.g. Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey & Chua 1988, Gudykunst 1991, 1998, Sarbaugh 1988, Ting-Toomey 1988, Kim 1986). Researchers in this area believe that observable patterns of cognitive, affective and behavioural processes are built-in features of any interactions, including intercultural ones. Furthermore, in their view, the use of language in interaction is an orderly process, which aids in identifying crucial differences between cultural groups and their communication patterns. These researchers incorporate psychological, and anthropological findings and approaches: the former provide information about psychological attributes such as ethnocentrism and the latter information about the individual communicator's experiential background. In their view, understanding the key differences between the worldviews, values, and communication patterns of participants in a communicative encounter helps predict potential communication barriers and increase knowledge of the way individuals manage, or fail to manage, such differences. Sociological knowledge is also incorporated to take account of the larger socioeconomic-political context in which intercultural communication takes place.

As mentioned earlier, this study has been informed by the research findings in all these areas. However, it must be stressed that the methods used to analyse the data do not conform to any one of the approaches outlined above. For example, there is no close analysis of the data typical of some of these methods. The purposes of the present study

are different. The aim, basically, is to see what happens when participants from all corners of the globe (participants who are educated and have had some exposure to international culture) interact using English: to establish the extent to which cultural patterns are maintained and how they manifest themselves when individuals are no longer interacting in their own groups but in a variety of intercultural clusters. The procedure is, first, to analyse the data in relation to the frame of reference (the relevant findings in the literature) outlined previous to the analysis, and second, to examine how successful communication in the data is achieved. According to Willing (1992:135), "the intellectual traditions of applied linguistics and cross-cultural communication studies have recently taken new perspectives on spoken interaction between native speakers and non-native speakers. Whereas previously the focus was often upon analysing cultural sources of communication difficulties, more recently there has been interest in observing how interactants deal practically with such difficulties". The approach taken in this study is to do both: to identify where problems have cultural sources and also to explore the ways in which participants achieve successful communication. A final aim will be to identify teaching and training needs suggested by these findings.

The problematic nature of intercultural communication

At least four broad potential problem areas have been identified in studies of intercultural communication. Most of these difficulties can also occur to some extent in intracultural communication. Indeed, the maintenance of intersubjectivity is a tenuous, fragile procedure even when people have similar backgrounds and share a native language. However, in intracultural interactions, participants have a better chance of both avoiding and overcoming problems because of their shared linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge. The following four areas are those which are most likely to cause difficulties.

Different schemata, frames and communication patterns

As mentioned earlier, schemata are knowledge structures, shaped by cultural values, and consisting of the accumulated world knowledge and experience of an individual. Given the complexity of the communication process, it is obvious that the more participants share expectations, assumptions and knowledge about the world, the more successful communication is likely to be. If people have had very similar histories, backgrounds and experience, they will probably make fewer mistakes in drawing inferences about what others mean. However, in much intercultural communication it is impossible to depend on shared knowledge and background to interpret what others are intending to mean. For this reason problems should be expected in this type of communication (Clyne 1994, Scollon & Scollon 1995, Halliday 1978, Gumperz 1990, Gumperz et al 1979, Gass & Varonis 1991). For example, the work of Gumperz (1992b), Erickson & Shultz (1982) and Chick (1989) has shown how communication fails when participants do not have the same assumptions about the purpose of the interaction and expectations about the outcomes and socially appropriate ways of fulfilling that purpose: that is, they do not have the same schemata or interpretative frames. This is particularly evident in highly conventionalised and culture-specific situations such as job and counselling interviews.

Another problematic area is that people from different cultures have preferred ways of communicating based on the values prioritised in their cultures. Even when they reach near native proficiency in a second language, they go on communicating in the style preferred in their first language (Clyne 1996, Gumperz 1996). This can cause

misunderstanding. For example, the linguistic strategies employed by people with different communicative styles have varied uses and meanings (Gumperz & Tannen 1979). The meaning of linguistic strategies, such as interruption, indirectness and silence, is often ambiguous. As Tannen (1994a:20) points out, there is never "an enduring one-to-one relationship between a linguistic device and an interactive effect". In general, where cultural backgrounds are not the same, habitual use of many linguistic strategies and ways of interpreting them will differ.

Furthermore, people have different expectations about what constitutes effective discourse organisation or structuring of information and what rhetorical strategies achieve the desired effects. And they use different linguistic conventions such as tone of voice to signal connections and significance. This is made even more problematic by the fact that all these cultural presuppositions operate at a low level of awareness. People can mistakenly take it for granted that their expectations in these areas are universally shared (Smith 1987). What is more, the failure to understand interactional differences produces serious problems in that it leads to unjustified negative evaluations of the sincerity, interest, intelligence, ability and motivation of the other parties in the situation (e.g. Erikson 1984, Chick 1989, 1990). Indeed, studies of employment and counselling interviews as well as meetings and negotiations (e.g. Gumperz 1992b, 1996, Erickson & Shultz 1982) show how individuals' lives can be affected in multicultural societies, for example, opportunities for upward employment mobility can be restricted. In addition, communication difficulties can lead to pejorative stereotyping of minority groups and over time this can contribute to serious social problems (Gumperz & Roberts 1991).

Face and hierarchy

In their studies of the ways in which facework and politeness are realised in different cultures, sociolinguists and sociologists have given the term 'face' a quite specific meaning. They define it as "the negotiated public image, mutually granted each other by participants in a communicative event" (Scollon & Scollon 1995:35). Researchers have established two kinds of politeness or face needs: positive politeness and negative politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987). Negative face refers to the desire to be unimpeded in one's actions and positive face to the desire to be approved of, at least in some respects. Brown and Levinson argue that this highly abstract notion of face is universal, but that it would be subject to many kinds of cultural specification because it is linked with questions of hierarchy, honour, shame, virtue and other important concepts which are culturally variable. Nevertheless, their theory has provided a reference model for culturally-specific uses and for the study of intercultural interactions. For example, problems can arise in intercultural communication when participants adopt politeness strategies which clash. Researchers have analysed interviews in which one participant's interactional style is characterised by negative, deference politeness (and assumes reciprocity), whereas the other participant is employing positive, solidarity type politeness in an attempt to build rapport. For cultural reasons, the former feels unable to adopt positive politeness strategies but can then be put in an unequal position because they are showing the deference symbolic of lower status (Scollon & Scollon 1983, Chick 1990, Erickson & Shultz 1982, Fiksdal 1991).

At the core of Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion of politeness is the idea that most utterances represent face-threatening acts and therefore require some sort of indirectness or 'softening'. However, the notion of what constitutes a face-threatening act is culturally-bound. In some cultures, other considerations may be more important than

face. As will be discussed in later chapters, some cultures appear to place sincerity and intimacy above face considerations. Furthermore, the way in which politeness is realised is not the same in all languages. In hierarchical societies, considerations of status must be taken into account and different forms of language used depending on the relative rank of the interactants. For example, in some languages, politeness appears to be carried more by the grammaticalization of honorifics and less by other means. When the language used in intercultural encounters does not allow for these types of expressions of politeness, people may unwittingly offend others who are concerned with matters of status.

Feelings and attitudes

As well as these difficulties, there can be added problems related to feelings and attitudes. Participants may bring feelings of uncertainty, anxiety and even hostility to intercultural interactions. Such feelings can contribute to ineffective communication. Indeed, there is much evidence that people feel more comfortable interacting with people from similar backgrounds, with similar values and communicative styles (Gudykunst & Kim 1984, Barlund 1994, Robinson 1985). There is a strong tendency towards group maintenance among both humans and animals. Ethnocentrism is defined as "the belief in the inherent superiority of one's own group and culture accompanied by a feeling of contempt for other groups and cultures" (Macquarie Dictionary 1981), and it is widely accepted that ethnocentrism is a natural tendency (Robinson 1985, Gudykunst & Kim 1984). This tendency causes people to make interpretations and evaluations based on their own cultural standards; that is, from a monocultural not an intercultural perspective. Such researchers point out that ethnocentrism and prejudice unconsciously influence even well-intentioned people. These attitudes have been learned as part of the socialisation process, a process which involves learning to share the attitudes of the groups one belongs to, including the stereotypes these groups hold about other groups. Interpretations of others' behaviour and meanings based on negative or inaccurate stereotypes cause misunderstandings and communication breakdown. There may also be strong, conscious manifestations of racism, prejudice, hostility and power inequality. Where such attitudes decide motives in an interaction, failure to achieve mutually satisfying outcomes is assured and would appear to play a more important part than sociocultural and linguistic differences.

Non-native speakers

In a great many intercultural encounters, the difficulties are increased because one or more of the interactants is not speaking their native language. Of course, this is not always so. For example, in a multicultural society, people may speak the same first language but have been enculturated into very different cultures at home and even in special schools. More often, however, some are non-native speakers or all are using a particular language as a lingua franca. This means that participants can have very different levels of language proficiency and this makes for even greater difficulties in interpreting the intentions of speakers and making communicative intentions clear. Another factor may be that different varieties of a language are being used by the participants, for example, there are many varieties of English, used by both native speakers and non-native speakers. This can be another type of difficulty in such interactions.

Some interesting research also indicates that there can be a significant difference in the ability to retrieve information in intercultural compared with intracultural encounters. Li (1999) videotaped Canadian and Chinese students in dyads (all with good English

language levels), engaged in conversations resembling those of doctors and patients. In written tests given immediately after, the intracultural dyads retrieved 75% of the informational content of the conversations: the intercultural dyads, only 50%.

Even when non-native speakers have a good command of syntax, lexis and phonology other concerns such as appropriate topics of conversation, forms of address and expressions of speech acts (such as apologies, compliments, disagreement) can cause problems because views regarding appropriateness are culturally based and their realisation in a particular situation depends on cultural knowledge (Smith 1987). As noted earlier, many non-native speakers transfer the patterns appropriate in their first language when speaking a second language. This is in part because these features of language use are far more difficult to master than features such as syntax and vocabulary. In fact, a number of researchers believe that this transfer of communication rules, including pragmatic features, discourse and prosodic patterns, from first languages is what causes most problems in intercultural situations. For example, there is evidence that native speakers do not judge mistakes in grammar, lexicon and pronunciation as harshly as they do these pragmatic and interactional types of error. This is particularly so when a speaker has a high level of proficiency in the linguistic aspects of language use. If the proficiency level is low, the native speaker does not expect interactional skills, but if it is high, the speaker has more opportunity to make pragmatic errors and is mistakenly judged in terms of attitude and ability. People are seen as unfriendly, uncooperative, rude or stupid because native speakers do not realise that the real cause is communication differences (Scollon & Scollon 1983, Candlin 1987, Clyne 1985, Gumperz 1990, 1992 a & b, Chick 1989, Gass & Varonis 1991, Wolfson 1989, Erickson 1984).

To conclude, it is clear that much of the literature provides a pessimistic view of the chances for successful intercultural communication. However, it should be kept in mind that miscommunication among competent adult members with a shared language and background is also a regular occurrence (Coupland et al 1991). Furthermore, the fact that spoken discourse is a collaborative process in which participants negotiate meaning in context means that it does not only reflect their cultural schemas and frames of reference and discourse strategies; rather they partly rely on these but modify or suspend them in order to achieve the transactional and relational needs of a particular interaction. There are many successful encounters which attest to this view. (Kasper 1995). Factors such as intelligence, social class and temperament also play a part. Moreover, in multicultural societies people have contact with other groups and this together with the acculturative influence of the mass media provides people with at least some knowledge of other ways of communicating (Erickson & Shultz 1982).

The intention is to look at the data in the light of these findings and see to what extent the data supports the more pessimistic views or provides contrasting evidence and supports the view that people do adjust and suspend behaviour based on their cultural conditioning in order to interact successfully. Again it is important to stress the role of context and situation. Cultural identity and behaviour is not fixed, it is situationally revealed, and therefore, its impact may vary in different communicative contexts (Jayasuriya 1991). Moreover, some situational contexts will be more conducive to successful communication than others. In the next chapter, the particular situational context of the interactions in this study will be detailed together with other information regarding the data sample.

Chapter Two

THE DATA

The nature of the data

A large number of interactions involving well-educated adults, native and non-native speakers of English from many different cultural backgrounds, form the basis of this study. Altogether, seventy six interactions comprising approximately forty hours of talk were taped and one hundred and fifty five non-native speakers and six native speakers participated. However, the actual interactions from which excerpts were then selected only numbered twenty eight and the participants seventy three, including four native speakers. Most of the talk was problem-solving, task-based discussion although there were also some casual conversations. The non-native speakers had varying levels of English proficiency from intermediate to advanced. The interactions, which involved either small groups or dyads, took place in a private home and in classrooms. It was not naturally occurring talk to the extent that the participants were asked to discuss certain topics and complete certain tasks. Many of the participants completed questionnaires about attitudes related to cultural values and communication style. Where relevant, participants' answers are included to aid in the understanding of the views they expressed and their communicative behaviour in the interactions.

The participants

The one hundred and fifty five non-native speaker participants in the interactions taped were immigrants and refugees who were studying on English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. Most were attending their first English course in Australia, and had been placed in Orientation classes. A few had attended community classes for a month or two while waiting for a full time course. Others were attending English for Professional Employment (EPE) classes. This was also the first course for some of these participants: they had been placed in these classes because their level of English proficiency was too high for an Orientation class. Others in these EPE classes had already completed previous courses, usually an Orientation course, and were now attending a second (or in a very limited number of cases a third) more advanced course. A few of the participants had had no English when they arrived in Australia. In the Orientation classes most of the participants had been in Australia for less than six months when the tapes were made and already had at least an intermediate level of spoken proficiency before they came here. In the EPE classes, all but a very few had arrived in the previous two years. Some had been placed in these classes as soon as they arrived in Australia. In general, the students who had been in Australia longer had been unable to access classes earlier because of pregnancies or work commitments.

All but six of these participants were aged between twenty and forty. None were under twenty and only one over fifty. They had all had at least twelve years education. Many had tertiary qualifications, two had doctorates, and most had worked in a skilled or professional occupation before coming to Australia. A number of the participants were engineers, others were doctors, scientists, university lecturers, computer programmers, businessmen, technicians, nurses, social workers, office administrators, musicians, journalists, teachers, an artist and a film director. All hoped to work in similar occupations in Australia as soon as they could get a job or, in some cases, after further training or retraining. Many of the students spoke more than one language apart from English. Their spoken English proficiency ranged from 1+ to 3 on the Australian

Second Language Proficiency Rating Scale (Ingram & Wylie 1984). A rating of 1+ indicates survival proficiency, a rating of 2 indicates minimum social proficiency and a rating of 3 indicates minimum professional proficiency. The descriptor 'intermediate level' would roughly equate with 1+ to 2+ and 'advanced level' with 2+ to 3.

Some of the students with a high rating for spoken English were in classes because they were experiencing difficulty with the unfamiliar Australian idiom and accent, and because their proficiency in other skills, particularly writing, was much lower. In addition, most had little knowledge of the written genres valued in Australian education institutions and workplaces, or the assumptions and expectations underlying the highly culture-specific job selection process common here.

The six native speakers were university students of various ages, also in the range of twenty to forty. Five had previously been in the workforce. They all had Anglo-Celtic backgrounds. Four had been born in Australia. Two had been born in England but educated in Australia. Some had volunteered to participate in the discussions, others were paid a small fee: all were willing to, and interested in, taking part.

Non-native Speakers: Countries of Origin

Area	Number	Countries
Eastern Europe	43	The former Yugoslavia
		Russia
		The Ukraine
		Poland
		Romania
East Asia	29	Czechoslovakia
		China
		Hong Kong
		Taiwan
		Korea
Southeast Asia	17	Japan
		Vietnam
		Indonesia
		The Philippines
		Thailand
Latin America	15	Burma
		Chile
		Argentina
		Brazil
		Mexico
South Asia	14	El Salvadore
		Sri Lanka
		India
		Pakistan
		Afghanistan
The Middle East	14	Bangladesh
		Nepal
		Jordan
		Egypt

		The Lebanon
		Iran
		Iraq
		Tunisia
Western Europe	5	France
		Germany
		Sweden
South Europe	3	Spain
		Italy
		Cyprus
Africa	3	Ethiopia
		Zaire

As can be seen from the table, the non-native speakers came from a wide range of countries. In general, only the geographical areas they came from have been identified in the study for reasons of confidentiality. Pseudonyms have been used for the same reason. The largest group, forty three, came from Eastern and Central European countries, mainly from the former Yugoslavia, but also small numbers from the other countries listed. For convenience, the term 'Eastern European' is used to refer to this group. Twenty nine came from East Asia, mainly from China but also including small numbers of other Chinese, together with Koreans and one Japanese. Seventeen came from Southeast Asia, most from Vietnam with smaller numbers from the other countries listed. Fifteen came from Latin America, approximately equal numbers from each of the countries named. Fourteen came from South Asia, again approximately equal numbers from each country listed. There were also fourteen from the Middle East, with roughly equal numbers from the countries listed. Five came from Western Europe and Scandinavia. This group are referred to as 'Western Europeans', again for convenience. There were also five from Southern Europe, from three countries, and three from Africa, from two northern African countries. The actual country of origin has been identified in the data analysis in a few cases where large numbers came from this country.

The procedure for the data collection

The corpus consisted of eighteen video-tapes and forty three audio-tapes of groups, usually of four or five participants, discussing problems and fifteen audio-tapes of dyads either discussing a problem or issue or 'making conversation'. Each of the interactions lasted from twenty to fifty minutes, with most lasting about thirty to forty minutes. Altogether, there was approximately forty hours of recorded talk. Extracts from twenty eight interactions, involving seventy three non-native and four native speakers, have been included in the data analysis. More detailed information about these participants is included in Appendix B.

These video-tapes and audio-tapes were made in class time either in empty classrooms or in separate rooms in the teacher's home. The students were regularly divided into small groups or pairs and given tasks to complete, including issues to discuss or problems to solve. These activities aimed to develop communicative competence, including discourse management skills as part of preparation for effective participation in the workforce. When the opportunity occurred, these were taped and, in some instances, transcribed. Students were asked to listen to the tapes and read the transcripts to assess their performances. In some cases, they were asked to fill in self-assessment check sheets.

On all of the courses during which these interactions were taped, the students did some work on different cultural values and communication styles and on the types of communication valued in the Australian workplace and in tertiary institutions. As mentioned earlier, many of the students completed a questionnaire related to this work. The main purpose of these questionnaires was to raise awareness and encourage the students to think about their own values before doing this work. Most of the tapes from which extracts have been taken were made before this work was completed. Where this was not the case, it will be indicated in the data analysis. Where relevant to the analysis, information from the questionnaires and self-assessment checksheets has been included in the discussion. As will be evident from the text, the type of questionnaire varied over the years this data was collected as different approaches to cultural awareness training were being tried out during this time. Also, not all participants completed these as sometimes they were set for homework, and sometimes participants were absent or had left the course when they were being filled out.

Sixteen different problems were discussed by the groups in the data sample. Extracts from discussions of the following eight problems have been included in the data analysis. An outline of the nature of each of these problems is provided in Appendix A.

The Problems

Problem One	The Heart Transplant
Problem Two	Co-educational High Schools
Problem Three	Managing Diversity
Problem Four	AIDS Education
Problem Five	School Cuts
Problem Six	The Budget
Problem Seven	The Bank Accounts
Problem Eight	The Printing Company

In some cases, the class read about the problem to be discussed together with the teacher before dividing into groups. Each group then went to separate rooms. In other cases, the groups formed first and then read the notes about the problems by themselves. After setting up the equipment, the teacher did not remain in the room in order to allow the discussions to develop as naturally and freely as possible.

It is accepted that naturally occurring discourse provides the best data. While these discussions and conversations closely resemble such discourse, they do suffer in certain respects. There is the fact that they were set up by the teacher, who chose the topics or problems, and most of them were roleplays. However, as Clyne (1985: 22) points out, while role-played situations do not always correspond to spontaneous behaviour, they are also useful as they "reflect the expectations of the cultural norms of communication". Again Kasper and Dahl (1991) found that the roleplays in their data exhibited many similar features when compared to the authentic interactions. Furthermore, in most workplace meetings, the topics are decided in advance and listed for discussion. On the other hand, the problems were not ones the participants were directly involved in. This of course imposed some artificiality, and the presence of a video camera, or cassette recorder and microphone added to this. Nevertheless, it did become apparent that, while these factors resulted in a degree of initial unease and

constraint, they were soon forgotten as the participants became involved in the topics. In many cases, the discussions became quite intense and even emotional as the concerns took on a reality for the participants, and they worked to persuade others, find solutions and reach agreement. This involvement was evident in the many instances where the participants forgot to change the tape over when it ran out. They had continued their discussion unaware that the tape had finished. Tannen's (1984b) experience supports this view. She found that especially if there is a relatively large number of participants and they have ongoing social relationships, they soon forget the tape recorder. This was clearly the case in these interactions

It can be argued that these discussions and conversations were also quite unconstrained because of the type of class they took place in: informality, joking and camaraderie were fostered from the outset, and by the time much of this data was collected, the students had begun to get used to participating in a variety of communicative tasks and a fair measure of rapport and routine had been established. The amount of previous problem-solving, and the length of time on the course did vary, however, and where an interaction was the first problem-solving task undertaken, this will be indicated in the analysis.

The interactions were also quite uninhibited because of the relationship between the participants and because of the relaxed setting. Apart from the native speakers, who were strangers, the participants all knew one another as classmates. The degree of familiarity, however, varied as some of the interactions occurred early on a course and some much later. There was no sense of competition in these classes and there were no outcomes or repercussions to take into consideration as there would be in a workplace situation where performance could matter in terms of promotion or job retention. In a workplace situation, there would also be the question of individual status and the need to be aware of any power differences. No matter how much industrial democracy is the ideal, there are risks in exposing oneself and one's real views in such a setting. Such considerations did not apply here. In fact, it could be argued that it would be impossible to collect data expressing such frank views on topics of this type in any other setting. Even in a relaxed social setting, it would be difficult to ask adults to concentrate on this kind of task for an extended period of time.

Tannen's (1994a) argument is of relevance here. She argues that there is a paradox inherent in all recorded conversation. The presence of the recorder precludes completely natural talk, yet, at the same time she points out that all natural speech is simply speech natural to the situation it is produced in. Contrived situations produce speech natural to that situation and provide otherwise impossible opportunities to compare how different groups speak in such contexts.

The procedure for the data analysis

All the taped material was listened to at least twice, some more often, and notes taken about the general features of each interaction. Those tapes which proved to be of particular interest were transcribed in full or in part, some for discussion in class. Parts of others were transcribed later for this study. Although excerpts from only some of the interactions are included, the observations and conclusions have been made in the light of the complete corpus. The interpretations and conclusions have also been influenced by observation of, and interaction with, second language learners over many years in both Australian and Asian contexts.

When listening to the tapes and making notes, the features noted were (a) evidence of the influence of cultural values on the views expressed (b) evidence of participants' communication style reflecting the style preferred in their first language, and (c) evidence of either of these factors contributing to misunderstanding or dissonance. Other factors noted were the general success or otherwise of any particular interaction and any features that contributed to these outcomes, in particular features which are generally recognised as communication competencies either among English speaker or in intercultural communication. Success in intercultural encounters can be defined in various ways. Gumperz and Tannen (1979) provide a helpful list. They see success as defined by smooth speaker exchange, the establishment and maintenance of conversational rhythm over significant stretches of discourse, the effective use of formulaic language and appropriate thematic progression. Other features on which an evaluation of success was made in relation to interactions in the data were the development of rapport, shared humour, an absence of misunderstanding and friction (or the effective handling of potential discord) and successful completion of the task set.

The choice of excerpts to transcribe were based on these notes. Where full interactions had already been transcribed for other purposes, selections were made from these. A further selection was then made as to which transcripts to include. These were listened to again a number of times to try to make the transcripts as accurate as possible. The aim here was not to transcribe the tapes down to the minute aspects of stress, intonation and paralinguistics but at the level Antaki (1988: 110) describes as "a prose approximation to the rush of words in ordinary speech." In any recorded discourse it is only possible to pick up part of what is going on, and in many cases, overlapping talk made one or all participants incomprehensible.

Most probably videotapes are better than audiotapes in that nonverbal behaviour can in some cases clarify the intention of the messages communicated through language and this can sometimes be detected on video and help in the understanding of what is going on. On the other hand, video cameras are much more obtrusive and may constrain the interaction more. Moreover, the loss of the visual channel might not be as much of a handicap as is sometimes suggested. In fact, Tannen (1984b: 36) argues that "the isolation of a single channel is not so great a shortcoming in the light of the redundancy of channels. Information lost from non-verbal channels, such as facial expressions, gestures and body movements, is rarely different from that preserved in the speech channel. Rather it reinforces the message communicated through the language". Another argument is that it is extremely difficult for a single observer from a particular cultural background to analyse non-verbal behaviour accurately. Indeed, the literature on intercultural communication points to the many complicated and confusing differences in the meaning of this behaviour across cultures and the fact that interactants cannot depend on non-verbal signals in such communication (Argyle 1986, Erickson & Shultz 1982, Lustig & Koester 1993, Goddard 1997, Dodd 1995). To give two brief examples only, and of quite overt signals, in Bulgaria a nod of the head indicates 'no' and a shake 'yes', while in Turkey a shake means 'I don't understand' (Lustig & Koester 1993). Indians do not nod: they move their heads from side to side in a circular movement to indicate that they are listening (Barraja-Rohan 1999).

As this corpus of data was collected over a period of some years, initially for other purposes, and involved large numbers of participants, it has not been possible to check the reactions of participants. While support for some of the conclusions reached and possibilities raised has been provided by participants' written comments in the

questionnaires on cultural values and communication styles and the self-assessment checklists on communicative performance, in general this does mean that the approaches and views are those of one culturally-bound analyst. However, one of the strengths of the method is the concrete evidence provided by the data. For example, if the analyst claims that a participant disagreed in a very direct way, they can show evidence of this in the actual transcript. In fact, the reader can always check interpretation by reading the transcript and measuring it against their experience. If the analyst's explanation is idiosyncratic or skewed and is not confirmed by the data in some way, the reader is in a position to make an informed judgement based on the evidence (Tannen 1984b, Jacobs 1986).

There were some other positive and negative factors. As Draper (1988), argues, conversations between intimates on the telephone put the analyst at a disadvantage, whereas conversations between strangers puts the analyst on the same footing as the participants. In this analysis, there was the disadvantage of not being present at the interactions, but the advantage of knowing the interactants about as well as they knew one another in most cases and the added advantage of sitting in on many similar but unrecorded discussions over many years. The fact that the participants were not interviewed for their comments was also a disadvantage. However, as Kandiah (1991:347) argues, interviews of this nature cannot establish definitely what has actually occurred. This is because of the complex nature of such interactions and the fact that, even if the participants can understand and analyse their motives and actions in an objective manner, a difficult enough feat, their observations might be influenced by their "natural tendency towards self-image preservation". Finally, there is the possibility that the findings could be influenced by the fact that the analyst selected the episodes to transcribe. As has been pointed out, all transcription is selective and motivated by analytical goals (Ochs 1976, Gumperz 1992a).

A final, problematic, aspect of this type of study is that the analyst is using one particular language loaded with cultural bias to describe and compare the values and communication styles of other cultures as well as the behaviour of participants from different cultures. English words with their often pejorative connotations have to be used to describe communicative behaviours and values which would be expressed in positive terms in the languages of the particular cultures. The analyst can only stress that in this study these words are not being used with a negative intention and that the analyst is aware of the limitations and dangers of language in this respect.

General features of the sample interactions

The situational context

The discussion in chapter one outlined the many types of difficulties which can occur in intercultural encounters. However, it is clear from this outline that many of these difficulties may be related to features or characteristics of the situation or context in which they took place. If, as this data appears to demonstrate, these features have a significant effect on the nature of the interaction and its outcomes, it is useful to describe them in detail.

Before discussing the effect of contextual factors on interactions, it is necessary to define the terms being used. The term 'context' is used in many different ways in the literature. According to van Dijk (1977), the notion of 'context' or 'situation of context' refers more to a theoretical or cognitive abstraction than to the more concrete features of

the situation. Many researchers do use it in this way. For example, they talk about the shared building of context: context is created in the interactive process (Gumperz 1982a, 1992a). In a review of the literature on context, Levinson (1983) concludes that it is not clear exactly what it is except that it is whatever produces inferences apart from semantics. The term 'social context' is sometimes used. It has been defined in terms of domains such as the school, the workplace and the home (Roberts et al 1992). The term 'situation' generally refers to the physical and biological components of a communicative event. These various uses and definitions make a choice of term difficult. For the purposes of this study, Gudykunst, Chua and Ting-Toomeys' (1988) term 'situational context' will be used. The sense in which it is being used will be detailed below.

One of the first widely used lists of components or situational variables was that of Hymes (1972). Hymes called language-created activities 'speech events' and isolated seven features which would need to be specified to describe a speech event and which would constitute the situation defining knowledge or contextualising knowledge. Saville-Troike (1982:137) summarised these as the *genre* or type of event (story, lecture, conversation); the *topic* or referential focus; the *purpose* or function of the event in general and in terms of the interactive goals of the participants; the *setting*, including time, location, and physical aspects of the situation; the *participants*, their age, sex, ethnicity, social status and relationship with one another; the *message form*, vocal or non-vocal channels and the code or language used; the *message content*, what is talked about; the *act sequence* or ordering of speech acts, including turn-taking; the *rules for interaction*; and the *norms of interpretation*, including shared presuppositions. This list was mainly intended as a base for studies of communicative events in particular cultures. Another list or scheme for categorising communication events which is more useful for intercultural encounters is that of Sarbaugh (1988:27) from the field of communication studies. It includes seven situational variables which identify the characteristics of an interaction. Some of the features overlap with Saville-Troike's list.

- (a) number of persons involved in the communication
- (b) type of channel used
- (c) perceived relationship among the participants
- (d) perceived intent of the communicators
- (e) code systems, including both verbal and nonverbal
- (f) normative patterns of belief and overt behaviours, with special consideration of values and roles
- (g) world view as a special category of beliefs

Two other crucial components, included in both lists, are setting and the type of participants. As indicated earlier, in much of the research into problematic intercultural communication, the setting, for example, job interview or counselling interview, is a crucial factor because of the different cultural expectations brought to the encounter and the asymmetrical relationships often determined by the function of the event.

The interactions in the present sample can be defined in these terms in order to establish the specific features of the situational context. Information about the participants and setting has already been detailed earlier in this chapter. In terms of number of persons, Sarbaugh (1988) claims that there tends to be increased difficulty in communication effectiveness with an increase in the number of participants. In the sample, the interactions were of two types: most involved four or more participants but a significant

number were dyadic. As will be evident in later chapters, the number of participant did not appear to be a determining factor in the success or otherwise of these encounters. Other factors appeared to play a greater role.

According to Sarbaugh (1988) channel refers to whether the communication is direct or whether an interpreter or mechanical device is interposed between the participants. The most favourable situation is when communication is direct and all of the five sensory modes can be used at the same time or in any combination. In the sample interactions, the optimum conditions applied. However, because of the diversity of cultural backgrounds, messages conveyed in this way may not always have been as effective as in more homogeneous groups. Very little was shared in regard to the many non-verbal aspects of communication thought to be culturally determined.

In regard to perceived relationship, Sarbaugh (1988) points out that the important considerations are the extent to which participants have positive or negative feelings toward each other, the extent to which they believe their individual goals are mutually shared or are incompatible and the extent to which they perceive their relationships as equal or hierarchical. Again in these respects, the sample interactions took place in very favourable conditions. The students had been told that in the Australian workplace or in tertiary institutions, they would be expected to work together in groups or teams discussing issues or solving problems and that the intention in these interactions was to give them the opportunity to practise their spoken English and to develop skills in these kind of activities. For these reasons, they tended to want to cooperate in a positive manner and to have a shared goal in completing the tasks set and solving the problems. At the outset of all the interactions, there was amity and cooperation. Where this was dissipated during the discussion, particular factors seemed to have been involved as will be discussed later. Most importantly, the relationships between the participants were symmetrical. No teacher was present and the students had all 'lost' their old status and were meeting on an equal footing as students in a new country.

Sarbaugh (1988) sees perceived intent as relating to the extent to which individuals try to help, to share with, to ignore, to disrupt, to dominate or to injure those with whom they are communicating. While there is evidence in the data that some individuals did dominate on occasions (in terms of holding the floor or ensuring that their views prevailed), this was not always their intention: as will be shown, other factors were sometimes involved. There was, however, much evidence of mutual assistance with language difficulties and the desire to share in finding solutions and completing the tasks. There was no evidence at any time of any intention to ignore, disrupt or injure others.

In relation to the code systems, the conditions were less favourable. The common code was English but the participants spoke a number of varieties of English, and the level of their proficiency in the language also varied considerably. The English they spoke had been learned in many different ways and places. In fact among them would be at least one representatives of almost all 'the Englishes' in the sense of native varieties and non-native varieties. The former would refer to clearly established forms such as American, British and Australian English. The native speakers in the sample spoke Australian English. The term 'non-native variety' includes both institutionalised and performance varieties (Kachru 1982, Saviile-Troike 1982). The main features of the institutionalised varieties are (1) they have an extended range of uses in the sociocultural context of the nations in which they are spoken, (2) they have a wide range of registers and styles and

these have been nativised, both in formal and contextual terms; and (3) they have a body of nativised literature. Some of the participants from Asia and Africa spoke such varieties. The performance varieties refer to those varieties basically used as foreign languages. They have a restricted functional range in specific contexts such as tourism and commerce. Such varieties are identified, for example, as Japanese English or Iranian English to indicate the style associated with them. Many of the participants spoke these varieties. Others spoke only the English they had learned in Australia.

In regard to the last two variables, normative patterns of beliefs, overt behaviours and world view, it could be assumed that the interactants, coming as they did from all parts of the world, would be quite dissimilar in these respects. Much of the study will be concerned with establishing the extent to which these differences were manifested and their effect on the communication. As will be demonstrated, there were some significant differences.

Sarbaugh (1988) sums up by saying that effective communication involves moving from a state of independence to a state of interdependence. The factors most conducive to this are participants who (1) are homogeneous (in terms of belief and behaviours), (2) share a common code, (3) have positive attitudes towards one another, (4) have compatible goals in the communicative event, and (5) are in symmetrical relationships.

The participants in this data meet the last three of these requirements: positive attitudes to one another, compatible goals in the communicative events and symmetrical relationships. However, they fail to meet the first two: homogeneity in terms of beliefs and behaviour and the possession of a common code (in the terms discussed above). On the other hand, they may have had some shared beliefs and behaviours for two reasons: they were relatively young and well-educated and had had some exposure to the international media through their knowledge of English and, as Clyne (1994) points out, people who choose to migrate may already be moving toward accepting some of the values and communicative behaviour that they see as typical in their new culture.

A similar list of favourable and unfavourable conditions from a different discipline, social psychology (Amir 1969), coincides to some degree with that of Sarbaugh's (1988) from the field of communication studies. Amir (1969) summarised the research done in social psychology to identify the conditions found necessary in intercultural interactions for improvement in relations rather than a continuation or increase in tension and prejudice. Amir is discussing ethnic group contacts but some of the findings would appear to hold for contacts between individual representatives of different groups and this list adds some important factors. The favourable conditions are seen as (a) equal status between groups (b) when an 'authority' and or the social climate are in favour of and promote the contact (c) when the contact is of an intimate rather than a casual nature (d) when the contact is pleasant or rewarding (e) when the participants have or develop common goals or superordinate goals that are of greater importance than individual goals (f) in interactions involving members of the majority group in the society, the members of minority groups have a high status.

Amir's list of unfavourable conditions includes situations where the opposite conditions prevail. Two extra factors identified are (a) situations where the contact is involuntary, and (b) where frustration and tension have already developed among members prior to the interactions.

Two of the favourable conditions, equal status, and common goals match with Sarbaugh's and were features of the sample interactions. And in this case, in most instances, so were the other three. The teacher can be seen as the authority and the language course or classroom as the social climate. Both were in favour of and promoted the contact. The contact was clearly enjoyable and rewarding in almost all the interactions. The reasons why this was not the case in some instances will be discussed in later chapters. In those encounters where native speakers, in this situation members of the majority group in the society, were present they were aware that the minority members were mainly highly educated professionals aiming to enter the skilled workforce or do further study at tertiary level. Finally, neither of the unfavourable conditions mentioned above was present. No evident tensions or frustrations had already developed among any of the participants, and while the non-native speakers were asked to participate by the teacher, they appeared to do so willingly. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the native speakers had in some cases volunteered to participate and in others were doing it for a small monetary reward, but also out of interest and with much enthusiasm.

It can be assumed that all these positive factors contributed to the success of the interactions. It means too that where misunderstandings occurred, they have to be attributed to other causes such as differences in values and communication styles. Indeed, the purpose in this study was to see what barriers and difficulties still exist when many of the most unfavourable conditions are not present. This enables a more accurate analysis of the influence of the negative or unfavourable variables that are present. Of course, the fact that only certain limited types of talk are being studied restricts the study of these barriers and problems even further. As research involving native English speakers has shown, there are many differences between institutional and everyday speech. The types of talk studied here are limited to two types: small group problem-solving discussions and dyadic conversations or discussions.

As has been discussed above, all communication is potentially problematic, and where there are differences in group membership the difficulties become greater. Many factors can be involved here: gender, age, ethnic or cultural group, education, place of residence (region or city within a country) income level or occupation. In addition, individual differences, such as very divergent personal histories, play a part. To try to take all of these into account when analysing discourse would be enormously difficult. In this study, the analysis was oriented towards the cultural aspects of the interaction, not towards other types of group membership or the temperament and attitudes of the participants as individuals. However, some discussion of gender differences was included where this seemed relevant

The types of speech activity

Another factor that needs to be taken into account is the type of speech activity involved. Gumperz (1982a:166) defines a speech activity as "a set of social relationships enacted about a set schemata in relation to some communicative goal". He suggests some types: "chatting about the weather", "telling a story to someone", "discussing politics", "lecturing about linguistics". Implied in such descriptions are expectations about thematic progression, turn-taking rules, the form and outcome of the interaction, as well as constraints on content. For example, in the activity of 'discussing', people expect a semantic relationship between subsequent utterances, whereas topics can change much more freely when people are 'chatting'.

The types of speech activity involved in the data could be described as 'discussing issues' and 'solving problems' and 'making conversation'. As mentioned earlier, people from diverse cultural backgrounds bring to such activities varying expectations and assumptions about roles, processes and outcomes. In any interaction, participants signal by the verbal style and the listenership cues they employ whether they agree or disagree about the nature of the activity they are engaged in and how it is to be conducted. In a successful encounter, they agree and tune into others' ways of speaking, at least to some extent. A further reason for the success of many of the interactions taped for this study was the fact that the participants generally appeared to have similar views about what was involved in discussing and solving problems and making conversation, although they did not approach problem-solving in the so-called classical linear style favoured in English-speaking societies: identify the problem, brainstorm solutions, evaluate these and choose the best alternative. This had to be taught. Moreover, many said they were not accustomed to the idea of team problem-solving in the workplace. However, they did all form opinions and priorities and were prepared to state these and argue for them. Some were prepared to be persuaded by others, while others held out for their own views, but they generally tended to agree that either the group should reach a consensus or the majority view should prevail. As will be seen in the data analysis, much depended on the tasks and topics: some were more conducive to resolution than others. When making conversation, usually in dyads, each party was aware of the need to 'keep up their end' by introducing topics and making comments and, in most cases, by giving feedback and showing interest. Had they been engaged in different types of speech activities, the findings may have been very different as other research confirms (Gumperz 1990, 1992b).

The speech acts

A further explanation for the success of many of these interactions is that the types of speech acts (Searle 1976) required were mainly representatives, which include acts such as proposing, arguing, explaining, clarifying, describing, objecting, and to some extent, directives as when speakers want to persuade other participants to their point of view and expressives as when speakers express their attitude to some aspect of the topic. These are thought to be less cross-culturally variable than other directives, for example, requesting and advising or expressives such as apologising and complimenting (Kasper 1995).

Accommodation and convergence

A useful theory for further explaining the success of many of these interactions is Speech Accommodation Theory (Tarone & Yule 1989). According to this theory, in some situational contexts, speakers try to converge linguistically (that is produce language which becomes more similar in form) toward the speech patterns they believe to be characteristic of their listeners. This happens under two conditions: they have positive attitudes towards them and want their social approval and there are no social costs involved. Speakers will not converge and, indeed, will tend to diverge in situations where they desire to emphasise their group membership and want to contrast it with the group memberships of any listeners. In many cases, participants did appear to converge. This would appear to have been because of positive attitudes towards one another and a perceived lack of a need to assert an identity based on group membership in a situation where a number of different cultural groups were present and relationships were positive and symmetrical.

Rapport and humour

As noted earlier, another factor that must be taken into account when deciding on the success or otherwise of communicative interactions is the degree of involvement the participants seem to develop. The terms 'rapport' and 'empathy' have been used to describe this. Fiksdal (1991) prefers the term 'rapport', arguing that empathy suggests verbal facility, whereas rapport has to do with the relationship that develops or is built between the interactants. Rapport strategies are generated by positive face wants: four types of activities are seen as rapport building: seeking agreement, presupposing common ground, avoiding disagreement and joking (Brown & Levinson 1987). A feeling of rapport was evident in many of the interactions in the sample as will be demonstrated in the analysis. In fact, one of the outstanding features of these interactions was the amount of laughter and the variety of the sources of the humour. Humour is seen as a social lubricant that enhances interactions and helps people cope with adversity (Adam & Newell 1994, Selinger 1995) and this was true of these interactions. For example, humour and laughter were often used to cope with the shared struggle to communicate in a second language.

As can be seen from the above outline, a number of particular features combined to create the situational context in which these interactions took place. Conclusions about the influence of cultural values and the evidence of communication styles in the following chapters are made about talk in this situational context only and may not be true of talk in different types of situational contexts. The next chapter will comprise a review of the relevant literature on different cultural value systems in order to provide a frame of reference for the data analysis which follows in chapter four.

Chapter Three

CULTURAL VALUE SYSTEMS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Definitions of culture and cultural values

Communicative behaviour is believed to be strongly influenced by cultural value systems. Indeed Samovar and Porter (1991:108) claim that "in the study of human interaction, it is important to look at cultural values, but in the study of intercultural communication it is crucial". When examining interactions involving participants from various cultural backgrounds, it is necessary to first outline what is meant by culture and cultural value systems in this context

One of the most widely quoted definitions of culture in the literature is that of Goodenough (1981:191). He sees a society's culture as consisting of whatever it is "one has to know, or profess to believe, in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members in every role that they accept for anyone of themselves". As Goodenough explains, a group's public culture is similar to a biological species. A species consists of a series of individuals: no two of them are identical and yet the process of natural selection limits the variance among them. In a similar way, no two individuals in a culture are identical in regard to beliefs and attitudes, yet the variance among them is also contained within limits. In this case, the process involved is one of selective adjustment; Goodenough calls it normative selection. This view of culture helps stress individual difference but at the same time see how culture limits the variance among those individuals who have shared a similar enculturation or socialisation process. The terms 'enculturation' and 'socialisation' are used interchangeably in social psychology and sociology and refer to the total activity of learning to become competent in one's culture, both consciously and unconsciously, through interaction, observation and imitation (Samovar and Porter 1991).

Another helpful explanation of culture is that of Loveday (1982:34). He defines it as involving "the implicit norms and conventions of a society, its methods of 'going about doing things', its historically transmitted but also adaptive and creative ethos, and its symbols and organisation of experience". He stresses that such knowledge is rarely conscious so it is not usually verbalised. This emphasis on the adaptive, creative and changing nature of culture is useful as is the point that much that relates to culture is seldom made explicit.

Perhaps the most useful approach to an understanding of culture is that of Hofstede (1980, 1991). He sees culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another. Culture in this sense, includes systems of values; and values are among the building blocks of culture" (Hofstede 1980:25). In fact, Hofstede identifies three levels of human mental programming: the universal level, which is almost completely inherited; the level of individual personality, the unique part, which is partly learned and partly inherited; and the cultural level, which is learned. This model gives equal emphasis to that which is culturally determined, that which is universally shared and that which is individual and idiosyncratic. In this way, it makes it clear that culture is only one of the influences on human behaviour and thought. It also highlights the fact that culture is learned. Indeed, culture can be seen as having two essential characteristics: it is learned and it is shared. And there would be no human society without culture (Blunt & Richards 1993).

According to Hofstede (1980) the word 'culture' is usually used to refer to societies (or in contemporary times, nations) or for regional or ethnic groups, but it is also possible to talk about gender as culture or the culture of organisations, professions or families. Following Hofstede, in this study the word 'culture' is used to apply to mainstream or dominant national groups and the term 'subculture' is used for other groups such as minority ethnic groups. Clearly, any study of the culture of a nation, particularly those comprising many ethnic groups, those with complex, modern cultures and those in which change is constant and rapid, presents almost insurmountable barriers. However, according to Gudykunst and Kim (1984), research which has limited itself to the study of value systems has provided information which sheds much light on the subject of intercultural communication.

Values form the heart or the core of culture (Hofstede 1991). Samovar & Porter (1991:108-9) define values as "enduring attitudes about the preferability of one belief over another" and go on to describe them as "the social guideposts that show us the cultural norms of our society and specify in large measure the ways in which we should behave". That people from different cultural backgrounds have diverse world views based on different religions and philosophies appears to be widely accepted. There may be limited understanding of what these actual views entail but the fact of difference is part of people's awareness. However, at the level of cultural values, which are largely derived from these world views, there appears to be far less awareness and yet it is these differences that impact most in intercultural encounters between people. Possibly this is because values are largely formed and held at an unconscious level (Hofstede 1980) and because of the common assumption that one's own values are universally applicable (O'Sullivan 1994). Norms are defined as the outward manifestations of beliefs and values. They are the "socially shared expectations of appropriate behaviour" (Lustig & Koester 1993:109). Bond et al (1992) point out that people's behaviour does not always reflect their values. Indeed, they suggest that being embedded in a national culture is not just a matter of having a particular set of values but is probably more a matter of knowing what outcomes are likely to arise from various actions. They believe that "greater future attention must clearly be addressed to understanding the development of behaviour-related expectancies in various cultural groups" (Bond et al 1992:224).

It is not so much that societies have different values, but as Wierzbicka (1991:69) puts it, they "have different hierarchies of values". This view was also held by Rokeach (1979) who identified thirty six values which appear in all societies but which as total systems differ greatly in terms of hierarchies or priorities.

Before analysing the data, it is necessary to briefly outline some of the broad frameworks or classifications that have attempted to describe the cultural value systems of large groupings of cultures. The problems and dangers inherent in trying to place shifting and intangible concepts such as cultural values into frameworks or onto scales are patently obvious (Wierzbicka 1991). In terms of research, the ideal is to study and describe each culture separately and, where possible, in language that is culture-free, for example, Wierzbicka's natural semantic metalanguage (Wierzbicka 1985b, 1991). However, in terms of practical application in training courses aimed at reducing ethnocentricity and developing intercultural awareness and skills, such knowledge would be encyclopaedic in scale and not accessible or manageable. For practical purposes, broad frameworks aid in the interpretation of actions and communicative intentions. In one's own society with those sharing a similar language and background,

there is a common sense view that we 'know where people are coming from' that is soundly based. If, however, people have no knowledge of the cultural values of others and the way in which they determine attitudes as well as ways of talking, then people tend to judge others on the basis of their own ethnocentric value system and misunderstanding and hostility can be the unintended result. At the same time, such frameworks can be used to provide a macro-level frame of reference for a discussion of the influence of values at the micro-level of actual communicative interactions. The following outline is intended to serve this purpose.

Cultural value systems: three frameworks

Three frameworks based on empirical research involving large numbers of participants which provide guides that assist in the understanding of cultural difference are Hofstede's (1980, 1991) four dimensions of cultural variability, Trompenaars' (1993) seven dimensions and Schwartz's (1994) seven culture-level value types.

Hofstede's four dimensions

Hofstede's research (1980, 1991) probably provides the most comprehensive analysis of cultural differences. He surveyed 116,000 employees of IBM from fifty-three different cultures. All but three of these were national cultures and three covered larger geographical areas: Arab countries, and East and West Africa. Hofstede identified four dimensions of culture: *collectivism* versus *individualism*, *high* versus *low power distance*, *masculinity* versus *femininity* and *strong* versus *weak uncertainty avoidance*. Briefly, the *collectivism* versus *individualism* dimension refers to the extent to which people identify as members of a group rather than as independent separate entities and have group rather than individual goals. The dimension of *power distance* measures the degree of acceptance of hierarchies and the unequal distribution of power in a society. *Masculinity* is the extent to which societies stress those characteristics widely accepted as masculine, such as assertiveness and success. In such cultures, materialistic values dominate, sex-roles are more inflexible and there is restricted cross-sex interaction. *Femininity* refers to the predominance of qualities seen as female, such as nurturing, concern for others and the quality of life. Sex roles are more flexible and cross-sex interaction less restricted. *Uncertainty avoidance* relates to levels of anxiety, the degree to which people feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created institutions and beliefs (such as a belief in absolute truth) that try to minimise these. Cultures rating high on this indice tend to be more emotional and to have less tolerance of different opinions and behaviours.

A major criticism levelled against Hofstede's work was that only Westerners were involved in carrying out his research. To counter this, Bond (Hofstede & Bond 1993) approached a number of Chinese social scientists from Hong Kong and Taiwan to design a values questionnaire, which was then administered to 100 students (50 males and 50 females) in a variety of disciplines in each of twenty two countries from all five continents. The results provided substantial support for Hofstede's analysis: all the dimensions except uncertainty avoidance emerged together with a fourth dimension which Bond called *Confucian dynamism* and which apparently related to society's search for 'virtue'. Uncertainty avoidance related more to 'truth'. Confucianism is a philosophy concerned with practical ethics, not religious questions: it emphasises virtuous behaviour and accepts the view that there can be multiple truths (Hofstede & Bond 1993, Hofstede 1991).

Other criticisms that can be made of Hofstede's research is that it is now rather dated (it was carried out during the seventies) and that the sample covered mainly males working at a certain level in IBM. However, a counter argument is that the respondents were extremely well matched in all respects except nationality, and cultural differences were more likely to be greater among countries outside IBM, so those found inside the corporation should be a conservative estimate of those actually existing for the countries in general (Hofstede & Bond 1993). Moreover, as Williams, Giles and Pierson (1990:3) point out, his dimensions have proved to be "remarkably robust". The individualism-collectivism dimension, for example, has been operationalised in a variety of communication-oriented studies (Gudykunst et al 1988). And other studies, for example those of cross cultural pragmatists such as Wierzbicka (1991) and Hijirida & Sohn (1986) provide linguistic evidence to support the findings relating to the power distance dimension. Finally, to quote cross-cultural psychologists Berry et al (1992:333), this dimensional framework "has been found useful for training and communication" and "Hofstede has made a commendable effort toward a thorough empirical analysis in an area where impressionistic attribution and stereotyping occur too frequently".

Trompenaars' seven dimensions

Trompenaars' (1993) research is more recent. His initial research was carried out in the late eighties and early nineties. He designed a questionnaire mainly based on value dimensions identified by earlier social anthropologists and sociologists, Parsons & Shils (1951) and Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1973). His study first reported in 1993 involved 15,000 participants from twenty eight countries. Since that time, the participants involved have increased to 30,000 and have come from fifty different countries and thirty companies, seventy five percent in managerial positions and twenty five percent general administrative staff (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1998). Trompenaars also identified the collectivism versus individualism dimension and his other dimensions in general correlate with this dimension.

The first five dimensions, including individualism versus collectivism (or communitarianism, the term he uses), cover ways in which human beings relate to each other. The second dimension *universalism* versus *particularism* indicates the degree of importance placed on rules applied equally to all versus a stronger emphasis on relationships. In the latter type of society, people are more likely to judge each situation in terms of the relationships involved and to bend or break the rules to help friends and relatives. Individualist cultures tend to stress universalism while collectivist cultures emphasise particularist values. The third, *achievement* versus *ascription* relates to the way in which status is accorded. In achievement-oriented societies, social status results from the individual's own success, whereas in ascription-oriented societies, it is based on factors such as age, sex, family background, education or wealth. Individualist societies tend to value achievement while collectivist cultures more often ascribe status. The fourth, *neutral* versus *affective* refers to the range of feelings expressed. Emotion and reason can be seen as opposite forces and people vary in the degree of reliance they place on one or the other. Those with an affective-orientation express their emotions more freely while others prefer not to show emotion and act according to what they think is reasonable. The difference between these two orientations is reflected in the way people communicate and will be discussed in more detail in the chapters on communication styles. The fifth dimension *diffuse* versus *specific* relates to the range of involvement expected in relationships. Individualistic cultures are more likely to favour a specific orientation in which people are direct and purposeful in relating and where, for example, work and private relationships may be sharply separated. In collectivist

cultures, it is harder to make contact because the relationship is more likely to involve the whole person and, therefore, while initial contact may be more difficult, once a relationship develops it is likely to be deep and long lasting.

The sixth dimension is the *internal-orientation* versus *external-orientation*. It relates to attitudes to the environment. People in individualist cultures generally hold a predominantly mechanistic view of nature. They believe humans can control nature and influence their environment, so they are more internally oriented and conflict is seen as a challenge to be faced. Those from collectivist cultures tend to have a predominantly organic view of nature. They believe humans are subjugated to nature's forces, so they are more externally oriented and aim to be in harmony with their environment. Harmony defines which actions are right and which are wrong so conflict is evidence of wrong actions or decisions. The last dimension is related to attitudes to time. *Past-oriented* cultures view life and the future in the context of history and tradition. *Present-oriented* cultures view everything in terms of its contemporary impact, while *future-oriented* cultures emphasise future plans and aspirations. Most Asian cultures are believed to belong to the first group, Latin American cultures to the second and new world cultures such as those of North America to the third group. Finally, some cultures are classified as *sequential* and others as *synchronic*. This matches closely with Hall's (1976) division of cultures into those observing monochronic time versus those favouring polychronic time. The former, generally individualist cultures, see time as tangible and divisible and prefer to structure it sequentially and do one thing at a time. The latter, more often collectivist cultures, see time as intangible and flexible, allowing many things to take place simultaneously.

Hofstede (1980,1991) Trompenaars (1993) and many other researchers argue that all cultures can be placed on a continuum from high collectivist to high individualist. It is widely accepted that most cultures are collectivist. Parts of Europe, in particular Western and Northern Europe, North America, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand seem to be the exceptions (Hanvey 1976, Gudykunst 1991, Samovar & Porter 1991, Triandis 1995, Kabagarama 1993). Indeed, according to Trompenaars (1993:7), there is a "clear-cut cultural border between the north-west European and the Euro-Latin cultures". The former stress analysis, logic, systems and rationality, while the latter are more people related and make more use of intuition and sensitivity. One area about which the research is less clear is Central and Eastern Europe. Only the former Yugoslavia was included in Hofstede's study where it was rated as quite strongly collectivist. Other sources suggest a tendency towards collectivism at least in some respects in that family ties are seen as stronger than in more individualist countries (Ronowicz 1995, Smolicz 1978, Reykowski 1994). For example, Reykowski (1994:290) believes that while there are both individualist and collectivist tendencies in Poland, his study of German and Polish adolescents revealed that the latter had "deep-seated beliefs about the responsibility of one's group for one's fate". However, as noted below, later research identified more individualist tendencies in eight of these countries (Smith & Schwartz 1997).

A helpful extension of Trompenaars' work was carried out by Smith, Dugan and Trompenaars (1996). They carried out a forty three nation analysis based on the data bank assembled by Trompenaars. They saw his sample as valuable because it included data from nine former communist bloc nations which had not been included in Hofstede's sample. They argue that Trompenaars' data provides a clearer separation between the individualism-collectivism and the power distance dimensions and found

that the pattern of favouring one's immediate associates originally described by Parsons & Shils (1951) as particularism cannot be correlated with collectivism in every respect. Particularists choose their associates whereas collectivists are embedded in a network of continuing obligation. Universalists, on the other hand, believe everyone is entitled to equal justice and a share of resources and this correlates with individualism in a low power context. This type of particularism was most strongly endorsed in a number of Eastern and Central European countries while universalism was endorsed in the United States, Australia, New Zealand and North and West Europe. They found that eight out of the nine ex-communist bloc countries showed a pattern of values that is individualist, ascriptive and particularist, although in general, a preference for ascription and particularist values is more typical of collectivist cultures.

Schwartz's seven culture-level value types

A later large-scale series of studies of values have been carried out by Schwartz and his collaborators (Schwartz 1991, 1994, Schwartz & Bilsky 1990, Smith & Schwartz 1997). Schwartz first concentrated on the analyses of single nations at the individual level and then he compiled value profiles at a national level. Schwartz believed that previous questionnaires and scales had confused perceived cultural norms and the personal evaluation of these norms and that it was necessary to distinguish and measure these two aspects separately. He found a lower correlation in individual cultures. Schwartz gathered his data from 1988 to 1992 from forty one cultures in thirty eight nations from every continent. He collected eighty six samples made up of primary and high school teachers, university students studying a range of subjects and general adults in a range of occupations. He then did a further analysis at the culture level and identified seven culture-level value types: *conservatism*, which involves lack of autonomy, maintenance of the status quo, self-discipline and respect for tradition, *hierarchy* involving the acceptance of a hierarchical system; *mastery* which relates to the active mastery of the social environment through self-assertion and choosing one's own goals; *egalitarian commitment* involving voluntary commitment to social justice and promoting the welfare of others; and *harmony* with nature involving fitting in with the environment and protecting it. He also distinguished between *affective autonomy* (hedonistic) and *intellectual autonomy* (broad minded, curious and creative). These value types have also been described in terms of three dimensions: dimension one, conservatism versus autonomy; dimension two, hierarchy versus egalitarianism; and dimension three, mastery versus harmony (Smith & Schwartz 1997). Schwartz's research included samples from China, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia and Zimbabwe, none of which had been in Hofstede's study although all but the last three had been included in Trompenaars's sample (Schwartz 1994). One of the most useful findings from Schwartz's research was a division between vertical and horizontal collectivism, that is collectivism which occurs in the context of hierarchy (vertical) and in a more egalitarian context (horizontal). For example, he sees the Pacific Asian nations as typical of vertical collectivism and Southern Europe as typical of horizontal collectivism (Smith & Bond 1999).

Smith and Schwartz (1997) see the consistent emergence of two culture-levels in all the studies so far: first, embedment versus autonomy, that is a preferred cultural view of individual-group relations and, second, negotiation by equals versus the acceptance of unequal hierarchical roles in relation to the allocation of resources and ways of motivating responsible social behaviour. There were some interesting variations in Schwartz's findings compared with the findings of the earlier research. For example, the United States, highest on Hofstede's scale for individualism, was not so highly

individualist as far as autonomy relative to the group was concerned but it was relatively high on mastery. Western European nations such as France were most autonomous but were concerned about social justice issues.

According to Smith and Schwartz (1997) all these studies also identified clusters of cultures or cultural areas with largely shared value profiles. For example, Schwartz found East Asian nations especially high on hierarchy and conservatism and low on autonomy and egalitarianism, whereas Western European nations exhibited exactly the opposite pattern. They point out that this might suggest a simple East-West dichotomy except that the profile of the Anglo cluster falls between the two, combining an emphasis on active self-assertion but tending to more acceptance of an unequal distribution of power and resources than is true of the Western European cluster. Smith and Schwartz also point out that the overlap here between the different studies is substantial. For example, both Schwartz's research and that of Smith, Dugan and Trompenaars found that in Northern and Western Europe, the emphasis is on achievement of status through personal merit and equality of individual rights together with an emphasis on utilitarian rather than loyalty considerations in interpersonal relations, while Eastern Europe is high on utilitarian involvement but also conservatism and accepts a more paternal, hierarchical system of ascribed roles rather than emphasising individual rights and responsibilities. Overall, however, Smith and Bond (1999), conclude that Schwartz's culture-level analysis strongly correlates with Hofstede's dimensions of individualism-collectivism and power distance and his studies together with those of Trompenaars have supported, refined and expanded on Hofstede's conclusions rather than contradicted them.

Individualism and collectivism

The most widely applied and comprehensive dimension identified and discussed in these frameworks and cross-cultural research in general is that of collectivism versus individualism. Indeed, researchers in communication studies (Gudykunst et al 1988) claim that this dimension has been isolated independently in anthropology, comparative sociology, cross-cultural psychology and philosophy. It should be noted that the word 'collectivism' in this sense has no political connotation. It refers to group membership, usually the extended family, but people can belong to more than one group. The work organisation or clan or tribe, school or ethnic group are also important in some societies. However, while not used in a political sense, Kagitcibasi (1994) claims that there is some evidence that in collectivist nations group loyalties often extend to national loyalties, whereas in individualist nations, individual interests are more important.

Triandis (1995), working in the area of cross-cultural psychology, believes (on the basis of a review of theoretical and empirical studies) that individualism and collectivism have four characteristics that are both defining and universal. These involve different views of the self, different types of goals, and different attitudes to norms and to relationships. According to Ting-Toomey (1993), the fundamental basis of the collectivism-individualism dimension is the relative emphasis on the perception of 'self' as connected or autonomous. The collectivist view does not conceive of the self as a discrete entity: rather connectedness and interdependence are encouraged and sought. A person is only made 'whole' when placed in the ingroup, in most cases the family. The latter view sees the self as a separate entity, encouraged to seek independence from others (Berry et al 1992). Thus the 'I' identity has precedence in individual cultures while the 'we' identity is stronger in collectivist cultures (Hofstede & Bond 1993). As mentioned earlier, in individualist cultures, greater emphasis is placed on individual

goals while group goals take precedence in collectivist societies. It is believed that an individual's best interests are served in this way (Hofstede 1980, Gudykunst et al 1988, Triandis et al 1993). In individualist cultures, social networks are looser and people are only expected to look after themselves and their immediate family, while in collectivist cultures, people have obligations and loyalty to wider groups such as the extended family, the clan, the tribe, the workplace organisation, the ethnic group or the state. In collectivist cultures, behaviour is largely based on the norms and roles that result from tradition and interactions among ingroup members.

In individualist cultures, people are guided more by internal standards of behaviour. Collectivist societies tend to socialise people by making them feel ashamed of behaviour that does not fit the norms whereas individualist cultures are more likely to use an internalised means of control and make people feel guilty. (Albert 1996, Gudykunst et al 1988). Finally in collectivist societies, relationships take on great importance and there can be complicated ties of loyalty and obligation among ingroup members. Collectivist cultures stress obligatory reciprocity norms but repayment can be made over extended periods of time, even generations, and obligation is not expected to be symmetrical. Individualist cultures stress voluntary reciprocity. People try to repay others quickly so they do not remain under any obligation and try to keep obligations symmetrical (Gudykunst et al 1988).

Finally, in individualist cultures people are judged on their individual achievements and performance, whereas in collectivist cultures educational background and qualifications are of great importance. In many collectivist cultures, especially those in which Confucian values are prevalent, education is highly valued and the educated person ascribed high status (Little & Reed 1989, Stevenson & Lee 1996).

It is important to note that the concept of 'individuality' is very different from that of 'individualism'. For example, while Latin American cultures are seen as collectivist, individuality or the uniqueness of individuals is highly valued in these cultures (Albert 1996).

While this dimension is still used as a basis for much research in a number of fields, there are some concerns that need to be noted. One important one is that the great majority of the research on individualism-collectivism has focussed on comparing the United States, Canada, England, or Australia with Asian countries and, therefore the generalisations made may be well be limited to these countries (Gudykunst 1998). In addition, other researchers question the idea that individualism-collectivism is a continuum: they argue that both orientations can be found in the same culture. A society can be highly individualist in some respects and highly collectivist in others (Weinrich 1997, Ho & Chiu 1994, Sinha & Tripathi 1994, Wierzbicka, 1996). However, it does seem possible to accept this view yet still see a culture as predominantly collectivist or individualist (Ho & Chiu 1994).

Power distance

Perhaps the most useful dimensions for explaining communicative behaviour is the power distance dimension (Hofstede 1980, 1991) or hierarchism-egalitarianism (Sohn 1983, Smith and Schwartz 1997). In general, high power distance tends to be a feature of collectivist societies and low power distance is typical of individualist countries. However, in Hofstede's research the Latin European countries, in particular France and Belgium, are exceptions in that they are individualistic yet rate as medium power

distance cultures. Austria and Israel, on the other hand, rate as small power distance countries with medium individualism (Hofstede 1991). And as noted previously, Schwartz made a distinction between vertical and hierarchical collectivism (Smith & Schwarz 1997). In high power distance cultures, people recognise and accept a hierarchy (including within families) based on factors such as age, gender and family background. It is acceptable for people in higher positions to openly assert their power. Small power distance cultures are more egalitarian: subordinates consider superiors to be basically the same as themselves and those in positions of power try to seem less powerful than they are. People treat everyone in a similar way and do not markedly change their language or demeanour depending on the status of the person they are interacting with as is common in hierarchical cultures (Sohn 1983). Egalitarian cultures subscribe to the belief that all human beings are equal in their intrinsic worth (Samovar & Porter 1991).

Masculinity versus femininity

Hofstede's masculinity versus femininity dimension is more problematic. It works well in regard to some cultures but it is more confusing than helpful in relation to others. For example, Japan rates as highly masculine and this fits in terms of the male domination of society and the stress on achievement. The Scandinavian countries rate high on femininity and again this fits their pattern of gender equality and high concern for social welfare. However, Iran, for example, rates quite high on the femininity scale, and while this may be appropriate on some of the measures, it does not fit well with the stress on different roles for men and women in societies such as Iran. Hofstede (1980) explains this by referring to Hall's (1959) description of Iranian men as openly emotional and affectionate compared with their coldly practical women. On the other hand, Hall also notes the submissive role of these women.

For intercultural understanding and training, it is more useful to look at where men and women fit in terms of the hierarchy or the form of the family institution evident in their societies and the roles generally ascribed to them. For example, in the Middle East because of their role as sacred links between families, and because the concept of male honour and self-esteem is intricately bound up with their behaviour, women must be beyond reproach. Indeed it is claimed that the most important factor on which male self-esteem is based is the sexual behaviour of the women for whom an Arab is responsible (Hall 1959, Patai 1973, Almaney & Alwan 1982). In Latin American countries, also, while gender differentiation is lessening especially in cities, the concept of *machismo* or manliness is still seen positively in such cultures. Such a view also emphasises the role of women in the maintenance of the man's dignity and honour, and it is believed that a man must protect his female relatives not only from the possibility of sexual misconduct but even from insult or innuendo about their sexual purity (Albert 1996, Sullivan 1987). Again, in the Moslem, Buddhist, Hindu and Confucian societies of Asia, male dominance is also the norm. For example, in Confucian societies such as China, Vietnam and Korea, the position and role of women has been sharply defined. Their main role has been to provide male heirs to continue the family line. The three obediences of Confucian philosophy have shaped society. A woman has been expected to obey first her husband, then her father and finally her son. While changes are occurring, this pattern still tends to prevail among more traditionally minded people (Bunge & Shinn 1981, Hu & Grove, 1991, Chu 1995, Goodwin & Tang 1996).

Hofstede's fourth dimension, strong versus weak anxiety avoidance will be discussed in relation to communication styles in chapter five.

Problem-solving and decision making

Other differences that are relevant to this study lie in the area of problem solving and decision making. It is claimed that individualist societies such as the United States have a problem-solving orientation, a tendency to look for problems and to find solutions. This is usually done by evaluating the consequences of various courses of action and selecting the one that appears to offer the greatest chance of success (Dunnett, Dubin & Lezberg 1986). This action orientation is largely based on a concept of events seen as a lineal chain of cause and effect. This conceptualisation of the world in terms of problems to be solved is clearly linked to the inner-orientation dimension and is not shared by the members of many collectivist cultures.

Collectivist cultures tend to be outer-directed, to conceive events in terms of multiple contingencies and to believe that it is best to live in harmony with the environment rather than try to change it. As Adler and Kiggundu (1983:130) explain, such cultures "only perceive situations that must be accepted and lived with. People do not completely control their worlds". When a problem must be dealt with, rather than brainstorming all alternatives and choosing the most advantageous, it is more common to try out a method to see if it works and then implementation is adjusted until success is achieved (Byrne & FitzGerald 1994). In cultures, such as that of China, people tend to want to skip the theorising, philosophising and speculation common in Western problem-solving in favour of trying out practical applications (Young 1994). However, Berry et al (1992) stress that while approaches to problem-solving are different, it is now widely accepted in cross-cultural psychology that cognitive processes are universal.

When making group decisions, even when not following formal procedures, people in individualist-egalitarian cultures tend to believe that everybody should have a chance to speak and to have a roughly equal voice in the decision. After this the wishes of the majority are to be accepted by the minority (Stewart 1987). In collectivist cultures, such as Japan and Indonesia, members of a group work informally and indirectly to reach consensus before any formal meeting or decision making takes place. In fact, according to Stewart (1987), this pattern of decision making is to some extent typical of all people whose self reference is the group and who believe decisions should be unanimous.

Interpersonal relations

In regard to interpersonal relations and the way they are realised in communicative interactions, researchers see collectivist cultures as valuing harmonious relations above all. (Hofstede 1991). This is because people tend to be in close and constant social contact in their ingroups and so any direct confrontation or criticism is avoided. In contrast, individualist societies are seen as valuing verbal self-assertion. The ability to cope with constructive criticism and to manage conflict is admired (Argyle et al 1986, Stewart 1972). As well as these different value orientations, members of these groups are believed to have different views about the cause of conflict. According to Ting-Toomey (1988, 1994) conflicts can be instrumental (arise from differences in practices or goals) or expressive (be based on negative or hostile feelings). She believes that people in individualist societies more often interpret the cause of conflict as instrumental and so can argue over task-based issues and not take it personally. However, people in collectivist societies are more likely to see conflict as arising from expressive sources and so it is more difficult to have an argument and keep the issues and the personalities separate. This causes loss of face and is one of the reasons why

such cultures are said to avoid confrontation or to use indirect styles to deal with it, for instance, use a third party as a mediator. For example, according to Irwin (1995), the use of third parties or intermediaries is a common practice in both personal matters and business dealings in Asian cultures.

This is a highly complex area as notions of face and politeness are involved here. As mentioned in chapter one, while these concepts appear to be evident in all societies, the ways in which they are realised can vary greatly. Positive face is related to the desire for involvement and the need to be accepted as a member of one's group or society. One displays this involvement or positive politeness by accepting the point of view of others, agreeing with them and working to create common views of the world. Negative face and negative politeness stresses the individuality of the participants, their right to self-autonomy and freedom from undue imposition by others. It is shown by discourse strategies which give or grant independence to others, such as not making assumptions about their needs or interests and giving them the widest range of options possible.

According to Scollon and Scollon (1995) face is paradoxical: both aspects must be projected in any communication and the degree of each demanded by the situation carefully assessed. In hierarchical-collectivist societies involvement or 'deference politeness', as it is sometimes called, is more important. And the higher a person's status, the more face they have to lose. In more egalitarian-individualist societies there is much greater stress on independence (Ting-Toomey 1988). Ting-Toomey believes that the prevailing face concern in collectivist cultures is other-oriented. Because in collectivist cultures the self is never free but is tied up in mutual role obligations, this facework is focussed on giving support to others' face while not bringing shame on one's own face. In individualist cultures, in contrast, where the self is ideally a free and separate entity, facework mainly involves preserving one's own autonomy and space while not imposing on others. Thus both negative and positive facework are at work in all cultures but cultural values will cause one or the other type to be more predominant and more actively pursued. To sum up, in this view, individual cultures stress negative face, collectivist cultures, positive face (Gudykunst et al 1988)

However, one researcher, Matsumoto (1988) questions this conclusion. In her view, the concept of independence or negative face presupposes that the basic unit of society is the individual, whereas in cultures such as Japan, people only see themselves as part of a group and so are concerned only with involvement or positive face. Mao (1995) supports this view in relation to Chinese culture arguing that negative face does not apply in the Chinese context because the concept of face exemplifies the concept of self and in Chinese culture this is relational not separate. What is certain is that views about face appear to have been a major influence in deciding features of communication style in different cultures, and this will be discussed further in the chapters on communication styles.

All these views of interpersonal relations operate according to the division into two groups only: those placing their highest value on group harmony and the avoidance of confrontation (collectivist cultures) versus those valuing autonomy and verbal self-assertion (individualist cultures). However, many of these conclusions seem to be based on research comparing mainly North American and East Asian cultures (Ting-Toomey 1988, Matsumoto 1988). They do appear, overall, to hold true for these groups but not for a number of other cultures. Researchers in different fields provide evidence that the values determining interpersonal relations are more complicated than this simple

division would suggest. For example, in the Slav and Jewish cultures of Eastern Europe, interpersonal relations are based on values such as warmth, spontaneity and sincerity. This allows for the expression of all emotions, negative as well as positive. Argument is an enjoyable sociable activity (Wierzbicka 1985a, 1991, Schiffrin 1984). To take another example, it is claimed that Latin Americans emphasise warmth and emotional expressiveness in interpersonal relations. They also tend to openly express both positive and negative emotions (Albert 1996). Clearly while involvement and positive politeness would appear to be more important than independence or negative face in these cultures, it is displayed in very different ways. These issues will be developed more fully in chapter five in the section on attitudes to confrontation and conflict.

Modernisation and convergence

Individualism has been closely identified with modern, wealthy developed societies (Hofstede 1991, Smith & Bond 1999) and it has been claimed that as countries modernise they will converge and become universally individualist. However much research suggests that this convergence hypothesis is not plausible (Smith & Bond 1999, Kagiticibasi 1994, 1997, Yang 1988). For example, Kagiticibasi (1994) argues that those aspects of collectivism that do not conflict with urban living tend not to change: there is no overall progression to a universal, higher level of social development as some earlier thinkers claimed. Kagiticibasi's (1997) research in Turkey found that although there was a decrease in interdependence among younger generations with socioeconomic development, it only related to economic, utilitarian concerns, and there was continuing, even growing, psychological interdependence. Furthermore, she claims that research from other parts of the world also indicates that while material dependency has become negligible, there are continuing close, collectivist ties among middle class people in non-Western countries. Yang (1988) supports this view. Based on studies of Japanese and Chinese culture, Yang sees evidence of values such as group solidarity, paternalism and interpersonal harmony co-existing with individualist values such as achievement and competition. Moreover, acceptance of hierarchical relations involving obedience and the inequality of men and woman can co-exist with a belief in democracy. Even in families living in modern, individualist countries, people from such cultures bring their children up to be interdependent not autonomous. Finally, Yang argues that modern cultures will develop in different and unpredictable ways rather than converge towards a common end point.

Discussion

Answers to questionnaires by the majority of the participants in this study partly confirmed the views about values relating to individualism and collectivism and low and high power distance outlined above. As mentioned previously, not all the participants answered these questionnaires as they were not given to the earlier classes and in later classes were given for homework and so were not always completed. Others did not do them because they had left or were absent from class at that time. The questionnaires were given out before any work was done on cultural values and communication styles as an awareness raising exercise before doing this work. Not all the respondents answered all the questions so the numbers answering each question vary slightly.

In answer to the following proposition and question "You think of yourself as a member of your family first and as an individual second and are happy to feel interdependent within your family group. You believe that what one family member does affects the

chances of others”, and “Do other people in your culture generally think the same way? Explain any differences” the various groups answered as follows:

Groups	Number	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed
East/ Southeast Asians	38	25	9	3*
East Europeans	27	11	5	11**
Latin Americans	15	9	0	6***
Middle Easterners	12	8	4	0
South Asians	12	8	3	1
South Europeans	7	6	1	0
North Africans	3	3	0	0
Western Europeans	2	0	0	2

* 3 said they were not typical of their culture,** 4 said they were atypical;*** 1 said they were atypical

In answer to the proposition, “All people are not equal. Some people come from better families with higher status or have more important positions and you should show more respect to, and be more polite, to such people. You should also show more respect to people who are older than you”, the groups answered in the following way:

Groups	Number	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed
East/Southeast Asian	41	11	9*	21**
Eastern European	27	3	5***	19
Latin American	12	4	3	5
South Asian	12	5	1	6
Middle Eastern	10	6	3	1****
South European	6	2	0	4
North African	2	1	0	1
Western European	2	0	0	2

* said respect should be given in regard to age; **many said they were not typical of their culture and some said their culture was changing in this respect; *** said respect should only be given in regard to age and career position; ****said they were atypical. Apart from the cases noted above, all the participants said others in their culture generally thought the same way in relation to both propositions.

Although these figures are too small, particularly for some groups, to be of any great significance, they do support the views expressed in the literature to some extent. For example, although in most cases these respondents had chosen to immigrate and possibly remain separated from their families, in each group except the small West European sample, a majority either agreed or partly agreed that they saw themselves first as members of their family and second as individuals. All these respondents came from cultures where collectivist values are said to be prevalent or strong in some aspects, so this does seem to provide some confirmation for this view.

The answers on the second proposition are more varied: only the respondents from the Middle Eastern countries indicated majority support for the acceptance of a hierarchical system. This might be explained by the fact that many immigrants choose to come to a society like Australia because of the opportunity it provides for upward social mobility. Clyne (1994:207) sees social mobility as "an overarching core value" common to most Australians and "the main motive of immigration". Such people might put a high value on equality of opportunity and might not be representative of their cultural group in this respect.

As is evident from this outline of the main research findings, our knowledge about different cultural value systems is far from complete and the evident deficiencies and limitations in the types of frameworks described are exacerbated by the reality of constant social change. A study looking for evidence of the influence of these values in spoken discourse may provide some concrete proof of their continuing salience, especially in a sample involving young educated people, many of whom have made the choice to migrate to a modern, democratic society. In any case, this outline of present views about the different cultural value systems provides a frame of reference for the analysis of the data.

A small number of the most obvious examples, in this corpus of data, of the way cultural values are reflected in spoken discourse, and can cause misunderstandings at various levels, have already been discussed elsewhere (FitzGerald 1996). However, there were significant instances of this influence in some of the other discussions taped, and these provide further evidence of the way the experience of growing up in very different cultures can impede full understanding. As well, there was further evidence of the way the views of individuals reflect those typical of their cultural group and social experience. These different views, based on cultural values can aid in the creative solving of problems but they also provide the potential for conflict and can lead to the negative evaluation of others from different backgrounds.

Before examining the data, it is important to stress again that all the variations observed in this review and in the data analysis are based on large national cultural groups and that within a given culture there will be subcultures and individuals who differ from the patterns described here. Furthermore, all cultures have all of the orientations: it is a matter of a greater prevalence of, or preference for, one pattern over another. Indeed, as will be seen, the data itself reveals instances of individual variance from dominant patterns. At the same time, as previously discussed, for practical purposes as a basis for interpretation and skill development, it is necessary to work with broad generalisations about cultural groups and to identify and stress group membership. Indeed research in social psychology supports this approach (Byrne and FitzGerald 1998a). To refuse to do so for fear of creating or maintaining stereotypes reduces intercultural training to vague, well-meaning injunctions with no basis in fact. Such an approach can indicate a form of

ethnocentrism in that it assumes that difference is synonymous with inferiority, and therefore, knowledge about differences will result in the negative stereotyping of minority groups. In my experience, if the approach is to point out the strengths and weaknesses of the various orientations and the way others view them, this type of result can be avoided. Moreover, in training sessions in both language classrooms and various types of workplaces, the patterns identified by the research outlined above have been validated again and again by the responses of members of the different cultural groups (often delighted recognition and a new appreciation of the underlying causes of familiar behaviours) and by the responses of individuals who have lived in other cultures for extended periods of time and who find that these frameworks enable them to reinterpret and make sense of much of their experience.

Chapter Four

DATA ANALYSIS: CULTURAL VALUES REFLECTED IN THE DISCOURSE

Introduction

Ten groups and one dyad will be discussed in this chapter. They were chosen from the data sample with three objectives in mind. The first was to identify interactions which provided examples of participants expressing views which correlated with those assigned in the literature to the cultures of the particular participants. It was of interest to see to what extent participants behaved as expected; that is, whether they seemed to be influenced by values said to be widely shared in their cultures, especially more traditional values. Where participants did express views reflecting values thought to be typical in their cultures, the next step was to look for recurring patterns in the data where similar views were expressed in more than one group and where the same contrasting views emerged in more than one interaction. This was done to provide evidence of the continuing salience of these values among young, educated subjects, interacting outside their own cultures in intercultural encounters. Six interactions displaying these patterns were examined. Where participants' values appeared to vary from those seen as dominant in their cultures, this was also noted.

The second objective was to identify interactions in which differences in values, world knowledge and attitudes limited understanding or caused clashes and discord. Four interactions were examined in some detail to identify how this happened, if there were any negative consequences and whether these problems could have been avoided.

The third objective was to identify interactions in which these differences were effectively negotiated and capitalised on. Three interactions were examined to illustrate how when different values and approaches are made explicit, these differences can help others in the group to see the issues from an intercultural rather than a narrow monocultural perspective and this aids in the problem-solving and decision making. More innovative or varied solutions can be produced when groups deal successfully with their diversity. These discussions provided evidence of what, in the Australian workplace, is referred to as productive diversity: the ability of diverse teams or groups to be more productive and creative than homogeneous groups, if they have the knowledge and skills to make diversity a plus rather than a minus.

Evidence of values reflected in the discourse: recurring patterns

A number of patterns recurred in more than one interaction. One pattern was a tendency for participants from hierarchical, collectivist cultures to place the interests of the group ahead of those of the individual, while participants from individualist cultures stressed the importance of individual achievement and rights. A closely associated tendency of the first group was to assert that individuals with a high status are of more value than others in a society because of the greater contribution they can make, again a view not shared by the second group. Another pattern was a tendency for participants from collectivist or ascriptive cultures, especially Confucian societies, to stress the value of educated people in a society and of educational qualifications in general, an emphasis not accepted by those from some more individualist cultures. A final pattern, less clearly marked, was the tendency of participants from some cultures to be more conservative and judgmental in their views on sexual morality. In some cases, more than one pattern was evident in the same group. These patterns were all evident in a

number of different groups discussing Problem One: The Heart Transplant. This task involved working as a team to decide which of seven critically ill patients should receive the one donor heart available for transplant. The group was also required to rank the seven patients in order of priority.

The collective before the individual; hierarchical values: Group A

One group in which a participant from a collectivist culture placed the interests of the group before those of the individual and was challenged by another participant whose views reflected more individualist values was Group A, which included Bisominka, a South Asian woman, Elica, an Eastern European woman, Li Dong, an East Asian man, and Alex, a male native speaker. Li Dong put forward a different view from the others when asked by Alex, early in the discussion, to give his opinion.

[NOTE: Throughout the text, the same transcript will retain the same lettering; however, the number of the excerpts will start again in each chapter. An explanation of the transcribing symbols used follows the list of contents at the beginning of this study.]

Transcript A

Excerpt 1

- 1 Li Dong: I think .. number five is the best one
- 2 Alex: Number five
- 3 Li Dong: because he's a important people
- 4 in Central {Intelligence Agency 1}
- 5 Bisominka: {Yes in I think also1}
- 6 Li Dong: and which means his contribution himself
- 7 to the social society
- 8 Alex: Right so your argument is that because he's important
- 9 Li Dong: and not just that
- 10 Alex: Yes
- 11 Li Dong: and the second one he's got three children
- 12 Alex: Three {children yes okay 2}
- 13 Bisominka: {x x x 2}
- 14 Li Dong: and the third is his serious ..
- 15 his disease is very serious

As can be seen from this extract, Li Dong argued that number five should be given the heart transplant because of his important job and the contribution he could make to society (lines 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7). Li Dong came from a collectivist society in which cultural values stress the importance of the individual contributing to the group, particularly the family, and political propaganda places society above the individual. The fact that he made this his first reason apparently reflected this type of enculturation. Bisominka was also from a collectivist, hierarchical culture and her comment in line 5 may have indicated some support for this argument. On the other hand, she may just have been confirming that Li Dong's view of number five as an important person was correct. This latter explanation is more probable on balance because Bisominka's style, in general, was one of co-operative overlap in which she tended to agree with the current speaker rather than introduce any new arguments or points of view.

Li Dong's collectivist rather than individualist orientation was reflected in his responses to a questionnaire on cultural values, given to raise awareness of individuals' own cultural values before doing some work on different value systems and communication

styles. When asked to agree or disagree with the proposition “You think of yourself as a member of your family first and an individual second and are happy to feel interdependent within your family group. You believe that what one family member does affects the chances of others”, Li Dong wrote, “Partly. Sometimes you can do something independently.” and to the question “Do other people in your culture generally think in the same way?”, he answered “Yes, they do”. Bisominka’s answers to these questions also indicated a collectivist orientation, which suggests she may have been ready to agree with Li Dong’s view at this point. In answer to the first proposition, Bisominka wrote, “I agree with this idea” and in relation to other people in her culture she wrote, “Yes, I think so”.

As can be seen in the following extract, Alex put forward a view more closely in line with the individualist and egalitarian values widely subscribed to in his culture. Elica agreed strongly with Alex. In her questionnaire, Elica had reflected a more individualist orientation saying she was an individual until she had a child and then she was prepared to put the child first. Alex did not fill in a questionnaire. Despite her more collectivist views, Bisominka now appeared to support Alex and Elica’s position.

Transcript A

Excerpt 2

- 1 Alex: Maybe just because someone is ranked more important
- 2 is that a good reason like
- 3 Bisominka: No
- 4 Elica: No I don't think so {I don't think so 1}
- 5 Alex: {because because 1}they might be famous
- 6 or because they might have done many great things in their life
- 7 is the woman who who has worked for her money
- 8 for the operation even though she's unemployed
- 9 Elica: Mm mm
- 10 Alex: and she's not famous or anything
- 11 do you think it's I don't think that's a good reason
- 12 Elica: I don't think so
- 13 Bisominka: No ..
- 14 Li Dong: Oh yes {I think it's important for the whole country 2}
- 15 Bisominka: { I think x serious who is the serious patient 2}
- 16 Alex: Oh yes I understand that yep yep
- 17 Li Dong: What I mean is it's not just the rice
- 18 you know a man's rice or ..
- 19 Bisominka: Race
- 20 Li Dong: race
- 21 Bisominka: {Race, yes 3}
- 22 Li Dong: {a man's 3}race or a woman's race
- 22 it's not that
- 23 Alex: It's the whole country you're thinking of yes and it's
- 24 Li Dong: He's doing something you know
- 25 he's doing something for this this country
- 25 Alex: Right

As can be seen from this second excerpt, Alex supported number six, the unemployed single mother who had raised money for her operation in her community (lines 7, 8 and 10). At the same time, he questioned Li Dong’s view that a person should get priority

because of fame or status or what they had achieved (lines 5, 6 and 11). Alex's feedback in lines 16, 23 and 25 did not indicate support for Li Dong's position, rather they were polite signals of comprehension typical of his style throughout this interaction. He continued to support patient number six, the unemployed single mother, while Li Dong continued to argue along the same lines evidenced in the above extracts. This last extract is interesting as it contains one of the only examples in the data sample where it is not clear what a participant meant, in this case when Li Dong used the word 'rice' and Bisominka, intending to correct him, suggested he meant 'race'. He accepted her correction, but in the context, this does not appear to be what he meant.

They left this line of argument at that stage to discuss the medical risks associated with the patients under discussion. Li Dong did not deviate from his support for patient number five although he later changed the order of his reasons, stressing the fact that number five had three children. However, he admitted to the group that his aim in doing this was to persuade them to support his choice. This was an interesting example of an individual realising that his argument, which may well have been persuasive in his own culture, was not effective in an intercultural group and so, although he did not change his own views, he adapted his argument to be more appropriate in that context.

The collective before the individual: the importance of educational qualifications; attitudes to sexual morality: Group B

Two participants in Group B had similar reasons for their preferences. This group consisted of Yolanda, a Latin American woman, Asmahan, a Middle Eastern woman, Doai, a Southeast Asian man, and Jack, a male native speaker. Early in the discussion, Asmahan argued strongly for number five on the grounds that he was a widower with three young children and his condition was serious as he was being kept alive on a heart-lung machine. Jack supported number six because she was a poor, unemployed woman on her own with four children. Yolanda tended to support Asmahan but was at first undecided. Doai, after listening to their views, entered the discussion to argue against number five on the grounds that his job working for the Central Intelligence Organisation was no longer socially useful since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Transcript B

Excerpt 1

- 1 Doai: Because I think we must
2 think about er his future
3 you say you save him
4 and his job is not necessary any more
5 I think it's better to choose another person
6 maybe he can contribute his ability to the social
7 after we save er his life {do you think so 8}
8 Jack: {Yer but then 8}
9 Asmahan: {But there's 8}
10 Jack: I was just saying
11 because like I chose number six
12 because she's a woman
13 who's got four kids
14 and she's struggled
15 she's actually had to struggle
16 to go and get the money
17 to pay for the operation

As can be seen in this extract, Doai's concern was that the heart should be given to someone who could make a contribution to the society. If the person was no longer of use, he should not be given priority (lines 1 to 7). Doai also came from a highly collectivist culture which values the group above the individual and in which political propaganda has pushed the message of serving the collective, in this case the nation state. Doai's questionnaire revealed that he held strong collectivist and hierarchical views. In the proposition about identifying with the family group first and feeling interdependent, he wrote, "Agree. It is Vietnamese national custom". Asmahan and Yolanda also identified as collectivist rather than individualist on this question, but less definitely, and in the discussion, they put other concerns such as the needs of the patient's children and the seriousness of the condition first. Jack's view, on the other hand, was similar to Alex's in Group A's discussion and reflected the same individualist, egalitarian values (lines 11 to 17). He admired the woman because she was a 'battler', an individual who had nothing but who had had the initiative to go out and get the money for the operation. Like Alex, Jack did not complete a questionnaire.

The discussion continued along these lines for a short time and then Doai interrupted with the following argument in support of patient number four, a woman with a masters degree in computer science from Harvard University.

Transcript B

Excerpt 2

- 1 Doai: I chose number four
- 2 because she has a master degree
- 3 and maybe she has intelligent
- 4 she can contribute if we save her life
- 5 she can contribute her ability and knowledge
- 6 to to USA or all over the world
- 7 because he he's studied computer science
- 8 and now he she finish master degree
- 9 um I think we must look we must think
- 10 about the future of the nation
- 11 if we save someone er life
- 12 and he can contribute
- 13 his er her ability to the world
- 14 I think best

As can be seen in this extract, Doai wanted to give the heart to someone who could contribute to society. A related value underlying Doai's argument was his belief in the importance of education and the contribution educated people can make to their society. The high value placed on education and qualifications in many collectivist cultures, especially Confucian societies, was reflected here in Doai's views. This was a value expressed by a number of participants in other groups. This will be further discussed later in this chapter.

As will be demonstrated in the chapters on turn-taking, and disagreement, the fact that Doai's quite long, repetitive turn was only achieved after three attempts to get the floor, and the fact that he was taking an adversarial position in relation to the other three, shows the strength of his conviction that priority should be given to the person best able to make a contribution to society. He came from a culture where interruptions, long

turns and disagreement are not the norm. Moreover, he continued to hold out for this position until much later when Jack had been persuaded to change to number five because of the seriousness of that patient's condition, and the others pressed Doai to change in order to reach agreement and complete the task. Even then his conviction about the correctness of his choice, clearly based on fundamental beliefs about the relative importance of the individual and the group, caused him to remain silent for some time rather than agree easily

Another attitude expressed in this group which appeared to reflect cultural values, and which was echoed by a participant from a similar cultural background in another group, was Asmahan's critical view of number six. Asmahan was arguing for number five because he was a widower with three children and was on a heart-lung machine. She had already introduced some arguments against number six receiving the heart related to health issues. She now introduced a moral argument.

Transcript B

Excerpt 3

- 1 Asmahan: (*laughing slightly*) She has never married
2 and has four children
3 Yolanda: Yes but this is not the reason
4 doesn't matter if you {are 1}
5 Asmahan: {Yes} I know but it is important also
6 what about if she has four children
7 and no husband and it's too
8 I think too um er x x

Unfortunately Asmahan's last comment was inaudible and she went on to change the subject and give more reasons for supporting number five. However, it did seem that she was arguing that number six did not deserve the heart because she was an unmarried mother. Although she made a token acknowledgment of Yolanda's point at the beginning of line 5, she still maintained that her view was important (line 5). Asmahan came from a cultural and religious background in which women's sexual morality is basic to the fabric of society and a woman never marrying but having four children would be unacceptable. Her slight laugh as she introduced her judgmental argument may have indicated embarrassment caused by an awareness that her views might not be shared by the others. Her token agreement with Yolanda that the woman's marital status should not be a reason for not giving her the heart (line 5) also suggests this. Alternatively, of course, she may just have been embarrassed by the nature of the topic. As mentioned earlier, Asmahan's answers to the questionnaire suggested that she subscribed to collectivist values. In answer to the proposition about thinking of yourself as a member of your family first and an individual second and being happy to feel interdependence within your family group, she wrote "Yes I think in my mind". To the question about whether others in her culture generally thought the same way, she wrote, "The people also like to get all the family with other and depend".

The collective before the individual; hierarchical values: attitudes to sexual morality:

Group C

Similar patterns emerged in other discussions of this problem. One such group was Group C which comprised Vinh, a Southeast Asian man, Eunsoo, an East Asian woman, Simin, a Middle Eastern woman and Ping, an East Asian woman. In this group, Vinh again used the argument that a person's "high position" and ability to work for others

was a reason for giving him the heart. In this case again, as well as the collectivist view, his attitude suggested acceptance of a hierarchy. The opposing position that the heart should go to the poor, single mother was taken by Eunsoo. However, in this instance it was not because she was an admirable individual who had struggled to raise the money for the operation but because if she died there would be no money for her children, a more collectivist position. Finally, a critical view of number six, the single mother, apparently reflecting the influence of her cultural background, was expressed by Simin. The following excerpt in which Vinh put his argument came quite early in the interaction. They were discussing the basis on which they must make a choice.

Transcript C

Excerpt 1

- 1 Ping: Yes choose the {x x x 1}
- 2 Vinh: {the most urgent 1}
- 3 and the most important
- 4 Simin: No no
- 5 Ping: I think the highest
- 6 and most suitable for {x x 2}
- 7 Simin: {What about 2} number five
- 8 he {is married unmarried his wife died 3}
- 9 Vinh: {Yes, I just said x x x x 3}
- 10 Simin: what are his children
- 11 {going to do 4}
- 12 Vinh: {yes and very very 4} small children
- 13 and his wife died
- 14 Simin: {died 5}
- 15 Vinh: {already 5} if he dies
- 16 nobody will take care of his children
- 17?: Yes
- 18 Vinh: and please remember that
- 19 Eunsoo: {Well in that case x x x 6}
- 20 Vinh: {he's still young and he's a VIP 6}
- 21 he can if we save him
- 22 he can you know he can work
- 23 for a lot of people with his high position
- 24 ... yer that's it ...
- 25 Simin: Okay

This excerpt suggests that right from the beginning (line 3), Vinh was regarding the status or importance of the patient in the society as one of the deciding factors about who should get the heart. This was confirmed in lines 20 to 23 when he said that he would choose number five because he was a VIP and could work for a lot of people, apparently meaning he would make a contribution to the society but also indicating acceptance of the importance of high status. It is possible that Ping had a similar view at this point (lines 5 and 6) although much later she changed her mind and supported Eunsoo.

Eunsoo then argued for number six. It was at this stage that Simin made an implied criticism of number six which mirrored closely the judgmental position Asmahan had taken in Group B. In this case, no one challenged her and she repeated her criticism in similar words four more times during the discussion. On the first two occasions, she

accompanied these comments with loud laughter in which the others joined. It appeared that she blamed the woman for her situation and felt she did not deserve to get the heart. The other two women felt sorry for the children but Simin just kept repeating the same sort of rhetorical question expressed in lines 4 and 8 in the following excerpt and opposed giving the heart to the woman. Eunsoo's point (lines 1 and 2) was not judgmental, just that number six was the same as number five in that she had children and no partner to care for them if she died.

Transcript C

Excerpt 2

- 1 Eunsoo: But that's the same
2 number six she hasn't married
but she has four children
4 Simin: So who told her not to marry *loud laughter, especially Simin*
5 Eunsoo: Number six x x
6 Simin: {Yes I know 1}
7 Eunsoo: {x x x 1}
8 Simin: so why is she having four children *prolonged laughter*

In the next excerpt, Eunsoo continued to argue for number six (lines 18 and 19). Vinh was apparently still attempting to defend his view that number five could work for the benefit of others and Simin again suggested that it was the woman's fault that she had four children and no husband and, therefore, she should not be given the heart.

Transcript C

Excerpt 3

- 1 Eunsoo: You said x x number five
2 because he has children
3 but I think he is has good job
4 so he has lots of money
5 {but he x x x 1}
6 Vinh: {No no it no I 1} didn't mean
7 that he has a lots of money
8 Eunsoo: {No no yes I know but yer 2}
8 Vinh: {I mean he can work for lots 2}
9 {of x x 3}
10 Eunsoo: {Yes I know 3}but if he die
11 if he dies you said
12 who takes care of the children
13 {x educate x x his money 4}
14 Simin: {x x x x 4}
15 Eunsoo: if she dies
16 she doesn't have any money
17 Vinh: No
18 Eunsoo: {if she dies 5}
19 Simin: So who told her
20 to bring four children *loud, prolonged laughter*

After this comment by Simin (lines 19 and 20) the loud laughter, led by Simin, drowned out the next two speakers. Perhaps the others joined in the laughter because the potentially titillating subject of the woman's presumed sexual immorality was being

raised. They did not take issue with Simin on this point, rather they joined in her long and loud laughter but did not support her or express the same views.

Much later, not having been able to agree about who should get the heart, the group tried working backwards and eliminating those least deserving. Vinh again put a view suggesting that contribution to the society was an important consideration and that they should make a hard-headed rational decision not an emotional one. Eunsoo had brought up the case of the young boy, number two.

Transcript C

Excerpt 4

- 1 Vinh: But she he you know is very young
- 2 if he dies he doesn't count much to the society

The others remonstrated with what they saw as Vinh's heartlessness but he told them he was very serious and again stressed that they should be working with their minds, not their hearts. Vinh's view here is one that would not normally be acceptable in an individualist society and even the others also from collectivist societies saw it as heartless, although they did not argue on the basis of the worth of the individual or individual rights.

The group was not able to reach any agreement as two held out for number six and two for number five. Towards the end of the tape, Simin repeated her criticism of number six.

Transcript C

Excerpt 5

- 1 Simin: So how could she give birth to four children
- 2 in the case that she has problems

Then again right at the end of the tape, she made almost the same deprecatory comments for the fourth time.

Transcript C

Excerpt 6

- 1 Simin: She never married and she has four children
- 2 who told her to give birth for four children

The last two times Simin raised this issue she was no longer laughing, which suggests that she found this behaviour morally questionable and almost certainly it would not have been permitted in the culture from which she came. Perhaps, she kept raising it hoping to get the type of support her cultural conditioning had probably prepared her to expect.

Unfortunately, Simin did not fill in a questionnaire. Vinh's answer to the proposition "You think of yourself as a member of your family first and an individual second and are happy to feel interdependent" revealed a collectivist orientation. He wrote "It's mostly true" and he wrote "yes" to the question "Do other people in your culture generally think the same way?". Eunsoo, however, was less certain. To the first proposition, she wrote, "I'm an individual as well as a member of my family at the same time. Both are important to me equally". To the second question, she replied, "Almost

yes". Vinh also expressed acceptance of a hierarchy. Asked if he agreed with the proposition "All people are not equal. Some come from better families with higher status or have more important positions and you should show more respect to, and be more polite to, such people. You should also show more respect to people who are older than you", he wrote "Yes, completely" and to the question "Do most people in your culture think the same way?", he answered "Yes".

The collective before the individual; hierarchical values: Group D

One more group where some of these patterns appeared was Group D, an all female group. The participants in this group were Marliss, a Western European woman, Raghat a Middle Eastern woman, Pepple, an East Asian woman, and Radmilla, an Eastern European woman. Radmilla had indicated that she believed number five should get the heart. Raghat had said she could not decide between numbers five and six because they both had children. Marliss argued that somebody was already looking after number five's children because he had a job and the money to pay for child care, whereas number six was poor and normally, therefore, wouldn't have the chance to get a heart. Up to this point, Pepple had not spoken. Marliss then asked for her opinion.

Transcript D

Excerpt 1

- 1 Marliss: What do you think
- 2 number five or number six Pepple?
- 3 Pepple: I think because er number five
- 4 is the man x x x expert x is also if he can life
- 5 then he can make contribution to the sociality
- 6 but er number six er .. um because just
- 7 (*laughing slightly*) you talk about money
- 8 Marliss: Yer
- 9 Pepple: yes just depends on the money
- 10 Marliss: Um
- 11 Pepple: from x x he pay the money for the transplant
- 12 Marliss: Um
- 13: Pepple: is through the contribution of
- 14 those her neighbours but again
- 15 I think if he if number five the man
- 16 he can er keep can keep alive through the transplant
- 17 then he can pay for the money by himself
- 18 Marliss: Um yer but that's just what I said
- 19 I think it's quite UNFAIR to give somebody the heart
- 20 because he's going to benefit
- 21 after the transplantation for society
- 22?: Um hum
- 23: Marliss: that is the unfair part of this
- 24: my personal opinion when I look er
- 25 from the ethical backgrounds and moral background
- 26 is that number six should have the heart

Marliss then repeated her earlier views about number five already having someone to look after his children while number six did not have anyone. The discussion then centred on the needs of the children and the ranking of all the patients and did not return to these issues. However, as this excerpt illustrated, Pepple, from a collectivist,

hierarchical culture, again looked at the issues from the point of view of the individual's contribution to society and number five's lack of financial dependence on society, while Marliss from a more individualist, egalitarian culture wanted to support the 'underdog' and felt it was unfair that people should be advantaged because of their wealth and importance to the society. Her protest stressing the word 'unfair' (line 19) indicates how strongly she felt about this. This class was given a different type of questionnaire with brief summaries of different values and the request to note which they identified with. Marliss identified with individualist values, not writing comments but marking individualist values with large ticks and the word 'yes'. Pepple's answers also confirmed the values reflected in the views she expressed. In answer to the question which group, collectivist or individualist, do you identify with, she wrote, "I think the second group (collectivism) I like most" and to the question whether most people in her culture thought the same way, she wrote, "Yes, most people in our culture think the same way I do".

It is of note here that Raghat, who came from a similar background to Asmahan and Simin, made no comments about number six being an unmarried mother and was sympathetic to her receiving the heart because of her four children. Her replies in her questionnaire may help explain this. In answer to the question which cultural orientation do you identify with, individualist or collectivist, she wrote: "I identify with the individualist but most people in my culture identified with the collectivist and the most common pattern is women and men may be expected to behave in very different ways".

The importance of educational qualifications: Group E

As we saw earlier in the discussion of Group B's interaction, a value which appeared to underly Doai's view about giving the heart to someone who could make a contribution to society was his belief in the importance of educational qualifications and the contribution educated people can make to the society, an attitude widely held in the Confucian society he came from (Nguyen 1980). Similar views were expressed a number of times by participants from Confucian societies, clearly reflecting the high value such societies place on education (Little & Reed 1989, Stevenson & Lee 1996). Participants from some other cultures with collectivist or ascriptive tendencies also stressed the importance of qualifications and the value to society of well educated people. This is a value orientation which can cause problems for immigrants in an individualist society such as Australia in which status is not ascribed but is based on personal achievement. They find the values underlying job selection, performance appraisal and promotion criteria (such as an individual's recent performance, their interpersonal communication skills, and their ability to 'sell themselves') difficult to comprehend. For them ascribed status (educational and family background, qualifications, seniority) should rate much higher than personal achievement (Hogarth 1995).

Another group in which these different attitudes in regard to education and qualifications was illustrated was Group E in their discussion of the same problem, The Heart Transplant. This group comprised Filip, an Eastern European man, Gia, a Western European woman, Wei an East Asian man and Elini, an African woman.

At the very beginning, Gia argued that number two deserved the heart because he was very young and his condition was extremely serious. Filip then put the following argument.

Transcript E

Excerpt 1

- 1 Filip: My opinion is that heart
- 2 er should be given to Gina Feinstein
- 3 she's number four on this list
- 4 er there are few reasons
- 5 first one is she is young
- 6 er second one she's well educated
- 7 she's she has masters degree from Harvard University
- 8 and because she's only twenty seven
- 9 er she will probably become doctor
- 10 in x in a few years

Filip continued to stress the importance of academic qualifications and the contribution of educated people to society throughout this discussion. Gia however, saw other factors including the degree of seriousness of the patient's condition as the important considerations. The following excerpt which came at a later stage illustrates her attitude. At this point she had moved her support to number five because of his medical condition and the fact that he had three children. The two non-Europeans did not contribute to this part of the interaction. In fact, the two Europeans monopolised this discussion and the other two, while firm in their views and ready to disagree, made far fewer contributions.

Transcript E

Excerpt 2

- 1 Filip: But number five is only a spy you know
- 2 and he is not important for our world
- 3 Gia: Why not
- 4 Filip: He is only a spy
- 5 it's not very important
- 6 Gia: He has three kids
- 7 that's the reason x x
- 8 on his own and his wife is dead
- 9 I mean why shouldn't we give
- 10 the heart to him I what I can say
- 11 Filip: {x x she probably x 1}
- 12 Gia: {We should NOT give it to 1}
- 13 number four just because
- 14 she have going to school
- 15 and she has good education

As can be seen from lines 1, 2, 4 and 5, as well as stressing the importance of education, Filip believed that if a person was not of use or importance to society this was a valid reason for not giving them priority. Gia, however, did not share this view and explicitly stated that the educational level of a patient should not be a deciding factor (lines 12 to 15). She held more egalitarian views and wanted to make the decision on the basis of individual need regardless of qualifications or importance to the society.

Unfortunately, Filip did not fill in a questionnaire. Gia did, however, identifying with seven of the eight values typical of individualist societies. The one collectivist value she marked related to expectations of friends and family.

Some of these same, or similar, patterns emerged in groups discussing other problems as will be seen in the next two sections of this chapter and in later chapters discussing communication styles.

Different values and unshared world knowledge: problematic interactions

In some groups, there was evidence that different cultural values and a lack of shared experience and world knowledge impeded understanding and caused more serious clashes, which in some cases resulted in a deterioration in interpersonal relations.

A lack of shared knowledge and values: Dyad A

As mentioned previously, lack of shared experience, world knowledge and cultural values make communication even more problematic. Facts or concepts that would require one word to someone with a shared background can require laboured explanations that cannot hope to fill the void in a few sentences, and the real concerns of each party are not always fully recognised. At times, the conversation seems to be going along on parallel lines which only occasionally meet, and changes in direction are sudden and possibly disconcerting for the other participants. These difficulties seem to be exacerbated when the subject is a more difficult one and when the interactants are from very different cultural backgrounds. One dyadic conversation between two men illustrated all these points although, as will be discussed later, it also demonstrated how participants with positive attitudes to each other struggle to create understanding and do achieve considerable success despite the obstacles.

One of the two male participants was an East Asian, Bai, and one an Eastern European, Dusan. At this stage they were studying on their first English course and did not know one another at all well, although they did become friends and maintain contact after the course.

At the outset, after Bai asked what topic Dusan would like to discuss, the following exchange took place.

Transcript (a)

Excerpt 1

- 1 Dusan: Oh it doesn't matter
- 2 Bai: It doesn't matter
- 3 Dusan: It doesn't matter anything
- 4 Bai: Anything
- 5 Dusan: Anything you would like to ask me

Perhaps this apparent preparedness on Dusan's part to discuss any sort of topic provided Bai with the opportunity to talk about a subject which it soon became evident was of some concern and interest to him: religion. He then asked.

Transcript (a)

Excerpt 2

- 1 Bai: I would like to ask what's your um religions
- 2 Dusan: I beg your pardon
- 3 Bai: Yes I would like to know which religions um
- 4 you um trust x x you believe which religions
- 5 Dusan: Ah which religions {ah I'm sorry 1}
- 6 Bai: { Yes yes which 1} religions

- 7 Dusan: Oh I'm not practising
 8 but I belong to the Orthodox Church
 9 Bai: Oh yer x church
 10 Dusan: Orthodox
 11 Bai: Orthodox oh
 12 Dusan: Orthodox
 13 Bai: Oh

Bai's reaction here clearly indicated that this word meant nothing to him either because he did not know the English or had not heard of the religion. Dusan began to explain.

Transcript (a)

Excerpt 3

- 1 Dusan: Orthodox like the people in Russia
 2 Bai: Uh hh
 3 Dusan: or part of the former Yugoslavia
 4 Bai: {Oh yer 1}
 5 Dusan: {called the 1} Serbs you know

Bai's next question suggested that he knew little or nothing about this religion.

Transcript (a)

Excerpt 4

- 1 Bai: Is there many people er believe in that
 2 Dusan: Yer quite a lot
 3 Bai: Oh yer yer is that your country's religion or
 4 Dusan: Oh no it's a minority
 5 Bai: A minority yes
 6 Dusan: A great minority but in the former Yugoslavia
 7 Bai: {Mm mm 1}
 8 Dusan: {there are 1} a lot of people in this religion
 9 and er as I said in er Russia
 10 Bai: Oh yer

In this exchange, Bai was working hard to keep the conversation going despite his obvious lack of knowledge about the subject. Here his use of "oh yer" (lines 3 and 10) as a form of back-channelling did not appear to be signalling full comprehension, or agreement with the information being imparted, rather, as has often been mentioned in the literature it may have been the polite use typical of East Asians signifying only 'I am listening' (Gao 1998), or together with the 'oh' it may have indicated surprise and interest as well. Other researchers who have done work on feedback tokens discuss the wide range of meanings conveyed by 'yes' and close variants of this token. For example, Platt (1989) notes that the word 'yes' as used by non-native speakers with the meaning equivalent in their own language can have a wide range of meanings. And Heritage (1984) argues that 'oh' indicates the receipt of new information. Gardener (1994) supports this, pointing out that 'oh' can be used to indicate that the user has just heard new information which is unexpected or surprising, something the listener did not know before. Bai appeared to be using 'oh yer' in this sense, for example, in line 10. Previously in line 7, Bai used the feedback token, 'mm hm', which, according to Gardener, is often used by a listener to encourage a speaker to continue. In this excerpt, Bai's purpose certainly appeared to be an attempt to sound interested and Dusan was

encouraged to go on and try to explain and inform. Bai also seemed to work at keeping the conversation going by repeating words he had picked up and understood, perhaps only as single words. In the previous excerpt, he repeated the word 'minority' followed by 'yes' (line 5), and in the following excerpt, he repeated the words 'Vatican' and 'Catholic', preceded by 'oh' (lines 9 and 11). Tannen (1989) notes that people use repetition as a means of keeping talk going: they often echo or shadow others words.

Transcript (a)

Excerpt 5

- 1 Dusan: er if you think about er
- 2 this was before the the . .
- 3 religions split at the time of Romans
- 4 Bai: Oh yes I see
- 5 Dusan: and er there were x east
- 6 Bai: Mm mm
- 7 Dusan: and the West it belonged
- 8 to the Watican Vatican
- 9 Bai: {Oh Vatican 1}
- 10 Dusan: {Catholic 1}
- 11 Bai: {Oh Catholic 2}
- 12 Dusan: {church the 2} biggest in this part of Europe
- 13 Bai: {Mm hm Catholic 3}
- 14 Dusan: {and on the east 3} side it was Byzantium Byzantium
- 15 I don't know how you say it

At this point, although Bai was still giving encouraging feedback (lines 4, 6, 9, 11, 13), Dusan gave up the attempt to explain further about his religion. Possibly the difficulty of explaining something quite clearly outside your conversation partner's experience and knowledge is increased when you are using a second language and your partner cannot help you with words you are unsure of. In fact, the whole conversation to this point illustrated the additional obstacle experienced when there is not only a lack of shared cultural background but also neither participant is using a language in which they are fully proficient (line 15).

A little later Bai tried to explain his views about religion. He had said he had no religion but went on to qualify this.

Transcript (a)

Excerpt 6

- 1 Bai: But I believe there may be one God in the nature
- 2 maybe one day in Australia I will believe in the Christian God

They then went on to discuss the need for some belief and Bai stated his belief that Christians have to persuade or convince others to believe. Dusan expressed doubt that this was still the case although he agreed it had been historically and put the view that there should be no coercion, each person should decide for themselves. Bai then said that if he became a Christian he would not "worry to persuade" others and would "believe in his house" rather than go to church. After this short period of apparently full comprehension of each other's meaning, Bai took the conversation in another direction and introduced an aspect of the topic which was clearly of great concern to him. This next part of the conversation demonstrated that when cultural values are not fully shared

this can prevent a mutually involved discussion of a topic. In this case, while Dusan gave polite, sympathetic feedback, his tone of voice suggested lack of real involvement and the absence of any questions or comments which further developed the subject along the lines central to Bai's concern revealed lack of real understanding.

Transcript (a)

Excerpt 7

- 1 Dusan: So as I was child I went very often to {church1}
2 Bai: {Yes 1}yes because they believe
3 that is their obligation
4 Dusan: {Yes x x x 2}
5 Bai: {otherwise um maybe 2} after one day
6 you know they are not exist in the world any more
7 Dusan: Yes
8 Bai: they can't go to heaven
9 Dusan {Yes that's right 3}
10 Bai: {and also one 3}thing I I am very worried about
11 Dusan: Mm
12 Bai: is what because I believe God you know
13 Dusan: Uh huh
14 Bai: I can go to the heaven right
15 Dusan: Yes
16 Bai: but one day if my parents
17 and my sisters, brothers or my wife
18 they don't believe
19 they can't go to heaven (*slight laugh*)
20 Dusan: That's that's right {that (x x x) 1}
21 Bai: {so I think that's 1} the problem here
22 Dusan: (*softly*) Yeh
23 Bai: just me believe
24 Dusan: (*murmur*) Yeh
25 Bai: just me only go to the heaven
26 Dusan: (*murmur*) Yeh
27 Bai: but how about my family
28 Dusan: And how about other million people believe in other way
29 they don't go
30 Bai: Yeh
31 Dusan: they can be still a good citizen
32 and lead a very good life {x x x 2}
33 Bai: {Oh so so this is one 2}point I always wondered
34 Dusan: Yeh
35 Bai: um how can I do about that
36 if I I believe
37 Dusan: { Yeh yeh 3}
38 Bai: {you know 3}
39 Dusan Yeh you're right {to ask this question 4}
40 Bai: {So that one day if 4}I believe
41 I have to convince
42 Dusan: Yeh
43 Bai: especially my parents, my wife to believe
44 otherwise oh I just don't know

- 45 how about me
 46 Dusan: (*very muted*) Yes
 47 Bai: just me in heaven
 48 Dusan: Yes that's right
 49 Bai: and looking for on my my relative
 50 under the heaven in hell
 51 Dusan: (*murmur*) Yes
 52 Bai: Oh how come I don't know
 53 {I don't know 5}
 54 Dusan: {Yes that's right 5}that's right
 55 so that's a big question
 56 Bai: (*murmur*) Yer
 57 Dusan: whether people {can ask x x 6}
 58 Bai: {Yes this is a question 6}
 59 I don't know how to solve it
 60 Dusan: Yer I think it's a quite difficult question
 61 Bai: Yes
 62 Dusan: (*softly*) {Er 7}
 63 Bai: {Oh 7} one thing I would like to know
 64 what's your native language

In this excerpt, Bai must have been expressing a fundamental problem that people from cultures such as the Chinese have in converting to Christianity. Faiths and philosophies widely accepted in Asia, such as Buddhism and Confucianism, while stressing that the individual should strive for virtue and wisdom, are inclusive: they allow for adherence to more than one doctrine and do not exclude those who fail to fully embrace them as the one true faith in the way Christianity does. While other core values may have been influenced by modernisation and the imposition of different political systems, the strong sense of Chinese loyalty and obligation to the family and their view of the individual as part of a family unit seems to have remained almost intact (Irwin 1996, Hu & Grove 1991, Bunge & Shinn 1981). The way Chinese express love and affection for those close to them is to work and sacrifice for them (Young 1994). A Chinese person is not seen as something pristine and separate from the family and Chinese child rearing inculcates dependence on the family and strong kinship relationships (Bond 1991, Ho 1997). Indeed, some writers specifically claim that Chinese have not developed a strong sense of self. Linda Young (1994:41) a Chinese sociolinguist, writes that "the idea of a discrete self ... a self-defining autonomous individual is almost insignificant in Chinese thinking". She goes on to say that in classical times 'I' and 'we' were not distinguished: both were written with the same character. And Gudykunst et al (1988:85) support this view claiming that the Chinese self is "defined through an intersecting web of social and personal relations". Schwartz's (1994) research did find a stronger sense of autonomy than expected among the Chinese in his sample, but all other research stresses the strong family ties in Chinese society. In the questionnaires completed by the participants in this study, not one of the Chinese (from many parts of Asia) completely disagreed with the proposition relating to interdependence within the family "you think of yourself as a member of your family first and an individual second" and most supported it wholeheartedly.

For Chinese, therefore, this aspect of Christianity must present great problems, and it is of interest that Hofstede (1980) comments that in individualist societies conversion to a faith is a highly individualist act, whereas in the history of all the great religions,

conversion has been collective not individual, and in modern China, ideological conversions are generally collective. It is natural for people with a sense of group identity to convert together.

Bai was obviously grappling with this cultural orientation and was only really concerned about conversion from a personal point of view, not from the wider philosophical view that Dusan attempted to introduce (lines 28 to 32). As mentioned earlier, findings in the literature about Eastern European cultures in regard to individualist and collectivist orientation are not consistent but, while there is evidence of strong ingroup ties (Smith, Dugan & Trompenaars 1996), and more emphasis on family closeness than is true of highly individualist cultures (Smolicz 1978), there is no evidence that a sense of self is only found in the connectedness of the family group and there does not appear to be anything as binding as the strong Confucian ties of loyalty and obligation.

The answers these two participants wrote in the questionnaire about cultural values tended to correlate with these generalisations. Bai was not as certain of his position as most Chinese in these surveys, but he still indicated partial agreement with a group-first orientation. In answer to the proposition "You think of yourself as a member of your family first and an individual second ...", he wrote, "Sometimes because one should be responsible for what he or she did". Dusan, however, wrote, "Disagree. I am first an individual and then a member of my family" although he said he felt he was different from others in his culture.

Pedler's (1985) analysis of interviews with Polish and Vietnamese immigrants is instructive in this regard. She found that among the European speakers, the most common theme was 'I' (twenty two percent). The second most common themes were situations and things using 'it' and 'this' followed by the impersonal 'you'. The number of themes consisting of 'we' was only nine percent. Moreover, their talk had an abstract, theoretical flavour revealing an interest in principles and abstract ideas. Among the Vietnamese speakers, on the other hand, 'we' and 'they' were equally prominent with 'I': each of the three terms comprising fifteen percent of their themes. According to Pedler, Vietnamese say that they see themselves as members of a family not as individuals and their conversation illustrates this. Their themes show they are less interested in themselves as individuals than in people as members of groups. Pedler concluded that people are their main interest. Less than ten percent of their themes referred to something other than people.

Given these different cultural orientations between Asians and Europeans generally, it is understandable that Dusan appeared to be unable to fully understand and empathise with Bai's very personal concerns. While Dusan clearly wanted to express sympathy and interest and encouraged Bai to talk by regular feedback such as in line 20 where he said "That's that's right" and line 39 "Yes, you are right to ask this question", nevertheless, his responses were impersonal and general. At no time did he express any similar concern at a personal level and the only clear development of the topic initiated by him was the introduction of the general, philosophical problem of the exclusion from heaven of all non-Christians no matter how deserving (lines 28, 29). Apart from a slightly surprised 'Oh' (line 33), Bai ignored this and continued to discuss how the problem could be solved on the personal level. After that Dusan limited his comments to sympathetic but muted agreement apart from one more attempt, right at the end, to introduce the question "whether people can ask" (line 57). Bai, however, overrode him with his own concerns saying "Yes this is a question, I don't know how to solve it"

(lines 58, 59) and then Dusan again offered only a general statement of sympathy "Yes, I think it's a quite difficult question" (line 60). It was at this point that Bai changed the subject.

This change of subject was quite sudden. There was only an almost imperceptible pause between Bai's 'Yes' (line 61) and then his question (line 63). Dusan's soft 'Er'(line 62) was said simultaneously as Bai began his question. Perhaps Bai felt he had held the floor long enough discussing his concerns or perhaps he sensed that Dusan had nothing more to offer than polite generalisations and could not share the deep personal concern he felt over this issue.

It would seem that while Dusan was tolerant and ready to question the religion he had been brought up in, his very different cultural conditioning made him unable to discuss the issue in the way Bai wanted to. He had said earlier that he believed each individual should have the freedom to choose what to believe and this may have prevented him from understanding Bai's need to convert his close family members rather than fail to share his "advancement" to heaven without them. At the same time, Bai (possibly not realising that people from other cultures would not share this problem) could not explain the depth of his concern. Perhaps if Dusan had learned about Chinese values and the views of the self and the group prevalent in that culture, he would have been able to empathise more with Bai's dilemma. As it was the conversation seemed to remain on two different levels: the general and the personal.

The fact that this lack of full understanding on both sides did not in this cases appear to lead to any negative reactions supports the view that the most important requirement for intercultural communication is "positive feelings to each other" (Sarbaugh 1979: 49). At the same time, the way the conversation developed also lends weight to the argument that some knowledge of others' cultural values is necessary if such communication is to be truly successful (Scollon & Scollon 1995).

Overall, this conversation demonstrated the way in which talk is a co-operative endeavour with each interactant working to create shared meaning and the difficulty involved when there is this wide dissimilarity in background and cultural knowledge and values. A topic introduced by one participant can only be fully discussed if the other participant has enough knowledge of the subject, and understanding of the other's concerns, to help in the development of the topic raised for discussion.

On the other hand, it must be noted that despite the problems of understanding experienced in this conversation, the interactants worked hard and achieved considerable success at managing the strategies which develop social bonds and help lubricate talk, in this instance, listener role feedback in particular. This interaction demonstrated a constant use of such feedback, not always entirely appropriate, but perhaps aimed at compensating for the lack of real understanding. Varonis and Gass (1985b) claim that there are clear instances in their data where one member of a conversational dyad tries to hide their lack of understanding by using continuing devices such as feedback tokens and repetition of words and phrases in order to appear relevant and knowledgeable and to keep the conversation going. This appeared to occur in this particular interaction.

Culture clash: Group F

The discussion in another group, Group F, illustrated a very different kind of problem that can occur in intercultural communication. In this type of interaction, the views being presented are comprehended and there may be an understanding that they are based on different values and beliefs, but there is dissonance and conflict because the values of at least some of the hearers are at variance with the reality of the message of others. Indeed, neither the message or the values underlying the message are acceptable to those with opposing values, there is no shifting of frames and the result is friction and alienation. This is possibly exacerbated by an incomplete understanding on the part of the listeners of the significance of these views in the cultural systems of those expounding the unwelcome views. In this instance, the issue was related to sexual morality, specifically to the roles of women and men. Two of the participants came from cultures in which differentiated roles are a fundamental part of the value system. A second theme in this discussion, which reflected the paternalistic nature of their cultures, was the view of these two participants that young people have no individual rights: wise adults must decide what is best for them.

This group, whose discussion was videotaped, comprised a Southern European woman, Sandra, two Eastern European men from different countries, Josef and Piotr, a Middle Eastern man, Jamal, and a Southeast Asian man, Phien. There had been a number of articles and letters in the local press about the advantages and disadvantages of co-educational high schools and the matter had been raised in class. The task set was to discuss these advantages and disadvantages and to try to make recommendations for local high schools. For the purposes of the present study, this has been designated as Problem Two: Co-educational High Schools.

At the very outset, Jamal took the floor and argued that it was necessary to separate boys and girls between the ages of twelve to sixteen. This opening turn took eight minutes during which none of the other participants spoke except for five back-channels from Phien saying 'yes' and two occasions when Phien provided a word Jamal needed to explain his meaning better. In this case, 'yes' appeared to indicate agreement. Phien's body language, leaning forward and nodding his head suggested this as did the fact that he later explicitly stated that he agreed with Jamal. Jamal's argument at first was that at a later stage, at college and university, girls and boys can study together but not at secondary school. His reason was that at this age their personalities are not formed so girls will try to imitate boys and become tough if they spend time together. He then went on to describe the results of this.

Transcript F

Excerpt 1

- 1 Jamal: After this when she will go home
- 2 as a wife she will be tough with her husband
- 3 maybe if the husband is tough and she is not tough
- 4 they er they can make something
- 5 Phien: Yes
- 6 Jamal: they can make a balance between them
- 7 but if she is tough and he is tough all the time
- 8 the divorce will happen

A short time later in the discussion, Jamal gave another reason for his view, saying that proximity at this age might cause young people to fall in love and want to marry at an unsuitably young age.

Transcript F

Excerpt 2

- 1 Jamal: And er they fell in love and a very quickly er very quickly
- 2 and maybe it will be marriage you know
- 3 and very early marriage is very dangerous for them
- 4 some of them
- 5 he is a child and she has a child
- 6 she is a child and she get pregnant
- 7 and she is maybe twelve . . .
- 8 she is a child how that er
- 9 how we will let that happen you know

A little later, Jamal concluded by repeating his 'dangerous age' theme and then indicating that he had finished by asking the others for their opinion.

Transcript F

Excerpt 3

- 1 Jamal: er this age is very dangerous
- 2 and you now reply with your opinion

Throughout this monologue Piotr and Josef had sat quietly, leaning back, listening politely, showing no expression and looking at Jamal. Sandra had also sat quietly, not looking directly at him but smiling when he talked about early marriage and pregnancy. None of these three gave any verbal feedback. As mentioned earlier, Phien sat forward, listening intently, indicating agreement verbally and by nodding. Jamal also sat forward maintaining strong eye contact with Josef and Piotr, in particular, but turning to Phien each time he indicated agreement. The discussion continued with Josef clarifying with Jamal the exact age during which he believed they should be separated, after which Josef argued that it is natural for boys and girls to grow up together and that he would only separate them for some subjects. Piotr then argued that girls' quiet, good behaviour can provide an example for boys and achieve a balance in the class

Transcript F

Excerpt 4

- 1 Josef: But it is unnatural
- 2 Jamal: Why why is it unnatural why
- 3 Josef: Why because it's naturally
- 4 to growing to grow up all
- 5 with boys and girls you know
- 6 if you are a boy with a girl or opposite
- 7 Jamal: Yes
- 8 Josef: But what I think
- 9 I would do all through
- 10 I would separate them
- 11 only for some subjects
- 12 Jamal: Some some subjects
- 13 Josef: You know for physical education

14. Jamal: I I yes
 15 Piotr: You told us you see
 16 only one er face of this problem
 17 you told us about
 18 boys' bad behaviour
 19 what about girls' good behaviour
 20 Jamal: Good behaviour yes
 21 Piotr: Because in my opinion
 22 I fully agree with you
 23 girls are more quiet
 24 Jamal: Yes yes
 25 Piotr: girls are more romantic
 26 Jamal Yes
 27 Piotr: girls not only boys er
 28 girls bad examples
 29 Jamal: Yes
 30 Piotr: but in X girls can give boys good behaviour
 31 you understand or not
 32 Jamal: I understand yes I understand

As can be seen from the above extract, during Josef's and Piotr's turns, Jamal made a number of responses, once interrupting to question a point (line 2), and twice to repeat phrases (lines 12 and 20). He also frequently used 'yes' as a back-channelling device. However, the meanings appeared to differ. In lines 7 and 29, it only seemed to indicate 'I hear what you are saying', but in lines 14, 24 and 26, he could have been agreeing with the particular comment just made, although not with the overall line of argument as became clear as the discussion continued. In line 32, the 'yes' appeared to be part of the confirmation that he understood Piotr's point. These apparent differences in meaning together with the clear agreement indicated by Phien's use of 'yes' in this interaction, is further evidence of the claims of Platt (1989) and Gardener (1994) that this feedback token has a range of uses.

After these turns, Jamal took another turn, which lasted four minutes and only ended because Piotr interrupted him quite deliberately and asked Sandra to give her opinion. In this next turn, Jamal argued that boys would never be influenced by the example set by girls, and that there were fundamental differences between the two sexes.

Transcript F

Excerpt 5

- 1 Jamal: (*very softly*) It's not a balance
 2 because all the time
 3 and it's a RULE
 4 there is no one single guy
 5 try to imitate a girl
 6 he will NEVER
 7 because because there's
 8 something in his mind
 9 in his nature
 10 is not to be a girl!

A little later, he went on to put a further argument.

Transcript F

Excerpt 6

- 1 Jamal: The girl must have her rights
- 2 all her rights
- 3 but we are not equal in body
- 4 God make us like that
- 5 God make us different in body
- 6 different in er psychology.

He also twice put the view that older people should make decisions for young people. The first time he expressed this point in the following manner.

Transcript F

Excerpt 7

- 1 Jamal: I don't like to separate them
- 2 but we have to in this age
- 3 in my heart in my heart
- 4 I'd like them to be together
- 5 but in my mind no
- 6 because I have to take care of them
- 7 in this age

The discussion continued in a similar way with Jamal taking long turns to either counter the arguments of the others or put new arguments himself. As is evident from Excerpts 5, 6 and 7, the others listened in silence. Sandra spoke only twice when Piotr directly asked her opinion. Her first turn came about half way through the discussion.

Transcript F

Excerpt 8

- 1 Sandra: I think boys and girls have to go to school together
- 2 at that age because they are x
- 3 because they have to have the opportunity
- 4 to know each difference
- 5 they have . . .
- 6 Jamal: They already know
- 7 Sandra: They have to learn how to solve their problems together

Phien made one contribution a little later when Piotr asked his opinion.

Transcript F

Excerpt 9

- 1 Phien: I agree with um Jamal
- 2 and I want to add something
- 3 I think with the presence
- 4 with the presence of the girl
- 5 the boy the boys
- 6 want to be tougher of girls

At a later stage he had a second turn, interrupting Jamal to support his argument and the authoritarian view that older and wiser people must make decisions for younger people.

Transcript F

Excerpt 10

- 1 Phien: And you remember that
- 2 the boys and girls are in the age
- 3 they don't know what's right and what's wrong

Josef and Piotr continued throughout to put counter arguments. Their main argument was that it was not natural or normal to separate the sexes. Clearly here they were putting a view that reflected the values of their societies but that would not be persuasive to people from cultures where men and women are expected to behave differently and it is quite natural for them to spend much of their time with their own sex. In this perhaps less explicit way, Piotr and Josef showed that they were equally bound by their cultural conditioning. They were also taking it for granted that their view was universally applicable. Indeed, both sides kept putting arguments that were not effective from the point of view of the other side. Had they been more fully aware of each others' different cultural values, they might have argued in terms less insupportable and irritating to the other side. The following transcript sums up the position Josef and Piotr held to throughout the discussion.

Transcript F

Excerpt 11

- 1 Josef: When boys and girls are separate
- 2 in the school
- 3 it's not really normal situation
- 4 because family and all life
- 5 is er kind of balance between boys
- 6 woman and er man for everything, you know
- 7 and why should boys and girls
- 8 be in a very unnormal situation unnormal situation
- 9 I think about school

The views expressed in this discussion were confirmed to some extent in the questionnaires on cultural values. No specific question on sex roles was asked but the participants' answers to questions on hierarchy, open disagreement and face tended to reflect attitudes that fitted with those expressed in the discussion. For example, when asked if they agreed with the proposition "All people are not equal. Some people come from better families with higher status or have more important positions and you should show more respect to such people. You should also show more respect to people who are older than you", Jamal and Phien, while qualifying the first part of the proposition, were firm in their view that old people must be shown respect. They also agreed that it is important to give other people face and avoid causing unpleasantness or lack of harmony. Indeed, Phien wrote "Yes, I completely agree with it". Josef, however, was forceful in his insistence on equality, writing "Everybody is just a human creature. I am not going to lick someone's ... only because of his (her) higher status", and in answer to the proposition "You can disagree with people even if they are older or more important", Piotr wrote "Yes, I can disagree with those people. I always say what I think".

This group did not get past the stage of an expression of views. There was no attempt to make recommendations. Jamal continued to the end to argue that it was too dangerous

to allow boys and girls to be together at this age, and the discussion finished with the views of each side apparently even more polarised and relationships quite strained. This was evident from their body language. Jamal became agitated and gestured more frequently, while Piotr and Josef became increasingly irritated and dismissive. Piotr showed this by withdrawing from the conversation, whereas Josef slouched right back in his chair and occasionally shrugged in an almost insolent way. Phien continued to show by back-channelling and gestures his enthusiastic support for Jamal, his strong conviction about the subject apparently greater than the dislike of confrontation said to be typical in his culture and, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, confirmed by him in answer to a questionnaire. However, he only spoke twice: the first time when Piotr invited him to express an opinion and this may have been because of the friction that developed. Sandra generally kept her eyes down and did not show any overt reaction after the one smile early in the discussion. Clearly this sort of discussion does nothing to promote good interpersonal relations. Rather those with opposing views are judging the others on the basis of their own values, from within their own cultural frame of reference, and making negative judgments about the others as individuals. This can have serious repercussions in a multicultural society where people must live and work alongside one another.

This strengthens the case for intercultural awareness training in such societies. If people are more culturally aware and can try to understand the cultural constraints and priorities determining the views of others, although they will not agree with them, they may judge them less harshly and the deterioration in relations might be averted. For example, if Piotr, Josef and Sandra had understood that Jamal's views reflected the fact that in many societies a man's honour is dependent on the sexual behaviour of the women in his family and that it is the man's duty to protect them from any suggestion of impropriety, they might have been more tolerant of his position. A knowledge of the way in which Confucian philosophy has determined male-female roles in societies such as Vietnam, China, Japan and Korea may also have helped them view Phien's attitude more sympathetically. Certainly, Josef and Piotr's insistence that it was 'natural' that men and women should be together revealed a lack of understanding of these other societies and was not a persuasive argument to put in this situation. Of course, it is possible that they may have had some knowledge of these cultural imperatives but chosen not to be influenced by this. As noted earlier, however, most people have very little conscious knowledge of their own or others' cultural values and tend to see their way of doing things as the only right and proper way (O'Sullivan, 1994, Hofstede 1980). However, it should be noted here that other factors beside propositional content could have played a part in causing the negative reactions of at least some participants in this interaction. The turn-taking styles of the group members showed clear differences, and the rhetorical style employed by Jamal was very different from that of the others, clearly reflecting the style valued in his first language, Arabic. These aspects of this interaction will be discussed later in the appropriate chapters.

Unshared values, a failure to explain and incomprehension: Group G

Another group which illustrated that contrasting values and a lack of cultural awareness can have negative results, in this case leading to the incomprehension of, or dismissal of, a culturally appropriate suggestion was Group G. This group comprised Yolanda, the Latin American woman from Group B, Anh, a Southeast Asian woman, Li Dong, the East Asian man from Group A, and Elvid, an Eastern European man. This group were discussing Problem Three: Managing Diversity, a situation in which an employee, newly arrived in Australia (his country of origin was not known), was refusing to report

to his immediate superior, a woman, saying that she was younger than he was and her short skirts were immoral and inappropriate for the office. The group were informed that this was a genuine case which had recently occurred in the workplace and told that, as middle level managers, it was their role to come up with an effective way of dealing with this staff problem. They were also told that the woman's clothes were typical of the 'power dressing' fashion of the time, seen as appropriate for young female executives. The group all agreed that in a free country like Australia you cannot tell a woman to wear different clothes and that in the Australian workplace it was the man who had to change his attitude. In the first half of the discussion, Elvid explained that in his country there were three religious groups including Moslems and that he had some knowledge of Moslem societies in the Middle East. He explained to the others that in some Middle Eastern countries men would never have to even work alongside women so the man's attitude was understandable. At the same time, he agreed with the others that in Australia the only solution was to tell the man he had to change. It was after this was decided on and Elvid was repeating this view that Li Dong attempted to suggest that the way in which the man would be told was important. However, Elvid (who, in general, dominated this interaction, taking much longer turns and overriding the others) ignored this suggestion.

Transcript G

Excerpt 1

- 1 Elvid: It's a free country
- 2 he must change his mind
- 3 Anh: Right that's right
- 4 Elvid: and the manager MUST tell him
- 5 Anh: Yer explain yer
- 6 Elvid: explain him about freedom in Australia
- 7 Anh: Right that's right
- 8 Elvid: about rules in company
- 9 Anh: {Yes 1}
- 10 Elvid: {he 1} he broke down rules
- 11 Anh: Yer he {break the rules 2}
- 12 Elvid: {er not she 2} she didn't
- 13 Anh: {I think er she had 3}
- 14 Li Dong: {But even you know 3}
- 15 even you know he was wrong
- 16 even though you know he was wrong
- 17 Elvid: wrong
- 18 Li Dong: he was wrong
- 19 you just can't say straightaway
- 20 sometimes you know
- 20 you JUST CAN'T
- 21 Yolanda: Yes
- 22 Li Dong: you will hurt her feelings
- 23 Anh: Yes that's why you have to explain
- 24 Li Dong: you will hurt her feelings {so 4}
- 25 Elvid: {Ah 4} That company you working here
- 26 you must tell him because
- 27 er profit of company depend of him
- 28 and all people who work in there
- 29 Anh: Right

- 30 Yolanda: {Yes but Li Dong 1}
31 Elvid: {You must if same 1}
32 situation {x x} how you work
33 in company not working
34 what she working
35 you can if you manager
36 you working as surrogate for she

In this excerpt, Li Dong argued quite strongly against a direct approach telling the man he was wrong: his repetition of, and heavy emphasis on the words "just can't" (line 20) suggest this. Unfortunately his limited English may have prevented him from being persuasive. His use of "straightaway" suggests he meant in a direct, straightforward way but this may not have been clear to the others and his confusion of the male and female pronouns (lines 21 and 23) made his argument unclear. Also he did not put his argument in cultural terms. His use of the phrase 'you will hurt her feelings', by which he probably meant humiliate and cause loss of face for the male staff member, suggested a more individual, personal reaction rather than a culturally conditioned response. Whatever the reason, his warning had no effect on Elvid who made no acknowledgment of it, and if he did not fully understand it, made no attempt to try to clarify the intention behind Li Dong's words. In fact, he continued his own line of argument about why the man must be told to change his attitude (line 25 on) as though there had been no interruption. Anh and Yolanda, while both most concerned about the woman's interests, did seem to give Li Dong some support. As can be seen from the first half of the excerpt, Anh was strongly in favour of making the male staff member aware of the situation in Australia (lines 5,7,11). This appeared to be because of her strong views about the rights of women and perceptions of what constituted discrimination. She raised this in this group and in another interaction discussed later. However, when Li Dong raised his concerns about how to approach the man (lines 14 to 22), she appeared to understand and support his position, suggesting that that was the reason why an explanation must come first before any insistence on changed behaviour (line 23). She had also interjected to say "explain" not "tell" earlier (line 5). Yolanda also possibly agreed with Li Dong (line 21), and she apparently tried to return to Li Dong's point a little later (line 30) but was overridden by Elvid and gave up.

After this Elvid told a story about how he had been involved in a similar situation and the discussion ended amicably with a degree of humour and laughter but with no resolution of this issue. It is interesting to note here that, while Elvid could understand the cultural values influencing the male staff member's behaviour, he did not seem to appreciate that people from other cultures might have different attitudes to direct confrontation and criticism. As will be further discussed in chapter five, Elvid came from a culture where indirect forms of communication are not valued and may well be seen as evasive and insincere. Li Dong came from a culture where indirect communication, especially in relation to conflict, has traditionally been highly valued. Even though his own communicative behaviour did not always reflect this, (as will be discussed in chapter eight), he appeared to understand how a direct approach might be counterproductive, serving only to humiliate the staff member, and he tried to 'get this across' to the others. However, his view was ignored by Elvid. This dismissal of a culturally sensitive viewpoint by a participant with very different values may not have happened if the group had already had cultural awareness training. Li Dong may have been able to express his view in a more persuasive way and Elvid may have understood and appreciated the reason for such a view. As discussed in chapter one, researchers

have found that intercultural teams work together more effectively and capitalise on their diversity when they have had this kind of training.

As mentioned earlier in discussions of Group A and B, Li Dong and Yolanda both identified as more collectivist on propositions related to identification with the group. Anh was strongly collectivist answering "Yes" to the proposition about thinking of yourself as a member of your family first. And when explaining why people in her culture agreed, she wrote, "Yes, they suppose their family are something which can't be split from their life. They always think about the family they are in". In relation to the need to maintain harmony and save face and not criticise others directly, Li Dong wrote "Yes I completely agree with that. But it depends what kind of people you are talking with and you can choose the different ways to express what you want them to know". This points to his being aware of what would have been appropriate in the case of the male staff member. Anh also agreed with this, writing "that is popular in my country". Yolanda, wrote, "I can criticise others directly but I try to do this the polite way". These answers suggest that they may have been ready to support Li Dong's approach. Unfortunately, Elvid did not complete a questionnaire.

Productive diversity

While the fact that participants have these different values can at times cause these types of difficulty, in other contexts a diversity of cultural backgrounds among participants, and the understanding of different value systems that this affords, can produce more tolerant and potentially effective solutions to problems, especially those involving cultural beliefs and attitudes. Differences are negotiated and the diversity of the group is a productive factor, an advantage not a drawback. The following discussion of three other groups illustrates ways in which this can happen.

Meeting needs in a culturally diverse society: Group H

These features were evident in Group H's discussion. This was a larger group of six students in an English For Professional Employment (EPE) class. The group included Govinda, a South Asian man, Vera, an East Asian woman, Miron, an Eastern European man, Carlos, a Latin American man, and Dana and Teresa, two Eastern European women. Apart from the two Eastern European women, they had all done a previous English course in Australia, but they had not done any specific cross-cultural training at this stage. This group discussed Problem Four: AIDS Education. They had been told to roleplay that they were a parents and citizens committee who had been asked how best to introduce education about AIDS into secondary schools in multicultural Australia. This subject was in the news at the time.

At Dana's suggestion, they began their discussion by each giving a brief outline of the situation in relation to AIDS, sexual practices and sex education in their countries of origin. Each participant gave a brief but frank account, which revealed a wide range of attitudes and practices in the different societies. Govinda had mentioned that in his country there were no special programs about AIDS but there were advertisements on television and radio and in the press which gave people information about the problem. Nada then made the point that constant education was required. However, Carlos intervened at this point to say there could be difficulties with such education for people from some backgrounds.

Transcript H

Extract 1

- 1 Dana: I think that the crucial thing
2 would be to educate them all the times
3 Carlos: Yes but this is too difficult you know
4 for example in my country they're too Catholics
5 Teresa: Yes that's right
6 Carlos: for x x {and if l}
7 Woman?: {x same l} like in x in China in Italy
8 Carlos: Yes it's too too cruel to show them
9 these these er programs about AIDS
10 Teresa: Mmm
11 Carlos: because I have seen programs
12 they show their bodies
13 and their conversations too explicit
14 I think it doesn't function in my country
15 because seems nobody will see this kind of program
16 or I don't know it's too explicit

In this excerpt, Carlos was alerting the others to the fact that any such education would have to keep in mind the attitudes of cultures such as his. In line 15, it would seem that his meaning was that people would refuse to watch a program that was too explicit. After this the conversation centred on the role of parents in educating their children. Then, as can be seen in the following excerpt, the discussion returned to the need for education in schools. Dana suggested that parents should also be educated about this problem in the schools. However, Carlos again interrupted her to say this might not be suitable for all cultural groups.

Transcript H

Excerpt 2

- 1 Dana: When I talk about parents
2 I thought that the best way would be
3 to er teach them at school too
4 at their children's school in the school
5 Teresa: Yes yes
6 Dana: when you call all the parents
7 Carlos: But I think we should divide
8 in the parents the culture
9 because I think for my culture
10 this er program is rude too cruel
11 maybe nobody wants to go to hear about this

Clearly, here Carlos was pointing out to the others that in a multicultural society like Australia they could not assume that this kind of program would be suitable for all cultural groups and some parents would view it very differently and might refuse to participate (lines 7 to 11). At this point, the group did not discuss this idea any further as Teresa now changed the subject, suggesting that perhaps parents should teach their children less sexually permissive moral values. However, at the end, when the discussion returned to the kind of education that was necessary, Carlos proposed adapting any education program to meet the needs of different cultural groups and there was no apparent disagreement.

Transcript H

Extract 3

- 1 Govinda: It would be the education
2 how to practice safe sex
3 Miron: That's true but not restriction
4 because restriction won't work
5 Carlos: I think this is a good point
6 but in different levels I mean for example
7 the education could be open for Australians
8 but more soft or kind with other cultures
9 Vera: Yes that's right
10 Miron: But you should adapt education
11 to every country
12 Carlos: Yes that's right
13 Miron: culture
14 Carlos: Culture yes

From Vera's comment in line 9, she clearly supported Carlos. She had also described her culture as very conservative with parents seeing it as shameful to talk about sex to their children although she, personally, wanted change. Earlier in the interaction she had said parents should talk to their children. Miron also seemed to be convinced by Carlos' argument as he clarified it in a supportive, sympathetic way (lines 10, 11 and 13). He had had the most permissive views on these matters and the fact that he appeared to accept Carlos' view shows the value of different viewpoints when discussing what will and will not work in a multicultural society. In this group, it was not a case of the views they expressed reflecting their cultural background without the participants being aware of it: rather different cultural attitudes were made explicit in order to explain views and persuade others. At the same time, this was another discussion which pointed to very different values in relation to sexual morality among participants. It also provided an example of a tendency on the part of some immigrants to assume that all cultural groups apart from mainstream Australians share their values and attitudes (lines 7 and 8), another misconception that causes misunderstanding and needs to be addressed in cultural awareness training.

Only Carlos, Govinda, Dana and Vera completed questionnaires. There was no direct question on identification with the group in this questionnaire. However, some of their answers to the proposition "If a friend or relative asks for help or a favour, it is your obligation to do your best to meet that request. You would not say directly that they are asking too much and would expect others to do the same for you", Carlos, Govinda and Vera all wrote "I agree" and answered "Yes" to the question "Do most people in your culture think the same as you". In fact, Vera added, "It's part of my culture". However, Dana wrote "Partly. If I think they are asking too much I would tell them" and wrote "The same" in relation to others in her culture. In response to the proposition, "All people are not equal. Some people come from better families with higher status or have more important positions and you should show more respect and be more polite to such people. You should also show more respect to people who are older", Carlos wrote, "I agree. We have three different ways to say 'you' in Spanish in my country. The one you choose depends on who you are talking to". Vera wrote, "Partly agree. We are expected to show more respect to people who are older than me". Govinda wrote "I would agree with second part of the statement and would not agree with the first part". Dana, however, wrote, "I disagree. All people are equal. I usually show more respect to older people". They all felt that their views were generally shared in their cultures. These

responses suggest that, while these participants were able to explain the views of their cultures in an objective way, they themselves still generally subscribed to these views. Certainly, Carlos held the most traditional, hierarchical views and so was most able to see the problems for people from similar cultures on a related issue.

Finding culturally appropriate solutions: Group I

The positive effect that a variety of cultural backgrounds can have on defining and finding appropriate solutions for some types of problems, in particular those involving cultural beliefs, was also seen in Group I's discussion. It also illustrated that an empathetic, explicit discussion about values and attitudes can lead to frame shifts on the part of some participants. It should be noted that this group had already done some work on different cultural values when the discussion took place, which may have influenced their behaviour and helped produce the more positive interaction.

There were five women in this group: Renata, a Latin American, Cam, a Southeast Asian, Meena, a Middle Easterner, Ljubika, an Eastern European and Ling ling, an East Asian who had lived in Western Europe for a number of years. Renata took the lead in this group probably because she was more fluent and assertive than the others and appeared to have had more exposure to Australian society through her husband, who had obtained a good position soon after arriving here. This group also discussed Problem Three: Managing Diversity.

Renata opened the discussion, allocating to herself the position of the manager with the problem. After outlining the situation, she immediately suggested speaking directly to the man and explaining the steps that must be followed in the company. Meena (from a culture said to avoid causing public loss of face) then suggested an approach which would be face saving for the man and avoid any direct confrontation.

Transcript I

Excerpt 1

- 1 Meena: Maybe it's better to change his position.
- 2 Renata: To change
- 3 Meena: Yer
- 4 Renata: You mean which position the man
- 5 Meena: Yer yer
- 6 Renata: We have to change the man
- 7 Meena: To another position um with another supervisor
- 8 Ljubica: Er in another part of our organisation you think
- 9 when supervisor is er some man, can't woman
- 10 Meena: Yes
- 11 Ljubica: Ah
- 12 Meena: Maybe it's better for him

It would appear that both Renata and Ljubica found Meena's suggestion rather unexpected. This is suggested by the fact that they did not immediately comprehend her intention but needed to clarify it. Renata twice asked questions to check that she had interpreted Meena's suggestion correctly (lines 4 and 6) and Ljubica also needed further clarification of Meena's intention (lines 8 and 9).

At this point, Cam entered the conversation to support Meena. It is of interest that Cam had not asked for clarification of intention, which suggests that she had immediately understood the proposal. This would also reflect the values ascribed to her culture.

Transcript 1

Excerpt 2

- 1 Cam: You know because he well quality qualify
- 2 and good at his job
- 3 it's not difficult to find the other supervisor
- 4 better than her

However, Renata and Ljubica as the following excerpt shows, were unable to accept this solution. As they argued against it, Cam began to shift her position, although at the same time she tried to explain the man's feelings. Cam's emphasis on the man's feelings may have reflected what Cam Nguyen (1994) describes as the importance placed on emotions and feelings by Vietnamese. Nguyen says they do not reject rationality and pragmatism but give greater weight to emotions and feelings. They may acknowledge that a certain decision should be made from a rational point of view but they look for a different solution based on emotional considerations. Meena also tried to explain the reasons for the man's behaviour but more from the point of view of the type of society he came from.

Transcript 1

Excerpt 3

- 1 Renata: The problem is not the supervisor
- 2 because when this man had the interview
- 3 he was interviewed for this position
- 4 and he is sweetable for this kind job
- 5 I think it's not the solution
- 6 just to change the place
- 7 because maybe tomorrow next year
- 8 his supervisor can be another woman
- 9 dressed in the same way
- 10 and you cannot keep changing the position of this man
- 11 Cam: {But 1}
- 12 Ljubica: {I think 1}he must to must
- 13 I don't know how to say
- 14 er accept this organisation
- 15 in this woman is a supervisor
- 16 Cam: Many women they could er qualitify
- 17 they er could good at their job
- 18 they can become er supervisor
- 19 even they very young
- 20 but the man usually they think
- 21 oh she very young x x boss my boss
- 22 they don't agree about that you know
- 23 and so sometimes feel they feel
- 24 they under the woman
- 25 they don't like that you know yer
- 26 Meena: In some countries
- 27 there is this situation

28 um men doesn't like
29 don't like the man to be a low position
30 than women you know
31 Ljubica: {It's very difficult 2}
32 Cam: (*laughing*) {They usually think 2}
33 they are stronger.

After this Renata changed her attitude slightly saying she could see that it was a difficult cultural problem. However, she felt that Australia had equal opportunity laws and that it was a case of discrimination because of the supervisor's sex. Ling ling and Ljubica agreed with her. Meena and Cam, while now moving towards agreement, continued to try to help the others see the man's position and how it might be best to approach him.

Transcript 1

Excerpt 4

1 Meena: Maybe it's better you explain
2 that er here women and men are equal
3 ? Yer yes
4 Meena: you know and it's no differences between them
5 maybe he has something wrong with his cultural background
6 so it's better to explain er Australian cultures to him
7 you know er because many migration doesn't know anything
8 about Australian cultures and it's better he knows about this

Cam put one last contradictory argument that it might be the woman's fault, saying perhaps because the woman was so young she did not have good communication skills and did not act like a supervisor. This might be one example of what has been described as the Vietnamese tendency to put multiple, contradictory views, to look at all sides of a question, before reaching a conclusion (Cam Nguyen 1994). This was not accepted by the others but a little later, clearly influenced by Meena's argument, Renata made another proposal that involved a rather more indirect way of dealing with the problem. This was to send him to a training course in intercultural communication and interpersonal skills. At the same time, the influence of the others' opinions in shifting Cam and Meenas' positions was, in turn, evident from comments they made at this point.

Transcript 1

Excerpt 5

1 Cam: So no need to change him
2 to other position
3 if we change he will complain more
4 (*laughing*) x x x the other women
.....
5 Meena: And he must separate his work
6 with the other things

This discussion ended with an agreed solution (a training course), joking and much laughter. As the following extract demonstrates, a good rapport had developed among the participants.

Transcript 1

Excerpt 6

- 1 Renata: If it doesn't work
2 I'll move him to your session (loud laughter)
3 then you'll have the problem
4 the hot potato in your hands (prolonged laughter)
5 Okay you think
6 Cam: (laughing) and if he can't change
7 x x send him to you for teaching him
8 Renata: And maybe I can start to wear short skirts too
9 then what will he do (more loud laughter)

The contributions of the various participants largely reflected the values they subscribed to as indicated in their replies to the questionnaires. To the proposition "You think of yourself as a member of your family first and an individual second. You believe that what you do affects the chances of your brothers and sisters and cousins and that if you know the family then you know the individual", Cam, Meena, Ljubica and Ling ling circled "agree" while only Renata circled "disagree". To the proposition "All people are not equal. You can place everyone in a hierarchy according to factors such as family background, age and social status and you show more respect to people of higher rank than you", Renata and Ling ling circled "disagree", Ljubica circled "strongly disagree" but Meena circled "agree" and Cam wrote "Yes, completely".

However, although these different values appeared to influence the views expressed, and led to initial disagreement, the participants worked at explaining their way of seeing things to the others and helped create a wider understanding of the problem from both points of view. Participants were prepared to shift their positions because of arguments put by others and a compromise solution was reached that avoided directly confronting the male employee under discussion, an approach which may have worsened the situation if he had already lost face having to work under a younger woman and if he came from a culture where direct criticism was seen as deliberately rude and humiliating. At the same time this group's solution fitted better with the realities and culture of the Australian workplace than Meena's initial proposal to move the man and place him under a male supervisor. As noted earlier, it has been claimed that culturally diverse workplace teams are more innovative and creative than homogeneous ones if they have had some training and this group did provide evidence that, if people bring a range of understandings to a situation and are prepared to shift their frames of reference in the light of new perspectives, more appropriate solutions may be found and agreed on. Of course, in this instance, it does have to be acknowledged that the fact that all the participants were women and the issue of equal rights for women was involved may well have been an important factor in bringing about both the agreement and the rapport.

Providing alternative perspectives and effective solutions: Group J

Some other groups made up of both men and women also had successful discussions on this topic, however. One such group, consisting of two women and two men all from very diverse cultures, exhibited much cultural understanding and openness to other viewpoints. While they did not develop the same amount of rapport as the all-female group, their discussion was occasionally marked by laughter related to the topic, and they avoided the clashes of some other groups. In addition, they did not ignore or dismiss one another's suggestions. The group participants were Gia, the Western

European woman from Group E, Karim, a Middle Eastern man, Zhiyan, an East Asian woman and Ramon, a Latin American man. One factor that did appear to have contributed to their success was the fact that their class had also already done some work on cross-cultural awareness before this interaction took place.

While all the participants made substantial contributions to the discussion, Gia was the most fluent and tended to dominate. She opened the discussion by going straight for a "let them have it out together" solution. She wanted to "sit them down together" to discuss why the man could not report to the woman. She made the immediate judgment that it was a personal problem, that the man "obviously" did not "respect the woman enough". Ramon put a view similar to that put by some other Latin and Eastern European men, implying that the short skirts were the problem for sexual reasons, an attitude they found understandable and titillating. However, nobody followed up this suggestion and, in fact, Karim then intervened to propose that the reason for the man's behaviour could be because of the culture he came from. The others accepted this suggestion and after some talk about whether the real problem was the woman's clothes or just the fact that she was a woman supervisor, Ramon shifted his position and suggested that perhaps the man was just using the short skirts factor as an excuse for avoiding the female supervisor. The following discussion then took place.

Transcript J

Excerpt 1

- 1 Zhiyan: Yes because we didn't know
2 where this man came from
4 if he came from America
3 Karim: Yer {x x x 1}
4 Zhiyan: {this would be fine 1}
5 maybe he came from the Middle East
6 he {can't accept this 2}
7 Karim: {x x x 2}
8 Gia: So what do we do about that
9 she's a woman and she's younger than him
10 . . . *(slight laugh)* what do we do
11 Zhiyan: I think as the manager um
12 you don't just go there and criticise this man
13 we should like er try to understand
14 why he got this problem
15 why he didn't go to report to his direct boss

In this extract, Zhiyan was also showing cultural awareness: that there might be very strong cultural conditioning involved which made it impossible for the man to accept the situation (lines 5 and 6). This made Gia more open to alternative suggestions about how to deal with the problem (lines 8, 9 and 10). Zhiyan, who came from a culture which traditionally valued harmony and avoided direct criticism and confrontation, then advised against just criticising the man and instead suggested they should try to understand his position. She realised that direct criticism would be counterproductive with people from many cultures. After this, Karim again showed his sympathy for the man, saying they must find a solution as the company would not want to lose him because of his good qualifications. At this point, Gia made a radical shift and proposed moving him to another section with a male supervisor. However, Karim felt that his qualifications might only be suitable for the one section and they must work on that

basis. As in many of these interactions, the discussion tended to go round in circles and points were often returned to. The participants now returned to the conclusion that it was the man's fault and he would have to change and adapt to the new culture. Karim then explained to the others how difficult it might be to do this quickly.

Transcript J

Excerpt 2

- 1 Karim: My view his culture is difficult
2 different from here so his . . . maybe
3 maybe he need more time
4 Zhiyan: That's right
5 Karim: to be used this er . . .
6 Ramon: But I er excuse me
7 {how can the x x 1}
8 Gia: {Maybe he just doesn't 1}
9 know how {x x 2}
10 Ramon: {the reason 2} because
11 you have to do the things as er
12 as they does the people do
13 Karim: {Yer but 3}
14 Ramon: {this culture 3}
15 Karim: if you are new in this country
16 it is not easy to do this thing {very quickly 4}
17 Gia: {No x x 4}
18 Zhiyan: {It is just one 4} of the culture shocks
19 for this man

Ramon and Gia were persuaded by Karim and Zhiyan's arguments (lines 15 to 19). They had learned about culture shock as part of the cultural awareness training so all understood Zhiyan's point. Although Ramon had argued that newcomers have to accept the way things are done in a new culture (lines 10 to 12), he agreed that the man needed time and Gia's understanding and sympathies had shifted so far that she proposed asking the female supervisor to "take it a bit easy with the short skirts: to wear them a bit longer for a few months". However, they again returned to the conclusion that the short skirts weren't the real problem and the final decision was to talk to the man to try to understand his problem and then to have another meeting to decide on the next step. The last part of this interaction was very amicable with some laughter, especially when they stepped out of their roles and realised another meeting was not possible.

This group's discussion again showed the value of diverse backgrounds in this sort of problem-solving. Had they all had similar backgrounds to Gia's, they might have accepted her initial views about how to solve the problem and insisted that the male staff member and the supervisor 'have it out'. If no alternative perspectives are introduced, it is natural for a group to agree on conclusions based on causes typical of interpersonal problems in their own culture and to propose solutions that would work with members of that culture. However, because of their different backgrounds, this group was able to fully explore the probable causes of the problem and arrive at a solution more likely to be effective in the circumstances. As mentioned earlier, the fact that their class had had some cross-cultural awareness training (Zhiyan's comment about culture shock, for example, was indicative of this) a short time before this

discussion took place also appears to have contributed to their understanding and receptivity to other points of view.

The questionnaires filled in by three of these participants (Gia, Karim and Ramon) provide evidence of the diversity of values held by these participants. As mentioned in the discussion of Group E's interaction, Gia's answers indicated that she held individualist values. She also identified completely with egalitarian values and indicated that she valued a direct, low context communication style. Ramon identified with collectivist values for five of the seven outlined. He also identified with all the hierarchical values and with an indirect, non-confrontational communication style. Karim's questionnaire revealed that he believed he differed in many respects from others in his culture. He wrote two pages of comments about his views as well as marking the questionnaire. Although he wrote "I feel the obligation to help my family first" and "I believe in strong family relations", he added that people should not be judged by family status or the university or school they attended. On communication style and power distance, he indicated that an indirect, face-saving communication style and high power distance were generally valued in his culture, but that he preferred a direct style of communication and believed people should be equal.

A number of other groups' discussion of this problem were recorded and in all these cases there was a similar division between the participants, usually reflecting their cultural backgrounds and the value systems that had been part of their enculturation. As the discussion of Group F illustrated, some of these discussions were not as successful and amicable as this one, however. A very small number of other discussions of this problem also resulted in misunderstandings and even clashes, leading to friction and negative evaluations of the personality and ability of other participants (FitzGerald 1996). In others, however, individuals who were culturally aware, especially some who had lived in different cultures or who understood but questioned some of the values of their own culture, were able to act as cultural mediators and effect frame switches on the part of others. Such people are highly valuable in an intercultural context.

The discussions of this particular problem also provided evidence of recurring patterns, apparently based on cultural background and gender. One common feature of all these discussions was that in every group the women shared a belief in women's rights and this belief tended to outweigh other considerations on their part. In most groups, the women supported the female staff member and her right to dress as she chose, although as in the group just discussed and one other, two European women (after listening to culturally-based explanations of the man's behaviour) developed enough sympathy for him to propose that the woman supervisor should wear longer skirts for awhile. And, as in the two groups discussed above, women with experience of Moslem or Confucian societies were able to explain the reasons for the male staff member's attitude. A number of men with experience of such societies also took this role, and the way in which they were able to help the others understand the problem provided evidence of the value of a diverse group when problem solving, especially when cultural issues are involved.

Another pattern that emerged in these discussions was consensus on the view that Australia was a 'free' society and ultimately the male staff member must accept the fact of women's rights if he wanted to work in this country. However, there was less agreement about the way in which to effect a change in the man's attitude. Most groups reached the conclusion that it would be necessary to talk to him and make him

understand the situation in the Australian workplace. However, in a few cases, participants, generally from hierarchical cultures preferring a more indirect communication style, attempted to suggest other more indirect ways of dealing with the problem such as a period of time under a male supervisor while getting used to the culture, a training course or a general talk about the issues at a staff meeting. However, these indirect approaches were usually ignored or not accepted by participants with different views about confrontation and 'having it out' (FitzGerald 1996). In fact, some participants from European cultures remained committed to bringing the two staff members together to sort out their problems. However, most groups finally decided that it was necessary to talk to the male staff member only. Again views about how direct or indirect this 'talk' should be seemed to be determined by cultural backgrounds, (as in Group G). Participants from non-confrontational, high power distance collectivist cultures saw the need to be indirect in the way the matter was raised but, in many cases, this was ignored by other participants from different cultural backgrounds. Presumably this was because they failed to appreciate or comprehend the fact that such an approach would no doubt be more successful with somebody from a hierarchical society where direct criticism would cause humiliation and exacerbate the loss of face already experienced having to work under a younger woman. If all the participants had come from backgrounds which shared this view, these suggestions would not have been ignored or dismissed as they were in some of these intercultural interactions. Alternatively, where there was more cultural awareness on the part of the participants, this did not happen in this unproductive way.

Discussion

As the discussions of these groups indicates, a number of interactions provided clear evidence of the influence on participants views of the cultural values identified in the literature as dominant in their cultures. At the same time there was evidence that some individuals had consciously chosen not to subscribe to these values. Overall, however, it must be noted that many of the interactions did not provide any evidence of cultural values influencing the content of the communication. In a number of these discussions, there was a convergence of views and, as indicated above, other factors such as shared gender at times seemed to be more salient than culture as an influence. Perhaps the features shared by the participants (their high level of education, their relative youth, their exposure to a second language and their experience of leaving their own culture and moving into a new one) gave them much in common and accentuated that which is universal among people rather than that which is different.

Another possibility is that in some discussions participants deliberately avoided introducing culturally bound information or views that they thought their listeners would not understand. In a study of Spanish speaking learners interacting in dyads with Japanese, Korean or Chinese learners describing things and giving instructions for their use, Tarone and Yule (1987) observed that the speakers appeared to be extremely careful to avoid using culturally bound information unless they thought their listeners would know about it.

A further explanation could lie in the nature of the topics under discussion. Particular topics, such as "The Heart Transplant" and "Managing Diversity", involved issues related to cultural values or engendered views based on such values. Other problems which will be discussed in later chapters, did not provoke different views or concerns based on cultural values. In fact, analysing discussions of a range of topics does lead to

the conclusion that the extent to which these values play a part depends to a large extent on the topic.

Nevertheless, although there was no evidence of conflict or misunderstanding as a result of different cultural values in many of the interactions, the fact that, in some of those discussed in this chapter and in other interactions (FitzGerald 1996), there were recurring patterns showing misunderstanding and even alienation because of value differences, does point to the need for cross-cultural training to help mitigate these problems. This view is strengthened by the fact that there was less misunderstanding in groups who were discussing the same topics but who had more cultural awareness. Participants were able to help others make shifts and appreciate different points of view because of their knowledge and because the others were more aware and open to these views. Together, they were able to see issues from a wider range of viewpoints and in some cases arrive at more culturally appropriate solutions.

To conclude, the examples discussed above do identify a number of ways in which different cultural values can impinge on communicative interactions. We have seen how they can play a part in determining priorities and preferences; how they can cause very deeply-held concerns which are not appreciated by others; how they can result in individuals holding fixed positions on an issue, leading to worsening interpersonal relations; and finally, how, when explicated to open-minded, receptive interactants, they can help solve a problem in more culturally appropriate ways.

Chapter Five

COMMUNICATION STYLES: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In this chapter, the literature concerning different communication styles will be discussed: first an overview of the styles and then three aspects of these styles: discourse organisation and rhetorical style; turn-taking and the distribution of talk; and attitudes to assertiveness, disagreement and conflict. The related data analysis of these three aspects will form chapters six, seven and eight respectively. As with the overview of the literature on cultural values, an attempt will be made to fit the diverse findings into an overarching framework.

As indicated earlier, one of the factors that most contributes to problems in intercultural communication is the different communication styles participants bring to any interaction. These styles have various labels. Tannen (1984b) calls them 'conversational styles', Blum-Kulka et al (1989) use the term 'interactional styles', while Erickson & Shultz (1982) describe them as 'cultural ways of talking and listening' and Dodd (1995) and Sarbaugh (1979) as 'communication patterns'. However, 'communication or communicative styles' seem to be the most widely used terms (Clyne 1994, Wierzbicka 1991, Clancy 1986, Scollon & Scollon 1995, Barlund 1994). Clancy (1986:213) describes communication style as "one of the most striking meeting places of language and culture" and defines it as "the way language is used and understood in a particular culture". According to Clancy, the style arises from shared beliefs about people and the way they should relate. In other words, these styles reflect cultural values and the different ways cultures believe good interpersonal relations are best achieved. As Wierzbicka (1991:69) explains it: "Different ways of speaking, different communicative styles, can be explained and made sense of, in terms of independently established different cultural values and cultural priorities".

Many of the fundamental components of how people talk differ from person to person and group to group. Ways of showing interest, the depth of involvement sought, when to start talking and when to stop, whether it is permissible to talk at the same time as others, how politeness is achieved, when to speak more loudly or softly, whether silence is acceptable or discomforting, whether disagreement should be avoided, how information should be organised and presented - all these are often taken for granted as self-evident but they can differ greatly depending on factors such as cultural background, gender and education as well as individual habits. Other features which make up these different communication styles are prosody and paralinguistic features (intonation, stress, phrasing, tone of voice, pitch, pacing, pausing and loudness) proxemics (spatial relations, such as personal space); kinesics (gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, body positions and movements); and haptics (use of touch) (Dodd 1995, Gumperz 1990, Andersen 1994).

Whenever people communicate they need to say each thing in a particular way in order to communicate their intentions, and the specific ways in which they do that is what forms their style, so style is fundamental, not something just added on or extra (Tannen 1984b, Clancy 1986). A person's style is a mix of features developed by the individual alone and those learned socially in interaction. But because these styles are learned in a social context, and from an early age, individual choices tend to be limited to those features made familiar by the groups in which the person is enculturated. That is, the

range within which individuals have a choice is socially determined, and individual variation generally occurs within the parameters of a particular cultural style (Scollon & Scollon 1983, Tannen 1984b). As Tannen (1984b: 10) suggests: "Perhaps the impression of individual style results from the unique combination and deployment of socially learned features". In this study only features which appear to be related to cultural background will be examined although some attention will be given to the influence of gender where this is relevant.

Divergent communication styles can create a feeling of dissonance, of not being understood and of not belonging. It is in this sense that communication style forms a significant component of cultural identity (Tannen 1981, Blum-Kulka et al 1989). In fact, communication style is closely identified both with one's identity as a person and as a member of a cultural group. (Scollon & Scollon 1990, Erickson 1984, Gudykunst et al 1988, Saville-Troike 1982)

In many intercultural encounters, participants can be using a common language, a *lingua franca*, in which they all have a solid grasp of the structures, but will be expressing themselves in the communication style of their first language. According to Clyne (1996) the pragmatic aspects of language, such as discourse patterns, are close to people's cultural values and personalities and so it takes much longer to master those rules in a new language than to master other features such as vocabulary, syntax and pronunciation. For this reason, people tend to go on communicating in the same style they always did even when they have near native proficiency in a new language. Tannen (1984a: 194) puts the same point in a different way. She believes that people who learn the explicit vocabulary and grammar of a new language are "likely to stuff it into the implicit paralinguistic and discourse castings of the native communication system". Seaman's (1972) research shows how resistant to change communication style can be. He found that the Greek language was almost extinct among third generation Greek Americans but that their communication style still reflected Greek influences.

As mentioned previously, native speakers are usually tolerant of problems non-native speakers may have with grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. However, when people communicate in a style that is not valued in their culture, they make judgments about the character and ability of the individual or the group they represent (Clyne 1996). Indeed, researchers such as Gumperz (1990, 1992b), Tannen (1981, 1984b) and Young (1994) have demonstrated how these different styles contribute to the negative stereotyping of cultural groups. Tannen (1981), for example, shows how these differences have resulted in the stereotype of New York Jews as aggressive and pushy and Young (1994) shows how a very different style has led to stereotypes of Chinese and other East and Southeast Asians as inscrutable and evasive. Gumperz (1978) describes how Pakistani English speakers are seen as negative and belligerent in Britain because they use 'no' as a pause filler not a negator, following the pattern used in their first language. According to Gumperz (1990), these types of problems are not solved by increasing contact because people are generally unaware of their underlying causes. The common problems between South Asian and British speakers of English are increasing rather than diminishing.

Such stereotyping as well as the negative evaluation of individual character and ability can have serious consequences. For example, it has been shown that in situations such as educational counselling sessions and job interviews, when the 'gatekeepers' (individuals who have decision-making powers) have a different communication style

from the student or interviewee, this may result in an adverse outcome for the latter (Erickson & Shultz 1982, Chick 1989, 1990, Gumperz et al 1979, Gumperz 1978, 1992b).

For the purposes of this study, only three aspects of communication style will be examined. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, they are, first, ways of organising discourse and the use of rhetorical strategies; second, turn-taking patterns and the distribution of talk; and, third, attitudes to the expression of opinion, disagreement and the handling of conflict. These three have been chosen for a number of reasons. In general, people appear to be unaware of the extent of differences in these areas, they can cause considerable misunderstanding, and they are among those most susceptible to teaching and training. For example, it is interesting to note that in their excellent training materials for effective team and meeting skills in the restructuring workplace, Joyce et al (1995), two of the main areas covered are turn-taking for effective participation and constructive agreement and disagreement. Other features of communication style such as prosody and some types of body language are more obvious and at the same time more difficult to teach and to analyse. For example, different accents are immediately perceptible but as Gumperz (1990:237) points out, style features such as prosody are "not readily amenable to classroom teaching". Non-verbal communication, while of great significance, is also highly problematic in intercultural communication. In chapter two some of the cultural differences in head movements were noted. To give an example of a less overt difference, according to Condon (1976, cited in Dodd 1995), as with other kinesic signals, the meaning of oculosic behaviours are culturally based. The widening of eyes indicates surprise and wonder in Anglo culture, anger in Chinese culture, challenge in French culture, persuasion in Black American culture and a call for help in Latin American cultures.

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the differences in the three areas selected for analysis which have been identified in the literature will be outlined in this chapter, and the data will then be analysed for evidence of these features of communication style and the effect they have on the interactions in the next three chapters. First, however, it is necessary to outline some of the general descriptions of communication styles in the literature, the attempts to find broad patterns across cultures, and then to mention some of the more specific studies which provide further confirmation of these larger patterns. The negative ways in which these styles are perceived by groups who have contrasting styles will also be discussed. This outline is intended to provide a frame of reference within which evidence of different communication styles in the data can be discussed.

Frameworks of communication styles

Hall's high and low context styles

One of the first and broadest descriptions of culturally-based communication styles was that of Hall (1976, 1983). He identified two styles: high and low context. In a high context style, the talk tends to be indirect. Much of the message is expressed by means other than words. People learn to watch for and interpret non-verbal cues and hinted at nuances of meaning. A great deal is left unsaid: silence is valued and is associated with self-restraint. Low context communication, however, is more direct and explicit: most of the message is carried in the words and people are comparatively unaware of other contextual cues and less adept at interpreting meanings other than those expressed verbally. They tend to take what is said at face value, generally expecting people to say what they mean. In high-context cultures people distinguish more between insiders and outsiders and the relative status of their interlocutors and vary their communication

accordingly. In such cultures, especially if something is troubling them or they have a negative message to communicate, people will talk around and around the crucial point, expecting their listener(s) to work out what it is.

As discussed earlier in the chapter on cultural values, one major dimension of cultural variability is the individualist-collectivist dimension. Much recent work aligns this individualism-collectivist dimension with the concept of low context-high context communication styles. Indeed, it has been claimed that the "dimensions of low-high communication and individualism-collectivism are isomorphic" (Gudykunst et al 1988: 44). One can see that for people who are operating as individuals, relatively free of group affiliations and less inclined to distinguish between insiders and outsiders, a more direct, explicit style of communication would be preferred, whereas people who are more concerned with harmonious relationships might prefer more ambiguous and implicit talk. Moreover, people who subscribe to egalitarian values would be less likely to vary their style to any great extent when talking to those perceived to have a higher or lower status. In contrast, there is considerable evidence that in hierarchical, high context cultures, people make clear distinctions between superiors, peers and subordinate as well as ingroups and outgroups and vary their communicative behaviour accordingly. For example, they can be more direct in communication with peers and subordinates. (Yum 1994, Smith & Bond 1999, Ting-Toomey 1994).

According to Hall (1983), national cultures can be ranked depending on the extent to which they emphasise the words used to communicate (low context) or the meanings inferred from the context (high context). He did warn, however, that this can only be a rough guide: there are individual variations within a culture and cultures in the mid-range of contexting, such as French culture, can exhibit a combination of the two styles (Hall 1976). Rosch and Seglar (1987) used Hall's work illustrating the relationship between context and meaning as the basis for their research ranking major cultures. They identified German, Scandinavian and North American cultures as low context and Japanese, Arabic and Latin American cultures as high context.

Other researchers question the validity of broad classifications in relation to cultural values and communication styles. Wierzbicka (1991), for example, insists that each language/cultural group must be studied separately. She argues that terms like 'directness' and 'indirectness' cannot be applied across all cultures: when compared with Japanese, Anglo-Americans are seen as valuing directness but in comparison with Israelis they appear to value indirectness. The same can be said about other terms used in the literature. This argument is most persuasive. However, it does seem that the findings of many studies of single cultural styles, and comparisons of two styles, do support many of the generalisations made about broad groupings of cultures. Furthermore, it is a fact that these frameworks are necessary as a basis for this type of study, as well as in intercultural training and educational settings where time and other constraints make detailed and encyclopaedic knowledge an impossibility.

This broad division does tend to work when comparing, for example, English-speaking societies with those of Southeast and East Asia. Comparisons of Japanese, Chinese, Indochinese and Korean styles with those of Anglo-Americans and Australians largely match these patterns (Yum 1994, Ishi & Bruneau 1994, Yamada 1992, Nguyen Dang Liem 1994, Nguyen Cam 1994, Lustig & Koester 1993). For example, according to Lustig & Koester (1993), North American style is seen as typifying the low context style, while Yamada (1992) describes Japanese communication as high context and

states that high-context talk produces conversation which lacks a clear focus or goal and which is characterised by numerous intermittent silences. Yamada (1992:59) also describes the mutually negative reactions of each group based on these style differences. According to her, "Americans criticize the perceived indecisiveness of the Japanese and the Japanese criticize the alleged cold and ruthless behaviour of the Americans". Respective criticisms are "Japanese are illogical and evasive. They beat around the bush, they make lot of irrelevant and anecdotal points", and "Americans are blunt and insensitive. They are loud and aggressive, they just steamroll over us with their own views" (Yamada, 1992:92-3). Comparisons of Anglo-Australians and Indochinese mirror these evaluations. According to Nguyen Dang Liem (1994:48) Cambodians, Laotians and Vietnamese consider Anglo-Australian straightforwardness "at best impolite if not brutal". It is seen as demonstrating "a lack of intelligence or courtesy". For them falsehood is not a moral concern: the important point is not whether a statement is true or false but whether its purpose is to facilitate interpersonal harmony. In workplace comments, Australians in turn often characterise Indochinese as evasive, shy and passive.

Gudykunst's, Ting-Toomey's and Chua's four stylistic modes

Gudykunst et al (1988) have further developed and extended Hall's framework. Their summary of communication patterns is very useful and is clearly based on much of the research comparing the styles of two cultures or describing the style of one culture. They identify four stylistic modes: *direct versus indirect, elaborate versus exacting versus succinct, personal versus contextual and instrumental versus affective*. They explain these by reference to Hofstede's (1980, 1991) dimensions and Hall's (1976, 1983) low-high context schema. In regard to the direct-indirect dimension, they believe that the value orientation of individualism in cultures such as those of North America encourages norms of honesty and openness realised through direct, precise, explicit verbal expression. The value orientation of collectivism in cultures such as those of East Asia, however, stresses group harmony and conformity, which are best achieved through indirect, imprecise, implicit verbal behaviours.

In terms of the amount of talk that is valued in different cultures, Gudykunst et al (1988) distinguish three styles. The elaborate style involves the use of eloquent, expressive language. They see the communication style of Arab-speakers as typical of this style and refer to their tendency to use highly expressive metaphors and similes. The exacting style is seen as typical of English speakers who tend to follow the Grice (1975) 'quantity maxim' which, as previously mentioned, requires a speaker to provide neither more nor less information than is required in any interaction. The third style, the succinct style, is characterised by pauses and silence and understatement: talk and verbal skills are not highly valued. Asian cultures such as that of Japan and China and some American Indian cultures provide examples of this succinct style. In general, these researchers suggest that in low context cultures, which rate low on Hofstede's (1980, 1991) uncertainty avoidance scale, an exacting style of communication is typical. In high context cultures, those societies which score high on uncertainty avoidance tend to use a succinct style, while those with moderate uncertainty avoidance scores tend to use an elaborate style. This does not fit in all cases as Chinese societies rate moderate to low on uncertainty avoidance but are said to have a succinct style. However, it does work for many groups, for example, as noted, English-speakers would be representative of the exacting style, Japanese and Koreans of the succinct group and Middle Easterners of the elaborate style.

Gudykunst et al (1988) identify the third stylistic mode as the personal versus contextual style. Personal style describes a style which is centred on the individual: 'personhood' and the 'I' identity are stressed and language reflects an egalitarian social order. The use of explicit personal pronouns is common and spatial and temporal locatives are crucial to meaning. Direct address and often first names are used to stress equality and informality. This style is typical of the English-speaking and Scandinavian societies which are low context, individualist cultures with low scores on Hofstede's (1980,1991) power distance dimension. In the contextual style, the 'role' identity is stressed, language reflects the hierarchical social order and there is a heavy reliance on contextual cues. Gudykunst and his colleagues briefly discuss the way in which Indian English and Chinese discourse style rely on contextual cues. Rather than orientating the listener by stating the main point or thesis statement first, as is usual among native English speakers, the listener is expected to share many assumptions about the situation and is given much minor contextual or background information first. They also outline the status-orientated nature of language in cultures as diverse as Korea and Burundi in which, for example, different forms of address, reference and verb forms must be used, depending on the situation and the status of those involved. Such cultures are collectivist, high-context, and score high on the power distance dimension.

The fourth stylistic mode described by Gudykunst and his colleagues (1988) is the instrumental versus affective style. The instrumental style refers to a more goal-oriented and sender-oriented use of language in which the onus is on speakers to make themselves understood and in which people try to persuade their listeners in a step by step process, not waiting to ascertain whether their argument is being received sympathetically. North Americans are seen as typical users of the instrumental style. The affective style is more listener and more process-oriented. These researchers make a further division into a *subdued affective* style and a *dramatic affective* style. In the former style, typical in East Asia, there is greater emphasis on the role of the listener: the speaker is deliberately imprecise and indirect because they are not prepared to express an attitude unless they can sense that their listener accepts their way of thinking and feeling. In the latter style, typical of Arab speakers, there is a more emotional tone and expressive non-verbal behaviour. The instrumental style is identified with self-face maintenance and meeting negative face needs, the affective style with mutual face maintenance and positive face needs.

More specific and detailed studies comparing the Anglo-American communication style with that of speakers from Middle Eastern Arab speaking cultures do support this extension of Hall's (1976) original division. For example, they make it evident that the Arab style, while high context, is significantly different in certain respects from that of some other groups, such as East and Southeast Asian speakers. The further divisions into succinct and elaborate styles and subdued and dramatic affective styles are most helpful in this respect. To briefly outline some of the more relevant findings, in Cohen's (1987) comparison of Egyptian and American speakers, he claims that Egyptians conform with the broad patterns of high context communication. For them, language is a social instrument and promoting social ends is as important as transmitting information, whereas Americans put greater emphasis on transmitting information. In Arab culture, directness and especially contradiction are disliked although Cohen points out that public discourse can be immoderate and vituperative. He also refers to the strong tendency to exaggerations and elaborations.

Other researchers (Almaney and Alwan 1982, Anderson 1994, Copeland & Grigg 1985) describe the Arab belief in the emotional appeal of language and their proclivity for overassertion in almost all types of communication, arguing that this is expected in Arab culture and that Arabs often fail to realise that people from other cultures may mean exactly what they say. In Arab culture, if you say what you mean without assertion others think you mean the opposite. Arabs tend to transfer their communication patterns into English, in particular a tendency toward overassertion, strings of adjectives, repetition, exaggeration, and the frequent use of parallel structures, as well as employing preferred patterns of organisational logic. In one particularly favoured pattern, a sweeping assertion is made and then supported by repetition, example and anecdote. Arabs are said to have a strong belief in the persuasive power of emotional or affective messages and persuasion is seen as the principle purpose of communication.

Katriel (1986) compares Arab communication style with that of other groups, in this case North American and Israeli. She describes Arabs as having a 'sweet talk' style in comparison with North Americans who have a 'tough talk' style and Israelis a 'straight talk' style. Katriel believes this 'sweet style' results from the high value placed on *musayara*, which means humouring or accommodating oneself to others in order to achieve harmonious social relations and to avoid confrontation. In this way the communication style in Arab-speaking communities fits into the positive politeness style said to be favoured in many collectivist cultures.

Clyne's four styles

Clyne (1994) also identifies broad communication styles but bases them on the detailed analysis of intercultural interactions. In general, his findings correlate with those outlined above and with the studies on the distribution of talk and turn-taking discussed below. In his study of communication in the Australian workplace between people from a number of very different backgrounds, mainly European and Asian, using English as a lingua franca, Clyne (1994:153) identifies the existence of "broad areal cultural communication patterns and expectations based on cultural value systems". He distinguishes four styles although he only describes three in detail. He finds "general tendencies" which "cluster" and which he designates in terms of these three styles. According to Clyne, (1994:159) it is "the interface between speech acts and turn-taking" in his data that suggests the existence of these styles. The main features of Style A demonstrated in Clyne's data is a tendency to have long turns. One reason for this is the non-linearity of this discourse style and the fact that negative politeness as well as positive politeness is realised through longer more elaborate explanations in speech acts such as directives and complaints. Those using Style B also tend to take long turns. In this case it is because of their bureaucratic style, with frequent use of repetition, and rhetorical devices like elaborate parallelism. This group emphasises positive politeness. Both these groups tend to long justifications and explanations. Both also exhibit a tendency not to listen to or tolerate interruptions. They are usually successful in turn maintenance and turn appropriation in intercultural interactions. Style C is characterised by relatively short turns, the frequent failure to appropriate or maintain turns in communication with the other groups, and the expression of negative politeness through deferential speech.

Those using Style A in Clyne's data are continental Europeans, such as Croatians, Poles, Spaniards, together with Spanish-speaking Latin Americans. Those who use Style B are South Asians, such as Indians, Sri Lankans of different ethnic groups, as

well as Iranians. Style C is that common to Southeast Asians: the ethnic Chinese, Cambodians, Indonesians, Malays and Vietnamese. Clyne describes these broad groupings as areal cultures which may have geographical or historical links. This is the case, for example, with Latin America as well as most of continental Europe. Clyne also identifies an Anglo-Celtic/Northern European style as a fourth style, which is always present in these communication settings. He notes that it is the style to which the other groups tend to converge, but he sees an analysis of this style as outside the scope of his study.

A useful aspect of Clyne's description of these styles is the way in which he sees some cultures as more centrally identified with a particular style. Indeed he says (1994:158) that these "areal cultures can be regarded as being on a continuum". For example, the Confucian-based cultures such as China and Vietnam would form the core or central cultures where Style C predominates and the Muslim-influenced Indonesians and Malays (not the Malaysian Chinese) would be on the periphery.

Clyne points out that when Europeans and Latin Americans using Style A talk together or with South Asians using Style B, there is usually reciprocal turn appropriation and simultaneous talk; however, both these groups tend to 'out talk' Southeast Asians. Nevertheless, he believes that the disadvantage of the Southeast Asians is lessened to some extent because in certain ways (for example, understating their case and not taking long turns to vindicate and explain their position) their style is more similar to the dominant Anglo style. Moreover, he does note significant differences among the Southeast Asian group. For instance, he describes the communication style of all but one Vietnamese in his sample as "quiet, or silent or reticent" (Clyne 1994:120), whereas he sees Indonesians and Filipinos as among the good intercultural communicators because their styles are more open and on the periphery of the areal groups they are identified with.

The identification of these two different Asian styles is particularly helpful as many writers on intercultural communication talk about an 'Asian style' which they compare with an English-speaking one (Scollon & Scollon 1995, Gudykunst et al 1988, Young 1994). As they usually seem most concerned with East Asian styles, particularly those of China and Japan, it is actually Style C that they are labelling as 'Asian'. Clyne finds that South Asians have more in common with the Iranians in his sample. Together they use the very different Style B which is characterised by a stress on form, with features such as repetition, parallelism and rhythmical balance.

Clyne's finding that Style C, characteristic of most of the Southeast Asians in his data, appears to disadvantage them in interactions with members of other groups, including those of the 'Anglo' group (although to a lesser extent), correlates with other evidence which will be discussed later. He establishes that many members of this group find it difficult to get a chance to participate in discussions and dialogues. He also believes that they do not always understand what is being implied by other groups, while the other groups cannot conceive that this group should be having these particular difficulties.

Most of the participants in Clyne's data were working in blue collar occupations. Since immigrants are often overqualified for the positions they are working in (Byrne & FitzGerald 1998a), this does not necessarily mean they were poorly educated. As will be seen, many of the features of their communication styles were similar to those of the

educated professionals from the same backgrounds who participated in the discussions analysed in this paper.

According to Tannen (1984b), some people object to research documenting differences in communication styles believing this perpetuates and strengthens negative stereotypes and leads to discrimination. However, as she argues, assuming everyone is the same is another form of discrimination and ignoring differences leads to misinterpretation and discrimination in important areas such as marriage and the workplace. Learning about different communication styles helps couples explain misunderstandings that have plagued them all their married lives (Tannen 1985a). This view is supported by the fact that at the end of training courses on communication styles in Australia, it is not unusual for people in long-standing intercultural marriages to comment that at last they understand their spouse's communicative behaviour. Moreover, as has been discussed previously, intercultural teams in the workplace are only effective if they have training which helps them negotiate these differences (Watson et al 1998).

As mentioned earlier, only three aspects of communication style will be examined in the data: discourse organisation and rhetorical strategies; turn-taking patterns and the distribution of talk; and attitudes to the assertion of opinion, disagreement and conflict. Findings about cultural differences which relate more directly to these aspects will now be outlined in order to extend the frame of reference within which the data will be discussed in the following three chapters.

Discourse organisation and rhetorical strategies

In Tannen's view (1984c: xiv) "the underlying organisation structure making words and sentences into a unified discourse has cultural significance for those that create or comprehend it. Compatriots from different subcultural backgrounds often have very different habits and expectations for the organisation of discourse". Young (1994: 58) also stresses the importance of these differences and their cultural basis, saying that "strategies for the organisation of discourse constitute significant symbols and intentions which both inform and distinguish a cultural population". When people follow the patterns common in their first language in a second language, this can be problematic. Indeed, Gumperz and Roberts (1991) claim that the tendency to map first language discourse organisation and rhetorical strategies onto English speech leads to the most serious problems of miscommunication because it is so invisible. Yet there is much evidence of this tendency in the literature. Tannen (1985a) describes the result as similar to following a route on which someone has turned the signposts around. The familiar signposts are there but they take you in the wrong direction.

The main difference that has been identified between native English-speaking discourse and that of many other cultures is that English speakers and writers tend to put the main point up-front and then support it in a direct, linear style. For example, a number of linguists (Scollon & Scollon 1995, Young 1994, Gumperz et al 1979, Kirkpatrick 1993, 1994, 1997, Brick 1991) believe that Chinese and other Asians use different principles to organise and present information, and that they tend to transfer these patterns into English. The main point or comment is not made until sufficient backgrounding of the topic has been done. Kirkpatrick (1993:27) describes this type of information sequencing as "modifier-modified" because subordinate or modifying information typically precedes the main information. He also uses the general term "because-therefore sequencing" to describe this phenomenon and notes that it is a fundamental unit of

sequencing in Modern Standard Chinese at both sentence level and at the level of extended spoken discourse.

The reverse order is favoured and, indeed, expected in most English-speaking discourse. Native English speakers expect 'because connectors' to be signalling backward links, whereas in much Asian discourse, they are signalling forward links. Thus sentence connectives which are so important as guides to the listener are used in rather different ways than those expected by native English speakers. When the background information comes first, they tend to assume that the point has been made. This different structuring of information, sometimes described as inductive organisation in contrast to deductive organisation, can result in native speakers interrupting before the main point has been made or switching off, thinking it has already been made.

Regular patterns of discourse tend to form systems of discourse and these are related to cultural norms. As noted earlier, concepts of self and notions of politeness involving 'face' vary from culture to culture. In Asian societies, the concern with showing deference or respect in interactions (particularly involving people with higher status), and thus preserving face, results in this tendency to use inductive rather than deductive strategies for introducing topics. This pattern allows for greater speaker-listener involvement: if a negative response is sensed, one can retreat. Opinions need never be made explicit. In English, the focus is on agency, whereas this pattern allows the focus to be on the situation not the agent.

Kirkpatrick (1997) points out that while this inductive reasoning is preferred, a deductive form is also quite possible. However, according to Young (1994), on those occasions when Chinese do put their own opinions or requests up-front, they do so in a conciliatory and flexible manner, suggesting that they are open to negotiation. She does make one group an exception, stating that young mainland Chinese youth in urban areas are "increasingly and more conspicuously assertive, egotistical and self-absorbed than those more traditional" (Young 1994: 58).

Researchers suggest further reasons for this preference. Gudykunst et al (1988) suggest that patterns of thought reflecting values may also be an influence on discourse organisation and rhetorical strategies. The particularist value-orientation of collectivist cultures, such as the Chinese and Japanese, tends to be associative, to recognise specifics, and so information processing begins with specific observations and reaches generalisations from this basis: an inductive process. Universalistic thought (more typical of individualist cultures) is more abstract: it begins with broad categories and decides how observed data fits the categories, a deductive process. Indeed, Young (1994) argues that the transcendental world view of westerners, which presumes a world shaped by some kind of unifying principle, yet is essentially dualistic in nature, engenders a great number of rhetorical patterns such as the tendency to put things into linear sequences of discrete units, governed by cause and effect, and to argue one's case with the aim to convince. Logic and reason are given higher priority than empathy. In contrast, a world view that is immanent and holistic rather than transcendental and dualistic, and in which things are not discrete entities but are defined by connections and relationships, causes people to use rhetorical strategies which generate mutual adjustment and accommodation.

Young (1994) outlines the type of stereotyping of Chinese by Westerners over the last hundred years and finds that Chinese have been consistently viewed as mysterious,

inscrutable people who do things backwards. At the same time they are seen as timid and lacking in self-assurance. She believes these impressions have very largely been formed because Chinese transfer their native discourse patterns into English. She mentions how a famous Chinese writer, Lin Yutang, described this as putting English meat onto Chinese bones. Young claims that Asian Americans, even those whose families have lived in America for three or more generations, tend to have problems because of their perceived aversion for assertiveness and their weakness in argumentation. The Asian tendency to lower the voice to signal great seriousness and feeling probably contributes to this interpretation. At the same time, however, Asians see native English discourse as ridiculously explicit and naive, and for them, giving the conclusions first amounts to going backwards. Indeed, stating the point at the outset seems either hopelessly rude and foolishly childlike or an indirect way of implying something else.

Gumperz and his colleagues (Gumperz 1990, Gumperz et al 1979, Gumperz & Tannen 1979) describe a similar pattern of discourse organisation by English speakers from the Indian subcontinent. They identify two ways in which South Asian discourse and rhetorical strategies operate differently from that of native English speakers. These speakers first very carefully provide general background information before making their point or contribution. Secondly, they use increased stress and loudness to mark this background information and then state the actual message in a low voice. As a result, they are often interrupted by native speakers before making their point and their contributions are negatively evaluated as illogical and of poor intellectual quality. One particular study of a job interview in Britain illustrates how the Indian applicant, not wanting to be too direct, answers questions first in a general way, only coming to important, specific points later. As a result, the native speaker listeners may well have switched off, thinking the point had been made (Gumperz et al 1979). In an analysis of Indian English discourse patterns, Yamuna Kachru (1987:97) points out that English is a second language in India. Linguistic competence in English is acquired in an Indian socio-cultural context and "discourse strategies developed along with the acquisition of Indic languages are discernible in Indian English discourse as well". She notes the frequent use of coordinating conjunctions in places where English speakers would use different types of conjunctions and the fact that the topic is inferred rather than stated. In a more wide ranging discussion of various types of English literary discourse, Braj Kachru (1987:135.) claims that distinct African, Indian, Chinese and Thai thought processes are evident in distinct types of English, not only in literary texts, but in all linguistic interactions. Indeed, according to him, they are "part of being an Indian, an African or a Singaporean".

An analysis of the nature of the miscommunication in an interview between an Australian Commonwealth Employment Service officer, a native English speaker, and a Vietnamese Australian found that a similar pattern was the cause of the problem. In his answer to questions, the Vietnamese Australian organised his information into episodic narratives, filling in the background to the main points before coming to them indirectly. The English speaker was unable to identify the key points because they were not placed first or stressed (Williams 1985).

In a study comparing American and Japanese workplace meetings, Yamada (1992) found that the Japanese organised their conversational topics in a circular manner and hopped back and forth from one topic to another. This promoted a harmonious,

nonconfrontational type of interaction: they were able to easily drop potentially confrontational subjects.

Robinson (1985) describes different ways of structuring information comparing American English speakers with South Asian speakers of English and Chicanos. The points she makes are that South Asians leave important specific points until last, and that they seldom repeat key topic words in the way native English speakers do, rather they often repeat a part of what the speaker has just said, which may have no direct relevance to the point they are making in reply. She identifies the same tendency to take a long time to get to the point (from the perspective of a native English speaker) among Chicanos.

This same pattern of discourse organisation has also been identified in a Latin American culture by Garcez (1993). An analysis of negotiations between American importers and Brazilian manufacturers revealed that in most instances the two parties used different rhetorical organisation of two elements: statements of intentions and supporting evidence for such statements. Garcez demonstrated the way in which the Americans' upfront statement of their case was, in each case, followed in a clear line of development by supporting evidence. Each proposition was coherent with the next and nothing was assumed about the listeners' role in making sense of their position. He termed this the "classical style" of argumentation. In contrast, the Brazilians' main statement or point only came after a longish build up towards coherence: the listener had to work to see the relevance of these pieces of background information, put them together and then connect them with the final statement of the main point at the end. Topical coherence was only achieved when the final point was made. This was because there were no clear signals indicating how the bits of background information related to what came before or what followed. This type of organisation of information assumed that the hearer was participating in the sensemaking and was expecting the talk to become increasingly relevant and coherent as it moved closer to the disclosure of the main communicative intention. Garcez does point out that there was one instance where the Americans made an indirect point and two cases when the Brazilians used the classical style. Both were in circumstances which appeared to make these variations necessary. For example, the Americans were indirect in a particularly face threatening situation and the Brazilians more direct when the atmosphere was uncooperative and they could not assume a high degree of listener involvement or when the Americans demanded they state their position upfront before discussing it. In general, problems arose in this interaction when the Americans assumed that the Brazilians' background information was their main point and interrupted them, making inaccurate guesses as to their meaning. At other times, the Americans failed to pick up the point at all and felt frustrated by the Brazilians' apparently incoherent reasoning.

Erickson (1984) found similar differences in his comparison of the Middle Class American style of argumentation and that of young, inner-city Black Americans. He found that the middle class Americans in his data used an oral version of a literate written style. First, there was a framing statement or main point and then examples to support it with explicitly formulated logical connections between the two. Black Americans sometimes used this Aristotelian logic with a sequence of propositions following each other in a linear sequence, but much more frequently, they used a string of anecdotes which were concrete rather than abstract and the connections between them were not made explicit. They did have underlying points but no formal proposition was stated.

There is also evidence in the respective languages to support these findings about different ways of organising discourse. For example, as Loveday (1983) points out, the preference of English-speakers for a direct, linear approach, which eschews digression and nuance, is reflected in many everyday expressions such as 'Don't beat about the bush' 'Get to the Point' 'Out with it' 'Let's get down to brass tacks' 'Let's put our cards on the table'. In his opinion, these phrases to some extent encode in ordinary speech Grice's (1975) maxims of quantity, relation and manner. As noted previously, Grice saw these as universal principles underlying all spoken discourse. This view has, of course, been questioned in relation to other cultures. For example, Loveday claims that the maxim of manner (be lucid, brief, unambiguous and orderly) would seldom be adhered to in Japan except in natural science circles. According to Loveday (1983:185), one typical structure of Japanese discourse, both spoken and written, is the "dot-type presentation of one item after another in a highly anecdotal or episodic vein without articulating the conclusion".

To give another example, in Vietnamese there is a saying 'rao truc, don sau'. The translation is "considering all implications and answering all possible objections". In practice this is what English speakers would consider beating about the bush. For Vietnamese, however, the more important the subject matter and the more important the audience or interlocutor is perceived to be, the bigger the bush. (Cam Nguyen, 1994:69-70).

Although it is accepted that spoken and written discourse have different features, at the same time oral and written forms do interact in varied and complex ways (Boyarin 1992), and because of this, research into the way different cultures present or organise information in writing tends to provide support for the tendencies described above. Kaplan (1966, 1987) distinguished five styles. In his view, native English speakers prefer a direct, linear style. Good organisation involves stating the main point first and then providing supporting detail and evidence. It is the writer's responsibility to ensure that it is easy to understand. He described the most valued Asian style as circular. A topic is looked at from a number of angles and discussed from various points of view. In this style, background information is provided first and the main point only touched on after this information has been provided. Moreover, the reader has to work to flesh out the meaning. According to Kaplan, the rhetoric of the romance languages is digressive and tangential. The reader has to work to make the necessary connections. The fourth style, Arabic rhetoric, frequently uses parallel constructions and co-ordination. Form takes precedence over content and certain kinds of redundancy and repetition are valued. And the fifth, Slavic or Russian rhetoric, again allows what in English is described as digression and only approaches the main point in a relatively oblique fashion. Kaplan's views were based on an examination of written paragraphs, mainly in academic discourse. Kaplan first identified these styles in 1966. In his later article in 1987, he claimed that all rhetorical styles are possible in all cultures: it is more a matter of certain styles being the preferred ones.

According to Clyne (1994), Kaplan wrongly linked the discourse types with genetic language types: (1) Semitic, (2) Oriental, (3) Romance and (4) Russian. They should be linked with cultures: (1) with Arabic culture (2) with Indonesian, Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Korean (3) with Central European including Germany, Italian, Spanish and Latin America, but is less true of French (4) as possibly an Eastern European variant of (3).

Kaplan's views have also been criticised as ethnocentric in assuming that styles other than the English one are departures from the norm. For example, in Clyne's view, it appears that English-speaking cultures are alone in their insistence on linearity, and what they describe as 'digressiveness' may in fact be a strong, comprehensive treatment of the content, while so-called 'circularity' may be the way English speakers interpret "implicitness when they are expecting "explicitness" (Clyne 1994:190-1). Liddicoat (1997a) is also critical, pointing out that such descriptions of the relationship between culture and writing are too 'monolithic'. They do not allow for the fact that writers are influenced by task and social considerations and may organise their writing differently depending on the subject area and purpose of the writing.

Other researchers in the field of contrastive analysis have also questioned some of Kaplan's findings. For example, Hinds (1990) claims that Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Korean) rhetorical style is linear: the difference from the English style is that it is what he calls quasi-inductive. The thesis is not stated upfront but is buried later in the piece of writing. This style involves a delayed introduction of purpose: the topic is implied not stated, background details or supporting points come first and the main point is only indirectly alluded to. Hinds claims that what disconcerts English-speaking readers, is that when the organisation of information is not deductive, they then expect it to be arranged in the inductive style which is used in certain situations in English when a hostile audience is expected. Despite criticisms of his findings, it is true that Kaplan did the first important research in this area and his work still serves as a basis for other contrastive analysis research and correlates in many respects with findings about spoken communication styles.

Taken altogether, the research outlined above does suggest that many groups organise discourse in different ways and employ different rhetorical strategies based on quite dissimilar world views and beliefs about the way in which people should communicate. Moreover, there is considerable evidence that many speakers employ these patterns when speaking in English and that this causes problems in intercultural interactions. It can result in native speakers negatively evaluating the character and ability of such non-native speakers and vice versa. In chapter six, the data will be examined for examples of these features and any difficulties they caused in the interactions.

Turn-taking patterns and the distribution of talk

When people talk together in ordinary conversation, there appear to be both broad similarities and some significant differences across cultures. As Gardner (1994) points out, films of recent contact groups in places as far apart as the New Guinea highlands and the Amazon show people generally taking it in turns to speak, with regular changes in speakership decided either by the previous speaker or with participants self-selecting. Overlapping is not uncommon but it is almost always brief. This description fits quite closely with the conversational behaviour proposed by the conversational analysts (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974), a system of turn-taking based on the analysis of data which has become the most widely accepted theory in regard to the basic conversational process in English native-speaker discourse (James & Clarke 1993). Conversational analysts claim that in most cases one participant talks at a time and transitions from one turn to another usually occur with little or no gap. Overlaps are common but brief. Transitions normally only occur at completion points such as phrases, clause and sentences and there are three types of turn allocation. The current speaker can select the next speaker, or if this does not happen, one of the other

participants can choose to take a turn. If nobody does this, the current speaker can resume their turn. More recent research in this field has established that overlap plays a more significant role than was at first believed. For example, Goodwin and Goodwin (1992) have demonstrated how the production of an assessment can be collaborative and this can result in extended simultaneous talk. Other researchers have pointed out that there is more overlap and simultaneous talk when people are disagreeing (Vuchinich 1990).

However, while this system of turn-taking provides a basic framework for the study of conversation, other types of talk, for example institutional forms of talk such as doctor-patient interviews and courtroom trials, vary significantly from ordinary conversation within one culture. Indeed, Gardner (1994) claims that there is greater variance between types of talk in one culture than there is between ordinary conversations across cultures. Van Lier (1988) sees turn-taking as more or less constrained depending on the speech activity involved. He sees conversation as the least constrained with turn-taking locally allocated and then discussion, interviews, debates and ceremonies as increasingly constrained (in that order) with pre-allocated turns greatest in ceremonies. Moreover, he argues that turn-taking is more ordered in dyadic interactions than in groups because in the latter there are more potential participants.

In general, research across different disciplines would suggest that turn-taking patterns and the distribution of talk varies according to the situational context, the type of speech activity and the communicative styles of the participants.

There is much evidence that different turn-taking styles and the distribution of talk are culture-bound and the source of many problems (Tannen 1985b, Tarone & Yule 1989, Scollon & Scollon 1995, Phillips 1990). For example, Clyne, Ball & Neil (1991:271) claim that turn length is influenced by culture and that the variation in this respect is "the cause of much frustration in intercultural communication". And Roberts et al (1992) make the point that as well as a preference for longer turns in some cultures, the way in which talk is distributed is heavily dependent on turn-taking strategies as well as factors such as unequal power and language proficiency. Whatever, the cause, people experience frustration when they are unable to get a turn.

Trompenaars (1993:68-9) provides a helpful, if rather simplistic, diagrammatic summary of three turn-taking patterns, which he claims have been identified by linguists. In the style he labels 'Anglo', people tend to take it in turns to speak but with almost no perceptible pause or break between turns. It is not polite to interrupt and silence makes people uncomfortable: it is seen as a failure to communicate. In the 'Oriental' style, people also take it in turns to speak but with marked pauses between turns in order to show respect for the speaker, to indicate that the listener has carefully noted and digested what has been said in the previous turn. In the 'Latin' style, there is turn taking but with more integration and regular overlapping: constant interruptions and simultaneous talk show interest in what others are saying. It is important here to note again that communicative behaviour varies depending on context. This is particularly true of hierarchical cultures using the 'Oriental style' (Irwin 1996, Scollon & Scollon 1995, Yamada 1992). This style is typical of very formal meetings, for example, (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996) but would not be usual in informal, ingroup contexts as later descriptions of Japanese interactions will suggest.

Tannen (1981, 1984b, 1985a) has identified two turn-taking styles which are explained in terms of different notions of facework and politeness. As discussed in the previous chapter in relation to facework, people have the simultaneous need for involvement, to affiliate with others (positive politeness), and independence, to maintain some separateness (negative politeness). In interaction, this means they must achieve a blend of the right amount of involvement or camaraderie together with the right amount of independence or non-imposition. (Tannen 1984b, Scollon & Scollon 1995). What this right blend consists of differs from culture to culture, and people use stylistic or conversational strategies to serve these needs. According to Tannen, these strategies can be described as broad operating principles. Conversationalists employ particular devices, based on these principles in order to achieve certain effects. And the use of these devices is habitual and probably fairly automatic. For example, in what Tannen (1984b) calls the "high-involvement style", devices such as supportive simultaneous talk, the avoidance of interturn pauses and a fast rate of speech are used to signal involvement or rapport. In this style, overlapping does not stop the speaker from continuing. Indeed, one function of overlap is for a listener to show understanding by talking at the same time. In this style, the task of speakers is not to make room for others to speak or to consider whether others want to hear their opinions or comments. This is taken for granted. Meanwhile the listener's task is to keep offering comments, or asking questions, in order to show interest and develop rapport. Such participants may make loud exclamations of understanding and interest, finish others' sentences for them and ask questions, the answers to which were clearly going to come; moreover, they cannot understand why others stop speaking when they overlap (Tannen 1985a). The need for involvement is served at the risk of violating independence. Moreover, silence is regarded as evidence of lack of rapport (Tannen 1981).

Tannen (1984b) contrasts this with a "high-considerateness style" in which people tend to speak more slowly and quietly, generally wait for a pause before speaking and expect others to wait to have their own turn. People who value this style see overlap as lack of attention (Tannen 1981). The preference that only one person should speak at a time is particularly marked in meetings and discussions but is also true of everyday conversations where the phrase 'let me finish' signals this preference. Such people tend to see any overlap as an interruption and stop speaking when the other person begins talking. Tannen describes such people as "overlap adversant or resistant" (Tannen 1994a:35).

Tannen (1984b) believes that it is important to look at the purpose of overlaps. If the intention is to support the speaker, to show interest and involvement, overlaps can be described as 'co-operative': if they are adversarial or if they change the topic, they can be seen as interruptions in the negative sense often implied by this term. She puts the view that if one speaker keeps overlapping and the other keeps giving way, the result is asymmetrical and the effect (though not, of course, necessarily the intention) is that one participant is dominating. However, if both or all speakers overlap each other and share the floor, there is symmetry and no domination, even if this was intended. Tannen also believes symmetry is achieved if both or all speakers avoid overlap.

As suggested earlier, what is involved here are two types of politeness: the need to show involvement and camaraderie and the need not to impose, that is, to be considerate. "The mainstream American notion of politeness values considerateness above involvement and so these speakers favour the high-considerateness style" (Tannen 1985b:106). In another study, Tannen (1984b) identified the high-involvement style

with English speakers coming from an East European Jewish background. Elsewhere, (Tannen 1981) she claims it is typical of East Europeans in general, rather than all Jews. For example, it is not true of German Jews. Tannen states that similar norms are evident in Latin cultures and in the Middle East. These patterns accord with Trompenaars' framework. The Anglo (and the Oriental) style would correlate with the high-considerateness style and the Latin with the high-involvement style.

In his study of Black and White American styles, Kochman (1990) finds similar opposing values accounting for style differences. He describes the Black style as reflecting the prior rights of feelings, whereas the White style reflects rights of sensibilities. Tannen (1984b) sees these as corresponding to her division. Blacks value an emotionally intense, highly demonstrative style, stressing involvement. Whites value a more restrained, subdued style stressing considerateness. The Black tendency to speak immediately on impulse, whenever emotions are aroused, involves overlap and simultaneous performance and causes asynchrony in interactions with those Whites who prefer discrete turns. Indeed, Tannen (1981) states that co-operative overlap is used by American Blacks as well as throughout the West Indies and the Middle and Near East.

A comparison of French and North American styles (Carroll 1988), also fits with Tannen's analysis and suggests that French prefer a high-involvement style compared with North Americans. The French are seen as valuing animated conversations in social situations. Conversation is fast-moving: people interrupt often and do not wait for answers to their questions. According to Carroll, this style demonstrates the desire to be warm, spontaneous and enthusiastic. North Americans, in contrast, prefer a slower pace, with fewer interruptions and fuller answers to questions. As a result, the Americans complain that the French are "so rude" "they interrupt you all the time", "they finish sentences for you" and "they ask you questions but never listen to the answers", while the French complain that the Americans are "boring", "know nothing about the art of conversation" and "respond to the slightest question with a lecture" (Carroll 1988:23). Carroll claims that the Gricean maxims apply to the Americans but not to the French. Kramsch (1981) supports this view, claiming that French and German speakers prefer to clarify or counter controversial points as they come up rather than wait for a speakers to complete their turn.

A comparison of Japanese and American meeting styles is also interesting in this context (Yamada 1992). This research compared the meetings of three male Japanese middle-management bank officers with those of three Americans, two women and a man in similar positions. Each group was used to participating in weekly meetings. At the American meetings in this sample, the participants took monological turns with almost no overlapping (except when competing to gain the floor), whereas at their meetings, the Japanese exchanged turns rapidly with a great deal of synchronised, overlapping talk. At the same time, Yamada found that long silences and pauses occurred much more frequently in the Japanese meetings, especially between topic changes. In Japanese-American interactions, Americans are said to find the long pauses and silences of the Japanese strange and a waste of time (Barlund 1975), while the Japanese feel Americans talk incessantly (Loveday 1983) and interrupt them (Yamada (1992). These problems could also be exacerbated by the fact that Japanese tend to communicate differently in more informal situations with colleagues and in more formal meetings with foreigners. As mentioned earlier, Irwin (1996) stresses that groups such as the Japanese vary their communicative style depending on the context much more than English speakers. Indeed, according to De Mente (1989), Japanese who do

business with foreigners have two modes of operation: a Japanese mode and a foreigner mode.

Hayashi (1996) has compared Japanese and American conversation, asserting that it is often difficult to establish who is holding the floor in Japanese casual conversation. Hayashi says that frequent simultaneous talk, sometimes involving three or even four people is a very typical aspect of Japanese speakers' conversation. Talk is accompanied by a great deal of non-verbal behaviour and both this and the verbal utterances are rhythmic and synchronised. Topical content is not always the main goal of the interaction: being together in an enjoyable interaction and empathising with each other is the objective and so the floor management strategies are chosen to achieve this. In comparison, American speakers often used the phrase 'don't finish my sentence' as an indication of their view that an individual's turn should not be interrupted and that simultaneous talk is unacceptable and makes them feel uncomfortable. At the same time, holding the floor for a long time is considered impolite.

Ervin-Tripp (1987:50) is another linguist who makes the generalisation that groups which value personal autonomy highly and therefore stress negative politeness are more likely to leave the floor to one speaker, while those who value involvement and closeness and emphasize positive politeness are more likely to achieve this through "the production of joint texts, proxy completions and simultaneity". However, she qualifies this by saying that other factors must be taken into account when describing overlap patterns such as the rank of the speaker and the formality of the situation. Ervin-Tripp also claims that overlapping can indicate involvement and empathy and quotes Indian doctoral research (Agrawal 1976) which shows there are groups in India where overlap is highly regarded and a measure of the degree of warmth and participation. Among some groups, two people who are intimate can talk simultaneously without feeling discomfort.

Wierzbicka's (1991:79) descriptions of turn-taking styles also correspond with Tannen's. She believes that the principle of taking it in turns to speak is fundamental in Anglo-American culture, whereas in Black and Jewish culture, speakers can talk at the same time, overlap and interrupt, and in this way show interest and involvement as they "maintain a continuous flow of uninhibited communication and self expression". In Wierzbicka's view, it is not that spontaneous self-expression is always frowned upon in Anglo-American culture: what it means is that it is acceptable as long as it does not clash with others' personal autonomy, their right to speak uninterrupted and unhindered. This insistence on discrete turns, reflecting the value placed on personal autonomy, contrasts also with the Japanese style in which the value of interdependence is reflected. Japanese speakers work together to make conversation a collaborative production. This is done in two main ways. Sentences are left unfinished so that the listener can complete them and the listener continually assists the speaker with feedback or responses called *aizuchi*. Wierzbicka (1991:81-2) deploys cultural scripts, using a culture-free semantic metalanguage based on semantic invariants, to describe these differences. She depicts the Anglo-American style as follows:

someone is saying something now
I can't say something at the same time
I can say something after this

In contrast, the Japanese style is depicted in this way:

I want to say something now
I think you know what I want to say
I think you would say the same
I think I can say part of it, you can say another part of it
I think this will be good

Clyne (1994) has undertaken the most extensive, in-depth discourse analysis of the turn-taking patterns of non-native speakers from very different cultural backgrounds interacting together. He sees the turn-taking patterns in his data as largely determined by the relative power of the interactants, that is, the deference that is given to people of higher rank in an organisation. However, he also makes the point that it is influenced by the turn-taking rules of the particular culture a person was brought up in. In his sample, the Central and Southern Europeans, Latin Americans and South Asians tend to have longer turns than the Southeast Asians. The majority of the Southeast Asians in his sample (Chinese, Indonesians, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Malays) were not successful in getting and holding the floor compared with other groups. He sees Filipinos as an exception in this respect. Clyne believes that the high value which Chinese, Vietnamese, and Southeast Asians in general place on harmony has an influence on their turn-taking behaviour. He found that they did not 'fight' to maintain their turns and did not increase their speed in order to do this. In addition, he found that they usually withdrew rather than take part in simultaneous talk. He also suggests that their shorter turns could reflect their preference for avoiding the expression of negative views. As mentioned earlier, he believes that the Southeast Asian style puts them at a disadvantage in interactions with members of these other groups. They find it difficult to get the chance to participate.

Clyne (1994) also argues that some cultures emphasise form over content while others stress content rather than form, and that this preference influences turn-taking strategies. He found that Central and Southern Europeans maintain or appropriate turns by increasing their speed or by engaging in simultaneous speech. This is because of their emphasis on content: they want to put their position across, to be able to say all they feel they need to say and they tend to be contrary. According to Clyne (1994:188), "This contrasts with the slower speech (including elongation) of South-east Asians and the repetition in South-east Asians and South Asians suggests a link between face saving and turn maintenance (and appropriation) *per se* rather than between face saving and getting your content/message across". South Asians may also increase their speed and engage in simultaneous speech to some extent in order to have their say. However, the rhythmical balance and the formal discourse structures they employ also indicate an emphasis on form. Speakers are evaluated on the way they speak. Clyne concludes that cultures have different ways of emphasising the more formal and the more content-based aspects through discourse.

According to Tannen (1984b:190) different turn-taking patterns and attitudes to the amount of talk considered appropriate results in "mutual negative stereotyping in country after country". In many instances, turn-taking patterns, the acceptability of simultaneous talk and the length of pause expected between turns influences the amount of talk a particular group contributes. Those who do not wait for a discrete turn and expect more talk stereotype the more silent group as uncooperative and stupid. Those who use less talk and prefer a discrete turn think of the more talkative group as pushy, hypocritical and untrustworthy. She quotes her own research (1981, 1984b) which

found there was mutual negative stereotyping by New Yorkers and non-New Yorkers. New Yorkers were seen as pushy: non-New Yorkers as cold and dull. A person's style can look very different in different settings: in one group they may seem like a conversational bully, in another relatively quiet. It all depends on the style of the other participants. Other researchers support these views. Scollon and Scollon (1983) assert that it only needs some difference in assumptions about the distribution of talk and the speed of exchange to cause mutually negative impressions. Enniger (1987:300) describes the way in which Mediterranean cultures with their "lower tolerance for longer gaps" can feel that central and northern Europeans are "impolite and even sullen". In contrast, the former are seen as domineering by the latter (Scheu-Lottgen & Hernandez-Camoy 1998). Different ways of 'getting and keeping the floor' also cause misunderstanding. Speakers of Indian English use increased volume when interrupted which makes British interactants think they are angry. British speakers tend to appropriate a turn by repeating an initial phrase to get the attention of the other participants and use verbal phrases such as 'I didn't finish' to maintain a turn (Gumperz 1990).

While there were no American Indians in the sample discussed in this paper, Scollon and Scollon's (1990) description of the problems between Athabaskan and Anglo-American English speakers in relation to the distribution of talk and turn-taking, is instructive. Because Athabaskans allow a slightly longer pause between sentences than English speakers, it is just long enough to cause difficulties. The English speaker only waits for a short time, and if the Athabaskan does not say anything, the English speaker tends to continue. In the meantime, the Athabaskan is waiting for a longer pause before taking a turn. The result is they feel they can never get a word in edgewise, that the English speaker goes on and on. In addition, Athabaskans believe that a speaker can take as long as they like to develop an idea and that when they do get a turn they are interrupted before they can finish: this is because English speakers would generally expect shorter pauses between sentence and shorter turns. The English speaker, on the other hand, thinks the Athabaskans are surly or have nothing to say. This type of research does suggest that the amount people talk can result from style differences rather than individual intention.

Other researchers have found similar patterns. Philips (1990) found that Warm Spring Indians also expect longer pauses for turn exchange cues than Anglos, and Chick (1990) found that Zulu speakers of English expect longer pauses to signal turn exchange and also find extended monologues more acceptable, in general, than South African native speakers of English. Again the results are negative impressions of the others. They are seen respectively as poor contributors to conversation and as rude interrupters.

There is other evidence which provides support for the existence of these different attitudes to turn-taking styles and the distribution of talk. In some instances this evidence illustrates the serious misunderstandings which result from these differences in certain situations. For example, Robinson (1985) describes a cross-cultural training film *Take Two* (1985) which showed an American student conversing with a Vietnamese student. The American kept asking questions and the Vietnamese responded with very short, often one word, replies. When asked to comment, the American expressed the view that the Vietnamese appeared uninterested and never initiated conversation or asked reciprocal questions. The Vietnamese felt that the American kept jumping in with questions, not giving her time to respond.

These differences and misunderstandings can also occur in more institutionalised types of talk such as workplace meetings and business negotiations. In film footage Byrne shot for Australian training videos, which was discussed in the book accompanying the videos (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996), the problems of different meeting styles and turn-taking in meetings and team discussions was addressed. An Asian-Australian originally from the Philippines, who was interviewed while working on a long-term joint venture with Indonesians and Japanese in Indonesia, described how he identified with Trompenaar's turn-taking patterns suggesting Asians expect a longer pause between turns. When he first worked in Australia, although he had fluent English, he found it very difficult to join in talk at work because as he put it "there wasn't any gap for you to come in on". He felt "very, very threatened and uncomfortable". He has now adjusted his style but, in meetings with his Japanese and Indonesian colleagues, he helps them get a turn. "I do allow our local employees or counterparts to contribute; otherwise they just wouldn't have a chance to speak up" (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996:90-1). In another section of the film footage, he tells how a Japanese colleague has described the way Australians communicate as aggressive "as if they are fighting" (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996:75). He interpreted this as being solely a result of their different communication styles (in particular, the Anglo-Australians linearity, directness and open-house meeting style) because he knew this was not the impression the Australians would have given to others in their own culture.

Another example in this film footage was provided by a Vietnamese-Australian council member who had attended meetings in Australia over a period of fourteen years. He explained in an impassioned way how he had felt "forgotten" as nobody addressed him or provided an opportunity for him to speak and therefore he felt unable to contribute. Clearly he was operating according to a different style and missing the subtle cues that to the culturally attuned indicate when it is appropriate to speak (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996:88). His strong feelings about this experience were not unique. Byrne (1997:6) has observed that "no other topic in the filming of 'What Makes You Say That?' aroused such strong feelings and so much misunderstanding as that of turn-taking".

Again footage of a meeting between Australian and Vietnamese officials in Hanoi, conducted in the formal style preferred by the Vietnamese in such meetings, shows the pattern of the senior representatives on both sides taking long uninterrupted turns to speak. The senior Australian then describes in an interview how she has had to modify her style and how important it is to wait for the pause between turns in order not to miss out on important information. This is discussed in Byrne & FitzGerald (1996:70-1). This segment, in particular, correlates with Trompenaar's depiction of the Asian style as requiring discrete turns with longer pauses between turns. It would appear that in certain types of situations, especially more formal ones, this is the preferred style in a number of Asian cultures.

As will be discussed in some detail in the next section, Asians are often seen as remaining silent in international English-speaking settings. From the above evidence it would seem that one reason for this relative silence in these types of interactions may be the difference in turn-taking styles although clearly there would be other cultural factors at work here, for example, a preference for silence in certain circumstances. According to Braithwaite (1990), in many cultures silence is associated with situations which are unpredictable, or ambiguous or where there is an unequal distribution of power. Indeed, it is widely accepted that East and Southeast Asian cultures tend to place much emphasis on silence: in some contexts it can be used as a control strategy in

conversations, in others it is seen as companionable and more expressive of warm emotions than words (Irwin 1996). In potentially confrontational situations, it is a sign of admirable self-restraint (Ting-Toomey 1994). Yet, as Scheu-Lottgen and Hernandez-Campoy (1998) point out, English speakers view long silences as indicating ignorance or mental slowness. In conversations between two English-speakers there is mutual embarrassment if nothing is said after four seconds: people feel obliged to say something.

Other evidence of these different attitudes to turn-taking and silence come from studies of intercultural negotiations. For example, high ranking Japanese may choose to remain silent for strategic reasons (Goldman 1994). And, another example, it is claimed that Japanese negotiators avoid directly negative responses preferring to sidestep the issue or to remain silent, while Brazilians find silence even more problematic than Americans, and particularly when trying to persuade others, frequently speak simultaneously. As a result, Americans may judge them to be rude and to be poor listeners. (Graham & Herbergner 1987).

Closely related to attitudes to silence and turn-taking are views about the nature and value of verbal self-expression and the amount of speech considered necessary for appropriate and successful interaction. For example, American English speakers see speech as a means of developing social knowledge. One manifestation of this attitude is that they talk to strangers to get to know them (Loveday 1982). However, North American Indians avoid talking except where social relations are known and established (Scollon & Scollon 1990). According to Gudykunst and Kim (1984:141) Western cultures place "great faith in the power of words" whereas "the psychocultural orientation of Asian cultures can be characterised as bordering on a mistrust of words". Asians are aware of the inherent bias of words and their limitations. Yamada (1992), for example, claims that Americans favour talk while Japanese distrust it. Japanese tend to view the open expression of thoughts and feelings as evidence of a lack of profundity and sincerity. Language is only one way of communicating (Loveday 1982). It is claimed that people who do not talk a lot are seen as more attractive in cultures such as Japan and Korea (Gudykunst et al 1988). In fact, talking too much is frowned upon and people are careful not to say too much. Goddard (1997: 190) captures this attitude in a cultural script relating to Malay conversation norms.

when I say something to someone
it is not good to say many things in a short time
if I do, this person might think something bad about me.

As mentioned earlier, the type of speech activity and the situational context influences turn-taking behaviour. The patterns typical of everyday conversation may not hold for group meetings and discussions. Not a great deal of research has been done in this area. Yamada's comparisons of Japanese and American meetings of close work colleagues outlined earlier in this chapter, point to marked differences, with the Americans preferring discrete turns and the Japanese engaging in more simultaneous talk. However, Edelsky's (1993) analysis of five committee meetings involving four male and seven female academics at an American university found a more complicated pattern among these native English speakers. Her research suggests that in more informal meetings discrete turns or single 'floors' are not the only pattern. She identified two types of 'floor' in her data: a singly developed floor in which one speaker spoke at a time while the others listened and responded and a collaborative floor in

which two or more people either seemed to be engaging in what she termed a 'free-for-all' or were working together, operating on the same wavelength, to jointly build an idea. She described the free-for-all type floor as involving a great deal of simultaneity, with joint building of answers and collaboration on developing ideas, while the periods where people seemed to be on the same wave length were more orderly and yet it was not possible to say that one person had the floor. She concluded that discrete turns are not a conversational universal nor are they essential for the communication of messages. In fact, in her view, collaborative floors, as well as being more informal and co-operative, appear to provide high levels of communicative satisfaction, of interest, excitement and fun. It is of note that unlike Tannen (1984b), in her study of a dinner party conversation between native speakers from different cultural backgrounds, Edelsky does not mention the cultural backgrounds of her participants.

Another study that specifically examines talk in meetings is that of Cuff and Sharock (1985). They are also discussing meetings involving native English speakers only and their conclusion is that such talk parallels everyday talk as described by Sacks et al (1974) in regard to the "length of turns, the distribution of turns, aspects of gap and overlap, the constituents of turns, mechanisms for speaker change and the like" (Cuff & Sharock 1985: 156). However, they did find that two other types of talk also occurred in meetings. One was what they called 'the round turn' in which each participant was given a turn to express any concerns they had and the round was only completed when these had been dealt with. They point out that such rounds usually give those afraid to 'butt in' and speak an opportunity to express their views uninterrupted and at some length. A second type was that initiated by 'talk co-ordinators', that is, participants who intervened in a formal or informal capacity to facilitate the discussion and who in this way played a part in shaping the distribution of talk.

One other source which suggests the type of turn-taking preferred in English-speaking meetings are English as a Second Language textbooks telling learners the appropriate behaviour and language for meetings in a British context. The books teach explicit phrases for the appropriation and maintenance of discrete turns such as 'may I come in here' and 'please let me finish', quite clearly indicating that discrete turns or a single floor is seen as the appropriate behaviour (Goodale 1987, O'Driscoll & Pilbeam 1987). This view of the desired behaviour fits with Tannen's (1994a) conclusion that practice differs from ideology. In her opinion, most Americans believe one speaker should speak at one time regardless of what they actually do. She describes the embarrassed, self-critical reactions of participants listening to tapes of conversations which they had enjoyed but in which they had engaged in a considerable amount of simultaneous talk. Van Lier (1988: 151) lists some "typical admonitions" used by English speakers which reflect their preferences: 'don't interrupt', 'don't monopolise' and 'don't be too quiet'.

Whatever, the actual difference between the style valued and that adopted in certain settings, there are clearly very diverse attitudes towards turn-taking and silence across cultures and this is another area where lack of awareness of these different attitudes and preferences can have negative consequences in intercultural encounters of many kinds.

Assertiveness, disagreement and conflict

As discussed in chapter three, attitudes to the assertion of personal opinions, disagreement and conflict are closely linked to questions of face and to views about how good interpersonal relations are best achieved. In regard to these concerns, some researchers again make a twofold division linked to the individualist/low context -

collectivist/high context dichotomy (Chua & Gudykunst 1987, Gudykunst et al 1988, Ting-Toomey, 1988, 1994). However, it is important to note that these researchers are not talking about all collectivist cultures. As noted in chapter three, their research is based mainly on East Asian cultures. For example, Ting-Toomey (1994) claims that intercultural communication research has provided strong empirical evidence identifying China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan and Mexico as collectivist societies. This view proposes that in individualist/low context cultures the prevailing style is a solution-oriented conflict style, whereas in collectivist/high context cultures an avoidance-oriented conflict style prevails. In low context cultures, people value the direct discussion of issues and ideas, in which people are free to express opposing opinions. However, in high context cultures, although people may experience strong inner tensions intrapersonally, they tend not to express their feelings or opinions directly.

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, in low context cultures the cause of conflict is generally perceived as instrumental (related to differences in goals or practices) but in high context cultures it is more often perceived as expressive (based on negative or hostile feelings). As a result, in low context cultures it is usual to separate the person from the issue, but in high context cultures, it is difficult to make this separation. If others disagree, especially friends, this can be taken personally. Indeed, open confrontation can be seen as extremely insulting, causing all involved to lose face, especially if superiors and subordinates have been involved. For example, it is claimed that there is no such thing as constructive criticism in Thai culture (Irwin 1996). In low context cultures, however, people can fight quite strongly over a task oriented issue and yet remain friendly afterwards. In a cross-cultural management book, Engholm (1991: 318) advises that "Westerners take criticism and deal with conflict differently than do Asians. Westerners might experience an altercation, yell at each other, and then make up and go and have a drink together. If two Asians have a conflict that erupts into yelling at each other, the two probably will never speak to each other again. A manager must remain extra sensitive to keep conflict below the surface".

Evidence from other sources supports these views. As noted in the previous section on turn-taking, Asians are often silent in meetings and in academic settings in international and English-speaking settings. This may be related to turn-taking styles and different attitudes to silence but it may well also involve cultural attitudes involving the desire to maintain harmony. In fact, as noted earlier, Clyne (1994) links this attitude with the refusal to fight for a turn in discussion and argument. Tahija (1993:72), a leading Indonesian businessman with wide international experience, sees this as a cultural preference. He says, "Many Asians by virtue of their upbringing and culture will not ask questions or argue in favour of their point of view". Rohwer (1996), writing from an international business perspective believes that it may be the desire for harmony and the dislike of open, public disagreement that causes many Asians to remain silent in the kind of open house meetings and discussions typical in English-speaking societies. He goes on to say that anyone who has spoken in public to Asian audiences finds them unwilling to engage in open debate and he claims that "the tendency to look upon public confrontation with distaste runs to the most sophisticated and Westernised reaches of Asian society"(Rohwer 1996: 333).

These differences can cause problems in intercultural settings. English speakers often feel critical about Asians' silence and lack of participation. According to Connor et al (1993: 14-19), East and Southeast Asian executives sitting silent throughout meetings with their English-speaking colleagues in international firms is a common occurrence.

This occurs despite meeting settings specifically designed "to avoid the pitfalls of hierarchy and encourage maximum frankness" and in which the task is to secure consensus on important issues and to encourage new initiatives. At the same time, Hitchcock (1994), who carried out a survey of Asian attitudes, says that a common complaint among Asians is that their silence in meetings is interpreted as agreement by native English speakers. This behaviour was confirmed at a different level in Clyne's (1994) research where he noted that there were hardly any Southeast Asians in employee participation groups in the factories he investigated and that those involved in meetings and meeting situations talked far less than most people from other cultural groups. Other research points to the fact that Asians talk less than Anglos in class and small group discussions in educational institutions (Powell & Andersen 1994, Malcolm 1989). Indeed the literature on Asian students in Australian educational institutions frequently, and often critically, discusses the failure of these students to participate in discussions and express an opinion (Nixon 1993, Byrne & FitzGerald 1998b).

However, again there do seem to be differences in this regard depending on the situational context. For example, Rohwer (1996: 333) claims that there are "lively discussions aplenty in Asia – I have found them more adventurous on the whole than those I have run across in places like London – but these debates are conducted in private – behind closed doors". Indeed a number of researchers point to different attitudes and behaviour depending on the context. For example, people in collectivist cultures may be more direct and confrontational with member of ingroups of equal status than they are with members of outgroups or those of higher status. In ingroups, higher status members can challenge the opinions of lower status members: it is lower status members who cannot disagree openly, especially in public (Ting-Toomey 1994). In general, however, people in these cultures are more likely to have conflict with outsiders, but work to preserve harmony in their ingroups with whom they have constant and ongoing contact (Argyle et al 1986, Gao 1998, Gabrenya & Huang 1996). For example, according to Gudykunst & Kim (1984), Asians such as the Chinese and Japanese tend to treat strangers either rudely as non-people or with excessive courtesy depending on the situational context. In research on the handling of disagreement in workplaces in twenty three countries, Smith et al (1998) found that neither individualist or collectivist cultures have an overriding concern to maintain harmonious relations with outgroups. Other research suggesting this is Goldman's (1994) study of Japanese approaches to negotiation. Shouting, insults, and adversarial public discussion were used as a strategy but were primarily reserved for outsiders. High ranking Japanese chose to be silent.

Nevertheless, other studies of specific cultures support these generalisations about the avoidance of unpleasantness and discord. In her study of Japanese meeting styles, Yamada (1992) demonstrates how Japanese use examples to indirectly express personal opinions. They can then shift the responsibility for the opinion from themselves to the example in potentially confrontational situations. Sohn (1983) in a study of Korean values and communication, states that in many interpersonal communication settings, Korean adopt an affective style as opposed to the instrumental style typical of Americans. This necessitates reading the feelings of others and choosing their words carefully to avoid hurting anyone's feelings. Thai communication style is similarly described. In order to avoid overt disagreement of any kind, Thais are trained to develop a high degree of sensitivity to the feelings of others. Thais view disagreement with another person as a personal matter, so the purpose is to avoid anyone being made to feel shame: in this way, no one loses face. (Fieg 1989, Richards & Sukwiwat 1986).

Geertz's (1976) view of Javanese society suggests a similar, even more constrained pattern. In this culture, the important thing is to conceal all emotions because they might affect others. Other research points to slight differences in this predominant pattern between East Asian collectivist cultures. According to Miyahara et al (1998) Japanese are not as high context in their preferred conflict management style as Koreans, who are more influenced by Confucian values. Japanese emphasise clarity more, while Koreans emphasise the maintenance of good relations.

Some studies suggest further differences within high context cultures. Hall (1976), in reference to Latin America and the Middle East, stresses the avoidance of face-to-face confrontation in these societies. And Condon (1986) claims that cultures such as that of Latin America and the Philippines distinguish between two kinds of reality: objective reality and interpersonal relations. The latter is the more important and the truth can be altered to preserve face or show deference. These attitudes are similar to those in other collectivist cultures such as those of Southeast Asia. However, it appears that they may deal with confrontation in rather different ways. While cultures favouring a succinct communication style, for example, East Asians, employ a calculated degree of vagueness and circumlocution or even silence and withdrawal in a conflict situation, those who favour an elaborate style, such as people in Arab cultures, mainly engage in an affective-intuitive appeal to the emotions, using circumlocution and flowery speech. (Anderson 1994). Indeed, Patai (1973:160) in contrast to Hall, claims that in Arab culture people "readily break into violent verbal abuse". An outburst of temper is not viewed negatively and people can show all their emotions. In regard to Latin American societies, there also appears to be some contradictory evidence. They are said to avoid direct criticism and confrontation (Hall 1976), but at the same time some research has shown a willingness to deal with conflict at work openly and immediately (Albert 1996). And in a discussion of Latin American negotiating style, Adler (1991:184) describes it as "passionate, argumentative, impulsive and spontaneous". At the same time, she stresses that face saving is crucial when it comes to making decisions in order to preserve honour and dignity.

As the above overview demonstrates, many researchers place cultures in one of these two groups although they suggest real differences in the way harmonious relations are realised. However, on the basis of other studies (e.g. Wierzbicka 1991, Broome 1994) there does appear to be a third group which has far more positive attitudes towards the expression of negative emotions and confrontation. At least some of the cultures of Europe together with Israel appear to belong to this third group. In terms of attitudes to argumentation and confrontation, Wierzbicka (1985a, 1991) explains that Polish cultural traditions allow strong personal views and emotions to be expressed without any thought for other people's views and feelings. Opinions can be expressed directly and forcefully, even dogmatically and not distinguished from facts in everyday talk, while criticism and personal remarks are tolerated and even promoted. In general, she points out that in Eastern European Slavic and Jewish cultures, people can forcibly and painfully disagree and bad emotions can be expressed. This type of open confrontation is accepted and encouraged because it promotes highly regarded values such as closeness, sincerity and spontaneity.

In comparison with these groups, English speakers are not as free to express opinions as they appear to be when compared with groups such as East and Southeast Asians. Wierzbicka (1991) argues convincingly that, while Anglo-Americans may be prepared to disagree and face up to conflicts, it is within limits compared with cultures such as

those of Eastern Europe. People in English speaking cultures modify their disagreement, dogmatism is frowned upon and they do not try to force their opinions on others as this would conflict with the value placed on personal autonomy. While 'having it out' and finding solutions to problems and conflict is valued, this should be done calmly and rationally. The expression of strong emotion is generally avoided and an unemotional style of argument preferred (Kochman 1981). Individuals can agree to disagree and criticisms can be made if they are seen as impersonal. This view is supported by Carbaugh (1988) in his study of American communication on a talkback television program. He argues that in American culture, the individual is expected to be ready to express opinions and these must be respected and tolerated, but people must speak only for themselves and not impose their opinions on others. When the same program was broadcast from the Soviet Union, with a Russian audience, the behaviour was quite different. People assumed the right to express positional rather than personal opinions or to refuse to join in the discussions at all.

Wierzbicka (1997:91) notes that for many Eastern Europeans, disagreement is not a matter of "what I reckon" or "what you reckon" or "let's agree to disagree" as with Australian English speakers but a matter of "who is right" "who is wrong" and "what is true". She provides evidence for her conclusions from the Polish language. She points out that Polish has particles which mean to disagree impatiently and in a quite contemptuous manner, and thus are directly confrontational. She also points to the positive connotations in Polish of words such as *bezkompromisowy* 'uncompromising' and *nieugiety* 'inflexible' which in English have negative connotations. And *kompromis* 'compromise' which in English is viewed positively has a more negative interpretation in Polish (Wierzbicka 1985a, 1992a). In this context, it is interesting to note that in Persian the word for compromise means surrendering one's principles (Samovar & Porter 1991). This provides another hint that attitudes to argument may vary more across cultures than much of the literature suggests.

Ronowicz's (1995) study of Polish communication also supports these views. He sees major differences in the ways opinions are expressed in Polish and English, with English speakers tending to avoid confrontation in comparison with Poles. He explains that Poles are more direct when they express opinions or disagree because they see arguments as a valued means of exchanging ideas as well as an enjoyable form of conversation. When they express an opinion, they aim to do it in a way that makes it difficult to refute; therefore, they avoid using temperate openers or modifying their propositions. When they disagree, they do not 'beat about the bush': rather, they use expressions equivalent to 'no' 'no way' 'you're wrong' 'I disagree' and 'you must be mad' even when speaking to strangers. In official or formal situations, all but the last phrase could be used but it would be made more polite by adding appropriate titles and/or softeners. Ronowicz observes that many Poles tend to transfer this style of argument into English and so may sound rude and opinionated.

Schiffrin's (1984) research provides further evidence that among lower middle class men and women of Eastern European Jewish background, argument is seen as an enjoyable sociable activity, a means of promoting intimacy and solidarity. In her data, people often contradict, deny or negatively evaluate what others have said. Other research also confirms the view that in Israeli society people at meetings disagree directly, using expressions such as 'not true' or 'you are wrong' which would not be common in such meetings in English-speaking cultures (Blum-Kulka 1982).

There is also some evidence of a more positive view of conflict in some other cultures than is the case in English-speaking societies. In a study of conflict and struggle in Greek interpersonal relations, Broome (1994) claims that the idea of conflict is usually associated with negative images (intense feelings, damaged relationships and wasted energy) in Western societies. In such societies, conflict is an abnormality which needs to be dealt with so that normalcy can be restored. In contrast, research indicates that in Greek society conflict is a part of everyday life, a natural part of human relations. Indeed, he states that a great deal of personal and social satisfaction is achieved through interpersonal battles. "Challenges, insults and attacks are, within appropriate limits, almost simultaneous with conversing" (Broome 1994:119). He goes on to say that conceding an argument on the basis of the facts or logic the other side presents would indicate weakness. Rather people assert their personality by expressing strong opinions and participating in intense, sometimes heated verbal disputes, whose aim is not to reach a conclusion or establish the objective truth. Such arguments or disputes are not seen as aberrations and they do not necessarily cause or involve negative feeling within relationships. He believes that traditional Greek culture is highly collectivist and that it has a strong influence on the communication styles even of contemporary urban Greeks. A study of the conversation at a Greek family dinner party (Tannen & Kakava 1992 cited in Tannen 1994a) provides some support for this view. It shows the value placed on regularly introducing opposing arguments even when the participants actually agree. At the same time affectionate name forms were used and other signs of intimacy and warmth were evident. Saunders (1985), in a study of Italian communication style, concludes that people are encouraged to reveal both negative and positive emotions and a dramatic, noisy style is valued in close, intimate groups.

Other research suggests that some Western European cultures also have a more positive attitude to strong argument than English-speaking cultures. One piece of evidence is the view expressed in a comparison of Australian and French attitudes, that in French culture the need to show emotion and to express anger supersedes face wants (Beal 1990). Another is a study of differences between Germans and Americans revealed on a training program in conflict management for a cross-cultural team. The Americans tended to handle the subject of conflict much less directly than the Germans, and when a conflict was recognised they preferred to address it and resolve it in a much shorter time. The Germans, however, addressed the issue more comprehensively and preferred an intellectual to an action oriented approach. Moreover, the Americans viewed strongly worded, emphatic argument as personal criticism and adopted a more relaxed tone to keep it impersonal (Clackworthy 1996).

Again, Clyne's (1994) distinction between South Asians and Southeast Asians does appear to extend to attitudes to argument and confrontation, at least in relation to Indians and Chinese. In a study of adversativeness, Ong (1981:22) claims that Indian logic, although it developed much later, followed the Greek pattern in that it arose out of conflict, out of "the analysis of dispute", whereas Chinese culture "minimised dispute and thought of rhetoric as serving propriety and harmony". Other studies provide some confirmation of different approaches. Chinese are generally thought to avoid disagreement especially among ingroups (Yum 1994, Young 1994, Gao 1998), whereas, according to Valentine (1995), Indian English speakers weigh both sides of an issue. This strengthens rather than weakens one's position and both disagreement and agreement components may be included in one turn. Considerable repetition, which can go on for more than one turn, is used to emphasise emotional agreement particularly by women and is highly conventionalised in Indian languages.

As with other aspects of communication, these different approaches to the expression of opinion and confrontation can lead to misunderstandings and negative evaluations of others. In low context cultures, for instance, indirect methods of handling conflict are seen as evasive and cowardly, while in many high context cultures, open disagreement and direct ways of handling conflict are seen as lacking in good taste (Gudykunst et al 1988). For example, in one study, Leung (1987) found that Chinese prefer mediation rather than the adversarial approach preferred by Americans because it is more capable of reducing animosity. In regard to 'face', a roundabout method of dealing with conflict can be seen as insulting in low context cultures, while a confrontational method is insulting and can close off the possibility of continuing manoeuvres and negotiations in those high context cultures that place the highest value on harmony. This is partly because in such high context cultures, 'face' is closely tied to concepts such as honour, shame, group obligations and status, but in low context cultures, face tends to only involve the present situation and the people immediately involved (Ting-Toomey 1994). Other studies have confirmed these propositions. For example, Kozan and Ergin (1998) found a preference for third party intervention in conflict management in Turkey but not in the United States. Again, Bond, Wan, Leung and Giacalone (1985) in a study of Chinese and North Americans, found that in a situation where two staff members were in conflict, the Chinese would advise a manager to meet them separately in order to avoid further conflict, while Americans advised a joint meeting to resolve the conflict. Indeed, the use of third parties or intermediaries is common practice in personal and business dealings in many Asian cultures because of these attitudes (Irwin 1996, Gao 1998, Yum 1994). Wierzbicka (1996) explains this practice in relation to Chinese culture. It is not the fact that someone has negative thoughts about another: it is the contempt and lack of regard displayed if they are spoken directly to one's face. An intermediary relating the thoughts does not offend.

Discussion

To sum up, it would seem that while broad frameworks cannot do justice to the complexity of the subject and there are clearly many areas of uncertainty, much of the research is complementary rather than contradictory and some broad patterns can be identified. One helpful overview is the division into low and high context styles and then the further division of high context into succinct/elaborate styles and subdued and dramatic affective styles. However, the style Wierzbicka and others describe as typical of many East European cultures does not really fit here and Southern and some Western European preferences do not fit neatly. Perhaps, a more helpful approach for practical training purposes and the purposes of this study is to think of three main ways in which cultures approach interpersonal relations and how this translates into communicative behaviour: (1) the desire for individual autonomy and avoiding imposition on others – an instrumental style where people can disagree, but ideally in an impersonal way and face conflict with the intent of solving or managing it; (2) the desire for warmth, sincerity, and involvement – negative feelings can be expressed and people enjoy argument, accepting conflict as normal; (3) the desire for harmony and the avoidance of unpleasantness. A further division can then be made between those whose desire for harmony involves using a succinct, subdued affective style, masking emotions especially negative ones and avoiding disagreement, conflict and criticism, compared with those who also avoid loss of face but adopt a dramatic affective style and argue in a persuasive, emotional way.

Clyne's four styles would appear to correlate at least to some extent with this division. His fourth style, Anglo-Celtic/North Europeans probably fits with the group who value individual autonomy and favour an exacting, instrumental style. His Style C, typical of the Southeast Asians in his sample, fits with the group who value harmony and adopt a succinct, unemotional style of expression. The other two styles do not fit so readily into this division. Nevertheless, maybe his Style A, exhibited by the Croatians, Poles, Spaniards and Latin Americans in his sample could fit with the group who value sincerity and spontaneity and express themselves in a confrontational, emotional and expressive manner and his Style B, typical of the South Asians and Iranians in his sample, could correlate with the group who value harmony but adopt a more elaborate and affective style of communication. The main area of doubt about this possible correlation is the place of Latin cultures, both European and South American, in that while there is some evidence that they engage in passionate argument and put the need to express emotions, including anger, above face wants, they are also said to put great stress on avoiding loss of face. Their attitude towards matters of face and direct criticism does seem to be different from that of Eastern Europeans.

Tannen's (1984b) high-involvement and high-consideration styles can also be fitted into this framework: the former being more typical in many European, Latin and Middle Eastern cultures and the latter in Anglo cultures and, although she does not claim this, in East and Southeast Asian cultures. Certainly the values underlying these approaches to interpersonal relations influence all three aspects of communication style analysed in the next chapters.

Responses in questionnaires provided by a majority of the participants support these broad patterns to some degree. In answer to the proposition "If you want to, you can disagree with people even if they are older or more important. You feel comfortable saying what you think and want directly and openly, and you believe this is the correct way to behave", the various groups answered in the following ways:

Group	Number	Agreed	Neutral/ Unsure	Disagreed
East/Southeast Asians	31	7*	4	20
Eastern Europeans	25	24	1**	0
Latin Americans	15	14	0	1
Middle Easterners	12	10	1	1
South Asians	7	4	1	2
Southern Europeans	7	6	1	0
Western Europeans	2	2	0	0

*6 of these were from Mainland China.

**modified it slightly.

These responses do tend to suggest that East and Southeast Asians are dissimilar to all other groups, especially Eastern Europeans, in their avoidance of the direct expression of opinions and open disagreement.

Responses to the proposition "It is important to give other people 'face'. You should not criticise others directly. You should avoid causing any unpleasantness and lack of harmony" were as follows:

Group	Number	Agreed	Neutral Unsure	Disagreed
East/Southeast Asians	31	28	1*	2**
Eastern Europeans	20	4***	4	12
Latin Americans	12	2	0	10****
South Asians	8	3	0	5
Southern Europeans	6	2	2	2
Middle Easterners	6	6	0	0
Western European	1	0	0	1

* undecided; ** said not typical of culture; *** 2 said not typical; **** 2 said not typical

The most noticeable feature about these figures is the contrast between the attitudes of the Eastern Europeans and those of the East and Southeast Asians. These figures do largely support the views expressed in the literature about these groups. The other numbers are so small and the results too mixed to be of any real significance. However, the fact that the Middle Easterners were almost unanimous in saying they could express disagreement but that saving face was important suggests both are possible in these cultures - that disagreement can be expressed in a way that does not cause loss of face. Again, the fact that all but one of the Latin Americans felt they could disagree openly and ten said saving face was not important may suggest changes among city-bred, educated people in these societies. On the other hand, the fact that two saw saving face and maintaining harmony as important and two others saw themselves as atypical suggests that this idea still has some salience and contrasts with the Eastern European view where the clear majority saw it as unimportant.

It is also important to stress that in many of the discussions of communication styles outlined above, generalisations are made with no reference to the situational context in which they are evidenced. In this study, the importance of the particular situational context is stressed. There does seem to be a strong argument that people change, or at least modify, their communicative behaviour depending on situational features, in particular the degree of formality, the presence or absence of hierarchical relations among participants, and expectations about the type of speech activity in which they are engaged. As suggested earlier, while this is evident in all cultures, the range and frequency of variation is greater in high context, high power distance predominantly collectivist cultures where factors such as face and ingroup, outgroup distinctions, play

a greater role. Irwin (1996), for example, points out that people from low-context societies like Australia, when interacting with high-context Japanese, often come to the conclusion that because the Japanese frequently appear to change their minds they either have no opinions or are too polite to state their real opinions. They are not aware that Japanese reasoning structures are predominantly contextual not abstract and, therefore, their views depend on the social context. For example, at work, Japanese males express great respect for their corporations and superiors, but when socialising after work they may express radically different opinions. Linguists such as Scollon and Scollon (1995) and Yamada (1992) have also pointed out that in such cultures the style and strategies adopted depend very much on context, that is, interpretative frames vary according to the specific conversational context. For example, a Chinese might use the indirect, inductive strategies commonly identified with Chinese cultures in many interactions but in certain informal contexts may dispense with these completely and be very direct. Again, according to Sinha and Tripathii (1994:128) the behaviour of Indians is determined by context. They "switch gears constantly according to the situation, therefore, displaying many frequent contradictions and facades". Certainly in hierarchical societies, people have to vary their style depending on the status of the person they are speaking with. If they have lower status, they adopt a more respectful or deferential style. If they have higher status, they may choose the style they believe appropriate to the relationship.

However, the reasoning structures of people from individualist-egalitarian societies, tend to be abstract rather than contextual so they are less likely to radically change their opinions and the features of their communication style according to the situational context (Williams, Giles & Pierson 1990). Even here there can be variation. For example, Tannen (1991:235) points out that Anglo women often make adjustments towards the male style of instrumental "report talk" (in contrast with their own affective "rapport style") when in mixed-gender group discussions, particularly in work or business settings.

It will be argued in this study that the fact that in the data some of the participants communicated in ways not seen as typical of their cultures was a direct result of the specific situational context in which the interactions took place and that it could not be generalised from this that they would necessarily behave in the same way in a different situation. At the same time, it is clear even from this very brief outline of the various communication styles identified in the literature that there are significant differences between cultural groups and that, as a result, critical problems can emerge in intercultural interactions. It would be expected that at least some of these differences and problems would be evident in the data being discussed and this is the case. Although there is some conflicting evidence, many of the findings are corroborated in the data. This further points to the need for training in these areas. As noted previously, a combination of linear organisation and the direct assertion of viewpoints can result in Japanese and Indonesians perceiving Australians as aggressive and rude (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996). A more robust style of argument can make Australians think Poles are rude and opinionated (Ronowicz 1995). It is all relative. It is helpful if training can make people aware that in intercultural settings their communicative behaviour may be perceived very differently from the way the same behaviour would be in their own culture and that they may need to adjust their style so they are perceived in a way that matches their intention.

Chapter Six

DATA ANALYSIS: DISCOURSE ORGANISATION AND RHETORICAL STRATEGIES

Introduction

As discussed in chapter five, the style most favoured for the presentation of information or argumentation, particularly in more formal settings, varies across cultures, and it is common for individuals to retain the discourse organisation patterns and rhetorical style of their first language when speaking or writing in a second language. In many high context cultures, an inductive structuring of information tends to be employed. Background information and justifications are stated first to gauge the reaction of the listeners or to persuade them. The main point is only stated towards the end or may only be hinted at. In the more direct, linear style valued in English-speaking cultures, the main point is usually stated first and then reasons or other supporting evidence for this view or proposition provided second, a more deductive approach. The data was examined to identify to what extent these different approaches were employed by participants from the various cultures, in what circumstances a particular approach was used, and how these worked in intercultural interactions. A second aim in this chapter was to look for examples of participants using rhetorical styles said to be favoured and effective in their cultures and again to examine how these worked in intercultural settings. The excerpts chosen for inclusion in the data analysis include examples of both direct and inductive approaches used by participants from particular cultures as well as comparisons showing how a number of approaches were used in the same interaction. Some excerpts illustrating the use of first language rhetorical strategies have also been included and conclusions reached about the effects this can have in an intercultural interaction.

There were a number of examples of individuals from high context cultures, Asian and Middle Eastern, using inductive approaches in the data. However, in general, participants used more direct, deductive approaches. The situational context of the discussions forming the data may have encouraged the use of this more direct style. They were relatively informal in comparison with workplace meetings or other more formal, asymmetrical interactions. As noted earlier, considerations such as face and hierarchical relationships can lead to the use of discourse strategies which make talk less explicit. Such considerations may not have applied in these symmetrical and relaxed discussions. In more informal gatherings with peers and ingroup members, more direct strategies are employed even in cultures where an indirect style is common in other contexts.

Another possibility is that those with less proficient English found it easier to be briefer and more explicit. They may also have felt that their priority in these interactions was to make themselves understood: to get their point of view across. A careful building up to a main point would probably involve greater linguistic skills. Moreover, it may not be possible to monitor non-verbal reactions during this build up in an intercultural context, therefore defeating part of the purpose of such an approach. A fourth possibility is that speakers in many of the groups tended to converge in their style. Often one speaker would 'pick up' a phrase from another and use organising devices such as 'my main reason is' or 'I think X is best because' a short time after another speaker had used these explicit expressions. This behaviour tended to be influenced by the task type and the

topic under discussion. In the more open-ended discussions where no real attempt was made to find a common view or reach a compromise, or where they were putting an opposing argument, some individuals seemed to exhibit their cultural styles more clearly. When they were more task-centred and there was general agreement or they were intent on solving the problem, there was usually more convergence and a more direct style was adopted.

There were also a number of examples in the data where participants employed the rhetorical strategies identified with their first language. This also tended to be more marked in less task-centred interactions and in discussions where participants were engaged in persuading others to their point of view.

A direct, linear style (an East Asian): Group A

One typical example of a participant from a high context culture employing a direct, linear style (apparently influenced by previous speakers) occurred in Group A's discussion of Problem One: The Heart Transplant. This group, who were discussed in chapter four, comprised Li Dong, the East Asian man, Bisominka, the South Asian woman, Elica, the Eastern European woman and Alex, the native speaker. Li Dong generally stated his point first and then listed reasons. One example of this occurred in Li Dong's first major contribution to the discussion on who should be given the heart (included earlier as Transcript A: Excerpt 1 in chapter four). During this presentation of his view, he did get interrupted while others clarified his view or made comments but basically his argument took the following form with a clear statement of his position followed by three reasons for his view, ordered and clearly signalled in order of importance.

Transcript A

Excerpt 1

- 1 Li Dong: I think . . . number five is the best one
- 2 Alex: Number five
- 3 Li Dong: Yes because he's a important people
- 4 in Central {Intelligence Agency 1}
- 5 Bisominka: {Yes in I think also}
- 6 Li Dong: and which means his contribution himself
- 7 to the social society
- 8 Alex: Right so your argument is that because he's important
- 9 Li Dong: and er and not just that
- 10 Alex: Yes
- 11 Li Dong: and the second one he's got three children
- 12 Alex: Three {children yes okay 2}
- 13 Bisominka: {x x x 2}
- 14 Li Dong: and the third is his serious . . .
- 15 his disease disease is very serious

There was some evidence that this approach was an example of convergence. Alex had suggested that they should go round in a circle and each say who they thought should get the heart. Bisominka had taken first turn using a direct approach and saying she thought patient five should get the heart and then giving her reason. Alex had then said his choice was number six and given three reasons using phrases such as 'the first point' and 'not the main reason'. Elica had followed the same pattern putting her preference, number two, first and then giving a reason. Alex had then asked Li Dong directly,

“What did you think was the best one”. At this point each person was free to express their preference, and there was no reason for Li Dong not to answer the question directly and follow the same pattern as the others. On the other hand, there were no examples of Li Dong using an inductive approach in the data. The fact that he was a young urban Chinese, the group noted earlier to have a more assertive, self-centred style (Young 1994), may also have been a reason for his direct approach. Although Alex checked to make sure he was following Li Dong’s argument, in this case it involved accurate confirmation of the points rather than evidence of confusion or misunderstanding. Li Dong’s presentation of his argument in this form was clearly understood by the others.

Inductive organisation (a South Asian): Dyad (b)

Nevertheless, while there were many such examples in the data, there were also a significant number of instances where participants, including other East Asians, adopted the less direct approach said to be common in their cultures and began with an introductory justification, giving reasons for a position before explicating that position: a ‘because ...’ ‘therefore ...’ organisation. At times this approach appeared to lead to some confusion on the part of other participants. One interaction in which this occurred was a dyadic discussion between Singh, a newly arrived South Asian immigrant, and John, a native speaker. Singh was a highly qualified professional who had used English in his previous employment for many years. They were discussing Problem Five: School Cuts, which necessitated making recommendations about which programs or other aspects of the high school curriculum would have to go because of budget constraints. Singh had some knowledge of the school system because his family had come ahead of him and his children had been studying in the secondary system. Singh took the lead at the outset.

Transcript (b)

Excerpt 1

- 1 Singh: We can discuss each and every point
- 2 in detail and decide

He then read out the facts about the special language program.

Transcript (b)

Excerpt 2

- 1 Singh: So what is your opinion
- 2 John: Er let’s see now actually
- 3 I think because it says here that er
- 4 it’s really a unique sort of a language laboratory
- 5 and er its the only one in the state
- 6 that probably we should keep this one
- 7 and what do you think about this first option
- 8 Singh: I think in the area er
- 9 Japanese or Mandarin language
- 10 is quite popular
- 11 John: (*quietly*) Yer
- 12 Singh: and as er the conditions today
- 13 I mean conditions regarding employment
- 14 if our boys know Mandarin or Japanese
- 15 they can converse over the adjoining countries

- 16 and boys who want to do business with these countries
17 they can have better prospects
18 John: Mm hm
19 Singh: or errr er the fellows who want to
20 have a job in these areas
21 because there would be
22 a lot of development in these areas now
23 John: Definitely
24 Singh: So
25 John: Definitely its certainly
26 very good for the economic climate isn't it
27 Singh: Yes I think Arabic can be dropped
28 there is not much problem
29 John: (*surprised*) Arabic
30 Singh: Yes
31 John: I don't think that's
32 particularly popular at the moment, is it
33 Singh: Yes that's what I'm saying
34 it should be dropped

John's opening statement (lines 3 to 6) in this extract demonstrates that native speakers can sometime use an inductive approach. Nevertheless, as is claimed in the literature and is evident from this data, it is not the one preferred by English speakers and the introductory justification tends to be brief when it is used as was the case here. This was the only occasion on which John employed this approach.

However, Singh did so a number of times and took much longer to come to his main point. For instance, throughout this extract, Singh was listing reasons for the maintenance of Japanese and Mandarin without first saying this was what he wanted or was considering. Then just as he seemed to be about to state his main point saying 'so' (line 24), John interrupted him with a supportive comment in the form of a confirming tag question (lines 25 and 26), apparently thinking he had already made his point. After this happened, Singh made no attempt to state his point explicitly. As Gumperz et al (1982) note, there is an underlying difference in the kind of thematic progression expected by native speakers and Indian speakers of English together with different devices to signal progression and effect cohesion. Singh went on to make his next point, giving a direct, up-front opinion this time (line 27) although, perhaps his positive statements about Japanese and Mandarin were a build up to the conclusion that Arabic should be dropped. However, for John, this appeared to be a change of topic, which was too abrupt and it caught him by surprise. He checked quickly (line 29) to make sure that Singh had intended to move on to discuss another language. Then when Singh confirmed this (line 30), John made a comment (lines 31 and 32) supporting Singh's new proposal to drop Arabic. The fact that he again put it in the form of a tag question, checking the inference he was making about the reason for this proposal, suggests that he was being cooperative and trying to keep up with Singh's reasoning. At this point, Singh clarified his intention (lines 33 and 34) in a very direct way. This clarification may have been made because Singh realised John was having trouble following him but it sounded rather impatient to a native English speaker as if Singh was irritated by the way John kept making polite supportive comments which also gave him the opportunity to confirm his interpretation of Singh's points.

After Singh's clarification, John attempted to add another comment but Singh interrupted him to make another topic switch and move onto the subject of Russian.

Transcript (b)

Excerpt 3

- 1 John: And er er
- 2 Singh: Russian I don't find any point
- 3 in keeping Russian language on our program
- 4 now we have to decide between Mandarin and Japanese

This decision on Russian was one example of Singh's occasional tendency to make abrupt decisions without consulting John. His conclusion that there had to be a choice between Mandarin and Japanese was also surprising as earlier he had appeared to give reasons for maintaining both these languages. John did not remonstrate and remained overtly cooperative and polite.

Two further examples of the problems caused by Singh preceding his main point with a longish introductory justification are illustrated in the following extract. These examples occurred towards the end of the discussion. A stalemate had been reached and there was a long silence of twenty seconds duration. John then suggested cutting a small number of teachers. It would appear that he had reluctantly come around to seeing the need to reduce staff numbers. Singh was surprised at this change of position.

Transcript (b)

Excerpt 4

- 1 Singh: What did you say
- 2 John: By axing a few teachers
- 3 it means that the budget
- 4 can save quite a lot of money
- 5 Singh: er ... thing is ...
- 6 you are teaching thirty students at a time
- 7 and second case you are teaching
- 8 forty or fifty students at a time ...
- 9 the thing is are you able to ...
- 10 justify ... the teaching ..
- 11 are you able to look after
- 12 all the fifty students
- 13 I think some of the students will be ignored
- 14 John: So let me see you're suggesting
- 15 that er we don't cut the number of ...
- 16 Singh: Don't decrease the teacher taught ratio
- 17 from one is to thirty
- 18 to one is to forty
- 19 to one is to fifty
- 20 John: But you
- 21 Singh: We don't increase that
- 22 John: But you at the same time you don't want
- 23 to cut the number of hours of people teaching
- 24 so there's no way for the budget to save any money
- 25 because you want both sides of this argument
- 26 so basically the final points are about either

27 ONE cutting the number of hours of
28 either core subjects or physical education or
29 SECOND cutting the number of teachers
30 so it has to be one of these
31 and there it can't be both
32 Singh: (Sure?) I think er er these maths teachers
33 I'm told they finish their course ...
34 quite well in advance
35 ... in a semester of four months ...
36 they finish their syllabus
37 in first two months
38 and then next two months
39 they are doing revision work
40 so I'm suggesting ...
41 they reduce the number of working hours
42 by thirty percent

In the first part of this extract, Singh was apparently building up an argument for maintaining the number of teachers in order to keep low numbers of students in a group, but instead of waiting for Singh to reach his conclusion (or maybe thinking he had made his point), John came in to try to clarify Singh's position (line 14). John was obviously trying to get Singh to make a clear cut decision between two possibilities and used the typical 'Anglo' approach of numbering points to make the situation very clear (lines 27 to 29). However, while perhaps his first indistinct word was 'sure' and signalled agreement with this approach (line 32), at first, Singh appeared not to provide a relevant answer (lines 32 to 39) although he actually eventually did so (lines 41 and 42). He signalled his main point with 'so I'm suggesting', having first given the reasons (lines 32 to 39). Overall, this extract shows that John found Singh's approach confusing and found it necessary to 'spell out' the choices available and force Singh to a conclusion.

Singh then went on to expand on the percentage of time to be spent on completing the course and doing revision work, suggesting students should do their revision alone out of school. John did not agree with this idea and the discussion continued without getting back on track for some time. They did come to a final agreement after John suggested paying teachers by the hour rather than giving them a set salary but, overall, the interaction appeared to be an uncomfortable one, with no indication of any rapport developing between them. There was evidence that both different cultural values and communication styles contributed to this.

For instance, their different opinions in relation to the subject were partly because of culturally-based assumptions. The discussion took place in the early nineties and, initially, John was strongly of the opinion that it was not possible for teachers to lose their jobs as they were qualified professionals and had permanent positions. Singh found this view difficult to understand in a situation where there were economic imperatives that demanded such a decision be made. Singh's tendency to talk only about boys' needs as though girls were absent from such schools (illustrated in the first extract lines 14 to 19 where he talked about the students as "boys" and "fellows") may also have been unexpected, even alienating, for John.

The fact that Singh was considerably older than John and came from a hierarchical society may also have been a factor in determining the way their relationship evolved.

For example, at times Singh exhibited a tendency at times to make decisions without consulting John. He may have felt that his seniority permitted this. It is true that this was only occasional. Much of the discussion involved question form checking for agreement by both participants. Nevertheless, Singh's unilateral decisions may have contributed to the lack of any obvious development of rapport between them.

However, the problems were also caused by conflicting communication styles. Singh's communication style was characteristic of the style valued in his culture, and identified by Clyne (1994) as Style B, in that his turns were often quite long and his language tended to sound rather formal, even bureaucratic. To give one example from Extract 2, " - - conditions regarding employment, if our boys know Mandarin or Japanese, they can converse over the adjoining countries". In addition, his tendency to use inductive strategies may also have contributed to the sense of strain often evident in this interaction. This discussion was marked by unusually long pauses and silences, which seemed to reflect both difficulty with the task and with understanding the intentions and attitudes of each other. As well, although there was no overlapping, each participant often interrupted the other one at inappropriate moments and in general the conversation exhibited more asynchrony than synchrony. Obviously other factors besides different ways of structuring information were at play here. Gumperz et al (1982: 28) point out that Indian speakers of English "systematically differ from native speakers of English in devices used to signal 'communicative intent' through lexicalisation, syntax and prosody" and, as a result, native speakers find their discourse disconnected and difficult to follow. While both remained overtly calm and polite, no affinity appeared to develop between them: there was no humour and no deviation from the task to engage in small talk.

Inductive organisation (a South Asian) contrasted with a deductive approach (an Eastern European): Group K

In another interaction, in this instance with non-native speakers, Singh also manifested this same style, taking long turns and giving reasons for a position before explicitly stating it. In this interaction, he also tended to use parallel structures and repetition. The other participants in this group, Group K, were Wen, an East Asian woman, Ivan, an Eastern European man and Ana, a Latin American woman. They discussed Problem Six: The Budget. With this problem, the groups were told that they were ministers in a hypothetical, developing Latin American country with a small budget and that they must prioritise the areas of government spending and decide how much for a program in each of the eight designated areas. In this case Singh's style did not seem to cause such a problem. Ivan also took long turns and gave detailed justifications for his position, features seen as typical of Style A speakers in Clyne's (1994) data. Ivan, however, in contrast to Singh, put his main points first and then gave his reasons. Maria had a high involvement style: her main way of participating was collaborative overlap. However, perhaps because of her less proficient English or because of the very different styles of the others, she made only a limited contribution to the discussion. Wen also spoke less frequently and took much shorter turns (fitting with Clyne's Style C). However, she made her views known quite assertively on occasions, even though she tended to use an inductive approach. Her insistence, in opposition to the others, that education be given a high rating was another example of the value placed on education by participants from Confucian cultures. Basically, however, the men dominated this conversation and their tendency to each take and allow long turns generally gave Singh the chance to complete his arguments and reach his main point. However, this was not always without having to work to maintain his turn as others sometimes overlapped with him. Nevertheless,

they appear to have been supporting his points rather than assuming completion of his argument and he was usually successful in maintaining his turns. The following two excerpts illustrate Singh's style and these features of the interaction. This group was placing each program as either 'A' (top priority) or 'B' (second ranking) or 'C' (low priority). In the first excerpt, they were discussing hydro-electric power and Ivan had pointed out that the country had large rivers and lots of rain. Singh then took this turn.

Transcript K

Excerpt 1

- 1 Singh: If you've got a river
2 you can have a dam there
3 and you can store water
4 and you can generate electricity
5 and I know electric power is the cheapest power
6 Ana: Yes it is cheaper {x x x 1}
7 Singh: {it is the cheapest 1} power
8 so you will be making use of your resources
9 and at the same time you'll be creating
10 a most er most fine thing for the country
11 Ivan: Yes
12 Singh: You cannot have mines without electricity
13 Ivan: Yes that's {true you can't 2}
14 Singh: {You can't have 2} utilities without industry
15 you can't have refrigerators
16 you can't have electric light
17 if you can't have electric light
18 how the children will study
19 {how will your hospitals run 3}
20 Ana: {x x x x x 3}
21 Ivan {x x x x x 3}
22 Singh: so I think we have to have this electric power in 'A'

In lines 2, 3, and 4, Singh used parallel structures, repeating part of each clause. He did this again in lines 12, 14, 15, 16, and 17. As can be seen, in lines 6 and 13, Ana and Ivan were agreeing with him. In lines 20 and 21, they made inaudible contributions, so it is not possible to know if they were just supporting his statements. In any case, he was able to continue and complete his turn, making his main point at the end in line 22. Interestingly, as in much of his dyadic interaction with John, in this and other instances in this discussion, Singh was not putting an opposing argument but still chose to use an inductive approach. Perhaps this was in anticipation of opposition or intended to be more persuasive than a direct approach might be.

Ivan's style had some similarities with Singh's in that he took long turns to justify his views. However, as noted previously, he stated his main point directly up-front and then gave his reasons. The following excerpt is typical of his blunt, forceful style with many justifications for his point of view. Before this excerpt, Wen had argued against ranking electric power as a top priority. Ivan then put the view that not making utilities such as electricity a top priority would completely inhibit development.

Transcript K

Excerpt 2

- 1 Ivan: Look it's really simple
- 2 if you except develop development of utilities
- 3 you are just making these people
- 4 you are just making them
- 5 to survive nothing more
- 6 that's what happened in South Africa
- 7 that's or in Asia some countries
- 8 poor like this one like this country
- 9 they're just surviving
- 10 because they're sending them money
- 11 for the food and they're sending
- 12 them doctors to heal them
- 13 and that's everything and eventually
- 14 that food's gonna disappear
- 15 and the doctors gonna go back
- 16 to where they came from
- 17 and they still have the same problems
- 18 you don't have potential
- 19 you don't have production
- 20 you don't have educated people
- 21 that's just maintaining that that
- 22 level of surviving that's nothing
- 23 Singh: You don't have your own things

In lines 1 to 4, Ivan directly made the point that if utilities were not developed, the result would be survival only, with no progress. His opening retort in line 1, 'it's really simple', appeared to imply criticism of Wen's view, which he did nothing to soften. He then went on to provide supporting evidence for his argument, drawing analogies with other countries that had made no progress (lines 6 to 17), perhaps indicative of the predisposition to digressive, tangential argumentation seen as typical of Style A (Clyne 1994). In lines 18, 19 and 20 he used repetition and parallel syntactic structures rather similar to those used by Singh, but this was not a common feature of his style. In this context, it should be noted that Tannen (1984b: 155) discusses the tendency of English speakers to use recurrent patterns of sound, such as words and syntactic constructions, spontaneously in ordinary conversation. She suggests that it serves "to sweep the audience along toward subjective knowing". Certainly, in this instance, Ivan was aiming to persuade the others to see his point of view. He may also have been influenced by Singh's style and unconsciously used more of these recurrent patterns than usual. The way in which Singh added another similarly expressed point (line 23) is of interest here as it provided further evidence of the way his style reflected first language preferences: in this case the intention to show polite desire to be cooperative by opening with some repetition of the previous speaker ideas or words (Gumperz et al 1982). Ivan had concluded by repeating his main point about just surviving (lines 22 and 23). Overall, while Ivan's style exhibited some emphasis on form, it generally accorded with Clyne's (1994) description of Style A. long turns and an emphasis on content rather than form.

Inductive organisation to present an opposing view (a Southeast Asian): Group B

There were a number of other examples of an inductive type of discourse organisation in the data, in these cases involving East Asian, Southeast Asian or Middle Eastern speakers. Just three examples will be discussed because of certain interesting features related to this type of discourse organisation. In some instances, this approach appears

to have been chosen because the view being put was different from that of other participants. The following extract from Group B's discussion on the Heart Transplant, which has already been analysed in the chapter on cultural values for different purposes, provides an example of this tendency. Here we see that, at the same time that it reflects particular values, the way in which the argument is presented also reflects the preference for a particular style of presentation. The participants involved here were Doai, the Southeast Asian man, Asmahan, the Middle Eastern woman, Yolanda, the Latin American woman, and Jack, the native speaker. At this point in the discussion, Asmahan had argued that number five should get the heart because of his serious condition and the fact that he was a widower with three children. Doai now put forward an opposing argument beginning with his justification for this position.

Transcript B

Excerpt 1

- 1 Doai: I have an idea I think now the person number five
- 2 he work now in the Central Intelligence Agency
- 3 Jack: Yes
- 4 Doai: but I think his job now
- 5 is not really necessary because
- 6 Jack: (*laughing*) He's a Russian
- 7 Doai: Yes the collapse of Soviet Union
- 8 and um in the future
- 9 I think they don't need
- 10 er more um

At this point first Asmahan and then Yolanda interrupted him arguing that the state of the patient's health was more important than any considerations about their work or knowledge. Possibly they thought he had already made his main point and it is true that they had inferred his reason for not giving the heart to number five without allowing him time to explicitly state this. However, as soon became evident, he had not yet come to the main point he wished to make. After stating their objections to his view, Yolanda attempted to move away from the discussion of number five to look at the situation in regard to number one. As can be seen in the following extract, Doai was not prepared to let this happen as he wanted to finish his argument against Asmahan's proposition first (see lines 6 to 7) and put his own proposal (see lines 8 to 10).

Transcript B

Excerpt 2

- 1 Doai: I think it's better to discuss
- 2 her ideas first
- 3 Yolanda: Yes okay
- 4 Doai: because I think we must
- 5 think about er his future
- 6 you say you save him
- 7 and his job is not necessary any more
- 8 I think it's better to choose another person
- 9 maybe he can contribute his ability to the social
- 10 after we save er his life

As became even clearer later, Doai's main criteria for deciding which patient should be given the heart was the contribution they would be able to make to the society. Here,

however, he just took long enough to make this point briefly. But, instead of stating this at the outset, he began by building up a case about the outdated nature of number five's role and expertise in the changed world situation, operating, presumably, on the premise that it is best to show others your line of reasoning and take them along with you before stating your actual proposition if you are opposing their view. In this instance, through persistence, he did complete his argument, but it is easy to see how this might not happen in more formal or intimidating circumstances and would thus lead to the complaint 'they never let me finish'.

Later in the interaction, Doai again provided a clear example of the 'because' ... 'therefore' organisation of an argument said to be so typical in Chinese and other Asian styles (Kirkpatrick 1993, Young 1994).

Transcript B

Excerpt 3

- 1 Doai: Sorry you look number seven again
- 2 they said Mr Jacobson has already
- 3 had one heart transplant operation
- 4 Jack: {Yes 1}
- 5 Yolanda: {Yes 1}
- 6 Doai: but his body rejected that heart
- 7 Yolanda: Yes that is the reason I didn't
- 8 Doai: His body has not {accepted the heart 2}
- 9 Jack: {I don't think x x x x 2}
- 10 Yolanda: {That is the reason I put him 2} at the bottom
- 11 Doai: Yes so between number four and number seven
- 12 I chose number four see
- 13 Jack: I can see your point there

In this excerpt, Doai took five lines to explain his reason for choosing number four rather than number seven, only making this point finally in lines 11 and 12. He had to struggle to maintain his turn and make this point as Yolanda may have thought he had already made it when she came in (lines 7 and 10). On the other hand, her comments could equally well be seen as collaborative overlapping as she agreed with Doai. Jack, however, was very possibly beginning a counter argument in line 9 and would not have waited for Doai to finish if he had not given way to Yolanda (line 10). This then gave Doai a chance to finish, and Jack was then able to appreciate the real point he was making (line 13). Although in this instance, Doai used this inductive approach to put forward an opposing position, his comments in his questionnaire suggest that this was his typical approach when expressing an opinion. He wrote: "Usually I show my opinion indirectly and carefully and gradually explain my idea".

Inductive organisation (a Southeast Asian challenged by an East Asian): Group L

In Group L's interaction there was another example of a Southeast Asian participant using this type of inductive organisation. An interesting feature here was that an East Asian participant interrupted him to get him to state his main point upfront. This group were discussing Problem Six: The Budget. The group comprised Mia, a West European woman, Ines, a Latin American woman, Sun, an East Asian man and Vinh, the Southeast Asian man from Group C. Mia had started by outlining her order of priority for each program in the budget. Sun had intervened to try to get some order into the

discussion, suggesting they just indicate their first two priorities. Mia agreed. The following discussion then took place.

Transcript L

Excerpt One

- 1 Mia: One and seven
- 2 agriculture because first
- 3 have to care for the people
- 4 Sun: I I absolutely agree completely
- 5 first is agriculture
- 6 second is social {services x x x 1}
- 7 Vinh: {I don't I don't 1} no I don't
- 8 because you know the developed
- 9 ... developed countries is not an agricultural country
- 10 usually it's a ... how do you say that
- 11 a x ... because um ... this age is the age
- 12 how do you say high technique {yer um 2}
- 13 Sun: {so excuse 2} me you don't agree with
- 14 but could you give us which er which program
- 15 you think is most important

After some more questioning by Sun and Mia, it became clear that, in lines 8 to 12, Vinh was building up an argument to justify putting education first and allocating it 35% of the budget (another example of a participant from a Confucian society stressing the importance of education). However, although he was prepared to disagree directly, he clearly did not want to state his priority initially, most probably because he already knew that two of the others had different priorities. He attempted to give his reasons before making his preference known: however, in this instance, Sun intervened to keep Vinh to the more direct and ordered structure he was trying to impose on the discussion. Sun, was another young, urban, mainland Chinese male. His more direct communicative style provided further evidence to support Young's (1994) view that this group are more assertive and direct. Young claims that when Chinese put the 'because' clause first, Americans interpret this as their main point and interrupt them. Sun, however, clearly understood that Vinh was giving a justification for his preference and interrupted to try to cut this off and get him to directly state his main point (lines 14 and 15). There was no misunderstanding. Sun appeared to be familiar with this inductive approach and just wanted to encourage Vinh to be more direct. This also fits with Young's belief that while these mainland youths may choose not to use such strategies, they are able to "recognise and respond to the communicative signals and social ends" of this type of discourse (Young 1994: 58). In some other interactions, however, Chinese and other East Asians used an inductive approach. One example will be included in chapter eight when discussing assertiveness and disagreement.

Three types of discourse organisation: Group M

Another participant who used this inductive type of organisation, in this case again to express a view she knew was contrary to that of other participants, was Ari, a Southeast Asian woman. This happened in Group M's discussion of Problem Six: The Budget. The other participants in this group were Elica, the Eastern European woman from Group A, Paloma, a South American woman and Netum, a South Asian woman. As will be discussed in the chapter on turn-taking, this group had highly organised turns in which each participant was given the opportunity to state their order of preference for

the eight programs listed. The organisation of their arguments was interesting as it took three distinct forms and individual participants maintained the same form throughout their listing of the programs. For example, Elica always stated her priority and then gave her reasons, as in the following extract.

Transcript M

Extract 1

- 1 Elica: On the fourth place I've put education
- 2 why because there's 90% of the people
- 3 who are illiterate that's why
- 4 on the fifth place let's have a look
- 5 maybe I can put social services
- 6 because there are no hospitals

Netum also stated her priority first and then gave her reasons. However, she moved closer to the 'because' / 'therefore' organisation in that she added a 'so clause' at the end each time. The following extract illustrates the pattern she followed for the eight programs.

Transcript M

Extract 2

- 1 Netum: The second one I put social services
- 2 because because they said there's only one doctor
- 3 for every 5,000 citizens
- 4 if you do other it's not enough they will die
- 5 so we have to save doing everything
- 6 to take care of them first
- 7 so I put second place for this social service

Both Elica and Netum had made agriculture their first priority in order to feed the people, especially the children, although they did not have the same order after that. Ari, however, had a quite different view. She was not prepared to state this upfront without first providing a lengthy justification for it. After checking that it was her turn, Ari developed her argument in the following manner.

Transcript M

Extract 3

- 1 Ari: I just want you to look at the whole problem
- 2 in this . . . country our country um
- 3 I know that the problem is . . very difficult for us to
- 4 Paloma? x
- 5 Ari: no to solve this problem
- 6 we have problem about agriculture
- 7 about transport about police and national guard
- 8 about everything it seems that we don't have um
- 9 we don't have um really good um
- 10 I mean we don't have any choice
- 11 to make a priority in our program
- 12 but if we look at our resources for example
- 13 we know that our country ...
- 14 looks or seems dx from other countries so

15 and also our people still poor
 16 so I think I think we should think that
 17 the main problem is the economic
 18 I um I know that we should care about the children
 19 who will become um er the owner of our country
 20 ? : Um mm
 21 Ari: but is it possible for us
 22 to give first priority from these programs
 23 because if we only think we want to give them
 24 first priority with this budget
 25 that means we can't to grow up um
 26 our I mean our I mean to to
 27 for example I mean I mean to priority
 28 another resources how can maybe um
 29 Paloma: Are you talking about your first priority
 30 Ari: Yes but I just try to make you understand
 31 why I chose first priority or second priority
 32 Paloma Yes
 33 Ari: so we can argue it better than before
 34 so for me for example I put transport first
 35 Paloma: Transport
 36 Ari: why because um we have um a lot of resources
 37 you know natural resources which are undeveloped
 38 . . . so this means we can have more money
 39 from these resources if we develop better
 40 we can have income from that
 41 so this is first the first time we should do
 42 if if transportation has becoming better
 43 so they can er this transportation can help
 44 develop the natural resources
 45 Elica: Yes I understand you {x x and I agree 1}
 46 Paloma: {x x x x 1}
 47 Ari: {x x x for our 1} country
 48 Ari: after that of course er
 49 we should put our um human resources
 50 so it means agriculture is the third priority

Ari appeared to take such a long time to justify her reasons for disagreeing with the others partly because she was trying to persuade them to her point of view, but also because she was putting a difficult and sophisticated argument with limited English. This interaction took place towards the beginning of her first course and she had had little experience speaking in English before coming to Australia. On the other hand, while her English level may have played a part, it may also have been cultural. Krasnick (1995) in an article on English use in ASEAN countries, remarks on the problems students have in expressing an individual opinion and getting to the point. In lines 1 to 28, she was obviously attempting to build up a case for an economic argument (the need to make money by developing transport and natural resources) which necessitated placing other programs ahead of agriculture and feeding the children. Paloma found her argument difficult to follow or was trying to keep her on track (line 29). Perhaps, when their first language is being used, listeners used to a high context style are more prepared to work at making sense of an argument. In intercultural communication, they

may need to check that they are getting it right. Ari then continued with her argument in a very conciliatory way, explaining her purpose in adopting this approach (lines 30, 31 and 33). It was only in line 34 that she finally stated her first preference and in line 50 that she admitted her proposal meant moving agriculture to third place. The others appeared to appreciate her conciliatory approach as Elica's feedback (line 45) was positive, (Paloma's was inaudible, line 46) and they let her finish her turn.

After the others again asked for clarification of her order of priority, she went on to further explain and try to persuade them to her point of view.

Transcript M

Extract 4

- 1 Ari: Second is develop natural resources
- 2 we only have two million
- 3 ? : um hm
- 4 Ari: we don't need we don't want
- 5 to borrow the money from um other countries
- 6 because we have debt or something like that
- 7 we don't need to borrow a lot of money
- 8 because we have natural resources in our country
- 9 and then so . . . third program third priority is the agriculture
- 10 it means we can build up um our human resources better
- 11 because this is very important too

In this last extract, Ari was clearly still trying to justify her proposal to put agriculture third, but in a way that would help the others see her line of reasoning and that agreed with them about the importance of what she called 'human resources'. She appeared to be trying to avoid conflict and to express conciliatory intent, and she seemed to find an inductive approach necessary to help achieve this. It was only when asked for clarification that she directly stated her order of preferences as in line 1 of this extract. Because of their agreement about each taking a turn to outline their priorities, she was given the opportunity to finish, but in a more free-for-all or open house type of discussion, it is doubtful if this would have happened. Moreover, if she had been allowed to complete her argument in a work or academic situation, it is very possible that native English speakers would have switched off or accused her of muddled thinking (Gumperz et al 1979, Brick 1991). In this case, the other participants appeared to be more understanding, providing feedback which indicated at least an appreciation of her viewpoint.

It is of interest that Paloma who took the last turn returned to a fairly direct approach even though her order of importance was also different. Nevertheless, unlike Elica, her approach was not a simple proposition followed by a supporting reason. Rather, like Netum, she always stated her priority first, then gave a reason or reasons and then repeated her main point again. The following extract illustrates her style of argument.

Transcript M

Extract 5

- 1 Paloma: It's so hard to .. everything is important
- 2 but we only have two million
- 3 so for me the priority is social security
- 4 because if you don't have health you can do nothing

This approach, used by both Netum and Paloma, may be the best one in an intercultural interaction. It would meet the expectations of both those participants listening for the main point at the beginning and those expecting it at the conclusion of the turn.

Inductive organisation in an opening argument (a Middle Easterner): Group N

As mentioned, there were also some examples of Arabic speakers using this indirect organisation. One example occurred in Group N which discussed the same problem, The Budget. This group comprised Jamal, the Middle Eastern man and Josef, the Eastern European man, who had both been in Group F, Emily, an East Asian woman and Pierre, a North African. In this case, this organisation was used at the outset of the discussion. Jamal took a very long opening turn in which he displayed a tendency to repeat words and syntactic structures and make what in English rhetoric would be regarded as dogmatic, sweeping statements. His main point, the actual percentage he wanted to spend on children did not come until the end of this turn when, having made his point, he relinquished the floor to Emily.

Transcript N

Extract 1

- 1 Jamal: We might start um hm
- 2 Josef: {But we have to be x 1}
- 3 Emily: {x x x x 1}..
- 4 Jamal: {The whole subject is 1}about developing develop
- 5 to develop er a country
- 6 the whole subject is right
- 7 and I think about the first point
- 8 that about the children
- 9 children are very important you know
- 10 in any society
- 11 and if you want to develop any country
- 12 and make it well
- 13 you have to have er a good generation
- 14 and that generation will build er..
- 15 Pierre: (*murmur*) Yes
- 16 Jamal: it's built by children
- 17 Emily: (*murmur*) Mm hm
- 18 Jamal: then you have to spend
- 19 a lot of money on children
- 20 and give them all the rights
- 21 you can give it to them er
- 22 for example good health good food good school
- 23 and er anything they need
- 24 good clothes for example
- 25 in these areas there is nothing
- 26 Emily: And {you have to x x x 2}
- 27 Jamal: {and they are x x x 2}
- 28 then you to
- 29 and first of all you have to give them good medicare
- 30 Emily: Education
- 31 Jamal: and education

- 32 Emily: (*slight laugh*) If you have money
 33 Jamal: if you have the money
 34 if you have one hundred percent
 35 if you have to have a lot of money
 36 to look after them
 37 then you have to make er
 38 to make er . . . a system
 39 a small system for them
 40 to have a good future
 41 that is my opinion
 42 then I consider that we have to spend
 43 about thirty percent about children

Jamal did organise his talk partly in a deductive way by defining the general subject (lines 4, 5 and 6). Moreover, he did indicate early in this turn that he was discussing the first program, agriculture, which referred to the malnutrition suffered by children (lines 7 and 8), but it was not until his turn was completed (lines 42 and 43), that it became clear that his extended discussion of the importance of children in a society and the need to spend money on them was a persuasive justification for his main idea - spending a very large percentage of the budget on them. As noted in chapter three, it is claimed that in Arab culture, people do not like directness (Cohen 1987) and strong forms of assertion are seen as necessary to convince others of your sincerity and persuade them to your view (Almaney & Alwan 1982). As well as showing an indirect approach, this extract gives some idea of Jamal's rhetorical style: the strong assertions 'you/we have to ...' (lines 13, 18, 29, 35, 42) and the repetition of a particular structure as in lines 33, 34, 35, where he picked up and repeated Emily's clause 'if you have ...' and the repetition of a word in lines 22 and 24 'good health, good food, good school, good clothes'.

In this case Jamal's inductive approach did not cause any confusion and although Emily made a number of comments (lines 26, 30, 32), Jamal was able to complete his turn and make his main point. And after this, as they worked cooperatively to complete the task, such long turns were not possible and Jamal became more direct and used deductive organisation more often.

Rhetorical strategies reflecting first language preferences (a Middle Easterner): Group F

Jamal displayed the rhetorical style valued in his first language, Arabic, much more in a later group. This was Group F discussed in chapter four and composed of Jamal, Phien, the Vietnamese man, Sandra, the Southern European woman, and the two Eastern European men, Josef and Piotr. They discussed Problem Two: Co-educational Schools, which involved deciding which type of secondary school is preferable and should be recommended: coeducational schools or single-sex schools. As the analysis of this interaction in chapter four illustrated, this was a subject that involved strongly held cultural beliefs and assumptions and the discussion did not progress past the stage of individuals expressing conflicting views about the subject. The topic and the type of discussion may have influenced the rhetorical style adopted more strongly by Jamal in this instance.

As outlined in chapter five, features valued in Arabic rhetoric include overassertion; repetition, particularly of main points; elaborate parallelism (the preference for

coordinate rather than subordinate clauses); embellishment and exaggeration; form over content, and long justifications and explanations. All of these features were evident in Jamal's speech throughout this interaction. For example, he repeated the phrase "this age is very dangerous" or close variants on it, ten times. The following excerpts illustrate this use of repetition of structures, coordination and parallelism, as well as the use of the emotional, affective argument that co-education would cause children to become pregnant.

Transcript F

Excerpt 1

- 1 Jamal: And very early marriage is very dangerous for them
- 2 some of them
- 3 she is a child and she has a child
- 4 she is a child and she get pregnant
- 5 and she is maybe twelve (pause)
- 6 she is a child

A little later he argued that girls at this age imitate boys.

Transcript F

Excerpt 2

- 1 Jamal: She want er to do that
- 2 to tell him that you are not better than me
- 3 if you are smoker I am smoker
- 4 if you are tough I am tough
- 5 if you can fight I can fight

Jamal also displayed a strong tendency to exaggerate, to make sweeping generalisations. This fits with the view that in Arab culture if you say what you mean without assertion people can think you mean the opposite (Almaney & Alwan 1982). As can be seen in the following extract which occurred towards the end of the discussion, Josef did not understand or appreciate this approach and challenged Jamal's claim about how men always behave in front of women, at the same time putting the argument that people must be seen as individuals.

Transcript F

Excerpt 3

- 1 Jamal: The man want to
- 2 display his personality
- 3 in front of girl you know
- 4 Phien: (*nodding enthusiastically*) Yes yes
- 5 Jamal: all the time
- 6 all the time
- 7 you try to demonstrate
- 8 Phien: Yes
- 9 Jamal: you know in front of
- 10 Josef: You can't talk like this
- 11 you do it very general
- 12 you can't talk about everybody like this
- 13 because maybe
- 14 Jamal: We speak generally

- 15 we speak generally
- 16 Josef: Yes, you can't talk about this
- 17 so generally as you are talking
- 18 you know why
- 19 because nobody is the same
- 20 it's a fact.

It would appear that at least this feature of Jamal's rhetorical style exacerbated the irritation which developed between him and Josef and Piotr and was described in detail in chapter four. Gumperz and Roberts (1991) point out that what is seen as persuasive and effective talk, which particular rhetorical and interactive strategies are best employed, depends on shared background and assumptions. In this case the sweeping assertions made by Jamal were alienating rather than persuasive in relation to Josef and Piotr. On the other hand, this did not appear to apply to Phien who showed only enthusiasm for Jamal's views. This would suggest that the way opinions are expressed may not cause a problem if people agree with the propositional content.

Rhetorical strategies reflecting first language preferences (a Middle Easterner and South Asian): Group O:

This style does not always have a negative effect. It can be colourful and dramatic and help others understand the strength of a particular cultural view. An example of this occurred in Group O, an extremely successful group who had had some cultural awareness training and were able to explicate cultural differences. This was a large group of eight people comprising three Eastern Europeans, a woman Lola and the man, Miron, and woman, Dana, from Group H. There were three others from this group, the East Asian woman, Vera, the Latin American man, Carlos, and the South Asian man, Govinda. There was also a Middle Eastern man, Zainab, and a Western European man, Alain. They discussed Problem Three: Managing Diversity. Zainab used strong, dramatic language with some repetition to explain his views to the others. Although he did not have long turns (no-one had the opportunity in this group), he was successful in persuading others to his point of view. The following two excerpts illustrate his rhetorical style, particularly the use of repetition and parallel syntactic structures.

Transcript O

Excerpt 1

- 1 Zainab: I think I think that we are facing here
- 2 ah a problem of cultural differences
- 3 because obviously the man
- 4 um came from a society
- 5 where er . . . I mean a male dominated society maybe
- 6 and he can't understand the behaviour of a female . . .
- 7 this behaviour he can't understand
- 8 he can't admit . . .
- 9 plus he can't afford the situation
- 10 when . . . a woman . . . ah er with ahh
- 11 with a strange behaviour
- 12 with a strange attitude
- 13 become his supervisor
- 14 he can't understand it

A short time later he used more repetition of parallel structures when he argued that it would be necessary to explain to the man that it was a business relationship.

Transcript O

Excerpt 2

- 1 Zainab: We are not in a bar
- 2 we are not in a recreation place
- 3 we have work to do
- 4 we have to do it

Further into the discussion, Zainab took a stronger, more dramatic and assertive line, urging the avoidance of confrontation and pointing out how deep the man's cultural conditioning probably was. This excerpt also showed how Miron, who had been persuaded to his view, now supported him, not by overlapping but by interspersing collaborative comments between Zainab's points.

Transcript O

Excerpt 3

- 1 Zainab: He is not a baby
- 2 Miron: He's not a baby
- 3 Zainab: He's adult now and to change his way of thinking
- 4 Miron: Its hard
- 5 Zainab: the adult's way of thinking
- 6 Miron: Just by talking to him it's not
- 7 Zainab: I'm afraid it's too late for him to change

The following remarks were made at intervals between the comments of the other participants but they further indicate Zainab's use of dramatic overassertion and repetition.

Transcript O

Excerpt 4

- 1 Zainab: Because I think I believe that
- 2 he can't change his attitude
- 3 it's too late
-
- 4 It's something in his culture he can't
-
- 5 I'm afraid it's too late for him to change
-
- 6 He would prefer to die
- 7 than to work with her
-
- 8 You have to understand his culture
- 9 at home with his family he's the king
- 10 you know he's really a despot
- 11 and he should obey at workplace
- 12 someone younger
-
- 13 You have to understand his culture
- 14 it's something holy

- 15 it's a holy thing
- 16 it's a red line a red line
- 17 and you can't go across it

In this interaction, Zainab also at times made humorous comments which amused the others. In addition, he was explaining cultural attitudes that he understood because of his background, but explicitly stated that he did not share. Under these circumstances, his expressive language was appreciated by the others and helped them understand this point of view.

This interaction also provided an example of another South Asian whose communication style in English reflected the preferences of his culture. This was Govinda, a man from a small South Asian country. Two of Govinda's longer turns demonstrated his style. Miron, apparently persuaded by Zainab's rhetoric, had suggested moving the male staff member to a different department. Dana and Vera had disagreed with this suggestion, arguing that the problem should be solved within the department he was presently working in. Govinda then expressed the following view.

Transcript O

Excerpt 5

- 1 Govinda: I think this is not the burning problem
- 2 that we have to solve it in by tomorrow {but it's 1}
- 3 Dana: {Yes, it 1} can't be solved very quickly
- 4 Govinda: It is a problem where you have to
- 5 try to change his attitude
- 6 wherever you want to place him
- 7 because he will face it as he
- 8 um er as he is developed in another society
- 9 anyway it takes time to change his
- 10 to change his attitude
- 11 Alain: Yes that's true
- 12 Govinda: So I think the first way we should do
- 13 is to convince him and let him know
- 14 how the situation he should work in Australia

In this excerpt, Govinda used an inductive approach. His actual proposal was not stated until the end of his contribution (lines 12 to 14). His reasons for this proposal were outlined first (lines 1 and 2, and lines 4 to 10). In the next excerpt, he used a similar approach, and as well, a considerable amount of co-ordination and repetition of words and structures, with an emphasis on the repeated verbs. Zainab and Miron had argued that it was too hard for the male staff member to change. He was an adult and it was too late to change his attitudes.

Transcript O

Excerpt 6

- 1 Govinda: Well I think I think that
- 2 as he IS adult
- 3 and he IS mature
- 4 and he IS qualified
- 5 after our suggestions to him

- 6 I hope he WOULD consider our suggestion
- 7 he WOULD evaluate the situation
- 8 because he WOULD have thought it
- 9 before he came to Australia
- 10 he WOULD have known the cultural diversities
- 11 he would face in Australia
- 12 I think he SHOULD and WOULD adjust himself

As can be seen from this second extract, Govinda again used an inductive approach. His main point came last (line 12) after a list of reasons for this opinion (lines 1 to 11). He used the co-ordinating clauses, said to be preferred in South Asian communication style, in lines 3 and 4, and in lines 6,7,8, 10 and 12 he repeated the same structure in an almost rhythmic manner.

Discussion

Despite the initial comments about much evidence of the use of direct, linear style arguments by most participants, the above excerpts show that participants from Asian and Middle Eastern backgrounds did sometimes use a more indirect, inductive organisation of information in these intercultural settings, particularly when they wanted to persuade others to their point of view or wanted to express an opposing position in a conciliatory manner. However, in these intercultural encounters, this approach was not always effective. It led to interruptions and misunderstandings when other participants took issue with the supporting reasons and the speaker had to fight to complete their turn and make their main point. Even when other participants understood the approach being taken, they sometimes insisted on more directness. As suggested previously, this may be because it is more difficult to work at inferring meaning in intercultural interactions and there is a preference for more explicit, direct verbal messages in such communication.

The data also supports the view that speakers of a second language often use the rhetorical style of their first language when speaking a second language. Certainly, the style exhibited by participants such as Jamal, Zainab, Singh and Govinda provided evidence of this tendency to transfer rhetorical devices favoured in the culture of their first languages into English. They all took longish turns, often marked by the use of repetition and parallel structures with an emphasis on form rather than content. This fits with Clyne's (1994) description of Style B, which he saw as typical of South Asians and Iranians. Some of the Eastern Europeans also exhibited Clyne's Style A - long turns with lengthy justifications for their position although in this data they did not generally display a tendency to digress. This could have been because of the type of talk involved: they may have felt that the best way to make their viewpoint clear to the others, and to be persuasive, was to take a direct, deductive approach. The Anglos also displayed the style described in the literature, an exacting, instrumental style, almost always employing a direct, linear organisation. Finally the East Asians, and Southeast Asians (Clyne's Style C) displayed a more succinct style with shorter turns, although their use of an inductive approach at times necessitated longer turns. Whether a particular rhetorical style was effective or alienating appeared to depend on factors such as the subject under discussion and the degree of opposition to, or support for, the propositional content of the particular argument being presented. At the same time, other participants often had difficulty with an inductive approach and interrupted to clarify meaning or try to force the speaker to make their point without completing their build up of supporting reasons first.

What are the training implications in these areas? As the literature makes clear, different ways of organising discourse and different rhetorical styles can cause problems in academic and workplace settings. For example, an inductive approach may not be effective in open-house type discussions. Other participants with different styles do not expect this type of organisation and can interrupt before the main point has been made. This can result in the frustrating experience that supporting evidence is argued about, the whole discussion gets diverted and the real purpose of the contribution is never explicated. At least if a main point is stressed initially and an interruption comes before the chance to provide supporting evidence or reasons, the argument concentrates on this point and does not become sidetracked. Moreover, even if the opportunity is given to build a case, other participants who value a more direct style may not be clear about what the main point is or may have switched off before it is made. As a result, they may make negative assessments about individual ability. Judgements such as 'muddled thinking', 'irrelevant', 'long winded' tend to be used by people taught to think that good communication means you should 'get to the point', 'spell it out' and be as concise as possible. Moreover, an inductive approach may not be persuasive with such listeners as it can raise the suspicion that the speaker is trying to 'wheedle' something out of the listener or even 'put one over' them as it is often used for these purposes or for communication which is seen as problematic in cultures which value directness. Of course, as noted earlier, in other cultures this straightforward style can be seen as simplistic, uncivilised, rude and aggressive. In many intercultural encounters, this direct, instrumental style may not be persuasive and the main point may be missed because it comes too soon and a final statement may be wrongly seen as the main point. Clearly, what is effective and persuasive all depends on the attitude of the listeners. Perhaps, as suggested before, one answer in interactions where there is more than one culture represented is to adopt the approach that a number of the participants did use: state the main point initially, then give reasons and justifications and then restate it at the end of the turn, signalling in each case that this is what you are doing. ESL teachers should provide practise in the language needed to signal these intentions clearly and thus help keep the listeners 'on track'.

In general, what appears to be needed are far less narrow and dogmatic views about what constitutes 'good communication' when participants from other cultures are involved. What is needed is awareness of the different approaches valued in other cultures together with flexibility and the ability to modify one's style in order to be effective in a particular situational context with a particular audience. This means that immigrants should be made aware of the style valued in educational institutions and the workplace in Australia so that in situations such as university seminars, presentations, job interviews, and workplace meetings where monocultural, native speakers are making assessments that will influence future prospects, they can choose to modify their style. At the same time native speakers should be made aware that other ways of communicating are valued, their views are not universal, and their own style can have a very negative impact on others. They, too, then have a choice: they can modify their approach when they want to be effective and achieve their communicative aims in situations where their usual style would be counterproductive. As well, they can be fairer and less judgmental in situations where they have power or form the dominant majority. Just making people aware of these differences may not be enough. Training in the requisite skills is probably also necessary. Training people to organise their discourse differently and use new kinds of rhetorical strategies is much harder in regard to spoken than written communication. In the latter, models can be provided and the

communication drafted and redrafted. Nevertheless, training in spoken communication is also possible. For example, using video clips or transcripts of actual intercultural encounters is one way of illustrating how different styles can cause misunderstandings and be ineffective, even alienating, in particular contexts. People can practise 'saying it differently' to be more effective in the specific circumstances. Roleplaying, using other styles and thus widening one's own repertoire, is also a way of developing flexibility and adaptability.

Chapter Seven

DATA ANALYSIS: TURN-TAKING PATTERNS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF TALK

Features of the data

As seen in the discussion on communication styles in chapter five, culturally-influenced features such as a preference for discrete turns or simultaneous talk, length of pauses between turns, length of turn and contrasting attitudes to silence and verbal self-expression may lead to difficulties in intercultural communication. Differences in these aspects of communication style can have negative effects on interpersonal relations, and volubility or taciturnity can result from style differences rather than a speaker's intention.

Type of speech activity

When examining turn-taking patterns and the distribution of talk, the type of speech activity needs to be taken into consideration. In this data, while most of the dyads engaged in conversation closely resembling ordinary or everyday talk and some of the groups began with this sort of talk, the bulk of the interactions more closely resembled meetings in which argumentation was the main discourse genre as the participants strove to solve problems and reach consensus in order to complete the tasks set. However, as has been noted in chapter five, differences in turn-taking behaviour can cause problems in both types of talk.

The different types of organisation of talk in meetings mentioned in the literature (the open-house type floor with discrete turns, the free-for-all with simultaneous talk, the round turn and turn-coordinator facilitated talk) all occurred in the sample. The open-house style was most common but in some groups the free-for-all pattern predominated or was evident in parts of the interaction. Moreover, in quite a few interactions, it was decided to allow each person to express their views and give their reasons for such views (the round turn) before the discussion became an open-house one. And in many of the discussions, one or more participants took it upon themselves to organise others and to act as talk-coordinators at least for part of the time. The native speakers took this role in two of the groups but male and female non-native speakers also assumed this role in a number of other groups, including some with native speaker participants. In a number of groups with both male and female participants, females took the lead, sometimes only at the outset but sometimes throughout the interaction.

General patterns

In general, the predominant pattern followed the structural constraints of conversational interaction described by Sacks et al (1974) in that it consisted of single turns. There was recurrent speakership change and protracted simultaneous talk or long monologues were the exception rather than the rule. This was particularly true of the dyadic conversations, in which all cultural groups took discrete turns and rarely overlapped. At the same time, in a number of the group discussions, there was a significant amount of overlapping, some sustained, simultaneous starts and interrupting, and cultural styles did appear to play a part here. On the other hand, Edelsky's (1993) research, outlined in chapter four, suggests that in more informal meetings discrete turns or single floors are not the only pattern, so cultural styles may only be part of the explanation. Edelsky's research is particularly useful as a comparison in that she studied both male and female native speakers interacting, and although there was considerable general conversation, talk

managing the agenda (planning, reporting on items, seeking opinions and providing information) was predominant. In this sense, these meetings were similar to task-based problem solving interactions. Edelsky's research shows that the one-at-a-time pattern is not the only one even among native speakers, and her description of the interactions she studied matched many of the features evident in the present data. In the interactions examined in this data, the two types of floor identified by Edelsky, the open-house but with discrete turns and the free-for-all type with simultaneous talk, were very evident, and often both occurred at various stages in the one interaction. In a few cases, participants used explicit verbal strategies to appropriate or maintain a turn, but in others, the overlapping, simultaneous talk was often collaborative and did not indicate conflict or interruption in the negative sense of appropriating another's turn in a domineering or inconsiderate manner.

In Clyne's (1994) study, he found that proficiency level did not affect length of turn and this was largely confirmed in this data. In general, apart from a very few individuals, this did not appear to influence the number of contributions made by participants either. On the other hand, as will be discussed later in this chapter, a few individuals with a fast, fluent style were able to 'hog the floor' and override other less fluent participants in some of the interactions. Clyne's finding that attempts to appropriate a turn often resulted in simultaneous starts was also evident in this data. Clyne found that the speakers in his sample used a number of methods to appropriate the floor or maintain a turn: an increase in volume and speed; a decrease in speed (for example, the elongation of a word or words); rising intonation; repetition; addressing a person by name; and the use of phrases such as 'excuse me'. He also found examples of turn-direction (a participant being given a turn in order to involve them or keep the conversation going) and turn-deflection (a participant deflecting the turn away from the speaker to another participant to encourage a more democratic, shared control of the floor). All these features were present in this data except there was no obvious decrease in speed involving elongation, and one other way turns were appropriated in a few instances was for a participant to ask for permission to speak.

It has been found in some studies that women in English-speaking societies tend to overlap collaboratively more than men (James & Clarke 1993, Tannen 1994a, Thwaites 1993). On the evidence found in this data, this also appears to be true of women from other cultures in these intercultural communication settings.

Overall, while the findings in this data support many of the views expressed in the literature, the mix of participants in terms of gender and cultural background, as well as the influence of the task-type and the topic, all contributed to a complex, varying picture from which it is hard to make generalisations. As just mentioned, there were some patterns which occurred in different groups, basically depending on factors such as the mix of participants, the group dynamics, the topic and the task-type.

Definition of terms

In the following discussion of the data, the term 'overlap' is used to indicate where a second (and possibly third speaker) started to speak during another's turn and then these two or more people spoke simultaneously until they had completed their turn or one or more withdrew. In many cases these overlaps were cooperative not adversarial and did not involve a change of topic. The term 'simultaneous start' is used where two or more started a turn at the same time and either continued or one or more dropped out. The term 'interruption' is used to indicate where a participant started to speak before another

speaker had completed their turn and the first speaker dropped out immediately. As Tannen (1994a) points out, it takes two people to create an interruption. This use of the term 'interruption' does not mean that the second speaker intended to have this effect: it is not possible to know the intention when a speaker interrupts. They may be attempting to dominate, they may feel it is time to assert their right to a turn, or they may have misjudged the situation and thought the other speaker was reaching a completion point. Alternatively, they may intend to overlap collaboratively but the first speaker is either overlap adversant or thinks the second speaker is justified in claiming the floor and is prepared to relinquish it. Brief listener-response utterances that support the speaker such as 'yes' or 'right' are defined as 'back channel signals' or 'back channelling' following Hayashi (1996:38). These brief back channelling signals are not considered to be overlaps or interruptions. The term 'feedback' is used to describe comments on the views of others. Various terms are used to label the different types of turn-regulating mechanisms (Clyne 1994). The terms used in this study, turn appropriation or claiming, maintenance or holding, yielding or relinquishing and overriding or out-talking are self explanatory.

Aspects discussed in the analysis

The excerpts included in the following data analysis were selected to show certain aspects of the interactions which suggested cultural influences, such as a preference for discrete turns or for collaborative overlap; as well as turn-taking behaviour that caused problems in these intercultural settings; and evidence of the variety of patterns in this data. This variety was one of the most striking features of the turn-taking in these interactions. The reasons for these different turn-taking patterns appeared to be most influenced by localised factors specific to an interaction, such as the mix of participants and the amount of disagreement generated by the topic or task. The three specific aspects discussed in the analysis are as follows:

- first, individuals with contrasting turn-taking styles and the results in an interaction. In these particular interactions, these diverse styles did not cause interpersonal problems but it is suggested that this could happen in other types of situational contexts;
- second, the contrasting floor types adopted by similar groups. It is demonstrated that very similar groups adopted quite dissimilar floors again pointing to the influence of localised factors related to the assumptions made by a particular group; and
- third, the highly variable turn-taking behaviour of the same individuals in different interactions. Again this points to the influence of factors specific to an interaction: in this case, most importantly, the mix of participants, their communication styles, the group dynamics and also the type of task and the topic.

High-involvement and high-considerateness styles: Group B and P

Group B provided examples of some of the trends mentioned above: in particular, the way the type of floor changed at different stages in the interaction and the turn-taking behaviour which resulted from participants having contrasting styles. Group B was one of the groups discussed in the chapter on cultural values and the chapter on discourse organisation. They were discussing Problem One: The Heart Transplant. The participants were Asmahan, the Middle Eastern woman, Yolanda, the Latin American woman, Doai, the Southeast Asian man and Jack, the native speaker. At the beginning of the interaction, the participants spent a short time engaging in everyday type conversation. During this stage, there was a quite a lot of overlap, repetition, brief turns and unfinished sentences that indicated involvement and interest and the collaborative making and clarification of meaning. The floor type here was closer to the free-for-all

type than the open house/discrete turns type. The other three had not met Jack before, and after exchanging names and places of origin, Doai changed the topic and asked whether Jack liked soccer. (Apparently Doai and Yolanda had been discussing soccer earlier). After Jack said he watched it occasionally, the following conversation took place.

Transcript B

Excerpt 1

- 1 Doai: Do you know a famous soccer man in her country?
2 Jack: Famous {Perer -what's his name 1}
3 Yolanda: {From where from my country 1}
4 Doai: {from her country 2}x x
5 Jack: {what's his name 2}
6 Doai: x x
7 Jack: No wasn't it
8 Yolanda: Maradona (laughter)
9 Jack: Oh yer that's right yer yer
10 Yolanda: Pele was from x
11 Jack: Yes that's right
12 I was thinking of what's his name from Brazil
13 Yolanda: Pele we don't talk about Pele
14 Jack: (laughing) Yer old one
15 yer Maradona yer yer
16 he's been in a bit of strife lately hasn't he
17 Yolanda: Sorry
18 Jack: He's been in lots of trouble
19 Doai: Ahh a lot of trouble
20 Asmahan: Ahh (much laughter)
21 Yolanda: {This is great for us 3}
22 Asmahan: {It's very difficult to 3} understand
23 Jack: Oh sorry strife it's like trouble
24 Asmahan: {Ah yes 4}
25 Doai: (Sorry 4)
26 Jack: Strife
27 Asmahan or Yolanda? {Strife 5}
28 Doai: {Strife 5}
29 Jack: Strife
30 Asmahan or Yolanda: {Strife 6}
31 Doai: {Strife 6}
32 Jack: It's like trouble
33 It's sort of slang
34 Australian slang
35 and I use a lot of slang (laughter)
36 Asmahan: {Australian slang 7}
37 Yolanda: {It's good 7}

This initial conversation was quite fast with some overlapping (lines 2 and 3) and simultaneous starts (lines 4 and 5, 21 and 22, 36 and 37) but it was all good natured, showed interest and involvement from the outset, and did not prevent understanding. For example, in line 23, Jack had 'picked up' that even though he had paraphrased the word 'strife' (line 18) when Yolanda did not understand it, this was not sufficient.

Yolanda's and Asmahan's (lines 21, 22) overlapping comments alerted Jack to the fact that they wanted to learn new slang words and he then repeated the word and made the explanation explicit. That he had made the right interpretation was clear from the way in which they all repeated the word to familiarise themselves with it. Their appreciation of the opportunity to interact with a native speaker who used idiomatic language was evident from Yolanda's comments (lines 21 and 37). A few minutes later in answer to their questions, Jack started telling them about his life.

Transcript B

Excerpt 2

- 1 Jack: I've worked all around Australia
- 2 I've worked as a stockman
- 3 Doai: You x stockman
- 4 Jack: Stockman which is like cowboy
- 5 Doai: {Cowboy 1}
- 6 Asmahan: {Ahh1}
- 7 Jack: x but worked up'n the Northern Territory {mustering cattle 2}
- 8 Doai: {x x x 2} horses
- 9 Jack: Yes yes with horses
- 10 Yolanda: x x like horses
- 11 Asmahan: I love horses yes
- 12 Yolanda: I used {to ride 3}
- 13 Asmahan: {I said 3}to my husband
- 14 I want to go somewhere and
- 15 but he didn't know x
- 16 and want to go {x x 4}
- 17 Doai: {But did you 4} ride a horse
- 18 {did you ride a horse 5}
- 19 Jack: {There's a place 5}
- 20 Asmahan: {No I would like 5}
- 21 Yolanda: I ride it once

At this point Yolanda told a story about her ride, which caused great amusement and a short time after this they began to discuss the task. This extract showed further examples of co-operative overlapping (Doai asking interested questions in lines 8 and 17 and simultaneous starts (lines 18, 19 and 20) together with one example of an interruption (Asmahan in line 13 when she interrupted Yolanda talking about how she used to ride horses and Yolanda withdrew). However, they appeared to be acceptable because they did show interest and most were questions (lines 8 and 17) or comments (lines 13, 19, and 20) developing the theme. When the participants moved onto the discussion, there were longer single turns and less of this type of communicative behaviour. In this second type of floor, Jack, Doai and Asmahan tended to take turns. However, Yolanda continued at times to exhibit a high-involvement style in the way she provided supportive overlap. The group had now started to discuss who should get the heart. Jack was explaining to Doai what he thought would happen to number six's children if she died. Yolanda overlapped to support and explain his ideas.

Transcript B

Excerpt 3

- 1 Jack: What I'm saying is that
- 2 they'd all get divided up

- 3 so you wouldn't have them as a family unit
4 you'd {have maybe 1}
5 Yolanda: {Because it's 1} in a poor situation
6 the children will be adopting for different families
7 Jack: Yer different families
8 so they {might see each other 2}
9 Yolanda: {If we have a new 2} family but
10 Doai: Is it true
11 Jack: Yes it can happen
12 Doai: Oh really I didn't know
13 Jack: Yes they get divided up rather than
14 because really say say if I died my wife died
15 who'd want to look after four boys you know
16 Yolanda: Mm hm
17 Jack: like in one go
18 cos it's a {bit hard so that's 3}
19 Yolanda: {yes four families 3} will care
20 probably for them
21 Doai: Ahh
22 Yolanda: in adoption under adoption yer

In these three instances (lines 5, 9, 19) when Yolanda began to overlap or support his view and expand on it, Jack relinquished his turn although he had clearly not finished. This was typical of his style, which could be described as a high-considerateness style as he appeared to be uncomfortable talking simultaneously. Yolanda, on the other hand, quite often overlapped with others and on occasions (as in lines 5, 9, 19) it was in this intentional way during someone else's turn rather than both starting simultaneously. Yolanda's style does support the view that Latin Americans tend to have a high-involvement style in which overlap is common (Trompenaas 1993, Loveday 1982, Tannen 1981). It seems possible that if other participants had shared her style she would have overlapped more, but finding herself alone in this style, she became quieter and actually spoke a little less than the others overall. There was no evidence from the tone of voice or anything said on the tape that Jack found this overlapping annoying, but he did stop talking and so could have seen her overlaps as interruptions. In a slightly more formal or different situation, for example in the workplace, it is possible that someone with his style would find even co-operative overlap irritating because it caused him to relinquish his turn. The other two tended to take discrete turns rather than overlap but did not appear to be as overlap adversant as the native speaker.

Another interaction that illustrated some of these patterns was that of Group P who also discussed Problem One: The Heart Transplant. This group comprised a native speaker, a woman called Jill, and the South American woman, Paloma, from Group M. The other two were the Southeast Asian woman, Anh, and the Eastern European man, Elvid, from Group G. Again the native speaker (in this case a woman) almost never overlapped and tended to stop speaking if another speaker overlapped, while the Latin American woman frequently overlapped. The following excerpts illustrate this pattern.

Transcript P
Extract 1

- 1 Jill: Actually I also thought about um
- 2 number five the Russian man
- 3 who is also on a heart lung machine
- 4 Elvid Yes the same
- 5 Jill: but he's got three children
- 6 Elvid: Yes
- 7 Jill: and that was something
- 8 that {you know I made the 1}
- 9 Paloma: {I put it the first 1}one too
- 10 but I don't put it because he has three children
- 11 I try to think with my head not with my heart

Clearly here (line 8) Jill had not completed her turn but when Paloma overlapped, initially supporting her (line 9), she dropped out almost immediately and let Paloma have the floor. To give one more example, sometime later Jill was trying to clarify the criteria on which they were making the decision when the same pattern occurred.

Transcript P

Extract 2

- 1 Jill: -- so . . . I mean do we think
- 2 that number two is the sickest
- 3 or number {five who 1}
- 4 Paloma: {It's not 1}important to {give the heart 2}
- 5 Elvid: { number one 2} {number one is the sickest 3}
- 6 Paloma: {to x x but who can still 3}continue to live
- 7 who has he best condition to live in

As can be seen, Jill again withdrew (line 3) when Paloma overlapped with her to comment on the point she was making. Elvid then overlapped with Paloma to argue for his choice but she kept going and finished her turn. Jill's communicative behaviour was again consistent with a high-considerateness style, a preference not to keep talking simultaneously, while Paloma often overlapped and then continued talking simultaneously with others. Paloma maintained this style throughout, possibly encouraged by the fact that there was a considerable amount of overlapping and simultaneous starts in this interaction on the part of all the non-native speakers. Anh did both and sometimes continued to talk simultaneously or succeeded in getting the floor. She did this by increasing her speed quite markedly. Elvid also exhibited both these behaviours at times, but he also used verbal strategies to gain or maintain a turn, suggesting a preference for discrete turns. He used three expressions 'excuse me' 'may I say something' and 'can I say something' to gain a single floor and 'let me finish' on one occasion to keep his turn. The interaction was generally friendly and successful: the overlapping and simultaneous talk did not appear to prevent understanding and interactivity, and all four participants made fairly equal contributions in terms of the amount of talk. In fact, Jill also at times increased her speed to throw in comments quickly sometimes starting simultaneously with others. However, she clearly preferred discrete turns as she withdrew rather than continue simultaneously. This suggests that in this kind of discussion, female native-speakers also prefer to employ a high considerateness-style. This was also true of the other female native speaker in this data sample, whereas all the Latin American women displayed a high-involvement style in the group interactions. However, as noted earlier, all the cultural groups tended to take discrete turns in the dyadic conversations.

Two contrasting groups (round turn and free-for-all floors): Groups M and Q

Two groups both composed of women and working on the same problem provided a sharp contrast in turn-taking styles, being almost at opposite ends of the continuum of styles evident in these interactions. In both groups there was a Latin American, a South Asian, and a Southeast Asian. Only, the fourth participant differed: in one group an Eastern European and in the other a Middle Easterner.

The first group, Group M, organised and maintained a round turn type floor throughout their interaction. This group, which was discussed in the chapter on discourse organisation, comprised Ari, the Southeast Asian, Elica, the Eastern European, Paloma, the Latin American and Netum, the South Asian. They discussed Problem Six: The Budget. There was a small amount of overlapping talk at the beginning of this interaction not directly related to the task. Then Elica began a three minute monologue stating the three programs she believed should be ranked first second and third.

Transcript M

Excerpt 1

- 1 Elica: Will I start
- 2 you understand everything okay
- 3 oh well I think it's my opinion that er er
- 4 I don't know but maybe big percentage
- 5 percent of that budget yes that budget
- 6 can go for these er these er children
- 7 malnutritions children and . . . because
- 8 I don't know what percentage

As can be seen from the above extract, Elica was uncharacteristically slow, repetitive and halting in this opening contribution. She continued in the same way for the full three minutes as she was clearly 'thinking on her feet'. Apart from two brief requests for clarification, a little supportive feedback and some help with a language difficulty, nobody overlapped or interrupted her, yet the only organisation of the turn-taking at this point was in line 1 when she asked, 'Will I start?'. There must have been some kind of unspoken agreement that this task would be best completed by each person being given a turn to express their opinions uninterrupted. This is suggested by the fact that in other interactions, both Paloma, and to some extent Netum, often overlapped, generally in a collaborative way, right from the outset.

Elica concluded this long turn in the following way and then Paloma asked for permission to speak (line 4).

Transcript M

Extract 2

- 1 Elica: For me it's my opinion
- 2 and you tell your opinion
- 3 and we will discuss
- 4 Paloma: Can I say something about this
- 5 I'm trying to put things on paper
- 6 because at the end we have to have some results okay

Elicia clearly relinquished the floor at this point (lines 2 and 3). Yet even after this signal, Paloma asked for permission to speak (line 4), apparently because she wanted to discuss how they would organise their discussion, rather than follow Elicia's suggestion and immediately state her opinion. After this the group spent a few minutes discussing what should be the structure of each person's turn. It was decided that each one in turn would briefly list the eight programs in their order of priority, giving reasons for their opinions. This would be written down and then they would look for 'common points'. There was some overlapping and disagreement at this stage but, finally, all agreed on the procedure. Elicia then took another turn of two minutes duration, stating the order she preferred for the other five programs. The next turn was appropriated by Netum in the following way (lines 3 and 4).

Transcript M

Excerpt 3

- 1 Elicia: And on the last police
- 2 and national guard ...
- 3 Netum: Okay I'm ready
- 4 can I start
- 5 Paloma: Yes yes
- 6 Netum: I put first er prior priority
- 7 first one priority the agriculture

Netum then took a seven minute turn, placing each of the eight programs in order, stating her main point then giving her reasons and then restating her main point. Again there were no interruptions apart from some back channelling indicating understanding. Ari then took a six minute turn. As discussed in the chapter on discourse organisation, she took quite some time giving reasons for her first two preferences before stating them. Apart from trying to clarify the order she preferred at one or two points, the others allowed her to complete her turn. Paloma took the last turn. She commented at the outset of her turn that she was worried about time and she only took three minutes to list all eight areas and give reasons.

An interesting feature of Paloma's turn was the way in which the others prevented Ari from interrupting her quite early in her turn.

Transcript M

Excerpt 4

- 1 Paloma: Second one for me is agriculture
- 2 because you need to eat
- 3 to keep your health you need to eat
- 4 Netum: Agriculture
- 5 Paloma: Yes okay but
- 6 Ari: Excuse me but just remember
- 7 agriculture is very hard {to to 1}
- 8 Elicia: {x x 1} just let {x x 2}
- 9 Nedum: {You just 2} let her to
- 10 tell her opinion first
- 11 Ari: I thought {we tell 3}
- 12 Nedum/Elicia?: {x x we discuss x x 3}
- 13 Nedum/Elicia?: {x after x x 3}
- 14 Paloma: Thank you

Ari disagreed with Paloma about ranking agriculture so highly and probably wanted to reiterate her earlier argument. Her use of a turn appropriation device 'excuse me' showed that she was aware that she was interrupting (lines 6 and 7). However, Elicia and Netum strongly asserted that their agreed procedure must be followed and Paloma must have her turn uninterrupted (lines 8 to 10). When Ari tried to question the procedure that had been decided on (line 11), they must have forcibly restated it (lines 12 and 13) as this exchange concluded with Paloma thanking them and resuming her turn (line 14). Both Elicia and Netum were talking simultaneously (lines 12 and 13) and only a few words were audible. Moreover, it was impossible to distinguish who said what. At the end of Paloma's turn, they again argued about procedure. During this there was some more overlapping. They were then each given another brief turn to list their first four preferences. However, the attempt to organise the turn-taking procedure in such detail and to adhere to it, resulted in the group running out of time (after thirty five minutes) well before any agreement had been reached. However, an important problem-solving task would not normally be limited to thirty five minutes and this round turn type organisation did result in great clarity about each participant's views.

In general, this interaction provided evidence that if a certain structure is implicitly or explicitly placed on a problem-solving discussion, then individual turn-taking styles will be subjugated to a large extent and the structure or procedure generally adhered to. In a meeting or task-based discussion where it is important that all members of a team or group have a chance to contribute, this kind of turn organisation does allow this and prevents individuals with styles that tend to dominate from doing so. For example, in an open-house or free-for-all discussion, it is doubtful if Ari would have had the chance to put her long inductively-organised argument, yet it provided another most valuable perspective on the subject under discussion.

The contrasting group, Group Q, which also discussed Problem Six: The Budget included Mirta, a Southeast Asian, Asmahan, the Middle Eastern woman from Group B, Dolores, a Latin American woman and Bisominka, the South Asian woman from Group A. The outstanding feature of this group's discussion was the high incidence of overlap: probably about half of the thirty five minute interaction evinced some form of simultaneous talk. At times the speakers overlapped collaboratively, repeating one another's points and building meaning in a joint way. At other times they overlapped when disagreeing and voices were raised as they competed to be heard. There was no real attempt to organise their approach or give participants the chance to fully express their views. As a result, most turns were quite brief. However, this appeared to be mainly because they were aiming to work collaboratively and get agreement immediately rather than argue at length for their own position and try to reach agreement at a later point. It was extremely difficult to transcribe the episodes of overlapping talk, and it was often not possible to distinguish who was speaking, but the following excerpts give some indication of the way the participants interacted during much of this discussion. This first excerpt came right at the beginning and was typical of much of the remainder of the talk.

Transcript Q

Excerpt 1

- 1 Dolores: We have five eight eight {points 1}
- 2 Bisominka: {We 1} have eight points
- 3 ? : {Yes we have eight points 2}

- 4 ? : {We have one two three four 2}
 5 ? { x x x x to choose 2}
 6 Bisominka: seven eight yes
 7 Asmahan: First agriculture
 8 Bisominka: {Yes but 3}
 9 Dolores: {No but that 3}
 10 Mirta: {We want to 3} have the percent of the budget
 11 ? : {We have only x 4}
 12 Asmahan: {Are you reading this 4}
 13 Bisominka: Yes we read everything
 14 Mirta: We have only .. um two million {budget 5}
 15 ? : {Two 5} million yes
 16 ? : {Yes 5}
 17 Mirta: and we are going to .. um choose
 18 which one are we going to do it first {right 6}
 19 ? : {Yes 6}
 20 Dolores: Yes the most important
 21 Bisominka: {The most important I think x x 7}
 22 ? : { x x x x x x x 7}
 23 Mirta: For me x x is the transportation
 24 Dolores: is {the transportation 8}
 25 Mirta: {because that 8} {x x 9}
 26 Dolores: {with transportation 9}
 27 {we can work everything 10}
 28 ? : { x x x x x 10}
 29 Mirta: There is no good {transportation here 11}
 30 ? {yer x x x 11}
 31 Bisominka: {x x x 11} very far from here
 32 ? : Very far
 33 ? : Yes very far
 34 Asmahan: Transportation is the most important
 35 Bisominka: {Transportation is the first 12}
 36 ? : {x x x x x x 12}
 37 ? : The first is transportation
 38 Dolores: Transportation is the first

In this first extract, the participants were generally overlapping collaboratively. In the first four lines, they were working together to establish how many areas had to be discussed and budgeted for. In the next twelve lines, they were still attempting to establish what they needed to do, but the amount of overlap and the divergent subjects being raised meant little progress was made. In lines 14 to 22, they were more successful, deciding jointly that they had to choose the most important area first and then, they agreed, with a considerable amount of collaborative repetition, that transportation was the most important. In lines 35 to 38 their agreement took the form almost of a repetitive chorus, with the same point reiterated in a slightly different form at least three times. This same pattern occurred again at other times: the repetition of the same idea in various ways appeared to help clarify meaning and enable them to reach a consensus. This type of repetition was unique to this group. The high incidence of overlapping may have been the cause: the need to be heard when others spoke more loudly and simultaneously. After this they began to disagree but their very brief,

overlapping turns tended to result in confusion at times and no clear decision was reached.

Transcript Q

Excerpt 2

- 1 Dolores: Okay after that {I think develop 1}
- 2 Bisominka: {Then after that I 1}think agriculture
- 3 Dolores: develop natural resources
- 4 Mirta: Not yet because we have also
- 5 Asmahan: communication social service
- 6 Mirta: We have
- 7 Dolores: Yes but if we {cannot 2}
- 8 Bisominka: {x x 2}x x
- 9 Mirta: The second one we're going to do is agriculture
- 10 Bisominka: Yes {I think x 3}
- 11 Mirta: {Yes because 3}look there is a lot of children
- 12 and malnutrition {so we have to 4}
- 13 Bisominka: {and malnutrition yes 4}
- 13 Mirta: um help them first {right 5}
- 14 ?: {Yes 5}
- 15 ?: {Yes 5}
- 16 Dolores: {no 5} {no 6}
- 17 Bisominka: {I 6}think the first one is agriculture
- 18 Dolores: No no
- 19 ?: {x x x x x x x 7}
- 20 Mirta: {no no the first one transportation 7}because
- 21 {bring medicine to the place 8}
- 22 Dolores: {x x x x x x 8}
- 23 but if we do not develop the natural resources
- 24 we cannot eat if we put {some money to develop 9}
- 25 Asmahan: {x x x x x 9} {x x x 10}
- 26 Dolores: {x x x 10} after that develop natural resources

At the beginning of this excerpt, Dolores was asserting that the development of natural resources should be the second priority but here Bisominka overlapped (line 2) to state her preference, agriculture. This was not seen as an interruption by Dolores, who finished making her point (line 3). Mirta then, after two attempts to take a turn (lines 4 and 5), was able to state that her second priority was also agriculture. It is possible that her use of 'we' (line 9) meant she could assume that they were going to put agriculture second because Bisominka had already expressed this preference and this was her way of supporting this viewpoint. Mirta and Bisominka then jointly constructed a reason for this choice (lines 10 to 13) and Asmahan appeared to support them (line 14 or 15). Dolores was not prepared to agree with the others (line 16). At this point Bisominka claimed that agriculture should be 'the first one' (line 17). It was not clear whether she meant ahead of transportation and was trying to change their earlier decision or whether she meant ahead of the development of natural resources. Mirta restated their decision to put transportation first, giving a new reason for this earlier decision. This sort of circularity and confusion occurred quite often in this interaction. Maybe, this happened because the overlapping and simultaneous talk must have meant not all views were heard or possibly it was because of the difficulty of trying to get a consensus throughout. Dolores then repeated her view that developing natural resources should be

the second priority and gave her reason (lines 22 to 26). However, at this point first Mirta and then Asmahan were overlapping with her, so it is not clear if she was heard. However, after this her view appeared to prevail and there was a quieter period when they listed all the areas in order, checking back and forth.

Apparently one, some, or all of them were writing down decisions and the constant checking and repetition was to make sure they were recording the same decisions. After they decided on the amounts to be allocated to each area, they went back over it to confirm that they all had the same amounts. There was also further confusion about the order so they went over this again a number of times. Having finally agreed on the order and the amounts, they then decided that they needed to write down their reasons. This final excerpt again demonstrates how at times they built on one another's ideas, some of the participants overlapping collaboratively

Transcript Q

Extract 4

Mirta: You need good transportation

you need good transportation

Dolores: {by air by water 1}

Mirta: {x x quickly by land 1}

?: { Yer yer 1}

?: By land yer

Mirta: by air because the aeroplane is the best way

Dolores: {x x we need 2}

?: {x x better way 2}

Asmahan: {you can put by the 2}plane

if you want to

Dolores: {For the developing 3}

?: {We have to put 3}

Asmahan: for developing in land by {air and water 4}

?: {By land yes 4}

?: {x x x 4}

Dolores: The airport is important for the transportation

This extract showed one pattern that emerged to some extent. Mirta would begin to express an idea (lines 1 and 2) and would continue although the others frequently overlapped with her. She did not appear to begin a turn during another person's turn but usually kept going when someone overlapped with her. However, this can only be a tentative suggestion as very often speakers could not be identified. Otherwise, there were no definite patterns although again more may have been identifiable if it had always been clear who was speaking and each turn had been audible. Bisominka and Dolores seemed to overlap more often than Asmahan, who often started a turn at the same time with someone else and kept speaking but did not begin during someone else's turn in the same way as Dolores and Bisominka. However, this is also not certain because some of the overlaps not able to be attributed to any speaker may have been Asmahan.

Following this extract, there was a great deal more repetition but much less overlapping because some of the participants were writing down the reasons as they were expressed and talking aloud as they wrote. The old arguments about whether agriculture should be ranked ahead of the development of natural resources resurfaced but in an amicable way

and there was laughter when they realised that they were once again changing the ranking and the amounts. This group did not reach a final agreement either, but as with Group N who approached the task so differently, this was mainly because there was unresolved disagreement on the order of priority. Groups who agreed were more likely to finish no matter how they organised their discussion.

As noted previously, some research involving English-speakers suggests that women are more likely to overlap, particularly when talking with other women (James & Clarke 1993, Tannen 1994a) and this was an all female group. Moreover, only one of the participants came from a culture where a succinct style is valued. This was Mirta. However, she came from a culture on the periphery of this style, not a core culture (Clyne 1994) and she did seem to have more discrete turns and overlap less than the others. Moreover, at least two came from cultures said to value simultaneous talk: Latin Americans as a feature of their high-involvement style (Tannen 1981, Trompenaars 1993) and South Asians at least in some groups and contexts (Agrawal 1976 cited in Evin-Tripp 1987). Moreover, both exhibited this style in other interactions. This was the only taped discussion that Mirta participated in so her style could not be observed in a different group. Nevertheless, it would seem that the deciding factor is the dynamics of the particular group, the explicit agreement or implicit assumptions about how they should best approach the task. A comparison between these two groups demonstrates this as they were very similar in terms of gender and culture, yet they approached this task in ways that resulted in these very different turn-taking patterns.

Dominating individuals (example one): Groups R and S

One pattern that occurred in four different cases was that the group dynamics resulted in a particular individual dominating to an extent that alienated the others or, at least, limited their contributions quite markedly. These four interactions were clearly unsuccessful and this appears to have been the main reason. However, when interacting with a different group, discussing a different topic, the same individuals no longer dominated to the same extent and the interactions were successful. Three factors appeared to be at play here: the type of task, the topic and the composition of the group. In the first four unsuccessful interactions, the tasks were less specific. They involved making recommendations, and in one case, the group found that the issue under discussion was quite contentious. In the successful interactions, a more task-centred approach was required in three cases and in all of them the individual was interacting with others who were equally assertive or shared the same style. One of these examples will be examined in some detail and three just briefly described.

In the first of these examples, Renata, the Latin American woman mentioned before in Group I in chapter four, dominated a discussion on Problem Two: Co-educational Schools to such an extent that the issues were not fully explored and the discussion concluded prematurely with the other participants having made comparatively brief contributions. Yet when she was in two other groups, her style did not have such a negative, unconstructive impact. The unsuccessful interaction involved Group R, which was made up of this woman, Renata, a South Asian man, Budhasia, an Eastern European man, Pawel, and the Eastern European woman, Ljubica, who was also in Group I with Renata. Pawel lacked confidence in regard to his proficiency and contributed very little in other groups, but this was not true of Budhasia and Ljubica: in other interactions, they contributed fully to the discussion. However, they did both speak more slowly than Renata, who generally spoke more fluently and at quite a fast pace.

Other features of Renata's style which, in this interaction, appeared to cause difficulties for the others was that she took long turns, sometimes almost thinking aloud in a preoccupied way, and she tended not to yield the floor when others tried to claim a turn. Furthermore, as they became quieter, she exhibited a tendency to avoid silences by filling them in with repetitions and comments, some almost addressed to herself. Had she not done this, the resulting silences might have encouraged the others to contribute more. As well, as noted earlier, she appeared to be better informed about Australian society than many of the others and this was again apparent in this discussion. However, in this instance, she seldom tried to make this knowledge accessible to the others or to explain terms that they might not understand. In general, her behaviour in this group showed that one does not have to be a native speaker to have the advantage over others in a discussion, one just needs to have greater knowledge and fluency. This group was videoed and it was clear that, while the others remained polite, there was no development of rapport, and no noticeable tendency to relax and develop effective or smooth interactive strategies.

The closing stage of the interaction was indicative of this. At the outset, the group had agreed that co-education was preferable as it was natural and normal. Nevertheless, because they had read media reports about fewer boys finishing Year Twelve, boys harassing girls and teachers giving more attention to boys, they were prepared to accept Renata's suggestion that single-sex experimental classes be set up to see if they achieved better results. This proposal was discussed to some extent by the others but mainly expanded and commented on by Renata.

Transcript R

Excerpt 1

- 1 Renata: I think we don't have
- 2 enough information about
- 3 what have we done to to
- 4 avoid the situation
- 5 I mean psychologists or counsellors at schools
- 6 we don't know what they are doing to to
- 7 avoid the situation in schools
- 8 which kind of work
- 9 they are doing with the boys
- 10 Budhasia: {x x x 1}
- 11 Renata: {counselling and psychology 1} you know
- 12 I don't think we have enough er information
- 13 Budhasia: {x x x 2}
- 14 Ljubica: {x x x 2}
- 15 Renata: {to decide about the 2} situation
- 16 we have just factors here and percentages
- 17 not information enough
- 18 We have x x x on the other hand

With this last sentence Renata lowered speed and volume significantly and almost seemed to be talking to herself. It is of note that both Budhasia and Ljubica tried to take a turn during this excerpt, Budhasia at line 10 and again at line 13 and Ljubica at the same time at line 14. However, in each instance they were inaudible as Renata increased

her speed and volume to maintain her turn (line 15) and they yielded the floor. Renata then went on to conclude the discussion in the following way.

Transcript R

Excerpt 2

- 1 Renata: Do you I think we have finished decided
- 2 I am going
- 3 Budhasia: Where are you going
- 4 Renata: I am going to call the teacher.

At this point she left the room and the others, laughing in a rather embarrassed way, slowly followed one by one.

This was the second group discussion Renata participated in. In the first one, Group U, she had shown some of these communicative behaviours, but in this case because the group were discussing Problem Six: The Budget, the completion of the task involved more specific answers and required the cooperation of the others, and so her style was more co-operative. A second factor was that in this first group, one of the other participants was just as assertive and knowledgeable about Australian society as Renata and led much of the discussion. In this case, as in some others, the presence of a second participant whose style matched in these aspects broke the pattern of individual domination and seemed to encourage others in the group to speak up too. This participant was Lu Hua, an East Asian woman, who had been in Australia for some time, self employed and working in her profession. She was now taking some time off to improve her English. In her communication style, she was one of a number of examples of East Asian women with strong, assertive styles.

The other two participants were Ljubica, the Eastern European woman who was in the two previously mentioned groups with Renata and Cveta, another Eastern European woman. While Renata and Lu Hua were ready to argue and dominate, they used humour and flattery to soften their assertions and the fact that all the participants were women may have also been a factor in building the obvious rapport that developed in this group. Ljubica, in particular, appeared to be more relaxed in this interaction as she was more fluent and assertive than in Group I or, particularly, Group R. The fact that there was a specific task to complete also seemed to make it easier for her to contribute. Cveta was quieter although she did contribute at times. She was less proficient in English than the others and was also quiet in other groups.

A feature of this interaction was the high incidence of overlap and simultaneous talk, much of it supportive. While Renata showed the strongest tendency in this respect, Ljubica also frequently overlapped with others. Lu Hua's style was different. She tended to interrupt when she wanted to change the subject and then maintain her turn when others overlapped or tried to interrupt. A final factor which contributed to the success of this interaction was the frequent laughter, mainly related to the task.

Some short extracts will give the flavour of this successful interaction. Renata had been talking about drugs and dictatorships in South America and the need to spend money on police for a few seconds when Lu Hua interrupted her to change the topic and talk about one of her priorities.

Transcript S

Excerpt 1

- 1 Renata: ... you know so I
- 2 Lu Hua: And er what about education
- 3 how much how many percent x you put ?
- 4 Cveta: I put fifteen percent {x x x x 1}
- 5 Ljubica: {I put fifteen percent 1} too ah ha ha (*some laughter*)
- 6 Renata: Yes er because the problem is that
- 7 you have to to share out {this money you know 2}
- 8 Lu Hua: {Yes x x x 2} the problem
- 9 Renata: Yes
- 10 Lu Hua: Why I put fifteen percent
- 11 I think education is very important
- 12 for the country's future
- 13 ? {Yes 3}
- 14 ? {Yes 3}
- 15 Renata: If you {don't understand 4}
- 16 Ljubica: {Especially for 4} the new country
- 17 {because if you have not 5}
- 18 Lu Hua: {x x x if you x 5} if you have money
- 19 but you don't know how to make it
- 20 Ljubica: {How to make it 6}
- 21 Lu Hua: {x x x x 6}
- 22 Ljubica: How to develop it
- 23 Lu Hua: How to develop it yes

This extract illustrates how Lu Hua was prepared to interrupt Renata (lines 2 and 8) and Ljubica (line 18) and maintain her turn (line 21) when she, Lu Hua, had concerns she wanted to express. It also illustrates the way in which Ljubica often overlapped with others in a supportive manner in this interaction (lines 5, 16, 20). This suggests that some women may have a tendency to overlap in this way in a more relaxed group and in this case an all female group as she overlapped much less in other groups. A short time later they were discussing utilities, specifically the development of electricity. Just before Lu Hua spoke, the other three had all agreed that this area be allotted ten percent of the budget.

Transcript S

Excerpt 2

- 1 Lu Hua: I think this because
- 2 if no electricity no power
- 3 you can't make a factory
- 4 {you can't x x x 1}
- 5 Renata: {Factories yes okay 1}
- 6 Ljubica: {Can't make x x 1}
- 7 You can't make money
- 8 {x x x x 2}
- 9 Renata: {x hospitals working 2}
- 10 Ljubica: Everything
- 11 Renata: Everything you're right
- 12 the problem is we are just working
- 13 with ten and five you know

- 14 just because it's easy
 15 Ljubica: It's easy (some laughter)
 16 I may change it
 17 Renata: {That's okay 3}
 18 Lu Hua: {And for the 3} problem six
 19 {I put twenty two percent 4}
 20 Ljubica: {For develop natural resources 4}
 21 Renata: {Because it's way to make money 5}
 22 Lu Hua: {x x x x x x 5}
 23 Ljubica: {x x x x x x x x 5}
 24 Renata: {for the country 5} you know (laughter)
 25 (very softly) I talk too much

The first part of this excerpt illustrates the way in which Renata and Ljubica would often add supporting points, frequently overlapping as they did so (lines 5/6, 8/9). The second part shows how Lu Hua again took the lead (line 18) as she had done in Excerpt One and moved the discussion on to the next point. There is also one example from this interaction of simultaneous speech with Lu Hua, Renata and Ljubica all talking at once (lines 21, 22, 23, 24). As often happened, Renata out-talked the others and they either finished making their point or gave up trying to. In this case Lu Hua withdrew first (line 22). Ljubica maintained her turn for almost as long as Renata, and because they realised this was happening, she and Renata began laughing (line 24). Renata then chided herself for talking too much (line 25).

At a later stage, the group was having problems because they were confused about the exact percentage they had decided on for each area. Renata suddenly realised there was a whiteboard and it might help to put the numbers on this. She must have gestured or moved towards the board because the others immediately understood her intention and agreed with the idea, which she then explicated verbally.

Transcript S

Excerpt 3

- 1 Renata: If you had a board why not use it
 2 Ljubica: Ohh yes
 3 Lu Hua {Yes 1}
 4 Cveta: {Yes 1}
 5 Renata: (laughing) Okay, which will be the first
 6 Cveta: (laughing) Agriculture eh
 7 Ljubica: Make er numbers
 8 Renata: Oh maybe first group
 9 {Okay first 2}
 10 Ljubica: {Agriculture 2} I think
 11 Renata: (to Lu Hua) What do you think
 12 if you disagree we can change it
 13 but we have {to put first 3}
 14 Lu Hua: (laughing) {Oh I just 3} thinking
 15 your writing very beautiful (shared laughter)

This excerpt shows the rapport that was developing among the group with laughter, the compliment from Lu Hua and, in particular, Renata's inclusive style all contributing to

this. She continued to use this style as she wrote on the board, making the following suggestion a little later.

Transcript S

Excerpt 4

1 Renata: Maybe x x could be put in the first one.

2 what do you think doctor?

Here she was again checking to see that Lu Hua was in agreement as earlier she had often had different priorities and percentages. She used the term 'doctor' in a friendly way, referring to Lu Hua's profession.

This quite long interaction of forty minutes continued in a similar manner for some time more and the task was completed and agreement reached. It was one of many examples which showed that discrete turns are not a prerequisite for success in such discussions. If there is good will and cooperation, a more involved, energetic style works well.

As noted at the beginning of this section, Renata was also a member of Group I, who discussed Problem Three: Managing Diversity (examined in chapter four). Her turn-taking style did not cause problems in that interaction either, although in that group she again took the lead and had more and longer turns than others. In that case, however, she was more inclusive and more willing to directly encourage others to contribute and to listen to their contributions without overlapping. The explanation appears to be that it was the third discussion she took part in and it took place after she had watched the earlier videoed interaction. Before doing this, students had been told about some of the features valued in communication in English-speaking cultures in the workplace and educational settings such as directness, the use of softeners, inclusiveness and short, discrete, shared turn-taking, and, as well, practice in some of these areas had been started. It was stressed that the extent to which they wished to modify their style was a matter of personal choice. Features of good intercultural communication such as the use of feedback and clarification were also included in this work. After students had watched or listened to themselves, they were asked to fill in a self-assessment checklist.

After watching the video interaction in which she had participated, in Group R, Renata answered the following questions in this way. In response to the question, "Was there smooth turn-taking or a lot of interrupting and talking at the same time? How would you rate yourself on this?", Renata wrote "There was a lot of interrupting. I rate myself as the most impolite in my group, I mean, I was all the time interrupting people". In answer to another question, "Did everyone get to contribute fairly equally? Why not? Did you try to draw out quiet people?", Renata wrote, "No. I talked so (to) much. I did not draw out quiet people". She also commented that she did not use any softeners. A final self-assessment was, "I think I can express my opinions clearly; at the same time, I think I must educate myself for a team discussion. I interrupted a lot when other people were talking". Her much modified style in the third interaction she took part in (Group I), does suggest that explicit teaching of this type can have an effect on communicative styles at least in interactions that are not stressful. The tendency to revert to one's original style in stressful situations is discussed in Byrne & FitzGerald (1994) and will be further addressed in chapter nine.

Dominating individuals: examples two, three and four

As mentioned above there were three other similar examples in the data. One of the individuals who dominated in one group but then worked cooperatively and contributed to a reasonable degree in a different group working on a different type of task was Jamal, the Middle Eastern male. One interaction he participated in, Group F, was discussed at length in the chapter on cultural values as it was a marked example of a clash involving irreconcilable views based on conflicting cultural values. This was the group of five with Jamal plus the Eastern European men, Piotr and Josef, the Southern European woman, Sandra, and the Southeast Asian man, Phien. The group was discussing the advantages and disadvantages of co-educational high schools and were to make recommendations as to which should be preferred. The main feature of the turn-taking pattern was the domination of the discussion by Jamal. As mentioned before, he appropriated the first turn and maintained this turn uninterrupted for eight minutes. He had other long turns of varying lengths, one of four minutes duration. His turns would have been longer on a number of occasions had he not been interrupted by others. Despite this, he held the floor for approximately two thirds of the thirty minute discussion. Only one other participant, Josef, had more than three turns. Jamal gained the floor by interrupting and held it because the others were seldom prepared to interrupt him early in his turns. However, his domination of the floor, together with the views he expressed, appeared to alienate at least two of the other participants and possibly prevented others from having a more equal share of turns.

Nevertheless, this turn-taking behaviour was not repeated in a second interaction in which he participated. This was Group N's discussion of Problem Six: The Budget. The other participants in this group, discussed in chapter six, were Emily, the East Asian woman, Pierre, the North African man and Josef, the Eastern European man, who had been in the other interaction (Group F). In this interaction, all the participants worked co-operatively, taking short turns, interrupting early in turns and giving constant feedback. It would appear that when no culturally sensitive issues were involved, where there was a specific task to complete and the other interactants were prepared to interrupt to take their share of turns, the communicative behaviour of the one participant did not have the same negative effect. A final observation that can be made here is that in the discussion about co-educational schools, Jamal was clearly emotionally involved and felt the need to try to persuade others. It does seem possible that in emotionally charged or stressful situations, people exhibit most strongly the communicative style of their first language. In addition, they may adopt turn-taking behaviour which differs from their usual pattern.

In the third of these examples, a Southern European woman, Aglaia, with a fast, fluent talkative style, dominated in one interaction to the extent that the others, two Eastern European women, Elizabeta and Ika and one from East Asia, Flora, (who were all much less fluent) withdrew into a rather sullen silence, and the last part of the interaction was almost monological. This group also discussed co-educational schools, a task which did not require co-operation in the way many other tasks did. However, in two other groups, Aglaia participated in a successful and interactive way without really changing her style. In one, a videoed interaction of a genuine problem-solving task about reorganising the provision of tea and coffee for the class with Marko, an Eastern European man and Omar a Middle Eastern man, there were equal turns, much humour and considerable rapport developed. In the other, a discussion of another real problem which had occurred in the workplace, an employee from a hierarchical culture changing her behaviour and being perceived as arrogant and unfriendly after getting a promotion,

the other participants were An-mei, an East Asian woman, Piotr, the Eastern European man from Group F and the same Middle Eastern man, Omar. This topic could have allowed one person to dominate but again the others were all assertive and contributed equally. The factors at work here appear to have been partly the type of task, but more importantly, the group dynamics with other voluble, assertive participants who made it impossible for her to dominate.

The final example involved an Eastern European woman, Lamija. In one videoed interaction again discussing Problem Two: Co-educational Schools, Lamija took very long turns, almost rambling, personalising the issue and at no times interacting in an inclusive manner. The other participants, all women, were a very quiet Southern European, Cristina, an equally quiet East Asian, Mi So, and Cam, the Southeast Asian from Group I. Cristina and Mi So could be described as quiet because they were like this in other groups and in the class. Cam, however, was quite assertive in other groups as was evident in the discussion about Group I in chapter four. There was almost no overlapping in this discussion. Both the Asians did express firm opinions about the subject but they took short turns and, in general they and Cristina allowed Lamija to dominate and no real rapport or interactive discussion developed.

However, in another group with Ivan and Singh, the Eastern European and South Asian men from Group K and Ling Ling, the East Asian woman from Group I, Lamija's communicative behaviour was quite different. This group discussed a problem involving potential workplace conflict of a non-cultural nature and the discussion was most successful, notable for its smooth turn-taking, inclusiveness, tentativeness and interactivity, especially considerable clarification of meaning and intention. One factor here may have been that this second discussion took place after some teaching of these points. The other explanations would seem to again be that the task-type involved (providing specific solutions, not just making recommendations as with Problem Two), and the group dynamics: in the second group the other participants were all assertive and voluble, especially the men. This correlates with Tannen's (1984b) view, mentioned in chapter five, that turn-taking styles can look very different in different settings depending on the pacing and pausing of the other participants. Indeed, Feldstein (1985: 39) goes further, asserting that the average duration of speaker turns is influenced entirely by the personality attributes of the listener and not those of the speaker: people take longer turns when their listeners are "reserved timid and restrained".

Discussion

As this examination of the data demonstrates, the turn-taking patterns and distribution of talk was most notable for the variety and complexity of the patterns that emerged. This suggests that when people have different styles and most are using a lingua franca, the turn-taking signals that can make speaker exchange smooth and synchronous among native speakers are not available and turn-taking patterns are more varied and less able to be neatly classified. Individuals often adapted their styles, in some cases quite markedly, depending on the group dynamics, previous teaching, the task-type and topic. The extent of overlapping and simultaneous talk also seemed to vary according to the task and topic, the mix of participants, the organisation of talk or lack of organisation and, as well, the style of some participants.

On the other hand, there was evidence of some of the style features identified in the literature. Some participants exhibited a high-involvement style, involving supportive overlapping and a tendency to keep talking when others overlapped. Apart from a few

very fluent speakers, some with this style did not have a fast rate of speech (another feature of a high-involvement style) but this was probably because of their language level. In particular, women from some cultural groups displayed this style: almost all the Latin American women and to a lesser extent some Eastern European, Middle Eastern, South European and South Asian women. This style was most evident in groups where other participants had a similar style. In groups where others tended to take discrete turns, most individuals modified their style and in groups where turns were organised, they adapted their style as required. This means that some individuals may have this high-involvement style when interacting with people from their own cultural background, but in this sample, were not in a group or groups where they felt comfortable using such a style or their language level made it difficult. Southeast and East Asian women and the female native speakers did not exhibit this style in this data. Their style generally displayed the features of the high-considerateness style, slower speech and a preference for discrete turns, demonstrated by their tendency to stop speaking when others overlapped. Overall, therefore, the turn-taking styles of the women in the sample, accorded with findings in the literature (Tannen 1981, Loveday 1982, Trompenaars 1991).

However, in general, no men consistently or markedly overlapped collaboratively, including the five Latin American men in the sample, although it is of note that Ramon from Group J and another Latin American man, Juan, in the sample, marked a description of a high-involvement style as the one typical of both their own style and others in their culture. (They were the only Latin Americans who filled in this particular questionnaire which included questions on communications styles). Perhaps these men were adapting their styles because they were in intercultural interactions involving work type activities. It is possible that the high-involvement style is more common in social situations. At the same time, in some groups all the participants, men and women, repeatedly began speaking simultaneously and continued to overlap, often raising their voices, especially when trying to claim a turn and when disagreeing. This included Southeast and East Asians of both sexes. This contrasts with Clyne's (1994) finding that Southeast Asians did not fight to maintain their turns and withdrew rather than speak simultaneously. Again, the explanation would appear to be the symmetrical relations of the participants, whereas he noted the influence of rank in his workplace interactions. Moreover, behaviour in the workplace has repercussions beyond the immediate context, which was not the case in these interactions.

In general, Middle Eastern, South Asian and Eastern European men took the longest turns although, as discussed, a few women also took long turns in some interactions. In general, too, there was confirmation of Clyne's (1994) findings about the shorter length of turn taken by East and Southeast Asians and this was also true of the native speakers in these interactions. Of course, as has been demonstrated, length of turn is partly a matter of negotiation. As well as individuals choosing to take long turns, others in the group have to allow this to happen.

A few participants from various cultures used explicit verbal management strategies, and while this may have indicated a preference for discrete turns, it appeared to mainly relate to the desire to have their say, particularly in adversarial situations. Some phrases were used appropriately but in other cases they may have annoyed other participants in a less informal situational context and would need softening or the use of less direct phrases.

Overall, however, this quite large data corpus involving a wide range of cultures in various groupings was most notable for the lack of consistent patterns, apart from the fact that the most common basic pattern was to take single turns. In the dyads this was a consistent pattern. Tannen (1984b) has observed that people tend to display more of the verbal strategies associated with the group when they are interacting with members of their own culture. This would perhaps explain why some participants did not display the turn-taking style associated with their cultural group. In intercultural communication involving a number of people from divergent cultures, there does appear to be some convergence of turn-taking styles, people adapt to some extent and the amount of simultaneous talk, for example, appears to depend predominantly on group dynamics.

What are the implications for the workplace and teaching? While many of these interactions were successful, there was evidence that different turn-taking styles can lead to some participants dominating and others being talked over or, perhaps, never getting the chance to make a real contribution. This does suggest that in intercultural teams and in seminars it would be wise to impose some sort of structure on the discussions. In one of the video sequences in "Success in Meetings" from the SBS series "What Makes You Say That?: Cultural Diversity at Work" discussed in Byrne and FitzGerald (1996), a number of different structures or techniques were tried out at a project team meeting on a two-year leadership program. The participants came from four different cultural backgrounds. The first part of the meeting proceeded in the usual open house type floor. The participants with Southern European and South Asian backgrounds dominated. The Southeast Asian and the Anglo-Celt took much shorter turns and fewer turns and did not interrupt or overlap. The team were then asked to try taking consecutive turns, to have pauses between turns and finally to reformulate briefly what the previous speaker had said at the beginning of each new turn. The result was that everyone participated more equally and each member's expertise and talents were fully utilised. As Byrne and FitzGerald point out, it is most useful to adopt a variety of techniques or procedures. For example, the free-for-all type of floor where people overlap collaboratively and throw in comments can encourage fast, creative brainstorming, a valuable phase in any problem-solving or decision-making process. Discrete turns in an open house floor allow each person's contribution to be heard. Consecutive turns (the round turn floor), on the other hand, allow everyone to get a turn and to state their position fully without interruption. In some of the interactions in this data, this latter type of structure was imposed either explicitly or sometimes without being stated and it did provide this advantage. It would seem that if people were made aware in language classrooms and on cross-cultural or diversity training courses of the crucial role played by turn-taking that this would be beneficial. Moreover, if the value of employing a repertoire of turn-taking styles which match the technique or procedure selected with the particular task or phase of the problem-solving was also recognised, this would lead to more productive and harmonious intercultural teams and fairer assessment of performance in tutorials.

Fortunately, this is an area where training can be effective. For instance, video clips demonstrating turn-taking patterns can be of great assistance in helping people appreciate the key, yet largely unrecognised, role these turn-taking patterns play in intercultural communication. The sequences dealing with this subject in the SBS series "What Makes You Say That?" series often prove to be 'eye-openers' on training courses for both native and non-native speakers and can help explain some of the problems intercultural teams have been having. In the language classroom, video recordings of

interactions help individual learners critique their own style and see where they might choose to modify their style when interacting with others with very different styles.

Certainly, in intercultural communication in regard to turn-taking, the common Anglo pattern, open house but discrete turns, cannot be insisted on as the 'right' one (and it may be that it is only the preferred style of Anglo men in situations such as meetings). It is important to point out that, while it can be useful for students to know the communication style valued in English-speaking cultures and be able to adopt this style in situations where it may serve their purposes, this turn-taking style is not the only one that works in intercultural communication. As discussed, very different turn-taking styles were evident in many of the successful interactions in this sample. This was also evident in the filmed data collected by Byrne for her SBS training films, "What Makes You Say That?" and discussed in the accompanying book (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996). For example, the Diecasting team meeting in the Prestige Group factory sustained a high-involvement style in which the participants interrupted and talked rapidly and often simultaneously for forty-five minutes, yet everyone was focussed on the task, all the agenda items were completed, all the necessary decisions were made and the meeting finished on time. Most of the team members were from cultures which value such a style but two were female native speakers. They were equally skilful in this style and appeared comfortable with it. And, in fact, they confirmed this impression in a discussion with Byrne after the meeting. As noted previously, some research into gender differences among native English-speakers shows that women may be more at ease with this style than men.

However, there may be situations where individuals choose to adapt their turn-taking style to 'fit in' with the preferred Anglo pattern in order to achieve their objectives. For example, this could be the case in job interviews and some workplace meetings and university tutorials where performance is being assessed by native speakers who have been taught that 'good communication' involves discrete turns which are not too lengthy, the democratic sharing of turns, no 'awkward' silences, and no interrupting (which is interpreted as any form of overlapping). They need to be aware that negative judgements may be made about them because of their turn-taking style: if they overlap and others keep withdrawing, they may be seen as rude and domineering, 'hogging the floor'; if they remain silent, as too passive, a non-contributor, lacking in ideas. Again non-native speakers should be given the necessary awareness and skills so that they can make informed choices.

Because the open house type floor is predominant in the workplace and in educational institutions in Australia, non-native speakers need practise in strategies which will help them get a turn. They cannot rely on cues such as intonation and eye movements which aid native speakers to claim a turn, so they need to practise more overt cues such as larger body movements, for instance, leaning forward and/or stretching out a hand, as well as explicit verbal strategies such as 'can I come in here' or 'can I just add a point'. In addition, as Kramsch (1981) suggests, they can try to ward off interruptions by structuring a longer unit of speech in advance, using verbal devices such as 'I'd like to make two points. First ...' or 'On the one hand ... on the other hand'. They also need verbal strategies to maintain a turn, fillers so they don't leave a pause which invites someone to claim a turn before they have finished and polite, generally acceptable expressions such as 'just a minute I've nearly finished' which can be used even if a superior is trying to appropriate the next turn. It may also prove useful to them to learn expressions which enable them to politely and effectively deflect and direct turns and

assist others to maintain their turn. In important contexts such as team meetings, the ability to implement these strategies can be vital for success, especially for team leaders. Indeed, as Willing (1992) concludes, all these turn-changing devices are crucially important interactive strategies for all parties in intercultural interactions and should have a central place in training.

Of course, again the ideal is greater awareness on all sides that 'good communication' is a cultural construct and an awareness that 'good intercultural communication' may be something quite different, requiring flexibility and a range of turn-taking styles. If this could be achieved, turn-taking would no longer arouse the passions and present the hurdles it does at present.

Chapter Eight

DATA ANALYSIS: ASSERTIVENESS, DISAGREEMENT AND CONFLICT

Introduction

As outlined in chapter five, different cultural groups have sharply contrasting attitudes to asserting personal opinions, disagreeing directly and handling conflict. To briefly recap the main patterns that have been identified, in cultures such as those of Southeast and East Asia, the tendency is to avoid expressing opinions upfront and to avoid open disagreement (Gudykunst et al 1988, Ting-Toomey 1994). In Eastern European cultures, however, strong, forceful, uncompromising argument is enjoyed and valued (Wierzbicka 1991, Schiffrin 1984). In mainstream English-speaking cultures, disagreement is acceptable but views should not be imposed on others and arguments should be unemotional (Wierzbicka 1991, Kochman 1981). In Mediterranean cultures and some Western European societies, there also appears to be a view of strong, emotional and combative argument as an enjoyable activity (Beal 1990, Broome 1994, Tannen & Kakava 1992, Clackworthy 1996). In other cultures, the picture is not so clear. In Middle Eastern, Latin American and South Asian cultures, while face must be maintained, there does not appear to be the same avoidance of argument and debate as in many of the cultures of Asia (Albert 1996, Adler 1991, Anderson 1990, Valentine 1995).

Support for these conclusions can be found in responses in the questionnaires given to many of the participants in the interactions being studied. Some of these responses will be included in the discussion of the interactions where they are of interest in terms of the analysis.

As has been obvious from excerpts in previous chapters, the data contains many instances of direct disagreement by participants representing all of the cultural groups included in the sample. The amount of disagreement in this data was no doubt partly because of different cultural attitudes to disagreement, many participants coming from cultures who enjoy strong argument, and also because of the nature of the tasks. In tasks where opinions and preferences must be expressed and priorities listed, disagreement is to be expected. In the dyadic conversations there was almost no evidence of disagreement.

In the data, while the less direct phrase 'yes but' or a counter argument beginning with 'but' were the most commonly used ways of disagreeing, showing that participants were able to use these phrases to soften their disagreement, there were also a great many instances in which participants said directly 'I don't agree with you' or 'no, no'. The possible reasons for this will be discussed later. At this point, it is interesting to observe that 'yes but' is said to be the phrase most used by native speakers to signal a statement disagreeing with the previous speaker and putting forward an opposing point. According to Schiffrin (1985:43) speakers often begin their challenge to a point view with a ritual display of cooperation in order to ease their attack. In fact, she argues that "a willingness to acknowledge the other's point of view is so frequent in argument that it is often reduced to an even more minimal token of ritualised agreement, in which the speaker displays mere awareness of the need for a display of cooperation, as in 'yes but' prefaces to challenges".

This accords with the view that argument is a discourse genre in which individuals are carrying out two tasks simultaneously: strengthening their own position and weakening that of their opponents. They are opposing others' views at the same time they are making their own points. This results in the ongoing negotiation of referential, social and expressive meaning, a process which depends on cooperation between participants as much as on competition (Schiffrin 1985). Van Emmeren & Grootendorst (1984) also see this type of speech activity as basically requiring cooperation. They discuss what they call argumentative discussions. They see the purpose of this activity as interactants working together cooperatively to settle a dispute, to reach an agreement.

This type of argument, a cooperative endeavour aimed at reaching solutions, would probably be more acceptable to people who might wish to avoid other types of unconstructive or self-defeating disputations. Whatever the reason, almost all the participants did join in, express views, argue for them and argue against opposing views. What form did their arguments take and how were they expressed? In Australia in educational institutions and in the workplace, there are strong cultural imperatives about how people should present themselves in these sorts of activities. One must avoid being seen as either passive or aggressive: a middle position 'assertive' is the valued mode. People who are too passive are sent to assertiveness training courses. This often happens to women because the prototype of an assertive person closely resembles the prevailing stereotype of masculinity in this society (Byrne & FitzGerald 1998a). Between 1973 and 1983, a total of 1,672 works were published in English (including educational films) addressed to women and outlining strategies for becoming more assertive (Ruben 1985). Because of their communication style, Asian women, in particular appear to be stereotyped as shy and passive in the Australian workplace. For example, they are portrayed this way on cross-cultural training videos, and it is not unknown for women who have escaped from brutal regimes and made dangerous journeys alone or with children across other countries to be sent on assertiveness training courses when they enter the workplace.

However, as can be seen from a description of attitudes and behaviours in other cultures, this view of behaviour as either passive, assertive or aggressive is a highly culture-specific construct and, in fact, there is no equivalent word for self-assertion in Japanese, Polish, Russian or French (Wierzbicka 1991). Unfortunately, many people in positions of power are completely unaware of this and this ignorance can have highly negative consequences in a multicultural society. Analysing what happens in intercultural discourse can hopefully provide answers, or confirmation, about what should be included in training in this respect for both non-native and native speakers.

While these discussions did take place in a relatively relaxed context and were symmetrical, the fact that they were being taped, and the other members of the group were in many instances members of the opposite sex, might well have inhibited the expression of personal views and disagreement especially on the part of women from some cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, the most notable finding in this area (and the aspect that will be focussed on in this chapter) was the many examples of an assertive expression of personal opinions, strong disagreement and continued opposition on the part of both women and men from cultures said to avoid expressing opinions and open disagreement, as well as on the part of individuals from cultures in which this is acceptable or valued. Clyne (1985) makes a key division between communication breakdown and communication conflict: the former involves misunderstanding and non-understanding, the latter, the development of friction between participants. And in their

study of the way disagreement was handled in workplaces in twenty three countries, Smith et al (1998 253) provide a useful definition of the line between disagreement and conflict: "Disagreement occurs when divergent views are made explicit and disagreement becomes a conflict when the parties give greater priority to having their views prevail than to problem-solving behaviours". While there was considerable misunderstanding, some non-understanding and a great deal of disagreement, there were only a very few instances where friction or conflict occurred, or threatened to occur, in these discussions. A second aim in this chapter is to look at how this potential or actual conflict was handled when it occurred. First, however, some examples of assertive behaviour and disagreement (some strong and direct, some more muted and indirect) on the part of participants from cultures said to avoid this behaviour will be examined.

Strong disagreement (an East Asian man): Group A

Group A's discussion of Problem One: The Heart Transplant provided quite a few examples of strong disagreement and one instance of discord. This group, which has already been discussed in previous chapters, comprised Elica, the Eastern European woman, Bisominka, the South Asian woman, Li Dong the East Asian man and Alex, the native speaker. The only participant who modified his disagreement or refrained from direct disagreement was Alex. The possible reasons for his non-argumentative approach are discussed a little later. The strongest he came to direct disagreement was in the following two instances. At one point, he said, "I can think of one reason against what Li Dong has said". Then later this exchange took place:

Transcript A

Excerpt 1

- 1 Li Dong: --- their ages are pretty similar
- 2 Alex: I don't think twelve and thirty four is similar

Elica was strong and direct on a number of occasions, which could be expected from someone with her cultural background, and she was the first to express this sort of disagreement. However, Bisominka also disagreed in some instances and Li Dong did so a number of times. The following exchange took place right at the beginning of the discussion.

Transcript A

Excerpt 2

- 1 Alex: Shall we start with the problem
- 2 Elica: No, no, {I want x x x I}
- 3 Bisominka: { No x x x I }
- 4 I want to think about it for awhile.

Elica was ready to disagree with Alex's suggestion because she wanted to use the opportunity to ask a native speaker about certain aspects of Australian society. Bisominka disagreed because she hadn't reached a decision after reading about the task. In general, in fact, this interaction provided evidence that non-native speakers need not be intimidated by a native speaker, even when he is a stranger they have just met.

A short time after they began discussing the task, Bisominka, Elica and Li Dong all disagreed with Alex although Bisominka appeared to be less decided about her position in this instance. Alex had concluded a turn stating his priorities as follows:

Transcript A

Excerpt 3

- 1 Alex: - - - the reason I would say number six instead of number five is
- 2 {because she's a bit younger 1}
- 3 Bisominka: {But but I think yes she's x x x 1}, yes, raise money
- 4 {for the operation with the contribution of her neighbours 2}
- 5 Li Dong: {It's not the main problem, it's not the main reason 2}
- 6 because this person is thirty four, {is still young 3}
- 7 Bisominka: {x x x 3}
- 8 Elica: {I'm not agree 3}with you I'm for number two

Here (line 2) the words 'but' 'but' followed by 'yes' suggest Bisminka may have been demonstrating the tendency, previously described as typical of Indian English speakers, to both agree and disagree at the same time (Valentine 1995) as she began with counter argument marker 'but' and then appeared to be supporting Alex's choice, number six, in line 4. Unfortunately, Bisominka tended to speak more softly than the others and to overlap and speak simultaneously so her arguments were not always clear. Li Dong was quite direct in his opposition (lines 5 and 6) and Elica even more so (line 8). It is possible that Elica's very direct expressions of disagreement right from the outset may have encouraged the other non-native speakers to be more openly argumentative, to converge more in their styles.

A little later Bisominka disagreed with Elica, who concluded her argument in favour of number two in line 1.

Transcript A

Extract 4

- 1 Elica: - - - so I put that person number first
- 2 Alex: Right
- 3 Elica: because her his life is in front of him
- 4 Alex: Yes, yes
- 5 Elica: { er that's why 1}
- 6 Bisominka: {But I think 1} there's only one x x x
- 7 but that patient has children {if if they die 2}
- 8 Elica: {But this is already 2} child {it's twelve years 3}
- 9 Bisominka: {But only one 3} child one child

Here Bisominka disagreed by twice putting a counter argument beginning with 'but' (lines 6 and ,7 and 9). In both instances, she overrode Elica to get the floor and get her point across. Then a short time later, she also opposed Li Dong, contradicting him quite firmly.

Transcript A

Extract 5

- 1 Li Dong: The age is not no the age is NOT
- 2 the main problem .. reason you know
- 3 the age could the age can't decide on
- 4 {which one should be 1}
- 5 Bisominka: {But age x x 1}
- 6 Alex: So right I think we all agree
- 7 that {some things are more important than others 2}

- 8 Bisominka: {I think age Li Dong age is very important 2}
9 to heart surgery

Here Bisominka apparently repeated her argument against Li Dong's point twice to make sure it was heard. The second time she interrupted Alex and spoke loudly and clearly, addressing Li Dong directly to get his attention (line 8).

Li Dong disagreed with the others' choice of patient and continued to argue for his choice throughout the discussion. On two occasions, first Li Dong and then Elica partly agreed with one another in quite constructive ways. Li Dong said, 'Yes, I agree with part of what you say' and Elica said, 'In some ways I'm agreed with Li Dong'. However, generally, they disagreed quite bluntly and explicitly. One excerpt, included earlier to show turn-taking patterns, illustrates this.

Transcript A

Extract 6

- 1 Li Dong: And number two I I disagree
2 Elica: No, I disagree with you...

However, the only time the discussion became heated and voices were briefly raised was when Elica, following Alex's example, tried to reach agreement with Li Dong by introducing a hypothetical example as Alex had just done.

Transcript A

Extract 7

- 1 Elica: Shall we put that in another way
2 for example there is a man with big x okay
3 or a women woman thirty years
4 with a career great career .. er um on top of career
5 and she is on a heart lung machine ..
6 and there is a boy twelve years ..
7 what do you think ...
8 Li Dong: You know in this case NO-ONE likes what YOU said so
9 Elica: {There are men you know 1}
10 Li Dong: {we WON'T DON'T 1} need to care about it
11 don't need to care
12 Elica: there is a man thirty four
13 Li Dong: Yes, so I think {number five is 2}
14 Elica: { No I change I 2} I said a woman
15 Li Dong: She's also important
16 Elica: I just er give er another example

In line 8, Li Dong spoke in a low, slow voice placing heavy stress on selected words and sounding quite hostile as a result. Elica's was almost shouting in her reply in line 9 and Li Dong raised his voice to a similar level in lines 10 and 11. He may have also raised his voice to compete for the floor as he treated her comment (line 9) as an interruption and completed his point (line 11) overlapping with her. However, Elica continued to speak in an angry raised voice in line 12 when she gained the floor. Nevertheless, immediately after this their voices became lower and their views and attitudes more conciliatory. For example, Li Dong used the acknowledgment marker 'yes' to preface his turn (line 13) and Elica used the mitigator 'just' in line 16. This

linguistic evidence together with the fact that they lowered their voices suggests that they wanted to avert any further suggestion of friction.

It is of interest that Li Dong in his answers to the questionnaire about disagreement and face, subscribed only in part to the views seen as more typical of his culture and was prepared to modify them to some extent. Even so his behaviour was more assertive than might have been expected from his expressed views. In response to the proposition "If you want to, you can disagree with people even if they are older or more important. You feel comfortable saying what you think and want directly and openly, and you believe this is the correct way to behave", Li Dong wrote "I almost agree. But I will be very careful with my personal opinions. I shouldn't force people to accept my thought. I can express my view in a reasonable way". In response to the proposition "It is important to give other people 'face'. You should not criticise others directly. You should avoid causing any unpleasantness and lack of harmony", he wrote "Yes I completely agree with that. But it depends what kind of people you are talking with and you can choose the different ways to express what you want them to know". He added that "Most Chinese do as same as me". It is also of interest that, as mentioned previously, Li Dong was a young Mainland Chinese from a large city and, as noted, Young (1994) sees a more aggressive, self-absorbed style developing among such people.

Bisominka from a South Asian culture also expressed views which allowed some disagreement. In regard to the first proposition, she wrote: "I am agree with it because if we have to ask something from people I think we will have to ask directly". However, she just wrote "I am agree" to the second proposition. Elica, on the other hand, was more decisive and more completely in line with the values attributed to her culture. She wrote, "Yes, because everyone has right to has his own opinion" in answer to the first proposition and to the second, "You can say what you are thinking in a polite manner".

As noted above Alex, who as an English-speaker might have been expected to be more direct in his disagreement, was the least so of all the group. It may, of course, have been his individual style, or it may have been because he took the role of group coordinator or leader from the outset and gave positive feedback and tried to clarify and understand the point of view of others throughout. As well, he appeared to make some allowances for the fact that the others were not native speakers, for example, simplifying his vocabulary slightly on one or two occasions, and this may have made him less ready to disagree strongly. As will be discussed later, it may also have been because of his greater mastery of English: he was more able to attenuate his disagreement because he did not need to concentrate so much on the referential content of the discussion.

Clearly this interaction provided evidence that individuals from cultures that value harmony and the avoidance of disagreement or confrontation, which can cause loss of face, may not always behave in this way. Furthermore, it provided some evidence that conflicts with the common stereotype of Asian women as non-assertive and unable to bring themselves to disagree with others.

Overall, the behaviour of the large majority of Asian women in this sample did not support this stereotypical but widely accepted view. Of the thirty one Asian women who participated in these interactions only three fitted this pattern in that they made almost no contribution to the discussions they took part in or spoke so quietly that most of their talk was inaudible. One was a Japanese, unfortunately the only one in the sample, one a Chinese who had lived in Japan for many years and one a Vietnamese.

The last two had weak listening skills and felt that their overall proficiency in English was low, so this may have been a contributing factor. For example, the Chinese woman wrote in her self-assessment checklist, "The main problem for me was lack of vocabulary. Sometimes when I tried to understand a signal word, I missed all the parts that followed". She also wrote, "I realised from the VT tape that my voice was so low that I couldn't hear myself".

Their responses to the questionnaires suggested that these three all subscribed to the values and communication style seen as typical of their cultural background. For example, in answer to the proposition about disagreement being acceptable, the Chinese woman wrote "In our culture young people should obey older or more important people. If you do not, you will feel uncomfortable", while the Japanese woman wrote, "Partly agree. It depends on the way of telling to people. Sometimes we have to be very polite". In regard to the proposition that you need to give people face and not criticise them, she wrote, "Agree. I don't like it, but I have to". In her response to this proposition, the Vietnamese woman wrote "I agree with this because if we are clever to behave with others we will succeed in life".

All the other Asian women were prepared to express their views in a definite manner although some softened them. As discussed in the chapter on discourse organisation, some were prepared to express a view at odds with other participants but felt the need to do this in a conciliatory way, using an inductive approach to help others see their reasoning before stating a different opinion. Ari's opposing view in Group M was an example of this. Emily in one group briefly discussed in the chapter on turn-taking, was another example. She overrode the male participants to assert her opinions, but at the same time, she was inclusive and mediatory. However, in other groups, some spoke up more assertively and disagreed, a few in a strong and straightforward manner and in some cases they maintained a minority position throughout the discussion.

Assertiveness and disagreement (a Southeast Asian woman): Group P

One example of this was Anh, the Southeast Asian woman in Group P, discussed in chapter seven. The others in the group were Paloma, the Latin American woman, Elvid, the Eastern European man, and Jill, the native speaker. They discussed Problem One: The Heart Transplant. During the initial small talk, Anh had participated fully, answering Jill's questions about their course and asking Jill questions about her university course. Jill then took the lead in moving from small talk to the task and Elvid started the discussion saying it was necessary to "classify the patients and find the worst one", meaning the patient who most needed the heart. He then asked Anh for her opinion.

Transcript P

Excerpt 1

- 1 Elvid: What do you think Anh
- 2 Anh: My opine opinion I ...
- 3 I will priority the um child
- 4 with age twelve on the top er
- 5 Paloma: Number two
- 6 Anh: The children children x
- 7 the number two in the list yep
- 8 Paloma: Um hm
- 9 Anh: because I think that he been young

- 10 he should save his life first thing
11 and the other things are
12 because he was born with the heart problem already
13 Paloma: Mmm
14 Anh: so if we keep him until teenage or whenever
15 the the um the condition
16 I mean his condition was worse
17 Paloma (*softly*) Dramatically
18 Anh: Yep worse and worse
19 so and the other thing
20 that because he's been keep alive
21 with the heart-lung machine
22 so actually that is a very very urgent point
23 and my idea
24 Elvid: But er he can be alive
25 without er operation for awhile
26 {for a short time 1}
27 Anh: {No no he can't 1}
28 Elvid: He can
29 Anh: No he can't
30 Elvid: He can be kept alive
31 on a heart-lung machine
32 Anh: that means x x
33 that means his condition has x dramatically
34 and also he got the the x heart
35
36 Jill: Well actually I also thought about number five

This excerpt shows that Anh was prepared to assert her view in a direct manner right at the outset before any of the others had expressed an opinion. She was prepared to take quite a long turn to fully expound her viewpoint and there was no 'beating about the bush': she made her main point first (lines 2 to 4) and then provided reasons to support it (lines 9 to 23). Perhaps, the fact that Elvid had directly asked her for her opinion made this easier for her and encouraged such directness, or perhaps she decided that this was the required behaviour given the task and the situation. This excerpt also shows that she was prepared to disagree quite directly. When Elvid questioned her opinion (lines 24-6), she contradicted him in quite explicit terms (line 27). When he was equally sharp and contradicted her in return (line 28), she again directly opposed him (line 29). She then went on to defend her position further (lines 33-5) until Jill intervened to divert them and introduce another viewpoint (line 36).

Elvid, like Elica, came from a background where argument is valued and as well he was a male, so his strong retorts were not unexpected. In fact, as the following excerpt shows, earlier during the conversation at the beginning of the interaction, he had contradicted an observation made by Jill, who he had just met, in a very blunt way. His tone and intonation suggested that her observation was quite incorrect. This strong reaction clearly surprised and slightly embarrassed her, making her feel the need to justify her view in a rather defensive tone.

Transcript P
Excerpt 2

- 1 Elvid: In my country I learnt Russian language
- 2 Jill: Ah
- 3 Elvid: for eight years
- 4 Jill: (*laughing slightly*)That's a very difficult language
- 5 Elvid: Oh I don't think so
- 6 Jill: Well for for people who speak you know English and
- 7 Elvid: Oh
- 8 Jill: different languages {that's difficult 1}
- 9 Elvid: {Yes that's right 1}

It would appear from his quick agreement in line 9 that Elvid had not intended to be argumentative in any hostile way and wanted to show this. His disagreement in line 5 was open and honest in a way apparently acceptable and valued in his culture. In English-speaking cultures, contradiction of a polite comment like this would probably have been softened or hedged in some way. Jill's explanation (line 6) sounded rather defensive as if she had been surprised and embarrassed by his retort and Elvid's 'oh' in line 7 again suggested (to an English speaker) that Jill's comment had been rather foolish. This was the only example in the data of what seemed (to an English speaker) to be a rather tactless rebuff, but it does support the view that people need to be made aware of these differences in attitudes to open, unhedged disagreement and confrontation.

The three non-native speakers continued to argue and disagree throughout this discussion, Elvid more strongly and directly than the others. Jill, while ready to disagree and to assert her own opinions, tended to take the role of mediator and to explain and summarise the positions others had reached at various stages. Paloma and Elvid shifted their positions at times but Anh continued to hold out for her original choice. Although there was a great deal of direct disagreement, the interaction remained amicable and there was much laughter towards the end. The following exchanges, which took place towards the end of the discussion, illustrate further the way in which Anh joined in the arguments. At this point, Elvid was arguing that patients number two and five were in a similarly critical position, but that there was a better chance of a successful operation in number five's case because of his age. Anh was still arguing for number two, the young boy.

Transcript P

Extract 3

- 1 Elvid: --- but the chance for a successful operation
- 2 er I prefer five er because he's thirty four
- 3 Anh: Yes but look at this look at this man
- 4...he's forty two but his body rejects the heart {you know 1}
- 5 Paloma: {No no 1} {x x rejects 2}
- 6 Anh: {I mean compared 2} compared with the seven
- 7 {nobody know because 3}
- 8 Paloma: {x x don't x yes 3}
- 9 Anh: Elvid {talking about the age 4}
- 10 Elvid: {but but look at this 4} look at this
- 11 Mr Jacobson's family has a history of heart disease
- 12 that's the reason what I think
- 13 what I think the first is x x

After this exchange, Anh was persuaded that her line of argument was not relevant and they returned to the question of a choice between two and five. It is of note here that at times like this when she was fighting to get and keep the floor, Anh spoke more quickly and maintained her turn even when Paloma overlapped with her (lines 4, 5 and 6). Incidentally, Paloma's 'no no' in line 5 also shows her readiness to disagree directly. This was quite typical of her style in the interactions in which she participated. Anh, however, while using these sort of strategies at times, more often softened her argument, for example, in line 3 she began with 'yes but', in line 4 she used the marker 'you know' which (as will be discussed in a later chapter) can have an inclusive, softening function, and in line 6 she attempted to explain herself more fully with the use of 'I mean'. Possibly she used these more conciliatory, interactive expressions because she was trying to persuade the others to her point of view but also it was representative of her general argumentation style.

At the same time she was assertive enough to maintain a minority position right to the end. After first Jill, then Elvid and Paloma, had finally decided in favour of number five because he had children and no wife, the following exchange took place.

Transcript P

Extract 4

- 1 Anh: My my my point of view
- 2 I still think I still think number two
- 3 the boy is a very urgent case
- 4 I still think about him
- 5 Elvid: But he hasn't children
- 6 Paloma: Mm mm no wife
- 7 Elvid: Who cares for the children
- 8 Jill: Yes who cares for the children if he dies

In this extract, Anh used repetition and the conventional phrase 'my point of view' to make sure she had the floor before she very seriously asserted and justified her view (lines 1 to 4). After this the topic changed as they began to joke about number five and number four and the tape finished without any further discussion of Anh's minority position.

Of this group, only Paloma and Anh completed questionnaires. It is interesting to note that while Paloma's style reflected the attitudes she expressed in the questionnaire, Anh's behaviour did not match the behaviour she appeared to subscribe to. For example, Paloma wrote "Yes" in response to the proposition that you can disagree and say what you think and to the proposition about needing to give 'face' and avoid criticism, she wrote "No. If you disagree you need to say that". Anh, however, in answer to the first proposition, wrote, "In my country it is not easy to behave like that. Especially for the more important people, you should not say anything directly and openly which might affect your relations with them". And in answer to the second proposition, she wrote, "That is popular in my country". Perhaps the fact that she wrote about how people were expected to behave in Vietnam rather than her own opinion was because she preferred a more direct and open approach. It is also possible that she was more assertive because the group was composed mainly of women. On the other hand the first argumentative exchanges she participated in took place with Elvid, the male in the group.

Assertiveness and direct disagreement (an East Asian and a Southeast Asian woman): Group T

Another group which provide further evidence that, in certain circumstances at least, Asian women are prepared to disagree and to hold out for their position against strong opposition was Group T. This was a group of five comprising an East Asian woman, Juxian, a Southeast Asian woman, Hoa, an Eastern European woman, Irma, an East Asian man, Ming and a Middle Eastern man, Sallay. This group discussed Problem Three: Managing Diversity. The first part of the long forty minute discussion centred on the extent to which the problem was caused by the male employee's cultural background rather than his personality. Juxian and Hoa argued that it was culture, while Sallay and Irma, and to some extent Ming, argued that individual attitudes were more significant. This class had already done some cultural awareness training so were able to talk about the issue in these terms. Sallay took the lead in this group and suggested moving the man to another department. The others were not persuaded, so he shifted his position and suggested talking to both employees. Irma agreed saying the man should be given a chance to explain his attitude. However, as can be seen from the following excerpt, it was at this stage that Juxian took an opposing position.

Transcript T

Extract 1

- 1 Sallay: I think we cannot make decision
- 2 because we don't know about the actual situation
- 3 I think it's better to talk directly with both of them
- 4 Irma: Yes
- 5 Sallay: then we make decision what should we do
- 6 Irma: Yes
- 7 Ming: Yes
- 8 Sallay: Yes that's right okay
- 9 Ming: Yes
- 10 Irma: He must explain the problem
- 11 Sallay: Yes yes
- 12 Irma: what is so unusual {and 1}
- 13 Ming: {I 1}think he explain that two problems
- 14 he can't work with woman and x x
- 15 he got qualification as well as his supervisor
- 16 so that's two points
- 17 you can see the problems
- 18 Irma: But he must explain if he's *offensive*
- 19 or if he's upset because she has a different dresses
- 20 and immoral dresses and he must explain
- 21 what is the usual dresses in his er background
- 22 or or um country how {how can 2}
- 23 Juxian: { No I 2}don't think so
- 24 I think you know he come to a NEW country
- 25 Irma: Yes
- 26 Juxian: he has to he have to he has to
- 27 x to himself in the new culture
- 28 to get used with the new culture you know
- 29 Irma: Yes
- 30 Juxian: the girl dress like x you can't say
- 31 oh you can't dress like that

- 33 you have to dress like in my country
 34 the young girl will dress
 35 no you can't say that
 36 Irma: It's okay but if you want to HELP him
 37 Juxian: mm hm
 38 Irma: you must ask him what is unusual
 39 what what is you are upset about about this girl ...
 40 maybe maybe he has some explain for this
 41 yes if if we want to help
 42 easy way is go away we don't need you
 43 it is x {x x 3}
 44 Sallay: {We need 3} some explanation from the man yes
 45 Juxian: Mm
 46 Sallay: it is easy for us to transfer into another department
 47 but it is not the x x
 48 we should know and then we make a decision
 49 Irma: (*quietly*)Yes yes
 50 Juxian: No I don't think if we work in Australia
 51 we can't transfer to another position
 52 we can't do it another position
 53 it doesn't belong to you
 54 it belong to another manager
 55 Sallay: Yes I give you for example give an example

This excerpt shows that the others thought they had reached agreement on the way they would deal with the problem (lines 3 to 22). However, Juxian apparently saw this as making too many allowances for the man's position. She wanted a less sympathetic approach as became increasingly clear as the argument proceeded. She was prepared to come in (line 23) and put her view even though it upset the consensus that seemed to be about to be reached. At this stage, Irma and Sallay were making at least token acknowledgments of her position as in line 36 when Irma began with "it's okay" and line 55 when Sallay began with 'yes' (though here it appeared to mean 'I'm listening' rather than signalling agreement). As discussed more fully later, 'yes' is often used with this meaning by second language speakers and Sallay did not support Juxian's argument at any point. Sallay, in fact, took a more conciliatory, inclusive approach in general than the others. In lines 8 and 44 he checked with the others to see if they all agreed and in line 11 he appeared to be supporting Irma, saying 'yes' twice. Juxian however, began her argument with a direct 'no' (line 23) and made no concessions to the others except for murmurs which suggested doubt rather than any form of agreement (lines 37 and 45). Then again in line 50, she began with another direct 'no' and her repeated phrases 'we can't', 'we can't' in lines 51 and 52 were quite dogmatic and non-inclusive.

After this the argument continued for at least another twenty minutes along similar lines, but with Hoa now supporting Juxian and both adding new arguments. Basically, their view was that it was the man's problem, and if he was unable to adjust, he should leave. Ming, Irma and Sallay were still intent on talking to the man to help him and wanted to begin by asking him to explain the causes of his problem. As the argument went on, the amount of overlapping increased

- 1 Sallay: First I ask what is your problem ...
- 2 Juxian: No .. the .. the ...
- 3 Hoa: No {it's the x x x 1}
- 4 Juxian: { No they don't you can't say 1}
- 5 your personality the problem to the boss
- 6 we have some problem with the supervisor
- 7 you have to solve this problem with us
- 8 Hoa: Yes yes
- 9 Juxian: no you can't say that to your boss
- 10 to the middle manager you can't say that
- 11 if you are got some personality problem
- 12 you leave
- 13 that's your problem
- 14 not your supervisor's problem
- 15 Sallay: Yes
- 16 Hoa: Yes the problem {is the x x x x 2}
- 17 Juxian: {If you don't feel comfortable 2}
- 18 to work here you leave
- 19 this is Australia
- 20 Hoa: If we have already resolved
- 21 that the main reason is the different culture
- 22 but I think ANY culture ANY culture
- 23 ANY country you come from you
- 24 when you come to Australia example
- 25 you have to follow with
- 26 Juxian: The new culture
- 27 Hoa: the new culture
- 28 Juxian: You have to put yourself {in the new culture 3}
- 29 Hoa: {You have to put 3} yourself in the new culture
- 30 Juxian: You can't say oh new culture follow me no{no 4}
- 31 Hoa: {No 4} you never say oh in my country I do that
- 32 no you have to put yourself in the new culture
- 33 Irma: Oh yes it's correct but er if you want
- 34 to find a good way for this problem ...

As can be seen from the above excerpt, Juxian and Hoa were arguing their case very strongly. At first Juxian was obviously searching for words (line 2) but then they both became more fluent and adamant. They began to overlap and to repeat and complete one another's points, perhaps to give them stronger emphasis (lines 16, 17, 18 and 26 to 31). They appeared to be on the same wavelength. Juxian completed Hoa's idea with a prompt in line 26 and Hoa confirmed this is line 27. The pace of their talk quickened and Hoa stressed some words heavily (lines 22 and 23). Irma's agreement in line 33 seemed to indicate that she agreed with the point they were making in general, but she then went on to say that she still wanted to try an approach more sympathetic to the man first. Alternatively she could have been making a token agreement in order to remain cooperative and work together to reach an agreement. Again, Sallay's 'yes' in line 15 may well just have meant 'I'm listening'.

After this excerpt, Juxian argued that, as they could not change the situation or the age of the woman, it would be best to let the man leave. The other three, excluding Hoa, still held to the view that it was the job of managers to try to solve the problem and help the

man. Juxian then argued that managers would not want to spend time on this sort of problem in Australia. This line of argument was interesting in that she was the only one in the workforce in Australia. She had a good skilled technical position in a university and had been working for a year or so, and had now been given time off to do the Orientation course to improve her English. No consensus was reached in this discussion and, towards the end, the pace of the talk and amount of overlapping increased even more and voices became noticeably louder. In the very last part of the discussion much of the conversation was inaudible because two or three people were all talking at once. The following excerpt came just before the tape ran out. The same sort of arguments were being repeated and nobody appeared to have shifted positions. There were thirty seconds of simultaneous speech where no one person's contribution could be distinguished, but both the men and women were talking, perhaps in two groups. Then Irma spoke loudly enough to be heard (line 1). As can be seen in line 1, she was now arguing quite strongly and emotionally and in lines 13, 14, and 16 to 19 she continued to argue that for managers to let people go without first trying to work out the problem is counterproductive and not a solution. Juxian and Hoa continued equally strongly to push their line that it was up to the individual not the manager. They made no concessions to the others' point of view and did not soften their arguments in any way, apart from Juxian using the marker 'you know' in line 11 which may have been intended to be inclusive, but as it was the only such marker, this is doubtful.

Transcript T

Extract 3

- 1 Irma: ...{never never never say I don't want to work 1}
- 2 Hoa/Juxian?: {x x x x x x x x 1}
- 3 Irma: {x x must have explain what happened 2}
- 4 Juxian: {She's your boss if you don't like 2}
- 5 {you have taken the position 3}
- 6 Hoa/Irma? {x x x x x x 3}
- 7 Juxian: then you say I don't like this boss
- 8 that's your problem
- 9 Hoa: You just think about yourself
- 10 Juxian: Yes the middle managers they won't want to spend
- 11 too much time to solve this kind of problem {you know 4}
- 12 Hoa: {x x 4} I think about you {I can't say 5}
- 13 Irma: {But if you 5} always do it on the same way
- 14 you lose your time and {you always say go on people 6}
- 15 Sallay: {Yes you lose your time 6}
- 16 Irma: you always have a problem
- 17 I don't have a worker
- 18 my my job stops
- 19 and I always have a problem {x x x 7}
- 20 X: {x x x 7}
- 21 Juxian: {Not in Australia 7} not in Australia that's a fact
- 22 Juxian {x x x x 8}
- 23 Ming: {x x x x 8}
- 24 X: {x x x x 8}

At this point the tape finished. Even though the discussion had clearly polarised and the participants had become increasingly involved and adversarial, there was some evidence

that the argument remained impersonal and did not become unfriendly. Just before this final section there had been some laughter on the part of the men in which Hoa had joined, and when the group broke for morning tea, they indicated in an amicable way that they had had a good argument but not reached any consensus. Perhaps the fact that, as they concentrated on the content of their arguments, their styles tended to converge and develop in similar ways created rapport. The tendency of all participants to forget 'considerateness' is illustrated by their increasing tolerance of noise and overlap and the fact that nobody explicitly insisted on single turns.

This interaction did provide further evidence of the need to qualify generalisations about culture and communication. Clearly in a situation conducive to this type of argument, East and Southeast Asian woman do not avoid confrontation or try to reach a compromise and their style can change and take on some of the features usually identified with a high-involvement style - persisting with chosen topics, becoming faster, louder and overlapping more often. In this interaction, the two Asian women argued with one another at one point early in the discussion and they argued directly with each of the men at different points as well as with the East European woman.

Juxian's responses on her questionnaire were interesting in that to some extent she identified with the communication style valued in her culture, yet in this interaction she displayed a quite different style. The questionnaires given to this class contained much longer propositions: the aim was to use them to provide information about cultural differences in a written form as well as helping them think about their own culture. One question described three different ways cultures achieve good interpersonal relations and asked respondents which ones they identified with and whether others in their culture were the same or different. Juxian wrote 'I identify with the first group' and 'others in my culture are same as me'. To summarise, the first group was described as cultures in which saving face, maintaining harmony and avoiding unpleasantness is valued most highly, and where to achieve this, people conceal their negative emotions and avoid open criticism, disagreement or conflict.

There was also a brief description of high and low context communication styles and the respondents were asked to indicate their individual preference and that of most people in their culture. Juxian wrote, "My individual preference is 'spell things out'" and "most people in China, their preference is hint at meanings and expect others to work out their meanings". In this instance, Juxian's individual preference indicates a divergence from the dominant cultural pattern and may help explain her communicative behaviour in the interaction. Hoa did not complete a questionnaire.

Irma identified with the patterns seen as typical in her culture. For example, she wrote, "Most people in my culture are directness-communication styles, we haven't short story about 'weather'!". In terms of the best way to achieve good interpersonal relations, her reply was also interesting because of its definitiveness. She wrote that she identified with the third group (described as most highly valuing warmth and intimacy and in which strong opinions and open, emotional conflict is acceptable and not showing how strongly you feel is boring). In relation to others in her culture being the same, she wrote, "YES!" Her style in this interaction reflected the values she subscribed to as did Ming's and Sallay's. Ming differed from his cultural group. He wrote, "Individual preference is to say something directly. Most people in my culture prefer to say something 'beat around the bush'". He also identified with the Anglo-style of good personal relations (avoiding imposition, disagreeing in an objective, unemotional way)

but wrote, 'no they are not' in relation to others in his culture. This fitted with his style in the interaction. He was prepared to put his view but did not argue as strongly or disagree as openly as the women. This was also true of Sallay who tended to be more conciliatory in his approach. In relation to the ways of realising good personal relations, Sallay wrote, "none of them is the same as in our culture but the first one is close to our culture". This was the maintain harmony, avoid open disagreement style seen as favoured in many Asian cultures. In terms of communication, he wrote, "I think sometimes directness is good but not always. Our people also think like this".

Conciliatory disagreement (a Southeast Asian man): Group B

There were also examples of Asian men expressing opinions and disagreeing with others, even maintaining a minority position against the rest of the group. One example was in Group B, which has already been discussed in the chapters four, six and seven. This group comprised Yolanda, the Latin American woman, Ashmahan, the Middle Eastern woman, Doai, the Southeast Asian man, and Jack the native speaker. As described earlier, they discussed Problem One: The Heart Transplant and Doai held out for his choice against the other three almost to the end. Doai generally disagreed in a polite way: for example, he prefaced his disagreement with polite markers such as 'I agree but', 'I think it's better to do X', 'Sorry', he introduced opposing ideas inductively and he carefully considered the views of others, clarifying exactly what they meant. Towards the end when the other three had reached agreement, he used silence to express his disagreement and had to be cajoled into agreeing with the majority. In respect to his silence, this may have indicated self-restraint and maturity. As noted in chapter five, this is how it can be viewed in his culture in this type of situation. As Ting-Toomey (1994) explains it, remaining silent in a conflict situation is seen as demanding immense self-discipline. In English-speaking cultures, of course, it can be interpreted as immature sulking and a refusal to act constructively and 'have it out'. However, although Doai avoided a confrontational approach, he did not avoid expressing and maintaining an opposing viewpoint.

This fitted with the attitudes he expressed in his responses to the questionnaire. In response to the proposition "If you want to, you can disagree with people even if they are older or more important. You feel comfortable saying what you think and want directly and openly, and you feel this is the correct way to behave", Doai wrote "Partly agree, usually I show my opinion indirectly to them, and carefully and gradually explain my idea". To the proposition "It is important to give other people face. You should avoid causing any unpleasantness and lack of harmony", he wrote "Completely agree" and to the proposition "If there is a conflict or problem, you face it directly, argue heatedly and express your opinions forcibly with strong emotion to show how strongly you feel", he wrote, "Partly agree, I do not express my opinions forcibly".

Conciliatory but direct disagreement (a Southeast Asian man): Group U

Group U provided another example of a Southeast Asian man asserting strong opinions. In this instance, however, he disagreed quite directly at times. At the same time, he took a more conciliatory, facilitating role than any of the other participants. Group U discussed Problem Six: The Budget. This was an all male group and the interaction took place early in the course before any training and at a time the participants did not know one another at all well. They had all arrived in Australia only a short time before. The group comprised Phien, the Southeast Asian from Group F, Sharad, a South Asian, Marko, an Eastern European, Nikola another Eastern European and Omar, a Middle Easterner. This discussion again developed into a split between those who wanted to

look to the future, to prioritise the development of natural resources as a means of increasing the budget in the future and those who wanted the money spent mainly on food, health and education. All of them argued for their own positions assertively and nobody shifted their position although Phien took a more propitiatory approach than the others. This was not a successful interaction: no agreement was reached, and while there was no overt friction, no rapport developed.

As soon as it was established that the tape was working, Sharad appropriated the first turn. He began by dividing one dollar and apportioning a number of cents for each area. Marko quickly interrupted him.

Transcript U

Extract 1

- 1 Marko: But you have two million is your er budget two millions
- 2 the prime minister of x has just directed your department
- 3 to decide how to spend this year's two million budget
- 4 it's not one dollar it's two million
- 5 Sharad: Just er we consider er how to divide the budget
- 6 Marko: Oh alright
- 7 Sharad: We er . . . measure the budget one only one dollar one unit
- 8 Marko: Alright

As can be seen from this extract, Marko did not attempt to soften his assertion that Sharad was wrong in his approach. Sharad, however, while conciliatory (using the mitigator 'just' (line 5) persisted with his method and Marko, from his tone, rather grudgingly concurred. Sharad then took a ten minute turn. At first there did not appear to be any order in the way he assigned cents to the different areas but then his priority became clear and he appeared to signal it with the introductory "and now I will tell you how I have made it" . . .

Transcript U

Extract 2

- 1 Sharad: --- so seven dollars .. cents for communication
- 2 three cents for . . . public relations three cents for public relations
- 3 ten cents for transportation
- 4 nine cents for police and national guard
- 5 seventeen cents for education twelve cents for develop utilities
- 6 is now er . . . I will tell you .. how er I have made it ...
- 7 twenty cents for agriculture

Apparently he intended this to be a brief outline of the amounts he had apportioned to each area before stating and then justifying his number one priority, agriculture. He then changed to percentages to do this. The pattern he followed was to state the percentage, give reasons and then restate the percentage given. His justification for prioritising agriculture was expressed as follows:

Transcript U

Extract 3

- 1 Sharad: Twenty percent or we can say 20 cents
- 2 because .. er seventy percent childrens are
- 3 currently receive less than quarter of calories

- 4 they don't have enough calories
- 5 so we have to make them good er health
- 6 good nutrition and it's er first essential . . . that is
- 7 because they are starving you know
- 8 first most think that er nutrition and health
- 9 good health for children er
- 10 so I put twenty percent of . . . er for agriculture

Sharad then went through each of the other nine areas taking as long or longer on each one. He made no attempt to be inclusive or tentative or to encourage any feedback during this very long turn. The others made no attempt to interrupt for this first ten minutes although Marko checked what figure he had allocated twice. Perhaps, they had all decided or assumed that they would each get a turn to outline their priorities and were prepared to hear him out. However, when he said if you are in a poor country nobody wants to invest and if you don't have resources nobody wants to come, Marko spoke up and contradicted him.

Transcript U

Excerpt 4

- 1 Marko: We have resources
- 2 Sharad: No they don't have resources
- 3 Marko: They have gold and everything
- 4 Sharad: No there are no mines there are no oil wells
- 5 so they don't have resources they are looking for them
- 6 after that three percent I think it's . . . that's all
- 7 Phien: Have we finished
- 8 Sharad: Yes please that's why I x
- 9 Phien: Do you agree with the budget
- 10 Marko: I'm not sure well I think
- 11 at least I did that the biggest part of budget
- 12 I give the er for developing . . . natural resources er it's my opinion . . .
- 13 Sharad: I think of er not have this first thing
- 14 if you are starving you can't do anything
- 15 Marko: Yes but if {you 1}
- 16 Sharad: {If 1} you have enough food
- 17 then you can think about other things

As can be seen in lines 2 and 4, Sharad directly disagreed with Marko and then completed his turn. Phien then took a facilitating role, checking that Sharad had finished (line 7) and for some reason using the inclusive 'we'. Perhaps, this was because Sharad had used 'we' throughout his turns or because he saw them as members of the same department. Phien then directed a turn to Marko (line 9) who was quite tentative in expressing his opinion at this stage. Sharad, however, immediately disagreed with him, again asserting his opposition and interrupting Marko when he tried to explain his position (lines 16 and 17). Phien then came in to put his point of view. Sharad had allocated ten per cent of the budget to the development of natural resources.

Transcript U

Extract 5

- 1 Phien: I think er we spend ten percent
- 2 on develop natural resources is er . . . too too little

- 3 Marko: Too little I agree with you
- 4 Phien I don't agree with {x 1}
- 5 Nikola: {x 1} x to invest
- 6 Phien: In my opinion, it's better if we spend twenty per cent
- 7 Nikola: Twenty per cent I agree with you
- 8 Marko: My idea is to spend about thirty percent on this

As can be seen from this extract, Phien expressed his opinion, which was not in agreement with Sharad quite assertively (lines 1 and 2) and then made his disagreement explicit (line 4) although, unfortunately, the last word in this turn was inaudible. He then put his proposition again quite strongly in lines 6 and 7. This contribution was made at a point when Marko and Sharad had been arguing back and forth for some time, Nikola had said very little and Omar had not spoken. There was no pressure on Phien to speak. If he had behaved in a way that fitted with views about his cultural background, he would have remained silent or at least avoided 'buying into' into the argument and asserting a position of his own.

Marko then took a long turn, raising his voice to ward off interruptions and outlining the percentages he had assigned to each area. He continued to argue for thirty percent to be allocated to the development of natural resources. Nikola also took long turns to argue for this as a top priority but did not want as much as thirty percent spent on it. There was some overlapping and raised voices as Marko and Nikola argued about the percentage. At this stage, Phien again intervened, this time to bring Omar, who had still not spoken, into the discussion.

Transcript U

Extract 6

- 1 Phien: What do you think about thirty per cent
- 2 Omar: In my opinion to make a good society
- 3 there is there are some things
- 4 very very important like education .. and .. health ..
- 5 it's the most important thing health and education

The argument then continued along these lines for some time. Omar now dominated, using repetition to stress the importance of healthy educated people as well as the need to feed the children and develop industries. He refused to discuss percentages, arguing that it was necessary to establish what was important first. Omar's use of repetition and strong generalisations provided yet another example of the way the style valued in a first language, in this case Arabic, can be employed in a second language. He also introduced an argument against spending money developing natural resources, saying that spending money on this was like gambling. Marko and Nikola argued against this view and Sharad repeated his argument that a poor country could not afford to spend money developing natural resources. Omar and Marko then began discussing what had happened in poor African countries to support their views and then Omar brought it back to the need to look after education and health first. Phien intervened again at this point to question the correctness of the point he thought Omar was making.

Transcript U

Extract 7

- 1 Phien: But how can you do this for one year
- 2 education and health how can you {x x 1}

- 3 Omar: {Not in one year 1} you have to spend
- 4 I say you have to spend seventy five
- 5 from here your budget seventy five per cent
- 6 from your budget every year to improve {the x 2}
- 7 Phien: {Yes but 2} {this is only two million budget for one year 3}
- 8 ? : { x x x x x x x x 3}
- 9 Omar: Yes
- 10 Phien: and you do this for one year
- 11 Omar: {Yes every year you have to spend 4}
- 12 ? { x x x x x x x x 4}
- 13 Phien: No no no the next year

At this point, a number of the participants began speaking simultaneously and no one speaker could be heard clearly. As can be seen from the above extract, Phien used the conciliatory 'yes but' in line 7 but then disagreed more forcibly (line 13). The discussion continued along the same lines, the other participants making no concessions to different points of view. Phien made one more contribution, demonstrating again his conciliatory, mediating but firm approach although his tendency to overlap with Omar as he agreed with him (lines 2 and 4) may have suggested some impatience with Omar's repetition of the same points. He was also agreeing politely before expressing an opposing view (line 6).

Transcript U

Extract 8

- 1 Omar: You have to prepare healthy educated {healthy people 1}
- 2 Phien: {Yes most essential 1}
- 3 Omar: you have to increase {your industry 2}
- 4 Phien: {Yes I agree with 2} you it's er very important
- 5 Omar: Yes
- 6 Phien: but um develop natural resources is
- 7 Marko: the most important
- 8 Omar: No it's NOTHING if I am poor
- 9 Phien: No it's very important {but 3}
- 10 Omar: {if 3} I am rich yes I can spend like America
- 11 now they can spend five billion to find nothing

The discussion went on for a few minutes with the other four participants restating their positions in slightly different ways, sometimes overlapping and interrupting. In general, these four all had stronger, more argumentative styles, and they took longer turns and made few concessions. As can be seen in the above extract, Phien did not fight to maintain his turn (lines 6 and 9), and in general, his turns were shorter and he tried to soften his disagreement in various ways ('yes but' 'I agree with you but'); nevertheless, he did speak up and make his position clear, disagreeing directly with other participants. In this way, this interaction provided further evidence that participants from this kind of cultural background, while exhibiting the succinct style seen as typical in their culture and using a less confrontational approach, are prepared to be assertive and to disagree.

The questionnaires that four of these participants completed shed further light on their attitudes to asserting their views and direct disagreement and the danger that this sort of confrontation may result in loss of face. Most of their comments fitted with the attitudes ascribed to their cultural backgrounds. For example, in relation to the proposition "If

you want to, you can disagree with people even if they are older or more important. You feel comfortable saying what you think and want directly and openly and believe this is the correct way to behave”, there was a range of responses. Marko wrote, “Completely. This is the only way to behave”. Nikola was less emphatic and total in his agreement, writing, “I can disagree with older people but I have to keep in mind to respect them and sometimes in a different situation it is not so comfortable”. Vishnu disagreed, writing, “Unfortunately not. If I disagree with my elders then I cannot say anything directly. It may be counted as disrespect behavior. I feel very uncomfortable at that time”. It is interesting that he prefaced his remark with ‘unfortunately’ showing his own preference and in this interaction where there were no ‘elders’ he showed that he was ready to disagree directly and assert his views. Phien wrote, “I partly agree with it. However, I only behave like this with people who are not my parents, brothers, sisters and relatives”. This suggests that he may have had different views about how to behave in ingroups and outgroups. As mentioned before, people in collectivist cultures such as his avoid any disharmony with those closest to them but are more prepared to speak up in outgroups. To the proposition “It is important to give other people ‘face’. You should not criticize others openly. You should avoid causing unpleasantness and lack of harmony” there was a similar variety of responses. At one extreme, Marko wrote, “Disagree. To be loved only because of ‘face’ is real disaster”. Nilola, however, wrote, “I agree but in my country it is a little bit more open style about criticism”. Sharad wrote, “Yes, we shouldn’t criticize anybody directly and openly”. Phien’s position was at the other extreme from Marko: “Yes, I completely agree with it”. Clearly, this group had very different attitudes and styles, and as noted, they had not had any cultural awareness training. These factors appeared to result in the lack of rapport and failure to reach agreement evident in this interaction.

Handling conflict

In general, in this data, while there were discussions like Group W’s where no agreement was reached and no rapport appeared to develop, as mentioned earlier, there were very few where actual conflict or friction developed or threatened to develop. How was this handled when it did occur? There was evidence that this was done in three different ways. One was for the interactants involved to draw back of their own accord and to each adopt a more conciliatory, less confrontational approach. This occurred in Group A’s interaction, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, when Elica and Li Dong began angrily shouting at each other but then quickly softened their voices and became more conciliatory. A second type of response was for participants who found a particular line of argument unacceptable to show their irritation and disapproval in their body language, and in some cases, to withdraw from the discussion. This happened in Group F, discussed in chapters four, six and seven. When Josef and Piotr could not accept Jamal’s views, they showed their irritation in their almost insolent, dismissive body language and Piotr withdrew from the discussion. This also happened in another group described elsewhere (FitzGerald 1996). When the values and assumption expressed by one of the participants clashed with those of another, the latter clearly showed her impatience and irritation and withdrew from the discussion. The third way was for the frustration, irritation or exasperation of one or more of the participants to be acknowledged and verbal attempts made to soothe them or to break the tension that was developing. This happened in two of the groups.

Handling potential conflict: Groups V and W

One of these was Group V who were discussing Problem Five: School Cuts. Because of budget constraints, the high school principal had made five proposals for the elimination

or reduction of programs. The group was to roleplay being the parents' advisory board and it was their task to decide which three of the proposals should be accepted. The instructions said "at least three must be accepted". This wording proved to be ambiguous for all the groups who worked on this task but most came to an agreement, often mistakenly agreeing that 'accepted' meant three programs be maintained not cut or reduced. In Group V however, this issue was never settled. The group comprised Dusan, the Eastern European man from Dyad A, Li Dong, the East Asian man from Group A, Bisominka, the South Asian woman from Group A and Dolores, the South American woman from Group Q.

From early in the discussion, Dusan, Bisominka and Dolores assumed that the task was to keep three programs and agree with two of the principal's proposals. Li Dong however, had correctly interpreted the instruction and was frustrated and annoyed when he could not get this across to the others. They responded by trying to calm him, telling him not to worry that he could not understand. Li Dong had said that he wanted to maintain programs one and two (foreign languages and physical education) and accept the implementation of changes to programs four, five and six (reduction of hours, teachers and the elimination of the music program). The others all argued that three programs should be maintained. Li Dong told them that they misunderstood and they argued about the meaning of 'accept'. Dolores saw this as meaning to keep or follow three programs. As can be seen from the following excerpt, they were all sure that it was Li Dong who could not understand and needed to be helped and soothed. There was a great deal of overlapping and simultaneous speech in this interaction, especially the two women speaking at the same time. Dolores spoke more loudly so usually her words could be heard and not Bisominka's.

Transcript V

Excerpt 1

Li Dong: I think I understand

Dusan: {Hold on 1}

Dolores: {Yes they will follow Li Dong 1}

Bisominka: {x x x x x x 1}

Dolores: {they will follow my friend 2}

Bisominka: {x x x x x x 2}

Dolores: {at least three must be accepted 3}

Bisominka: {x x x x x x 3}

Dolores: they have to follow

Li Dong: Yes but

Dolores: {I think it's not to cut 4}

Bisominka: {x x x x x x 4}

Li Dong: Yes I know that

Dolores: {x x x x x x 5}

Bisominka: {x x x x x x 5}

Dolores: only two two are not three will follow two cut

Bisominka: One and five cut

Li Dong: So so ...

Dolores: Don't worry don't worry

Li Dong: I can understand it

{I think I can understand it 6}

Bisominka: {x x x x x x 6}

{very important in Australia 7}

Dolores {No no you think if you 7}
are not sure please don't worry

In line one, Li Dong was actually saying that he thought he was right, not that he understood them. Dolores's 'yes' in line two and her reiteration of the group's understanding suggest she thought he meant he might now understand the group's interpretation. She appeared to want to encourage him, addressing him by name and calling him 'my friend'. She continued to try to explain their view to him. At times they seemed to be even more at cross purposes with Li Dong agreeing with her in line 13, whereas they had not actually reached any agreement. When Li Dong was hesitant (line 18), Dolores was sympathetic and tried to console him telling him 'not to worry'. She then misinterpreted his meaning again when in lines 20 and 21 he said that he thought he understood the instructions, and she thought he meant he possibly understood the way the others interpreted the task. Again she tried to reassure him that he shouldn't become upset or worried if he couldn't understand for certain (lines 24 and 25).

The discussion continued in the same way throughout. A short time later, Li Dong tried again to explain that the 'question' (meaning the instruction) was worded in an ambiguous way. He used the word 'tricky'.

Transcript V

Extract 2

- 1 Li Dong: You know ah ah you know
- 2 it's a bit tricky it's a bit tricky
- 3 this question is a native you know..
- 4 this kind of question is a native question
- 5 it' a native question .. look here you ..
- 6 have to accept ..
- 7 you have to accept at least three of them
- 8 which means WHAT which means
- 9 you CAN'T do another two ...
- 10 Dusan: {No I think 1}
- 11 Bisominka?: {No x x 1}
- 12 Li Dong: {You wish me 1}
- 13 Dusan: you don't understand this question I think
- 14 Bisominka: Yes yes
- 15 Dolores: We want you to know Li Dong 2}
- 16 Dusan: {You know 2}don't be ..
- 17 Dolores: worry
- 18 Dusan worried about it

Li Dong was becoming increasingly frustrated by his inability to explain to them the way he interpreted the instruction. At this point, he had realised that the problem was in the way the question was worded and tried to make the others see this (lines 1 to 9). He used a word that sounded like 'native' but did not fit here. The others did not try to clarify the meaning of this word, apparently because they were still convinced that he had misunderstood the whole task. He became more agitated as he went on and by lines 7, 8 and 9 was shouting. The main concern of the others was to soothe him, presumably to avoid any friction and get on with completing the task. They wanted to help him understand (line 15) and they wanted to calm him down (lines 16 to 18).

After this, Dusan went on to explain their interpretation again carefully and patiently. The issue was never resolved and the same pattern continued for the whole interaction. It did not develop into any more of a conflict perhaps because of the concern and patience Dusan and Dolores, in particular, showed. They obviously felt sorry for Li Dong, thinking it was his lack of comprehension skills that was the problem. Li Dong remained frustrated and exasperated at his inability to make them understand rather than becoming angry with them, maybe because of their sympathetic attitude. Possibly, too, Li Dong was aware that it was a language problem (as he tried to explain in the second excerpt) and so there was no point in becoming angry with the others. This interaction was unusual in that there was no other example of such a prolonged and unresolved misunderstanding between participants.

The other example of this way of handling potential conflict occurred in Group W, an EPE group. The participants in this group were Sylvia, a Latin American woman, Vera, the East Asian woman from Groups H and O and Hossam, a Middle Eastern man. They were discussing Problem Seven: The Bank Accounts. This was a rather different type of problem. Each participant was given some information about five bank accounts, the names and occupations of the account owners, the account numbers, the amount of money in the account and the name of bank. The information was given in a somewhat cryptic manner and was incomplete. It had to be put together rather like a puzzle and was a quite difficult, frustrating task to complete. It was necessary to hypothesise and make connections that were not always obvious. Sylvia had taken on the task of writing down the facts as they were established. Sylvia and Hossam became absorbed in the task, working together and verbalising all their thoughts. Vera tended to work more on her own, coming in whenever she had worked something out and had something to contribute. At times Hossam became highly agitated, went off on tangents, and interrupted and overlapped with Sylvia who became irritated with him.

Transcript W

Extract 1

- 1 Sylvia: Just a minute Hossam
- 2 Hossam: Okay
- 3 Sylvia: We just
- 4 Hossam: Look look look no one less
- 5 than hundred dollars
- 6 here just this one this is a doctor twenty five dollars
- 7 Sylvia: Less less than two hundred
- 8 Hossam: One hundred this one
- 9 who who who account {tant 1}
- 10 Sylvia: {The 1} balance in the accountant's
- 11 account is less than two hundred
- 12 it could be a hundred .. {or it could be 2}
- 13 Hossam: {It could be 2}
- 14 Sylvia: twenty five point
- 15 Hossam: Who less than a hundred ..
- 16 more than ..more than
- 17 Sylvia: No less than two hundred two hundred
- 18 Hossam: Yer again again how many person
- 19 how person five one two three four five
- 20 Sylvia: We know that we know that
- 21 Rob is not {in the Southern Bank 3}

- 22 Hossam: {x x again again 3}
 23 Sylvia: Just a minute {Hossam 4}
 24 Hossam: {No the 4} first you miss {x x 5}
 25 Sylvia: {But x 5}
 26 Vera: Don't fight don't fight
 27 Hossam: { x x x 6}
 28 Sylvia: (*laughing*) {We are not 6} fighting

As can be seen from this extract Sylvia and Hossam were collaborating on the task, for example, Hossam checking information with Sylvia (lines 8 and 9) and Sylvia correcting wrong information (line 17). But at times they went off on their own track, Hossam checking the number of people involved (lines 18 and 19) and Sylvia on another track, noting that Rob was not in one particular bank (lines 20 and 21). Then Hossam came back, wanting Sylvia to follow his line of thought (line 22). She became impatient (line 23) and he became agitated. Their voices rose slightly as they overlapped and parts of their comments were inaudible (lines 24 and 25). It was at this point that Vera intervened saying "don't fight don't fight". It was not clear from her intonation and tone whether she was serious or half joking. Whatever her attitude, her interjection broke the developing tension. Sylvia laughed as she defended herself and Hossam against this accusation. Hossam's comment was inaudible but after this they worked together amicably for a short time. There were only two more points at which some friction developed. Hossam was trying to explain an idea he had in relation to the length of the bank account numbers and Sylvia was having trouble understanding his point. Hossam became agitated and appeared to keep repeating the same two or three words.

Transcript W
Extract 2

- 1 Hossam: You can't understand me I am sure
 2 Sylvia: No
 3 Hossam: x again again
 4 Sylvia: I'm sorry Hossam I don't get your point
 5 Hossam: x x
 6 Sylvia: Would you mind telling me again
 7 don't get upset with me please be patient
 8 Hossam: Okay okay this is a seven number
 9 Sylvia: {Yes I get that 1}
 10 Hossam: {No this is more 1} than a seven {number 2}
 11 Sylvia: {Just let 2} me try to tell you what I am understanding
 12 Hossam: Okay.

After this they clarified the point Hossam was trying to make and there was no more friction for some time. Hossam obviously felt very frustrated and annoyed at not being understood and Sylvia was sensitive to this and deflected possible conflict by being apologetic (line 4), taking the blame for the communicative breakdown 'don't get upset with me' and bringing the fact that he was upset into the open and asking him to be patient (line 7). This approach was effective and enabled the discussion to continue on a harmonious note again. There was only one more moment of tension when the teacher told them time was nearly up and Hossam's frustration began to show again.

Transcript W
Extract 3

- 1 Hossam: I think we miss some information
- 2 Sylvia: Well Hossam just stay with calm please please
- 3 Hossam: Mm okay

Again Sylvia dealt with the fact that Hossam was agitated (and possibly that this was irritating her) by bringing it out into the open rather than ignoring it. Her strategy of appealing to Hossam to be calm was effective again and, indeed, after this as they began to solve the problem, very good rapport developed between the three with collaborative checking and confirming punctuated by delighted shouting, laughter and self-congratulations as they worked out the last pieces of the puzzle just before the deadline.

The sample is too small to arrive at any conclusions, but it is of note that in these two groups, the participants who took the lead in attempting to soothe and placate and try to clear up misunderstandings included an Eastern European man, and two Latin American women. This suggests that it is not only people with certain cultural backgrounds who try to avoid conflict. Again, of course, in cases like this one has to be mindful that the other two influential factors, gender and/or personality, may play a more salient role than culture. As well, the situation, the fact that they were all in the same difficult position coping with a new language, may have encouraged empathy and contributed to the desire to avoid conflict.

Discussion

As has been demonstrated, in this sample, individuals from all the cultural groups represented asserted personal opinions quite strongly and were prepared to disagree with others. Most notably, there was a great deal more strong assertion of views and open disagreement on the part of members of cultures said to value harmony and avoid argument, including the female participants, than might have been expected. There are a number of possible explanations for this. The nature of the tasks could have been one. The fact that the tasks necessitated operating largely in the discourse genre of argument meant that it was difficult for participants to avoid disagreement. In addition, the fact that the teacher had encouraged the participants to express points of view, to persuade others to their point of view and to take the opportunity to practise speaking English might have lessened restraints operative in many other situations. As well, as stressed elsewhere, the equal status, non-threatening, non-competitive 'no repercussions' situation may have made individuals feel they could argue for their point of view. As mentioned previously, people remain silent in situations which are ambiguous or uncertain and where there is inequality in status (Braithwaite 1990). Another factor may have been that in the collectivist cultures said to value harmony, a distinction tends to be made between ingroup and outgroup members. It is vital to maintain harmony in close ingroups in which people must interact over long periods of time, but outgroups can be treated more harshly (Gabrenya & Huang 1996, Gao 1998). While many of the class members did work to build up group relationships over the course, the actual discussion groups were temporary and certainly could not be equated with ingroups. A further factor, could have been the tendency to convergence: the behaviour of participants from cultures more accustomed to strong argument may have encouraged others to be more open and argumentative than they may otherwise have been. Alternatively or even as well as this tendency towards accommodation or convergence could be another tendency identified in the literature: the tendency to try to adopt the style thought to be typical of native speakers. In one study, Japanese were antagonistic and aggressive when using English but not at all when using Japanese (Yamada 1992). Some participants may have felt that being assertive and disagreeing strongly, while

unacceptable in their own language, was acceptable and even appropriate when speaking English.

A final explanation could be the level of language proficiency. As will be discussed in greater detail in chapter ten, learners' speech acts are often noted for their directness and lack of mitigation (Kasper 1997). Participants may have been concentrating on the referential content of the language they were hearing and using and not had enough attention left to be concerned about the effect of what they were saying. They may not even have been consciously aware of this effect. Porter's (1986) study of twelve adult male learners from Spanish speaking backgrounds interacting with six native speakers in the United States reaches this conclusion. She found that the greatest difference between the native and non-native speakers was in the way they disagreed. The native speakers avoided or hedged their disagreement (for example, 'I wouldn't necessarily agree with that even though ...'), whereas the non-native speakers used expressions such as 'No', 'I'm no agree with that', 'Well I disagree' and 'Is wrong'. Porter felt one explanation may have been interference from Spanish, but another study showed that when a comparable group of learners did the same tasks in Spanish, the strategies they used were identical to those of the native English speakers, so she concluded that language level was the most likely explanation. The native speakers in this present sample also tended to hedge their disagreement, while the non-native speakers often disagreed in similarly direct ways. These findings do support the need for explicit teaching of phrases and expressions so that non-native speakers can disagree in a way that will not make them appear rude and confrontational when this is not their intention.

Training also needs to include information about the different attitudes to disagreement and criticism and the values behind them so unintentional offence can be avoided. As well, all groups need an understanding of what is seen as effective, persuasive argument in different cultures so individuals can tailor their style to their audience rather than unwittingly using a style that is ineffective or even counterproductive. It can also be helpful for immigrants to have an understanding of what is seen to constitute good interpersonal relations in the Australian workplace: to understand the meaning behind the terms 'passive', 'assertive', and 'aggressive' as they apply in this context. Video sequences and roleplay exercises can help develop this understanding and the verbal strategies which achieve the desired effect. Finally, it is helpful to practise these strategies as well as those which enable the constructive expression of agreement and disagreement so that they become automatic and can be used even in stressful situations. This then means that non-native speakers will have the knowledge and the language skills to 'come across' in the way they intend, not in a way dictated by cultural ignorance and limited language.

To conclude, obviously there were a number of context-related factors operating in this sample which means that the findings could not be extrapolated to other contexts, and the different cultural attitudes to argument and confrontation outlined in the literature no doubt still hold in most situations. In fact, as discussed in the analysis of the data in this chapter, there was some evidence that even when they were arguing quite strongly for a position, the East and Southeast Asians tended to be conciliatory and none were as strongly argumentative as some of the other groups. Furthermore, their responses to the various questionnaires were generally in line with the patterns identified in the literature. A more direct, assertive approach to argument was often noted as an individual preference not typical of their culture. Moreover, the questionnaire responses made by Eastern European compared with those of the East and Southeast Asians

confirmed quite opposing views about how direct and critical one should be. Clearly this is an area where deep misunderstandings and negative evaluations about people's intentions can result because of these different attitudes. It seems to be an area where awareness and skills are vital in a multicultural society (and a global village for that matter).

At the same time, the fact that this data sample, which included participants from all continents interacting in various groupings, contains so few examples of communication breakdown and friction is cause for optimism. So, too, is the skill with which participants from varied backgrounds mediated and worked to avert conflict developing despite limited language proficiency. It does present a more positive view of intercultural communication than some of the darker, more negative views in the literature.

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCIES: INTERCULTURAL AND LINGUACULTURAL

Introduction: what competencies should be taught

In this chapter the competencies required for good communication in this type of interaction, and by extension in academic and workplace settings, will be outlined and some interactions which displayed some of these features examined. Both the competencies required for effective communication in intercultural settings and in the specific Anglo-Australian 'linguaculture' will be discussed. Fantini (1995) uses this helpful term, arguing that it is a reminder of the inseparability of a language and its culture and the fact that people can be linguistically proficient but culturally deficient. Although there were also many successful interactions in the Orientation classes, groups in EPE classes have been chosen for this chapter as, in general, their proficiency level was higher and their discussions may more closely mirror the level of English typical in the professional workplace. In fact, during EPE courses, work experience was arranged for these learners and some of them were asked to stay on in paid positions.

To be successful communicators in Australia, non-native speakers need to be aware of what native speakers consider is good communication in English and need to be competent intercultural communicators (FitzGerald 1999). The former is necessary because native speakers are often gatekeepers in this society and because their style may dominate in many situations. For example, interpersonal skills and good communication rate most highly in surveys done by personnel managers in relation to job selection criteria in Australia (Hogarth 1995). Moreover, the great majority of native speakers still have monocultural views about what constitute effective interpersonal skills and good communication, tending to judge any variation as reflecting personal and intellectual inadequacy. As well, however, domestic and global realities require all Australians today to be good intercultural communicators. This situation means that ESL teachers, while avoiding a narrow 'native speaker model', do need to inform learners about the style valued in native speaker communication and let them practise the skills, so they can adapt their style if they choose to do so in certain situations. It also means that teachers must teach and practise intercultural competencies. However, at present there is no definitive list of either of these types of competencies. Furthermore, as will be discussed, many appear to overlap.

What are the intercultural communication competencies which are seen as contributing towards effective communication? A great deal of research aimed at answering this question has been done, particularly in the United States. According to Martin (1993), who reviewed this work, researchers have looked at the broader competencies on three levels. First they have identified higher order cognitive and behavioural processes such as understanding cultural, social and relational rules governing interaction. Second they have established mid-range constructs involving groups of specific behaviours (for example, interaction management, social relaxation, rules like 'be polite' and 'follow role prescriptions, and traits such as assertiveness and empathy). Thirdly they have identified overt behaviours such as interruptions, eye gaze, head nods and smiling. Martin observes that possibly the main difficulty in this research is understanding the relationship between culture-specific and culture-general aspects of communicative competence. As she puts it, what is required is "the identification of elements that apply

to specific intercultural interaction between members of specific groups and elements that apply to all intercultural interactions” (Martin 1993:22).

This may be a difficult task. The reality would seem to be that success in intercultural communication is related to contextual factors. Competency cannot be evaluated independent of the situational and relational context in which the communication occurs. In one setting, behaviour might be highly competent but in another the same behaviour might be incompetent. To be appropriate and effective, communication must fit the requirements and expectations of the situation and achieve the personal outcomes desired by the participants (Lustig & Koester 1993). As Loveday (1982) points out, one aspect of this is the ability to accommodate to the speech of other interactants.

Nevertheless, there do appear to be some generally applicable competencies. In addition to his ‘revised’ maxims, which extend Grice’s (1975) Cooperative Principle to make it more truly universal, Clyne (1994: 195) changed the second maxim of Manner and added a fifth one to meet the needs of intercultural communication:

(2) “Make clear your communicative intent unless this is against the interests of politeness or of maintaining a dignity-driven cultural core value, such as harmony, charity or respect” and

(5) “In your contribution, take into account anything you know or can predict about the interlocutor’s communication expectations”. Elsewhere, he notes that good intercultural communicators “express themselves in “as ‘culturally neutral’ a way as possible and know which questions to ask to resolve potential causes of communication breakdown” (Clyne 1994: 153).

For practical training purposes, a narrow range of approaches and skills closely linked to language and spoken interaction can be helpful. One most useful list has been drawn up in a handbook written by Bowe and Fernandez (1996) to accompany a training video “English and the Multicultural Team – A Collaborative Approach”. The kit is based on a number of research projects studying actual conversation in the multicultural Australian workforce in factories in Australia, including Clyne’s (1994) study. This research “revealed a number of strategies or approaches which can promote successful communication between people whose level of English language skills may be quite low” and also highlighted ways in which speakers who are proficient in English can foster the English language development of their co-workers, as well as revealing approaches which should be avoided” (Bowe & Fernandez 1996: 2).

Bowe and Fernandez identify six strategies. They illustrate each with short extracts from real interactions. The first strategy, ‘collaboration’, involves both speakers and listeners working together to ensure that the desired message is conveyed. Speakers should break messages up into small segments and use pauses to encourage feedback. Listeners should use repetition to check information and expose miscommunication, as well as use questions to clarify unclear messages. The second strategy, ‘creating a positive team spirit’, involves softening directives and requests, for example, by using an indirect approach or asking for co-operation, avoiding confrontation, being sensitive to cultural expectations and toning down complaints by using politeness strategies such as indirectness and explanation. The third strategy, ‘being sensitive to cultural differences’, involves being aware of different value systems and how they influence communication, for example, some cultures value verbosity while others frown on it. The fourth strategy, ‘turn taking’ involves the sharing of turns – specifically allowing a speaker to complete the point they set out to make. The fifth strategy, ‘use straightforward English’, involves keeping the message simple and avoiding complex

vocabulary and grammar. The sixth is 'avoid ungrammatical foreigner talk'. The authors say that research has shown that when native speakers try to be helpful by simplifying their English (for example, by leaving off verb endings, using only the present tense and leaving out prepositions), this actually makes their language harder to understand and is detrimental to learners who need to hear and model standard language.

Byrne and FitzGerald (1996: 110-112) also independently compiled a list in their handbook accompanying the training video "What Makes You Say That?: Cultural Diversity at Work". They divided their list of "skills for intercultural communication" into two sections: those "useful in most situations" and "special skills needed when another person's language level is not yet good". Both sections were intended for non-native as well as native speakers. The list included examples of appropriate phrases or approaches for each skill. In addition to some of the strategies outlined above from Bowe and Fernandez, they listed the following skills:

- bring out into the open any cultural differences you feel may be impeding understanding
- if there is a misunderstanding, rephrase - do not repeat exactly
- clarify the intention behind your words, knowing others may not share your world view
- expect other ways of structuring information and emphasising a point
- use 'fillers' to avoid pauses when you have not finished what you want to say
- soften negative statements where culturally appropriate

In the second section, they added:

- do not break up units of meaning
- repeat difficult ideas using different words: ask questions (other than 'yes'/'no' ones) to check understanding
- use introductory phrases to make the function of important sentences clear
- give instructions or information in correct sequence without extraneous comments

The acquisition of these specific skills presumed a knowledge of the nature of language and the way it reflects and shapes culture, the communication process, the different cultural value systems and the communication patterns influenced by them. The skills were intended to be taught as part of the practical segment following the cognitive and experiential segments of a training course.

While these two lists are helpful, they were compiled with less proficient non-native speakers in mind. It must be kept in mind that there can be a very fine line between native speakers accommodating their speech in a helpful manner to promote understanding and accommodating it to an extent, or in a way, that appears patronising and insulting (Trifonovich 1981).

The research that has been done analysing native/non-native and non-native/non-native interactions and comparing them with native speaker interactions is also helpful as a guide to establishing teachable competencies and as a point of reference when analysing the data in this study. While it is true that there can be 'troubles' when native speakers are interacting and constant feedback and monitoring by all parties is necessary (Schegloff et al 1990), more of this type of interactivity occurs when non-native speakers are involved (Kasper 1989, 1997, Gass & Varonis 1991, Aston 1986, Varonis

& Gass 1985a, Porter 1986). For example, Varonis & Gass (1985a) found more clarification requests, repetitions, expansions and elaborations and a significantly greater degree of transparency in conversations involving non-native speakers than in those only involving native speakers. After reviewing much of this research, Aston (1986) reached the conclusion that, as well as being necessary for the negotiation of meaning and to prevent communication breakdowns, this interactivity allows participants to display that the interaction is in some respects successful and satisfactory despite the handicaps of unshared backgrounds and, in some cases, limited language proficiency. At the same time, there can be evidence of lack of understanding which is not overtly expressed or even noticed.

Fewer studies have been done involving only non-native speakers from different backgrounds (Meuiss 1994). However, these also suggest that a considerable amount of repair (in its broad sense as the treatment of trouble) and the negotiation of meaning is characteristic of these interactions (Tarone & Yule 1987, Meeuwis 1994, Varonis and Gass 1985b, Porter 1986). Varonis and Gass (1985b) compared three types of conversational dyads, a native speaker with a non-native speaker, two native speakers and two non-native speakers. The last type of dyad evidenced the highest incidence of negotiation, but in dyads of this type, the least amount of negotiation occurred where there was a shared language background and the same level of proficiency. This shared background is clearly an important variable. Porter (1986) compared non-native learner/native speaker and learner/learner interactions and found that the incidence of monitoring and repair work was practically the same, but her study was limited to learners with homogeneous Spanish language backgrounds. In this context, it is interesting to note that Moerman (1987) found the organisation of repair the same in Thai as in English, so this suggests that non-native speakers have shared experience in this respect. Overall, however, this research suggest that interactive skills, such as the ability to monitor the conversation and provide effective feedback and do skilful repair work, are vital intercultural competencies.

In his analysis of problem-solving interactions involving native and non-native speakers in the professional workplace in Australia, Willing (1992: 1) identified some of "the means people use in order to stay reasonably clear about each other's meanings and intentions". Clearly the ability to use these effectively would constitute vital competencies in intercultural communication using English as a lingua franca. His discussion, in general, also points to a number of linguacultural-specific competencies required in the Australian workplace. Willing found that "the main functions of this interactivity" were "acknowledgment, guidance, clarification and repair". He gives examples of discourse markers which carry out these functions. He first discusses what he calls minimal linguistic cues. For example, 'right' 'yeah' 'okay' can be used to acknowledge the recognition of given information or the receipt of new information and back-channelling feedback such as 'mm', 'hm', 'oh', 'really' indicate interest. Markers such as 'now' or 'next' provide guidance. The marker 'I mean' often prefaces clarification or repair. According to Willing (1992:69), these markers "carry implicit interpersonal messages" which regulate or structure the flow of information between interactants. However, he points out that the problem is that, while native speakers are familiar with the denotations and connotations of all the common markers, they are not nearly so thoroughly known by non-native speakers. There are exceptions. Willing lists 'well' 'yes', and 'okay' as examples of markers which do not cause problems because they occur so often in the language input most learners are exposed to. However, Willing qualifies this by noting that, in his sample, non-native speakers used 'yes' or

'yeah' for a variety of functions with meanings related to their own language rather than to signal agreement or confirmation as is usual in English. Other writers make the same observation (Gao 1998, Nguyen 1980, Gumperz 1992b). Gumperz (1992b), for example, explains that for South Asians it replaces 'hmm' meaning 'I'm listening'. However, this may not only be true of non-native speakers: Maltz and Borka (1982) claim that while men only use 'yes' when they agree, American English-speaking women use it to mean 'I'm with you', 'I follow'.

Willing (1992) also lists some of the more explicit phrases which can perform the same functions: for example, 'so you're saying that', 'see what I'm getting at' (clarification); 'what I'm saying is', 'the most important point is' (guidance). Willing distinguishes between clarification of referential meaning as in the above two examples and clarification of a speaker's intention, (what the speaker wishes to accomplish by the utterance), for example, 'are you asking me or telling me' or 'are you serious'. Willing found that there were fewer communication breakdowns when such phrases were used and that non-native speakers were better able to hold their listeners' attention when they used them. Other means of carrying out these functions can be even more explicit. For example, performative verbs such as 'I promise' or 'warn' are clear guides to a speaker's intention (although, as Willing warns, these can sometimes sound too formal or abrupt: for instance, native speakers would be more likely to say 'perhaps we could' rather than 'I suggest').

One aspect of language use that Willing (1992) looks at is the role of modalising forms, particularly modal auxiliaries such as 'could', 'would', 'may', 'might'. His findings are especially helpful for teachers who want to help learners become aware of some of the forms of politeness that native speakers might expect in this type of communicative activity. As mentioned previously, the way politeness is realised in English is based on the values of personal autonomy and freedom from imposition (Wierzbicka 1991). When working in a group or a team, it is important not to make others feel that their personal autonomy is threatened. Proposals relating to group action or decisions should be made so others see them as inclusive, as tentative and dependent on mutual agreement or at least majority support. One of the most important skills in group discussions is the ability to soften or hedge assertions and propositions which might otherwise sound dogmatic and suggest that the speaker is imposing their ideas on others. The problem is that the use of modal auxiliaries in this way is difficult for non-native speakers. Stubbs (1986:22) describes the use of these forms as a "notorious problem".

Performative verbs such as 'I think that', 'I suppose that', 'I doubt that' or prefacing phrases such as 'in my opinion' modalise assertion in an explicit way. When a proposition or assertion is personalised in this way, it places less of an imposition on listeners. As Willing explains it, (1992:112) "Such markers hedge assertion by defining the nature of the belief as epistemically 'subjective'. At the same time they identify the speech act as that of expressing an opinion". Willing's data and the present data, including the transcripts analysed in this chapter, provide evidence that many non-native speakers do use at least some of these more explicit means quite often. However, this is not the case with less explicit markers such as modal auxiliaries.

These modal auxiliaries indicate both subjective speaker commitment and interactive politeness. Yet in the data Willing's work is based on, non-native speakers who were otherwise quite competent seldom used modal auxiliaries in this way. Indeed, Willing

makes the point that non-native speakers rarely used modal auxiliaries of hypothesis, speculation and probability-assessment even though these speech activities are of central importance in key types of professional-level interaction such as problem-solving which involves "expressing surmises, hypothesising about causes and solutions and estimating the likelihood and importance of the same" He goes on to say that this difference was "the single most prominent of all measurable differences between native and non-native speakers" and one which "critically disadvantaged non-native speakers" (Willing 1992:124). He found that "non-native speakers tended to express these functions by the single (and very vague) lexicalisation *maybe* (a token used by non-native speakers 6.8 times as often as native speakers)" (Willing 1992:87).

Kasper's views (1997:79) accord with Willing's findings. She uses the term 'modality reduction' to describe the way non-native speakers who are not fully proficient in English have to accommodate their communicative goals to their processing capacity. To do this, they typically sacrifice polite markers in order to maintain their illocutionary and propositional goals.

Willing points out that there are markers such as 'certainly', 'maybe', 'perhaps', 'actually' which, like modal auxiliaries, are used to intensify, attenuate or qualify the speech acts to which they apply. As mentioned above, in his data, native speakers tend to rely heavily on just one of these - 'maybe'. In her study of Spanish-speaking adult male learners interacting with native speakers (discussed in chapter eight), Porter (1986) also reports a limited use of these markers. The learners never used impersonal verbs such as 'seem' and seldom hedged. When they did they only used five forms: 'I think', 'perhaps', maybe 'for me' and tags like 'you know?', 'right?' and 'no?'.

Willing also describes the need for speakers to use other conventionally indirect strategies, particularly when making suggestions, for example, phrases such as 'how about', 'why don't we', 'do you want to', 'perhaps we could' and 'I was wondering if' in order to sound more inclusive and to preclude any impression of imposition on others. Other ways of being more tentative and inclusive are to use disclaimers such as 'I don't know', 'I'm not really sure', 'I'm probably wrong but' and tag question such as 'we could try X couldn't we'.

Loveday's (1982) list of 'softening devices' based on that of Bublitz (1980) adds direct references to addressees and particles such as 'just' and 'well' together with semantically restrictive elements which question and subjectify an utterance such as 'Do you think?' and 'As far as I am concerned'. He also stresses that these softeners are vital in establishing and maintaining good interpersonal relations in English-speaking cultures and the inability to use them is seen as a personality defect (arrogance, tactlessness, lack of warmth). He points out that children start learning to use softening devices at a very early age because this makes them more successful in getting what they want. However, as discussed earlier, this frequent use of softeners and hedges is based on particular cultural values. Achieving competency in this respect may mean disregarding other values and radically changing communicative style.

This also applies to other aspects of communication previously discussed, such as discourse organisation, the display of emotion, confrontation and turn-taking. There are preferences in these regards in the Anglo-Australian culture, which is dominant in workplace and educational settings in Australia. According to Wierzbicka (1997a), while Anglo culture encourages the free expression of one's thoughts and allows the

free expression of dissent, confrontation is avoided and people try to find some common ground. Kochman (1981) also describes these preferences in his description of white middle class attitudes to discussion in the United States. He says that Anglos value detached, rational discussion together with an open-minded and flexible approach. They believe emotion stops reason from working effectively: emotional argumentation is not persuasive and no one person has all the answers. In regard to turn-taking, the concern is that everyone must have their turn uninterrupted. This is seen as democratic. Clearly, as discussed earlier, very different preferences operate in many other cultures.

For these reasons, teachers are confronted with something of a dilemma when deciding how to assist learners to become competent in lingua-culture-specific terms. They want to avoid what critics have described as the "assimilationist nature of much ESL teaching" (Williams 1995: 21-24), yet provide the necessary information and skills to enable learners to interact effectively with native speakers. And this has to be in addition to the intercultural competencies required to communicate effectively with the approximately one in four Australians (first and second generation) from over one hundred different non-English speaking backgrounds. The first requirement may be the more difficult. The crucial aim here must be to make the learning of these lingua-culture-specific competencies additive not subtractive, to encourage biculturalism and bilingualism and not conformity to the norms of the dominant group in the society. Learners must be given the knowledge and skills to enable them to make their own choices.

Wierzbicka (1997a: 119 – 121) has written an engaging and illuminating account of the choices she made in this regard in an article called "The Double Life of a Bilingual". She points out that an awareness of the differences between the style of a first language and that of the new language allows one to modify features of style that may be negatively viewed in the new culture. At the same time, it also allows one to choose not to behave in new ways that go "too much against the grain". She describes the changes she felt she had to make to function in Anglo-Australian society. She "had to learn to be a new person, but didn't want to 'betray' the old person". She felt that by learning the Anglo way she could "enrich herself immeasurably but could also lose herself". To achieve this balance she made some adaptations but refused to make others.

She decided she had to "learn to 'calm down' to become less 'sharp' and less 'blunt', less 'excitable', less 'extreme'" in her judgments and "more 'tactful' in their expression". She had to "learn the use of Anglo understatement (instead of the more hyperbolic and more emphatic Polish ways of speaking)". She had to "learn to avoid sounding 'dogmatic', 'argumentative', 'emotional'". One of the means by which she was alerted to the way her communication style came across to native speakers was that students' course assessment questionnaires, "while praising her enthusiasm, also often included criticisms of her 'intensity', 'passion' and 'lack of detachment'".

She writes that she "learnt the Anglo rules of turn-taking ('let me finish!', 'I haven't finished')." She learnt "not to use the imperative (Do X!)" in her day to day interactions with people and to replace it with a broad range of interrogative devices ('Would you do X?' 'Could you do X?' 'Would you mind doing X?' 'How about doing X?' 'Why don't you do X?' 'Why not do X?' and so on".

But there were limits she didn't want to go beyond. She couldn't bring herself to play the 'how are you?' - 'I'm fine, how are you?' game, or deploy the weather related

conversational openings, or engage in 'white lies' and 'small talk'. Nor would she use formulaic expressions such as 'pleased to meet you and 'it was nice to meet you' because she felt "they 'pretend' to be spontaneous and individualised". She concluded this list by saying, "On the other hand, I have learnt to use and even to savour, Anglo conversational strategies such as 'I agree, but on the other hand ...' (instead of simply saying 'No!')".

Clyne (1985, 1994) also discusses these concerns in an eloquent but more general way. He points out that the achievement of native-like communicative behaviour may involve changing not only an individual's cultural value system but also their psychological make-up. Yet he acknowledges that quite a high degree of communicative competence in English is necessary for access to power and even to some extent to information and that, therefore, some active command of what he describes as 'general Australian' or 'Anglo communication rules' may be necessary for instrumental motives. However, it should not be to an extent that threatens identity. Learners must be given the choice. This means being given the necessary information to make choices. The objective should be biculturalism not assimilation. Moreover, he sees biculturalism and bilingualism as bringing socioeconomic and psychological advantages. Basically learners need to be able to understand the rules other styles are based on and they should be made aware of the effect of their own rules on the dominant group. Some researchers believe that what is involved is assisting each individual to find their own third position between their first culture and that of the new language they are learning (Kramsch 1993, Liddicoat 1997b, Crozet & Liddicoat 1997) or, to express it another way, "negotiating a place for themselves between the two" (Crozet 1996:54). These views do assist teachers to make decisions when faced with the dilemma about what competencies to teach and what the aim is in teaching them.

Research into the sociocultural competencies professional and managerial immigrants require in Australia also supports the need for linguaculture-specific training (Mak et al 1999). In a study involving over one hundred Hong Kong immigrants, almost two thirds identified the main barrier in the transfer of their occupational skills as unfamiliarity with Australian culture and society. And the most commonly expressed need, spontaneously volunteered, was some kind of intercultural communication training. Mak and her associates identified learning to speak up and to present ideas and opinions to a group as key competencies in most work-related and social situations.

Thomas (1983) makes a distinction that is helpful for teachers when making these decisions. She distinguishes between what she calls pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure. While she sees them as forming a continuum and admits that it is not always clear which is occurring, the former is language-specific while the latter is culture-specific. An example she gives of pragmalinguistic failure is a learner not understanding that "can you close the window" usually carries the pragmatic force of a request in English. A sociopragmatic failure would be having a different opinion from the majority of English speakers as to what questions can be properly asked in a particular situation. A teacher can correct pragmalinguistic errors in a quite straightforward way, whereas a sociopragmatic error is to some degree a reflection of the learner's values and, therefore, should only be pointed out and explained, not corrected.

Baxter (1983: 303-304) also has a helpful approach for English teachers. He is talking about teaching English as an international language but the same would appear to hold

true for teaching in multicultural Australia in today's global village. Baxter argues that the notion of communicative competence must be "grounded in intercultural interaction" not, as in the past, in terms of a single speaker – "the ideal, educated native speaker". As Baxter explains it, "the pedagogical model cannot be the single speaker of one given culture, but must be the interaction unit, which includes speakers of differing cultural backgrounds". He goes on to point out that "in a situation of intercultural interaction, standards for language behaviour are not fixed but are to a certain extent negotiable". He argues that it is the areas of behaviour which are not shared across cultures that need to be emphasised in training, and that behavioural skills alone are not enough: cultural awareness is also necessary as is work in the affective area. Attitudes towards intercultural communication should not be forgotten as attitudes such as respect and concern for others are also essential. He concludes by asserting the need for a new model of intercultural communicative competence in English, one which combines culture-general, culture-specific and language-specific training.

Finally, there is another argument for teaching linguaculture-specific competencies. Some may fit with styles valued in many other cultures and some may overlap with intercultural competencies, making it easy to justify teaching them. For example, teaching learners how to sound less assertive, dogmatic and confrontational in English may fit to some extent with Clyne's (1994) intercultural competency, express yourself in "as culturally neutral a way as possible", and may, as well, fit with the cultural values of many learners. As discussed in the chapter on disagreement and conflict, it may be the lack of English language skills that make some people 'come across' like this, rather than their intention or cultural preference. For example, Gudykunst et al (1988) point out that in many high context communication styles, speakers frequently use the equivalent of qualifiers such as 'maybe' 'probably' 'somewhat' and 'rather', while Ting-Toomey (1994) claims that in conflict situations, collectivists typically use qualifiers such as 'perhaps', tag questions, disclaimers and indirect requests. By 'high context' and 'collectivists', these researchers almost certainly mean Southeast and East Asians in particular. Again, in unpublished research comparing meetings in Hong Kong and Australian banks (Yeung 1996 cited in Smith and Bond 1999), both groups softened assertions of their position on issues to avoid being seen as 'pushy', although they did it in different ways. The Australians used verbal hedges while the Chinese focussed on 'we' questions. In multicultural groups, Chinese might not always see this 'we' approach as appropriate. It is very possible that people from these cultures would feel more comfortable knowing how to express themselves in a similar but appropriate style in English and would feel more comfortable interacting with people who did not appear to be too aggressive and dogmatic. Another argument is that people from cultures where strong, direct forms of confrontation are valued may prefer not to use this style of communication with people who they know view it very differently. Indeed, Bowe and Fernandez (1996) list softening directives and requests as one example of an intercultural competency.

Secondly, part of the purpose of the training in the type of classes involved in this study was to prepare learners for interactions where all or some of the other participants would be native speakers, in particular speakers of Australian English. There is some research evidence that speakers of Australian English may be especially concerned with avoiding imposition on others. After a study of interactions between English-speaking French and Australians in the Australian workplace, Beal (1994) found that Australian English has some very specific features. Her findings were similar to those of the Cross-cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), which compared Australian,

American, British, Canadian, Danish, German and Israeli male and female native speakers (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper 1989). In the CCSARP research, it was found that Australian English was the least direct: for example, more than eighty percent of requests were conventionally indirect, and as well as this high level of indirectness, there was very little intrasituational variability. In her research, Beal found that Australian superiors always asked for work to be done as a service: they never gave orders or instructions. These language differences resulted in a considerable amount of negative stereotyping on both sides. There was no awareness that language differences were the cause of the problem and relations soured. Beal concluded that it is not the French who are "odd", rather speakers of Australian English are "unduly tentative, self effacing and egalitarian" (Beal 1994: 56). Wierzbicka (1992b: 102) provides further support for this view, referring to "the well-known Australian super-egalitarianism and the Australian cultural assumption that all people are essentially the same. And, in another context, (Wierzbicka 1991:88) she refers to expressions such as 'Could you do X' (often used to give directions and orders in Australia) as the "so-called whimperatives" Given this egalitarian emphasis reflected in their language on the part of Australian English speakers there does seem to be a need to emphasise these features in training for people who want to succeed in the Australian workplace. Indeed, the ability to use hedges and indirect forms would appear to be a key linguacultural competency in the Australian context as well as an intercultural competency appreciated by many others in intercultural teams.

Evidence of the development of competencies in the interactions

The data sample does provide some evidence that training in linguaculture-specific competencies (in particular relevant politeness strategies used by native speakers), as well as in intercultural competencies, can assist learners to communicate in a way that might be more appropriate and successful in certain contexts where English is being spoken. Many of the interactions were taped before any such training had been done, some after a little training and a few after considerable work in these areas. The following extracts are taken from three different interactions in which a number of the same learners participated. These groups were in an EPE class. Before the first interaction, no training had been done: before the second, some. In particular, learners had been made aware of the different cultural value systems and the way they influence communication style. They had also been warned of the danger of making judgements about personality and ability based on differences in communication style. Some work had been started on communicative competencies. Before the third, quite a lot of work had been done, especially on competencies such as inclusiveness, checking, and clarifying, as well as practice using hypothesising conditionals and softeners (for example, modals and interrogative devices) to make opinions and proposals sound less dogmatic. The way in which this type of language reflected important cultural values in this society had also been made clear.

These three interactions were chosen for analysis for four purposes. The first was to see what competencies were already evident before any training (and which, therefore, might require less explicit teaching), as well as to see which were conspicuously absent. The second purpose was to establish whether general cultural awareness training had any effect on the interactions: to see if there was evidence that such training developed broader competencies such as the ability to bring out cultural differences and display an awareness of different value systems. A third purpose was to see to what extent training could develop the type of problem-solving skills seen as a key competency in the Australian workplace. The fourth, and most important, purpose was to demonstrate that

specific linguistic strategies related to competencies can be taught and individuals can modify their style, if they consciously chose to do so, in order to make it more appropriate in contexts outside their own cultural group. In this case, the competency discussed above as both an intercultural and a linguistic-specific competency, the ability to use modals and other indirect forms to make assertions and proposals less dogmatic and more inclusive, was given most attention. This was because of the emphasis in the literature on its difficulty for learners and its importance in many cultures, including mainstream Australian culture. Indeed, this competency provides a key example of the way language reflects cultural values and the ability to use such language appropriately is a crucial component of the interpersonal skills valued in particular cultures. The fact that many of the same learners participated in two or more of these three interactions made this type of analysis possible.

Pre-training: Group I

The first interaction involved Group H working on Problem Four: AIDS Education. This group was discussed in chapter four. The participants were Govinda, the South Asian man, Vera, the East Asian woman, Miron, the Eastern European man, Carlos, the Latin American man and the two Eastern European women, Dana and Teresa. They were to roleplay that they were a parents and citizens committee who had to decide whether to introduce AIDS education into secondary schools and how it could be done. As noted before, their discussion was successful in many respects. Participants took account of one another's cultural knowledge, there was good rapport and humour, and they had a most interesting and frank discussion about the sexual practices in their countries and their own views about love and sex. There was shared turn-taking and people were given the opportunity to complete their turns. Moreover, as will be discussed below, there was a great deal of interactivity in this group discussion and this appeared to contribute to its success. There was no communication breakdown or friction. However, there was limited modality and indirectness, and in terms of the problem-solving, only a small amount of the time was spent on the actual task, and no final decisions were made.

While there was considerable interactivity, when they discussed the task set, the main approach was to state what they thought should happen using the one structure 'I think X should'. There was almost no hypothesising or use of modals although prefacing their opinions about what should be done with 'I think' did make them less dogmatic and assertive than the two structures commonly used in a number of other groups: 'We have to do X' or 'We must do X'. According to Willing (1992), the use of a performative verbs such as 'I think' hedges an assertion by marking it as personal belief, rather than an objective truth that others are expected to accept as such. It is particularly suited for making suggestions and directives. Willing (1992:118) explains that "a recommendation may be made relatively inoffensive if it is presented as a subjective judgment". The use of such phrases by many participants including Eastern Europeans, before any training is interesting in the light of Wierzbicka's (1997b) observation that in Polish opinions are rarely presented as just opinions (not the 'truth') and while there are expressions equivalent to 'I think' and 'in my view', they are relatively restricted in use and seldom used to preface opinions. She sees this view of argument as the assertion of who is right and wrong and what is true rather than a matter of the expression of opinion as one generally shared by Eastern Europeans. The following extracts are typical of the way this group discussed what should be done about the problem.

It was quite some way into the discussion when the first proposal indirectly relating to the task was made by Vera. She said that people should use precautions and told a story illustrating the dangers of unsafe sex. She then continued as follows:

Transcript H

Extract 1

- 1 Vera: I think also parents should talk
- 2 to their children about sex
- 3 Dana: Yes first you have to talk to parents
- 4 Vera: When they reach a certain age
- 5 er apart from education
- 6 sex education in schools

Line 1 of this extract illustrates the typical way opinions were expressed, and suggestions made, by this group - prefacing the 'should do' with 'I think'. Dana's proposal (line 3) was more assertive and dogmatic 'you have to' but this structure was rarely used in this interaction. Dana did use an interactive marker 'yes' to suggest agreement or acknowledgment before making her comment (line 3); however, Vera did not respond to or acknowledge Dana's contribution. She treated it as an interruption and completed her own turn (lines 4 to 6), apparently assuming that some sort of sex education in schools was agreed on by the group.

After this the group talked for a short time about the difficulties parents and children have talking to one another about sex. Then Govinda got the discussion back on track again.

Transcript H

Extract 2

- Govinda: (*laughing*) Well but we should not wait
till the generation of my baby
we have to because the problem
is growing up at the moment
I mean it will grow up so the emphasis
should be given as soon as possible
and the best way is
Teresa: in school
Govinda: in school yes
Teresa: the education system
Govinda: Yes that's right
Dana: When I talk about parents
I thought that the best way would be
to er teach them at school too
at their children's school in the school
Teresa: Yes yes

There were a number of interactive discourse markers in this extract. Govinda began with the marker and softener 'well' (line 1). According to Willing (1992), 'well' used to start a new turn indicates that the speaker feels their contribution will be relevant to what has just been said, for example, by adding to it or diverging from it, while Loveday (1982) sees it as having a softening function. Govinda followed 'well' with another marker 'but', clearly signally some divergence from the previous direction the

talk had taken. Kalin (1995) calls 'but' the 'adversative' connector but here it was suggesting a change of direction rather than opposition. Then in line 5, Govinda self-repaired to clarify his point using the marker 'I mean'. In line 8, Teresa demonstrated her understanding of Govinda's meaning by finishing his sentence for him. As Schegloff (1984) points out, the ability to complete a sentence shows that one knows what the speaker has in mind. Govinda acknowledged the correctness of her completion (line 11). Teresa further clarified his intention in line 10 and he again acknowledged that she was right. The addition of the marker 'that's right' makes it clear that he was using 'yes' as confirmation in this instance. In line 13, Dana softened her assertion about 'the best way' by prefacing it with 'I thought', apparently using past tense to refer back to her mention of parents in the first extract. In line 16, Teresa gave feedback to Dana, her emphatic repetition apparently signalling agreement. This extract was quite typical of the type of successful interactivity in this discussion. However, it also further illustrated the pattern of baldly asserting what should be done (lines 1 and 6) and the best way to do something (lines 7 and 8). There was no hedging to make these suggestions more tentative and therefore more inclusive. A short time later, Teresa made the following suggestion:

Transcript H

Extract 3

- 1 Teresa: Maybe we should try to teach
- 2 our kids some moral principles
- 3 like not go to bed with him
- 4 so I think that's one of the ways
- 5 we should follow
- 6 Miron: I think that the main problem's
- 7 if we can make people
- 8 not to feel ashamed about it
- 9 because the problem with AIDS
- 10 they feel if they can you know
- 11 just er speak up about an illness like that
- 12 you know then the problem would be half solved

Again participants introduced their suggestions with 'I think' (lines 4 and 6). In this case, Miron made no acknowledgment of Teresa's proposal before stating his rather different opinion. This was not so typical in this interaction but it was common in many of the other discussions. However, he did twice use the marker 'you know' which does appear to have an inclusive function. According to Kasper (1989), while it can be used as a filler to avoid silence or prevent a possible loss of turn, its main function is to establish harmony, an interpersonal function. And Brown and Levinson (1987) see it as different from fillers like 'sort of' or 'I guess' because it also has the function of expressing uncertainty and asserting common knowledge. Whether this use was intentional is open to question. Miron could have been using it as a filler to give himself time to think or deliberately using it because he knew it was a common expression among native speakers and it might make his English sound more 'natural'. Whatever the reason, he used it quite often in this and later discussions. Some other participants in other groups also used this marker quite frequently, for example, Li Dong in Group A and V, Jamal in Groups F and O and Emily in Group O. It appeared to be a habit that some learners adopted and others didn't.

Teresa's use of 'maybe' (line1) was one of the rare times that this marker was used to make a suggestion more tentative in this interaction. Carlos used 'maybe' on one occasion. Dana also used 'maybe' on one occasion and 'perhaps' on another. But in a long discussion lasting over an hour, these were the only softeners used, and the problem solving did not get much beyond this type of suggestion: it was agreed that some sort of culturally appropriate education in the schools was necessary, but exactly what form it would take had not been agreed on when the discussion had to end.

On the other hand, as is evident from these three extracts, there was a great deal of successful interactivity. One more brief extract will further illustrate this. After Miron expressed the opinion that it was important that people could speak up about having AIDS without being made to feel shame, the group went on to discuss sleeping around, telling your partner if you have AIDs or being silent because of shame and whether you should have sex without love. The following exchange then took place.

Transcript H

Extract 4

- 1 Dana: Ah but that's what I wanted to say
- 2 you should have sexual contact with someone you love
- 3 Miron: Sorry that's your opinion that you should
- 4 but it doesn't happen like that
- 5 Dana: Yes I know
- 6 Miron: That's the point I mean the fact is
- 7 that it doesn't happen like you say

In each of these turns, the participants used interactive devices to signal acknowledgment of the previous speaker's contribution, and in lines 6 and 7, Miron used markers to clarify his meaning. His comment "sorry that's your opinion" (line 4) is interesting as this might well be an approach a native speaker would take to mitigate disagreement. Miron came from a culture where strong disagreement is said to be permissible. Perhaps, this is an example of a change to behaviour more appropriate in the second language culture when one is using that language. This may be unconscious – just using phrases that have been picked up from the language input the learner has been exposed to. Alternatively, of course, it may reflect a form of disagreement used in a first language situation: demolishing an argument by labelling it an opinion only in which case the behaviour might fit the first-culture pattern. Wierzbicka (1991) notes that in Polish culture opinions are not distinguished from facts in everyday talk.

This interaction took place early in the course, and as noted, there had been no explicit teaching of cultural awareness or communicative competencies. As illustrated in the above extracts, the participants used a number of discourse markers. They did this throughout the talk, using phrases such as "I mean" and 'Yes, that's right', 'That's true' 'Good one' 'Me too'. This was true of almost all the interactions, including the everyday conversation type chats between dyads, and this accords with the literature in regard to the high incidence of certain types of interactivity in interactions involving non-native speakers. This suggests that there is less need for explicit teaching of many of these types of interactive signals. Porter (1986) supports this view. She found that non-native speakers use clarification, repairs and prompts (the continuation or completion of the speaker's utterance) with the same capability as native speakers. However, while the need may be less, all such markers should be included in work on communicative competencies and those not so easily acquired or those used to signal

various meanings should be stressed. This is supported by the fact that there was considerable evidence in the data in general, as well as in this interaction, of the relative absence of some interactivity markers, for instance, the failure on many occasions to appropriately acknowledge the previous speaker's contribution and to provide explicit guidance about intentions.

In regard to the use of softeners or the use of modals for hypothesising and assessing probability, in this early interaction and in many others, the present data confirmed Willing's (1992) and Kasper's (1997) findings about the absence or rarity of these interactive devices in the discourse of many non-native speakers. The class was made aware of this lack and in the following discussion there was more evidence of this type of language.

Mid-training: Group O

Five of the same participants took part in this interaction, Group O, discussing Problem Three: Managing Diversity. This interaction was discussed in chapter six. The participants were Govinda, the South Asian male, Dana, the Eastern European woman, Vera, the East Asian woman, Carlos, the Latin American man, Miron, the East European man, (the five from the previous group) together with Lola, the East European woman, Zainab, the Middle Eastern man and Alain, the West European man. As noted previously, this group had had some training about cultural values and communication styles and a little work had been started on communicative competencies.

This was also a successful interaction in that again all the participants became involved and interested, they were ready to shift frames when presented with differing views, there was shared turn-taking, considerable humour and a high level of interactivity. In addition, in this discussion the participants stayed centred on the task throughout. However, although there was an increase in the use of softeners and some hypothesising, the main tendency was still to state an opinion or suggest a solution without softening it or making it inclusive, apart from prefacing it with 'I think'. The following extract from near the beginning of the interaction illustrates this.

Transcript O

Extract 1

- 1 Alain: I think our fellow has problem of
- 2 er he has a cultural problem
- 3 because apparently he's coming from a
- 4 er country .. in which
- 5 this kind of situation never happened
- 6 because er the woman er
- 7 probably they don't have any responsibilities
- 8 of power in any organisation
- 9 so we have to convince him
- 10 that in Australia we have
- 11 different behaviour different customs and er habits
- 12 and organisation in the the workplace
- 13 are very different from his old country ...
- 14 {I er I}
- 15 ? : {Well er }
- 16 Zainab: I think I think that we are facing here
- 17 ah a problem of cultural differences

- 18 because obviously the man
 19 um came from a society
 20 where er .. I mean a male dominated society maybe
 21 and he can't understand the behaviour of a female ...

Here, Alain's use of the phrase 'I think' (line 1) and the modifiers 'apparently' (line 3) and 'probably' (line 7) made his opinions more tentative although he did use 'we have to' in line 9, which sounded less inclusive. This combination, 'I think' together with 'we have to do X'" was used quite often in this interaction, by a number of the participants. Zainab also prefaced his opinion (line 16) with 'I think', repeating it once (possibly using it as a filler while he thought about how to express his opinion or what he wanted to say). However, he made no acknowledgment of Alain's contribution even though he expressed a similar view of the cause of the problem. As noted before (and as can be seen in many of the transcripts of the various groups), participants often expressed their opinions without any acknowledgment of the previous speaker's contribution. This tendency continued in this interaction even after some competency training stressing the need for interactive markers of acknowledgment as well as guidance and clarification. The reason may be that they were not really listening because they were planning what to say. This would be quite natural for many non-native speakers for whom production can be even more of a challenge than comprehension. The fact that in this turn Zainab was quite hesitant, using fillers and pauses (lines 17, 19 and 20) and reformulating his utterance (line 20) suggests that he found it quite difficult to express what he wanted to say on this matter. His use of the marker 'maybe' in line 20 does have the effect of softening his proposition although in terms of meaning it rather contradicts the earlier marker 'obviously' (line 20).

A short time later, Zainab made a proposal about what should be done.

Transcript O

Extract 2

- 1 Zainab: So I think we have to talk to him
 2 and explain that in Australia
 3 in all place ..
 4 it's it's normal that people
 5 dress in a way they they like

Here again Zainab used the assertive 'we have to' although it was softened by the introductory 'I think' (line 1). This proposal came at the end of his explanation of the man's behaviour: the 'so' connective clearly marked the shift from the explanation to the proposal. Zainab concluded his proposal with the inclusive question: "What do you think?". There was quite a high incidence of interactivity in the next segment of the discourse as Miron disagreed with Zainab's suggestion and put forward a different proposal.

Transcript O

Extract 3

- 1 Miron: I'm afraid just talking to him is not enough
 2 he might need need to attend {some 1}
 3 Lola: {English 1} {classes 2}
 4 Miron: {EPE Two 2} classes you know *laughter*
 5 to broaden his er you know

- 6 vision about cultural issues in Australia {so 3}
- 7 Alain: {You 3} mean he needs a sort of training
- 8 Miron: A sort of training yes
- 9 an adjustment time

In line 1, the introductory phrase 'I'm afraid' softened Miron's disagreement. Then in line 2, he used a modal auxiliary to make his surmise more tentative, one example of the very occasional use of this type of modal in this interaction. In line 3, Lola's sentence completion prompt showed how closely she was following his proposal. As was evident from the earlier group interaction discussed above, Miron tended to use 'you know' quite often. Its repeated use here in one turn suggests he was using it as a filler to avoid possible loss of turn but at the same time it had the inclusive effect of presuming shared knowledge (and he could presume shared knowledge about this particular topic). In line 7, Alain's used the marker 'you mean' to preface his request for clarification. It seems clear that Alain would have understood Miron: the laughter which followed the proposal that the staff member join an EPE Two class (line 4) suggests that his meaning was clear to the others. There were EPE One and EPE Two classes running at this time. Class Two, these students' class, was the more advanced one. As mentioned in chapter nine, from her studies of native and non-native (learner) interactions, Kasper (1989: 218) sees laughter as a form of learner acknowledgment, what she calls 'a learner uptaker', and Alain's question seems to have been probing for further clarification rather than checking comprehension. Miron's answer provided Alain with both confirmation (line 8) and further explanation (line 9).

Miron went on to say that the staff member was assessed for the job on his professional competency not his cultural competency and so needed time and training. As can be seen in the following extract, when Zainab began to interrupt him, he further elaborated to make sure the others understood what he was suggesting (lines 2 and 3).

Transcript O

Extract 4

- 1 Zainab: Maybe maybe the ideal solution is {to 1}
- 2 Miron: {I'm 1} not saying they should sack him
- 3 just remove

Line 2 of this short extract did provide an example of very explicit clarification while line 1 provided another example of the more frequent use of markers such as 'maybe' and 'perhaps' and 'probably' in this interaction. There were also a very small number of examples of speculative hypothesising, using modal auxiliaries and conditional clauses, not always completely correctly but the meaning was clear. For example, at one point late in the discussion, Miron was arguing that the organisation had hired the man and wanted to keep him.

Transcript O

Extract 5

- 1 Miron: They wanted this man
- 2 they hired him and they want to keep him
- 3 if you know if they didn't want him
- 4 they shouldn't have employed him
- 5 that's true yes
- 6 Alain: Up to a point

- 7 Govinda: They might not know
8 that he has a different attitude
9 and that er he he didn't change his attitude

In lines 3 and 4, Miron used a conditional structure to indirectly speculate about the past and make a judgment and then checked for agreement (line 5). Alain and Govinda both gave feedback questioning this view: Alain using a phrase to indicate partial agreement and Govinda using a modal auxiliary to mark the tentativeness of his alternative hypothesis (lines 7 to 9).

Overall, this interaction did provide some evidence of the effects of explicit teaching of general cultural awareness and of specific communicative competencies. For example, right from the outset, the group was comfortable talking about the problem in terms of cultural differences rather than limiting it to an issue of individual personality as some untrained groups tended to do. Their shared knowledge enabled them to shift positions and discuss intelligently and objectively a variety of proposals which took into account the effect of cultural conditioning and the very real differences in values and attitudes possible in a multicultural society. As well, they approached the problem-solving in a more effective manner, working to establish the cause of the problem and then to suggest and evaluate solutions, although they tended to go around in circles to some extent and still could not be judged competent in this process as it would be defined in the Australian workplace. Finally, there was evidence of some improvement in specific competencies, such as an increased use of interactivity markers and some hedging, hypothesising and modality.

Post-training: Group X

A number of the same participants took part in a videotaped discussion towards the end of the course after more concentrated instruction and practise in some of the competencies, particularly in the use of modal auxiliaries to achieve more inclusive and tentative expressions of opinions and suggestions for action, as well as the classic Western approach to problem solving. In her research in the Australian workplace, Byrne found this was the approach used by native speakers, for example, by the Research and Development Team at Lochard Development Systems (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996). This group, Group X, discussed Problem Eight: The Printing Company. Three of the interactants in this group had participated in the two groups just discussed. They were Govinda, the South Asian man, Vera, the East Asian woman and Dana, the Eastern European woman. Two had taken part in the second group: Alain, the Western European man and Zainab, the Middle Eastern man. One participant, Sylvia, a South American woman, had not been in either of these groups, but was in Group W discussed in chapter eight. In this third interaction, the teacher stayed in the room and guided the discussion, breaking it into five phases to remind the group what the next phase entailed, changing some of the participants, and intervening on two occasions: once to point out a misunderstanding and twice to keep the activities limited to those expected in each phase.

The phases, seen as typical in the classic problem-solving model, are as follows:

1. define the problem: diagnose causes
2. deepen understanding of the problem: redefine if necessary
3. brainstorm possible solutions (but no evaluation at this stage)
4. evaluate each solution, hypothesising about its consequences, and select the most suitable one

5. devise a plan of action

The participants were told that they were each managers of a different section in a printing company. The problem was that there had been a marked decrease in profits over the last couple of months. The meeting was to find out what was causing the problem and what action needed to be taken to redress the situation. They were each given a card with some brief points providing information about what was happening in their section. Not all the learners took part in all the phases in order to keep the group small and give participants more of an opportunity to contribute. Only Dana, Govinda, Alain and Sylvia took part in Phase One. Dana took the lead at the outset and after briefly outlining the problem went on to conclude her turn in the following way:

Transcript X

Extract 1

- 1 Dana: So I would like you to ... consider the problem
- 2 and to try to find out why this was this happened ..
- 3 Sylvia: Well, one reason **might be** that
- 4 the number of customers' orders
- 5 has remained the same, they hasn't raised ...
- 6 Dana: Alain what
- 7 Alain: Well er actually er in my section
- 8 we have er ..we have a problem and er ..
- 9 perhaps it's one of the reason the the firm
- 10 has some er difficulties during this last month .. because
- 11 er... we have to buy a lot of extra materials
- 12 Sylvia: Mm
- 13 Alain: and especially because er we suspect pilfering
- 14 so it **might be** er one of the reasons we have
- 15 so so many problems I don't know
- 16 Dana: Mm
- 17 Govinda (*nodding*) Right as far as my section is concerned
- 18 there has been no decrease in production
- 19 the same amount of goods are.. goods have been going out
- 20 to customers .. er so .. er I would agree .. that
- 21 I would agree with you .. that um the problem **might be** in that area
- 22 Alain: Oh
- 23 Dana: Do you think Alain that those
- 24 er pilfering er had increased er extraordinary or ...
- 25 Alain: Yes yes um ... there has always been some
- 26 but er this have increased dramat dramatics
- 27 Dana: Drastically
- 28 Govinda: Drastically
- 29 Alain: (*smiling*) Oh yes very difficult ...
- 30 Dana: What do you think Sylvia
- 31 why why we lose our customers
- 32 Sylvia: Well .. I I think you misunderstand my point {because 1}
- 33 Dana {Oh 1}
- 34 Sylvia: we are not losing customers
- 35 we just stay the same with the same
- 36 Dana: You don't have any {new customers 2}
- 37 Sylvia: {and we haven't 2}any increase in the orders

- 38 and the problem in the profit
39 may be a combination between the p pil
40 Alain: {pilfering 3}
41 Sylvia: {pilfering 3} and the we are producing the same amount
42 and investing more money buying material ...
43 Dana: Yes it could be that
44 Alain: It could be both

The quite high incidence of hesitations and pauses in this extract was probably at least partly because the participants were not talking about familiar events but were using the key information on the cards they had been given and working at further expanding it. Some of the vocabulary the participants were using was very newly acquired. For example, the words 'pilfering' and 'dramatically' were unfamiliar words, which had been included in the initial briefing about the task. Despite this there was a high level of interactivity. The most notable finding was that each of the participants used at least one modal auxiliary to hedge their propositions (lines 3, 14, 21, 39, 43 and 44) as well as other hedges 'perhaps' (line 9), 'I think' (line 32) and the disclaimer, 'I don't know' (line 15).

In addition, as well as acknowledgments and feedback (also common in other interactions) such as 'right' (line 17) and 'I would agree' (lines 20, 21) 'yes' (lines 25, 43) 'oh yes' (line 29), there was more evidence of inclusivity: 'I would like you to' (line 1), 'do you think' (line 23) 'what do you think' (line 30). Finally, there was more use of minimal feedback tokens than in earlier discussions (lines 12, 16, 22, 33) and they seemed to be used appropriately, except perhaps for Alain's 'oh' (line 22) which was not appropriate when Govinda was agreeing with him. On the other hand, it could have been meant as a humorous acknowledgment that the finger was being pointed at his section.

There were also examples of prompts. In lines 27 and 28, Dana and Govinda came to Alain's assistance when he had trouble with a word. They actually provided him with a slightly different word - 'drastically'. He appeared to be grasping for 'dramatically'. And later (line 40), Alain helped Sylvia with the word 'pilfering' although she then produced it simultaneously. In line 19, Govinda rephrased his point in order to clarify his meaning, and in line 35, Sylvia did the same, while in line 32, she clarified a misunderstanding explicitly, but tactfully, "well I think you misunderstand my point".

This high level of interactivity continued throughout the five phases. Moreover, there were other different types of interactivity in some of the phases. The use of modal auxiliaries also continued. The following extracts illustrate this. During phase three, the brainstorming phase in which Sylvia, Vera, Zainab and Govinda participated, a number of solutions were proposed. In phases three and four, Sylvia wrote up proposals and decisions on the white board, so some of the pauses occurred when the participants were waiting for her to do this. The following extract came about half way through phase three.

Transcript X

Extract 2

- 1 Zainab: I was wondering if er we could establish
2 a control system .. a control system er with access ..
3 to the stores and materials is strictly limited

- 4 ... I mean at the moment they can come
 5 and do what they want
 6 because some people with permission special permission
 7 they have access to the stores
 8 Govinda: Yes .. what else **could** we
 9 consider as a possible solution...
 10 {do you think I}
 11 Zainab: {Actually we can I} we can we **could**
 12 use the services of some security companies ...
 13 Govinda: Well it **could be** a good idea
 14 Zainab: We can't afford can't afford the situation
 15 Govinda: Don't you think it **would be** too too strict

It is interesting to note how much Zainab modified his typically strong, assertive style (discussed in chapter six) in this interaction. In line 1, he used the conventionally indirect strategy 'I was wondering if' together with the modal auxiliary 'could' and in line 11, he replaced 'can' with 'could' to sound more inclusive and tentative. In line 14, he reverted more to his typical style, as he did in some other parts of the interaction, but generally he modified his approach to one more likely to be appropriate in many intercultural settings. As this extract shows, Govinda also continued to modify his style (also discussed in chapter six) and used inclusive questions (lines 8, 9, 10, 15) and modal auxiliaries (lines 8, 13, 15). Another extract a little later in this same phase further illustrates their modified style, their brainstorming of solutions and the way they introduced humour into the discussion.

Transcript X

Extract 3

- 1 Govinda: How about installing a video camera ..
 2 in front of .. in front of the store storeroom
 3 so that we can count .. the person going in and out ..
 4 how many times per week or how many times a day
 5 Zainab: Or maybe we can dig hole in front of the door *loud laughter*
 6 Govinda: and if you ... if you are the first who goes *more laughter*

In line 1, Govinda also used a conventionally indirect strategy 'how about' to be more inclusive and Zainab used the marker 'maybe' to preface his joking proposal although he used 'can' rather than the more tentative 'could'. Govinda quickly picked up on Zainab's joke, pointing out the ironic possibility that Zainab might fall into the hole. The others also immediately caught on, laughing before Govinda completed his joke. The end of his sentence and Zainab's retort were drowned out by the laughter.

In Phase Four when speculating about the consequences of possible solutions, they generally continued to hedge their propositions. Zainab had proposed first starting an internal investigation and second involving a security organisation to take care of the problem. Vera, Govinda, Sylvia and Zainab took part in this phase.

Transcript X

Extract 4

- 1 Vera: You mean we employ er er security person
 2 from outside to come and solve it {x I}
 3 Zainab: {Right I}

- 4 Vera: if we did that that means um there would be some ...
 5 Govinda: expenditure
 6 Vera: Yes expenditure
 7 Zainab: Yes but we can stop the stealing ...
 8 Vera: What about um someone to {um 2}
 9 Zainab: {and 2} stealing is more expensive than the
 10 expense of er possibility of x
 11 Sylvia: But Zainab I think if we do this internal investigation
 12 we will stop the stealing
 13 because we will find the person {who is doing this 1}
 14 Zainab: {It's not the idea 1}
 15 Sylvia: if after finding this person imple implement
 16 this type of control I think it would be
 17 more difficult for people try to steal again ...
 18 Dana: Yes I've changed my point of view because x x
 19 even if we hire someone from outside this organisation
 20 and our internal control is not properly implemented
 21 we will still have this problem again and again in the future

In this extract, Vera checked to confirm her understanding of Zainab's proposal (line 1) and then used the inclusive 'what about' (line 8) and the hypothetical second conditional (line 4). This was the only use of this conditional form, which would probably be used more often by native speakers in this sort of speculation. The participants typically used the first conditional (lines 11, 15, 19). It is possible that native speakers could use this in similar circumstances to suggest high probability and the participants did sometimes use hedges, for example, 'I think' (lines 11 and 16). In line 11, Sylvia softened her disagreement with Zainab by addressing him by name and in line 18, Dana explicitly signalled a change of position.

At the end of Phase Five when Zainab appeared to be pushing his solution rather hard, there was some joking about the need to use modals, which provided clear evidence of their awareness of the need to use these forms.

Transcript X

Extract 5

- 1 Zainab: Let's limit the access
 2 Govinda: (*laughing*) modal modal modal
 3 wouldn't it be possible to do *laughter*
 4 Sylvia: What do you think if
 5 Govinda: (*laughing*) Modal language {this is x the class 1}
 6 Zainab: (*smiling*) {You are listening or not 1}
 7 Sylvia: Sorry Zainab I wasn't listening
 8 Zainab: Let's limit the access to the stores
 9 and at the same time let's start our internal investigation

Zainab was actually prefacing his proposals with the inclusive 'let's' but Govinda must have felt he was being too assertive and stepped outside the roleplay to jokingly remind him about using modals, suggesting he use the phrase "wouldn't it be possible to" (line 4). Zainab smiled but ignored Govinda and addressed Sylvia (line 5) who was politely apologetic (line 7).

What particular competencies were displayed in this final interaction after explicit teaching? First, although participants were often hesitant and slow in expressing their ideas, the competency, good, shared turn-taking (allow people to complete their turns and encourage others to take turns), identified by Bowe and Fernandez (1996) was a feature of this interaction. Moreover, the group did the problem-solving quite successfully. The main weakness was the tendency to evaluate in the brainstorming phase. And changing some of the participants at the beginning of some of the phases made the interaction less natural. Again, as can be seen from the above extracts, there was a great deal of interactivity: the participants used at least one example of each type of interactive strategy listed earlier in this chapter except for tag questions. While the structure and uses of tag questions would have been taught, they were not practised in the context of these discussions and were not used by any non-native participant in this data. There was also a significant increase in other key competencies, such as the ability to be more tentative and inclusive and to hypothesise and speculate more. Of course, it does have to be taken into consideration that this particular task may have lent itself to this type of language use more than many of the other tasks. Moreover, as all the group had just had the training, it was probably upmost in their minds and they mutually reinforced one another. The joking reminder in extract 5 about using modals provides some proof of this. Therefore, the evidence from this group and this particular task may not hold for other tasks in different contexts, especially in situations where emotions and strongly held values intrude.

Nevertheless, while this group provided one of the best example of this kind of change, other groups in different classes also provided evidence of the same kind of change. There were other interactions towards the end of courses in other classes, some in Orientation classes, where some participants modified their style and there was also a great deal of successful interactivity, in particular, inclusivity, positive feedback and frequent use of softeners including modal auxiliaries. (Ivan, in Group L, was an individual example of this, becoming much more inclusive and using a range of softeners including modals). It must also be noted that some of the earlier interactions provided evidence of successful interactivity and the use of a range of interactive markers, with the exception of modal auxiliaries used as softeners. On the other hand, as is clear from some of the transcripts included in this study, many of the earlier interactions almost entirely lacked these features. Two examples of later more successful interactions are briefly discussed in Byrne and FitzGerald (1994). In one of these discussions, however, there was evidence that, in a stressful situation where there were conflicting values, these newly acquired strategies were disregarded. This was confirmed by students in discussions about their work placement experiences. When they were actually in the workplace and confronted with difficult, stressful situations, it was harder to use less familiar language and adapt their communication style.

Overall, an examination of these three interactions does provide evidence that when intercultural and specific linguacultural competencies are explicitly taught as such (which includes explaining why they are being taught, their cultural significance and their use in certain contexts), this can be done with some degree of success. Particular linguistic strategies can be practised so that they are more often used. As the last interaction shows, problem solving skills can be developed, together with more appropriate linguistic strategies for hypothesising and speculating. As well, learners can be more inclusive and tentative, using a range of linguistic means, and can display greater flexibility and modify their communication style to be more appropriate in the particular context. Of course, being flexible and appropriate is what all good

communicators do in their own culture, having learnt how to do it as part of their enculturation, but in intercultural settings, it is much more complex and people need to have been provided with the knowledge and skills to know what is appropriate and how to adapt their language and style. This points to the need for training and its value both for individuals and for the society.

However, the reality is that many non-native and native speakers never have the opportunity to attend training courses. A positive finding from this data sample was that in many of the interactions people with no training, some who had previously seldom or never communicated to any extent with people from other cultures, did display highly effective interactive skills and apparently modified their communication style to some degree in order to converge with other participants. (This included the native speakers in this sample, none of whom had had any intercultural communication training). The fact that most of the interactions in this sample were successful attests to this. This was also true of much of Clyne's (1994) and Willing's (1992) data and of the interactions filmed by Byrne (Byrne & FitzGerald 1996). As Clyne (1996:130-1) notes, "very often a situation of collaborative discourse has developed, particularly among people from non-English speaking backgrounds" and people help those who are not communicating very effectively. While training can enhance performance and increase the chances and level of success, it is not, fortunately, a prerequisite for success.

CONCLUSION

The key role of the situational context

This study was marked by two contrasting features. Compared with many studies based on the analysis of spoken discourse, the data sample was quite large and involved a relatively high number of participants from a very wide range of cultural backgrounds, talking at considerable length on a variety of topics and performing a variety of tasks. However, the situational context was extremely restricted and atypical in that most, if not all, of the social features which can impact negatively on intercultural encounters were absent; the types of speech acts required by the tasks were limited; and the participants, while culturally diverse, were similar in a number of other respects and not representative of their wider communities in terms of their educational level, age range and exposure to a new culture. Moreover, while the tasks set in some ways approximated those common in workplace and educational institutions and, therefore, necessitated certain types of communicative behaviours, the constraints of status differences, competitive environment and the pressure to perform because of external repercussions were not present. As a result, any findings or conclusions from this study must take these factors into account.

One main finding was that despite the favourable situational context, communicative behaviour and results were not consistent over the range of interactions. The behaviour of individuals and the success or otherwise of each interaction depended on localised factors, the right mix of ingredients in relation to the particular group dynamics, the task type and the topics under discussion. Furthermore, in many cases, rapport and effective communication seemed to develop early in an interaction and continue in this way and vice versa: an interaction would show signs of strain and difficulty almost from the outset and relations would deteriorate rather than improve. In general, the factors which appeared to contribute most to a lack of success were a topic which aroused strongly-held but conflicting cultural beliefs, tasks which did not clearly depend on co-operation to achieve completion and one participant with a voluble, fluent style interacting with others unable or unwilling to match this style. Conversely, the factors which contributed to the success of interactions were tasks requiring or encouraging collaboration and inclusivity, non-controversial topics and participants whose styles were more equally matched in terms of fluency and volubility. On the other hand, some groups who discussed the more controversial topics with less clear-cut task completion requirements were highly successful. The main factors here seemed to be a willingness to shift positions or appreciate others' points of view, a high level of interactivity and inclusivity, one or more of the participants taking a facilitating role, the deliberate injection of humour by participants or a readiness to see humour in the situation.

Nevertheless, overall, an examination of the data suggests that in interactions where only two of the variables seen as making communication potentially more difficult are present - the culturally diverse backgrounds of the participants and imperfect mastery of the shared code (Sarbaugh 1988) - the chances of success are quite high. Of the seventy six interactions, probably about half could be described as successful in that there was evidence of co-operation, rapport, shared turn-taking, the effective handling of communication and interpersonal difficulties and successful task completion. About eight were not successful, with evidence of communication difficulties, strain and even friction and alienation. The remainder were unremarkable: there were no obvious

problems but neither was there evidence of rapport or effective problem-solving. The great majority of the dyadic interactions were unremarkable: the participants took turns, kept up a pleasant, interested conversation, but did not develop any particular rapport or depth of involvement. Maybe, no more should be expected in this type of contrived and relatively brief situation. What can be assumed is that the ratio of unsuccessful interactions might have been much higher in less favourable situational contexts.

Indeed, the major conclusion drawn from this study is that the situational context must always be taken into consideration when discussing intercultural communication: the findings from one type of situational context cannot be extrapolated to other dissimilar ones. Findings about communicative behaviours only hold as context-free generalisations if they occur across a range of situational contexts or, perhaps, in quite different ones.

However, with these provisos in mind, it has been possible to identify some patterns and make some generalisations: to find evidence of communicative behaviour which in many instances accords with the findings in the literature but which in others, suggests that some modification may be necessary. In this way, these findings can contribute some small pieces to the infinitely intricate, complex and shifting mosaic that is intercultural communication, yet which so crucially needs to be simplified and made teachable.

General findings

The influence of cultural values

This study provided further evidence that individuals are not cultural automatons who passively act out cultural values and expectations of which they are unconscious. The contrasting view that people are only partly influenced by their culturally-bound schemas and frames and that they modify and suspend them to work together with others in intercultural interactions was confirmed in much of this data. The reality appears to be that schemata and frames inform and predispose but by no means determine. Possibly, in interactions with members of the same culture, there would be more 'groupthink' and more evidence of cultural values reflected in the discourse. But in these interactions with people from a number of different cultures, individuals behaved in general as constructive, autonomous agents who often introduced cultural knowledge in an objective way and who were prepared to shift frames.

Of course, here again this conclusion must be qualified in that, as emphasised previously, these subjects were not representative of their communities but were something of an educated elite who shared many of the elements of modernity, had possibly accepted some of the values of their new society in making the decision to migrate and had had the exposure to intercultural contexts inherent in the migration experience. If the subjects had come from a wider range of socio-economic backgrounds, the results might have been different.

Nevertheless, while this was the general pattern, there was evidence of the influence of cultural values in the positions adopted by some participants and there were a number of recurrent patterns in this respect. One pattern occurred in discussions about who most deserved to receive a heart transplant. Participants from hierarchical-collectivist cultures tended to place the greatest value on people with a higher status who could make a contribution to the society, while participants from more egalitarian-individualist

culture opposed this and stressed the value of the individual, often supporting a person portrayed as an 'underdog' or 'battler'. A related pattern was the emphasis placed on the value to society of highly educated people by participants from cultures with collectivist tendencies, particularly Confucian cultures, whereas this was again opposed as a priority in determining the worth of an individual by participants from more individualist cultures.

Another pattern was discernible in discussions about preferences for co-educational or single-sex high schools. While most participants, from across a range of cultures, argued that it was natural for boys and girls to study together and the best preparation for life in the society, some, particularly men from Moslem and Confucian societies, argued that it was necessary to separate them for their own good, for example, girls needed to be protected. They also asserted that older people should make decisions for young people. In fact, this subject was the most controversial in the data and in some untaped interactions. Those participants who believed in the separation of the sexes at this stage held this view very strongly, while others saw it as 'unnatural' and extreme. There was also some evidence of different views in relation to sexual morality based on cultural background. Participants from Moslem societies were more prepared to pass judgments in this respect, although here there were individuals who differed from their cultural group. Other participants acknowledged the feelings of shame prevalent in their cultures in regard to explicit talk about sexual matters, while some men from European and Latin cultures occasionally exhibited attitudes which might be seen as sexist and salacious and, therefore, cause problems for them in a society where sexual harassment has become an issue in the workplace

A further pattern, perhaps reflecting experience rather than values, could be identified in discussions about allotting money to particular programs in the budget of a hypothetical, poor, backward country. There were some exceptions but, in general, participants from developing countries tended to prioritise spending on food and health services, while Europeans argued that the exploitation of natural resources and the development of transport should be the first priority in order to engender wealth for the future.

Finally, in discussions about an immigrant from a hierarchical society refusing to accept a young woman as his supervisor in the Australian workplace, participants from Moslem, Hindu and Confucian societies, while not condoning this behaviour, showed understanding of the reasons for the man's attitude and were able to help others see his situation more sympathetically. In addition, there was a clear division between participants from more egalitarian-low context cultures who, initially at least, wanted confrontational solutions, for example, the man and his supervisor should be brought together to 'have it out', whereas participants from hierarchical-high context cultures proposed more indirect approaches, such as moving him to another section or a staff meeting to discuss the matter in general terms. One other pattern that emerged clearly in discussions on this topic was that women from all cultural groups defended the female supervisor and the rights of women to equality and freedom from discrimination. Gender dominated over culture in this respect. The discussions on this topic, in particular, also provided evidence of the value of diversity in problem-solving teams in that 'groupthink' is avoided and a variety of viewpoints explicated. This was also true of many of the discussions on other issues. It was particularly true of some discussions which took place after the group had had some intercultural communication training and supports the view that this type of training increases the effectiveness of diverse teams.

Finally, the responses of participants to propositions about cultural values almost always correlated with the views they expressed in the discussions. These responses also provided evidence that young, educated immigrants subscribe in general to the values said to be dominant in their cultures, particularly in relation to individualist and collectivist views about the relationship of the individual and the family group, the need to show respect for the aged and preferences for indirect, face-saving communication. The main way in which participants' attitudes differed from those said to be dominant in their cultures was that many participants from hierarchical-collectivist cultures questioned a hierarchy based on ascription rather than achievement. This accords with the view that the desire for social mobility is an overriding value shared across all groups in Australian society and one likely to be held by those who chose to immigrate here (Clyne 1994). It also correlates with the view that as people move from a traditional to a modern way of life, they retain those values which can be adapted, such as family ties, but tend to no longer subscribe to those that do not fit with the new requirements of a modern society (Kagitcibasi 1997, Yang 1988).

Communication styles

In regard to communication styles, there was considerable evidence of behaviours which corresponded with the styles described in the literature, together with some evidence that behaviours can vary depending on the situational context. In some cases, there were insufficient numbers to make more than extremely tentative generalisations about a particular group. However, in relation particularly to East and Southeast Asians and Eastern Europeans some claims can be made.

The East and Southeast Asians in the data sample (forty six altogether) did at times employ an inductive organisation to present their views, especially when they were presenting an opposing view. In general, these participants took shorter turns and preferred discrete turns. However, at times they joined in free-for-all type floors when interested and involved in a conversation or disagreeing with others. When they disagreed, they tended to adopt a more conciliatory approach than some other groups: an inductive approach was often employed for this purpose, for example, and they sometimes took the role of mediator when others were clashing. On the other hand, the view often expressed in the literature that Asians from these cultures (especially Asian women) are not prepared to be assertive and express personal opinions and, in particular, avoid disagreement and confrontation was not confirmed. Indeed, as the data analysis proved conclusively, this was not the case in these interactions. Both men and women asserted opinions, sometimes opposing ones and in some cases held out for them against the rest of the group. Moreover, a number of both men and women disagreed quite directly. However, this finding is the one that most strongly suggests the crucial importance of taking the situational context into account. This behaviour occurred in informal interactions in which the participants had symmetrical relations. Moreover, there was evidence from some comments in the discussions that they were conscious of the fact that the teacher, the authority figure in this instance, had encouraged the expression of views and that in Australia the expectation was that all had the freedom to express their opinions. A further qualification is the fact, discussed earlier, that learners with limited language proficiency are more likely to disagree directly: the ability to manage to express referential content and to soften disagreement at the same time comes with a higher level of language proficiency. In their responses in the questionnaires, some of these participants who had disagreed very directly tended to express the view that disagreement with others, especially older people, should be avoided or expressed indirectly and that direct criticism and the display of negative

emotions should be avoided. This suggests that if they had had greater mastery of the language, they may well have softened their disagreement and used more indirect strategies to argue their points.

The forty three Eastern Europeans' communicative behaviour did very largely correlate with descriptions in the literature. They expressed their opinions strongly and forcibly, clearly wanting to get their position across and seldom softened their disagreement, although some were prepared to compromise and shift positions when persuaded by others. Many took long turns to explain and justify their reasons for a view. However, in this data there was no real evidence of the non-linearity and tendency to digressive, tangential communication that Clyne found in his sample (Clyne 1994). This could be explained by the nature of the communication and the type of speech acts required. In this data, participants were intent on expressing and justifying opinions and persuading others, so they may have felt a direct, deductive approach, clearly signalling their view or proposal and concentrating on defending it, was the most effective strategy in these intercultural interactions. Their responses in the questionnaires certainly correlated with descriptions in the literature. In general, they more strongly defended their right to show their emotions and express their opinions freely, with no concern for the status or face of others, than any other group.

There were only fourteen South Asians in the sample and fewer and less generalised claims can be made about them. The men who made significant contributions in the discussions did clearly exhibit the style described in the literature: they used inductive approaches even to introduce opinions which were not challenging others, they took very long turns and they used formal, repetitive language with an emphasis on form to express their arguments. The main feature of the communicative behaviour of the small number of women from these cultures was a tendency to be quite voluble and to appear to be comfortable overlapping and talking simultaneously with others. Again, this tendency might only be displayed in informal, non-hierarchical interactions. In their written responses, these participants generally expressed views which suggested that disagreement with those of higher status, especially older people, should be avoided but were less concerned about face and direct criticism.

One generalisation that can be made in relation to the small number of Latin Americans in the data, fifteen in all, is that the women all tended to exhibit a high-involvement style: to be quite voluble, to be comfortable talking simultaneously and to quite often overlap collaboratively. However, this was not true of the five men in the sample. They all took short, discrete turns, spoke quite directly and did not overlap with other speakers. A possible explanation here might be that just as it is believed that English-speaking women overlap more, at least in all-female settings, while men prefer discrete turns, this may be true to some extent in some other cultures. Another possibility is that the men saw these discussions as more work related than social and adapted their style to one they felt might be more suitable in a multicultural workplace. However, this is speculation and there was no evidence to support these hypotheses. In their written responses, most felt they could disagree openly and that free expression was more important than face concerns and this correlated with their behaviour in the interactions. However, some of their comments suggested that these views might be those of more modern, educated people in their cultures and not typical of more traditional, conservative groups.

Even fewer generalisations can be made about the small Middle Eastern sample, fourteen in all. As illustrated in the data analysis, the communicative style of some of these participants clearly reflected the style preferred in their first language, Arabic. For example, they used indirect, inductive approaches, repetition and parallel structures and couched their arguments in affective, dramatic language. However, others did not display these stylistic features in any obvious way. In their written responses, the great majority felt they could assert their opinions openly and disagree with others; however, they sometimes qualified this in relation to strangers or older people and the six who responded to this proposition felt direct criticism and unpleasantness should be avoided.

In relation to the other three groups, the numbers were too small (five or less) to make anything but very tentative generalisations, and in any case, there were very few observable, general tendencies in their communicative behaviour. Among the five Southern European women in the taped sample, there was a range of behaviour: three were voluble and assertive and two very quiet and withdrawn. There was more consistency in their written responses with almost all agreeing that the open expression of opinions and disagreement was acceptable, although there was much less agreement about giving face and avoiding direct criticism and unpleasantness. The five Western Europeans, four of whom were women, were all direct, assertive and voluble. The three Africans tended to remain silent in groups when there were short turns and a lot of interactivity and overlapping but to take longish, rather formal turns when asked to contribute. Only two in the Western European group responded to propositions about communicative behaviour and only one from the African group: their responses tended to correlate with the behaviour they exhibited.

Finally, the native speakers in these interactions did conform to the style described as most typical of native speakers of Australian English. They seldom overlapped and tended to withdraw when others overlapped with them. They almost always used direct, deductive discourse organisation and their rhetorical style could be described as exacting and instrumental rather than elaborate or affective. In addition, in general, they softened and hedged their disagreement and made their propositions tentative and inclusive.

Gender, humour and the role of non-native speakers

Three other generalisations can be made which tend not to accord with many of the views expressed in the literature. First, researchers on gender behaviour involving English-speakers generally claim that men dominate in team discussions and women are more conciliatory than men, caring more about maintaining good relations than asserting their views. In this sample, while there were some interactions where this pattern was evident, overall, the women were equally voluble and assertive, and as seen in the data analysis, occasionally dominated a group by overriding others and ensuring that their views prevailed. Second, much of the literature suggests that humour is both highly problematic and rare in intercultural interactions (e.g. Sarbaugh 1988, Lee 1994). This was not the case in this data. There was considerable laughter and joking in many of the group interactions, and this humour had a number of sources. For example, there was joking about language difficulties, about aspects of the topic being discussed (especially in relation to male-female relationships) and about behaviour related to the task, such as participants unconsciously moving in and out of the roleplays or behaving as though the roleplays were real; and as well, humour was used to soften disagreement and restore rapport. Third, in this data, while some of the native speakers tended to take facilitating roles and to accommodate their speech to some extent, there was no

evidence of some of the types of behaviour described in the literature (Tsuda 1986, Trifonovitch 1981), that is, native speakers behaving in a patronising manner or their linguistic skills giving them an unfair advantage over the non-native speakers, enabling them to dominate and impose their values and views. In fact, as can be seen from the data analysis, the group interactions involving native speakers were successful in terms of equal contributions by both groups to productive discussions and in terms of the development of rapport and good interpersonal relations. And this was equally true of the three interactions which were not discussed. At the same time, it has to be stressed again that the situational context was probably largely responsible for all three of these features of the interactions and very different behaviours might well have occurred in more hierarchical, formal, competitive situations. For example, in the large data sample of team discussions filmed by Byrne in the workplace, some of which were discussed in Byrne and FitzGerald (1996), there was no evidence of humour and no laughter.

Indications for teaching and training

One conclusion to be drawn from this study is that even though the situational context was most conducive to successful communication and most of the interactions were successful, the fact that, in these optimum conditions, there were still examples of cultural clashes, misunderstandings and alienation reinforces the need for intercultural communication training for all. It further suggests that at least some of the barriers to effective intercultural communication are created by ignorance of cultural differences not prejudice or the rejection of difference. As discussed in the data analysis, all the examples of difficulties and dissonance could have been mitigated or prevented if the participants had had more knowledge of the cultural values and styles influencing the behaviour of others and more awareness of their own. This is supported to some degree by the fact that some of the most successful interactions took place after training and there was evidence that this had contributed to the success of the interactions. Where good intentions are buttressed by knowledge and sensitivity, people know how to convey an understanding of themselves and their intentions; they know what questions to ask to clarify meaning and intention and what arguments to put to persuade people on their own terms.

In today's world, this kind of training should be routine in educational institutions, included in all language, communication, sociology, psychology and management courses. It should not something which occurs for half a day in workplaces and educational institutions because culturally-based problems can no longer be ignored or because personnel have experienced difficulties on overseas assignments. The ideal would be workplaces and educational institutions in which constant intercultural negotiation was taking place, in which native speakers had learned or were learning a second language and in which all parties were receptive to learning from others. Much lip service is now given to valuing diversity and claims are made that the old paradigm where clones of the dominant group were selected for positions and promotion has been replaced with a new one in which difference is valued and capitalised on and individual potential realised. However, too often the training required to make this a reality does not take place. Good communication is a required skill but it is commonly seen in linguaculture-specific terms rather than intercultural ones.

Intercultural communication training must be for both native and non-native speakers. If it is not included in other established courses, it should be taught as a subject in secondary schools and in workplace training courses. For non-native speakers it should

be taught on English-language courses and in the workplace. Such courses do not need to be long. In my opinion, the essential outcomes should be:

- some understanding of the nature of the communication process and how culture bound schemas and frames impact on communication;
- a working knowledge of the different cultural value systems, including some understanding of the role of culture in the socialisation process and the importance of interpreting and evaluating behaviour from an intercultural not a monocultural perspective;
- a working knowledge of the different communication styles (including non-verbal behaviour), their equal validity and how they reflect cultural values, together with an understanding of the way evaluations of character, ability and intention are based on these differences and the harm this can do;
- some understanding of the nature of language, the way it reflects, underpins and shapes culture, the fact that there are few semantic universals and that becoming bilingual can mean entering another socio-semantic world;
- an understanding of the way attitudes to accents are socially constructed; and
- a knowledge of, and some skill in the competencies which facilitate and enhance intercultural communication. The ability to convey an understanding of oneself and one's intentions to all other people would be accepted and practised as a crucial and central skill.

The ultimate goal would be to encourage ethnorelativist rather than ethnocentric attitudes and to see 'good' communication as communication appropriate to the situational context not something which is universally applicable. Such training needs to take into account the socio-political contexts in which language is used. For example, non-native speakers need to have the opportunity to acquire communication skills effective in terms of access, and equal opportunity in educational and vocational contexts. Those skills which are linguacultural-specific only could be taught almost as a subset of a wider training in intercultural knowledge and skills.

This study also provides evidence that supports the view that three aspects of much intercultural communication literature and training are highly problematic. One is the common tendency to oversimplify cultural differences by dividing cultures into two groups only, high context-collectivist and low context-individualist, and then describing value systems and communication behaviours which really only apply to some Southeast and East Asian cultures as high context-collectivist and those typical of English-speaking cultures, in particular North America, as low context-individualist. This has largely occurred because much training is based on literature which ignores or is unaware of most of the sociolinguistic research. Sociolinguistic research clearly identifies the need for further divisions and qualifications as do the findings in this study. Much of the literature and the training based on this literature also make generalisations which ignore the crucial role of situational context in communicative interactions, especially those involving people from hierarchical-high context cultures. This study supports the view that they can adjust their communicative behaviour quite radically, depending on the nature of the situational context. Finally, there is still a tendency to stress group behaviour and not place sufficient emphasis on individual differences. As this study shows individuals may no longer subscribe to some or many of the values dominant in their society. Training must stress that while there are these different ways of seeing the world, and people from a particular culture would have been enculturated in these different ways, individuals are not cultural automatons and

some may have chosen to adapt or change their way of thinking in at least some respects.

Australia's immigration policy stresses the value to the country of bringing in skilled immigrants and in recent years has made this a justification for the program. If language and culture remain impenetrable barriers for many immigrants, and if people cannot work together effectively because of communication problems which are unrecognised as such, this would prevent the desired outcomes of the program from being fully realised. The modern workplace is already highly stressful because of constant change and job insecurity. As well, communication skills have become a key requirement at all levels. Misunderstandings foster dissension and negative attitudes and increase stress, while an ethnocentric dominant group prevents the skills of immigrants from being utilised and their potential from being fully realised. In addition, immigrants often believe that discriminatory attitudes are the cause of their problems when, in fact, it can be ignorance of cultural differences on both sides. In any case, perceived discrimination can be just as harmful as real discrimination. Are these problems insurmountable? While experience as a trainer and much of the literature confirms that there are difficulties, discourse analysis research carried out in the workplace is, on the whole, positive, showing much evidence of people working together collaboratively. At the same time, of course, it also highlights some of the problems (Clyne 1994, Willing 1992, Byrne and FitzGerald 1996).

This study does provide some further cause for cautious optimism. If intercultural communication using English as a lingua franca remained highly problematic even under favourable conditions with all the negative social factors removed, it would be an extremely depressing finding. However, this was clearly not the case. Rather, the data demonstrated the ability of people to express complex viewpoints and argue convincingly despite, in many cases, the severe limitations of an imperfect mastery of the code they shared. Moreover, much of the data revealed that they were also able to display a high level of interpersonal skills and to develop considerable rapport. The ability to use a range of interactive markers in another language appears to be something that develops naturally without explicit teaching. This is not to say that such teaching should not take place in order to enhance this ability and to emphasise those markers which are not easily acquired or the use of which might be confusing. Research has identified markers, such as 'yes', which can be misinterpreted, as well as the types of linguistic interactivity, such as hedging and modalising, which may need teaching. This study suggests that such teaching is possible.

The social problems of prejudice, ethnocentrism and ignorance, of course, remain. However, these can be alleviated by training, which can certainly overcome the ignorance and may diminish the prejudice and ethnocentrism. There was some evidence in the data that training encouraged a more open discussion of different cultural values and helped people interact more appropriately in an intercultural context. Comments in evaluations after training courses in the workplace and educational institutions also support this view. Common reactions by both native and non-native speakers are that the training has helped explain behaviour which had been evaluated negatively and made sense of experiences which had been difficult to understand.

The final conclusion is that intercultural communication training is essential. Although as noted earlier, it is not a prerequisite for success, it may help prevent failure. As this study shows, ignorance causes problems even in the most favourable conditions. Such

ignorance can obviously have devastating consequences in less favourable conditions. At the same time, this study points to the wonderful ability of people to use a lingua franca, even imperfectly mastered, to great effect and to the value of diverse backgrounds in viewing an issue from different perspectives and producing creative solutions. As Berry (1997:149-50) succinctly concludes: "Diverse societies (indeed our diverse world) are in need of understanding if the 'spice' rather than the 'irritant' is to carry the day".

References

- Adams, P. and Newell, P. (1994) *The Penguin Book of Australian Jokes*. Victoria: Penguin Books
- Adler, N. (1991) *International Dimensions of Organisational Behaviour*. Second Edition. Boston: PWS – Kent Publishing Company
- Adler, N. and Kiggundu, M. (1983) Awareness at the crossroads: designing translator-based training programs. In D. Landis and R. Brislin (eds) *Handbook of Intercultural Training*. New York: Pergamon Press
- Agar, M. (1994) The intercultural frame. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 18 (2): 221-231
- Agrawal, A. (1976) Who will speak next. *Papers in Linguistic Analysis*. Delhi: University of Delhi 1: 58-71
- Albert, R. D. (1996) A framework and model for understanding Latin American and Latin/Hispanic cultural patterns. In Landis, D and Bhagat, Rabi S. (eds) *Handbook of Intercultural Training*. Second Edition. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Almaney, A. J. and Alwan, A. J. (1982) *Communicating with the Arabs: A Handbook for the Business Executive*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press
- Amir, Y. (1969) Contact hypothesis in ethnic relations. *Psychological Bulletin* 71:319-342
- Andersen, P. (1994) Explaining intercultural differences in nonverbal communication. In L. Samovar and R.E. Porter (eds) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. Seventh Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth
- Anderson, J. (1994) A comparison of Arab and American conceptions of 'effective' persuasion. In L. Samovar and R. E. Porter (eds) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. Seventh Edition. Belmont, California: Wadsworth
- Antaki, C. (1988) Explanations, communication and social cognition. In C. Antaki (ed.) *Analysing Everyday Explanations: A Casebook of Methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Argyle M. (1986) Inter-cultural communication. In S. Bochner (ed.) *Cultures in Contact: Studies in Cross-cultural Interactions*. Oxford: Pergamon Press
- Argyle, M., Henderson, M., Bond, M., Iczukka, Y., and Contarelo, A. (1986) Cross-cultural variations in relationship rules. *International Journal of Psychology* 21: 287-315
- Astbury, V. E. (1994) The use of turn-taking resources in a Khmer-Australian English conversation. *ARAL Series S 11*: 173-184

Aston, G. (1986) Trouble-shooting in interactions with learners: the more the merrier. *Applied Linguistics* 7 (2): 128-143

Bachman, L. (1990) *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. London: Oxford University Press

Banks, S., Gao, G. and Baker, J. (1991) Intercultural encounters and miscommunication. In N Coupland, H. Giles and J. Wiemann (eds.) *Miscommunication and Problematic Talk*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Barlund, D. (1975) Communication styles in two cultures: Japan and the United States. In A. Kendon, R. Harris and M. Key (eds.) *The Organisation of Behaviour in Face-to-Face Interactions*. The Hague: Mouton

Barlund, D. (1994) Communication in a global village. In L. Samovar and R. E. Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. Seventh Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth

Barraja-Rohan, A. (1994) A very delayed acceptance to an invitation in a French conversation. *ARAL Series S* 11: 153-172

Barraja-Rohan, A. (1999) Teaching conversation for intercultural competence. In J. Lo Bianco, A.J. Liddicoat, and C. Crozet (eds.) *Striving for the Third Place: Intercultural Competence Through Language*. Melbourne: Language Australia

Baxter, J. (1983) English for intercultural competence: an approach to intercultural competence training. In D. Landis and R. Brislin (eds.) *Handbook for Intercultural Training*. Vol. 2. New York: Pergamon Press

Beal C. (1990) It's all in the asking: a perspective on problems of cross-cultural communication between native speakers of French and native speakers of Australian English in the workplace. *ARAL Series S* 7:16-22

Beal, C. (1994) Keeping the peace: a cross-cultural comparison of questions and requests in Australian English and French. *Multilingua* 13 (1/2):35-58

Bennett, M. J. (1986) Towards ethnorelativism: a developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In M. Page (ed.) *Cross-cultural Orientations: New Conceptions and Applications*. Lanham MD: University Press of America Inc.

Berry, J. W. (1997) Cruising the world: a nomad on academe. In M. Bond (ed.) *Working at the Interface of Cultures*. London: Routledge

Berry, J. W., Poortinga, Y. H., Segall, M. H. and Dasen, P. R. (1992) *Cross-cultural Psychology: Research and Application*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Blommaert, J. (1991) How much culture is there in intercultural communication? In J. Blommaert and J. Verschueren (eds.) *The Pragmatics of Intercultural and International Communication*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Blum-Kulka, S (1982) Learning how to say what you mean in a second language: a study of speech act performance of learning Hebrew as a second language. *Applied Linguistics* 3:29-59

Blum-Kulka, S., House J. and Kasper G. (1989) Investigating cross-cultural pragmatics: an introductory overview. In S. Blum-Kulka, J. House and G. Kasper (eds.) *Cross-cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies*. Norwood, N J: Ablex

Blunt, P. and Richards, D. (1993) Introduction. In P. Blunt and D. Richards (eds.) *Readings in Management, Organisation and Culture in East and South East Asia*. Darwin: Northern Territory University Press

Bond, M. H. (1991) *Beyond the Chinese Face: Insights from Psychology*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press

Bond, M. H., Leung, K. and Schwartz, S.H. (1992) Explaining choices in procedural and distributive justice across cultures. *International Journal of Psychology* 27(2): 211-225

Bond, M. H., Wan, K., Leung, K. and Giacalone, R. (1985) How are responses to verbal insults related to cultural collectivism. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 16:111-127

Bowe, H. and Fernandez, S. (1996) *English and the Multicultural Team: A Collaborative Approach*. Melbourne: A Project of Monash University Dept. of Linguistics and the Language and Society Centre of the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia

Boyarin, J. (1992) Introduction. In J. Boyarin (ed.) *The Ethnography of Reading*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Braithwaite, C. A. (1990) Communicative silence: a cross-cultural study of Basso's hypothesis. In D. Carbaugh (ed.) *Cultural Communication and Intercultural Contact*. Hillsdale, N J: Erlbaum

Brick, J. (1991) *China: A Handbook in Intercultural Communication*. Sydney: National Centre Of English Language Training and Research

Broome, B. (1994) Palerome: foundations of struggle and conflict in Greek interpersonal communication. In L. Samovar and R.E. Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. Seventh Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth

Brown, P. (1993) Gender politeness and confrontation in Tenejapa. In D. Tannen (ed.) *Gender and Conversational Interaction* New York: Oxford University Press

Brown, P. and Levinson, S. C. (1987) *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Revised Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Bublitz, W. (1980) Hoflichkeit im Englischen. *Linguistik und Didaklick* 40:56-69

Bunge, F. M. and Shinn, R. S. (1981) *China: A Country Study*. US Foreign Area Studies: The American University

Byrne, M. (1997) 'Unheard I felt invisible': the problem with meetings. Paper presented at seminar "New Images of Workplace Communication" held at MacQuarie University, September 3-5

Byrne, M. (1999) Challenging the way we work. Introductory seminar notes. Loganholme, Qld.: Marcom Projects

Byrne, M. and FitzGerald, H. (1994) Intercultural communication and problem-solving skills: a training approach. *Prospect: a Journal of Australian TESOL* 9(3): 7-16

Byrne, M. and FitzGerald, H. (1996) *What makes You Say That?: Cultural Diversity at Work*. Training handbook. Sydney: SBS Publications

Byrne, M. and FitzGerald, H. (1998a) *Blue Eyed: Training Kit on Discrimination and Prejudice for Use in an Australian Context*. Trainers' manual. Loganholme, Qld.: Marcom Projects

Byrne, M. and FitzGerald, H. (1998b) New skills for new times: what does it actually mean to think internationally? Paper presented at Twelfth Australian International Education Conference. To be published in conference proceedings. Canberra: ANU

Calvalcanti, M. (1983) *The Pragmatics of FL Reader Text Interaction: Key Lexical Items as a Source of Potential Reading Problems*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Dept of Linguistics, University of Lancaster

Canale, M. and Swain, M. (1980) Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing. *Applied Linguistics* 1(1): 1-47

Candlin, C. (1976) Communicative language teaching and the debt to pragmatics. Washington: *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics* 237-256

Candlin, C. (1981) Discoursal patterning and the equalising of interpretative opportunity. In L. Smith (ed.) *English for Cross-cultural Communication* Hong Kong: MacMillan

Candlin, C. (1987) Beyond description to explanation in cross-cultural discourse. In L. Smith (ed.) *Discourse Across cultures: Strategies in World Englishes*. New York: Prentice Hall

Carbaugh, D. (1988) *Talking American: Discourse on Donahue*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex

Carroll, R. (1988) *Cultural Misunderstandings: The French-American Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Chick, J. (1989) Intercultural miscommunication in South Africa. In O. Garcia and R. Otheguy (eds.) *English Across Cultures: Cultures Across English: A Reader in Cross-cultural Communication*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter

- Chick J. (1990) The Interactional accomplishment of discrimination in South Africa. In D. Carbaugh (ed.) *Cultural Communication and Intercultural Contact*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum
- Chu, C (1995) *The Asian Mind Game*. Crows Nest, NSW: Stealth Productions
- Chua, E. and Gudykunst, W. (1987) Conflict Resolution Style in Low- and High-Context Cultures. *Communication Research Reports* 4:32-37
- Clackworthy, D. (1996) Training Germans and Americans in conflict management. In M. Berger (ed.) *Cross-cultural Team Building: Guide for More Effective Communication and Negotiation*. Maidenhead, Berkshire: McGraw Hill
- Clancy, P. (1986) The acquisition of communicative style in Japanese. In B. Schieffelin and E. Ochs (eds.) *Language Socialisation Across Cultures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Clyne, M. (1985) Beyond grammar: some thoughts on communication rules in our multicultural society. In J. B. Pride (ed.) *Cross-cultural Encounters: Communication and Miscommunication*. Melbourne: River Seine Publications
- Clyne, M. (1994) *Intercultural Communication at Work: Cultural Values in Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Clyne, M. (1996) Interview published in Byrne, M. and FitzGerald, H. *What makes You Say That?: Cultural Diversity at Work*. pp. 129-133
- Clyne, M. and Ball M. (1990) English as a lingua franca in Australia especially in industry: a first report. *ARAL Series S 7*: 1-15
- Clyne, M., Ball, M. and Neil, D. (1991) Intercultural communication at work in Australia: complaints and apologies in turns. *Multilingua* 10(3): 251-273
- Clyne, M. and Slade, D. (1994) Spoken discourse studies in Australia. *ARAL* 15(2): 1-20
- Cohen, R. (1987) Problems of intercultural communication in Egyptian-American diplomatic relations. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 11:29-47
- Condon, E. C. (1976) Cross-cultural interference affecting teacher pupil communication in American schools. *International and Intercultural Communication Annual* 3:108-120
- Condon, J. (1986) ...So near the United States. In J. Valdes (ed.) *Culture Bound: Bridging the Culture Gap in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Connor, J., Evangelista, R., Lopez, M., and Borromeo, H. (1993) Asian managers in a global partnership. *Asia Management Journal* June-July: 14-19

- Copeland, L. and Grigg, L. (1985) *Going International: How to Make Friends and Deal Effectively in the Global Marketplace*. New York: Random House
- Coupland, N., Giles, H., and Wiemann J. (eds) *Miscommunication and Problematic Talk*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Cox, T. and Blake, S. (1991) Managing cultural diversity: implications for organisational effectiveness. *Academy of Management Executive* 5(2): 45-56
- Crozet, C. (1996) Teaching verbal interaction and culture in the language classroom. *ARAL* 19(2): 37-58
- Crozet, C. and Liddicoat, A. J. (1997) Teaching culture as an integrated part of language teaching: an introduction. *ARAL Series S* 14: 1-22
- Crozet, C., Liddicoat, A. J., and Lo Bianco, J. (1999) Intercultural competence: from language policy to language education. In J. Lo Bianco, A.J. Liddicoat and C. Crozet (eds.) *Striving For the Third Place: Intercultural Competence Through Language Education*. Melbourne: Language Australia
- Cuff, E.C. and Sharock, W.W. (1985) Meetings. In T.A. Van Dijk (ed.) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Vol. 3. London: Academic Press
- De Mente, B. L. (1989) *Behind the Japanese Bow: An In Depth Guide to Understanding and Predicting Japanese Behaviour*. Lincolnwood, IL: Passport Books
- Dodd, C. H. (1995) *Dynamics of Intercultural Communication*. Fourth Edition. Madison, Wisconsin: WCB Brown and Benchmark
- Draper, S. (1988) What's going on in everyday explanation. In C. Antaki (ed.) *Analysing Everyday Explanation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Dubois, J., Cumming, S. and Schuetze-Coburn, S. (1988) *Guide for Transcribing Spoken Discourse*. Santa Barbara: University of California
- Dunnett, S.C., Dubin, F. and Lezberg, A. (1986) English language teaching from an intercultural perspective. In J. Valdes (ed.) *Culture Bound: Bridging the Culture Gap in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Duranti, A. (1985) Sociocultural dimensions of discourse. In T. Van Dijk (ed.) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Vol. 1. London: Academic Press
- Edelsky, C. (1993) Who's got the floor? In D. Tannen (ed.) *Gender and Conversational Interaction*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Enninger, W. (1987) What interactants do with non-talk across cultures. In K. Knapp (ed.) *Analysing Intercultural Communication*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter
- Engholm C. (1991) *When Business East Meets Business West: The Guide to Practice and Protocol in the Pacific Rim*. New York: J. Wiley

- Erickson, F. (1984) Rhetoric, anecdotes and rhapsody: coherence strategies in a conversation among black American adolescents. In D. Tannen (ed.) *Coherence in Spoken and Written Discourse*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex
- Erickson, F. and Shultz, J. (1982) *The Counsellor as Gatekeeper: Social Interaction in Interviews*. New York: Academic Press
- Ervin-Tripp, S. (1987) Cross-cultural and development sources of pragmatic generalisations. In J. Verschueren and M. Bertuccelli-Papi (eds.) *The Pragmatic Perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins
- Fantini, A. (1995) Anexpanded goal for language education: the development of intercultural communication competencies. In M. L. Tickoo (ed.) *Language and Culture in Multilingual Societies*. Singapore: SEAMO
- Feldstein, C. (1985) Psychological correlates of silence and sound. In D. Tannen and m. Saville Troike (eds.) *Perspectives on Silence*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex
- Fieg, J. (1989) *A Common Core: Thais and Americans*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press
- Fiksdal, S. (1991) *The Right Time and Place: A Microanalysis of Cross-Cultural Gatekeeping Interviews*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex
- FitzGerald, H. (1996) Misunderstanding in cross-cultural communication: the influence of different value systems as reflected in spoken discourse. *ARAL* 19(1): 21-38
- FitzGerald, H. (1998) *Cross-Cultural Communication for the Tourism and Hospitality Industry*. Melbourne: Hospitality Press
- FitzGerald, H. (1999) Adult ESL: What culture do we teach? In J. Lo Bianco, A.J. Liddicoat and C. Crozet (eds.) *Striving for the Third Place: Intercultural Competence Through Language Education*. Melbourne: Language Australia
- Gabrenya, W. K. and Hwang, K. (1996) Chinese social interaction: harmony and hierarchy on the good earth. In M.H. Bond (ed.) *The Handbook of Chinese Psychology*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press
- Gao, G. (1998) "Don't take my word for it" - understanding Chinese speaking practices. *Interntional Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 22(20):163-186
- Garcez, P. (1993) Point-making styles in cross-cultural business negotiation: a microethnographic study. *English for Specific Purposes* 12: 103-120
- Gardner, R. (1994) Conversation analysis: some thoughts on its applicability to applied linguistics. In R. Gardener (ed.) *Spoken Interaction Studies in Australia*. ARAL Series S 11. 97-118
- Gass, S. and Varonis, E. M. (1985) Variation in native speech modification to nonnative speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. 7:37-58

- Gass S. and Varonis, E.M. (1991) Miscommunication in nonnative spoken discourse. In N. Coupland, H. Giles and J. Wiemann (eds.) *Miscommunication and Problematic Talk*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Geertz, C. (1976) *The Religion of Java*. Chicago: Chicago University Press
- Goddard, C. (1997) Cultural values and 'cultural scripts' of Malay (Bahasa Melayu). *Journal of Pragmatics* 27:183-201
- Goddard, C. and Wierzbicka, A. (1997) Discourse and culture. In T. Van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as Social Interaction*. London: Sage
- Goldman, A. (1994) Ningensi and Japanese negotiating. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 18(1): 29-54
- Goodale, M. (1987) *The Language of Meetings*. Hove: Language Teaching Publications
- Goodenough, W. H. (1981) *Culture, Language and Society*. Second Edition. California: Benjamin/Cummings
- Goodwin, C. and Goodwin, M. H. (1992) Assessment and the construction of context. In A. Duranti and C. Goodwin (eds) *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Goodwin, R. and Tang, C.S.K. (1996) Chinese personal relations. In M.H. Bond (ed) *Handbook of Chinese Psychology*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press
- Graham, J.L. and Herbergner, R. A. (1987) Negotiators abroad – don't shoot from the hip. In L. Luce and E. Smith (eds.) *Towards Internationalism*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House
- Green, G. (1989) *Pragmatics and Natural Language Understanding*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum
- Grice, H. (1975) Logic and conversation. In P. Cole and J. Morgan (eds.) *Syntax and Semantics, Vol. 3: Speech Acts*. New York: Academic Press
- Gudykunst, W. (1991) *Bridging Differences: Effective Intergroup Communication*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Gudykunst, W. (1998) Individualist and collectivist perspectives on communication: an introduction. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 2(2): 107-134
- Gudykunst, W. and Kim, Y. (1984) *Communicating With Strangers: An Approach to Intercultural Communication*. New York: McGraw-Hill
- Gudykunst, W., Ting-Toomey, S. and Chua, E. (1988) *Culture and Interpersonal Communication*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Gumperz, J. (1978) Dialect and conversational inference in urban communication. *Language in Society* 7: 339-409

Gumperz, J. (1982a) *Discourse Strategies: Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics*. London: Cambridge University Press

Gumperz, J. (1982b) Introduction. In Gumperz, J. (ed.) *Language and Social Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Gumperz, J. (1990) The conversational analysis of interethnic communication. In R. Scarcella, E. Andersen and S. Krashen (eds.) *Developing Communicative Competence in a Second Language*. New York: Newbury House

Gumperz, J. (1992a) Contextualisation and Understanding. In A. Duranti and C. Goodwin (eds.) *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Gumperz, J. (1992b) Interviewing in intercultural situations. In P. Drew and J. Heritage (eds.) *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Gumperz, J. (1996) The linguistic and cultural relativity of conversational inference. In J. Gumperz and S. Levinson (eds.) *Rethinking Linguistic Relativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Gumperz, J. and Tannen, D. (1979) Individual and social differences in language use. In C.J. Fillmore, D. Kempler and W. Wang (eds.) *Individual Differences in Language Ability and Language Behaviour*. New York: Academic Press

Gumperz, J., Jupp, T.C. and Roberts, C. (1979) *Crosstalk: A Study of Cross-Cultural Communication*. London: The National Centre for Industrial Language Training

Gumperz, J., Aulakkh, G. and Kaltman, H. (1982) Thematic structure and progression in discourse. In J. Gumperz (ed.) *Language and Social Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Gumperz, J. and Roberts, C. (1991) Understanding in intercultural encounters. In J. Blommaert and J. Verschueren (eds.) *Pragmatics of Intercultural and International Communication*. Vol. 3 Amsterdam: John Benjamin

Hall, E.T. (1959) *The Silent Language*. New York: Doubleday

Hall E.T. (1966) *The Hidden Dimension*. New York: Doubleday

Hall, E.T. (1976) *Beyond Culture*. New York: Doubleday

Hall, E.T. (1983) *The Dance of Life: The Other Dimensions of Time*. New York: Doubleday

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978) *Language as Social Semiotic*. London: Edward Arnold

Hanvey, R. (1987) Cross-cultural awareness. In L. Luce and E. Smith (eds.) *Towards Internationalism*. Cambridge MA: Newbury House

Hayashi, R. (1996) *Cognition, Empathy and Interaction: Floor Management of English and Japanese Conversation*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex

Heritage, J. (1984) A change-of-state token and aspects of its sequential placing. In J. Heritage and J. M. Atkinson (eds.) *Structures of Social Action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Heritage, J. and Atkinson, J.M. (1984) Introduction. In J. Heritage and J.M. Atkinson (eds.) *Structures of Social Action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hijirida, K. and Sohn, H. (1986) Cross-cultural patterns of honorifics and sociolinguistic sensitivity to honorific variables: evidence from English, Japanese and Korean. *Papers in Linguistics* 19(3): 365-401

Hinds, J. (1990) Inductive, Deductive, quasi-inductive: expository writing in Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Thai. In U. Connor and A. Johns (eds.) *Coherence in Writing*. Alexander, Virginia: TESOL Inc.

Hitchcock, D. (1994) *Asian Values and the United States: How Much Conflict?* Washington: Centre for Strategic and International Studies

Ho, D.Y.F. and Chui, C.Y. (1994) Component ideas of individualism, collectivism and social organisation: an application in the study of Chinese culture. In U. Kim, H.C. Triandis, C. Kagitcibasi, S.C. Choi and G. Yoon (eds) *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Methods and Applications* Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage

Ho, J. W. Y. (1997) Cultural transmission in literacy acquisition: a case study in Chinese *ARAL Series S* 14:102-118

Hofstede, G. (1980) *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values*. Beverly Hills, CA. Sage

Hofstede, G. (1991) *Cultures and Organisations: Software of the Mind*. London: McGraw Hill

Hofstede, G. (1997) The Archimedes effect. In M. Bond (ed.) *Working at the Interface of Cultures*. London: Routledge

Hofstede G. and Bond, M.H. (1993) The Confucius connection: from cultural roots to economic growth. In P. Blunt and D. Richards (eds.) *Readings in Management, Organisation and Culture in East and Southeast Asia*. Darwin: University of Northern Territory Press

Hogarth, W. (1995) *Job Focus*. Second Edition. Surry Hills, NSW: AMES

Holmes, J. (1985) Sex differences and miscommunication – some data from New Zealand. In J. Pride (ed.) *Cross-Cultural Encounters*. Melbourne: River Seine Publications

Hopper, R., Koch S., and Mandelbaum, J. (1986) Conversational analysis methods. In D.G. Ellis and W. A. Donohue (eds.) *Contemporary Issues in Language and Discourse*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Hu, W. and Grove, C. (1991) *Encountering the Chinese*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press

Hymes, D. (1972) Models of the interaction of language and social life. In J. Gumperz and D. Hymes (eds.) *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Ingram, D. E. and Wylie, E. (1984) *Australian Second Language Professional Ratings*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service

Irwin, H. (1996) *Communicating with Asia: Understanding People and Customs*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin

Ishii, S. and Bruneau, T. (1994) Silence and silences in cross-cultural perspective: Japan and the United States. In L. Samovar and R. Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. Seventh edition. Belmont, C A: Wadsworth

Jacobs, S. (1986) How to make an argument from example in discourse analyses. In D. C. Ellis and W. A. Donohue (eds.) *Contemporary Issues in Language and Discourse*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

James, D and Clarke, S (1993) Women, men and interruptions. In D. Tannen (ed.) *Gender and Conversational Interaction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

James, D. and Drakich, J. (1993) Understanding gender differences in the amount of talk: a critical review of research. In D. Tannen (ed) *Gender and Conversational Interaction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Jayasuriya, L (1991) The problematic of culture and identity in cross-cultural theorising. In M. Clare and L. Jayasuriya (eds.) *Issues of Cross-cultural Practice*. Perth: University of Western Australia

Joyce, H., Nesbitt, C., Slade, D. and Solomon, N. (1995) *Effective Communication in the Restructured Workplace: A Training program. Vol. 1: Team Work. Vol. 2: Spoken and Written Communication in Workplace training*. Carlton North, Victoria: National Food Industry Training Council

Kabagarama, D. (1993) *Breaking the Ice: A Guide to Understanding People from Other Cultures*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon

Kachru, B. (1982) Models for non-native Englishes. In B. Kachru (ed.) *The Other Tongue: English Across Cultures*. Oxford: Pergamon

- Kachru, B. (1987) The bilingual's creativity: discourse and stylistic strategies in contact literature. In L. E. Smith (ed.) *Discourse Across Cultures: Strategies in World English*. New York: Prentice Hall
- Kachru, Y. (1987) Cross-cultural texts, discourse strategies and discourse interpretation. In L. E. Smith (ed.) *Discourse Across Cultures: Strategies in World English*. New York: Prentice Hall
- Kagitcibasi, C. (1994) A critical appraisal of individualism and collectivism: towards a new formulation. In U. Kim, H.C. Triandis, C. Kagitcibasi, S.C. Choi and G. Yoon (eds.) *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Methods and Applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Kagitcibasi, C. (1997) Crossing the Bosphorus: toward a socially relevant and culturally sensitive career in psychology. In M. H. Bond (ed.) *Working at the Interface of Cultures*. London: Routledge
- Kalin, M. (1995) *Coping With Problems of Understanding: Repair Sequences in Conversations between Native and Non-Native Speakers*. University of Jyväskylä
- Kandiah, T. (1991) Extenuating sociolinguistics: diverting attention from issues to symptoms in cross-cultural communication studies. *Multilingua* 10-14: 345-379
- Kaplan, R. (1966) Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning* 16 (1-2): 1-20
- Kaplan, R. (1987) Cultural thought patterns revisited. In U. Connor and R. Kaplan, (eds.) *Writing Across Languages: Analysis of L2 Text*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley
- Kasper, G. (1984) Pragmatic comprehension in learner-native speaker discourse. *Language Learning*. 34 (4): 1-18
- Kasper, G. (1989) Interactive procedures in interlanguage discourse. In W. Olesky (ed.) *Contrastive Pragmatics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins
- Kasper, G. (1995) *The Role of Pragmatics in Language Teaching and Teaching Education*. Pre-reading for seminar, ANU, Sept. 23-24
- Kasper, G. (1997) Beyond reference. In G. Kasper and E. Kellerman (eds.) *Communication Strategies: Psycholinguistic and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. London: Longman
- Kasper, G. and Dahl, M. (1991) *Research Methods in Interlanguage Pragmatics*. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press
- Katriel, T. (1986) *Talking Straight: Dugri Speech in Israeli Sabra Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Kim, Y. (1986) *Interethnic Communication: Current Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Kirkpatrick, A. (1993) Information sequencing in modern standard Chinese *ARAL* 16(2): 27-60

Kirkpatrick, A. (1994) How do you know what I'm going to say? The use of advance organisers in modern standard Chinese. *ARAL Series S* 11: 83-96

Kirkpatrick, a. (1997) Using contrastive rhetoric to teach writing: seven principles in teaching language and teaching culture. *ARAL Series S* 14: 89-102

Kluckhohn, F.R. and Strodtbeck, F. L. (1973) *Variations in Value Orientation*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press

Knapp, K. and Knapp-Potthoff, M. (1987) Instead of an introduction: conceptual issues in analysing intercultural communication. In K. Knapp (ed.) *Analysing Intercultural Communication*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter

Knox, T. (1994) Repetition in nonnative/native speaker conversation. In B. Johnstone (ed.) *Repetition in Discourse: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Vol. 1. Norwood, NJ: Ablex

Kochman, T. (1981) *Black and White Styles in Conflict*. Chicago: University of Chicago

Kochman, T. (1990) Cultural pluralism: black and white styles. In D. Carbaugh (ed.) *Cultural Communication and Intercultural Contact*. Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Kozan, M. K. and Ergin, C. (1998) Preference for third party help in conflict management in the US and Turkey. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 29(4): 525-539

Kramsch, C. (1981) *Discourse Analysis and Second Language Teaching*. Washington: Centre for Applied Linguistics

Kramsch, C. (1993) *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Krasnick, H. (1995) The role of lingua culture and intercultural communication in ASEAN in the year 2020: prospects and predictions. In M. L. Tickoo (ed.) *Language and Culture in Multilingual Societies: Viewpoints and Visions*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre

Lee, W. (1994) Communication about humour as procedural competence in intercultural encounters. In L. Samovar and R.E. Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader* 7th ed Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company

Leech, G. (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*, London: Longman

Leung, K. (1987) Some determinants of reactions to procedural matters for conflict resolution: a cross-national study. *Journal of Psychology and Social Psychology* 53(5): 898-908

Levinson, S.C. (1983) *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Li, H. Z. (1999) Communicating information in conversation: a cross-cultural comparison. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 23(3): 387-409
- Liddicoat, A.J. (1997a) Communication within cultures, communication across cultures, communication between cultures. In Z. Golebiowski and H. Barland (eds.) *Academic Communication Across Disciplines and Cultures*. Melbourne: Victoria University of Technology
- Liddicoat, A. J. (1997b) Everyday speech as culture: implications for language teaching. *ARAL* 14: 55-70
- Little, R and Reed, W. (1989) *The Confucian Renaissance*. Sydney: The Federation Press
- Loveday, L. (1982) *The Sociolinguistics of Learning and Using a Non-native Language*. Oxford: Pergamon Press
- Loveday, L. (1983) Rhetoric patterns in conflict: the sociocultural relativity of discourse-organising processes. *Journal of Pragmatics* 7: 169-190
- Luce, L. and Smith E. (1987) Cross-cultural literacy: a national priority. In L. Luce and E. Smith (eds.) *Towards Internationalism*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House
- Lustig, M. and Koester, J. (1993) *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication Across Cultures*. New York: Harper Collins
- Mak, A., Westwood, M., Ishiyama, F. and Barker, M. (1999) Optimising conditions for learning sociocultural competencies for success. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 23 (1): 77-90
- Malcolm, I. (1989) Invisible culture in the classroom. In O. Garcia and R. Otheguy (eds.) *English Across Cultures; Cultures Across English*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter
- Maltz, D. and Borker, R. (1982) Gumperz, J. (ed.) *Language and Social Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Mao, L. M. (1995) Understanding self-face through compliment responses. In M. L. Tickoo (ed.) *Language and Culture in Multilingual Societies: Viewpoints and Visions*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre
- Martin, J. M. (1993) Intercultural communication competence: a review. In R. L. Wiseman and J. Koester (eds.) *Intercultural Communication Competence*. Newbury Park CA: Sage
- Matsumoto, Y (1988) Re-examination of the universality of face: politeness phenomenon in Japan. *Journal of Pragmatics* 12: 403-426
- Mawer, G. (1992) Developing new competencies for workplace education. *Prospect: A Journal of Australian TESOL* 7 (2) 7- 26

- Meeuwis, M. (1994) Nonnative-nonnative intercultural communication: an analysis of instruction sessions for foreign engineers in a Belgian company. *Multilingua* 13(1-2): 59-82
- Millen, M., O'Grady, C and Porter, J. (1992) Communicating in a multicultural workforce: pragmatics and a problem-centred approach to cross-cultural training. *Prospect: A Journal of Australian TESOL* 7(2): 46-56
- Miyahara, A. Kim, M S., Shin, H.C. and Yoon, K. (1998) Conflict resolution styles among collectivist cultures: a comparison between Japanese and Korean. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 22(4): 505-525
- Moerman, M. (1987) *Talking Culture: Ethnography and Conversational Analysis*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania
- National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) (1992) A guide to the development of competency standards for professions. *Research Paper 7*
- Nguyen, D. L. (1980) Vietnamese-American crosscultural communication. *Bilingual Resources* 3(2): 9-15
- Nguyen, D.L. (1994) Indochinese cross-cultural communication and adjustment. In X.T. Nguyen (ed.) *Vietnamese Studies in a Multicultural World*. Pascoe Vale, Victoria: Vietnamese Language and Culture Publications
- Nguyen, C. (1994) Barriers to communication between Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese. In X.T. Nguyen (ed.) *Vietnamese Studies in a Multicultural World*. Pascoe Vale, Victoria: Vietnamese Language and Culture Publications
- Nguyen, X. T. (1994) The Vietnamese family moral code. In X. T. Nguyen (ed.) *Vietnamese Studies in a Multicultural World*. Pascoe Vale, Victoria: Vietnamese Language and Culture Publications
- Nixon, U. (1993) Coping in Australia: problems faced by overseas students. *Prospect: A Journal of Australia TESOL* 8(3): 42-51
- Ochs, E. (1976) The universality of conversational postulates. *Language in Society* 5:67-80
- O'Driscoll, N. and Pilbeam, A. (1987) *Meetings and Discussions*. London: Longman
- Ong, W. (1981) *Fighting for Life: Context, Sexuality and Consciousness*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press
- O'Sullivan, K. (1994) *Understanding Ways: Communication Between Cultures*. Sydney: Hale and Iremonger
- Parsons, T. and Shils, E. (1951) *Towards a General Theory of Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
- Patai, R. (1973) *The Arab Mind*. New York: Charles Scribners Sons

- Pedler, B. (1985) Vietnamese speakers and Polish speakers. *ARAL Series S* 2:70-86
- Philips, S. (1990) Some sources of cultural variability in the regulation of talk. In D. Carbaugh (ed.) *Cultural Communication and Intercultural Contact*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum
- Platt, J. (1989) Some types of communicative strategies across cultures: sense and sensitivity. In O. Garcia and R. Otheguy (eds.) *English Across Cultures and Cultures Across English*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter
- Porter, P. (1986) How learners talk to each other: input and interaction in task-centred discussions. In R. Day (ed.) *Talking to learn: Conversation in Second language Acquisition*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House
- Powell, R. G. and Andersen, J. F. (1994) Culture and classroom communication. In L. A. Samovar and R.E. Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. Seventh Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth
- Psathas, G. (ed.) (1990) *Interaction Competence*. Studies in Ethnomethodology and Conversational Analysis No.1. Maryland: University Press of America
- Reddy, M. J. (1979) The conduit metaphor: a case of frame conflict in our language about language. In A. Ortony (ed.) *Metaphor and Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Renwick, G. (1980) *Interact: Guidelines for Australians and North Americans*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press
- Reykowski, J. (1994) Collectivism and individualism as dimensions of social change. In U. Kim, H. C. Triandis, C. Kagitbasi, S.C. Choi and G.Yoon (eds.) *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Method and Applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Richards, J. and M. Sukwiwat (1986) Language transfer and conversational competence. *Applied Linguistics* 4(2): 113-127
- Riley, P. (1989) Well don't blame me: on the interpretation of pragmatic error. In W. Oleksy (ed.) *Contrastive Pragmatics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin
- Roberts, C., Davies, E. and Jupp, T. (1992) *Language and Discrimination: A Study of Communication in Multi-ethnic Workplaces*. London: Longmans
- Robinson, G. (1985) *Crosscultural Understanding: Processes and Approaches for Foreign language, ESL and Bilingual Educators*. New York: Pergamon
- Rohwer, J. (1996) *Asia Rising*. London: Nicholas Brealey
- Rokeach, M. (1973) *The Nature of Human Values*. New York: The Free Press
- Ronowicz, E. (1995) *Poland: A Handbook in Intercultural Communication*. Sydney: National Centre English Language Training and Research

Rosalda, M.R. (1990) The things we do with words: Ilongot speech acts and speech act theory in philosophy. In D. Carbaugh (ed.) *Cultural Communication and Intercultural Contact*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Rosch, M. and Segler, K. (1987) Communicating with the Japanese. *Management International Review* 27(4): 56-67

Ruben, D. (1985) *Progress in Assertiveness 1973-83: An Analytical Bibliography*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. and Jefferson, G. (1974) A simplest systematics for the organisation of turn-taking in conversation *Language* 50: 696-735

Samovar, L. and Porter, R.E. (1991) *Communication Between Cultures*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth

Sarbaugh, L. E. (1979) *Intercultural Communication*. New Jersey: Hayden Book Company

Sarbaugh, L. (1988) *Intercultural Communication*. Revised edition New Brunswick: Transaction Books

Saunders, G.R. (1985) Silence and noise as emotion management styles: An Italian case. In D. Tannen and M. Saviile-Troike (eds.) *Perspectives on Silence*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex

Saviile-Troike, M. (1982) *The Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell

Schegloff, E. (1984) On some questions and ambiguities in conversation. In J. Heritage and J.M. Atkinson (eds.) *Structures in Social Action*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Schegloff, E., Jefferson, G. and Sacks, H. (1990) The preference for self-correction in the organisation of repair in conversation. In G. Psathas (ed.) *Studies in Ethnomethodology and Conversational Analysis*. Maryland: University Press of America

Scheu-Lottgen, U. D. and Hernandez-Campoy, J. M. (1998) Analysis of Sociocultural Miscommunication. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 22(4): 375-394

Schiffirin, D. (1984) Jewish argument as sociability. *Language and Society* 13: 311-335

Schiffirin, D. (1985) Everyday argument: the organisation of diversity in talk. In T. van Dijk (ed.) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* Vol. 3. London: Academic Press

Schwartz, S. H. (1991) The universal content and structure of values: theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 25:1-65

Schwartz, S. H. (1994) Beyond individualism /collectivism: new cultural dimensions of values. In U. Kim, H.C. Triandis, C. Kagitcibasi, S.C. Choi and G. Yoon (eds.) *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Method and Applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Schwartz, S. H. and Bilsky, W. (1990) Towards a theory of the universal content and structure of values: extensions and replications. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 58(5): 878-89

Scollon, R. and Scollon, S. (1983) Face in interethnic communication . In J. Richards and R. Schmidt (eds.) *Language and Communication*. London: Longmans

Scollon, R. and Scollon S. (1990) Athabaskan and English interethnic communication. In D. Carbaugh (ed.) *Cultural Communication and Intercultural Contact*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Scollon, R. and Scollon S. (1995) *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach*. Oxford: Blackwell

Seaman, P. (1972) *Modern Greek and American English in Contact*. The Hague: Mouton

Searle, J. (1976) A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society* 5: 1-23

Selinger, V. (1995) *Humour Across Cultures*. Unpublished Australian Defence Force Academy research paper presented at an ACT Network for Intercultural Communication workshop

Sheridan, G. (1979) *Tigers: Leaders of the New Asia-Pacific*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin

Sheridan, G. (1999) *Asian Values: Western Dreams*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin

Sinclair, K. and Wong, P.Y. (1990) *Culture Shock: China*. Singapore: Times Books International

Sinha, D. and Tripathi, R. C. (1994) Individualism in a collectivist culture: a case of coexistence of opposites. In U. Kim, H.C. Triandis, C. Kagitcibasi, S. C. Choi and G. Yoon (eds.) *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Method and Applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Smith, L. E. (1987) Introduction: discourse strategies and cross-cultural communication. In L. E. Smith (ed.) *Discourse Across Cultures: Strategies in World Englishes*. New York: Prentice Hall

Smith, P.B., Dugan, S. and Trompenaars, F. (1996) National culture and the values of organisational employees: a dimensional analysis across 43 nations. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 27(2) 231-264

Smith, P. B. and Schwartz, S. H. (1997) Values. In J. W. Berry, M. H. Segall and C. Kagitcibasi (eds.) *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology* Vol. 3. Second Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon

- Smith, P.B., Dugan, S., Peterson, M. and Leung, K. (1998) Individualism: collectivism and the handling of disagreement, a 23 country study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 22(3): 351-367
- Smith, P.B. and Bond, M.H. (1999) *Social Psychology Across Cultures*. Second Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon
- Smolicz, J. J. (1978) *Culture and Education in a Plural Society*. Canberra: Curriculum Development Centre
- Sohn, H.M. (1983) Intercultural communication in cognitive values: Americans and Koreans. *Language and Linguistics* 9: 93-136
- Stevenson, H. W. and Lee, S.Y. (1996) The academic achievement of Chinese students. In M. H. Bond (ed.) *The Handbook of Chinese Psychology*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press
- Stewart, E. C. (1972) *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-cultural Perspective*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press
- Stewart, E. C. (1987) American assumptions and values: orientation to action. In L. Luce and E. Smith (eds.) *Towards Internationalism*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House
- Stubbs, M. (1986) A matter of prolonged field work: notes towards a modal grammar of English. *Applied Linguistics* 7(1): 1-23
- Sullivan, C. S. (1987) Machismo and its cultural dimension . In L. Luce and E. Smith (eds.) *Towards Internationalism*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House
- Tahija, J. (1993) Swapping business skills for oil. *Harvard Business Review* Sept.-October pp. 64-77
- Tannen, D. (1979) What's in a frame ? In R. Freedle (ed.) *New Directions in Discourse Processing*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex
- Tannen, D. (1981) New York Jewish Conversational Style. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 30:133-149
- Tannen, D. (1984a) The pragmatics of cross-cultural communication. *Applied Linguistics* 5(3): 189-195
- Tannen, D. (1984b) *Conversational Style: Analysing Talk Among Friends*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex
- Tannen, D. (1984c) Introduction. In D. Tannen (ed.) *Coherence in Spoken and Written Discourse*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex
- Tannen, D. (1985a) Cross-cultural communication. In T. van Dijk (ed.) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* Vol. 4. London: Academic Press

Tannen, D. (1985b) Silence: anything but. In D. Tannen and M. Saville-Troike (eds.) *Perspectives on Silence*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex

Tannen, D. (1986) *That's Not What I Meant*. New York: William Morrow

Tannen, D. (1989) *Talking Voices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Tannen, D. (1991) *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. Sydney: Random House

Tannen, D. (1993a) Introduction. In D. Tannen (ed.) *Framing in Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Tannen, D. (1993b) The relativity of linguistic strategies: rethinking power and solidarity in gender and dominance. In D. Tannen (ed.) *Gender and Conversational Interaction*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Tannen, D. (1994a) *Gender and Discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press

Tannen, D. (1994b) *Talking from 9 to 5*. London: Virago Press

Tannen, D and Kakava, C. (1992) Power and solidarity in modern Greek conversation: disagreeing to agree. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 10: 12-29

Tarone, E. and Yule, G (1987) Communication strategies in east-west interactions. In L. E. Smith (ed.) *Discourse Across Cultures: Strategies in World Englishes*. New York: Prentice Hall

Tarone, E. and Yule, G. (1989) *Focus on the Language Learner*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Thomas, J. (1983) Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied Linguistics* 4(2): 92-112

Thwaite, A. (1993) Gender differences in spoken interaction in same sex dyadic conversations in Australian English. *ARAL Series S* 10: 147-179

Ting-Toomey, S. (1993) Communication resourcefulness: an identity negotiation perspective. In R. Wiseman and J. Koester (eds.) *Intercultural Communication Competence*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Ting-Toomey, S. (1988) Intercultural conflict styles: a face negotiation theory. In Y. Kim and W. Gudykunst (eds.) *Theories in Intercultural Communication*. Newbury park, CA: Sage

Ting-Toomey, S. (1994) Managing intercultural conflicts effectively. In L. Samovar and R. Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*. Seventh Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth

Triandis, H.C. *Individualism and Collectivism*. Boulder, CD: Westview

Triandis, H., Brislin, R. and Hui, C. (1993) Cross-cultural training across the individualism-collectivism divide. In D. Blunt and P. Richards (eds.) *Readings in Management, Organisation and Culture in East and South East Asia*. Darwin: Northern Territory University Press

Trifonovitch, G. (1981) English as an international language: an attitudinal approach. In L. Smith (ed.) *English for Cross-cultural Communication*. London: MacMillan Press

Trompenaars, F. (1993) *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business*. London: The Economist

Trompenaars, F and Hampden-Turner, C. (1998) *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Global Business*. Second Edition. New York: McGraw Hill

Tsuda, Y. (1986) *Language Inequality and Distortion in Intercultural Communication: A Critical Theory Approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins

Valentine, T. M. (1995) Agreeing and disagreeing in Indian English discourse: implications for language teaching. In M. L. Tickoo (ed.) *Language and Culture in Multilingual Societies: Viewpoints and Visions*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre

Van Dijk, T. A. (1977) *Text and Context*. London: Longman

Van Eemeren, F and Grootendorst, A. (1984) *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions*. Dordrecht, Holland: Foris Publications

Van Lier, L. (1988) *The Classroom and the Language Learner: Ethnography and Second language Classroom Research*. London: Longman

Varonis, E. and Gass, S. M. (1985a) Miscommunication in native/non-native conversation. *Language and Society* 14: 327-343

Varonis, E. and Gass, S. M. (1985b) Non-native/non-native conversations: a model for the negotiation of meaning. *Applied Linguistics* 6(1): 71-90

Vuchinich, S. (1990) The sequential organisation of closing in verbal family conflict. In Grimshaw, A. (ed.) *Conflict Talk*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Watanabe, S. (1993) Cultural differences in framing: American and Japanese group discussions. In D. Tannen (ed.) *Framing in Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Watson, W., Johnson, L., Kumar, K. and Critelli, J. (1998) Process gain and process loss: comparing interpersonal processes and performance of culturally diverse and non-diverse teams across time. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 22(4): 409-430

Weinreich, P. (1997) Enculturation of a semi-alien. In M. H. Bond (ed.) *Working at the Interface of Cultures*. London: Routledge

- Wetherell, M. and Potter, J. (1988) Discourse analysis and the identification of interpretative repertoires. In C. Antaki (ed.) *Analysing Everyday Explanations: A Casebook of Methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Wierzbicka, A. (1985a) Different cultures, different languages, different speech acts: Polish vs. English. *Journal of Pragmatics* 9: 145-178
- Wierzbicka, A. (1985b) A semantic metalanguage for a cross-cultural comparison of speech acts and speech genres. *Language in Society* 14: 491-514
- Wierzbicka, A. (1986) Does language reflect culture? Evidence from Australian English. *Language in Society* 15: 349-374
- Wierzbicka, A. (1991) *Cross-cultural Pragmatics: the Semantics of Social Interaction*. Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter
- Wierzbicka, A. (1992a) *Semantics, Culture and Cognition: Human Concepts in Culture-Specific Configurations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Wierzbicka, A. (1992b) Intercultural communication in Australia. In G. Schulz (ed.) *The Languages of Australia*. Canberra: Academy of the humanities
- Wierzbicka, A. (1996) Contrastive sociolinguistics and the theory of cultural scripts: Chinese vs. English. *Contrastive Sociolinguistics* 313-343
- Wierzbicka, A. (1997a) The double life of a bilingual: a cross-cultural perspective. In M. H. Bond (ed.) *Working at the Interface of Cultures: Eighteen Lives in Social Science*. New York: Routledge
- Wierzbicka, A. (1997b) Japanese cultural scripts: cultural psychology and 'cultural grammar'. *Ethos* 295-32
- Williams, A. (1995) TESOL and cultural incorporation: are we doing the devil's work? *TESOL in Context* 5(1): 21-24
- Williams, A., Giles, H. and Pierson, H. (1990) Asian Pacific language and communication. In *The Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* Vol. 1. Clevedon, Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters
- Williams, T. (1985) The nature of miscommunication in the cross-cultural employment interview. In J. Pride (ed.) *Cross-Cultural Encounters: Communication and Miscommunication*. Melbourne: River Seine Publications
- Willing, K. (1992) *Talking it Through: Clarification and Problem-solving in Professional Work*. Sydney: National Centre of English Language Training and Research
- Wolfson, N. (1989) *Perspectives: Sociology and TESOL*. Cambridge: New House

- Wood, J. (1994) Gender, communication and culture. In L. Samovar and R. Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader Seventh Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth
- Yamada, H. (1992) *American and Japanese Business Discussions: A Comparison of Interactional Styles*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex
- Yang, K. S. (1988) Will societal modernisation eventually eliminate cross-cultural psychological differences? In M. H. Bond (ed.) *The Cross-Cultural Challenge to Social Psychology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Yeung, L. N. T. (1996) *The question of Chinese indirection: a comparison of Chinese-English participative decision-making discourse*. Unpublished manuscript. Hong Kong: Lingan College
- Young, L. (1994) *Crosstalk and Culture in Sino-American Communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Yum, J.O. (1994) The impact of Confucianism on interpersonal relationships and communication patterns in East Asia. In L. Samovar and R. Porter (eds.) *Intercultural Communication: A Reader Seventh Edition*. Belmont CA: Wadsworth
- Williams, A. Giles, H. and Pierson, H. (1990) Asian Pacific Language and Communication: foundations, issues and directions. In H. Giles and H. Pierson (eds.) *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* Vol. 1 Clevedon, Philadelphia,: Multilingual Matters

Appendix A

Problems

Problem One: The Heart Transplant

This task involved the group working as a team to decide which of seven critically ill patients should receive the one donor heart available for transplant. The team was also required to rank the seven patients in order of priority. A brief outline of the situation of each patient, in terms of their background and medical condition, was provided. This task came from a publication designed to give ESL learners an opportunity to discuss and problem-solve.

Problem Two: Co-educational High Schools

The group was asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of co-educational high schools and make recommendations for local high schools. This issue was in the news at the time and the students had read some relevant articles.

Problem Three: Managing Diversity

This was a problem which had occurred in the workplace and had been described to a previous class by a guest speaker invited to talk and answer questions about the Australian workplace. The situation was as follows: an employee, newly arrived in Australia, (his country of origin was not named) was refusing to report to his immediate superior, a woman, saying she was younger than him and her short skirts were immoral and inappropriate for the office. The group were told that her dress was typical of the 'power dressing' style of young executives then in fashion. They were asked to roleplay a situation where they were middle-level managers in the organisation and they needed to find a way to deal effectively with the problem.

Problem Four: Aids Education

The group was asked to roleplay a situation in which they were a parents and citizens committee who had been asked how best to introduce education about AIDS into secondary schools in multicultural Australia. This subject was in the news at the time.

Problem Five: School Cuts

The group was told that they were the advisory board of a local high school. The school was to have its budget drastically cut and the principle had to eliminate or reduce some programs or make other changes; otherwise, the school would be closed. Five proposals for reducing costs were briefly outlined and the group told they must accept at least three of these proposals.

Problem Six: The Budget

The group was told that they were the budget department of a new, hypothetical South American country with abundant, undeveloped natural resources but primitive living conditions. The Prime Minister had directed them to decide how to spend the \$2 million budget for that year. Eight programs (including items such as transportation and education) were briefly outlined and the team was asked to jointly recommend what percentage of the budget each program should receive and to give reasons. This task was also from a publication designed for ESL learners.

Problem Seven: The Bank Accounts

The stated aim of this task (designed and published for general use in the workplace) was to enable participants to experience group problem-solving processes. Each participant was given certain pieces of information about five bank accounts, the name and occupations of the account owners, the account numbers, the amount of money in the account and the name of the bank. The information was given in a rather cryptic manner and was incomplete. The team had to put the pieces of information together, hypothesising and making connections that were not always obvious in order to match the right person with the right details of their occupation and account.

Problem Eight: The Printing Company

This was another task which had been designed and published for team work training in the workplace. The group was asked to roleplay that they were each the manager of a different section in a printing company. The problem was to identify the cause of a sudden and marked fall in profits and to suggest solutions. Each team member was given certain information which, when pooled, helped in identifying the cause of the problem.

Appendix B

The seventy seven active participants whose discourse has been included in the transcripts are listed here alphabetically and some further details provided about them. The length of time in Australia is based on dates of arrival and the beginning of the full time English courses in which the interactions were taped. Some students came to English classes after trying to get work or after working for a short time. Others had family commitments, however, most came as soon as a class was available. The majority had reached at least an intermediate level in their speaking through English studies at school or university and self study. Where they had also used English for their work or attended previous courses, this is noted. A few students attended community classes while waiting for a full time course. Some in EPE classes had attended previous full time courses.

name/sex	age	area	education/ work	length of time here	previous use of English
Alain (m)	37	Western Europe	B Arch architect	1 yr	
Alex (m)	26	Australia	university student/Arts		
Ana (f)	43	Latin America	B Sc medical lab scientist	6 mths	
Anh (f)	27	Southeast Asia	admin/office airlines	2 mths	a little at work
Ari (f)	27	Southeast Asia	radio announcer	1 mth	
Asmahan (f)	20	Middle East	one year university biology	2 mths	
Bai (m)	37	East Asia	Dip Econ property manager	5 wks	at work
Bisominka (f)	33	South Asia	nurse	1mth	
Budhasia (m)	34	South Asia	electrician	6 wks	
Cam (f)	31	Southeast Asia	B Sc physics teacher	5 mths	community class
Carlos (m)	31	Latin America	B Industrial Engineering	1 yr	2 previous courses
Cveta (f)	29	Eastern Europe	Dip Pharmacy pharmacist	5 wks	
Dana (f)	34	Eastern Europe	B Civil Engineering	2 wks	
Dolores (f)	48	Latin America	Certificate Child Care carer	6 mths	community class

Doai (m)	31	Southeast Asia	B Sc university lecturer	2 mths	at work
Dusan (m)	45	Eastern Europe	Dip Mech Engineering designer	2 mths	
Elicia (f)	36	Eastern Europe	B Med doctor	3 mths	
Elini (f)	25	Africa	office admin	1 mth	
Elvid (m)	36	Eastern Europe	M Chemical Engineering army officer	5 mths	communiy class
Emily (f)	38	East Asia	Dip Secretarial public servant	1 mth	at work
Eunsoo (f)	35	East Asia	10 yrs univ chemistry	2 mths	
Filip (m)	33	Eastern Europe	media technician	3 wks	
Gia (f)	27	Western Europe	office admin hospitality	2 wks	at work
Govinda (m)	31	South Asia	Ph D Engineering geologist	8 mths	previous orientation course
Hoa (f)	36	Southeast Asia	sales assistant	2 mths	
Hossam (m)	42	Middle East	B Engineer/ production engineer	2 yrs	2 previous courses
Ines (f)	23	Latin America	2yrs post secondary tourism	1 mth	at work
Irma (f)	32	Eastern Europe	B Phys Ed teacher	3 wks	
Ivan (m)	31	Eastern Europe	B Engineer/ computing	1 mth	
Jack (m)	32	Australia	university student /Arts no. of jobs		
Jamal (m)	45	Middle East	B Arabic Lit Journalist poet/writer	1 mth	3 yrs in England
Jill (f)	21	Australia	university student Asian studies		
John (m)	23	Australia	university student linguistics	18 years	born in England

Josef (m)	21	Eastern Europe	B Sports/ Education teacher musician	2 wks	
Juxian (f)	38	East Asia	B Sci lab technician	5 mths	working in Aus
Karim (m)	32	Middle East	B Sci maths secondary teacher	3 wks	
Li Dong (m)	26	East Asia	B Sci teacher college	1 mth	
Ling ling (f)	32	East Asia	B Sci forestry officer	5 mths	in Europe study and at work
Ljubia (f)	34	Eastern Europe	M Ec computer programmer	2 mths	
Lola (f)	33	Eastern Europe	B Mech Engineering	8 mths	previous orientation course
Lu Hua (f)	38	East Asia	B Med doctor	8 mths	practising in Australia traditional medicine
Marko (m)	29	Eastern Europe	B Elec Eng electrical engineer	4 mths	community class
Marliss (f)	23	Western Europe	university student/ Arts	2 wks	
Meena (f)	30	Middle East	B Arts Eng Lit	3 wks	
Mia (f)	32	Western Europe	12 yrs school	2 mths	earlier study as overseas student/ 6 mths
Ming (m)	39	East Asia	B Engineer/ TV information processing	6 mths	private college in Aus tralia
Miron (m)	36	Eastern Europe	B Mech Eng machine construction	7 mths	previous orientation course
Mirta (f)	28	Southeast Asia	Dip Ed primary teacher	9 mths	
Netum (f)	26	South Asia	Dip Drafting draftsman	2 mths	in Europe study/work

Nikola (m)	23	Eastern Europe	architect technician	1 mth	over a yr in USA
Omar (m)	35	Middle East	B Ed science teacher	2 mths	
Paloma (f)	39	Latin America	MBA hotel management	5 mths	community class
Pawel (m)	23	Eastern Europe	technician	3 wks	
Pepple (f)	24	East Asia	12 yrs school office work	2 mths	a little at work
Phien (m)	30	Southeast Asia	B Sci computer programmer	5 mths	community class
Pierre (m)	32	Africa	11 yrs univ economics		
Ping (f)	28	East Asia	B Sci research assistant	2 yrs	
Piotr (m)	31	Eastern Europe	B Phys Ed teacher/coach	1 mth	a little at work when abroad
Radmilla (f)	21	Eastern Europe	university 2 yrs science	2 mths	
Raghat (f)	32	Middle East	B Arch architect	2 wks	
Ramon (m)	63	Latin America	M Arts Sociology university lecturer	6 mths	community class
Renata (f)	32	Latin America	B Ed teacher	13 mths	
Sallay (m)	46	South Asia	B Sci insurance company	3 wks	at work in internat. company
Sandra (f)	21	South Europe	student 12 yrs	1 mth	
Sharad (m)	29	South Asia	M Ec computer programmer	3 mths	
Simin (f)	30	Middle East	univ student science 1 yr	3 wks	
Singh (m)	40	South Asia	B Civil Engineering civil engineer	2 mths	at work
Sun (m)	40	East Asia	B Ec banking	2 mths	A little at work

Sylvia (f)	30	Latin America	B Industrial Engineering computer programmer	1 yr	2 previous courses
Teresa (f)	32	Eastern Europe	B Ec Tourism bookkeeper	1 yr	worked in USA 6 mths
Vera (f)	31	Southeast Asia	B Accountg investment research	3 yrs	earlier study Australian degree
Vinh (m)	24	Southeast Asia	12 yrs school	1 mth	in refugee camp
Wei (m)	31	East Asian	electricial technician	3 wks	
Wen (f)	35	East Asia	B Food Science	6 yrs	house wife self taught
Yolanada (f)	30	Latin America	BA Music primary teacher	5 mths	community class
Zainab (m)	29	Middle East	MA Journalism journalist cameraman	15 mths	orientation course
Zhiyan (f)	32	East Asia	B Med doctor	2 mths	