

## INTRODUCTORY NOTES

[The aim of this manual is to provide assistance in learning how to interact with diverse populations – people, who think, feel and behave differently than you do. You probably won't become skilled enough after taking one course to deal with people from every culture on the globe. But you can be prepared, however, to interact generally with people who are different from you whenever and wherever you meet them.

This manual is also an introduction for readers who wish to enhance their knowledge about and proficiency in that which is the most human of all human experiences: communication.

The study of intercultural communication should enhance your understanding of your own culture in relation to other cultures. As a result you ought to be able to conceptualize areas of potential misunderstandings and be better prepared to act when they surface. You ought to be able to convey respect for the way others behave and act positively toward actions that are dissimilar from yours. When abroad you ought to recognize the communication variations across cultures and respect their value to the host nations.

The manual also provides the cues to evaluating your personal self. This feature encourages you to pinpoint your own strengths and weaknesses and thereby gain insights into behavior in communication situations.

This manual is targeted at hands-on training that should accompany the body of knowledge provided by textbooks and instructional lectures. It supplies a variety of hands-on learning activities. The assignments move you from an acquaintance with the intercultural communication process to the factors that influence this process. The reader is exposed to a variety of learning methods and materials, all designed to enhance the learning process. The manual contains critical incidents, cross-cultural reviews, case studies, field research, project and interview outlines, readings, and probes into selected cultures. It also presents specific steps toward achieving greater competence in intercultural communication.

The manual focuses on issues exploring the multifaceted and dynamic connections of diversity, culture and communication. It is divided into three parts. Units on encountering differences, cross-cultural adjustment and a multicultural world are included in Part 1. Units on value systems, verbal and nonverbal communication are included in Part 2. Units on dominant American cultural patterns and cross-cultural variables in American and Kazakhstani communication are included in Part 3. Each part contains various assignments, authentic materials from a range of sources, and references that might be of use for further reading.

The author hopes the manual is likely to find its way into courses in other allied disciplines – culture studies, international relations, American studies, linguistics, English as a foreign language, speech communication including interpersonal communication, business communication, nonverbal behavior, semantics, conflict and decision making.

All comments, suggestions and recommendations will be of great value and highly appreciated.

## Unit 1: ENCOUNTERING DIFFERENCES

Assignment #1

### How to Increase Cultural Understanding and Intercultural Sensitivity?

#### 1. Reading for Meaning:

- Read the article "From Ethnocentrism & Stereotyping to Ethnorelativism & Empathy" (Text #1) for class discussion on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
- As you read, make notes and underline the most important ideas.
- When you finish, define the words below.

*Ethnocentrism* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Ethnorelativism* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Stereotyping* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Empathy* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Applying what you know. Questions for whole group discussion:

- How does a person move from an ethnocentric to an ethnorelative worldview?
- Do you think most cultures are ethnocentric or ethnorelative worldview? Why?
- If we stereotype someone from another culture, how does it hurt him/her? How does it hurt us?
- Why do people stereotype each other? (What benefit does stereotyping afford us?)
- Have you heard any stereotypes about Kazakhstani/Kazakh students/people? What were they?
- What is a belief or assumption you have about the world that you thought was held by everyone in the world, but you now realize is influenced by your culture? Some common topics include views about families, dating, behavior in class, time, money, religion, being polite in public, being successful, socially appropriate topics, roles of men and women in society, etc.
- Is there anything about the U.S. that you used to think was "wrong" but you now realize is based on American ways of thinking?

- h) Why is it so difficult for people to accept those who have a cultural view that opposes our own in a neutral way? Why do we tend to judge negatively people who see the world differently from us?
- i) Why is it important that we understand today's concepts before we move ahead in this course?

Text #1

### From Ethnocentrism & Stereotyping to Ethnorelativism & Empathy:

#### A Reading

*How do we develop our worldview? (Why are we frequently bothered by people who are not like us?)*

No matter what country we come from, beginning at a very early age we all learn a set of cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors, which shape the way we look at the world. For example, these cultural traits tell us what beliefs about religion are acceptable or not, how and why people date and get married, how to dress, how to socialize with friends, what constitutes a "good" job, and so on. Internalizing the cultural patterns of your society is important because they help people to interact smoothly and effectively with each other.

We generally are not aware of our society's cultural patterns until we meet people from other countries whose ideas on the exact same topics are quite different from our own. For example, you might meet someone who believes that the guiding laws of a country's government should come from religious rules when your country separates religious rules from governmental laws. Ironically, it is when we realize that not everyone is like us that we begin to think about our own culture. What happens is that we meet a person from another culture whose habits, ideas, or customs seem strange. For example, we may meet a woman who prefers a veil and long dress in public, or we may meet someone who seems to be focused on time at the expense of enjoying food, friends, and fun. From this feeling of strangeness, we may then jump to a feeling of dislike or disapproval.

The fact that we react negatively should not really be surprising. We invest a lot of time and energy in developing our set of cultural values, deciding what is "good" and "bad" or appropriate as we interact with people around us. Our views on things like what makes a person honest, polite, considerate, intelligent help define who we are as human beings. It makes us uncomfortable to realize that there are people in the world who do not hold those same views; furthermore, they believe their views are perfectly workable and logical - it is ours that seem strange or inappropriate to them. Feeling a little uncomfortable about this is OK. However, problems in communication begin to occur when these feelings of being uncomfortable lead us to automatically judge someone who is different from us as "bad" or "negative".

### Ethnocentrism and Stereotyping

When we see different as bad or negative, we are being ethnocentric, which can lead to stereotypical labeling of others. *Ethnocentrism* and *stereotyping* contribute to misunderstanding in cross-cultural interactions.

*Ethnocentrism* means making judgments based on one's own standards and applying those standards to others who may be from very different cultures (Brislin, 1986, p.262). Instead of looking at our culture as just one of many, each with valid realities, values, assumptions, we see our ways of interaction as the absolute truth. In other words, our own group is seen as the standard of what is good, normal, or positive. If someone from another culture has the same characteristics as our group, then they are seen as normal or positive. However, if the other group does not have the same characteristics, then their actions or ideas are seen as strange, wrong, bad, or inappropriate.

One problem with this way of looking at the world is that it generates narrow-minded ideas. We may see differences as negative rather than neutral variations of what is real or normal. For example, some cultures believe that people should succeed because of what they do, not whom they know. People from this kind of culture may have a negative attitude toward people who believe that connections (whom you know) are more important than performance in determining job success. The problem is that this kind of thinking does not help us understand that worldviews, which sharply differ from our own, are just as valuable and workable as ours within their society.

*Ethnocentrism* occurs in all cultures. Two common ways Americans demonstrate ethnocentrism in cross-cultural interactions are through the statements "Deep down everyone is the same," and "Just be yourself." These statements are really reflections of American values of individualism and egalitarianism, but these are not held as important values in all cultures. In many cultures, the group or the family is much more important than the individual. (This is true, generally speaking, in Japan, China, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates.) In some societies, the idea that there will always be people who have a right to more status and power than you is seen as logical and appropriate.

Another problem with ethnocentric perceptions is that they can lead us to see others in *stereotypes*. Stereotypes are negative (or positive) labels we place on people to explain why they are different from us. Here are some examples heard on an American campus: *Japanese students only like to hang around with other Japanese. International students are too dependent. Americans only think of money. Latinos just love to party.* Stereotypes such as these are not based on lots of information. There is little thought given when assigning characteristics to other people. Rather, they are used to find a quick, easy solution to why the group or person we are interacting with is different from us in the framework of our own cultural experience (Bennett, 1991). Again, it should not be so surprising that people rely on stereotypes when interacting with someone whose cultural patterns are different even though they actually hinder the communication process. Stereotyping is our own natural defense in confronting cultural differences. It helps us to simplify the complexity of differences we run into every day when we

interact with people from so many different places and with so many different life experiences. Stereotypes allow us to protect our view of ourselves and our ego. However, they are dangerous because they do not force us examine why other people are different from us. Furthermore, they keep us from learning the important point that these different perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors are just as valid as ours.

### Empathy as a Tool to Reducing Ethnocentric Behavior

When we interact with people from other cultures, we are going to be confronted with hundreds of specific behaviors, ideas, and values which are going to seem unusual, even surprising. There is no way to prepare in advance for all of the differences that you will be asked to deal with. However, what we can do is to work on developing a tool that will help us to be more effective communicators when interacting with people who have cultural patterns that differ from our own. That tool is empathy.

Having empathy means being able to see the world from the other person's perspective. When interacting in an empathetic manner, we begin from an acknowledgement that there are differences from each other in our ways of thinking or acting, but we approach the differences in a cooperative rather than confrontational manner. Then we try to find common goals and context within which we can interact. When developing empathy for those who are different from us, we learn to assign causes or reasons to events the way the other culture does, not the way we do. So, when we see actions or behaviors that strike us as odd, we learn to say, "What are the rewards for this kind of behavior? Why is this behavior OK in the other culture? If I lived in that person's culture, I would probably do (think, act, feel, believe) the same thing."

This article has focused on some of the difficulties of intercultural communication, talking about what can go wrong with our cross-cultural communication style, or how we need to change it. Learning to communicate with people whose fundamental cultural values and beliefs differ from our own, while difficult, is also extremely rewarding. Good cross-cultural communication skills will help us if we plan to work in the international business community. Also, very importantly, as we develop more effective ways of communicating with people from other cultures, we learn to tolerate and sometimes even enjoy a whole host of ideas, events, and experiences that otherwise would have passed us by.

#### Sources:

- Brislin, Richard, Kenneth Cushner, Craig Cherrie, and Mahealani Yong. *Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage Publications, 1986.
- Stewart, Edward C., and Milton J. Bennett. *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1991.
- Triandis, Harry C. "Theoretical Concepts That Are Applicable to the Analysis of Ethnocentrism", *Applied Cross-Cultural Psychology* (ed. Richard W. Brislin). New York: Sage Publications, 1990.

## Stereotypes of Various People Held by Japanese and American College Students

Read the information below and fulfill the following:

1. Try to identify which stereotypes respond positively and which ones respond negatively towards people described.
2. Ask someone whose opinion on the subject matter you consider being reliable to tell you what he or she thinks about these various people.
3. Make comparisons and prepare your comments for class discussion.

### English

- by Japanese: formal, traditional, polite
- by American: formal, proper, polite, intelligent

### Irish

- by Japanese: cold, patient, religious
- by American: drinkers, hot-tempered, jovial, loud

### Chinese

- by Japanese: diligent, serious, ingenious, laboring
- by American: quiet, industrious, small, smart

### Mexicans

- by Japanese: cheerful, passionate, spicy-food eaters
- by American: lazy, poor, loud, dirty, uneducated

### Russians

- by Japanese: cold, dark, closed, secret, selfish
- by American: cold, respect authority, hardworking

### Israelis

- by Japanese: religious, faithful, warlike, Jewish
- by American: religious, quarrelsome, wealthy, greedy

### Blacks

- by Japanese: strong, musical, cheerful, discriminated against
- by American: athletic, loud, prejudiced, rhythmic, disrespectful of authority

#### Source:

Ishii, S., and Klopff, D. "A Comparison of Stereotypes Held by Japanese and Americans of Selected National Groups." *Otsuma Women's University Annual Report*, Vol. 20, 1988, p. 73.

## Unit 2: CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

### Assignment #3

#### Adjustment? ↴

Read the text and express your agreement or disagreement with the management's decision on John's repatriation. Reason your opinion.

John was a manager who worked in the Saudi Arabian office of a North American international construction company. He was proud that the company was "American" and he always wanted to do things the American way.

When one of his colleagues was leaving to return home he wanted to organize a coffee party one afternoon to say farewell.

He had great difficulty in getting his Arab subordinates to agree to come to the party although he pressed them hard.

Eventually they complained to the higher management that John was trying to make them break Ramadan.

John was repatriated within a week for trying to impose home ways on the host culture.

### Assignment #4\*

#### Are They Strange or Just Different?

Read the extracts and try to guess what country or culture is described. Explain why you think so. Find language cues in each extract that might be of support to prove your opinion. (What are they?)

1. But the chief confusion for outsiders was that [the natives] telescoped time. They would relate something that happened five years ago as if it happened last week, and so you could go very badly astray on this.

CHARLES ALLEN

2. When they came they often brought singers and musicians to entertain me. The only hitch was [they] went to such lengths to treat me as one of them that they also assumed I was not interested in going out into the city. During the entire fortnight I spent with them I never once found my way out of the house. For long hours I sat in the patio listening to the sounds of the city outside, in the hope that someone would come, something would happen. But as I say, if I was bored, that was my own fault. They were doing everything they could to please me.

PAUL BOWLES

3. I walked through the city this morning ... but before I had gone very far I began to feel timid. ... I found myself an object of curiosity, and this embarrassed me. Everyone stared at me; people who were squatting on their heels in front of their houses rose up, salaamed, called others out and stood staring; groups of men interrupted their conversation to watch me pass; children followed me, and women covered their faces. ... I felt intrusive and self-conscious.

J. R. ACKERLEY

4. Bold Talent shook his head. How like children they were, with their pranks and easy warmth. Men who offered their hands for strangers to shake, ladies who sat and chattered at dinner with gentlemen they had never seen before, children who threw snowballs at adults no matter what their station. He would miss them.

BETTY BAO LORD

5. "I am not the type, monsieur, who feels himself superior to the rest of humanity. Indeed, I am no better than others. But these people. ... They are not human."

"But why do you say that?"

"You don't see why, monsieur? Have you eyes? Look at those men over there. Are they not eating with their hands? With their hands! It is frightful."

ROBERT BYRON

6. In this arrangement of the day no circumstance is so objectionable as that of dining at noon ... for as the ceremony is kept up, you must be home from any morning's excursion by twelve o'clock. ... Dividing the day exactly in halves destroys it for any expedition, business, or enquiry that demands seven or eight hours' attention. ... I am induced to make this observation because the noon dinners are customary all over this country. They cannot be treated with too much ridicule or severity for they are hostile to every view of science, to every spirited exertion, and to every useful pursuit in life.

ARTHUR YOUNG

7. Their lack of personal space at home in their apartments, on public transportation or on the job causes them to erect their personal space boundaries next to their skin. Therefore it is common for them to have deadpan or frozen expressions on their faces. We tend to perceive this as unfriendly and it may ruffle our feathers.

JAN L. PERKOWSKI

8. Once we were out in a rural area in the middle of nowhere and saw a man come to a stop sign. Though he could see in both directions for miles and no traffic was coming, he still stopped!

TURKISH EXCHANGE STUDENT

9. They have no capacity for abstract thought and make bad coffee.

GEORGES CLEMENCEAU

10. To them good smells are pleasing and a way of being involved with each other. To smell one's friend is not only nice but desirable, for to deny him your breath is to act ashamed. Americans, on the other hand, trained as they are not to breathe in people's faces, automatically communicate shame in trying to be polite.  
EDWARD T. HALL

11. [They] pitied us European women heartily, that we had to go about traveling, and appearing in the streets without being properly taken care of - that is, watched. They think us strangely neglected in being left so free, and boast of [how closely they are watched] as a token of the value in which they are held.  
HARRIET MARTINEAU

12. I was traveling with a few of the nobles by train. Seeing "Beef" on the menu, I ordered it. The waiter said "Beef" was off, so I had something else. Later, back in Dewas, the host said to me, with great gentleness, "Morgan, I want to speak to you on a very serious subject indeed. When you were traveling with my people you asked to eat something, the name of which I cannot even mention. If the waiter had brought it, they would all have had to leave the table. So they spoke to him behind your back and told him to tell you that it was not there. They did this because they knew you did not intend anything wrong, and because they love you."  
E. M. FOSTER

13. Nothing is more charming than their courtesy, but sometimes they really are too sympathetic by half. For in order not to contradict you or give you a moment's pain by disputing the accuracy of your ideas, they will tell you what you want to hear rather than what would be of real use to you to hear. At the same time their own self-esteem will not permit them to confess a blank ignorance; they will rather tell you something incorrect than tell you nothing at all.  
ALDOUS HUXLEY

14. Here again was their new world attitude of bringing out the bulldozer to save someone from an awful fate, or what they thought was an awful fate. ... I had not reckoned with their naiveté nor their lack of subtlety.  
LORD KILLANIN  
(Modified from Gary Althen. *American Ways: A Guide for Foreigners in the United States*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1988.)

\* Instructions to a lecturer: The best arrangement for this assignment is to distribute the extracts among students one for each of them and ask to discuss their samples in pairs before coming up with their explanations for group discussion.

How Much Do You Know About Culture Shock? X

1. Read the text on culture shock.  
2. After you finish reading, check if the following statements are true (T) or false (F):

- Culture shock is the same as homesickness. T F
- Many people are very happy and excited during their first few weeks in a new country. T F
- Some people feel culture shock; some don't. T F
- Most people who move to new countries adapt to the new culture after the first six weeks. T F
- The symptoms of culture shock are always mental, not physical. T F
- Strong feelings of anger are a common symptom of culture shock. T F
- If you feel really homesick and stressed by culture shock, it's a good idea to take a week off from classes/work and relax by yourself in your room or apartment. T F
- To get over culture shock, you must learn to like the food in the new country. T F
- Because physical exercise is stressful, it's better not to exercise when you are feeling culture shock. T F
- A sense of humor can help to cope with culture shock. T F

3. What should you do when you feel lonely, confused, and sad in a new country? Why? (Some ideas are provided in the Keys section. See, if you've got the same ones.)

\* Instructions to a lecturer: Ask your students, if there is at least someone who has stayed abroad for more than three months and might share the feelings he/she has

experienced there. If there is no one, ask your students to interview someone who has got such experience, and to come up with their comments at a seminar that will follow this one.

Text #2

### Culture Shock

When people leave home, they begin a new life. Adjustment to their new life takes more than a few days or weeks. Learning to be comfortable in a new culture can take a long time.

When people enter a new culture, they usually feel disoriented. There are many things that are new. It takes a lot of time to learn about the new food, ways of transportation, and how to use the post office, banks, and stores. It is exhausting to speak in a second language all of the time.

When people come to a new country, they are separated from their families and friends. They are also separated from their jobs or their familiar work as students. People in a new culture often feel very confused and frustrated. These feelings are usually called *culture shock*.

Culture shock is the adjustment process that occurs when people begin living in a culture different from their own. For most people it begins with the excitement and adventure of moving. Things may go very well at the beginning, but as newness wears off the unpleasant feelings of culture shock begin.

With culture shock, some people get headaches or stomach aches; some people feel angry. Other common feelings are sadness and homesickness. There are many different symptoms and not everyone feels all of them. Some typical feelings are frustration, alienation, depression, fear, and loneliness. These feelings occur because people leave their familiar surroundings. The knowledge of how to behave in many different situations, communicate with others, and carry on daily life is often not very useful in the new culture. People are surrounded by things that are strange and new. This can be exciting at first, but as time passes, they get tired of new things and the symptoms of culture shock appear.

Culture shock happens to everyone who lives in a new culture to some degree. Because people are all different, their feelings are different. However, many people experience the following:

*Initial euphoria:* Everything is exciting and new. It is interesting and fun to be in a new country. The people of the new country are interesting. These feelings last for the first two weeks to two months of a stay in a new country.

*Irritability and hostility:* Now things aren't so exciting. The food isn't as good. The people in the new country aren't so friendly. One begins to notice lots of differences between the new country and his/her own country. These differences

are difficult to understand. He/she starts feeling this irritability and hostility after staying in a new country for two or three months.

*Gradual adjustment:* As time passes, people begin to feel more comfortable in their new environment. They can understand the new language better, and they can enjoy some of the differences between cultures.

Assignment #6

### The Insight Inventory: Attitude & Character Traits That Promote Cultural Learning

**Activity:** Assessing Your Potential for Culture Learning.

**Directions:** Look through the list of traits in the Insight Inventory. On a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high), rate yourself in each of these traits. Write the number beside each trait and total them.

Culture learning is more than getting over culture shock or getting used to life in a new country. It is a process of personal growth and transformation. It is true that some people cannot tolerate this process and decide to return home early. Others make half-hearted accommodations to the new culture, but still see the people who come from host culture in negative ways.

Just as there are strategies for being a good language learner, there are also characteristics that promote successful culture learning. Generally speaking, a good learner of culture believes that he/she is beginning a journey from a "monocultural point to a larger world view in which he/she develops new perspectives, learns new mental, emotional, and behavioral responses. In short, that person learns to build intercultural bridges and in the end becomes a new cultural person" (Hess, 1994, p. 10).

Thanks to millions of travelers who have lived in new cultures, we know that there are certain skills or traits that can help ease adjustment to a new culture, even when it is very different from our own:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Tolerance for Ambiguity
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tolerance Ability to Set Realistic Goals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Open-Mindedness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Judgmentalness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Empathy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communicativeness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Flexibility/Adaptability
- \_\_\_\_\_ Curiosity
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sense of Humor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Warmth in Human Relationships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Motivation

Humor X

- Self-Reliance \_\_\_\_\_
- Strong Sense of Self \_\_\_\_\_
- Tolerance for Differences \_\_\_\_\_
- Perceptiveness \_\_\_\_\_
- Ability to Fail \_\_\_\_\_

**Recommendations:** Dr. Robert Kohls, an expert in the area of cross-cultural adjustment, has found that people who score below 55 (out of a possible 80) on this list tend to have difficulty during cross-cultural adjustment process. If your score is below 55, what can you do? One strategy is to pick one or two traits on your list that received a score of 1-4. Work on improving those skills first, and then move to a new skill on the list. Three traits are considered more important than all of the others in learning about a new culture. If you don't know where to get started, you might want to work on one of these:

1. *Sense of Humor* - At times getting used to a new culture can be anything but funny! Developing the ability to laugh when you'd rather cry or get angry helps fight the difficult times of adjustment.
2. *Ability to Set Realistic Goals* - Setting unattainable or unrealistic goals leads to disappointment. We feel like a failure even though the goal we set for ourselves was impossible to reach. People who are able to relax and handle new circumstances as they happen tend to be more effective and enjoy their overseas experience more.
3. *Ability to Fail* - This can be tough for people who are used to being very successful in their personal life, and professional or academic life. If you have experienced very little failure at home, this may be hard to accept. However, the ability to fail when living overseas is critical. "Everyone fails at something when living overseas" (Kohls, 1984, p.73). Fortunately academic, professional and social success generally return quickly to those who were successful at home due to their motivation and hard work in their new cultural environment.

**Sources:**  
 Hess, J. Daniel. *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1994, pp. 9-10.  
 Kohls, L. Robert. *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1984, pp. 71-73.

**Introduction:** As it has already been discussed in Assignment #6, humor is considered to be one of the most important traits in learning a new culture. We consider some people to have sense of humor, and some not to have it. What about you? How would you handle a joke told by someone else that was unfair to you or to another cultural group?

**Instructions:**  
 1. Check the approach you feel you would use. Would you:

1. Go on as if it had not taken place, but later take the person aside and alert him/her to your feelings on the matter.
2. Denounce the storyteller in public.
3. Tell an appropriate joke as a model for the kind of jokes that should be told.
4. Laugh now but tell the person about your discomfort later in private.
5. Tell an even worse joke about the other person's group.

2. Explain if there are reasons for choosing that particular approach?

## Unit 3: A MULTICULTURAL WORLD

Assignment #8

### How Are We Different?

**Introduction:** The information you will find attached is taken from the e-mail message of a Russian girl who is an international university student in Sweden. (Let's call her "Masha.") The experience of living and studying abroad with students from various countries has obviously excited her greatly. It also has made Masha come to a number of *personal* observations about diverse cultures and people, which she has described under the title "Cultural Differences: Top 10 Reasons for Being..." Masha's thoughts show that some of the most effective and efficient cultural learning abroad takes place outside of the classroom. Her "reasons" help us get a sense of how cultural assumptions we make of others can reinforce our positive/negative stereotypes of them.

#### Instructions:

- A. Read Text #3 for class discussion on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
- B. Applying what you know. Questions for whole group discussion:
  1. Do you see people from other cultures in the same way?
  2. Have you found anything in the text that surprises you? That you disagree with?
  3. Why was it difficult for Masha to describe a Russian soul?
  4. How are students/people in Kazakhstan different from students/people in other countries?
  5. How are you, as an individual, different from students in your class? How are you similar?
  6. Judging from the "reasons" provided by Masha, what would you prefer being if you have a choice?
  7. Could you think of top 10 reasons for being Kazakhstani?
  8. Could you think of top 10 reasons for being Kazakh/Russian/Ukrainian/etc. (who you really are)?
  9. Have you come across any unknown or useful English words and word combinations in the text? What are they?

Text #3

#### Cultural Differences: Top 10 Reasons for Being...

Dear friends!

Living in Sweden in a corridor with students from 15 different countries, I find it really exciting to think about.... *cultural differences*. Unfortunately, a mysterious Russian soul remained too difficult to analyze.

### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING DUTCH:

1. You can get arrested for growing plants, but not for smoking them.
2. You can make jokes about the Belgians and still drink their beer.
3. They pay you back by selling you illegal fireworks and let you blow up small parts of your country.
4. You're exactly like the Germans, except that nobody hates you.
5. You think you are a world power, but everyone else thinks Copenhagen is your capital...
6. You get to insult people and defend yourself by saying it's a national tradition.
7. You can put your finger in a dyke and it will save your country
  - a. You can legally kill yourself
  - b. You can legally be killed.
8. You live in the most densely populated country in Europe, and still you've never seen your neighbors.
9. If the economy is bad, blame the Germans. If a war is started, blame the Germans. If you loose your keys, blame the Germans.
10. Bikes are public property. Locks are a challenge.

### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING BELGIAN:

1. You get to speak three languages, but none of them intelligibly.
2. If other countries want to fight a war, they will do it in your country.
3. You can brew drinks out of fruit, and still call it beer.
4. You are either
  - a. like the Dutch, just less efficient
  - b. like the French, just less romantic
  - c. like the Germans.
5. Decent fries. Real mayonnaise. Great chocolate. The best beer. Need I say more?
6. No one knows anything about you, except for the Dutch and French and they make fun of you.
7. More scandals in a week than any other country in a decade.
8. You can drive like a maniac on the road and nobody cares.
9. All your famous countrymen are either imaginary, or sex-offenders.
10. Face it. It's not really a country, is it?

### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING FRENCH:

1. When speaking fast you can make yourself sound gay.
2. Experience the joy of winning the World Cup for the first time.
3. You get to eat insect food like snails and frog's legs.
4. If there's a war you can surrender really early.
5. You don't have to read the subtitles on those late night films on Channel 4.
6. You can test your own nuclear weapons in other people's countries (Well, who hasn't eh?)
7. You can be ugly and still become a famous film star.



8. Allow Germans to march up and down your most famous street humiliating your sense of national pride.
9. You don't have to bother with toilets, just sh\*t in the street.
10. People think you're a great lover even when you're not.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING AMERICAN: ☹

1. You can have a woman president without electing her.
2. You can spell color wrong and get away with it.
3. You can call Budweiser beer.
4. You can be a crook and still be president.
5. If you've got enough money you can get elected to do anything.
6. If you can breathe you can get a gun.
7. You get to be fat.
8. You can play golf in the most hideous clothes ever made and nobody seems to care.
9. You get to call everyone you've never met "buddy".
10. You can think you're the greatest nation on earth.
- 10a. When you're not.
- 10b. At all.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING NORWEGIAN:

1. You get to pay the highest taxes in the world.
2. You can kill baby seals and eat Rudolf the Reindeer.
3. You live in total freezing darkness half the year and get 24-hour ozone-hole radiation the other half.
4. You can get capital punishment for smoking dope.
5. You can go skiing in your knickers.
6. You get to hate the Swedes and beat the Brazilians in football.
7. You have to be a woman to get anywhere.
8. You don't need to worry about land prices rocketing - it's fairly spacious.
9. When abroad you can impress people you meet with stories about killing polar bears and shagging penguins - and they believe you.
10. You can actually get bored with blondes.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING ENGLISH: ☹

1. Two World Wars and One World Cup-doo-dah, doo-dah.
2. Proper beer.
3. You get to confuse everyone with the rules of cricket.
4. You get to accept defeat graciously in major sporting events.
5. Union jack underpants.
6. Water shortages guaranteed every single summer.
7. You can live in the past and imagine you are still a world power.
8. Bathing once a week - whether you need to or not.
9. Ditto changing underwear.
10. Beats being Welsh.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING SCOTTISH:

1. You ain't English!
2. You ain't English!
3. You ain't English!
4. You ain't English!
5. You ain't English!
6. You ain't English!
7. You ain't English!
8. You ain't English!
9. You ain't English!
10. You ain't English!

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING ITALIAN:

1. In-depth knowledge of bizarre pasta shapes.
2. Unembarrassed to wear fur.
3. No need to worry about tax returns.
4. Glorious military history prior to 400 B.C.
5. Can wear sunglasses inside.
6. Political stability.
7. Flexible working hours.
8. Live near the Pope.
9. Can spend hours braiding girlfriend's armpit hair.
10. Country run by Sicilian murderers.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING SPANISH:

1. Glorious history of killing South American tribes.
2. The rest of Europe thinks Africa begins at the Pyrenees.
3. You get your beaches invaded by Germans, Danes, Brits, etc.
4. The rest of your country is already invaded by Moroccans.
5. Everybody else makes crap paella and claims it's the real thing.
6. Honesty.
7. Only sure way of bedding a woman is to dress up in stupid, tight clothes and risk your life in front of bulls.
8. You get to eat bulls' testicles.
9. Gibraltar.
10. Supported Argentina in Falklands War.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING INDIAN:

1. Chicken Madras.
2. Lamb Passanda.
3. Onion Bhaji.
4. Bombay Potato.
5. Chicken Tikka Masala.
6. Rogan Josh.
7. Popadoms.

- 5) How will you characterize each factor? Provide examples both from the reading and additional sources if possible.
- 6) What do you know about Kazakhstani business gift giving practices?
- 7) What do you know about business gift giving practices in the English speaking countries?
- 8) What gifts are preferred in your family? In which situations?

**Part II. An Interview:**

**Introduction:** You will have to interview a representative of a business company. Hopefully, it won't be difficult to find one. To make some comparisons on intercultural business gift giving practices during class discussion, it is good if each student in the group interviews representatives of culturally diverse business enterprises (like international companies or joint ventures). Kazakhstani enterprises dealing with foreign partners are of great interest as well.

**Instructions:**

1. Prepare interview questions on business gift giving (you are free to use the information in Table 1 of the reading). Try to avoid sensitive issues if you know there are or might be any.
2. Discuss the questions with your instructor prior to arranging an interview.
3. Make interview arrangements, and then conduct it. Do not forget to take notes.
4. Process your interview results for class discussion on the topic: "Gifts that are presented to businesses and by businesses in Kazakhstan."

Text #4

**Cross-Cultural Business Gift Giving: A Reading**

The most critical barriers to successful business giving in foreign countries are the customs and practices of the domestic culture. Appropriate behavior based on a profound cultural understanding can bridge the differences between cultures and, thus, increase chances of forming a good business relationship. There are etiquettes and local customs when it comes to business gift giving. In cultures where a business gift is expected, but not presented, it is an insult to the host. In countries where gifts generate an obligation, such as Japan, it may be beneficial to engage in the practice (Fadiman, 1986). Yet in other cultures, offering a business gift could be misinterpreted as inappropriate, thus offending the recipients. For example, in Germany and Switzerland, local executives do not feel comfortable accepting gifts because they do not like being obligated. The customs that one must abide by when conducting business in a different culture are known as "imperatives." The term used to refer to customs and practices that are optional is "adiaphoras" (Cateora, 1993). In this context, business gift giving is regarded as either an imperative (i.e. a must) or an adiaphora (i.e. something one may or may not have to do).

Based on anthropological literature, cultures which view business gift giving as an imperative seem to belong to Hall's high context category (Hall, 1959; 1966; 1976). In such a culture, communication style is more implicit, non-verbal, and is more reliant on hidden cues and the context of personal relationships. Successful communication and negotiation depend more on friendship and trust, than the explicit words in contracts. By contrast, people in a low context culture seldom borrow or lend among each other, they emphasize promptness, rely on explicit contracts, and usually form short-term personal relationships. Communication in such a culture is more formal and explicit, with negotiations based on a more formal legalistic orientation (Hall and Hall, 1987).

High context cultures such as those upheld by the Japanese, Arabs and Mediterraneans (Italians, Spanish, Turkish, etc.) tend to view gift giving as an imperative. For these cultures, customs of giving gifts are complex, delicate, and are considered relatively more meaningful activities. Societal members are more concerned with those who are closely related (family, friends, business associates) than privacy. They borrow from and lend to each other more often and more easily and have a strong tendency to build lifetime relationships. On the other hand, the optional customs of business gift giving (treated as an adiaphora) seem to prevail primarily in low context cultures such as the U.S., Germany and Switzerland.

Imperative gift giving in a high context culture suggests that business gift giving is a critical part of conducting business and, thus, cannot be avoided. To be accepted in the business community one must conform to the accepted way of gift giving. On the other hand, adiaphora gift giving in a low context culture suggests that business gift giving is an optional activity but, if it is done properly, it could enhance the competitive advantage of the company.

We identify five factors which further elaborate differences in business gift giving between the two cultural contexts. Based on these factors, research propositions are provided for future empirical tests by academics and for use as guidelines by managers making cross-cultural gift giving decisions. The latter presentation is in a checklist format presented in Table 1.

**Legal Factors**

*Legal restrictions concerning business gift giving in low context cultures are more stringent and more numerous than those in high context cultures.*

In terms of variation in legal aspects affecting multinational operations worldwide, the U.S. seems to be the only nation that has sought to legislate moral business conduct overseas (Singer, 1991). The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) prohibits U.S. companies, their subsidiaries and representatives from making payments to high-ranking foreign government officials, or political parties for the purpose of making a sale or increasing the profits from a sale. Although it explicitly allows facilitating payments to persuade foreign officials to perform their normal duties, the guidelines on business gift giving are not well specified. In a broad sense, FCPA only requires companies to keep a reasonably fair and accurate record of transactions (Coppett, and Staples, 1990). In other low context countries, the laws applying to business gift giving are also well laid out. Scandinavian

countries require that every consumer and business promotion be approved by the government. In Italy and Germany, bribes can be legally deducted as business expenses, but only in transactions abroad (Cateora, 1993).

Table 1

|  |
|--|
| <p>1. What are the legal restrictions on gift giving:<br/>         In the giver's country?<br/>         In the recipient's country?</p> <p>2. What are the ethical implications of gift giving:<br/>         In the giver's country?<br/>         In the recipient's country?<br/>         As they relate to:<br/>         The act of gift giving<br/>         The value of the gift<br/>         Perception of bribery</p> <p>3. What company policies apply to gift giving:<br/>         In the giver's country?<br/>         In the recipient's country?</p> <p>4. What if gift giving is an acceptable practice in both the giver's and recipient's company:<br/>         What is the acceptable range of value of a gift?<br/>         Is the value of the gift linked to status or practice?</p> <p>5. What are the possible taboos of gift giving in the giver's and the recipient's country with regard to:<br/>         Attached or implied meaning<br/>         Product attributes<br/>         Country of origin<br/>         Physical characteristics<br/>         Color<br/>         Religious or cultural holidays</p> |
|--|

On the other hand, many high context countries view gifts, payoffs and even bribes as merely a cost of business (Coppett, and Staples, 1990). In some Middle Eastern and Far Eastern countries, such payments are legal (Laczniak, and Murphy, 1985). Bribery is actually a part of the commercial traditions of parts of Asia, Africa and the Middle East (Fadiman, 1986). For example, in such countries, it is expected that government officials will make up for low salaries and even provide for retirement by accepting bribes. Bribery is simply seen as a tax for using government services and therefore harmless (Braybrooke, 1983). However, it must be emphasized that the level of economic development and personal income is not likely to be as critical a factor for explaining the degree of gift giving as the cultural context. The example used above was offered simply to illustrate the broad

connotations that "gift giving" can take on in high context cultures. Japan, for example, is a highly developed, affluent society with widespread gift-giving practices. Refusing to participate in business gift giving in such cultures can cause hard feelings and misunderstandings between business clients.

*Ethical Factors*

*Ethics pertaining to business gift giving in a low context culture are more stringent and more elaborate than those in a high context culture.*

Related to legal factors are ethical concerns that arise when business gift giving is used to influence relationships and effect certain outcomes. In the U.S. and other low context cultures, business gifts of high value are generally discouraged and are usually not accepted by business executives. Expensive gifts are often perceived by the receiver as a form of hard sell or, even worse, as a bribe. Such gifts could create a negative attitude, and destroy the original purpose of the gift, which was to stimulate reciprocity (Shama, and Thompson, 1989).

Ethical norms vary greatly across cultures and, as such, culture has a strong impact on what constitutes ethical decision making and ethical behavior. Due to cultural diversity, there is no single standard of ethical behavior for all nations (Laczniak, and Murphy, 1985). Dubinsky *et al.* (1991) found that Korean salespeople view giving gifts to buyers as less of an ethical issue than the Americans. Koreans also feel that giving gifts, providing entertainment to buyers, and giving preferential treatment to good customers are less of an ethical issue than the Japanese do.

The codes of business ethics to gift giving differ in high and low context cultures. Cross-cultural courtesy or attempts to make friends in high context cultures can easily be misunderstood by Westerners as begging or blackmail. Three traditions in high context cultures that form a condition for payoffs are: the inner circle, the future favor, and the gift exchange. Concerning the inner circle tradition, one is considered either an "insider" or an "outsider." To get into the inner circle tradition, one must create an obligation. As for the future favor tradition, to strengthen buyer-seller relationships, gifts are given to create an obligation that can be reciprocated in the future. The exchange of gifts creates an inner debt which has to be discharged, a practice called *giri* in Japan (Fadiman, 1986).

*Company Policies*

*Companies from a low context culture (regardless of operation location) tend to have a stronger formal policy addressing business gift giving than those from a high context culture.*

*Companies operating in a low context culture (regardless of their national origin) tend to have a stronger formal policy addressing business gift giving than those operating in high context countries.*

Firms based in various countries often come up with their own policies on what is and is not acceptable behavior with regard to business gift giving. Written codes are effective in communicating the importance of a policy, as they focus both management and employee attention on ethical issues, and they give a clear

reason for employees to act in a certain way and identify penalties for violators (Coppett, and Staples, 1990). Gift-giving policies, in particular, are designed to prevent conflicts of interest, to avoid compromising the company and to protect employee integrity (Yager, 1991).

Because many U.S. multinational corporations view the FCPA as ambiguous on such issues as legal ways to facilitate payments, bribes and gift giving, they have banned these practices altogether so as to remain on the safe side of the law (Braybrooke, 1983). For example, certain sales and marketing activities conducted by U.S. firms overseas frequently have been criticized for promoting products (through bribes and payoffs) to generate sales. When such activities have been determined to be illegal, the result is an embarrassment for both the company and its country, as with the case of Lockheed Aircraft and Prime Minister Tanaka of Japan (Laczniak, and Murphy, 1985). Consequently, many U.S. companies have developed strict policies on gift giving and bribes. For example, IBM, GE and Eastman Kodak have adopted a broad policy of prohibiting the use of business gifts (Kim, and Barone, 1981). In spite of GE's policy of no gifts, and informing suppliers of it, an internal audit found violations in the purchasing department of the Aircraft Engine Business group. Ten employees were forced to resign and five others were disciplined because sports tickets, liquor and other larger gifts were accepted by them. Ford and GE agree that accepting gifts of nominal value cannot be avoided (Thomas, 1989).

On the other hand, multinational companies from high context cultures appear to have less formal company policies and standards on the issues of giving and accepting gifts. Some even choose not to address the issue at all, allowing for a wider latitude to use gifts for influencing others to, perhaps, gain a competitive edge.

#### *Acceptable Value and Price Range*

*Business gift giving value is driven more by status differences in a high context culture.*

*Business gift given in a high context culture tend to have a relatively higher value than those given in a low context culture.*

An acceptable price range of a gift tends to be driven by cultural and legal factors. In a high context culture, position or status is so very critical in determining gift value for various people (i.e. there is a clear hierarchy of gift values in accordance with the hierarchy of power). Legally under the American IRS tax laws, up to \$25 per client can be deductible as a business gift expense and up to \$4 per client can be deducted for logo and promotional items as advertising expenses (Bryan, 1987). Though some U.S. executives exceed the \$25 limit, most do not (Meredith, and Fried, 1977). Because of guidelines set by the IRS, gifts under \$25 are considered appropriate in most circumstances since the value of the gift is small enough not to sway a person to act against his/her principles or against company policies. In a low context culture, expensive gifts may be mistaken as a bribe although monetary value alone cannot be used to distinguish a bribe from a gift (Reardon, 1984).

#### *Taboos in Gift Giving*

*There are more taboos associated with business gift giving in a high context culture than a low context culture.*

Because so much significance is given to gift giving in a high context culture, there tend to be more taboos associated with the *what, when, where, how, by whom and to whom*. Moreover, people are more sensitive to and more prone to attaching meanings to product attributes (such as country of origin, quantity, physical characteristics, and color of gifts). The following examples are just a few taboos that add complexity to cross-cultural business gift giving (Axtell, 1990; Bryan, 1987):

- Do not give gifts made in China to a Korean.
- In Latin America the gift of a knife means the severing of a relationship.
- Do not give hand-made dolls to a Brazilian, because they are associated with voodoo.

Therefore, it is critical for business executives to understand and be aware of the powerful taboos associated with certain gifts in many high context cultures. On the other hand, relatively less frequent incidents of strong beliefs and taboos are associated with gift giving in a low context culture.

There is no doubt that cross-cultural gift giving is an essential part of international business practices. It is integral in cross-cultural communication and negotiation processes, especially in high context cultures. It is important for us to increase our understanding of this topic as the trends towards globalization continue to strengthen and grow.

(Adapted from Arunthanes, Wiboon, Patriya Tansubaj, and David J. Lemak. "Cross-Cultural Business Gift Giving: A New Conceptualization and Theoretical Framework", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1994, pp. 44-55.)

## KEYS

### To Assignment #4

1. The Chinese (Charles Allen. *Tales from the South China Seas*.)
2. The Moroccans (Paul Bowles. *Their Heads Are Green and Their Hands Are Blue*.)
3. The Indians (J.R. Ackerley. *Hindoo Holiday*.)
4. The Americans (Betty Bao Lord. *Spring Moon*.)
5. The Afghans (Robert Byron. *The Road to Oxiana*.)
6. France (Arthur Young. *Travels in France*.)
7. The Russians (Jan L. Perkowski. *America, 4 October 1986*.)
8. An American (Turkish Exchange Student. *There Is a Difference*.)
9. The Americans (Georges Clemenceau.)
10. The Arabs (Edward T. Hall. *The Hidden Dimension*.)
11. [The women of the harem]. (Harriet Martineau. *Eastern Life*.)
12. India (E. M. Foster. *The Hill of Devi*.)
13. Southern countries (Aldous Huxley. *Along the Road*.)
14. The Americans (Lord Killanin. *My Olympic Years*.)

### To Assignment #5

- Stay in touch with friends or others you have confidence in. Don't withdraw. Some people find new friends through their nationality clubs.
- Remain active. Do social things that you enjoy - for example, taking walks, swimming, going to concerts or movies, or eating meals with friends.
- Get a routine and stick with it. This will create a new daily life that begins to feel familiar - "normal." It's important to keep about the same times every day for meals, going to bed, and getting up.
- Stay healthy. Get plenty of sleep. You may find at first you need more than you did at home. Eat well. Get exercise several times a week. A healthy, well-rested body is better able to handle things like loneliness and confusion.

## REFERENCES

- Althen, G. *American Ways: A Guide for Foreigners in the United States*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1988.
- Arunthanes, W., Tansuhaj, P., and Lemak, D.J. "Cross-Cultural Business Gift Giving: A New Conceptualization and Theoretical Framework", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1994.
- Axtell, E.R. *Do's and Taboos of Hosting International Visitors*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1990.
- Braybrooke, D. *Ethics in the World of Business*. NJ: Roman & Alanheld, 1983.
- Brislin, R., Cushner, K., Cherric, C., and Yong, M. *Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage Publications, 1986.
- Bryan, D. *The Art of Etiquette of Gift Giving*. New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1987.
- Cateora, R.P. *International Marketing*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Homewood, IL: Irwin, 1993.
- Coppett, I.J., and Staples, A.W. *Professional Selling - A Relationship Management Process*. Cincinnati, OH: South Western, 1990.
- Dubinsky, J.A., Jolson, A.M., Kotabe, M., and Lim, U.C. "A Cross National Investigation of Industrial Salespeople's Ethical Perception", *Journal of Business Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 4, 1991.
- Fadiman, A.J. "A Traveler's Guide to the Gifts and Bribes", *Harvard Business Review*, July-August, 1986.
- Hall, E.T. *The Silent Language*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1959.
- Hall, E.T. *The Hidden Dimension*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1966.
- Hall, E.T. *Beyond Culture*. New York, NY: Anchor Press-Doubleday, 1976.
- Hall, E.T., and Hall, R.M. *Hidden Differences Doing Business with the Japanese*. New York, NY: Anchor Press-Doubleday, 1987.
- Hess, D.J. *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1994.
- Ishii, S., and Klopff, D. "A Comparison of Stereotypes Held by Japanese and Americans of Selected National Groups", *Otsuima Women's University Annual Report*, Vol. 20, 1988.
- Kim, H.S., and Barone, S. "Is the FCPA of 1977 a Success or Failure?" *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 12, Winter, 1981.
- Kohls, R.L. *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1984.
- Laczniak, R.G., and Murphy, F.P. *Marketing Ethics: Guidelines for Managers*. Lexington, MA/Toronto: D.C. Heath & Co., 1985.
- Meredith, G., and Fried, R.P. *Incentives in Marketing*. NJ: National Premium Sales Executives Education Fund, Union, 1977.
- Reardon, K.K. "It's the Thought that Counts", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 62, No. 5, September-October, 1984.
- Shama, A., and Thompson, K.J. "Gifts Build Goodwill and Market Share", *Journal of Retail Banking*. Vol. 11, Summer, 1989.

Singer, W.A. "Ethics: Are Standards Lower Overseas?" *Across the Board*, 28 September 1991.

Stewart, E.C., and Bennett, M.J. *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1991.

Thomas, M.C. "It's Blessed to Give, But Not to Employees of the Big Three", *Automotive News*, 26 June 1989.

Triandis, H.C. "Theoretical Concepts That Are Applicable to the Analysis of Ethnocentrism", *Applied Cross-Cultural Psychology*. New York: Sage Publications, 1990.

Yager, J. *Business Protocol, How to Survive and Succeed in Business*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1991.

Заказ №2789. Подписано в печать 11.04.02  
Формат 60x84 1/16. Бумага офсет №1.  
Печать RISO. Усл.печ.л. 2,1.  
Тираж 100 экз.

Отпечатано в ТОО "ПД "Домино"  
г. Алматы, пр. Гагарина, 52  
тел. 42-53-47

8. Chicken Dopiazza.
9. Meat Boona.
10. Kingfisher lager.

**TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING GERMAN:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Give them a second chance.

1. Oktoberfest.
2. Oktoberfest-beer.
3. BMW.
4. VW.
5. Audi.
6. Mercedes.
7. On a highway you can travel at a speed that would bring you to jail in any other country of the world.
8. You do not have to learn German as a foreign language.
9. You think Sauerkraut is delicious.
10. Contrary to common believe laughing is not forbidden by law.

**TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING WELSH:**

1. You've got to be having a laugh, haven't you? X

**TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING IRISH:**

1. Guinness.
2. 18 children because you can't use contraceptives.
3. You can get into a fight just by marching down someone's road.
4. Pubs never close.
5. Can use Papal edicts on contraception passed in second Vatican Council of 1968 to persuade your girlfriend that you can't have sex with a condom on.
6. No one can ever remember the night before.
7. Kill people you don't agree with.
8. Stew.
9. More Guinness.
10. Eating stew and drinking Guinness in an Irish pub at 3 in the morning after a bout of sectarian violence.

**TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING CANADIAN:** U

1. It beats being an American.
2. Only country to successfully invade the U.S. and burn its capital to the ground.
3. You can play ice hockey 12 months a year, outdoors.
4. Only country to successfully invade the U.S. and burn its capital to the ground.
5. Where else can you travel 1000 miles over fresh water in a canoe?
6. A political leader can admit to smoking pot and his/her popularity ratings will rise.
7. Only country to successfully invade the U.S. and burn its capital to the ground.
8. Kill Grizzly bears with huge f\*\*koff shotguns and cover your house in their skins.
9. Own-an-Eskimo scheme.
10. Only country to successfully invade the U.S. and burn its capital to the ground.

**TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING AUSTRALIAN:** LL

1. Know your great grand dad was a murdering bar steward that no civilized nation on earth wanted.
2. Fosters Lager.
3. Dispossess Aborigines who have lived in your country for 40,000 years because you think it belongs to you.
4. Cricket captain not afraid to cry live on TV.
5. Tact and sensitivity.
6. Bondi Beach.
7. Other beaches.
8. Liberated attitude to homosexuals.
9. Drinking cold lager on the beach.
10. Having a bit of a swim and then drink some cold lager on the beach.

Assignment #9

**How Do Cultures Differ in Business Gift Giving Practices?** U

**Part 1. Reading for Meaning:**

a) Read Text #4 on business gift giving. As you read make notes and underline the main ideas. You will apply what you know during your class on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

b) Applying what you know. Questions for class discussion:

- 1) What are "imperatives" and "adiaphoras"?
- 2) What are the differences between high and low context cultures?
- 3) Is Kazakhstan a high or low context culture?
- 4) Can you enumerate the five factors that differentiate the two cultural contexts in business gift giving?

- h) Why is it so difficult for people to accept those who have a cultural view that opposes our own in a neutral way? Why do we tend to judge negatively people who see the world differently from us?
- i) Why is it important that we understand today's concepts before we move ahead in this course?

Text #1

### From Ethnocentrism & Stereotyping to Ethnorelativism & Empathy:

#### A Reading

*How do we develop our worldview? (Why are we frequently bothered by people who are not like us?)*

No matter what country we come from, beginning at a very early age we all learn a set of cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors, which shape the way we look at the world. For example, these cultural traits tell us what beliefs about religion are acceptable or not, how and why people date and get married, how to dress, how to socialize with friends, what constitutes a "good" job, and so on. Internalizing the cultural patterns of your society is important because they help people to interact smoothly and effectively with each other.

We generally are not aware of our society's cultural patterns until we meet people from other countries whose ideas on the exact same topics are quite different from our own. For example, you might meet someone who believes that the guiding laws of a country's government should come from religious rules when your country separates religious rules from governmental laws. Ironically, it is when we realize that not everyone is like us that we begin to think about our own culture. What happens is that we meet a person from another culture whose habits, ideas, or customs seem strange. For example, we may meet a woman who prefers a veil and long dress in public, or we may meet someone who seems to be focused on time at the expense of enjoying food, friends, and fun. From this feeling of strangeness, we may then jump to a feeling of dislike or disapproval.

The fact that we react negatively should not really be surprising. We invest a lot of time and energy in developing our set of cultural values, deciding what is "good" and "bad" or appropriate as we interact with people around us. Our views on things like what makes a person honest, polite, considerate, intelligent help define who we are as human beings. It makes us uncomfortable to realize that there are people in the world who do not hold those same views; furthermore, they believe their views are perfectly workable and logical - it is ours that seem strange or inappropriate to them. Feeling a little uncomfortable about this is OK. However, problems in communication begin to occur when these feelings of being uncomfortable lead us to automatically judge someone who is different from us as "bad" or "negative".

### Ethnocentrism and Stereotyping

When we see different as bad or negative, we are being ethnocentric, which can lead to stereotypical labeling of others. *Ethnocentrism* and *stereotyping* contribute to misunderstanding in cross-cultural interactions.

*Ethnocentrism* means making judgments based on one's own standards and applying those standards to others who may be from very different cultures (Brislin, 1986, p.262). Instead of looking at our culture as just one of many, each with valid realities, values, assumptions, we see our ways of interaction as the absolute truth. In other words, our own group is seen as the standard of what is good, normal, or positive. If someone from another culture has the same characteristics as our group, then they are seen as normal or positive. However, if the other group does not have the same characteristics, then their actions or ideas are seen as strange, wrong, bad, or inappropriate.

One problem with this way of looking at the world is that it generates narrow-minded ideas. We may see differences as negative rather than neutral variations of what is real or normal. For example, some cultures believe that people should succeed because of what they do, not whom they know. People from this kind of culture may have a negative attitude toward people who believe that connections (whom you know) are more important than performance in determining job success. The problem is that this kind of thinking does not help us understand that worldviews, which sharply differ from our own, are just as valuable and workable as ours within their society.

*Ethnocentrism* occurs in all cultures. Two common ways Americans demonstrate ethnocentrism in cross-cultural interactions are through the statements "Deep down everyone is the same," and "Just be yourself." These statements are really reflections of American values of individualism and egalitarianism, but these are not held as important values in all cultures. In many cultures, the group or the family is much more important than the individual. (This is true, generally speaking, in Japan, China, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates.) In some societies, the idea that there will always be people who have a right to more status and power than you is seen as logical and appropriate.

Another problem with ethnocentric perceptions is that they can lead us to see others in *stereotypes*. Stereotypes are negative (or positive) labels we place on people to explain why they are different from us. Here are some examples heard on an American campus: *Japanese students only like to hang around with other Japanese. International students are too dependent. Americans only think of money. Latinos just love to party.* Stereotypes such as these are not based on lots of information. There is little thought given when assigning characteristics to other people. Rather, they are used to find a quick, easy solution to why the group or person we are interacting with is different from us in the framework of our own cultural experience (Bennett, 1991). Again, it should not be so surprising that people rely on stereotypes when interacting with someone whose cultural patterns are different even though they actually hinder the communication process. Stereotyping is our own natural defense in confronting cultural differences. It helps us to simplify the complexity of differences we run into every day when we



interact with people from so many different places and with so many different life experiences. Stereotypes allow us to protect our view of ourselves and our ego. However, they are dangerous because they do not force us examine why other people are different from us. Furthermore, they keep us from learning the important point that these different perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors are just as valid as ours.

### Empathy as a Tool to Reducing Ethnocentric Behavior

When we interact with people from other cultures, we are going to be confronted with hundreds of specific behaviors, ideas, and values which are going to seem unusual, even surprising. There is no way to prepare in advance for all of the differences that you will be asked to deal with. However, what we can do is to work on developing a tool that will help us to be more effective communicators when interacting with people who have cultural patterns that differ from our own. That tool is empathy.

Having empathy means being able to see the world from the other person's perspective. When interacting in an empathetic manner, we begin from an acknowledgement that there are differences from each other in our ways of thinking or acting, but we approach the differences in a cooperative rather than confrontational manner. Then we try to find common goals and context within which we can interact. When developing empathy for those who are different from us, we learn to assign causes or reasons to events the way the other culture does, not the way we do. So, when we see actions or behaviors that strike us as odd, we learn to say, "What are the rewards for this kind of behavior? Why is this behavior OK in the other culture? If I lived in that person's culture, I would probably do (think, act, feel, believe) the same thing."

This article has focused on some of the difficulties of intercultural communication, talking about what can go wrong with our cross-cultural communication style, or how we need to change it. Learning to communicate with people whose fundamental cultural values and beliefs differ from our own, while difficult, is also extremely rewarding. Good cross-cultural communication skills will help us if we plan to work in the international business community. Also, very importantly, as we develop more effective ways of communicating with people from other cultures, we learn to tolerate and sometimes even enjoy a whole host of ideas, events, and experiences that otherwise would have passed us by.

#### Sources:

- Brislin, Richard, Kenneth Cushner, Craig Cherrie, and Mahealani Yong. *Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage Publications, 1986.
- Stewart, Edward C., and Milton J. Bennett. *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1991.
- Triandis, Harry C. "Theoretical Concepts That Are Applicable to the Analysis of Ethnocentrism", *Applied Cross-Cultural Psychology* (ed. Richard W. Brislin). New York: Sage Publications, 1990.

## Stereotypes of Various People Held by Japanese and American College Students

Read the information below and fulfill the following:

1. Try to identify which stereotypes respond positively and which ones respond negatively towards people described.
2. Ask someone whose opinion on the subject matter you consider being reliable to tell you what he or she thinks about these various people.
3. Make comparisons and prepare your comments for class discussion.

### English

- by Japanese: formal, traditional, polite
- by American: formal, proper, polite, intelligent

### Irish

- by Japanese: cold, patient, religious
- by American: drinkers, hot-tempered, jovial, loud

### Chinese

- by Japanese: diligent, serious, ingenious, laboring
- by American: quiet, industrious, small, smart

### Mexicans

- by Japanese: cheerful, passionate, spicy-food eaters
- by American: lazy, poor, loud, dirty, uneducated

### Russians

- by Japanese: cold, dark, closed, secret, selfish
- by American: cold, respect authority, hardworking

### Israelis

- by Japanese: religious, faithful, warlike, Jewish
- by American: religious, quarrelsome, wealthy, greedy

### Blacks

- by Japanese: strong, musical, cheerful, discriminated against
- by American: athletic, loud, prejudiced, rhythmic, disrespectful of authority

#### Source:

Ishii, S., and Klopff, D. "A Comparison of Stereotypes Held by Japanese and Americans of Selected National Groups." *Otsu Women's University Annual Report*, Vol. 20, 1988, p. 73.

## Unit 2: CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

### Assignment #3

#### Adjustment? ↴

Read the text and express your agreement or disagreement with the management's decision on John's repatriation. Reason your opinion.

John was a manager who worked in the Saudi Arabian office of a North American international construction company. He was proud that the company was "American" and he always wanted to do things the American way.

When one of his colleagues was leaving to return home he wanted to organize a coffee party one afternoon to say farewell.

He had great difficulty in getting his Arab subordinates to agree to come to the party although he pressed them hard.

Eventually they complained to the higher management that John was trying to make them break Ramadan.

John was repatriated within a week for trying to impose home ways on the host culture.

### Assignment #4\*

#### Are They Strange or Just Different?

Read the extracts and try to guess what country or culture is described. Explain why you think so. Find language cues in each extract that might be of support to prove your opinion. (What are they?)

1. But the chief confusion for outsiders was that [the natives] telescoped time. They would relate something that happened five years ago as if it happened last week, and so you could go very badly astray on this.

CHARLES ALLEN

2. When they came they often brought singers and musicians to entertain me. The only hitch was [they] went to such lengths to treat me as one of them that they also assumed I was not interested in going out into the city. During the entire fortnight I spent with them I never once found my way out of the house. For long hours I sat in the patio listening to the sounds of the city outside, in the hope that someone would come, something would happen. But as I say, if I was bored, that was my own fault. They were doing everything they could to please me.

PAUL BOWLES

3. I walked through the city this morning ... but before I had gone very far I began to feel timid. ... I found myself an object of curiosity, and this embarrassed me. Everyone stared at me; people who were squatting on their heels in front of their houses rose up, salaamed, called others out and stood staring; groups of men interrupted their conversation to watch me pass; children followed me, and women covered their faces. ... I felt intrusive and self-conscious.

J. R. ACKERLEY

4. Bold Talent shook his head. How like children they were, with their pranks and easy warmth. Men who offered their hands for strangers to shake, ladies who sat and chattered at dinner with gentlemen they had never seen before, children who threw snowballs at adults no matter what their station. He would miss them.

BETTY BAO LORD

5. "I am not the type, monsieur, who feels himself superior to the rest of humanity. Indeed, I am no better than others. But these people. ... They are not human."

"But why do you say that?"

"You don't see why, monsieur? Have you eyes? Look at those men over there. Are they not eating with their hands? With their hands! It is frightful."

ROBERT BYRON

6. In this arrangement of the day no circumstance is so objectionable as that of dining at noon ... for as the ceremony is kept up, you must be home from any morning's excursion by twelve o'clock. ... Dividing the day exactly in halves destroys it for any expedition, business, or enquiry that demands seven or eight hours' attention. ... I am induced to make this observation because the noon dinners are customary all over this country. They cannot be treated with too much ridicule or severity for they are hostile to every view of science, to every spirited exertion, and to every useful pursuit in life.

ARTHUR YOUNG

7. Their lack of personal space at home in their apartments, on public transportation or on the job causes them to erect their personal space boundaries next to their skin. Therefore it is common for them to have deadpan or frozen expressions on their faces. We tend to perceive this as unfriendly and it may ruffle our feathers.

JAN L. PERKOWSKI

8. Once we were out in a rural area in the middle of nowhere and saw a man come to a stop sign. Though he could see in both directions for miles and no traffic was coming, he still stopped!

TURKISH EXCHANGE STUDENT

9. They have no capacity for abstract thought and make bad coffee.

GEORGES CLEMENCEAU

10. To them good smells are pleasing and a way of being involved with each other. To smell one's friend is not only nice but desirable, for to deny him your breath is to act ashamed. Americans, on the other hand, trained as they are not to breathe in people's faces, automatically communicate shame in trying to be polite.  
EDWARD T. HALL

11. [They] pitied us European women heartily, that we had to go about traveling, and appearing in the streets without being properly taken care of - that is, watched. They think us strangely neglected in being left so free, and boast of [how closely they are watched] as a token of the value in which they are held.  
HARRIET MARTINEAU

12. I was traveling with a few of the nobles by train. Seeing "Beef" on the menu, I ordered it. The waiter said "Beef" was off, so I had something else. Later, back in Dewas, the host said to me, with great gentleness, "Morgan, I want to speak to you on a very serious subject indeed. When you were traveling with my people you asked to eat something, the name of which I cannot even mention. If the waiter had brought it, they would all have had to leave the table. So they spoke to him behind your back and told him to tell you that it was not there. They did this because they knew you did not intend anything wrong, and because they love you."  
E. M. FOSTER

13. Nothing is more charming than their courtesy, but sometimes they really are too sympathetic by half. For in order not to contradict you or give you a moment's pain by disputing the accuracy of your ideas, they will tell you what you want to hear rather than what would be of real use to you to hear. At the same time their own self-esteem will not permit them to confess a blank ignorance; they will rather tell you something incorrect than tell you nothing at all.  
ALDOUS HUXLEY

14. Here again was their new world attitude of bringing out the bulldozer to save someone from an awful fate, or what they thought was an awful fate. ... I had not reckoned with their naiveté nor their lack of subtlety.  
LORD KILLANIN

(Modified from Gary Althen. *American Ways: A Guide for Foreigners in the United States*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1988.)

\* Instructions to a lecturer: The best arrangement for this assignment is to distribute the extracts among students one for each of them and ask to discuss their samples in pairs before coming up with their explanations for group discussion.

How Much Do You Know About Culture Shock? X

- 1. Read the text on culture shock.
2. After you finish reading, check if the following statements are true (T) or false (F):

• Culture shock is the same as homesickness. T F

• Many people are very happy and excited during their first few weeks in a new country. T F

• Some people feel culture shock; some don't. T F

• Most people who move to new countries adapt to the new culture after the first six weeks. T F

• The symptoms of culture shock are always mental, not physical. T F

• Strong feelings of anger are a common symptom of culture shock. T F

• If you feel really homesick and stressed by culture shock, it's a good idea to take a week off from classes/work and relax by yourself in your room or apartment. T F

• To get over culture shock, you must learn to like the food in the new country. T F

• Because physical exercise is stressful, it's better not to exercise when you are feeling culture shock. T F

• A sense of humor can help to cope with culture shock. T F

- 3. What should you do when you feel lonely, confused, and sad in a new country? Why? (Some ideas are provided in the Keys section. See, if you've got the same ones.)

\* Instructions to a lecturer: Ask your students, if there is at least someone who has stayed abroad for more than three months and might share the feelings he/she has

experienced there. If there is no one, ask your students to interview someone who has got such experience, and to come up with their comments at a seminar that will follow this one.

Text #2

### Culture Shock

When people leave home, they begin a new life. Adjustment to their new life takes more than a few days or weeks. Learning to be comfortable in a new culture can take a long time.

When people enter a new culture, they usually feel disoriented. There are many things that are new. It takes a lot of time to learn about the new food, ways of transportation, and how to use the post office, banks, and stores. It is exhausting to speak in a second language all of the time.

When people come to a new country, they are separated from their families and friends. They are also separated from their jobs or their familiar work as students. People in a new culture often feel very confused and frustrated. These feelings are usually called *culture shock*.

Culture shock is the adjustment process that occurs when people begin living in a culture different from their own. For most people it begins with the excitement and adventure of moving. Things may go very well at the beginning, but as newness wears off the unpleasant feelings of culture shock begin.

With culture shock, some people get headaches or stomach aches; some people feel angry. Other common feelings are sadness and homesickness. There are many different symptoms and not everyone feels all of them. Some typical feelings are frustration, alienation, depression, fear, and loneliness. These feelings occur because people leave their familiar surroundings. The knowledge of how to behave in many different situations, communicate with others, and carry on daily life is often not very useful in the new culture. People are surrounded by things that are strange and new. This can be exciting at first, but as time passes, they get tired of new things and the symptoms of culture shock appear.

Culture shock happens to everyone who lives in a new culture to some degree. Because people are all different, their feelings are different. However, many people experience the following:

*Initial euphoria:* Everything is exciting and new. It is interesting and fun to be in a new country. The people of the new country are interesting. These feelings last for the first two weeks to two months of a stay in a new country.

*Irritability and hostility:* Now things aren't so exciting. The food isn't as good. The people in the new country aren't so friendly. One begins to notice lots of differences between the new country and his/her own country. These differences

are difficult to understand. He/she starts feeling this irritability and hostility after staying in a new country for two or three months.

*Gradual adjustment:* As time passes, people begin to feel more comfortable in their new environment. They can understand the new language better, and they can enjoy some of the differences between cultures.

Assignment #6

### The Insight Inventory: Attitude & Character Traits That Promote Cultural Learning

Activity: Assessing Your Potential for Culture Learning.

Directions: Look through the list of traits in the Insight Inventory. On a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high), rate yourself in each of these traits. Write the number beside each trait and total them.

Culture learning is more than getting over culture shock or getting used to life in a new country. It is a process of personal growth and transformation. It is true that some people cannot tolerate this process and decide to return home early. Others make half-hearted accommodations to the new culture, but still see the people who come from host culture in negative ways.

Just as there are strategies for being a good language learner, there are also characteristics that promote successful culture learning. Generally speaking, a good learner of culture believes that he/she is beginning a journey from a "monocultural point to a larger world view in which he/she develops new perspectives, learns new mental, emotional, and behavioral responses. In short, that person learns to build intercultural bridges and in the end becomes a new cultural person" (Hess, 1994, p. 10).

Thanks to millions of travelers who have lived in new cultures, we know that there are certain skills or traits that can help ease adjustment to a new culture, even when it is very different from our own:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Tolerance for Ambiguity
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tolerance Ability to Set Realistic Goals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Open-Mindedness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Judgmentalness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Empathy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communicativeness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Flexibility/Adaptability
- \_\_\_\_\_ Curiosity
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sense of Humor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Warmth in Human Relationships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Motivation

Humor X

- Self-Reliance \_\_\_\_\_
- Strong Sense of Self \_\_\_\_\_
- Tolerance for Differences \_\_\_\_\_
- Perceptiveness \_\_\_\_\_
- Ability to Fail \_\_\_\_\_

*Recommendations:* Dr. Robert Kohls, an expert in the area of cross-cultural adjustment, has found that people who score below 55 (out of a possible 80) on this list tend to have difficulty during cross-cultural adjustment process. If your score is below 55, what can you do? One strategy is to pick one or two traits on your list that received a score of 1-4. Work on improving those skills first, and then move to a new skill on the list. Three traits are considered more important than all of the others in learning about a new culture. If you don't know where to get started, you might want to work on one of these:

1. *Sense of Humor* - At times getting used to a new culture can be anything but funny! Developing the ability to laugh when you'd rather cry or get angry helps fight the difficult times of adjustment.
2. *Ability to Set Realistic Goals* - Setting unattainable or unrealistic goals leads to disappointment. We feel like a failure even though the goal we set for ourselves was impossible to reach. People who are able to relax and handle new circumstances as they happen tend to be more effective and enjoy their overseas experience more.
3. *Ability to Fail* - This can be tough for people who are used to being very successful in their personal life, and professional or academic life. If you have experienced very little failure at home, this may be hard to accept. However, the ability to fail when living overseas is critical. "Everyone fails at something when living overseas" (Kohls, 1984, p.73). Fortunately academic, professional and social success generally return quickly to those who were successful at home due to their motivation and hard work in their new cultural environment.

**Sources:**  
 Hess, J. Daniel. *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1994, pp. 9-10.  
 Kohls, L. Robert. *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1984, pp. 71-73.

**Introduction:** As it has already been discussed in Assignment #6, humor is considered to be one of the most important traits in learning a new culture. We consider some people to have sense of humor, and some not to have it. What about you? How would you handle a joke told by someone else that was unfair to you or to another cultural group?

**Instructions:**  
 1. Check the approach you feel you would use. Would you:

1. Go on as if it had not taken place, but later take the person aside and alert him/her to your feelings on the matter.
2. Denounce the storyteller in public.
3. Tell an appropriate joke as a model for the kind of jokes that should be told.
4. Laugh now but tell the person about your discomfort later in private.
5. Tell an even worse joke about the other person's group.

2. Explain if there are reasons for choosing that particular approach?

## Unit 3: A MULTICULTURAL WORLD

Assignment #8

### How Are We Different?

**Introduction:** The information you will find attached is taken from the e-mail message of a Russian girl who is an international university student in Sweden. (Let's call her "Masha.") The experience of living and studying abroad with students from various countries has obviously excited her greatly. It also has made Masha come to a number of *personal* observations about diverse cultures and people, which she has described under the title "Cultural Differences: Top 10 Reasons for Being..." Masha's thoughts show that some of the most effective and efficient cultural learning abroad takes place outside of the classroom. Her "reasons" help us get a sense of how cultural assumptions we make of others can reinforce our positive/negative stereotypes of them.

#### Instructions:

- A. Read Text #3 for class discussion on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
- B. Applying what you know. Questions for whole group discussion:
1. Do you see people from other cultures in the same way?
  2. Have you found anything in the text that surprises you? That you disagree with?
  3. Why was it difficult for Masha to describe a Russian soul?
  4. How are students/people in Kazakhstan different from students/people in other countries?
  5. How are you, as an individual, different from students in your class? How are you similar?
  6. Judging from the "reasons" provided by Masha, what would you prefer being if you have a choice?
  7. Could you think of top 10 reasons for being Kazakhstani?
  8. Could you think of top 10 reasons for being Kazakh/Russian/Ukrainian/etc. (who you really are)?
  9. Have you come across any unknown or useful English words and word combinations in the text? What are they?

Text #3

#### Cultural Differences: Top 10 Reasons for Being...

Dear friends!

Living in Sweden in a corridor with students from 15 different countries, I find it really exciting to think about.... *cultural differences*. Unfortunately, a mysterious Russian soul remained too difficult to analyze.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING DUTCH:

1. You can get arrested for growing plants, but not for smoking them.
2. You can make jokes about the Belgians and still drink their beer.
3. They pay you back by selling you illegal fireworks and let you blow up small parts of your country.
4. You're exactly like the Germans, except that nobody hates you.
5. You think you are a world power, but everyone else thinks Copenhagen is your capital...
6. You get to insult people and defend yourself by saying it's a national tradition.
7. You can put your finger in a dyke and it will save your country
  - a. You can legally kill yourself
  - b. You can legally be killed.
8. You live in the most densely populated country in Europe, and still you've never seen your neighbors.
9. If the economy is bad, blame the Germans. If a war is started, blame the Germans. If you loose your keys, blame the Germans.
10. Bikes are public property. Locks are a challenge.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING BELGIAN:

1. You get to speak three languages, but none of them intelligibly.
2. If other countries want to fight a war, they will do it in your country.
3. You can brew drinks out of fruit, and still call it beer.
4. You are either
  - a. like the Dutch, just less efficient
  - b. like the French, just less romantic
  - c. like the Germans.
5. Decent fries. Real mayonnaise. Great chocolate. The best beer. Need I say more?
6. No one knows anything about you, except for the Dutch and French and they make fun of you.
7. More scandals in a week than any other country in a decade.
8. You can drive like a maniac on the road and nobody cares.
9. All your famous countrymen are either imaginary, or sex-offenders.
10. Face it. It's not really a country, is it?

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING FRENCH:

1. When speaking fast you can make yourself sound gay.
2. Experience the joy of winning the World Cup for the first time.
3. You get to eat insect food like snails and frog's legs.
4. If there's a war you can surrender really early.
5. You don't have to read the subtitles on those late night films on Channel 4.
6. You can test your own nuclear weapons in other people's countries (Well, who hasn't eh?)
7. You can be ugly and still become a famous film star.

8. Allow Germans to march up and down your most famous street humiliating your sense of national pride.
9. You don't have to bother with toilets, just sh\*t in the street.
10. People think you're a great lover even when you're not.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING AMERICAN: ☹

1. You can have a woman president without electing her.
2. You can spell color wrong and get away with it.
3. You can call Budweiser beer.
4. You can be a crook and still be president.
5. If you've got enough money you can get elected to do anything.
6. If you can breathe you can get a gun.
7. You get to be fat.
8. You can play golf in the most hideous clothes ever made and nobody seems to care.
9. You get to call everyone you've never met "buddy".
10. You can think you're the greatest nation on earth.
- 10a. When you're not.
- 10b. At all.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING NORWEGIAN:

1. You get to pay the highest taxes in the world.
2. You can kill baby seals and eat Rudolf the Reindeer.
3. You live in total freezing darkness half the year and get 24-hour ozone-hole radiation the other half.
4. You can get capital punishment for smoking dope.
5. You can go skiing in your knickers.
6. You get to hate the Swedes and beat the Brazilians in football.
7. You have to be a woman to get anywhere.
8. You don't need to worry about land prices rocketing - it's fairly spacious.
9. When abroad you can impress people you meet with stories about killing polar bears and shagging penguins - and they believe you.
10. You can actually get bored with blondes.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING ENGLISH: ☹

1. Two World Wars and One World Cup-doo-dah, doo-dah.
2. Proper beer.
3. You get to confuse everyone with the rules of cricket.
4. You get to accept defeat graciously in major sporting events.
5. Union jack underpants.
6. Water shortages guaranteed every single summer.
7. You can live in the past and imagine you are still a world power.
8. Bathing once a week - whether you need to or not.
9. Ditto changing underwear.
10. Beats being Welsh.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING SCOTTISH:

1. You ain't English!
2. You ain't English!
3. You ain't English!
4. You ain't English!
5. You ain't English!
6. You ain't English!
7. You ain't English!
8. You ain't English!
9. You ain't English!
10. You ain't English!

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING ITALIAN:

1. In-depth knowledge of bizarre pasta shapes.
2. Unembarrassed to wear fur.
3. No need to worry about tax returns.
4. Glorious military history prior to 400 B.C.
5. Can wear sunglasses inside.
6. Political stability.
7. Flexible working hours.
8. Live near the Pope.
9. Can spend hours braiding girlfriend's armpit hair.
10. Country run by Sicilian murderers.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING SPANISH:

1. Glorious history of killing South American tribes.
2. The rest of Europe thinks Africa begins at the Pyrenees.
3. You get your beaches invaded by Germans, Danes, Brits, etc.
4. The rest of your country is already invaded by Moroccans.
5. Everybody else makes crap paella and claims it's the real thing.
6. Honesty.
7. Only sure way of bedding a woman is to dress up in stupid, tight clothes and risk your life in front of bulls.
8. You get to eat bulls' testicles.
9. Gibraltar.
10. Supported Argentina in Falklands War.

#### TOP 10 REASONS FOR BEING INDIAN:

1. Chicken Madras.
2. Lamb Passanda.
3. Onion Bhaji.
4. Bombay Potato.
5. Chicken Tikka Masala.
6. Rogan Josh.
7. Popadoms.

- 5) How will you characterize each factor? Provide examples both from the reading and additional sources if possible.
- 6) What do you know about Kazakhstani business gift giving practices?
- 7) What do you know about business gift giving practices in the English speaking countries?
- 8) What gifts are preferred in your family? In which situations?

**Part II. An Interview:**

**Introduction:** You will have to interview a representative of a business company. Hopefully, it won't be difficult to find one. To make some comparisons on intercultural business gift giving practices during class discussion, it is good if each student in the group interviews representatives of culturally diverse business enterprises (like international companies or joint ventures). Kazakhstani enterprises dealing with foreign partners are of great interest as well.

**Instructions:**

1. Prepare interview questions on business gift giving (you are free to use the information in Table 1 of the reading). Try to avoid sensitive issues if you know there are or might be any.
2. Discuss the questions with your instructor prior to arranging an interview.
3. Make interview arrangements, and then conduct it. Do not forget to take notes.
4. Process your interview results for class discussion on the topic: "Gifts that are presented to businesses and by businesses in Kazakhstan."

Text #4

**Cross-Cultural Business Gift Giving: A Reading**

The most critical barriers to successful business giving in foreign countries are the customs and practices of the domestic culture. Appropriate behavior based on a profound cultural understanding can bridge the differences between cultures and, thus, increase chances of forming a good business relationship. There are etiquettes and local customs when it comes to business gift giving. In cultures where a business gift is expected, but not presented, it is an insult to the host. In countries where gifts generate an obligation, such as Japan, it may be beneficial to engage in the practice (Fadiman, 1986). Yet in other cultures, offering a business gift could be misinterpreted as inappropriate, thus offending the recipients. For example, in Germany and Switzerland, local executives do not feel comfortable accepting gifts because they do not like being obligated. The customs that one must abide by when conducting business in a different culture are known as "imperatives." The term used to refer to customs and practices that are optional is "adiaphoras" (Cateora, 1993). In this context, business gift giving is regarded as either an imperative (i.e. a must) or an adiaphora (i.e. something one may or may not have to do).

Based on anthropological literature, cultures which view business gift giving as an imperative seem to belong to Hall's high context category (Hall, 1959; 1966; 1976). In such a culture, communication style is more implicit, non-verbal, and is more reliant on hidden cues and the context of personal relationships. Successful communication and negotiation depend more on friendship and trust, than the explicit words in contracts. By contrast, people in a low context culture seldom borrow or lend among each other, they emphasize promptness, rely on explicit contracts, and usually form short-term personal relationships. Communication in such a culture is more formal and explicit, with negotiations based on a more formal legalistic orientation (Hall and Hall, 1987).

High context cultures such as those upheld by the Japanese, Arabs and Mediterraneans (Italians, Spanish, Turkish, etc.) tend to view gift giving as an imperative. For these cultures, customs of giving gifts are complex, delicate, and are considered relatively more meaningful activities. Societal members are more concerned with those who are closely related (family, friends, business associates) than privacy. They borrow from and lend to each other more often and more easily and have a strong tendency to build lifetime relationships. On the other hand, the optional customs of business gift giving (treated as an adiaphora) seem to prevail primarily in low context cultures such as the U.S., Germany and Switzerland.

Imperative gift giving in a high context culture suggests that business gift giving is a critical part of conducting business and, thus, cannot be avoided. To be accepted in the business community one must conform to the accepted way of gift giving. On the other hand, adiaphora gift giving in a low context culture suggests that business gift giving is an optional activity but, if it is done properly, it could enhance the competitive advantage of the company.

We identify five factors which further elaborate differences in business gift giving between the two cultural contexts. Based on these factors, research propositions are provided for future empirical tests by academics and for use as guidelines by managers making cross-cultural gift giving decisions. The latter presentation is in a checklist format presented in Table 1.

**Legal Factors**

*Legal restrictions concerning business gift giving in low context cultures are more stringent and more numerous than those in high context cultures.*

In terms of variation in legal aspects affecting multinational operations worldwide, the U.S. seems to be the only nation that has sought to legislate moral business conduct overseas (Singer, 1991). The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) prohibits U.S. companies, their subsidiaries and representatives from making payments to high-ranking foreign government officials, or political parties for the purpose of making a sale or increasing the profits from a sale. Although it explicitly allows facilitating payments to persuade foreign officials to perform their normal duties, the guidelines on business gift giving are not well specified. In a broad sense, FCPA only requires companies to keep a reasonably fair and accurate record of transactions (Coppett, and Staples, 1990). In other low context countries, the laws applying to business gift giving are also well laid out. Scandinavian



countries require that every consumer and business promotion be approved by the government. In Italy and Germany, bribes can be legally deducted as business expenses, but only in transactions abroad (Cateora, 1993).

Table 1

|  |
|--|
| <p>1. What are the legal restrictions on gift giving:<br/>         In the giver's country?<br/>         In the recipient's country?</p> <p>2. What are the ethical implications of gift giving:<br/>         In the giver's country?<br/>         In the recipient's country?<br/>         As they relate to:<br/>         The act of gift giving<br/>         The value of the gift<br/>         Perception of bribery</p> <p>3. What company policies apply to gift giving:<br/>         In the giver's country?<br/>         In the recipient's country?</p> <p>4. What if gift giving is an acceptable practice in both the giver's and recipient's company:<br/>         What is the acceptable range of value of a gift?<br/>         Is the value of the gift linked to status or practice?</p> <p>5. What are the possible taboos of gift giving in the giver's and the recipient's country with regard to:<br/>         Attached or implied meaning<br/>         Product attributes<br/>         Country of origin<br/>         Physical characteristics<br/>         Color<br/>         Religious or cultural holidays</p> |
|--|

On the other hand, many high context countries view gifts, payoffs and even bribes as merely a cost of business (Coppett, and Staples, 1990). In some Middle Eastern and Far Eastern countries, such payments are legal (Laczniak, and Murphy, 1985). Bribery is actually a part of the commercial traditions of parts of Asia, Africa and the Middle East (Fadiman, 1986). For example, in such countries, it is expected that government officials will make up for low salaries and even provide for retirement by accepting bribes. Bribery is simply seen as a tax for using government services and therefore harmless (Braybrooke, 1983). However, it must be emphasized that the level of economic development and personal income is not likely to be as critical a factor for explaining the degree of gift giving as the cultural context. The example used above was offered simply to illustrate the broad

connotations that "gift giving" can take on in high context cultures. Japan, for example, is a highly developed, affluent society with widespread gift-giving practices. Refusing to participate in business gift giving in such cultures can cause hard feelings and misunderstandings between business clients.

*Ethical Factors*

*Ethics pertaining to business gift giving in a low context culture are more stringent and more elaborate than those in a high context culture.*

Related to legal factors are ethical concerns that arise when business gift giving is used to influence relationships and effect certain outcomes. In the U.S. and other low context cultures, business gifts of high value are generally discouraged and are usually not accepted by business executives. Expensive gifts are often perceived by the receiver as a form of hard sell or, even worse, as a bribe. Such gifts could create a negative attitude, and destroy the original purpose of the gift, which was to stimulate reciprocity (Shama, and Thompson, 1989).

Ethical norms vary greatly across cultures and, as such, culture has a strong impact on what constitutes ethical decision making and ethical behavior. Due to cultural diversity, there is no single standard of ethical behavior for all nations (Laczniak, and Murphy, 1985). Dubinsky *et al.* (1991) found that Korean salespeople view giving gifts to buyers as less of an ethical issue than the Americans. Koreans also feel that giving gifts, providing entertainment to buyers, and giving preferential treatment to good customers are less of an ethical issue than the Japanese do.

The codes of business ethics to gift giving differ in high and low context cultures. Cross-cultural courtesy or attempts to make friends in high context cultures can easily be misunderstood by Westerners as begging or blackmail. Three traditions in high context cultures that form a condition for payoffs are: the inner circle, the future favor, and the gift exchange. Concerning the inner circle tradition, one is considered either an "insider" or an "outsider." To get into the inner circle tradition, one must create an obligation. As for the future favor tradition, to strengthen buyer-seller relationships, gifts are given to create an obligation that can be reciprocated in the future. The exchange of gifts creates an inner debt which has to be discharged, a practice called *giri* in Japan (Fadiman, 1986).

*Company Policies*

*Companies from a low context culture (regardless of operation location) tend to have a stronger formal policy addressing business gift giving than those from a high context culture.*

*Companies operating in a low context culture (regardless of their national origin) tend to have a stronger formal policy addressing business gift giving than those operating in high context countries.*

Firms based in various countries often come up with their own policies on what is and is not acceptable behavior with regard to business gift giving. Written codes are effective in communicating the importance of a policy, as they focus both management and employee attention on ethical issues, and they give a clear

reason for employees to act in a certain way and identify penalties for violators (Coppett, and Staples, 1990). Gift-giving policies, in particular, are designed to prevent conflicts of interest, to avoid compromising the company and to protect employee integrity (Yager, 1991).

Because many U.S. multinational corporations view the FCPA as ambiguous on such issues as legal ways to facilitate payments, bribes and gift giving, they have banned these practices altogether so as to remain on the safe side of the law (Braybrooke, 1983). For example, certain sales and marketing activities conducted by U.S. firms overseas frequently have been criticized for promoting products (through bribes and payoffs) to generate sales. When such activities have been determined to be illegal, the result is an embarrassment for both the company and its country, as with the case of Lockheed Aircraft and Prime Minister Tanaka of Japan (Laczniak, and Murphy, 1985). Consequently, many U.S. companies have developed strict policies on gift giving and bribes. For example, IBM, GE and Eastman Kodak have adopted a broad policy of prohibiting the use of business gifts (Kim, and Barone, 1981). In spite of GE's policy of no gifts, and informing suppliers of it, an internal audit found violations in the purchasing department of the Aircraft Engine Business group. Ten employees were forced to resign and five others were disciplined because sports tickets, liquor and other larger gifts were accepted by them. Ford and GE agree that accepting gifts of nominal value cannot be avoided (Thomas, 1989).

On the other hand, multinational companies from high context cultures appear to have less formal company policies and standards on the issues of giving and accepting gifts. Some even choose not to address the issue at all, allowing for a wider latitude to use gifts for influencing others to, perhaps, gain a competitive edge.

#### *Acceptable Value and Price Range*

*Business gift giving value is driven more by status differences in a high context culture.*

*Business gift given in a high context culture tend to have a relatively higher value than those given in a low context culture.*

An acceptable price range of a gift tends to be driven by cultural and legal factors. In a high context culture, position or status is so very critical in determining gift value for various people (i.e. there is a clear hierarchy of gift values in accordance with the hierarchy of power). Legally under the American IRS tax laws, up to \$25 per client can be deductible as a business gift expense and up to \$4 per client can be deducted for logo and promotional items as advertising expenses (Bryan, 1987). Though some U.S. executives exceed the \$25 limit, most do not (Meredith, and Fried, 1977). Because of guidelines set by the IRS, gifts under \$25 are considered appropriate in most circumstances since the value of the gift is small enough not to sway a person to act against his/her principles or against company policies. In a low context culture, expensive gifts may be mistaken as a bribe although monetary value alone cannot be used to distinguish a bribe from a gift (Reardon, 1984).

#### *Taboos in Gift Giving*

*There are more taboos associated with business gift giving in a high context culture than a low context culture.*

Because so much significance is given to gift giving in a high context culture, there tend to be more taboos associated with the *what, when, where, how, by whom and to whom*. Moreover, people are more sensitive to and more prone to attaching meanings to product attributes (such as country of origin, quantity, physical characteristics, and color of gifts). The following examples are just a few taboos that add complexity to cross-cultural business gift giving (Axtell, 1990; Bryan, 1987):

- Do not give gifts made in China to a Korean.
- In Latin America the gift of a knife means the severing of a relationship.
- Do not give hand-made dolls to a Brazilian, because they are associated with voodoo.

Therefore, it is critical for business executives to understand and be aware of the powerful taboos associated with certain gifts in many high context cultures. On the other hand, relatively less frequent incidents of strong beliefs and taboos are associated with gift giving in a low context culture.

There is no doubt that cross-cultural gift giving is an essential part of international business practices. It is integral in cross-cultural communication and negotiation processes, especially in high context cultures. It is important for us to increase our understanding of this topic as the trends towards globalization continue to strengthen and grow.

(Adapted from Arunthanes, Wiboon, Patriya Tansubaj, and David J. Lemak. "Cross-Cultural Business Gift Giving: A New Conceptualization and Theoretical Framework", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1994, pp. 44-55.)

## KEYS

### To Assignment #4

1. The Chinese (Charles Allen. *Tales from the South China Seas*.)
2. The Moroccans (Paul Bowles. *Their Heads Are Green and Their Hands Are Blue*.)
3. The Indians (J.R. Ackerley. *Hindoo Holiday*.)
4. The Americans (Betty Bao Lord. *Spring Moon*.)
5. The Afghans (Robert Byron. *The Road to Oxiana*.)
6. France (Arthur Young. *Travels in France*.)
7. The Russians (Jan L. Perkowski. *America, 4 October 1986*.)
8. An American (Turkish Exchange Student. *There Is a Difference*.)
9. The Americans (Georges Clemenceau.)
10. The Arabs (Edward T. Hall. *The Hidden Dimension*.)
11. [The women of the harem]. (Harriet Martineau. *Eastern Life*.)
12. India (E. M. Foster. *The Hill of Devi*.)
13. Southern countries (Aldous Huxley. *Along the Road*.)
14. The Americans (Lord Killanin. *My Olympic Years*.)

### To Assignment #5

- Stay in touch with friends or others you have confidence in. Don't withdraw. Some people find new friends through their nationality clubs.
- Remain active. Do social things that you enjoy - for example, taking walks, swimming, going to concerts or movies, or eating meals with friends.
- Get a routine and stick with it. This will create a new daily life that begins to feel familiar - "normal." It's important to keep about the same times every day for meals, going to bed, and getting up.
- Stay healthy. Get plenty of sleep. You may find at first you need more than you did at home. Eat well. Get exercise several times a week. A healthy, well-rested body is better able to handle things like loneliness and confusion.

## REFERENCES

- Althen, G. *American Ways: A Guide for Foreigners in the United States*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1988.
- Arunthanes, W., Tansuhaj, P., and Lemak, D.J. "Cross-Cultural Business Gift Giving: A New Conceptualization and Theoretical Framework", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1994.
- Axtell, E.R. *Do's and Taboos of Hosting International Visitors*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1990.
- Braybrooke, D. *Ethics in the World of Business*. NJ: Roman & Alanheld, 1983.
- Brislin, R., Cushner, K., Cherric, C., and Yong, M. *Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage Publications, 1986.
- Bryan, D. *The Art of Etiquette of Gift Giving*. New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1987.
- Cateora, R.P. *International Marketing*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Homewood, IL: Irwin, 1993.
- Coppett, I.J., and Staples, A.W. *Professional Selling - A Relationship Management Process*. Cincinnati, OH: South Western, 1990.
- Dubinsky, J.A., Jolson, A.M., Kotabe, M., and Lim, U.C. "A Cross National Investigation of Industrial Salespeople's Ethical Perception", *Journal of Business Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 4, 1991.
- Fadiman, A.J. "A Traveler's Guide to the Gifts and Bribes", *Harvard Business Review*, July-August, 1986.
- Hall, E.T. *The Silent Language*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1959.
- Hall, E.T. *The Hidden Dimension*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1966.
- Hall, E.T. *Beyond Culture*. New York, NY: Anchor Press-Doubleday, 1976.
- Hall, E.T., and Hall, R.M. *Hidden Differences Doing Business with the Japanese*. New York, NY: Anchor Press-Doubleday, 1987.
- Hess, D.J. *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1994.
- Ishii, S., and Klopff, D. "A Comparison of Stereotypes Held by Japanese and Americans of Selected National Groups", *Otsuma Women's University Annual Report*, Vol. 20, 1988.
- Kim, H.S., and Barone, S. "Is the FCPA of 1977 a Success or Failure?" *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 12, Winter, 1981.
- Kohls, R.L. *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1984.
- Laczniak, R.G., and Murphy, F.P. *Marketing Ethics: Guidelines for Managers*. Lexington, MA/Toronto: D.C. Heath & Co., 1985.
- Meredith, G., and Fried, R.P. *Incentives in Marketing*. NJ: National Premium Sales Executives Education Fund, Union, 1977.
- Reardon, K.K. "It's the Thought that Counts", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 62, No. 5, September-October, 1984.
- Shama, A., and Thompson, K.J. "Gifts Build Goodwill and Market Share", *Journal of Retail Banking*. Vol. 11, Summer, 1989.

Singer, W.A. "Ethics: Are Standards Lower Overseas?" *Across the Board*, 28 September 1991.

Stewart, E.C., and Bennett, M.J. *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1991.

Thomas, M.C. "It's Blessed to Give, But Not to Employees of the Big Three", *Automotive News*, 26 June 1989.

Triandis, H.C. "Theoretical Concepts That Are Applicable to the Analysis of Ethnocentrism", *Applied Cross-Cultural Psychology*. New York: Sage Publications, 1990.

Yager, J. *Business Protocol, How to Survive and Succeed in Business*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1991.

Заказ №2789. Подписано в печать 11.04.02  
Формат 60x84 1/16. Бумага офсет №1.  
Печать RISO. Усл.печ.л. 2,1.  
Тираж 100 экз.

Отпечатано в ТОО "ПД "Домино"  
г. Алматы, пр. Гагарина, 52  
тел. 42-53-47

Однако, без солидной научно-теоретической базы, без разработки единых нормативных документов и современных учебно-методических материалов трудно ожидать качественную подготовку высококвалифицированных специалистов в любой сфере, в том числе и в сфере международных отношений. Именно поэтому при Казахском университете международных отношений и мировых языков им. Абылай хана был создан Научно-исследовательский центр по проблемам межкультурной коммуникации и перевода (НИЦ МКП), утвержденный в январе 2001 года Министерством образования и науки РК в качестве научного подразделения КазУМОиМЯ.

За прошедшее время сотрудниками НИЦ МКП разработано несколько Государственных стандартов высшего профессионального образования по смежным специальностям, проведены Международная научно-практическая конференция «Актуальные проблемы межкультурной коммуникации и перевода» (апрель 2001 г.), целый ряд международных и межвузовских семинаров и курсов повышения квалификации преподавателей перевода и т.д. Интенсивные научные исследования по проблемам межкультурной коммуникации и перевода ведутся сотрудниками Центра на самых различных уровнях: от курсовых и дипломных работ до магистерских, кандидатских и докторских диссертаций. Свообразным каналом от теории к практике является подготовка сотрудниками НИЦ Типовых программ и пособий для студентов и специалистов-международников.

Предлагаемое Вамему вниманию учебное пособие, разработанное старшим научным сотрудником НИЦ МКП, к.ф.н., доцентом Абдыгаппаровой Сауле Кабашевой, представляет собой удачное сочетание теоретических положений и практических рекомендаций в области межкультурной коммуникации. Выпускница МПТИИЯ им. Мориса Торсеа С.К. Абдыгаппарова работает на факультете международных отношений с первых лет его образования в КазУМОиМЯ по настоящее время, за исключением 1999-2000 гг., когда она по программе Фулбрайт работала над научным проектом «Лингвистические и экстралингвистические особенности делового общения» в университете штата Канзас, США. В апреле 2000 г. С.К. Абдыгаппарова выступила с докладом «Обучение межкультурному общению в Казахстане» на конференции Ассоциации Коммуникации Центральных Штатов «АКЦШ на пороге нового тысячелетия: перспективы на будущее» (Детройт, США), установила сотрудничество с известными американскими специалистами по проблемам межкультурной коммуникации (профессора Н. Асуньон-Ланде, Д. Клайнберг, М. Кофи, Б. Монфилдс и др.). Имеет 7 публикаций по проблемам межкультурной коммуникации.

Несомненно, что богатый практический опыт и глубокие теоретические исследования автора первого в Казахстане пособия по межкультурной коммуникации будут способствовать успешному использованию данного практикума как в социальной, так и профессиональной сферах межкультурного общения.

*Д.ф.н., профессор Р.З. Загидуллин*

## INTRODUCTORY NOTES

The aim of this manual is to provide assistance in learning how to interact with diverse populations – people, who think, feel and behave differently than you do. You probably won't become skilled enough after taking one course to deal with people from every culture on the globe. But you can be prepared, however, to interact generally with people who are different from you whenever and wherever you meet them.

This manual is also an introduction for readers who wish to enhance their knowledge about and proficiency in that which is the most human of all human experiences: communication.

The study of intercultural communication should enhance your understanding of your own culture in relation to other cultures. As a result you ought to be able to conceptualize areas of potential misunderstandings and be better prepared to act when they surface. You ought to be able to convey respect for the way others behave and act positively toward actions that are dissimilar from yours. When abroad you ought to recognize the communication variations across cultures and respect their value to the host nations.

The manual also provides the cues to evaluating your personal self. This feature encourages you to pinpoint your own strengths and weaknesses and thereby gain insights into behavior in communication situations.

This manual is targeted at hands-on training that should accompany the body of knowledge provided by textbooks and instructional lectures. It supplies a variety of hands-on learning activities. The assignments move you from an acquaintance with the intercultural communication process to the factors that influence this process. The reader is exposed to a variety of learning methods and materials, all designed to enhance the learning process. The manual contains critical incidents, cross-cultural reviews, case studies, field research, project and interview outlines, readings, and probes into selected cultures. It also presents specific steps toward achieving greater competence in intercultural communication.

The manual focuses on issues exploring the multifaceted and dynamic connections of diversity, culture and communication. It is divided into three parts. Units on encountering differences, cross-cultural adjustment and a multicultural world are included in Part 1. Units on value systems, verbal and nonverbal communication are included in Part 2. Units on dominant American cultural patterns and cross-cultural variables in American and Kazakhstani communication are included in Part 3. Each part contains various assignments, authentic materials from a range of sources, and references that might be of use for further reading.

The author hopes the manual is likely to find its way into courses in other allied disciplines – culture studies, international relations, American studies, linguistics, English as a foreign language, speech communication including interpersonal communication, business communication, nonverbal behavior, semantics, conflict and decision making.

All comments, suggestions and recommendations will be of great value and highly appreciated.

Unit 1: VALUE SYSTEMS 7

Assignment #1

What Is Your Worldview?

Some people have an Eastern outlook on life, others a Western perspective. What is yours?

- A. Respond to each of the following items with "1" if it never relates to you, "2" if it rarely does, "3" if it sometimes does, "4" if it often does, and "5" if it usually does.
  - 1. People should strive to return to nature. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. I believe in a personal soul that will continue after death. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. I hate to kill anything, even insects. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4. I get little pleasure from material things. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5. We should accept our role in life as it is given to us by our parents. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6. Meditation is the highest form of enlightenment. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 7. The use of artificial organs is going too far. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 8. I feel real kinship with most plants and animals. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 9. We should try to harmonize with nature rather than try to conquer it. \_\_\_\_\_
  - 10. A meaningful life depends more upon learning to cooperate than to compete. \_\_\_\_\_

B. To score, add the points for the ten items. Total score: 10 to 50. Scores of 40 to 50 suggest an Eastern outlook on life or worldview, below that, the Western view.

C. Make comments: What worldview is more typical in Kazakhstani diverse society (Eastern, Western, or a mixture of both)? Why?

(Based on "Questionnaire to Measure Eastern and Western Thought" by A.R.Gilgen, and J.H.Cho, in Psychological Reports, Vol. 44, 1979.)

Assignment #2

Individualism vs. Collectivism U

Directions:

A. For each number put I for the statement that defines an Individualist. Put C for a statement that defines a Collectivist.

- C 1a. It takes a long time to make a new friend.
- I 1b. Friends can be made relatively quickly.

- 2a. I expect people to judge me by my achievements. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2b. I expect people to judge me by the groups I belong to. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3a. Before making a decision, it is best to make sure everyone agrees with it. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3b. Before making a decision, you should get at least half of the people to agree with it. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4a. I am embarrassed by individual recognition. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4b. If I do a good job, I feel that I have earned individual recognition. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5a. Making sure people don't lose face is more important than always being completely honest. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5b. Being honest with people is always best in the end. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6a. If my brother did wrong, I would admit it to other people. 1
- 6b. If my brother did wrong, I would defend him to other people. C
- 7a. Confrontation is sometimes necessary to clear the air. Indiv perspective
- 7b. Confrontation almost always causes more problems than it solves. for both sides.
- 8a. In the end, you can always rely on other people. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8b. In the end, you can only rely on yourself. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Do you consider yourself to be an individualist or collectivist value oriented? Explain why by using the choices above.

(Modified from Storti, Craig, Figuring Out Foreigners: A Practical Guide. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1999, pp. 29-31.)

Assignment #3

Concepts of Individualism and Collectivism U

Introduction: Cultures do typically vary in putting individualism or collectivism first in their thinking process, although both may be included in their reasoning. Below are quotes from Trompenaars' analysis of individualism and collectivism (Hampden-Turner, and Trompenaars, 1994).

Instructions: Read the statements below and discuss Trompenaars' points with your partner. Do you agree or disagree? After reading, try to formulate a short summary of Trompenaars' point of view. You will share your summary with the rest of the class.

1. Individualism is often regarded as the characteristic of a modern society, while collectivism reminds us of more traditional societies...
2. It is probably truer to say that these dimensions are complementary, not opposing, preferences. They can each be effectively reconciled by an integrative process, ... by the individual voluntary addressing the needs of the larger group.
3. The idea that rising individualism is a part of the rise of civilization itself needs to be treated as a cultural belief rather than a fact beyond dispute.
4. Individuals are either self- or collectivity-oriented, though we must be careful in generalizing about which collectivity a particular culture identifies with.
5. Emile Durkheim, the 19<sup>th</sup> century French sociologist, saw a later, more sophisticated form of voluntary integration among sovereign beings which he called organic solidarity.
6. My own conviction is that individualism finds its fulfillment in service to the group, while group goals are of demonstrable value to individuals only if those individuals are consulted and participate in the process of developing them.

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment #4

Monochronic & Polychronic Societies *U*

1. Comment on the following:  
 In your culture, how would you react if:
  - Someone arrived early for work? Exactly on time? 20 minutes late? One hour late?
  - A train arrived at the station earlier than expected? Exactly on time? 20 minutes late? One hour late?
  - A guest arrived for dinner 15 minutes earlier than invited? Precisely at the time specified by the host? 20 minutes late? One hour late?
2. Here are some American expressions that have to do with time. Which statements match up with which of these American values about time?

American Values

- Time is money.
- Time is a limited resource.
- Time is a valuable commodity.

English Expressions

- Do you have any time to spare?
- Thank you for giving me your time.
- The plane lost time due to the strong prevailing winds.
- There isn't enough time to do that now.
- How did you spend your free time?
- I need to put aside some time to catch up on my correspondence.
- Don't waste my time making excuses.
- She's investing a lot of time in her new job at the bank.

3. What are some common Russian/Kazakh expressions that reflect our society's ideas about time?

4. What have we learned about values regarding time that might affect American and Kazakhstani relationships in business settings? What kinds of problems or misunderstandings might arise?

(Modified from Cogan, Dominic. "All the Time in the World." In *New Ways in Teaching Culture*. Alvino E. Fantini (Ed.). Alexandria, VA: TESOL, Inc., 1997, pp. 208-209.)

Assignment #5

What Would You Do?

Read the extracts and suggest what you would do or say if you were faced with these situations. What particular cultural value is being described in both of these extracts?

Situation #1

Efficiency

One of your colleagues is from the United States of America and he is having problems adjusting to what he calls "unprofessionalism" in the working place. He complains about how inefficient people are: they don't come to meetings on time; they come very late to appointments with him or they make him wait a long time when he has an appointment with them; when he is meeting with someone, that person will take telephone calls or talk to people who drop by and interrupt the conversation. "That is not the way to do business," he told you

yesterday. Apparently he has complained to other people in your office as well, for just today some of them have come to you to complain about *him*. You are his closest friend in the office. What should you do?

Situation #2

### Caregiver

A nurse works in an elderly-care home in Canada where you are the nursing supervisor. Her work habits are beginning to bother a lot of people, including several physicians and numerous residents. The latter complain that she is always late for her tasks, whether it's bathing them, helping them to the toilet, or taking them down to the dining room at mealtime. They say she's too friendly by which they mean she spends too much time chattering with people (who nevertheless appreciate it a lot), and this puts her behind the schedule. Physicians and other nurses complain that she's late to meetings and often reports late to work, which means someone on the shift before hers has to stay on until she arrives. Everyone likes this woman - she's outgoing and very compassionate - but she can be exasperating when it comes to managing her time. What's your next move?

Assignment #6

### What Are the Challenges of Multiculturalism?

**Introduction:** The article you are going to read is about Korean-Americans (1,076,872 out of 281,421,906 Americans or 0.4 percent of population according to U.S. Census 2000 statistics). There is a Korean ethnic group in Kazakhstan as well. (Do you know the figures?) Isn't it interesting to know how people of the same ethnic background live in culturally different environments? Let's try to find it out.

### Part I: Reading for Cultural Understanding.

Read the text and think of your answers to the following questions:

- 1) What are the reasons that have led to the miscommunication described in the text?
- 2) Can you list values of Korean-Americans that are opposite to the values of other cultural groups in the U.S.?
- 3) Have you learned anything about Korean culture that you did not know before?
- 4) How do Korean-Americans differ from Koreans in Kazakhstan?
- 5) From your personal experience, what is the number one notion (music, food, behavior, business, etc.) you will characterize as specifically Korean? Is it good or bad? Why?
- 6) Do you know anything about South and North Korean culture? What is it, if the answer is "yes"?

12

### Part II: An Interview.

1. Based on the information you have read prepare interview questions for a Korean-Kazakhstani on sensitive communication issues he or she might encounter in our republic. (If there are no Koreans among people you know, you may choose a representative of any other ethnic group. Adapt your questions to a particular situation.)
2. Discuss the questions with your instructor prior to arranging an interview.
3. Make interview arrangements, and then conduct it. Do not forget to take notes.
4. Process your interview results for class discussion on the topic: "We, Kazakhstanis, are people of multicultural and multiethnic nation."

Text #1

### Language-Related Korean-American Troubles: A Reading

By Jung-Won Han (University of Houston)

Intercultural misunderstandings often spring from the different assumptions speakers of different languages bring to the same set of words and grammatical structures. At least five Black boycott movements have been staged against foreign-born Korean-Americans in New York City, each lasting eight weeks or longer. The longest lasted seventeen months in a Black neighborhood in Brooklyn. During the 1992 Los Angeles race riots, about 2,300 Korean-owned stores were burned or looted, many in Koreatown, located three miles from the major riot scene. These and many other similar problems stem partially from miscommunication.

Stemming from the influence of Confucian teachings, Korean's stoic behavior confuses Westerners. Lack of facial expression, compounded by a constant display of deference, projects Korean-Americans as aloof, indifferent, rude, or unfriendly in U.S. society, a society that encourages being casual and informal. Interactional patterns vary from society to society and Korea's contrast with American expectations.

Many Korean-American problems result from different notions of politeness. Although the basic goal of politeness is universal, the speech style used to achieve the intended goal - cooperation - is culture-specific. Silence, speaking little, or speaking ambiguously are signs of polite intentions in the Korean culture. Greetings are reserved for personal acquaintances. Speaking frankly in the Korean culture is not a virtue and could be considered a threatening act. Greeting strangers is seen as impolite and boorish. Culturally, to maintain stability, Koreans do better staying quiet in speech and in presence. This poses problems when Korean-Americans are storeowners. Their stoic demeanor and lack of a welcoming greeting can turn off customers.

13



Korean speech acts – such as accepting invitations, offers of assistance, compliments, or exchanging gifts – contrast strongly with American patterns. Korean-Americans are expected to deny any offers several times before accepting one. The person extending an offer must do so several times for the purpose of politeness. Americans rarely repeat an offer after it has been turned down. Shyness, disinterest, and nonassertiveness can be mistakenly presumed from Korean-American attempts at politeness.

Koreans are not accustomed to or familiar with U.S. practice of small talk and gossip, partly because of their upbringing and partly because the Korean language reveals politeness through its speech patterns, not through small talk. English speech patterns do not feature politeness as the Korean language does. Consequently, Koreans' polite intent can be lost when they are speaking English.

Also, a few encounters with a U.S. customer do not constitute enough intimacy for Koreans to be casual, so they may appear to be aloof. Koreans avoid using common English terms of familiarity such as "buddy," "pal," "dear," and "sweetheart." They refrain from jargon, slang, and body-touching such as hugging.

Misunderstandings between Korean-Americans and other groups of Americans are attributable to a Korean culture learned long before these Koreans emigrated to the United States.

Source:

Klopf, Donald W. *Intercultural Encounters: The Fundamentals of Intercultural Communication*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Englewood, CO: Morton Publishing Company, 1998, pp. 201-202.

## Unit 2: VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Assignment #7

### Most Misunderstood Passenger

**Directions:** Read the article from the Fort Lauderdale *Sun-Sentinel* newspaper (as cited in *Parade magazine*, 2 January 1994, p.6) and think of your answers to the questions that follow.

As the plane left the runway, the German tourist bolted from his seat, shoving aside a flight attendant who tried to stop him. He had to go to the bathroom, he later told a judge.

But on that January flight from Fort Lauderdale to Hanover, Germany, something got lost in the translation.

"The roof is going to go!" was what the flight attendant said she heard him say, as he made a sweeping gesture with his arms as if to indicate a gigantic explosion.

The plane was brought back to Fort Lauderdale, and the passenger was arrested on federal charges of interfering with a flight crew and making a bomb threat.

The tourist spent nine months in jail, until a German-speaking judge released him. Apparently, the German expression "then the roof flies" is slang for having to use the bathroom.

Questions:

1. What was the reason for miscommunication?
2. Was the punishment fair? Why?
3. Why do language expressions like "The roof is going to go!" might become barriers in understanding messages?
4. How are such expressions called?
5. When is it proper to use them?
6. Have you or anyone you know ever been in a situation like that? If "yes", what were the consequences?

Assignment #8

### Food Ways

A. Activity: There are many ways to group these foods. Which ones do you think should go together?

|          |         |         |
|----------|---------|---------|
| potatoes | lettuce | rice    |
| tomatoes | meat    | bread   |
| fish     | spinach | carrots |

B. Practice asking and answering these questions in your groups:

Which things do you think should go together?

I think \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ should go together.

I think \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ should go together.

I think \_\_\_\_\_ should be in a separate group.

How about \_\_\_\_\_ ? Do you think it should go with \_\_\_\_\_ ?

How about \_\_\_\_\_ ? Do you think it should go with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Yes.

No.

Maybe.

I don't know.

Why?

Why not?

Because they are \_\_\_\_\_.

Because \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ but \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_.

|                     |                      |                           |                   |   |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---|
| a staple<br>staples | a starch<br>starches | a vegetable<br>vegetables | a fruit<br>fruits | a source of protein<br>sources of protein |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---|

C. Questions for discussion:

1. Why do Japanese eat fish and rice but Westerners eat meat and bread?
2. Why do Japanese eat fish and rice but Americans eat meat and potatoes?
3. What do Russians eat?
4. What do Kazakhs eat?
5. What is your favorite international cuisine?

(Modified from Hough, David A. *Global Issues in Intercultural Communication*.  
A Presentation at TESOL 2001 Convention.)

A Cultural Study of Slogans on T-Shirts,  
Caps & Stickers: A Project *lt*

**Introduction:** In this assignment you are going to conduct a small research project on slogans found on T-shirts, caps, and stickers. Because these kinds of slogans are very popular nowadays, they provide an easy method for gaining insights into what is popular, important or of interest in modern society. What do these slogans suggest about a particular culture? You'll have a chance to think about that as you work on your project.

**Directions:** Complete the chat below, using slogans that you find on T-shirts, caps, and stickers around the city. You are asked to comment on 10 items. Finding items with slogans in English should not be difficult. You can look at T-shirts, caps and stickers in stores. You will also see people wearing T-shirts and caps on campus and downtown. After you complete the chart, then answer the summary questions that follow. Two examples are provided to you. GOOD LUCK and get started.

(If for some reasons you cannot find slogans in English, use the ones in Kazakh and/or Russian. The directions are the same, with the exception for column 5, in which your slogans are to be provided with English equivalents or translated into English.)

**Due Date:** This completed project is due in two weeks time from now. No late papers will be accepted. Both content and sentence-level accuracy will be graded.

\* C = Caps; S = Stickers; T = T-Shirts

| Item* | Slogan<br>(The saying)                             | Why do you think this slogan would be popular, important, or funny in society?   | Which cultural value, belief, assumption, or attitude explains this slogan? | What is the Kazakh/Russian equivalent for this slogan? If "no", give the translation. |
|-------|--|--|---|---|
| S     | "My only domestic value is that I live in a house" | Equal rights for women are an important topic in Western societies. Such a bumper sticker might belong to a woman who is making the statement that she does not want to be confined to traditional female roles. | Issues of equality and women's roles in society                             | «Нашли бесплатную дом-работницу»  |

| T  | "Think different" (Apple Computer) | Some people like things that are new and unusual, i.e. not done or seen before. | Individualism, future orientation | «Новое мышление» |
|----|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. |                                    |   |                                   |                  |
| 2. |                                    |   |                                   |                  |
| 3. |                                    |   |                                   |                  |
| 4. |                                    |   |                                   |                  |
| 5. |                                    |   |                                   |                  |
| 6. |                                    |   |                                   |                  |

|     |  |  |  |  |
|-----|--|--|--|--|
| 7.  |  |  |  |  |
| 8.  |  |  |  |  |
| 9.  |  |  |  |  |
| 10. |  |  |  |  |

**Summary questions:**

1. Do you have any items with slogans? What is one of the slogans? Why did you buy those items? (What did you like about the slogans?)

---



---



---



---



---

2. Of course a study like this does not give a complete picture of cultural values. However, it does provide some insight into issues that people are comfortable expressing to others. Based on what you observed in this project, what might a person learn about values, behaviors beliefs or assumptions?

---



---



---



---



---

3. Did you see any slogan that surprised, offended or amazed you? What was the slogan? Why was it surprising/offensive/funny?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

4. Did you see a slogan that you did not understand? What was the slogan?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

5. What were the language peculiarities of slogan wordings? Did some of them seem slangy? Which ones?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

#### Assignment #10

#### Which Are the Words, and What Are the Meanings?

**Introduction:** Language can serve to strengthen community and cultural identity; it can also be a source of misunderstanding and an obstacle in intercultural interaction. Culture and language are bound inextricably. Language usage is a function of the cultural context. Language also shapes perception. People perceive the world in the way their language allows.

Words of a language might have different meanings: denotative, connotative, contextual, and figurative. This assignment is addressed to the figurative one. Figurative words are those used in an unusual and nonliteral sense to give beauty or clarity to what is said. Figurative meanings carry affective connotations, helping bring the speaker's feelings to the listener. Figurative phrases, constructions, and expressions holding a different meaning from the literal one are widely used in any language and are known as *idioms*. Idioms can cause all sorts of problems for foreigners and especially translators because their meanings are contained in the user of words, not in the words themselves. What it means is that all idioms are determined by and specific to a certain culture.

#### Reading for Meaning:

A. Read the article "The Rich Idioms of Russian: Verbal Soul Food of a Culture."

B. When you finish, think of your answers to the questions below for class discussion:

- What equivalents and/or translations are provided in the article for the following Russian idioms?

1. «Кашу маслом не испортишь»
2. «С жиру бесится»
3. «Большо жирно будет»
4. «Расхлебывать кашу»
5. «Каша во рту»
6. «Мало каши ед»
7. «Вешать лапшу на уши»
8. «Ради бога»
9. «Ни богу свечка, ни черту кочерга»
10. «Не боги горшки обжигают»
11. «Душа на распашку»
12. «Наплевать в душу»
13. «Связши голову, по волосам не платут»

- What Russian idioms can be used to express the following?

1. "God knows how much I have suffered"
2. "God knows what I have done"
3. "God be merciful" *See what a God!*
4. "My soul is being engraved upon"
5. "My soul is being trampled upon"
6. "My soul is being put aside" *My soul is not*
7. "My soul is being unburdened"
8. "My soul is being burdened"

- What are the Russian equivalents and/or translations for the following American idioms?

1. "Killing one bird with one stone"
2. "Letting the cat out of the bag"
3. "Pride goes before a fall"
4. "Turn the tables"
5. "He's as slow as molasses"

- What other idioms in English do you know? Do they have equivalents in Russian? If not, how will you translate them?

- Do you know any other idioms that you consider to be "culturally" American? What are they? How will you translate them into Russian/Kazakh? Do they have equivalents in Russian/Kazakh?
- Do you know any other idioms that you consider to be "culturally" Russian? What are they? How will you translate them into English? Do they have equivalents in English?
- Do you know idioms that you consider to be "culturally" Kazakh? What are they? How will you translate them into English and Russian? Do they have equivalents in English and Russian?
- Do you agree with Michael Specter's opinion on the way Russian idioms characterize Russian culture? Does his perception of Russian idioms make him stereotype Russians or not? Explain.

Text #2

**The Rich Idioms of Russian: LC  
Verbal Soul Food of a Culture: A Reading**

By Michael Specter, NY Times 4/20/95

Moscow

Of all the horrors confronting Russian society – political and economic instability, a lingering war, an average life expectancy for men so low it's hard to believe (57 years) – worrying about the current state of Russian conversational language might seem a little, well, petty.

But that would be taking the short view.

"There is nothing more important than the language," said Sophia Lubensky, a professor of Slavic Language and Literature at the State University of New York at Albany. "Czars come and go. Presidents come and go. There are wars, there are famines. Language lives through it all."

Mrs. Lubensky, a Russian émigré, has just produced the "Russian-English Dictionary of Idioms" (Random House) the first book in decades to try to translate the ideas of Russian idioms – and not just the words – into English. And while it is rich in the dark phrases of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and not terribly up on the current slang one hears on the streets of Moscow, a careful tour of this volume can tell a reader as much about what matters to Russians as the results of any election or emergency meeting of the International Monetary Fund.

*God, Food and Soul*

The book is full of the language of God, food and the soul. Not surprising perhaps for a country that always seems to have something bad in the mouth (vodka is heavily linked to the soul in the Russian imagination; no doubt so are cigarettes though there are no idioms here to prove it).

For instance, a Russian could pretty much convey the entire range of human emotion with reference only to kasha, the grain dish. Nobody around here would argue with this notion, for example: "Kashu maslom ne isportish," which means literally you cannot spoil kasha with too much butter. What it really means, of course, is you can't have too much of a good thing – and in Russia a good thing is usually, well, food soaked in butter.

A new dictionary explains what Russians say, and what they mean

Then again, there are limits. If things go too well for too long a guy can simply "s zhiru besitsya," which means go mad from eating so much fat, or have it so cushy that he gets soft. "Bolno zhirmo budet," sick with fat, painfully fat or it's a lot of fat, means, basically, who does this guy think he is? Is his diet so rich that he can treat everyone like a vassal? And if somebody does mess up pretty badly (Boris Yeltsin in Chechnya, for example) then the only thing to do is: "raskhlyobyvat kashu," which literally means eat up the kasha, but really means clean up his disgusting mess.

Russians don't speak with marbles in their mouth, they speak with kasha in their mouth ("kasha vo rtu"). They're not green behind the ears; they have "malo kashi yel," which means they have eaten too little kasha in their lives to be worth much.

Even some of today's best-known idioms are food-based. When Prime Minister Viktor S. Chernomyrdin was being challenged not long ago about the war in Chechnya he erupted: "Veshat lapshu na ushi," which means don't try hanging noodles on my ears, buddy, or, as Americans might say it, that's a lot of bull. Mikhail S. Gorbachev spat the same phrase at a member of Parliament who was trying to explain why he participated in the failed 1991 coup.

Food matters, of course, but not as much as the Lord. Russians often express their most fundamental feelings with reference to God, even if God is nothing they actively believe in.

The aphorisms are practical. After all, if your head has been cut off, there's no use crying about your hair.

In addition to the many idioms that translate easily into English (God knows how much I have suffered; God knows what I have done; God be merciful) there are some phrases that mean far more to Russians than they do in America: "Radi boga" (for God's sake) is possibly the most commonly repeated phrase in the Russian language – except for a few profanities that translate quite well, but not in this newspaper. Instead of filling empty airspace with the all-purpose words well, um, and you know – all part of the America's national speech, impediment – Russians are capable of repeating the phrase radi boga 20 times in five minutes.

God's name is invoked in every imaginable way. If somebody is a complete loser he is "ni bogu svechka ni chyortu kochera" – neither a candle to God nor a

rod to the devil, i.e., useless. If it's time to stand up and be a man then you say, "Ne bogi gorshki obzhigayut" - It's not God who bakes all the clay pots, or anybody can do this work if he really tries.

But not even God can compare with the soul. No word has more significance in the Russian language than *dusha*, or soul. A good human being has a "dusha naraspashku" - an unbuttoned soul, but really an open heart. But a bad guy - and this has been said of everyone from Dostoyevsky's Raskolnikov in "Crime and Punishment" to Gen. Dzhokhar Dudayev, the Chechen rebel leader - is a person who would "naplevat v dushu," or spit in your soul.

Russian souls are also always being engraved upon, trampled upon, put aside, unburdened and burdened. People worm their way into your soul, they rip their soul in two, and of course, they are often caught selling the damn thing.

#### Window on Culture

"Without this type of idiomatic expression people could not communicate," said Yevgeny N. Shiryayev, deputy director of the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Russian Language and an expert on the development of common speech. "Words would not add up properly. And of course the type of idioms we often rely on - earthy, physical phrases - tell a lot about our culture."

That's no doubt because the Russian people are so practical. After all, "Snyavshi golovu, po volosam ne plachut" - or, once your head has been cut off, there's no use crying about your hair. Now doesn't that make "there's no use crying over spilt milk" seem a little pathetic?

|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p><i>A Phrase in the Hand</i></p> <p>Expressions from "Random House Russian-English Dictionary of Idioms," by Sophia Lubensky (\$75)</p> | <p><i>Otkrit Ameriku</i><br/>(to discover America)</p> <p>To reinvent the wheel; to come up with a breathtaking revelation that everyone already knows (as in "Boris Yeltsin seems to be drinking a lot these days" "Did you discover America?")</p> | <p><i>Volchy billet</i><br/>(wolves' ticket)</p> <p>To be blacklisted; to receive a negative evaluation; to be finished. (Wolves have a bad reputation from fairy tales.)</p> <p><i>Metat ikru</i><br/>(to spawn caviar)</p> <p>To raise a huge fuss about something.</p> | <p><i>V Tulu so svoim samovarom ne yezdyat</i></p> <p>(don't go to Tula with your samovar)</p> <p>Similar to "taking coals to Newcastle." The Russian city of Tula is famous for making samovars.</p> |
|---|--|---|---|

### Unit 3: NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Assignment #11

#### Nonverbal Behavior in the U.S.: Positive Behavior in Conversations

**Directions for students:** People in all cultures have certain ways they like to behave when they talk to people in friendly conversation. Below are descriptions of ways people in the U.S. behave when they want to have satisfying conversations. These types of behavior may be similar to or different from the ways people in your culture act. After each description, decide if the behavior is similar or different compared to behavior in your culture. You will discuss your answers in class.

**Stance:** Face the other person squarely and don't tilt back or away. At times, lean slightly forward, thus showing interest and involvement in what the other person is saying.  
Similar or different \_\_\_\_\_

**Open:** Keep your arms at your sides and your body relaxed. This conveys that you are open to what the other person has to say. Avoid crossing your arms tightly over your chest, as it has the effect of raising a barrier between you and the other person and may give the impression that you are cold toward him or her.  
Similar or different \_\_\_\_\_

**Facial Expression:** A positive, relaxed facial expression (especially a smile) makes the other person feel at ease and shows that you are interested in what she or he is saying. It also is contagious.  
Similar or different \_\_\_\_\_

**Touch:** Caution! A handshake is common the world over, but be careful about more aggressive touching. Americans and Canadians tend to be rather ambiguous about it. Some people feel extremely uncomfortable when touched by a stranger in any way, though they will almost always participate in a handshake.  
Similar or different \_\_\_\_\_

**Nod:** Head nods show that you understand what is being said and that you are listening.  
Similar or different \_\_\_\_\_

**Eye contact:** Fairly steady but not continuous eye contact is important as it conveys that you are attentive to what is being said. Avoid staring.  
 Similar or different \_\_\_\_\_

**Speech:** Speak at a moderate pace, using positive, warm tones of voice.  
 Similar or different \_\_\_\_\_

**Space:** Interpersonal distance affects the degree of comfort people feel in social interaction. Arm's length is considered the most comfortable (or at least neutral) interpersonal distance for social conversations. An interpersonal distance that is too close may evoke anxiety, or one that is too far may communicate disinterest.  
 Similar or different \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment #12

**Types of Nonverbal Behavior: An Outline**

**Directions for students:** Go to a place where you can watch people communicate. Choose a place with many people so you will not be noticed. Take a few notes, but be careful not to do it too openly. You do not want to make people uncomfortable. Use this guide to help you chart the process. Make additional comments if you feel appropriate for class discussion.

**TOUCH**

playful: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 hug: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 self-touch: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 body location: head \_\_\_\_\_ arm \_\_\_\_\_ hand \_\_\_\_\_ back \_\_\_\_\_ leg \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_  
 duration: short \_\_\_\_\_ medium \_\_\_\_\_ long \_\_\_\_\_  
 strength: light \_\_\_\_\_ medium \_\_\_\_\_ strong \_\_\_\_\_  
 intention: accidental \_\_\_\_\_ intentional \_\_\_\_\_

**GREETINGS**

handshake: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 smile: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 head nods: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 kiss on the cheeks(s): yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 raised eyebrows: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 duration of greeting: \_\_\_\_\_

**HAND GESTURES**

expressive \_\_\_\_\_ unexpressive \_\_\_\_\_  
 positive \_\_\_\_\_ negative \_\_\_\_\_  
 accompanying speech: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

**GAZE**

looks up \_\_\_\_\_ looks down \_\_\_\_\_  
 looks to side \_\_\_\_\_ avoidance \_\_\_\_\_  
 intense: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 stare: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

**EYE CONTACT**

yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 frequent \_\_\_\_\_ infrequent \_\_\_\_\_

**FACIAL EXPRESSIONS**

happy \_\_\_\_\_ angry \_\_\_\_\_  
 neutral \_\_\_\_\_ sad \_\_\_\_\_  
 surprise \_\_\_\_\_ interest \_\_\_\_\_  
 smile: relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ forced \_\_\_\_\_

**DRESS**

sloppy \_\_\_\_\_ neat \_\_\_\_\_  
 colorful \_\_\_\_\_ dull \_\_\_\_\_  
 business \_\_\_\_\_ leisure \_\_\_\_\_  
 traditional: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 trendy: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Low \_\_\_\_\_ High

**COORDINATION OF MOVEMENTS (Similarity of movements and / or gestures of people interacting)**

posture mirroring: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 gesture mirroring: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 similar facial expressions: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERPERSONAL DISTANCE**

near \_\_\_\_\_ far \_\_\_\_\_ intermediate \_\_\_\_\_  
 comfortable: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

**POSTURE**

leans forward \_\_\_\_\_ leans backward \_\_\_\_\_  
 open \_\_\_\_\_ closed \_\_\_\_\_  
 relaxed: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

**BODY ORIENTATION**

toward \_\_\_\_\_ away \_\_\_\_\_  
direct \_\_\_\_\_ indirect \_\_\_\_\_

**WALKING STYLE**

fast \_\_\_\_\_ slow \_\_\_\_\_  
strides: long \_\_\_\_\_ short \_\_\_\_\_ medium \_\_\_\_\_  
self-assured \_\_\_\_\_ uncertain \_\_\_\_\_  
leisurely: yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

**SPEECH**

volume: loud \_\_\_\_\_ soft \_\_\_\_\_ medium \_\_\_\_\_  
speed: fast \_\_\_\_\_ slow \_\_\_\_\_ medium \_\_\_\_\_  
silent periods: frequent \_\_\_\_\_ infrequent \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX**

**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**  
Written Assignment #1

There are many articles in local and international newspapers and magazines dealing with issues of culture and diversity. Try to find one that describes matters of ethnicity, religion, age or gender differences, political, societal or business cultural values.

For the first part of this assignment, you are asked (1) to write a short description of the article content and (2) to comment on how it is connected with the topics we have been considering in class.

In the second part of the assignment, you are asked to analyze the article content in terms of cultural/intercultural communication dynamic. Be sure to clarify in your analysis what you mean by terms or concepts such as *culture*, *intercultural communication*, *values*, *differences*, etc. It might be helpful to offer a brief definition of terms and/or elucidate the notions introduced. You are not expected to do research beyond what you have been assigned to read in class. Nevertheless, if you need assistance or advice in finding some specific references, please feel free to contact your lecturer.

Your paper will be evaluated on the basis of (1) how well you utilize relevant readings and lectures, (2) how effectively you link the article content and the analysis of that content, (3) organization and clarity of writing, (4) grammar, punctuation and spelling. Papers should be no more than 5 pages in length. The copy of the corresponding article is due to be attached. Papers are due in class in three weeks on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Please note: You may decide to do this assignment together with another person. Each member of the two-person team will receive the same grade.



## INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION Written Assignment #2

**Introduction:** You will have to interview a person who either is a foreigner to Kazakhstan,

- (1) an employee of a foreign company or joint venture,
  - (2) someone who has lived abroad for not less than 3 months,
  - (3) a representative of a different cultural/sub-cultural group from your own.
- That person might be your group mate, friend, neighbor, relative or acquaintance.

The interview objectives are:

- (a) to identify specific cultural benefits, challenges and barriers that people come across in cross/intercultural encounters,
- (b) to explore the ways people handle differences and find cross/intercultural problem solutions.

For the first part of this assignment, you are asked (1) to write interview questions paying special regard to the interviewee's background (age, gender, status, experience, etc.) and interview context; (2) to discuss your interview questions with your instructor prior to the interview date and not later than two weeks from now.

- In the second part of the assignment, you are asked
- (1) to comment on the choice of an interviewee and interview context, interview questions and procedure,
  - (2) to describe the interview atmosphere and participants' behavior,
  - (3) to analyze the interview content in terms of cultural/intercultural communication peculiarities specific to your particular situation,
  - (4) to make conclusions in terms of objectives set in the Introduction and concepts considered in the frame of our course.

Your paper will be evaluated on the basis of (1) how well you manage your interview preparatory stage, (2) how effectively you link the interview content and the analysis of that content, (3) how grounded your conclusions are, (4) organization and clarity of writing, (5) grammar, punctuation and spelling. Papers should be no more than 7 pages in length. Papers are due in class on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Please note: You may decide to do this assignment together with another person. Each member of the two-person team will receive the same grade.

## Guidelines for Analyzing Cases

Many cases are reports of actual happenings in which interpersonal communication somehow went awry. The analysis of each of these cases provides an ample opportunity to proceed from a superficial knowledge of what goes wrong in an interpersonal encounter to a deeper insight of the problems and challenges of interpersonal intercultural encounters. You can benefit from the case by probing, examining, dissecting, or analyzing the problem, and searching for underlying assumptions governing human encounters.

The following are several alternatives that may be helpful in case study analysis. It should be recognized, however, that the nature of the case might have some bearing on the means of analysis.

A. Your first objective is to read and decide what the focus should be. Sometimes people begin to analyze without either objective in mind or a particular direction. **Remember:** You should know the focus.

B. Questions:

1. Who are the characters? What is going on in the case? What has happened?
2. What is the culture context? What major cultures are involved? (You need to research the cultural background of the characters.)
3. What are the primary intercultural communication factors which have contributed to the problem? (You need to pay attention to values, beliefs, norms, and communication patterns.)
4. What intercultural communication principles would lead to the successful resolution of the problem?
5. What kind of lessons can we learn from the case?

C. Be creative when you answer above questions.

Case Study #1

### Missing Her Appointment

Chu was a student at an American University, having arrived shortly before from Malaysia. Although suffering from culture shock, she adapted to American ways eagerly and was doing well in her classes.

One of Chu's classmates, Virginia, became friendly with her and they often did their homework together. During one class, the professor asked for two volunteers to help him with a special project. Virginia volunteered and also proposed Chu's name, to work with her. Chu stammered her regrets, saying that her English wasn't good enough. Virginia assured the professor that Chu could handle the work easily and accepted the assignment for both of them.

## Peggy's Expectations

An instructor, Peggy, arrived in Seoul to teach English for a year. She cleared customs and waited for her new employer to pick her up. The man finally drove up and helped her with her bags. The employer remarked that it was a four-hour ride to the campus, and they drove off.

Peggy thought she was going to work in Seoul at a major university. Instead she ended up at a junior college in the hinterlands. Shown her living quarters, she was amazed to see that she would be living in a one-room apartment with the bathroom down the hall and a community cooking area. Her office turned out to be a desk in a room shared with the other faculty. She found the whole situation unsatisfactory but didn't know what to do.

## American Hosts

Eva came to the United States from Peru to study at an American college. She wanted to live with an American family to find out more about the American way of life. And she wanted to improve her English.

The foreign student office of her college found the Larsen family for Eva to live with. Eva spoke with Mrs. Larsen on the telephone. She sounded very warm and friendly to Eva. She told Eva she could move in the next day. Eva was very happy about it.

Eva arrived the next day with all her luggage. She was excited to meet the Larsens. She rang the doorbell.

A tall, blond woman answered the door with a big smile on her face. She said, "Oh, you must be Eva! I'm so glad you're here. Let me help you with your bags. Come on in. I'm Hilda Larsen." She took one of Eva's bags into the house.

When they got inside, Mrs. Larsen put the bag down and stood across from Eva, about 3 feet away. She crossed her arms in front of her and asked Eva, "Tell me about your trip. I'd love to go to Peru someday."

Just then, her teenage son walked in, hands in his pockets. "Jimmy, meet Eva. Maybe she can help you with your Spanish this semester," said his mother.

Jimmy said, "Hi, glad to meet you." His hands stayed in his pockets while he nodded his head.

Eva didn't know what to do with her hands. She felt uncomfortable. But she smiled and said, "Hi, nice to meet you."

The Larsens showed Eva her new room, then they left her alone to unpack. Eva felt a little disappointed, but she didn't know exactly why. She thought Mrs. Larsen seemed so friendly on the phone. But now she wasn't sure. Jimmy also seemed a little cold, but maybe he was just shy.

Chu failed to appear for the special project, and Virginia had to do the work alone. When she saw Chu next, Virginia asked her why she didn't show up. Chu apologized, saying something had come up. Put out by Chu's excuse, Virginia asked why Chu hadn't called to tell her of the conflict. Chu said nothing.

## Case Study #2

## Tabu

Madeline, a stickler on protocol, was in Israel for an international conference. There she met with a Chassidim Jew who was to discuss conference seating with her. She handed this orthodox, highly religious man her calling card. He didn't accept it; another man took it and handed it to the Chassidim. Madeline extended her hand in greeting. The handshake was ignored. At the meeting table, she handed the Chassidim her seating plan. He didn't take it, so she laid it on the table before him. Madeline was perplexed with the man's pertinacious behavior.

## Case Study #3

## The Friendly Professor

Emily, from Taipei, enrolled in the American university, bright-eyed and excited about graduate study in a well-known program. With her advisor's consent she signed up for a full course load, two with the same professor.

She decided to see the professor and explain her lack of English fluency. He welcomed her graciously and talked with her kindly about her courses. In the restaurant he invited her to join him for lunch. Then he opened doors for her and pulled out her chair. Emily thought this was nice and appreciated the attention.

The professor answered Emily's questions with a smile and offered her much help. To and from the cafeteria, he helped her across the busy streets, taking her elbow to guide her through the confusion of students changing classes. He invited her to join him at the upcoming football game, a sport she had never witnessed.

When she returned to the dormitory, Emily was excited as she recounted the day's events to her roommate from Japan. By the time they finished talking about it, Emily and her roommate were convinced that Emily had a boyfriend. Graduate study would be a joy.

The first day of class, the roof fell in. Emily walked away from the two classes with the same professor, loaded with work. He was brusque and demanding of all students. Emily realized that every minute of her free time would be filled with study. No football game for her if she wanted to keep up with her studies -- not only with the professor but with all of her classes.

### The Shinto Priest

The U.S. branch of a Japanese manufacturing company had been operating successfully for some years, but in recent months a series of seemingly unrelated incidents had caused concern. First, there was a rash of accidents in the plant itself, then one of the Japanese executive's children died of a rare illness and another executive's car caught fire, severely burning him. Rumors of a jinx on the company began to spread among the employees, and morale lowered. Consequently, the management called a meeting of the executives to decide how to react to the situation. The American managers suggested that all safety and quality control procedures be reviewed so as to reassure the workers that their welfare was taken seriously. The Japanese managers, however, held that this had already been done; they felt that other forces were at work. They wished to bring in a Shinto priest to bless the company and protect it against evil spirits - this was the only course of action that would reassure them. The Americans were reluctant to adopt such an action and preferred the idea of seeking suggestions from the employees. The meeting ended in disagreement.

### Was Somebody Saying No?

Dr. Xuang Xi, who worked at an important economic planning institute in Beijing, was on a study tour of the United States when he contacted Dr. Ronald Hastings, who was affiliated with a similar organization in New York City. Hastings, the author of several well-received books, was a high-status economist and considered a leading authority in the field of economic forecasting based on microeconomic predictors. Dr. Xi invited Dr. Hastings to come to China for 2 months to give seminars on microeconomic variables in forecasting, with special attention to using data sets available in China. Dr. Hastings responded, "I'm interested, but I have to check the invitation with the administrators here in this [American] organization. The organization just received a grant that frees me from any teaching responsibilities for 3 years, and that's great because I can devote full time to research and writing. But I don't know the details of what that grant allows, for instance, time away from New York to go to China as well as a more teaching-oriented than research-oriented 2 months in China. So I'll check with the administrators here to get their approval." Dr. Hastings then ended his meeting with Dr. Xi, thinking that it had gone well. However, Dr. Hastings never heard again from Dr. Xi.

Eva tried to decide what was wrong. She thought to herself: If an American girl came to stay with me in Peru, she would get a warmer welcome than that. My mother would give her a big kiss, instead of just standing there, on the other side of the room. And my brother would give her a proper greeting. Well, people told me that Americans are cold. I guess they're right.

### Who Is More Important?

A manager in a data processing company was having difficulty with a conflict between a young, ambitious French Canadian male and his co-worker, an older Chinese woman who was on a special visa from China. She had recently become uncooperative and had made it clear to the manager that she would not be willing to travel to the capitol with her co-worker to hold discussions with legislators about a new product. Yet she had worked on the development of the product with great enthusiasm.

When the manager asked her what the problem was, he received no clear explanation. When he asked her co-worker, the young man had no insights to offer. The young French Canadian was clearly annoyed, however, that the Chinese woman was refusing to share her data with him. That meant he couldn't make the presentation to legislators, because she had all the key data on her computer disks.

The manager's repeated questions to her about her "problem" got nowhere. So he changed his approach. He began explaining his concerns, as manager and as spokesperson for the company, about the upcoming meeting with legislators. His explanation about his position was unemotional. In that climate she then felt she could explain her position. She revealed that she felt that as an older - and to her mind, more senior - person she should not be sent to the capitol with a younger employee who would do the presentation of material she had worked hard to develop. That would diminish her status, she felt.

This was obviously a conflict about power, and more specifically about roles. Because the manager explained his position without blame or emotion, the woman was able to respond with an explanation of her own. Once the manager understood her position, he could take steps to resolve the conflict. He announced through a general memo that the woman was the senior consultant of this project and her name would be first on the documents. The young man would do most of the presentation because he was a native English speaker. This satisfied her and allowed the project to continue.

### Case Study Sample Analysis

#### To Case Study #5

Many Americans shake hands when they meet someone, but to an American, the important things are the words and tone of voice. In other cultures, such as Eva's, a greeting is not a real greeting if there is no physical contact. A handshake or a kiss is a way of showing respect. And Asian greetings are different, too. In most Asian cultures, there is no physical contact at all in a greeting. Respect is shown by *not* touching the other person.

Eva used the "rules" of her own culture to understand Mrs. Larsen. But she misunderstood her. To Eva, Mrs. Larsen seemed cold because in Eva's culture a woman who greets another woman without giving her a kiss is cold. But Mrs. Larsen was not cold by the rules of American culture; she gave a warm smile and asked friendly questions. In fact, in Mrs. Larsen's culture, to kiss another woman when meeting for the first time would seem very strange.

Another reason why Mrs. Larsen seemed cold to Eva was that she stood so far from her. Scientists, mainly anthropologists and psychologists, have studied personal space, or how far from each other people stand. How much personal space people need to feel comfortable is a cultural matter. For example, Americans feel comfortable with their friends at a distance of 18 inches to 4 feet. If someone stands closer, it is too friendly and the American feels uncomfortable. If someone stands farther than 4 feet away, he seems cold. But Latin Americans and Arabs normally stand closer than 18 inches from their friends. In those cultures, standing farther than 18 inches seems unfriendly.

Greetings and personal space, like gestures, are examples of nonverbal communication, or body language. Some examples are eye contact, ways of moving, and touching. Nonverbal communication is an extremely important part of conversation. Some scientists believe that people pay more attention to body language than to spoken language. For example, Eva thought Mrs. Larsen was cold even though her words were warm.

So, to understand what people from another culture really mean, you must be aware of two things. First, you must pay attention to your own nonverbal actions. Second, learn the nonverbal ways of the other language. But both things are difficult to do because of the way deep culture works. Most people are not aware of their own nonverbal communication because it is so much a part of them: it just feels like the only natural way to act. So to learn about another culture, you must watch carefully how people act and how they react. In doing so, you may learn as much about your own culture as about others.

### KEYS

#### To Assignment #2

I - 2a, 3b, 4b, 5b, 6a, 7a, 8b  
C - 2b, 3a, 4a, 5a, 6b, 7b, 8a

#### To Assignment #10

1. 'You can't have too much of a good thing'
2. 'Go mad from eating so much fat,' or 'have it so cushy that he gets soft'
3. 'Sick with fat,' or 'painfully fat,' or 'it's a lot of fat,' which means, basically, 'who does this guy think he is? Is his diet so rich that he can treat everyone like a vassal?'
4. 'Eat up the kasha,' but really means, 'clean up his disgusting mess'
5. 'Speak with marbles in the mouth'
6. 'He has eaten too little kasha in his life to be worth much'
7. 'Don't try to hang noodles on my ears, buddy,' or 'That's a lot of bull'
8. 'For God's sake'
9. 'Neither a candle to God nor a rod to the devil,' i.e. 'useless,' or 'a complete loser'
10. 'It's not God who bakes all the clay pots,' or 'anybody can do this work if he really tries'
11. 'An unbuttoned soul,' but really 'an open heart'
12. 'Spit in your soul'
13. 'Once your head has been cut off, there's no use crying about your hair,' or 'There's no use crying over spilt milk'