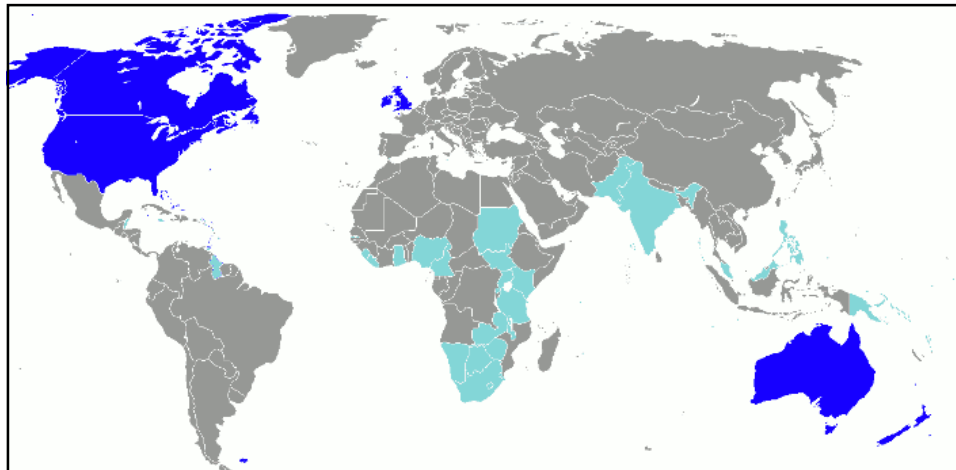

Business English and the Real World: Gender, Power, Hierarchy



Judith Mader, Rudi Camerer
BESIG-CONFERENCE, 14 November 2014

Photo: MS Cliparts



1. Are We Teaching the Right Things?
2. English as a Lingua Franca: How does it Affect Us?
3. Three Examples: Gender, Power, Hierarchy
4. Teaching Business English for the Real World





Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English

<http://www.univie.ac.at/voice/>



Each: approximately
1 million items

INTERNATIONAL CORPUS OF ENGLISH

<http://ice-corpora.net/ice/>



ICE CRITICAL ISSUES - Train-the-Trainer Course

THE MOST EFFECTIVE FAX

In a study of Chinese faxes collected in mainland China after 2001, Professor Yunxia Zhu* of Queensland University, Australia, documented politeness patterns, which she identified as typical of Chinese written business communication. The fax noted as the most successful one by Chinese business managers is given below. Only the translation of the text is provided here.

* M 1 stands for the first move, M2 the second, and so on.



- M1** ATTN: Mr Wang Jiawei.
- M2 How are you? Happy New Year! Wish you prosperity!
- M3 [1] I have recently received Contract AS-4589 signed by your company. Thank you for ordering about \$8 cotton shopping bags. We are extremely grateful to you for your cooperation and support at the beginning of the New Year. In order to guarantee the time of delivery now we are making adequate arrangements to design samples and prepare materials according to your order. You can trust our commitment to collaboration.
- M3 [2] At the same time, our company sent over 104,000 cotton bags and the delivery number is CVCB 18025. We haven't received your payment yet. According to Mr Zhang, the payment of US \$ 35,490 was sent on November 30. However, we consulted with Merion Branch, China Bank and found that no payment had been made by your bank so far. We kindly ask Mr. Lian (the addressee) to help check about this at your earliest convenience because delayed payment may affect directly the carrying out of our sales orders. Please think about the possible further collaboration between you and us. I hope that you can help Mr. Zhang sort out this issue.
- M4 Thank you for your cooperation! Happy New Year!
- M5 Zhen Liangchen (zhong)

Discuss with your partner

- What strikes you as special about Mr. Liangchen's fax?
 - Which features make Mr. Liangchen's fax different to what is often taught in Business English course books today?
 - Do you think written politeness conventions in China may have adapted to Anglo-American conventions and be different today?
- d) Write a reply!

* Yunxia Zhu (2003), Effective Communication in Chinese Business for Writing, in: E. Argente-Chappell / M. Goffé (eds.), (2003), Asian Business Discourse(s), 11-41.

Business correspondence



M1* ATTN: Mr Wang Jiawei,

M2 How are you?
Happy New Year! Wish you prosperity!

M3 (1) I have recently received Contract AS-6589 signed by your company. Thank you for ordering 60x58 cotton shopping bags. We are extremely grateful to you for your cooperation and support at the beginning of the New Year. In order to guarantee the time of delivery now we are making adequate arrangements to design samples and prepare materials according to your order. You can trust our commitment to collaboration.

M3 (2) At the same time, our company sent over 104,000 cotton bags and the delivery number is CVC/B 98055. We haven't received your payment yet. According to Mr Zhang, the payment of US\$ 35,490 was sent on November 30. However, we consulted with Henan Branch, China Bank and found that no payment had been made by your bank so far. We kindly ask Mr Lian [the addressee] to help check about this at your earliest convenience because delayed payment may affect directly the carrying out of our sales orders. Please think about the possible further collaboration between you and us. I hope that you can help Mr Zhang sort out this issue.

M4 Thank you for your cooperation! Happy New Year!

M5 Zhen Liangchen (shang)

Influence of L1 on pragmatics

e.g. **request schemata in writing:**

Anglo-American style	Common in China, Indonesia, Japan ...
Salutation Request Sign off	Salutation Face-work / Securing of Good Will Reasons for request Request Sign off

Influence of L1 on pragmatics

e.g. **Turn-taking conventions**

Turn-stealing / interruptions vs. seniority, gender etc.



Photo: MS Cliparts

Influence of L1/C1 on pragmatics

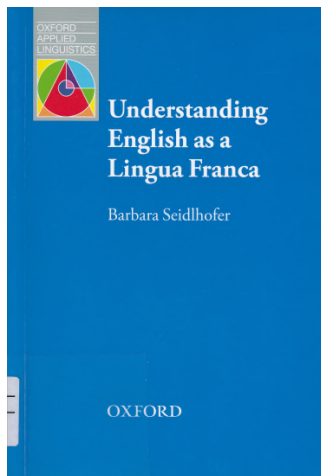
e.g. **Reacting to a compliment**

"You speak Chinese really well."

- a) *Thank you.*
- b) *I have been trying hard to learn, but my Chinese is still not good.*
- c) *No, no, my Chinese is very poor.*



Photo: MS Cliparts



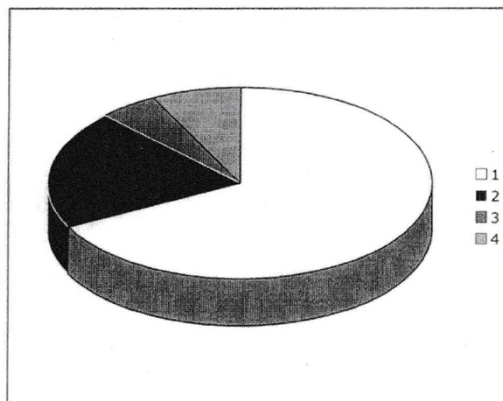
ELF users regularly ...

- do not use third-person singular present tense s
- use of relative pronouns *who* and *which* interchangeably
- omit definite and indefinite articles or insert them where they do not occur in SE (e.g. *they have a respect for all, he is very good person*)
- pluralize nouns that do not have plural forms in SE (e.g. *informations, knowledges, advices*)
- use the demonstrative *this* with both singular and plural nouns (e.g. *this countries*)
- extend the uses of certain 'general' verbs to cover more meanings than in SE, especially *make, do, have, put, take* (e.g. *make a discussion*)
- ...

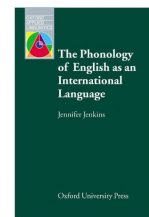
<http://www.univie.ac.at/voice/>



The causes of communication breakdown in ELF



Key: 1 = pronunciation; 2 = vocabulary; 3 = grammar; 4 = other causes




productive &
receptive
skills affected !

Jennifer Jenkins (2000). *The Phonology of English as a Lingua Franca*





Influence of L1 on pronunciation



Train-the-Trainer Course

INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH
LISTENING COMPREHENSION






1. Ms. Mustafina
Ms. Mustafina grew up in Kazakhstan and has worked internationally for many years. In this interview she talks about her experience in several countries, including China and Ethiopia.
Listen to what she says and mark whether the following statements are true (T), false (F) or not mentioned (0).

	T	F	0
Ms. Mustafina does not think her English is really good.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethiopians thought her way of speaking English was best.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Dave
Dave is a Scot who has lived in Germany for some years. Here he talks about his experience with a German football club.
Listen to what he says and mark whether the following statements are true (T), false (F) or not mentioned (0).

	T	F	0
Dave finds committee meetings in his football club unorganised.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Club life in Scotland is much more fun than in Germany.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Chisato
In this recording, Chisato from Tokyo in Japan, discusses her experiences of negotiating with people from European countries.



European
Language
Competence



Collins
English for Business
LISTENING
Ian Badger

POWERED BY COBUILD



Collins
English for Life
B1+ Intermediate
Listening
Ian Badger

POWERED BY COBUILD

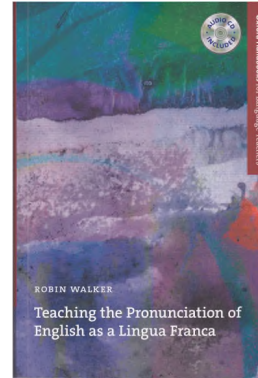


European
Language
Competence

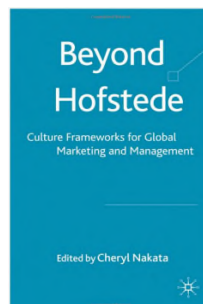
Influence of L1 on pronunciation

ELF and the learner's first-language pronunciation:

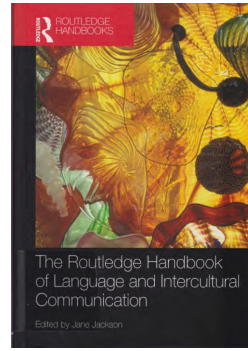
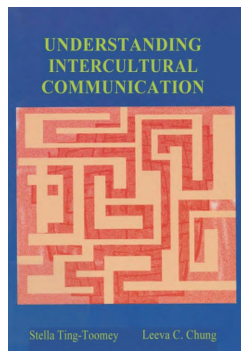
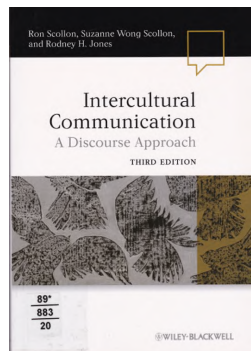
- Arabic
- Chinese
- German
- Greek
- Japanese
- Malay
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish



Intercultural theory 3.0







“Perhaps the most significant aspect of this evolution has been our development over the past decade of the theoretical framework of mediated discourse analysis, an approach to discourse which focuses less on broad constructs like ‘culture’ and more on the everyday concrete actions through which culture is produced.”

Ron Scollon, Suzanne Wong Scollon, Rodney H. Jones (2012). Intercultural Communication. A Discourse Approach. 3rd ed. p. XVIII.



Culture-based COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

- Directness
- Enthusiasm
- Formality
- Assertiveness
- Self-promotion
- Personal disclosure



A. Molinsky (2013). Global Dexterity. 49f.

Photo: MS Cliparts



A Six-Dimensional Approach for Diagnosing the Cultural Code

Directness: How straightforwardly you're expected to communicate in a particular situation. Are you expected to say exactly what you want to say, or to 'hint' at something in a more indirect manner?

Enthusiasm: How much emotion and energy you are expected to show when communicating. Can you express how you feel, or is it more appropriate to hide your positive feelings?

Formality: The amount of deference and respect you are expected to display with your communication style. Are you expected to show a high level of respect when communicating with someone in a particular situation, or can you be more informal?

Assertiveness: How strongly you are expected or allowed to voice your opinion and advocate your point of view in a particular culture and in a particular situation in that culture. Should you be forthright in expressing yourself, or work at hiding or sublimating your point of view?

Self-promotion: The extent to which you can speak positively about yourself in a given cultural situation. Should you actively promote your positive qualifications or be more self-effacing?

Personal disclosure: The extent to which it is appropriate to reveal personal information about yourself to others. Should you be open and forward in expressing details about your life, or is it more appropriate to hide these personal details?

Andy Molinsky (2013). Global Dexterity, p 49f.



TEACHING ENGLISH IN A GLOBALISED WORLD:

Anglo-American English
("Mid-Atlantic")



International
English



The "Big Six" in Business English Training:



ME & MY CULTURE(S)

e.g. Mr. Kim

Corporate culture

for Kolon Co., Seoul
Prestigious company

Professional group

Worked on a joint-venture team

Utilitarian discourse

Korean language community



Age: late forties

Generational discourse

His children grow up in an affluent environment.

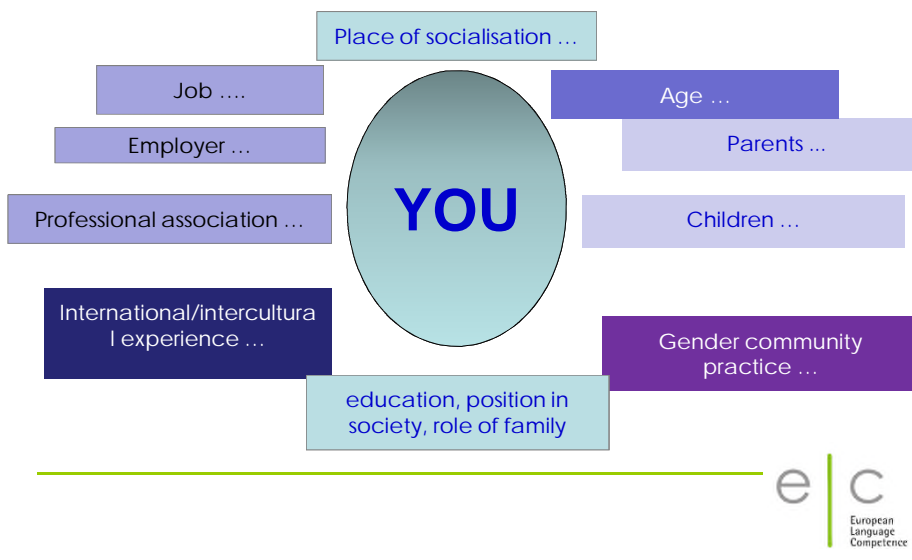
Gender discourse

Confucian community of values



Adapted from Ron Scollon & Suzanne Wong Scollon (2001). Intercultural Communication. A Discourse Approach. 2nd ed. p.181f.

YOU & YOUR CULTURE(S)



Questioning the concept

e.g. Hofstede, Trompenaars/Hampden-Turner

CULTURE = NATION STATE ?

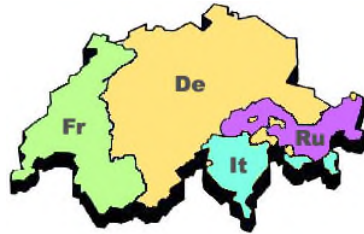


TABLE 6.1 Long-Term Orientation Index (LTO) Values for 39 Countries and Regions

COUNTRY/REGION	SCORE	RANK	COUNTRY/REGION	SCORE	RANK
China	118	1	Slovakia	38	20-21
Hong Kong	96	2	Italy	34	22
Taiwan	87	3	Sweden	33	23
Japan	80	4-5	Poland	32	24
Vietnam	80	4-5	Austria	31	25-27
Korea (South)	75	6	Australia	31	25-27
Brazil	65	7	Germany	31	25-27
India	61	8	Canada Quebec	30	28-30
Thailand	56	9	New Zealand	30	28-30
Hungary	50	10	Portugal	30	28-30
Singapore	48	11	United States	29	31
Denmark	46	12	Great Britain	25	32-33
Netherlands	44	13-14	Zimbabwe	25	32-33
Norway	44	13-14	Canada	23	34
Ireland	43	15	Philippines	19	35-36
Finland	41	16	Spain	19	35-36
Bangladesh	40	17-18	Nigeria	16	37
Switzerland	40	17-18	Czech Republic	13	38
France	39	19	Pakistan	0	39
Belgium total	38	20-21			

Scores for countries or regions in **bold type** were calculated from the original Chinese Value Survey database. Scores for other countries or regions were based on replications.

G.Hofstede/G.J.Hofstede (2005). *Cultures and Organizations. Software of the Mind*, p.211



You never meet a culture,
you always meet individuals !

Culture, Stereotypes, Country Specifics ?



INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

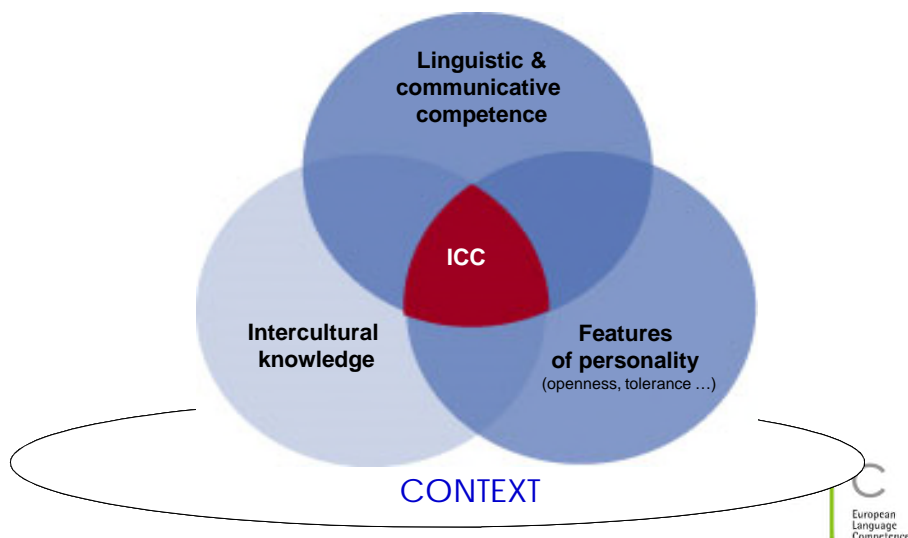
Suggesting a definition

“Intercultural Competence means possessing the necessary attitudes and reflective and behavioural skills and using these to behave effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations.”

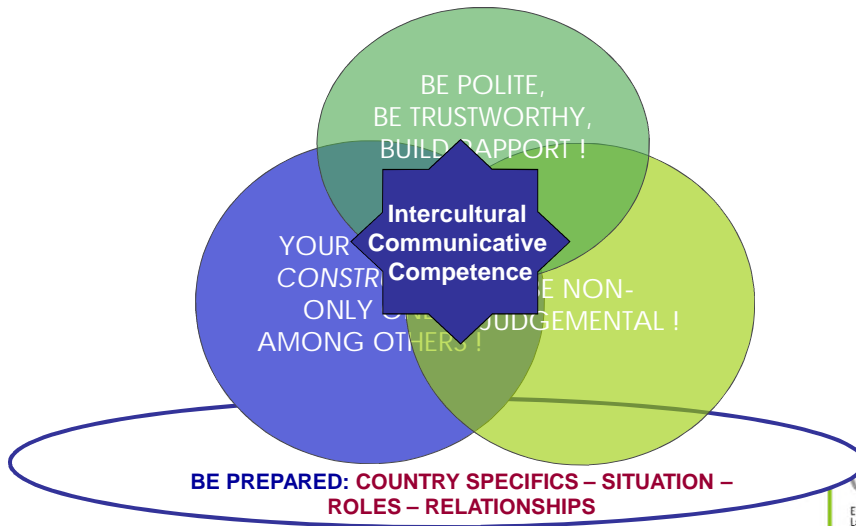
Interkulturelle Kompetenz – Schlüsselkompetenz des 21. Jahrhunderts.
Thesenpapier der Bertelsmann Stiftung auf der Basis der interkulturellen
Kompetenzmodelle von Dr. Darja Deardorff. Gütersloh 2006.



INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (ICC)



INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (ICC)



INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (ICC)

Create "Cultural Islands"

(Ed Schein)

Be effective in "Communities of Practice"

(Etienne Wenger, Jean Lave, Barbara Seidhofer, Jennifer Jenkins etc.)

4 BASIC RULES

concerning Intercultural Communication

1. NEVER BE UNPREPARED !



2. YOU NEVER MEET A CULTURE, BUT ALWAYS INDIVIDUALS .

3. YOU CANNOT NOT COMMUNICATE .

4. ALWAYS BE NON-JUDGEMENTAL !



Photo: MS Cliparts

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

2 BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF TRAINING

- 1st, 2nd, 3rd encounters are crucial !
- positive relationship sought !



“COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE”

Etienne Wenger (1998). Communities of practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press



Photo: MS Cliparts

Implications for the teaching of Intercultural Competence in English



ONE LANGUAGE FOR ALL?

Each speaker will use his or her own politeness conventions and the use of English as an apparently common language may well hide more than it reveals.

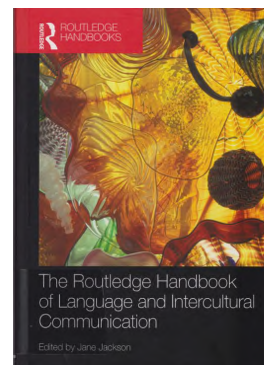
Two basic rules should therefore be observed:

1. First and second encounters are crucial and will most probably have an effect on how the relationship continues.
2. The higher the level of the speaker's English in linguistic terms, the more serious will breaches of politeness conventions generally be considered.



Photo: www.iStockphoto.com

3 Practical examples



1. **Power:** e.g. 2 Job Interviews
2. **Hierarchy:** e.g. self-disclosure in intercultural encounters
3. **Gender:** When do we reach our limits?



1. Using English in Job Interviews

Michael (US-American) Tries to Promote Himself for a Special Assignment in China.

After a meeting of his department, Michael takes the elevator up to the finance division to visit Xiaodong Liu, a human resources manager in charge of selecting participants for a prestigious leadership development program in Singapore. Ever since he arrived at the company, Michael had heard about this program and has been anxious to participate. Michael has had numerous interactions with Xiaodong and feels comfortable approaching him about this. He walks over to Xiaodong's office and knocks on the door.

Michael: Hi, Xiaodong! How're things? Do you have a minute?

Xiaodong: Sure, Michael, come on in. Please have a seat.

Michael: Thanks. I heard you're looking for people to participate in the Singapore leadership development program. I'd love to be a part of this team.

Xiaodong: Hmmmm. I think you'll be a good fit.

Michael: I'm really glad you think so. I actually think I'd be a great fit, given my background and skill set.

Michael does not hear from Xiaodong on this subject. It is only after a week that he finds out that another colleague was chosen for the leadership development program in Singapore. Not only is he disappointed, but he also feels that Xiaodong, more than ever before, is now keeping him at a distance.



Discuss with your neighbour:

1. What - if anything - went wrong?
2. Can you think of how Michael might have promoted himself differently in this situation?

Adapted from: Andy Molinsky (2013), Global Diversity, 34f.

Jan (Dutch) Applies for a Job with a US American Company



As a young Dutch engineer I once applied for a junior management job with an American engineering company which had recently settled in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. I felt well qualified: with a degree from the senior technical university of the country, good grades, a record of active participation in student associations, and three years' experience as an engineer with a well-known, although somewhat sleepy Dutch company. I had written a short letter indicating my interest and providing some vital personal data.

I was invited to appear in person, and after a long train ride I sat facing the American plant manager. I behaved politely and modestly, as I knew an applicant should, and waited for the other man to ask the usual questions which would enable him to find out how qualified I was. To my surprise he asked very few of the things I thought should be discussed. Instead he wanted to know some highly detailed facts about my experience in tool design, using English words I did not know, and the relevance of which escaped me. Those were the things I could learn within a week once I worked there. After half an hour of painful misunderstandings he said "sorry— we need a first class man." And I was out in the street.

Discuss with your neighbour:

1. What - if anything - went wrong?
2. Can you think of how Jan might have promoted himself differently in this situation?

Geert Hofstede (1991), Cultures and organizations, p. 79f.

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Xiaodong: Hmmmm. I think you'll be a good fit.

Michael: I'm really glad you think so. I actually think I'd be a great fit, given my background and skill set.



Michael finds out more th

HOW CAN WE TEACH DIVERSITY?

Discuss with your neighbour:

1. What - if anything - went wrong?
2. Can you think of how Michael might have promoted himself differently in this situation?

Adapted from: Andy Molinsky (2013), Global Diversity, 34f.

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Geert Hofstede (1991), Cultures and organizations, p. 79f.

**Self-Disclosure:
SHOWING GRIEF**

2. Personal Disclosure in Hierarchical Relations

Read the incident and think about what has happened. Then discuss the incident with the group, paying particular attention to the questions.

The following incident is reported by Richard Gesteland, a Danish businessman, in his book *Cross-Cultural Business Behavior*: When working in Singapore he decided to learn Mandarin. So he hired Stefanie, a pleasant young woman who had recently immigrated from Taiwan, to tutor him. But due to the unexpected death of both of his parents he was forced to stop the lessons for about a month. It was on a Saturday after he had got back to Singapore that Stefanie dropped by to enquire why he had missed over a month's worth of lessons. Suffering from grief compounded by jet lag and exhaustion, he briefly said that both of his parents had just died. A stricken look flashed across Stefanie's face for just a fraction of a second, and she gasped. Then the young woman suddenly laughed out loud, right in his face, and proceeded to giggle for several seconds. A few weeks later Stefanie stopped coming and Richard had to find a new Mandarin tutor.



Adapted from: Richard R. Gesteland (1999). *Cross-Cultural Business Behavior. Marketing, Negotiating and Managing Across Cultures*. Copenhagen Business School Press, Copenhagen, p. 371.

Discuss this incident and your reactions to it.

- a) Can you give any explanations for this incident?
- b) Has anything like this ever happened to you? What has gone wrong here? Can you finish the story? What can Richard say and do?
- c) What can be done to prevent something like this happening again?
- d) What aspects of cultural theory do you find most helpful in understanding this critical incident?
- e) Which of the following do you think has most influence on what has happened – features of personality, knowledge or communicative ability?

4-STEP METHOD

STEP 1: Questions: What—Who—When—Where—Why—What else? Allow each participant individually to ask questions concerning the situation under discussion so as to create as complete a picture as possible. All questions, including those which cannot be answered, should be documented.

STEP 2: Sharing opinions and feelings about the issue. Ask participants to voice their personal opinions and feelings about the issue under discussion, without jumping to "hypotheses" or "solutions" at this point.

STEP 3: Hypotheses about possible reasons. Find one or more answers or assumptions concerning the underlying reasons and motivations of the people involved.

STEP 4: Solutions for practical ways of dealing with the situation. Provide participants a) with a communication strategy to deal appropriately with the situation and b) with the language needed for this and c) engage them in practical exercises using the language provided.



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Photo: MS Clipart

Self-Disclosure: SHOWING GRIEF

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face,
few w
had to

Adapted
Across C

HOW CAN WE TEACH THIS?

Discuss this incident and your reactions to it.

- a) Can you give any explanations for this incident?
- b) Has anything like this ever happened to you? What has gone wrong here? Can you finish the story? What can Richard say and do?
- c) What can be done to prevent something like this happening again?
- d) What aspects of cultural theory do you find most helpful in understanding this critical incident?
- e) Which of the following do you think has most influence on what has happened – features of personality, knowledge or communicative ability?

3. GENDER in international/intercultural business communication



GLASS CEILING ?

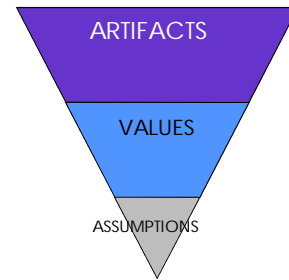
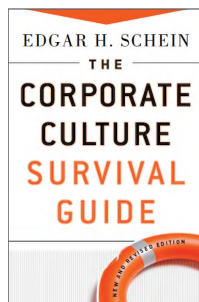


Photo: www.iStockphoto.com

DOUBLE BIND ?



Photo: MS Cliparts



“Certain truths are so clear that we have forgotten them and we don’t really pay close enough attention to them. You cannot in any kind of high hazard world be safe without good communication.”

Edgar H. Schein

Bertelsmann-Stiftung The New Leadership: Culture Management and Helping 14-15 October 2011





Mary McLeod is a highly qualified software engineer working for a global information technology corporation based in California, USA.

Here is her report on what happened to her during an assignment in Japan.

Sensei? No females allowed.

"As project manager and main designer of the software to control an integrated circuits tester, I was the natural choice to travel to Japan to teach a 5 day class to their engineers.

I was told by many of my colleagues who had taught classes in Japan that as teacher or sensei, I would practically be a god in the classroom. They told me the students there respect teachers so much that they would bow to me and be the most polite students I had ever seen. So I arrived in the classroom with high expectations.

I was "greeted" by chaos in the class. My entrance didn't cause even a slight pause in the engineers' casual conversations. Only several minutes later when my host (a male engineer) spoke did the men look up. I was introduced as the teacher.

I began the class and the conversations resumed again as if I didn't exist. I waited for them to stop, tried to get their attention, spoke more loudly, all to no avail. I stopped and formally stated my background and qualifications then presented my business cards individually to each engineer. When my job title clearly showed that I out-ranked each one of them, they became quiet. That lasted nearly 2 hours, until old habits kicked in and the conversations resumed.

During the hands-on labs, they refused to ask me questions. They only asked my host. So he had to tell me the questions, get the answer from me and then tell them. These engineers spoke almost fluent English, so language wasn't the issue.

I learned that the entire division of our company in Japan had a total of 3 women engineers at that time. Women were the secretaries only, so these engineers could not comprehend a female engineer. It was challenging but I kept on teaching.

On the last day, my host gave me the highest compliment: 'Mary, you are a REAL engineer.' But I never got the respect a male sensei would have automatically received."



"As project manager and main designer of the software to control an integrated circuits tester, I was the natural choice to travel to Japan to teach a 5 day class to their engineers.

I was told by many of my colleagues who had taught classes in Japan that as teacher or sensei, I would practically be a god in the classroom. They told me the students there respect teachers so much that they would bow to me and be the most polite students I had ever seen. So I arrived in the classroom with high expectations.

I was "greeted" by chaos in the class. My entrance didn't cause even a slight pause in the engineers' casual conversations. Only several minutes later when my host (a male engineer) spoke did the men look up. I was introduced as the teacher.

I began the class and the conversations resumed again as if I didn't exist. I waited for them to stop, tried to get their attention, spoke more loudly, all to no avail. I stopped and formally stated my background and qualifications then presented my business cards individually to each engineer. When my job title clearly showed that I out-ranked each one of them, they became quiet. That lasted nearly 2 hours, until old habits kicked in and the conversations resumed.

During the hands-on labs, they refused to ask me questions. They only asked my host. So he had to tell me the questions, get the answer from me and then tell them. These engineers spoke almost fluent English, so language wasn't the issue.

I learned that the entire division of our company in Japan had a total of 3 women engineers at that time. Women were the secretaries only, so these engineers could not comprehend a female engineer. It was challenging but I kept on teaching.

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Mary McLeod is a highly qualified software engineer working for a global information technology corporation based in California, USA.

Here is her report on what happened to her during an assignment in Japan.

Sensei? No females allowed.

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HOW CAN WE TEACH THIS?



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS?



Rapport building

in intercultural encounters is affected by (at least) these main factors:

1. **Goals** rapport-building
2. **Face** quality & social identity face
3. **Speech-act strategies:**
 - Directness / Indirectness
 - Enthusiasm / Restraint
 - Formality / informality
 - Assertiveness /
 - Self-enhancement / Self-effacement
 - Personal Disclosure



H. Spencer-Oatey (2000). Face, (Im)Politeness and Rapport. In: H. Spencer-Oatey (ed.) (2000). Culturally Speaking. Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory. p. 44.

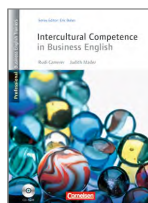


Photo: MS Cliparts



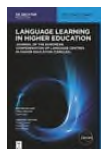
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Judith Mader, Rudi Camerer
Interculture Journal 12/2010
<http://www.interculture-journal.com/>



Professional Business English Trainers: **Intercultural Competence in Business English**

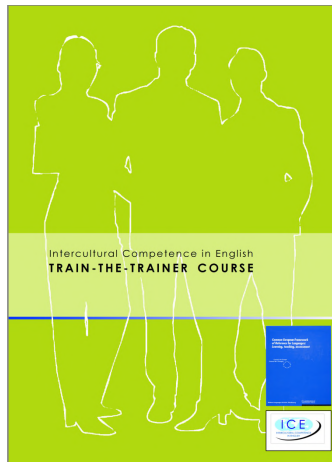
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“Testing intercultural competence in (International) English: Some basic questions and suggested answers”

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Language Learning in Higher Education 2014 – 4(1). pp. 207-236.





Sat 29 / Sun 30 November / Sat 6 / Sun 7 December 2014
FRANKFURT / MAIN



Sat 6 / Sun 7 January 2015 BERLIN



THANK YOU!

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