

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC EXAMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION CLASSES:
CULTURAL PATTERNS, CLASSROOM DYNAMICS, AND ADJUSTMENT
DIFFICULTIES

by

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STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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Yarıř bitti, bayrađı eve getiriyorum.

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ABSTRACT

Two of the mandatory English composition classes offered by the Writing Program at the University of Arizona are all-international (NNS) and mixed (NNS/NES) sections of composition. The NNS sections consist solely of international students who are non-native speakers of English. The NNS/NES sections, on the other hand, are open to both American and international students; therefore, they are mixes of non-native and native speakers of English. This study investigates classroom interaction patterns of 35 international and 9 American students enrolled in one NNS and one NNS/NES section of composition. Data was collected through classroom observations, Teacher's Journal, questionnaires, one-on-one interviews with the participants, and videotaped lectures, in-class small group work, and teacher-student conferences.

The study attempts to identify common interaction patterns within five culture groups in the two classes: Asian Indian, Japanese, Chinese, Middle Easterner, and American. Classroom interaction patterns that reveal the students' home culture or interaction norms in educational institutions in their country are examined for this purpose. This study also compares classroom dynamics in the two sections to report whether mixing Americans with international students causes differences in the classroom atmosphere and the ease of communication among students. Finally, this study reports international students' perspectives about being in a mixed section with Americans, their thoughts and feelings about American culture and people, their adjustment difficulties in the United States and the classroom manifestations of these difficulties.

The results of this study have pedagogical and methodological implications and suggestions. Pedagogically, the results and interpretations of this project can enable instructors to have a better understanding of the difficulties and interaction patterns of international students. This may lead to better teacher preparation and improved interaction between teachers and students in these types of classes. Methodologically, this study presents an application of sociolinguistic and ethnographic research in a pedagogical context. Interaction analysis in the classroom through the use of technologically-advanced data collection methods, such as video- and audio-taping, in collaboration with more common data collection techniques such as observations, questionnaires, and interviews may be inspiring to teacher-researchers who are looking for more consistency, credibility, and practicality in their research studies.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A Personal Introduction

My mother went through the security check with a sad look on her face. She turned around to wave at me after she passed through the x-ray machine. I sat down in a seat across from the ticketing counters and looked around. I didn't know anyone. For the first time in my life I thought, "I am so alone" and I started crying. This was August 1996, my first month in America.

There were many things I needed to accept about myself. I was a foreigner and I needed piles of documents to prove that I had a right to reside here. My name was from now on /Betel/ and my last name no longer had its character. Eroz was strange enough; there was no need for the Umlaut on my "o." I had an accent, so I would be frequently asked where I was from by people who, often as not, seemed fascinated by the fact that a country could be named after an animal. Life in America was full of unexpected, difficult decisions. I had to decide whether I liked ranch or French or Italian or thousand Island or balsamic vinaigrette on my salad; baked potato, fries, steamed veggies, or cole sla (what?) with my entrée.

There were many other novelties I needed to get used to, such as parking between the white lines without touching either one (or I had to pay a \$25 fine); getting off the phone with telemarketers after listening to their 10-minute monologues without hurting their feelings; and getting used to being asked how I was doing without the expectation of an answer.

I attended the international student orientation offered by the U of A for two weeks at the beginning of the semester. At those meetings I met people from all over the world, people

that I still am very close friends with after all these years. Being in this community of international students and socializing with these interesting people helped with my adjustment process and eased my homesickness to some extent. However, it was only with the help of my small group of protective Turkish friends and a wonderful American mentor that I managed to understand the rules of social life and the intricacies of the academic environment in America.

In my second year in the EL/L program, I was given a teaching assistantship which I desperately needed due to financial difficulties my parents were facing in Turkey. I started teaching freshman composition to native speakers of English, some of whom had a hard time believing their English teacher was a foreigner. I was shocked when my students approached me to challenge my grading, question my teaching style, or criticize the selected readings. Soon enough, I realized that this was a completely different group of students from the ones I was accustomed to in Turkey.

I made some adjustments in my teaching style, learnt to deal with confrontational attitudes, and respond to in-class challenges. In my second year of teaching, I was assigned to the international sections where I encountered as many different needs to be met as there were students in the classroom. I grabbed this opportunity to improve myself as a teacher. In addition to modifying the required writing assignments to be interesting and manageable for the ESL learners, I supplied handouts to help them with their apparent language and stylistic problems.

I felt like I had just started my teaching profession when I started teaching these classes. Being a curious person and an international student like my students, I often had private conversations with my students about how their lives were going, whether they were having

any difficulties in America, and what I could do to help them. Apparently, listening to their stories and addressing some personal problems was a good start in forming rapport with my students. They needed someone to talk to, someone who would listen and empathize with the difficulties they were going through and give them some advice.

I heard stories of Iraqis leaving their home without taking any personal belongings one night to flee to Jordan before migrating to the United States. I heard fearful accounts of a young woman being harassed by stalkers on the phone just because of the way she dressed. I heard the uneasy decisions a young man had to make in order to avoid an arranged marriage being imposed by his parents. I heard a young woman cry her heart out after breaking up with her boyfriend.

These people shared very personal information with their teacher that they looked up to in search of empathy, understanding, and affection. It wasn't because they didn't know how to handle these things on their own; it was because they just needed an ear. I have become more than a teacher through my interactions with my international students. As a foreigner myself, I felt responsible to help them when they needed help, as my friend had helped me when I was going through some difficult times early on. Now that I have come to the end of my journey in America, I feel the need to give something back to the two groups of people that changed my life significantly, made my days enjoyable and full, and made me the person that I am today.

This dissertation is for my friends who showed me the world and kept me on my feet when I was falling into emotional despair. This is to my friends who were generous with their time and who brought wisdom to my life from all around the world. This paper is for all my

students who showed me the real joy of teaching; who gave me kindness and respect; who allowed me into their private lives and enlightened me in many ways; and who made me more mature, tolerant, and open-minded as an individual and more creative, helpful, and skillful as a teacher than I was before I came to this country.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my professors who provided me with endless challenges in their classes; presented me with new and innovative ideas, theories, and practices through the class readings and discussions; and gave me a solid foundation that enabled me to start writing this paper. This is for the school that gave me an opportunity to instruct the wonderful students that I have taught over the years. And finally this is for the program that provided me with financial and technical resources that helped me determine the kind of research I enjoyed and supported my professional development financially and morally.

Introduction to Current Study

I assume that the proper study of interaction is not the individual and his psychology, but rather the syntactical relations among the acts of different persons mutually present to one another. None the less, since it is individual actors who contribute the ultimate materials, it will always be reasonable to ask what general properties they must have if this sort of contribution is to be expected of them. What minimal model of the actor is needed if we are to wind him up, stick him in amongst his fellows, and have an orderly traffic of behavior emerge? What minimal model is required if the student is to anticipate the lines along which an individual, qua interactant, can be effective or break down? That is what these papers are about (Goffman, 1967: pp. 2-3).

The Writing Program at the University of Arizona offers first-year and advanced composition classes to the students attending the university. The first-year classes are mandatory for all students, and they are divided into four categories: mainstream, honors, all-international (NNS), and mixed (NNS/NS)¹.

The NNS sections of freshman composition courses consist solely of non-native speakers of English from different countries and cultures. English is a second or foreign language to these international students who have most often completed high school in their countries and are in the United States to get a university degree. Due to their diverse cultural backgrounds, these students have various approaches to interaction in the classroom, which creates a challenging, but interesting classroom environment. Sometimes they might have difficulty following a lecture, but many are not very comfortable with asking questions and taking the spotlight in class. Sometimes they cannot express themselves freely and accurately, so they do not get a clear and straight answer from the instructor or are misunderstood by their classmates. Speaking from personal experience, I can suggest that the international students

¹ A detailed discussion of the University of Arizona, Writing Program will be provided in Chapter 3, Research Design and Methodology. For purposes of introducing this study, in the Introduction only all-international sections (with only non-native speakers of English) and mixed sections (open to both non-native and native speaker students) will be discussed.

have different needs and expectations from their teacher and their composition class, depending on the educational setting they come from. That is why it can sometimes be frustrating for the instructors to meet everybody's expectations or even understand these expectations and attitudes towards classroom activities.

The NNS/NS sections of composition, on the other hand, are open to both American and international students; therefore, they are mixes of non-native and native speakers of English². These sections started with the ideal that students would have cross-cultural interaction and would learn about different cultures from all over the world. While having mixed groups sounds like an effective way of providing cross-cultural communication in the composition classes and a very effective tool for teaching, there might be some shortcomings to these classes:

Attitudinal and cultural differences [may] create major distinctions between international and native English-speaking students. In most basic writing courses, international students recognize the hostility among some native English-speaking students who resent being placed in the same class as international students whose linguistic limitations may be wrongly interpreted as signs of stupidity (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p. 249).

My personal experience with the mixed sections has been rather unpredictable. I have taught 5 mixed sections, and I had a different experience in each one of them. My first experiences took me by surprise because I wasn't prepared for such diversity and conflict in the same class. Despite my efforts to mix and mingle the international students and the Americans and make them work together in cooperation, some students remained distant and uninterested in the other group (e.g., some American athletes wanted to stick with their teammates in class and some international students couldn't even look the native speakers in the eye).

² The NNS/NS sections will be referred to as "mixed sections" and the NNS sections will be referred to as the "all-international sections" in the discussions throughout the dissertation.

After my first class, I started assigning culture-oriented readings for classroom discussions and cultural research based writing assignment in the mixed sections. The purpose for this was to bring more awareness, understanding, and acceptance about different cultures. After these adjustments to the curriculum, I received positive responses from my students praising the class for being fun, interesting, and informative, and the mixed group for being such a great experience as it allowed them to meet with people from different cultures. It is not possible to please everyone in a class, so in a couple of classes some international students expressed concern about being in the same class with native speakers and being graded in the same way, and some American students felt like they were tutoring the international students whose English they couldn't understand. However, in some groups I didn't have this reaction at all. Some international students have a difficult time speaking up in class, especially when there are Americans around them; they are concerned about their language skills as nonnative speakers of English. In addition to this, they have a hard time adjusting to American culture and understanding the expectations of the American academic environment, so they have some resistance to being around native speakers of English in an English composition class.

Purpose and Assumptions of Study

This study is an investigation of classroom interaction patterns of students in the all-international and mixed sections of composition using an ethnographic approach of data collection and analysis. The project examined classroom interaction patterns of international and American students enrolled in two freshman composition classes at the University of Arizona: one all-international section (AIS) and one mixed section (MS) of composition. Data were collected through classroom observations, teacher's journal, questionnaires, one-on-one

interviews with the participants, and videotaped classroom sessions and teacher-student conferences.

One of the goals of this study was to identify common interaction patterns within specific culture groups in the two composition classes. In other words, classroom interaction patterns that reveal the students' home culture or interaction norms in the educational institutions in their home country were examined. Culture-specific classroom interaction behavior or reflections about students' culture and beliefs are reported by examining the videotapes of class discussions and teacher-student conferences (in both sections); the classroom observation notes (for the MS); and the teacher's journal entries (for the AIS). These observations are supported by information provided by the students' questionnaire responses and their descriptions of classroom interaction in their culture and their explanations for these patterns detailed in the one-on-one interviews with the researcher. In order to have a balanced investigation, cultures that were represented by 5 or more students (total for both sections) were chosen for examination while cultures that don't have this many representatives will be excluded from the cultural patterns analysis.

Another purpose of this study was to compare the classroom environment in the two sections and report whether mixing native speakers (Americans) with nonnative speakers (international students) causes differences in the classroom atmosphere and the ease of communication among students. This point was investigated through videotaped classroom sessions and conferences, classroom observation notes, and student responses in questionnaires and interviews.

This dissertation also reports international students' opinions about being in a mixed

section with Americans as well as their thoughts and feelings about American culture and people. The interviews were the main source in reporting the cultural differences and adjustment difficulties the international participants in this study have had in the United States.

Through my analysis, I expected to find differences between the interactional patterns of students in the all-international sections and those in the mixed groups. My assumption was that the international students in the all-international sections would be more comfortable in the classroom while asking questions to the teacher than the ones in the mixed section, because having native speaker peers in their English class may be intimidating for some international students. I also expected to see some cross-cultural differences in the interaction behavior of the international students. Depending on their culture and the cultural norms of classroom conduct in their home countries, they may act differently in class, at least towards the teacher during whole-group discussions or teacher lectures. I suspected that some students would find it difficult (and maybe even rude) to express themselves out loud in the classroom or ask questions during a lecture. I also report some difficulties in adjustment and acculturation of the international students, especially those who aren't very confident and comfortable with their English skills and those who are from cultures that are in essence very different from Western cultures, like the American culture. This study particularly focused on the attitudes and feelings of international students who are from Middle Eastern cultures and how they perceive Americans and how they think they are being perceived, especially after the tragic events of September 11th, 2001 and their association with Muslim extremists. The effects of international students' adjustment difficulties on their classroom interaction behavior or academic life will also be explored.

Significance of Study

This project hopes to clarify certain interactional patterns and adjustment processes of the international students under observation, and it discusses the reasons behind their behavior. The results can enable instructors to understand the difficulties and reasoning of international students better. The discussions and suggestions may lead to better teacher preparation and improved interaction between teachers and students in this type of classroom setting. It also hopes to offer help to enhance communication among students from different cultures, which can enhance the curriculum for the Writing Program.

The contribution of this research is not only pedagogical but also methodological. It resembles a culturally contexted conversation analysis (Moerman, 1988) in the context of writing classes, and the data are examined and interpreted through an ethnographic lens. Therefore, the study presents an application of sociolinguistic and ethnographic research in a pedagogical context. Furthermore, interaction analysis in the classroom through the use of technologically-advanced data collection methods, such as videotaping, in collaboration with more common data collection techniques such as observations, questionnaires, and interviews will hopefully be inspiring to teacher-researchers who are looking for more reliability and practicality in their research studies.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter provides in-depth discussions on the theoretical and methodological background of this research study as well as a close look at the student population under study. This Chapter starts with a discussion of international students in the United States focusing on their adjustment difficulties and communication problems with native speakers in their classes. Because the setting of the present study is a classroom, the chapter continues with a review of classroom research methods and an overview of various classroom interaction analysis studies. The second section of this chapter presents the theoretical background for analysis and interpretation of interactions within social situations. In this section, social psychology theories will be presented clarifying the commonly used terminologies that will be used throughout the dissertation. I will also provide an overview of social interaction theories in this section. In the final section of this chapter, I will provide a discussion of various research approaches that helped form the framework for the research design of this study.

Part 1: International Students in the United States

The United States is one of the most popular destinations for students from all over the world. Getting an undergraduate or graduate degree in America is the dream to many students for a variety of reasons. In many countries a degree from an American university is very prestigious, and it is sometimes a guarantee for a good job and a high salary. Many universities and colleges in the United States welcome these international students, because

they are a source of diversity and cultural enlightenment (Selvadurai, 1991). In an attempt to have applicants from different countries to enrich the cultural, social, and academic atmosphere in their institutions, many schools provide scholarships and other academic services to international students. The United States Department of State lists some of the reasons why 550,000 international students are pursuing degrees in this country: the quality of education, facilities, resources, and faculty; the variety of choices American schools have in terms of types of institutions, academic and social environments, degree programs, and subjects of specialization; financial support and good value for the money spent; and flexibility in the choice of courses and transfers between universities. This is an accurate reflection of the higher education situation in the United States; however, living in America may not be very easy once the international students get here.

The Department of State warns the international applicants about the challenges of moving to a new country while arguing that most people who have been in the United States as students have had positive experiences:

Going as a tourist to a foreign city or country for a short period of time can be fun, but living and studying there for longer than a few months is a completely different experience. You get to know the place and the people on a much deeper level. Even though living in a foreign country can sometimes be frustrating, it can also be very rewarding. The majority of people who live and study in the United States for an extended period of time go home feeling positive about their experience and believe that the time spent abroad was beneficial both academically and personally (www.educationuse.state.gov/living.htm).

After they arrive in America, international students go through an adjustment period when they try to get used to the cultural, sociolinguistic, and academic norms. During this adjustment period, students can face serious personal challenges depending in their sociocultural background, beliefs, or the specific location they end up going to. This adjustment period is commonly known as “acculturation.”

Specifically defined, acculturation is the adaptation period during which an immigrant or international student tries to adjust to the new culture by learning about its ways of living and interaction. Although it is not uncommon for acculturating individuals to experience racism and discrimination, especially in countries going through social changes (Chun, Balls-Organista, & Marin, 2003), research indicates that they manage to adapt, at least to some extent, to the larger culture (Berry, 2003). There are four strategies that individuals employ (consciously or subconsciously) while acculturating in a new culture:

[W]hen the individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interactions with other cultures, they are using the *assimilation* strategy. In contrast, when individuals place a value on holding on to their original culture and at the same time wish to avoid interacting with others, they are using *separation* alternative. When people have an interest in maintaining their original culture during daily interactions with other groups, they use the *integration* strategy. In this case, there is some degree of cultural *integrity*, and at the same time they seek, as a member of an ethnocultural group, to participate as an *integral* part of the larger social network. Finally the *marginalization* strategy is used when there is little possibility of or interest in cultural maintenance and little interest in having relationships with others. Although marginalization can be a strategy that people choose as a way of dealing with their acculturative situation, it can also result from failed attempts at assimilation (involving cultural loss) combined with failed attempts at participating in the larger society. Such cases may be due in part to discriminatory attitudes and practices of the dominant group (Berry, 2003: p. 24).

Even though acculturation processes differ depending on the home culture, religion, and the social environment of the individual, this process results in changes in the personalities, values, or beliefs of acculturating individuals to varying degrees (Chun, Balls-Organista, & Marin, 2003; Marin & Gamba, 2003). Sometimes, the individual acculturates so well in to the target culture which is significantly different from her own culture that going back to the home culture can be traumatic and readjusting to the home culture can be more challenging than adapting to a new environment (Segars-Behrens & Bennett, 1986). When the individual feels accepted by members of the host group, the acculturation process is easier; however, if

the individual feels rejected, her adjustment will stop or at least be delayed (Mehta, 1998). In the next section, I will discuss the adjustment difficulties that international students face in the United States, the reasons for these difficulties, and possible solutions to overcome these problems.

Adjustment Difficulties of International Students in America

Cross-cultural adaptation is an increasingly important issue with the growing numbers of international students...coming to pursue their degrees in the United States. Many of these students struggle with feelings of inadequacy and frustration in the changed environment. Some students resist change and cling to their old habits; others desperately try to fit into the target community and yet experience a sense of failure and desperation (Liu, 2001: p. 9).

The international student community is very diverse in its nature and the challenges they face are as varied as the ethnicities they represent and the personal characteristics they have. The two main types of problems often reported by international students are academic problems and sociocultural problems.

Some academic problems that have been reported by international students are poor academic advising, difficulties in classroom atmosphere, faculty-student rapport (Selvedurai, 1991), listening difficulties, lack of understanding of differences in cultural backgrounds, poor oral communication skills, insufficient vocabulary, and poor writing skills (Lee, 1997). The students are expected to meet the requirements and norms of a different academic situation than the one they come from, and it takes them a while to get used to the rules and procedures of this new environment. They might be taken by surprise by the classroom etiquette and practices, like Liu (2001) did when he first arrived in the United States as a graduate student:

In one of the courses I took during my first quarter, I felt extremely uncomfortable when I noticed that the professor sat on the desk while teaching. I was equally surprised to notice that some of my classmates brought soft drinks and potato chips

into class. In Chinese culture, these behaviors are not acceptable because they indicate disrespect for teachers, but here in the United States, nobody in class seemed to be bothered. (Liu, 2001: p. xiii).

For most students, English is a second or foreign language and they may never have used it for daily communication, listening to lectures, or writing papers. Therefore, language difficulties or a lack of proficiency in English (speaking and listening) become troublesome for international students. Some students consider their first language an impediment to their learning of English and development of English writing (Low, 1999). For some, difficulties include “the quick thinking required by multiple choice and short answer examinations [may] create psychological barriers and tension” (Selvadurai, 1991: p. 29). Expectations of active classroom participation in American classrooms also add to this stress, sometimes resulting in misunderstandings between professors and international students, especially Asian students (Liu, 2001).

Lee (1997) offers some suggestions to instructors who wish to help their international students with the classroom difficulties they have. To deal with listening comprehension difficulties, she suggests that teachers speak slowly and clearly, repeating the key terms several times or putting them on the board or on a handout. She also emphasizes the importance of recommending to students some TV or radio programs to watch or listen to. Lee urges teachers to understand that the students are in culture shock and they are not very knowledgeable about American culture and academics. Therefore, teachers should give them background information about culture-specific topics, recommend research materials, and spend some extra time with them in office hours. She also highlights the importance of avoiding idiomatic language and slang, providing sample essays for writing assignments, and explaining the expectations in simple but detailed terms. Atkinson (1999) asks TESOL

professionals to examine the concept of culture in teaching English and highlights that people's concepts of individualism and social group membership are different. He reminds teachers that language (learning and teaching) and culture are mutually implicated, but culture is multiple and complex; therefore, it requires attentive focus and clear understanding.

International students in the United States also report sociocultural problems. They come from cultures "with close family ties and distinct patterns of etiquette, food habits, and religious beliefs" (Selvadurai, 1991: p. 31), so they find the family values, food, and religious diversity surprisingly (disturbingly) diverse and different. Having social relationships and making friends can also be problematic because often times "these students are unaware of cultural differences in friendship building, dating etiquette and customs of Americans" (Selvadurai, 1991: p. 30). In addition to their homesickness and academic stress, some students face racial, cultural, or religious discrimination from Americans (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Lin & Yi, 1997; Garrod and Davis, 1999), which may lead to "complaints of nervousness, loneliness, insomnia and physical illness, all of which appear to interfere with their studies [and] friendships" (Lin & Yi, 1997: p. 473). An Indian contributor to Garrod and Davis' (1999) book *Crossing Customs. International Students Write on U.S. College Life and Culture*, reports that his American roommate and his friends made fun of him for being vegetarian and asked him disrespectful questions, didn't respect his privacy and space, and made his life a living hell during his first few months. These problems result in psychosomatic difficulties such as loneliness, depression, and reduced self-esteem in some students (Yin & Li, 1997). Some others, like the Polish immigrant in Leki's (1999) study react to this unwelcoming approach by manipulating the system. They try to cheat and plagiarize and look for ways to get easy grades.

The acculturation process, the degree of acculturation obtained, and the strategies the students use during this process vary from individual to individual. In a survey study, Kagan and Cohen (1990) gave questionnaires to 92 international and 67 American students to identify what personal factors influence cultural adjustment. International students with high resistance to cultural adjustment were usually married, didn't have close American friends, and didn't speak English at home. International students with high adjustment rate were mostly single students who spoke English at home and had American friends. Trice (1993) found that Japanese students, in their adjustment process, have a preference for other Japanese students when they travel, study English and other subjects, discuss personal problems, and do campus activities. Older students, males, and degree seeking students were more likely to spend time with Americans; whereas, younger students, females, and students on an one-year exchange program spent more time with their fellow nationals or other international students.

According to Liu (2001) the “[c]ultural adaptive transformation requires the construction of an intercultural identity, which allows one to function across various cultural groups and communities within the target culture” (p. xvii). So the international students should show a conscious effort to integrate and adjust to American culture in order to overcome social and psychological problems in acculturation. Summarizing Kim's (1988) integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation, Liu (2001) asserts that “cross-cultural adaptation...necessitates at least a minimum level of acculturation to the host culture and deculturation from the native culture” (p. 14). He suggests that especially Asian students put an effort in communicating with Americans and learning to participate in the classroom to increase the rate of their adaptation despite the social norms they are bringing to America. Kagan and Cohen's (1990) study also supports a “native-extinction, host-association model of

cultural adjustment” (p. 133) for a less painful adjustment. Poyrazlı (2003) adds that knowing more about one’s own ethnic identity and having high English proficiency helps psychosocial adjustment. These are all suggestions for international students in the target culture. But what about the culture they live in, the American culture? What can the Americans do (or not do) to have this considerably large group of people feel more welcomed in their multicultural, multi-religion country?

Multiculturalism in the United States

In a country where people from different cultural, social, and religious backgrounds live together, conflicts between these groups may arise due to cross-cultural misunderstanding or irrationally racist attitudes. The tension and conflict between groups may result in exaggerated mental, visual, or verbal images of the target groups’ characteristics, which is what Donehue (1998, p. 63) calls a stereotype. Despite the fact that the United States was founded by immigrants looking for a better life for themselves and their children, discrimination has always been a social problem for new immigrants, especially for non-Anglo groups (Buenker & Ratner, 1992; Cheng, 2001; Banerjee, 2002; Berry, 2003).

Originating in the 17th century and popularized in the 19th century, Anglo-Conformity, “a racist and culturally imperialist approach” (Banerjee, 2002: p. 8) took full swing in the 20th century. This hierarchical social system is based on the belief that European peoples are superior:

It [Anglo-Conformity] was based on the Social Darwinistic belief that peoples from Northern and Western Europe were the most evolved, therefore, peoples from Southern and Eastern Europe who were lower on the evolutionary order were expected to assimilate and adopt the mores of the superior groups. The inferiority of peoples of

color was simply assumed and the possibilities for their assimilation were greatly restricted. The central aim of this approach appeared to be the forging of a unity among diverse people; a unity, which was perceived to be continually threatened by the influx of immigrants with diverse cultures, languages, national origins, and religions (Banerjee, 2002: p. 8).

One approach that came out as a rival to Anglo-Conformity was the Melting Pot approach which “advocated the gradual assimilation of old ethnicities to become a new ethnicity, namely, American” (Banerjee, 2002: p. 8). Multiculturalism, which derived from Early Pluralism and was critical of both the Anglo-Conformity and the Melting Pot approaches, “presented that American public and civic life were ethnically neutral and that private life was ethnically determined” (Banerjee, 2002: p. 9). Multiculturalism suggests embracing cultural diversity and highlights the importance of social tolerance. Being a target of racism can negatively affect the self-esteem and adaptation of an immigrant and may cause psychological distress, resulting in more conflicts within a society (Mehta, 1998; Donehue, 1998; Adams, 2002).

Despite the fact that the United States was formed with immigrants from different countries, many Americans aren't very knowledgeable about other cultures and other peoples of the world, and they don't put much effort in embracing the world coming into their country in big numbers every year, as Kubota (2001) explains:

While many nonnative speakers of WE [world English] try to improve their communicative skills in English by attending ESL/EFL classes, the Inner Circle [English as a mother tongue] native speakers rarely receive training to develop the awareness and communicative skills needed for interacting with speakers of Englishes that are different from their own variety (p. 47).

In an attempt to bring awareness of other Englishes and other varieties and accents of English, Kubota carried out a pilot project in a North Carolina high school which mainly consisted of Anglo and African American students with very few Latinos. The 17 students who

participated in this project took an 8-week course (one hour a week) watching movies, hearing lectures, and interacting with international guest speakers about world Englishes and other accents. Much to Kubota's disappointment, some of the students didn't take the class seriously and some weren't engaged or interested. Some learned a few new things and had a positive attitude, but she mainly observed "naivety and negativity toward linguistic and cultural diversity" (p. 56) among the students. The students presented clear "xenophobia, a homogenized view of Asian people (that they are all Chinese), and ethnocentric attitude (that Americans do not need to learn foreign languages) [which was reflected in their avoidance of] interaction with nonnative speakers of English" (Kubota, 2001: p. 57). Kubota concluded that "despite the efforts to engage students in critical inquiry, students increasingly believed that everyone in the world should speak English, that the global spread of English is a good thing, and that learning foreign languages is not important for Americans" (Kubota, 2001: p. 60).

These findings are surprising in a multicultural society, but they help us understand the social problems international students face in American classrooms. When American students with such attitudes attend universities with large international populations, they hurt the international students by ignoring or dismissing them, if not offending verbally. Leki (2001) examined 6 international students (or resident immigrants) working in small groups with Americans in their content classes (other than English, writing, or ESL classes). She received negative responses from the international students about the way the American students treated them in group work. As a result of doubts about their potential contributions, the domestic students resisted or ignored the international students' potential contributions. The native speakers took over the discussions and didn't allow for input from the non-native speakers.

Similarly, in Liu's study (2001) on Asian students' communication patterns in American universities, some of the Asian participants remained passive and silent in classroom discussions. One reason for this was the active participation of the American students. Whenever an Asian student was thinking about a question and forming a response to a question, which took some silent thinking time, an American student would respond or ask the question the Asian student had been planning. Because of their discomfort in prolonged silences in the classroom, American students tend to fill in these gaps even when they don't have a solid answer. They also think aloud and ask any questions that they might have in order to clarify everything for themselves. However, some of the participants in Liu's study found this rude, because they thought that asking simple and basic questions in class was a waste of class time and disrespectful to the teacher. Also, some students thought that a good question required some thinking time in order to signify that it is a good question, so they didn't appreciate the quick responses of the Americans. With such different approaches to classroom interaction issues, effective communication seems to be impossible without a detailed understanding and respect for the other culture.

It would certainly be unfair to make this generalization to all native speakers; there are many Americans who enjoy living in a diverse culture and socialize with foreigners whenever they get a chance. In studies where there is effective communication between native and non-native speakers of English, the native speakers usually put significant effort into understanding the non-native speakers by using strategic comprehension strategies and leading the non-native speakers to better communicate with them (Polio & Gass, 1998). Freiermuth (2001) acknowledges that when non-native speakers are mixed with native speakers, they feel uncomfortable using English, which can result in frustration for the students and the teachers

(p. 170). Therefore, he offers online communication as an alternative communication tool in class. In his study on native and non-native speaker exchanges (spoken and online), he found that spoken communication was not very effective because the international students didn't get the floor very often and were self-conscious, but during online exchanges international students were more comfortable and contributed more to the discussions. This study, however, doesn't deal with overcoming cultural biases and difficulties in oral communication in daily life.

Education plays a crucial role in promoting interracial and intercultural tolerance, especially when children are informed about cultural, racial, and ethnic differences at an early age. However, this kind of tolerance training comes later on in many people's lives, if it ever does. Learning about other people's history and culture takes time and effort, and not many people are willing to put the effort into educating themselves unless it is required by their learning environment. In the United States, some universities have made considerable efforts to integrate courses about racism and intercultural differences; however, passive discrimination still exists in the general culture (Adams, 2002). Young and Davis-Russell (2002) exemplify this by reporting their observation,

When in a diverse group, people often avoid discussions of race, class, gender, and sexual identity for fear of creating discomfort, embarrassment, or hostility. The avoidance, in the guise of politeness, can take such forms as making light of the topic, shifting topics, or simply ignoring anything said that happens to relate to the topic. This *code of silence* is a reflection of a societal denial that cultural factors matter, and that things such as sexism, racism, and White privilege exists (p. 41).

However, issues of cultural differences and social stereotypes need to be brought out in order to have healthy discussions for a peaceful community. Being in a community that is accepting and understanding makes the acculturation process of foreigners easier and less painful.

One way the host group members can help the new comers who may not speak the host country's language, or may not speak it well, is to accommodate their speech in an attempt to communicate with these people. The Accommodation Theory, by Howard Giles, describes the changes native speakers make in their speech in order to better communicate with the nonnative group. The native speaker uses "foreigner talk" which is a "linguistic adjustment that native speakers make when interacting with L2 speakers" (Zuengler, 1991: p. 234), which might reflect the great social and cultural difference perceived by the native speaker. A more falsifiable alternative to the Accommodation Theory is Bell's Audience Design that looks at things at a macro level emphasizing that speakers modify their styles during interaction depending on their interlocutor's age, class, familiarity, ethnicity; the topic of conversation; or the communicative setting (Bell, 2001).

When native speaker students perceive social and cultural differences between themselves and the international students they encounter at school, they are likely to adjust their speech to the level that they perceive the nonnative speaker to be at. Sometimes this adjustment is necessary in order to maintain communication, but it also points to a clear distinction and difference between groups in terms of abilities of language use and learning needs. These distinctions can be seen clearly between native and non-native speakers when they are mixed in English composition classes in American universities.

Having native and nonnative speakers in the same writing class may not be as beneficial as administrators hope it to be. Intercultural tolerance comes with cross-cultural communication; however, writing classes may not be the perfect place for this ideal to grow. It is a myth that just because a student can write in his native language, he will be able to write a well-organized essay in English (Kaplan, 1966, p. 3). Students from various language

backgrounds have different rhetorical structures in writing depending on their first language; therefore, teaching writing to nonnative speakers differs from teaching writing to native speakers of English (Kaplan, 1966, 1987; Silva, 1997).

American students and international students learn English writing in different contexts (L1 versus EFL), and they have different problems (Kaplan, 1987; Reid, 1998). For example, it is difficult for students from collectivist cultures, like Chinese and Japanese cultures, to adapt to the individualistic ideology of the American classroom. They find it hard to make the move from the interdependent and cooperative social classroom environment to the individualistic classroom practice that involves peer reviews, critical thinking, and textual ownership (Ramanathan, & Atkinson, 1999).

Silva (1993) examined 72 reports of empirical research that reported significant difference between the writing of native speakers of English and ESL writers who are native speakers of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish. He makes the following recommendations for writing teachers and writing program administrators who deal with ESL writers:

- Use different criteria while evaluating L2 writers
- Familiarize L2 writers with the expectations of the L1 audience and provide them strategies for working with unfamiliar texts and tasks they may encounter in the L1 academic setting
- Assign teachers who are aware of, sensitive to, and capable of dealing with the sociocultural, linguistic, and rhetorical differences of L2 writers. ESL specialists with sufficient experience and training should instruct these students.
- Offer “credit-bearing, requirement-fulfilling” classes that are designed to serve the special needs of L2 writers; don’t force them into mainstream writing classes (Silva, 1993, pp. 670-671)

Part 2: Theoretical Framework for Analysis and Interpretation

Designing a research project and making the crucial decisions about data collection techniques are the most important initial steps in a research project. The analysis of that data, however, requires more than a decision-making process. Especially when looking at interactions in a community, the researcher has to be informed about the organization of social interactions and human psychology in social situations in order to obtain insightful, accurate, and informative results. Therefore, a review of social psychology and social interactions is essential to enhance the interpretation of results in a study. The section provides an overview of social theories that may play a crucial role in the interpretation stage of the current study because of its focus on the socio-psychological reasons behind students' interaction behavior in class and their perceptions of themselves as foreigners in the American culture.

This section provides a review of theories of social psychology and social interaction and introduces terminology that will be used while reporting the results of this study. Although some of these terms are an intricate part of our social lives and most people take for granted their shared meaning and reference, it is important to specify my particular usage in some cases. In addition to the clarification of social terminology, there will be an overview of social theories that have influenced the way we look at others and ourselves in social encounters.

The Social Self

Social psychology provides tools for understanding the events that occur around you every day. In your personal life, it can help you make sense of your day-to-day interactions—your friendships, love relationships, interactions at work, and performance at school. It can give you insight, for example, into why your most recent romantic relationship did not succeed, and why you find yourself attracted to one person in your afternoon math class but not to another. It can also help you understand why you may behave aggressively when someone cuts ahead

of you in a cafeteria line, or why you get annoyed when someone sits right next to you in a theater when there are plenty of other empty seats. Social psychology can help you understand why other people act the way they do. For example, social psychology can help us understand the forces that led to the massacre at Columbine High (Bordens and Horowitz, 2002, p. 3).

According to Bordens and Horowitz (2002) social psychology is the “scientific study of how individuals think about, interact with, and influence each other” (p. 3), and it helps us understand our personal, cultural, emotional, and interactional involvement in social situations. Our thoughts and knowledge about who we think we are, including the cognitive aspect of ourselves, is our self concept, and the social information we have about how other people view us is our reflected appraisal. As human beings in social life, we constantly “compare our reactions, abilities, and attributes to others” (Bordens and Horowitz, 2002).

The social self is “developmental” as George Herbert Mead, one of the most prominent American philosophers, suggests. He states that the self “is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process” (Mead, 1934: p. 134). Responding to and influencing other members of the social group one belongs to forms the basis of self (Miller, 1982; Mead, 1934; Strauss, 1956). Mead’s distinction of “I” and “me” is important to mention here: “The ‘I’ is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the ‘me’ is the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes. The attitude of the others constitute the organized ‘me,’ and then one reacts toward that as an ‘I’” (Mead, 1934: 175). The culture in which the individual lives plays an important role in her self-concept development. Religious beliefs determine the norms for behavior and character (Bordens and Horowitz, 2002), imposing moral codes that

vary from culture to culture and even among different groups within the same culture (Gilligan, 1982).

Depending on their culture and upbringing, individuals develop individual or collective selves. In individualistic cultures, such as the mainstream culture in the United States, priority is given to “one’s own goals over group goals and defining one’s identity in terms of personal attributes rather than group identifications” (Myers, 1999: p. 43) whereas, in collectivist cultures like Japan, “giving priority to the goals of one’s group (often extended family or work group) and defining one’s identity accordingly” (Myers, 1999: p. 43) is the basis for social perception. In such cultures, “individuals are more likely to define themselves in terms of meeting the expectations of others rather than fulfilling their own private needs” (Myers, 1999: p. 39). Strauss (1956) argues that education plays a crucial role as a “process of taking over a certain organized set of responses to one’s own stimulation; and until one can respond to himself as the community responds to him, he does not genuinely belong to the community” (p. 253). According to Mead, whose ideas reflect Durkheim’s “collective conscious” analysis (shared cognitions are important) and Wundt’s ‘mental communities’ notion (actors share certain attitudes), people’s self perception depends on the signals they emit and receive:

[A]n individual’s self-conception mediates between configurations of impulses, generalized others, and assessment of alternatives, on the one hand, and signaling through gestures, on the other hand... [P]erceptions of self have a direct causal effect on signaling, independent conscious thought. That is, people’s signals are often unconsciously influenced by their conception of themselves as a particular kind of individual... When one’s self-conception in a situation is not confirmed or affirmed, impulses to secure such affirmation/confirmation are heightened, with the result that perception, thought, and signaling are increasingly oriented to considerations of self” (Turner, 1988: p. 77).

It is obvious that having a clear sense of who we are and having that “self” recognized by the others around us is essential in effective communication within that community.

Understanding the intricate rules of communication within a society enables the individual to enhance his participation and acceptance in a community, which requires a comprehension of the function and structure of social interactions.

Social Interactions

When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed. They will be interested in his general socio-economic status, his conception of self, his attitude toward them, his competence, his trustworthiness, etc...Information about the individual helps to define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he will expect of them and what they may expect of him. Informed in these ways, the others will know how best to act...to call forth a desired response from him (Goffman, 1959: p. 1).

Human beings are social actors. We take part in social and communal activities, whether this is a simple and routine task like picking up groceries from the store or a stressful, one-time, public oral examination. We come face to face with other people in different settings, with different rules for interaction and codes of conduct. Our encounters with others and the way we present ourselves during those meetings are crucial. We send and receive messages during even the briefest exchange. According to Goffman (1963) “[w]hen persons come into each other’s immediate presence they tend to do so as participants of... a *social occasion*. This is a wider social affair, undertaking, or event, bounded in regard to place and time and typically facilitated by fixed equipment” (p. 18). The dynamics of conversation are seen as describable and standard by social psychologists. For example, Mead simplifies these encounters this way:

First, an organism gestures as it moves in the environment, and in so doing, it sends out signals to other organisms. Second, another organism perceives this movement by becoming aware of gestures, and then responds to these gestures by altering its movements in the environment, thereby, sending out its own signals. Third, the original organism perceives these latter signals and responds to them by altering its

course of behavior. When these three events have occurred, the triad is complete, and interaction has taken place (Turner, 1988: p. 74).

When in public, a special set of rules called situational proprieties guide the individual. These social rules “govern the allocation of the individual’s involvement within the situation, as expressed through a conventionalized idiom of behavioral cues” (Goffman, 1963: p. 243). Schutz, calls these rules “stocks of knowledge,” a cognitive structure that retrieves past experiences and helps the individual use them as guidelines to interpret the gestures, or signals, of others (Turner, 1988: p. 80). We use our stocks of knowledge to understand and make meaning out of our interactions with and behavior of our social interlocutors. This knowledge enables us to understand the dynamics of the social situation we are in and to adjust our own behavior and interaction patterns accordingly.

Goffman popularized the term *face* which refers to the “positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact” (Goffman, 1967: p. 5). It is a self-image people create in accordance with acceptable social norms, a *face* that they would like others to see them in. We can say that this *face* is created by others rather than the individual himself: “What the individual is for himself is not something that he invented. It is what his significant others have come to see he should be, what they have come to treat him as being, and what, in consequence, he must treat himself as being if he is to deal with their dealings with him...So what the individual in part must come to be *for himself* is someone whose appearances are ones his others can see as normal” (Goffman, 1971: p. 279).

Just like actors, people wear faces that they think are expected, accepted, or desired by others. This is not a misleading act; it is confirmation with the social situation and communal norms. However, a *face* that fits one social situation and makes an individual accepted or

appreciated by one social group may not be as effective in another setting. This is especially true in intercultural communication settings. When two communities don't have the same concept of what behavior (or face) is socially desirable or acceptable, conflicts and miscommunication may arise, which may lead to feelings of rejection and alienation of new members of an established community.

Cross-cultural communication can be problematic for the simple reason that people from different cultures may not know enough about each other's community to understand, appreciate or value each other's self-images and social selves. This could lead to misinterpretation of signals and, as a result, misunderstanding and miscommunication among groups. Developing an accurate understanding of other people in social interactions depends on the emotional development of the individual. It is easier to read other people's emotional expressions when one is comfortable with her own emotional expressiveness; whereas, people who are depressed have social interaction problems (Bordens and Horowitz, 2002). Finding that state of emotional stability can be difficult, and this challenge may lead to feelings of social paranoia. People want to be accepted by their group and feel a sense of belonging in a community. However, some social factors that may occur in the lifetime of any individual may lead to feelings of alienation and insecurity about self worth. Bordens and Horowitz (2002) list these factors like this:

1. Being different and distinctive (age, race, gender, religion, social class)
2. Being under intense scrutiny (dependency and vulnerability, being too sensitive)
3. Uncertainty about social standing (first year students, new hires) (p. 84)

Although many of these factors can have internal attributions, most of them usually have external attributions; that is, the causes of negative behavior can be attributed to some conditions outside of a person's control rather than to some internal characteristics of that

individual. These outside events or conditions, that usually occur in intercultural interactions, can be stereotypes, prejudices, or acts of discrimination, all of which lead to unpleasant social interactions.

Prejudice and Discrimination

Being a newcomer, a foreigner, or an outsider in a community is always very difficult. The individual feels self-conscious and without foundation, especially if the new culture is very different from the home culture. This phenomenon is common among immigrants and foreign workers or students in a community. They arrive in a new social situation about which they don't know much and where they are easily identifiable for one of many reasons (accent, shape of eyes, color of skin, way of dress, etc.). They aren't sure how their self-image is perceived, how they should represent themselves, and whether they will be accepted and welcomed in the new community or not. At this point, a process of accurate perception combined with inaccurate interpretation can set in, as the subjects try to see themselves through the eyes of natives. Given the above scenario, it's clear that intergroup relationships are very delicate; they need to be handled with care and patience in order to build strong relationships among people and avoid conflicts. Three closely related but distinct barriers between different groups are stereotypes, prejudices, and racism.

Stereotypes are a “rigid set of beliefs, positive or negative, about the characteristics or attributes of a group, resulting in rigid overgeneralized images of members of that group” (Bordens and Horowitz, 2002: p. 109). Stereotypes lead to generalizing the limited amount of acquired knowledge from a single source (e.g., one individual, a movie, a book) to the whole population of a group. For example, if people base their opinion of Turkish people on the

movie “Midnight Express,” they would think that all Turkish men are short, stocky, and ugly with a moustache, and all Turkish people are cruel and ruthless. If people watch too many American soap operas, they may end up believing that all American women are two-faced seductresses whose main goal in life is to get pregnant by the man they are obsessed with in order to get him to tie the knot. Not all stereotypes are ridiculously negative like these. If a teacher has an Indian student who is very hard-working and attentive, she may be inclined to say all Indians are very hard-working and assiduous. These are all stereotypes based on the “general cognitive process of categorizing” the main function of which, according to Tajfel (1981), is “to simplify or systematize, for purposes of cognitive and behavioural adaptation, the abundance and complexity of the information received from its environment by the human organism” (p. 146-147).

When stereotypes are taken one step further and are accompanied by a “biased attitude positive or negative, based on insufficient information and directed at a group, which leads to prejudgment of members of that group” (Bordens and Horowitz, 2002: p. 108), this is *prejudice*. Prejudices result from an out-group homogeneity bias, which, according to Bordens and Horowitz (2002) is to assume that all the members of an out-group (a group different from one’s own) have the same characteristics (p. 135). A conservative Muslim man saying that all Americans are immoral because of what he overhears about sorority and fraternity parties, and treating all American people around him as immoral infidels is a prejudiced act. Similarly, an uninformed American who associates the events of September 11th 2001 with the Islamic faith and harasses Muslim women with head scarves is performing a prejudiced act. Being in a culture where one is “a target of prejudice has a variety of negative consequences” such as emotional distress and negative attitude (Bordens and

Horowitz, 2002). The negative behavior caused by cultural, religious, or social prejudices and directed towards a specific group of people is called *discrimination*.

When discrimination is based on a people's perceptions of their race as superior to all other races or a particular race as inferior to theirs, we start talking about *racism*. The world has seen many violent wars and local events based on this unreasonable complex. In the United States, African Americans fought many tough fights in order to be treated like human beings and have the same rights as white people did. Similarly, one of the biggest tragedies in world history, the Holocaust, was the outcome of a madman's racial obsession with the Aryan German race. In our modern day, racism still exists, but is less overt in form. Bordens and Horowitz (2002) define modern racism as "Subtle racial prejudice, expressed in a less open manner than is traditional over racial prejudice and characterized by an uncertainty in feeling and action toward minorities" (p. 121) and give an example from American culture:

Some social psychologists believe that many white Americans currently are *aversive racists*, people who truly believe they are unprejudiced, who want to do the right thing but, in fact, feel very uneasy and uncomfortable in the presence of someone from a different racial group... When they are with members of other groups, they smile too much, are overly friendly, and are sometimes very fearful. These feelings do not lead the aversive racist to behave in a negative way toward members of other groups; rather, they lead him or her to avoid them (p. 121).

Being the target of racism and discrimination is frustrating for individuals and harmful for intergroup relationships. Tajfel's Social Identity theory emphasizes the importance of group membership through common goals and beliefs (Brown & Turner, 1981) and identification with the group in order to maintain self-esteem. Being a group member confirms the social identity of the individual through his emotional bond and recognized membership in that community.

Two theories that have been introduced in an attempt to reduce intergroup conflicts and overcome problems among groups were Belief Congruence Theory by Rokeach (1960) and the Contact Hypothesis by Allport (1954). The Belief Congruence Theory suggests that people's attitudes towards each other are determined by the perceived similarity (or congruency) between them. People "are attracted to persons with similar beliefs since they tend to validate [their] own... [I]n many situations similarities and differences between people's beliefs are more important for their mutual acceptance or rejection than their social group membership" (Brown & Turner, 1981: p. 47). This theory proposes that having the same beliefs can be more important than being members of the same community (e.g., be in the same class, live next door to each other, go to the same gym). It is not clear, however, what this theory refers to as "belief" (religious, moral, emotional). Its prediction that there would be "less discrimination against outgroup members with similar attitudes than against those with different attitudes" was disproved by research studies in which, "subjects showed high levels of ingroup favoritism, regardless of the similarity of the outgroup" (Brown & Turner, 1981: p. 57).

Another social theory that attempts to reconcile intergroup conflict and restore cross-group harmony is the Contact Hypothesis proposed by Allport who suggested that prejudices between groups could change only through constant interaction and contact among the members of these groups as "equal status participants pursuing common goals in an atmosphere of social and institutional support" (Brown & Turner, 1981: p. 59). Allport underlines the importance of large scale group relationships rather than individual contact for elimination of prejudice:

What is more probable, if contact is confined to social interaction between individuals *qua* individuals, is that a few interpersonal relationships will change but that the intergroup situation will remain substantially unaltered. If, on the other hand, the contact can be characterized in ‘group’ terms, that is as interaction between individuals *qua* group members, or in ways that alter the structure of group relations, then genuine changes at the intergroup level may be expected. Even here, however, we suspect that the nature of the social contact is often more likely to be symptomatic of pre-existing group affiliations and intergroup relations, rather than a decisive determining factor (Brown & Turner, 1981: p. 60).

This ideal theory of mixing various cultures in order to overcome sociocultural conflicts and change the prejudiced opinion groups hold against each other has unfortunately been falsified by many research studies (Bordens and Horowitz, 2002) and history itself (e.g., Turks and Greek in Cyprus, Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East, Serbs and Bosnians in Yugoslavia). One suggestion that Hall offers is for people to be “sensitized to the norms of their own and other cultures...[through] cross-cultural training programs in order to reduce cross-cultural conflicts” (Gallois & Callan, 1991: p. 245).

This comes down to education and its influence on children’s self-development (Deegan, 2001) and awareness of the world around them. Without developing an understanding and tolerance for other cultures, it is impossible to overcome irrational feelings like racism. Social theories show us the significance of social action and interaction in the sense that they can make or break relationships between and within groups. Therefore, it is important to learn about other cultures, other peoples, other ways of interaction, other belief systems, and other ways of living in order to gain multicultural eyes that can see beyond differences and that can read and interpret accurately.

Part 3: Theoretical Framework for Research Design

Ethnographic Studies

You arrive, tape recorder in hand, with a grin rapidly planted on your face. You probably realize that you have no idea how the grin is being interpreted, so you stop and nervously attempt a relaxed pose. Then you realize that you have no idea how that is being interpreted. Soon you work yourself unto the paralysis of the psychiatrist in a strip joint—she knows you can't react, but she also knows she can't not react. It is little wonder that people sometimes hide in a hotel room and read mysteries
(Agar, 1980, p. 83).

Agar's description of this awkward situation is a familiar experience for many researchers who attempt to study of a group of people unknown to them, in other words, who attempt to do ethnographic studies. Watson-Gegeo (1988) defines ethnography as the "study of people's behavior in naturally occurring, ongoing settings, with a focus on the cultural interpretation of behavior (p. 576). As a way of grasping and investigating how a group pf people make sense of their own lives (Moerman, 1988), ethnographies focus on "people's behavior in groups and on cultural patterns in that behavior" (Watson-Gegeo, 1988: p. 577). The ethnographer is curious to learn about different aspects of a culture, such as family life, social roles, appropriate ways of communication, traditions and history, interpersonal relationships, etc. (Saville-Troike, 1978). Addressing this curiosity is a tough task; it entails being closely involved with the lives of complete strangers in order to gain insights about their culture and way of living and to report these findings accurately, a task that Agar (1980) refers to as "impossible" (p. 41).

The challenging aspect of ethnographies is their demand for objectivity from the ethnographers in very subjective and uncontrolled settings, which is the result of observing a group of people in a real-life setting instead of a laboratory (Nunan, 1992, pp. 54-55) in order

to “comment on, translate, and embellish the native world” (Moerman, 1988: p. 5). The ethnographer aims to gain information that she didn’t have prior to the study (Agar, 1980) and “provide a description and an interpretive-explanatory account of what people do in a setting (such as a classroom, neighborhood, or community), the outcome of their interactions, and the way they understand what they are doing (the meaning interactions have for them)” (Watson-Gegeo, 1988: p. 576). For her ethnographic study, *Ways with Words*, Heath (1983) observed two communities a few miles apart from each other in the Piedmont Carolinas for ten years, and analyzed “the effects of home and community environments on the learning of the language structures . . . needed to succeed at school and at work” (Nunan, 1992, p. 64). Similarly, in a more recent ethnographic study, Gonzales and her colleagues (1993), looked at the types of knowledge that can be found in the households of Mexican families that could help the learning of the children at school. These researchers had pedagogical curiosities as well as a social concern for the effects of home life on the education of children in unstudied communities.

Data Collection and Analysis

Ethnographic data is generally collected through non-participant observations, participant-observations, and interviews. Non-participant observations take place in the homes or communal settings of the group of people under study. The ethnographer enters the community and takes field notes, but she doesn’t participate in the activities. For participant-observations the ethnographer becomes a functioning member of the community. For example, if she is interested in classroom interaction patterns in a certain culture, she takes the role of the classroom teacher or a teacher assistant and becomes involved in the setting actively. As a participant-observer, the researcher can keep a journal or do videotaping,

especially if her role in the community doesn't allow for note-taking during the events she needs to examine. Interviews are more explicit as quests for information; the ethnographer approaches certain group members for a meeting to talk about their culture, which may influence the naturalness of the interaction. As expected, the "speech produced for an outside researcher, even though spoken by a "native," is not the same as talk addressed to fellow participants as part of the process of building the events that constitute the social life of a society" (Goodwin and Heritage, 1990: p. 301). The interviews are not "that difficult, but interviewing in which people tell [the ethnographer] how they really think about things [she is] interested in learning, or how they think about things that are important to them, is a delicate art" (Wolcott, 1995: p. 105). The researcher needs to be sensitive to the conventions of sharing personal information in the culture under study. For example, Japanese people don't feel comfortable sharing personal information with strangers; they wait to establish strong social relationships before they express their sincere opinion (Donahue, 1998). An ambitious ethnographer who hopes for a forthright and animated discussion of the personal life and perspectives of a Japanese person will be sorely disappointed or will end up collecting insignificant and even inaccurate information if she approaches the participants before building rapport with them.

Ethnographers collect various types of communication data when they are present in the culture they are observing. While collecting data, the researcher experiences life with the group under observation, interacts with them, forms a bond, and contributes to the community by spreading the valuable information about their speech functions and culture to others in academia. Saville-Troike (1982) emphasizes that by participating in the culture and having a functional role in the community while collecting data, "the researcher can develop a deeper

understanding of the culture under study” (p. 109). One suggestion that she offers to the ethnographer is to try and “[contribute] to the welfare of the host group in a way they recognize and desire. Whether this is as a teacher or construction worker cannot be determined out of context, but the ethnographer should not be ‘taking’ data without returning something of immediate usefulness to the community” (Saville-Troike, 1982: 121-122). A good example for this is Shirley Brice Heath who worked as a teacher in the Carolinas community while doing her research for *Ways with Words* (1983).

Data analysis is a crucial element in ethnographic research because usually the information reported by the researcher is her impressions and interpretations of what she has observed. Due to the fact that the ethnographer generally spends a considerable amount of time in the community, she may gather a lot of information through notes, tapes, and interviews. Looking through all this data to report the findings can be cumbersome. However, it is important to examine the collection carefully to make accurate claims about the community and the social events. While interpreting and reporting the results of the analysis, it is usually expected that the researcher will situate herself in the observation for credibility. That is, using the “I” perspective and mentioning the involvement of one’s self as the researcher is common, even required, in ethnographic work. Agar (1996) insists that “the ethnographic job is a privilege, and it carries a *responsibility* to get it right and an *authority* that allows the professional to make that claim” (p. 15) and criticizes some researchers for not claiming their presence and authority in their reports:

First, why was the book just written about [the community under investigation]? Where was the ethnographer? Wasn’t he or she part of the story as well? Data didn’t just fall out of the sky. It was actively constructed over time in a collaborative way. Or maybe it wasn’t all that collaborative; maybe ‘they’ didn’t have much of a choice. And who *was* this ethnographer anyway? Didn’t he or she have a particular biography

and particular interests that explained why the ethnography took the shape that it did?...Second, what kind of ‘community’ had the ethnographer studied? (p. 4).

For data analysis and interpretation, Watson-Gegeo (1988) highlights a distinction between emic and etic analyses. Citing Pike (1964) who proposed the emic-etic distinction from the phonemic-phonetic distinction in linguistics, she clarifies this distinction as such:

Etic analyses and interpretations are based on the use of frameworks, concepts, and categories from the analytic language of the social sciences and are potentially useful for comparative research across languages, settings, and cultures...[and] “etic terminology is rarely culturally neutral because its source is typically either the culture to which the researcher belongs or what we might call the ‘culture of research’ itself (referring here to the traditions and ways of speaking that have evolved in particular research disciplines) (p. 579); [whereas,] emic refers to culturally based perspectives, interpretations, and categories used by members of the group under study to conceptualize and encode knowledge and to guide their own behavior. Emic terms, concepts, and categories are therefore functionally relevant to the behavior of the people studied by the ethnographer...[who] incorporates the participants’ perspectives and interpretations of behavior, events, and situations and does so in [a] descriptive language (p. 580).

In an attempt to understand how the participants of a social situation perceive the situations that the researcher has observed, ethnographers have shown a strong, but not explicit, preferences for the emic approach: “Ethnographic analysis is not exclusively emic. Rather, a carefully done emic analysis precedes and forms the basis for etic extensions that allow for cross-cultural and cross-setting comparisons” (Watson-Gegeo, 1988: pp. 580-581). Through their systematic involvement with the community under observation, the ethnographers form a “grounded theory” about the community based on their observations. This theory formation is possible only when the ethnographer spends a long time in the community (e.g., Philips, 1983; Heath, 1983; Moerman, 1988). However, merely being in the community and spending a long time at the research site don’t give the ethnographer the authority to claim knowledge of the group.

Wolcott criticizes researchers who “get off on the wrong foot, somehow confusing the fact of their physical presence with the hope that simply by “being there” they will be able to observe and experience what they are interested in observing and experiencing” (Wolcott, 1995: p. 88). He also emphasizes that “ethnography is time-consuming and, for the time invested, a low-yield research approach, well-suited for some scholarly careers but rather too broadly focused for the target questions often posed in funded research or ‘quickie dissertations’”(in Van Maanen, 1995: p. 99). Wolcott (1995) warns that data collection techniques can sometimes work against the researcher if she is not well-trained or sensitive enough: [a] fieldworker can easily offend through inappropriate behavior, comment, or question” (p. 87).

At the end of an ethnography, the study might reveal to the ethnographer some new ideas and information that she didn’t foresee when she started the observation. As Agar (1996) points out, if a study doesn’t “abduct” the researcher (i.e., take the researcher to places she didn’t think she would go or come across concepts that would take her closer to the community than she predicted), it is not ethnographic (p. 40). Wolcott (1995) highlights the importance of keeping an open-mind and an open-eye during an ethnographic study with this recommendation to the ethnographer:

Review constantly what you are looking *for* and whether or not you are seeing it or are likely to see it. You may need to refocus your attention to what is actually going on and discard some overconceptualized ideas you brought into the field (such as ‘watching’ decision-making or ‘observing’ discrimination)...That should include patterns of things *not* happening as well as things that are happening (p. 97).

Clearly, an ethnographic study can bring unexpected results to the ethnographer, and she may need to switch focus or revisit initial research questions. In ethnographic studies, the data leads the study, and the researcher would be wise to go with the flow of information as the

group unveils itself in many different dimensions and shares its fascinating aspects with this “professional stranger.”

Ethnography of Communication

A principal concern in the ethnography of communication is the discovery of the regular patterns and constraints (i.e. ‘rules’) that operate at different levels of communication. At a societal level, this patterning generally occurs along dimensions of social organization, community attitudes, and such macrofunctions as social control, ritual interaction with the supernatural, and establishment or reinforcement of group identity. At the level of individuals and small interacting groups within a society, this patterning occurs in expression and interpretation of personality and in macrofunctions related to participants’ purposes and needs (Saville-Troike, 1985: 14).

Ethnography of communication (EOC) is a specific kind of ethnography that aims to answer the following question: “What does a speaker need to know to communicate appropriately within a particular speech community, and how does he or she learn?” (Saville-Troike, 1982, p. 2). The difference between an ethnographic study and an EOC study is that “[t]he ethnography of speaking is concerned with the situations and uses, the patterns and functions, of speaking as an activity in its own right” (Hymes, 1995:250); whereas ethnographies focus on the culture generally and as a whole without too much concern with the ways in which language is used as a communicative tool. In EOC studies (e.g., Philips, 1983; Moerman, 1988), the researchers take the speech community as their main focus to analyze “the way communication within [this community] is patterned and organized as systems of communicative events, and the ways in which these interact with all other systems of culture” (Saville-Troike, 1982, p. 3).

A speech community, as defined by Hymes, is a group of people sharing rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech and rules for the interpretation of at least one linguistic

variety; the members of a speech community share knowledge about and attitudes towards a community. For example, the Turks in Cyprus have a distinctive Turkish dialect that many Turks from Turkey have difficulty understanding. The grammar, expressions, cultural references, intonation, and vocabulary are very different from standard Turkish. The Cypriot Turks, in this case, are a speech community; their culture is reflected in their expressions, jokes, and structures of language.

Another community research approach that gained support by many researchers and theorists is the Communities of Practice Approach (CofP) developed and supported by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992). This approach takes the basic idea that “in any culture ... [there are] linguistic practices that are more ambiguous, often contradictory, differing among women of different classes and ethnic groups and ranging from accommodation to opposition, subversion, rejection, or autonomous reconstruction of reigning cultural definitions” (Gal, 1992, p. 158), and suggests that individuals participate in various communities of practices, which are social activities or tasks collaboratively carried out by a specific group of people with a specific goal in mind. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) define a community of practice as “an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in some common endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations—in short practices—emerge in the course of their joint activity around that endeavor, ... [such as] people working together in a factory, regulars in a bar, a neighborhood play group, a nuclear family, police partners and their ethnographer, the Supreme Court” (p. 95). Analyzing language use within communities of practice gives the researcher a more accurate perspective about what is happening in a conversation and why. Research studies following this approach and looking into smaller and more specifically oriented groups (e.g., Freed, 1996; Greenwood,

1996; Bergvall, 1996; Hall and O'Donovan) have insightful and meaningful explanations of how communication is shaped in different contexts and in different research settings.

Data Collection and Analysis

The different types of data that can be gathered include background information about the community including history, ethnic issue, education and employment opportunities; social organization of role relationships and social stratification; and beliefs in the community about language use (Saville-Troike, 2003). To obtain reliable data, it is recommended to use multiple data collection techniques while doing fieldwork (Agar, 1980; Saville-Troike, 1982). Data for EOC studies are usually obtained through introspection, participant-observation, non-participant observation, and interviews.

When the researcher is experimenting in her own culture, she uses her insights as the insider of the culture to determine focus points and interpret the speech events; this is introspection. She will then have the convenience of using her connections to contact cultural informants and gain relatively easy access to participants. An outside researcher, however, cannot enjoy this comfort as a foreigner who is not familiar with the culture, but she can make her presence more acceptable by contributing to the community as discussed above.

The two types of observations are participant and non-participant observation. As a participant-observer, the researcher participates in the speech community; she has a role and responsibilities other than following people around to observe communication patterns (e.g., a teacher-researcher who examines the classroom she is teaching). The researcher, then, becomes a functional member of the community and mingles with the crowd naturally. A

non-participant observer, on the other hand, doesn't take on a participating role in the community. She asks for permission to observe the speech events as an outsider and tries to be a 'fly on the wall' as much as is possible. A researcher who observes classroom interactions and attends classes to take notes or tape the classroom without participating in the discussions is a non-participant observer.

As mentioned during the discussion of ethnographies in general, videotaping is a common and recommended data collection tool. Saville-Troike (2003) recommends videotaping the communicative events of the group under investigation, highlighting that this is a "potentially useful adjunct to participant-observation and interview, particularly because of the convenience of replaying for micro-analysis, but it is always limited in focus and scope to the cameraman's perception, and can only be adequately understood in a more holistic context." She also reminds us that, "the acceptability of taping, photographing, and even note-taking depends on the community and situations being observed" (p. 98), so the speech community should agree and feel comfortable with this practice.

Interviewing is another essential tool in EOC studies, because it allows the researcher to directly access information from her participants that is not readily accessible through observations. Some crucial considerations for interviews are choosing trustworthy informants, having a good rapport with the interviewees, and asking questions that would make the participants talk more than the researcher and give insightful information regarding the research question (Saville-Troike, 1982, 2003; Wolcott, 1995; Seidman, 1998). It is important for the researcher to be "open to new ideas, information, and patterns which may emerge in the course of interviewing, and to differences between 'ideal' and 'real' culture as reflected in statements of belief or values and actions, respectively" (Saville-Troike, 1982: p. 125).

Data analysis in EOC “begins with a description of the components which are likely to be salient” such as genre, topic, purpose or function, setting, participants, message form, message content, act sequence, rules for interaction, norms of interaction (Saville-Troike, 1982: pp. 137-138). The researcher identifies focus points and revisits data (in note, tape, or video cassette form) to identify the significance of these speech events and their function in communicative contexts. The ethnographer uses her insights, experiences, knowledge, and information gathered from the participants to explain and interpret the *how* and *why* of these speech events. *Ways with Words* by Heath (1983) provides an example to illustrate this focus choice. Heath reports her observations of two communities in the Piedmont Carolinas that were a few miles from each other for ten years, and analyzes “the effects of home and community environments on the learning of the language structures ... needed to succeed at school and at work (Nunan, 1992: p. 64). Similarly, “Teacher Research on Funds of Knowledge: Learning from Households” by Gonzales and her colleagues (1993), looks at the types of knowledge that can be found in the households of Mexican families that would help the learning of the children at school.

Ethnomethodology

A current of American sociology pioneered by Harold Garfinkel in the 1960's, Ethnomethodology (EM) is the empirical study of methods that individuals use to give sense to and at the same time to accomplish their daily actions: communicating, making decisions, and reasoning. Garfinkel, who was influenced by the social theorists Schutz and Parsons, introduced the principles and methodologies of EM in his 1967 work *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. EM is a social phenomena theory which suggests that we are all

‘practical sociologists’ and that the real world is described by the people using common sense in approaching everyday activities. EM focuses on the analysis of ordinary methods that ordinary people use to realize ordinary actions in locally situated “here and now” of interaction (Coulon, 1995: p. 2).

Garfinkel was inspired by Parson’s theory which suggested that an actor’s motivations are integrated in normative models that regulate behaviors and reciprocal appreciations. This is what accounts for the stability of social order and its reproduction in every individual encounter. We share values that are beyond us and that dictate our daily behavior. To avoid anguish and sanctions, we tend to conform to the rules of common life. Austrian theorist Schutz, who also helped form the theoretical foundations of EM, suggests that the social world is the world of daily life as lived by people who have no theoretical interest in the constitution of the world. According to Schutz, the social world is an intersubjective world, a world of routines, in which the acts of daily life are for the most part accomplished mechanically. Reality seems natural and obvious (Coulon, 1995:p. 3).

Ethnomethodologists investigate the ways in which “social actors” (Goffman, 1959; 1963) adjust their performance depending on the context they are in and use appropriate communicative patterns in these situations (Jones, 1997) in an attempt to learn more about the cultural and linguistic choices of a specific group of people. Garfinkel insists that researchers “place the situated production of social actions and activities at the forefront of the analytic agenda and treat mundane events, even physical and biological phenomena, as the ‘artful accomplishments’ of the participants in the settings in which they arise” (Heath, 1997: p. 185). EM deals with everyday interactions that are of interest to sociological studies (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998: p. 30) and aims to discover the underlying assumptions that come from the

shared knowledge and understanding of a culture and norms of the group under study while analyzing the language used to produce and interpret communicative exchanges.

From the 1970s' on, the field of EM has been divided into two camps: 1) conversation analysts who look into conversations in search of contextual reconstructions that enable people to understand and convey communicative messages; and 2) sociologists whose foci remain restricted to traditional subjects of sociological studies, such as education, justice, organizations, administrations, and science. Conversation Analysis, which I will discuss in detail in the next section, can be considered the most accomplished program of EM thanks to the innovative research of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1972) and others after them on the detailed organization of turns in conversations.

Data Collection and Analysis

Ethnomethodologists use a variety of data collection techniques including direct observations in settings like classes or court houses; participant observation; interviews; examination of administrative files and school reports; studying video recordings of classes or counseling; playback sessions showing video recordings to actors and recordings of comments during these showings. One difference between EM and ethnography is that in EM the researcher usually does playbacks of taped data with the participants and asks for their reflections and insights about their own actions, speech, and behavior in order to report the intentions, thoughts, and reasonings of the group under study without bias. It is important to avoid biases for a more accurate and objective study of the daily life of a society. Ten Have (1990) lists the solutions that EMists have tried in order to study social order without the bias of common sense:

- Close study of sense-making activities in situations where these activities are especially important.
- Researcher investigates his own sense-making work by placing himself in an extraordinary situation ... where routine sense-making procedures would fail, or where one has to show mastery of a challenging and unfamiliar task, or where one gets instructions from the members of the setting to view the world in a way that is natural for them but not for the researcher himself.
- Close observation of situated activities in their natural settings and discussions with experienced participants to grasp the competence involved in the routine performance of these activities.
- Studying ordinary daily activities by audio- or video-taping some of their 'products' first, and then transcribing these to find 'orderly products' (pp. 29-30).

Among the pioneering studies in this tradition is Garfinkel's (1967) work with Agnes, a 19-year-old transsexual secretary who became a woman after an operation in UCLA Medical Center in 1958. In this study, Garfinkel interviewed Agnes and used her insights as a man in the process of becoming a woman to report the societal impositions and suggestions of gender roles. Garfinkel did 35 hours of interview for his study and concluded that Agnes must continuously exhibit, in all the activities of her daily life, the cultural characteristics of a "normal" woman, because she hasn't mastered a routine femininity. She must control her attitudes, when she eats, when she goes to the beach, when she has to hide from her roommate.

Another EM study by Garfinkel is the investigation of 10 university students who were invited to participate in an "alternative means to psychotherapy" study and were counseled individually by the researcher himself who presented himself as a student counselor. The students asked at least 10 Yes/No questions for personal guidance, and the experimenter gave random answers to all these. At the end of the session the students summarized their impressions of the exchange and were then interviewed. The subjects constantly tried to give sense to the random responses of the researcher thinking that there was shared common sense. The students attached meaning to the experimenter's yes/no responses, which they thought

provided genuine advice. At the same time, they constantly chose elements from the context to pursue their interpretive processes and created the reference frame of the pattern (Garfinkel, 1967, pp. 34-36). This study revealed how individuals assigned meaning and interpretation to responses and advice they got from an individual who was perceived to be an authority on helping them deal with problems in their daily lives.

Conversation Analysis

Conversation is an essential part of daily life through which we communicate our meaning and express our feelings. Casual daily conversation, which appears to be ordinary and trivial to some, is a semantic activity that has a distinct structure and functional motivation. We negotiate our identities, and roles and membership in the society through these daily interactions (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990, p. 6), and through talk “we conjure up and deal with our fellows, expose our character, bespeak our culture. Conversation analysis provides a technical description of how talk is organized” (Moerman, 1988, p. 29).

Conversation Analysis (CA) emerged “from the ‘cognitive revolution’ that swept across the social sciences in the 1960s” (Berger & Luckman, cited in Goodwin & Heritage, 1990, p. 283) and it “placed a new emphasis on participants’ orientation in indigenous social and cultural constructs” (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990, p. 283). CA focuses on talk and aims at systematically analyzing everyday, ordinary conversations in social interactions (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). An important consideration for CA, presented by Ten Have (1990), is that its “position is marked by a tension between what we might call ‘interpretation’ and ‘analysis.’ ‘Interpretation,’ here, refers to the effort to formulate the

relatively unique meaning of an utterance, an action, or an episode seems to have for participants and/or researchers, while ‘analysis’ is used to indicate efforts to isolate aspects, mechanisms, and procedures that are relevant to a range of cases” (p. 44).

The Focus of CA Research

Conversation analysts are distinguished from other communication analysis researchers in that they look at contextualized conversations and very specific elements in talk, such as turn-taking procedures (Sacks, et al., 1974; Schegloff, 1987; Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998); adjacency pairs (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998); gaps, laughter, overlap, repair and the organization of these elements of conversation (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998); nonverbal elements like head shakes (Schegloff, 1987); topic changes (Schegloff, 1987); co-construction (Jacoby and Ochs, 1995); and priority response (Bilmes, 1993).

Data Collection and Analysis

The methodological basis for CA consists of the following assumptions: there is a systematic organization and strict order in talk-in-interaction; talk-in-interaction is produced methodically; naturally occurring data is the essential base for analysis of talk-in-interaction; prior theoretical assumptions should not constrain analysis (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998, p. 23). Data collection methods and data analysis procedures are well-defined in CA. Data are collected via video- or audio-taping the conversations “rather than through methods in which details of behavior will be lost (e.g. note-taking or on-the-spot coding of behavior)” (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990, p. 289). Videotaping is an important data collection tool for two main reasons: 1) It provides information about both verbal and nonverbal communication elements for analysis (Heath, 1997); and 2) “[I]t permits permanent records of the social world to be

examined and reexamined in the light of different research questions” (Goodwin and Heritage, 1990, p. 289).

After recording, the researcher transcribes the conversations. This initial step is essential in CA and the practice and production of the transcription itself is an important step in the data analysis process. It is important, though, to note that transcripts are not considered to be data; the data are the recordings of naturally occurring interactions. The researcher, then, selects the sections to be analyzed from the transcription and begins the process of the analysis of talk-in-interaction. Ten Have (1990) summarizes the entire process like this:

- a) record a natural sounding conversation
- b) transcribe the recordings
- c) choose certain episodes to analyze among these transcriptions
- d) make sense out of the selection using common sense (i.e., shared knowledge about social events)
- e) make the interpretation explicit, and its empirical basis specific
- f) elaborate on the analysis
- g) in order to support the current analysis, make references to other analyses (p. 32-34).

The first two steps seem pretty straightforward; most researchers can agree on the procedures. However, the rest of them require more subjectivity. The researcher needs to decide which episodes to use for the analysis and interpret the data using his/her perspective in addition to information gathered from the participants of the study.

Culturally Contexted Conversation Analysis

[E]thnographers of communication, expecting that communal aspects of talk can be found and analytically foregrounded in the details of routine, everyday interaction...tend to find work by conversation analysts sterile, to have missed what it is in the talk and interaction that makes it grounded and meaningful in the participants' social world...Conversation analysts for their part, expecting that ethnographers can and should attend... to the particularities of interaction, fault ethnographers...for relying too much instead on informants and other sources of evidence external to the interactions of interest to tell them what to focus on and what to make of it, and for aggregating details of talk and interaction according to their alleged communal meanings, not their recurrent, observable, form and sequential organization (Sanders, 1999, pp. 129-130).

Sander's quote shows that ethnographies and CA have important differences in terms of their focus and research procedures. Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998) find ethnographic studies problematic, because they rely heavily on the information they get from the interviews with the members of the social groups; they rely heavily on commonsense as a resource instead of turning it into a topic of study; and they do not reveal the details of the events and conversations to the readers—the readers have to trust the accuracy of the report of what happened (pp. 25-26).

On the other hand, "CA is resistant to appeals by the researcher to external contextual explanations for what is happening in interaction" (Silverman & Gubrium, 1994, p. 181). CA's insistence on using video- or audio-taped data minimizes its access to and use of data collection and analysis techniques common in social sciences, such as interviews, observation studies, experimental methods, and "idealized or invented examples based on the researcher's own native intuitions" (Ten Have, 1990, p. 25).

To the ethnographers, detailed analysis of recorded conversations may seem too mechanical and not really reflective of the culture under observation, and to conversation analysts, cultural generalizations made merely through observations seem too vague and rather

untrustworthy. However, the main problem seems to lie in the fact that the foci of these two disciplines are very different. Ethnographic studies aim at reporting the way the members of a culture live and communicate; whereas, CA aims to look more closely at how certain functions within a social setting are accomplished through the use of talk.

The differences between these two methods can be complimentary for the researcher who wants to present an insightful and accurate analysis of a culture and the way communication is shaped in that culture. Moerman (1988) has the following suggestion:

I am not proposing that ethnographic data be restricted to conversational transcripts and ethnography to their analysis. But I am insisting that those who use talk in order to discover what people think must try to find out how the organization of talk influences what people say. The data and techniques of conversation analysis permit this (p. 9).

There are clear advantages and disadvantages to both approaches and an eclectic blend of methodologies has resulted in a strong and interesting research tradition: Culturally Contexted Conversation Analysis (CCCA).

CCCA is the approach used by Moerman in his study on Thai interactions reported in *Talking Culture: Ethnography of Conversation Analysis*. This approach concentrates on commonplace talk, while investigating the ways in which participants make certain orientations in everyday talk and “tries to limit the ingredients of interpretation, the components of meaning, to ones that are locally significant and locally occasioned” (1988: p. 7). CCCA seems to be a middle way in which the interactional patterns between and among society members are analyzed in detail to understand the communication styles of that community. Although it involves recordings of conversations and transcription, the way data are analyzed follow the ethnographic interpretation procedures that aim to determine “how

communicative situations and events are organized and ... how patterns in communication interrelate in a systematic way with and derive meaning from other aspects of culture” (Saville-Troike, 1996, p. 353). Therefore, combining data collection and analysis processes could be beneficial for research studies focusing on communication within a certain social setting.

As a researcher with these concerns, Moerman encourages ethnographers to use a combination of CA and EOC techniques in search of universal principles in conversational interaction across different languages. However, this might be personally difficult for ethnographers to accept, because “it invites an established discipline to replicate findings of a younger discipline ... [and] should these exercises reveal universals in conversation’s organization, this could undermine ethnography’s privileged explication of cultural differences” (Hopper, 1990, p. 162). However, if researchers keep an open mind and are willing to negotiate their set ideas about how research should be conducted, they can gain better insights about a culture and reflect more accurate and reliable information to the others.

Classroom Research

[I]f we examine the purposes and contexts of most of our verbal interaction during an average day, we will probably come to the conclusion that the transmission of information is a very minor concern compared to such vital tasks as creating and maintaining social relationships, establishing accommodation between speaker and hearer, getting people to do things for us, making sense of the situation we are in, creating a good impression of ourselves, and so on. The classroom does not provide the same motives for communicating as participating in the outside social world does. The preponderance of information-exchange activities which we find in applications of the communicative approach tend to transform classroom communication into a rather narrowly focused enterprise (van Lier, 1988: p. 29).

Given the fact that the classrooms under observation mainly consist of ESL students, it is appropriate to refer to literature on research in language classrooms and gather suggestions

for doing ethnographic research in language classrooms. Ethnographic research had important contributions to the field of applied linguistics with its “identification of what a second language learner must know in order to communicate appropriately in various contexts in that language, and what the sanctions may be for various communicative shortcomings” (Saville-Troike, 1982: 10). Van Lier (1988) supports this statement by reminding us that classroom research (CR) can be a “knowledge-gathering” or a “problem-solving” activity, or can be both (p. 22) and he lists possible reasons for doing second language classroom research: scientific, linguistic, and pedagogical.

The scientific argument emphasizes that any second language acquisition theory needs to consider classroom data as a basis for “theory construction” or as relevant aspects of the analysis of this data in order to be complete. Ignoring this data as an essential source of information pertinent to L2 classrooms may be the cause of “one-sided” second language studies (van Lier, 1988). Therefore, van Lier recommends an ethnographic approach in classroom research, because classroom ethnographies take “the educational environment (with the classroom at its centre) as the crucial data source and thus strongly emphasizes the social context in which language development takes place” (p. 24). Van Lier’s linguistic concern is that interaction in the classroom is varied at different times depending on the flow and topic of the lesson, which provides a “rich and diverse source of data for second-language acquisition research” (pp. 25-26). Another valid point provided by van Lier is concerned with pedagogy. He states that “Many of today’s journals are filled with articles containing information that no practicing teacher could possibly know what to do with, and reports of research that only a handful of specialists can understand...[,which widens] the gap between the researcher and the

teacher” (van Lier, 1988: 26). This clearly suggests that it is strongly advisable for teachers to assume the role of the researcher and look into their classrooms for pedagogical discoveries.

Watson-Gegeo (1988), who is also a proponent of ethnographic research in the classroom, believes that ethnographies can enable the researcher to document contextualized and varied teacher-learner interactions in a systematic way to develop “grounded theory” which is “theory generated from data” (p. 585). She maintains that “ethnographic research can document and analyze what it takes to establish good relationships between teachers and students in the context of particular cultural and school settings, so that this information is available for teacher training” (p. 586). Watson-Gegeo adds another dimension to van Lier’s arguments, suggesting that classroom ethnographies help reveal cross-cultural aspects of a language classroom:

With regard to culture and teaching, for example, we can use ethnography to study the role of the classroom teacher in relation to how that role is defined and enacted in various societies. In Japan, teaching is a prestigious and respected role, the teacher-student relationship is one of polite distance, and the burden of responsibility for learning is placed on the student rather than on the teacher (White, 1987). In the United States, teachers do not enjoy such prestige or respect, and they are increasingly expected to meet more and more of their students’ needs. Americans expect teachers to fill in as surrogate parents, and teachers are nearly always at the forefront of blame for their students’ low achievement” (p. 586).

Watson-Gegeo (1988) explains that ethnography can contribute to pedagogical practice in terms of teacher training and supervision, assisting teachers in changing their own classrooms, and helping teachers gain awareness of “classroom organization, teaching and learning strategies, and interactional patterns” (p. 588). Similarly, van Lier (1988) lists the reasons for doing classroom ethnographies:

1. “our actual knowledge of what goes on in classrooms is extremely limited;
2. it is relevant and valuable to increase that knowledge;
3. this can only be done by going into the classroom for data;

4. all data must be interpreted in the classroom context, i.e. the context of their occurrence;
5. this context is not only a linguistic or cognitive one, it is also essentially a social context” (p. 37).

Using taped data is recommended for classroom ethnographies not only to enhance description and analysis, but also to serve as an “estrangement device, which enables the ethnographer to look at phenomena (such as conversations, rituals, transactions, etc.) with detachment” (van Lier, 1988: p. 37). Van Lier’s suggestions reinforce my intended roles in the current study in the sense that most of the data is video- or audio-taped during my participant observation as the classroom teacher in the all-international section and my non-participant observation role in the mixed section of composition. However, van Lier strongly discourages short-term, uninvolved data collection procedures: “[C]lassroom study [as a non-participant observer] cannot easily be conducted on the basis of one-shot, quick entry and exit observation, but requires considerable familiarity with the setting and intensive immersion in the data. The former argues for longitudinal observation, the latter for a programme of observing, recording and transcribing” (p. 41). Clearly, it is essential to be focused on and involved with the classroom under study while doing ethnography, either as the classroom teacher/researcher or as a long-term observer who is familiar with the context and dynamics of the classroom.

Classroom Interaction Analysis Research

Classroom interaction studies differ in terms of their theoretical approaches, focus, number and characteristics of participants, and data analysis procedures. However, in contradiction to the suggestions by van Lier and Watson-Gegeo, most researchers don’t use a variety of data collection techniques to increase the reliability to of their data. Classroom observation seems

to be a desired and common data collection technique for most research studies (e.g., Bik-may, 1987; Nunn, 1996; Sullivan, 1996; Musayeva, 1998; Lyster, 1998; Anton, 1999; Duffy, Warren, and Walsh, 2001), but only a small number of the classroom interaction studies involve questionnaires or interviews as supplementary data collection tools. Some of these studies involve one-time observation of a large number of classes. For example, Duffy, Warren, and Walsh did one-time observations in 36 classes (18 English, 18 math) to investigate the effects of the gender of the teachers and students on teacher-student interactions. Similarly, Fassinger (1995) observed 51 classes (each class once) to study the dynamics of classroom interaction in adult education focusing on the effects of the gender of the teachers and students and the self-perception of students on classroom interaction.

The data analysis and reporting of these studies were quantitative in nature. Duffy, Warren, and Walsh (2001) coded their observations using INTERSECT (intersections for sex equity in classroom teaching) and did chi-square analyses of the coding, concluding that both female and male teachers (whether they are literature or math instructors) interacted more with male students than they did with female students. Fassinger (1995) reported the results in percentages and correlations by running chi-square and multiple regression analyses. She found that students were more responsive and talkative with female teachers and that the personality of the teachers didn't have a significant effect on student participation. She reported that students participated more when it had an impact on their grades and they interacted with each other more when the teacher arranged the class physically and designed the syllabus according to the students' needs.

Another study that utilized quantitative data analysis for observations was Nelson La Gall and DeCooke's 1987 study examining children's preference for and perception of their

classmates as helpers. The researchers randomly chose 10 children among 74 fifth-graders for intensive observation. They complemented their observation with a sociometric scale which they analyzed by doing ANOVA. Girls were found to be perceived as more reliable than boys. Lyster (1998) who focused on students' perceptions of recasts as negative evidence, observed a total of 4 fourth- and fifth-grade French immersion classes, and utilized the COALA (Computer Aided Linguistic Analysis) program to code and quantify semantically contingent replies of teachers. He concluded that the most common recasts were isolated declarative ones in which the teacher correctly reformulated all or part of the student's message with falling intonation.

Researchers that had smaller observation samples didn't use quantitative analysis, but some of them reported the results using percentages and totals (e.g., Nunn, 1996; Foster, 1998; Musayeva, 1998). Musayeva observed four EFL classes at Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey investigating oral corrective discourse in basic English classes. She performed frequency counts for error distribution and noted the amount and type of error treatment. After conducting interviews with teachers and giving questionnaires to students, she concluded that language teachers can help learners progress by providing feedback for developmental errors and that error treatment may increase students' awareness of target language accuracy. Nunn (1996) used classroom observation and surveys as data collection tools to examine the amount of verbal interaction in college classrooms, teachers' elicitation techniques, and the similarity between teachers' and students' view about classroom interaction. She used percentages to report that very little classroom time consisted of student participation (1 minute in a 40-minute class session) and that less time was spent in participation in large public universities when compared to small, private, liberal arts colleges.

Studies that followed the suggestions for ethnographic classroom research were more qualitative than quantitative in their analysis. Sullivan (1996) investigated social and cultural factors on classroom interaction by observing two classes in Hanoi, Vietnam. She chose these two classes among 22 university English classes, observing and video-taping them over a 14-month period. She reported that in Vietnam overlapping and simultaneous talk are a norm in interaction; whereas, in the United States one person speaks at a time. One significant ethnographic study that focused on classroom interactions was Philips's (1983) study in the Warm Springs Indian reservation. She lived in this community for two years and observed classroom interactions of the Warm Springs Indians comparing them to those in Anglo classrooms.

Classroom research can be done through a variety of methods using a combination of data collection procedures. The data analysis may involve statistical analysis, especially if the focus group is very large, or it may be descriptive and intuitive in nature. The above studies are chosen to illustrate this diversity in research design choices. Depending on the topic of the research, the time available for the study, the number of the participants, and availability of funds and technical support, the researcher needs to tailor her project in order to attain the desired answers from the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The research traditions discussed in the previous chapter have some similarities in terms of data collection and analysis, as well as research focus. They also have some significant differences in their foci, analysis procedures, and interpretation processes. However, it seems possible to adopt an eclectic approach and use a variety of applications from multiple methodologies. My personal preference is ethnographic studies that have a strong basis in data collection and analysis. Moerman's CCCA research is inspiring in the way that it combines ethnographic analysis with Conversation Analysis elements for an insightful study. An ethnography which utilizes several data collection methods (e.g. observation, interview, videotaping, introspection) would present consistent and trustworthy results. For the current study all four of these data collection techniques were used to develop a clear picture of the international students' interactional choices, cultural patterns, and feelings about American classroom and culture. My insights as an experienced instructor as well as an international student enabled me to understand and interpret the points offered by the participants.

In terms of data collection, participant-observations are valuable due to their ability to capture natural communication among participants and to allow the researcher to be personally involved in the project. However, even the most careful and fastest researcher could document everything happening in an observation setting, especially when the observer is a major participant in the action, such as the classroom teacher or the judge or the social worker.

This kind of involvement requires a third eye in the setting, which can be obtained through videotaping. Interviews can also be very useful to double-check the understanding and interpretations that the researcher offers, as well as to give the participants a voice and a chance to explain their perceptions of the events under investigation.

As for data analysis, the personal, intuitive, and narrative nature of ethnographic work is appealing. Depending on the project and the focus of the researcher, the amount of detail that is required for analysis will change. For this study, looking for cultural patterns in classroom interactions doesn't require sentence structure analysis; however, frequency and amount of participation in interaction can be meaningful indicators of the social norms for communication in academic settings. The students also need to be given voice to speak for themselves and express their opinion about classroom practices, whether they discuss their own participation behavior or their perceptions of other students' interaction patterns. Therefore, giving questionnaires to all and doing interviews with a sample for more personal insights seems necessary. Information gathered during interviews also enhances the interpretations and brings new light to the analysis and reporting of the research report.

Research Questions

In this study, I investigated classroom interaction patterns of international and American students examining how they reflected students' cultures and beliefs. I also examined international students' feelings about being in mixed composition classes with native speakers, their thoughts about American culture and people, and the classroom manifestations of the

social challenges they face in America. The research questions for this project were as follows:

- 1) Are there interactional similarities among students from the same culture in terms of how and how much they participate in class and how they relate to the teacher and each other in communicative activities (e.g., small group discussions and conferences)?
- 2) Are there differences between how comfortable international students are in an all-international section versus in a mixed section? How does the type of classroom affect students' participation and sense of community?
- 3) What do international students think about being in a mixed section with Americans? What are some cultural or personal reasons for their feelings about being in an English composition class with native speakers?
- 4) What are some challenges and difficulties that international students face in American culture? How do these challenges impact their classroom participation? What are their perspectives about how they are perceived by Americans?

The Research Site

The research site for this study was the University of Arizona (U of A, henceforth), a large university in the southwest of the United States. The choice of the research site was one of convenience. Because I have been an instructor at the U of A for 7 years, and contributed time, energy, and effort into improving the ESL sections of composition, this program was my first choice while determining the research site for the study. In addition to this, I have been

assigned to teach the international and mixed sections of composition due to my background in ESL; therefore, I knew I would be teaching one of these classes, which made my access to the community immediate and convenient.

The University of Arizona Writing Program

The U of A Writing Program provides first-year composition classes for registered students; these classes are mandatory to complete the writing requirement to be eligible for graduation.

The Writing Program policies are well defined in the following excerpt from the Program's webpage:

First-year composition courses at the University of Arizona share several fundamental premises about writing and reading. First, writing is personal, academic, professional, and civic action. It is a means of learning, communicating, creating, criticizing, and changing. Second, writing is a rhetorical act, that is, a negotiation among diverse writers and readers using texts in specific situations for particular purposes and audiences. Third, writing is collaborative action by writers and readers, with the writer's aims and interests dominating at times and the reader's at other times. Although differences in values, assumptions, ideologies, experiences, races, classes, and genders make writing and reading challenging, these differences also motivate writing and reading. Fourth, writing and reading are complementary actions, in that writers read texts, including their own, and readers rewrite the works they read. Fifth, because writers, readers, texts, and situations change, the kinds of negotiations and the kinds of writing that will be effective always change. Composing is a recursive process of generating, drafting, revising, and proofreading for specific contexts. Sixth, writers must learn when to write to discover for themselves and when to rewrite for a specific audience and context. The writer's task is always to read motives and contexts carefully and figure out what kind of writing will probably work best for a particular audience and situation (available at <http://info-center.ccit.arizona.edu/~writprog/>).

As it can be seen in this description, the Writing Program demonstrates an awareness of a multi-cultural student body and encourages the sharing and enhancement of diversity through writing.

Curriculum and instruction

The composition classes are usually conducted as workshops focused on reading, writing, peer revision, conferencing, and research. Instructors have the option of choosing their own readings and making them available for their students in different ways. They can put the reading materials on reserve in the library and the students can go and check them out for a short period to make copies or they can find online articles and provide links for these on their personal web page or on the U of A faculty instructional website (POLIS) to be downloaded by students. The instructors in the Writing Program have various backgrounds and interests, and they come from different departments within (or linked to) the English Department. The different graduate programs that typically provide the teachers for the composition courses are: Rhetoric, Composition, and the Teaching of English (RCTE), Literature (LIT), Creative Writing (CW), Comparative Cultural and Literary Studies (CCLS), English Language and Linguistics (ELL), and Second Language Acquisition and Teaching (SLAT).

Students are expected to improve critical thinking skills on academic and social issues through writing different types of essays required for each class (Wurr, Eröz, & Singh-Corcoran, 2000). They can revise their work and meet with their instructors for feedback or go to the Writing Center to get help from trained tutors for their special needs. For some essay assignments, students do library research and integrate the information they find in their essay synthesizing research and analysis (Singh-Corcoran, Eröz, & Sadler, 2001). The essay assignments are basically the same for all classes, but each instructor has the liberty to make changes in the syllabus in terms of choosing the types of readings, tailoring the assignments for the class culture, and changing the structure of the assignments to reflect their own expertise and interest in writing.

Classes and Placement

The Writing Program offers first-year and advanced composition classes. The first-year classes are mandatory for all students. The first-year classes are divided into four categories: mainstream, honors, ESL, and mixed.

Mainstream classes

The mainstream classes (English 100, 101, 102) are the ones in which all of the students have graduated from an American high school. This group includes native speakers of English who were born and raised in the United States; children of immigrants whose native language is different, but are graduates of American high-schools; and international or exchange students who attend an American high-school and later on go to college in the United States. This first group is the most difficult to define and describe, because it is not a homogenous group and the sociocultural background and language experiences of these students are quite diverse. These students are placed in composition classes depending on “factors [such] as grades earned in high school, verbal scores from the SAT, score on the ACT English exam, and other relevant data” (<http://info-center.ccit.arizona.edu/~writprog/>). Students are placed in 100 or 101 depending on how they meet the Program criteria for placement. English 100 is designed for students who need more college-level writing practice. After taking English 100, students should also take English 101 and 102 in order to complete composition requirements. English 101 focuses on the written analyses of a variety of texts (fiction, non-fiction, visual, etc.) through “close reading, contextual analysis, . . . researched argumentation, [and] cultural analysis” (Singh-Corcoran, Eröz, & Sadler, 2001: p. 25). English 102 helps build on the skills

developed in English 101 by focusing on rhetorical analysis, personal reflection, and persuasive writing.

Honors classes

The honors classes (English 103, 104, 109) are for students who demonstrate advanced composition skills. English 103 is the first course in the series and students need to take English 104 to complete their composition requirements. More complex and stringent than the mainstream classes, the honors courses pose “a great challenge for those who are very interested in developing creative and effective rhetorical texts. This course is preferred by many English majors, pre-law students, and others who want a full two semesters of intensive practice in writing and analytical thinking” (<http://info-center.ccit.arizona.edu/~writprog/>). English 109, which is the only one-semester composition course sequence, is designed for students who receive a 4 or 5 on the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition exam. Students who receive a B or better in this class do not need to take a second semester of college writing, and they will have completed their freshman composition requirement.

All-international (ESL) sections of composition

The ESL sections of composition are for non-native speakers of English; that is, for international students for whom English is a second or foreign language, who have not graduated from an American high school and aren't citizens or residents of the United States. The ESL courses are English 106, 107, and 108. Most international students take English 107 followed by 108, and some are placed in English 106 depending on their Placement Exam

scores and English writing skills during the International Student Orientation. Students who take English 106 are required to take 107 and 108 in the following semesters.

English 106 is the ESL counterpart of English 100 for non-native speakers who can benefit from getting extra practice with academic writing. The course, like all other ESL sections of composition, is taught by teachers with special training in ESL:

This classroom setting is diverse and dynamic with students from all over the world. Reading materials, writing assignments, and discussions of language use issues are relevant and specific to multi-lingual students. Students who place into English 106 are systematically exposed to the conventions of writing in English, and gain valuable practice in applying these conventions in an academic context. Through its emphasis on analysis, inferential thinking, and careful consideration of evidence, this course seeks to strengthen students' critical thinking while asking them to apply that thinking to a variety of texts (<http://info-center.ccit.arizona.edu/~writprog>).

English 107 is comparable to the native speaker mainstream class, English 101. This course aims to strengthen ESL students as readers and writers; improve their critical thinking skills; teach them how to do library research; and practice methods of argumentation and analysis (Wurr, Eröz, & Singh-Corcoran, 2000; Singh-Corcoran, Eröz, & Sadler, 2001). Students who take 107 are required to take 108 to complete their composition requirement.

There are no honors sections for ESL despite the fact that often times there are exceptional writers or international students who have spoken English all their lives (e.g., students from India, Australia, or Canada) and have strong writing skills. The placement for the ESL sections is problematic because there aren't enough qualified instructors and raters to judge these exams. Most of the time students with grammar difficulties are placed in English 106 even if the content and ideas of the essay are mature; given the fact that grading and instruction in the Writing Program put greater weight on these aspects of writing, this placement approach can have unfair consequences. In addition to this, because there are no honors sections for international students with advanced writing skills, there is usually a

discrepancy in terms of writing ability and needs for improvement among the English 107 students.

Students

Students in the ESL sections of composition are from a variety of backgrounds. They come from different parts of the world to get a better, cheaper, easier, or more prestigious education in the United States than they would find at home. Many of the international students are here on scholarships either from the government of their countries or other sponsor programs. These sponsored students are required to keep a certain Grade Point Average (GPA); otherwise, they lose their scholarships and have to go back to their countries without a degree or prospects of a good education. Therefore, succeeding in the American school setting is essential for them. Most of them are very hard-working, ambitious, and usually more motivated than the American students in the mainstream classes. These are not merely my observations as a composition teacher who has taught both mainstream and all-international sections; my colleagues who have worked with both groups of students confirm these generalizations about the two students groups.

Teachers

The instructors of the ESL sections are all trained ESL/EFL professionals. The Graduate Teaching Assistants/Associates (GATs) are a multi-cultural and multi-lingual group who are in a language teaching related program at the U of A. Some of the instructors are international students themselves representing a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and they are usually graduate students in the Master's program in English Language and Linguistics or the

Ph.D. program in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching at the U of A. Instructors for the ESL sections are chosen from graduate students or adjuncts who have had experience teaching the mainstream sections for at least one year before being assigned an international section. This is because the instructors are expected to be experienced with and well-adjusted to the curriculum of the Program before dealing with the more challenging and complex ESL sections.

Mixed sections of composition

A relatively new addition to the composition family of classes, the mixed sections of composition started with the hope that they would promote intercultural communication between American students and international students, teaching the native speakers about other countries and cultures and helping international students adjust to this culture better by interacting with people from the home country. There are usually a few mixed sections of English 101 and 107 and English 108 and 102 because these courses are compatible in terms of curriculum. The fact that a particular section of composition is open to both American and international students is announced on the U of A's on-line Schedule of Classes so students can decide whether or not they would like to sign up for that section. However, most of the time, students don't read the fine print and find themselves in one of these sections by accident. The ratio of international and American students is usually 15 international students and 10 Americans, and the idea behind that is to avoid intimidating the nonnative speakers who are already overwhelmed by that fact that they are competing with native speakers in their other classes.

There is no English 100-106 mixed section, which is an intentional choice on the part of the Writing Program. The student body of English 100 is thought to be markedly different from English 106 students in terms of their writing abilities, thinking skills, linguistic skills, content maturity, and interest in other cultures. In English 100, it is common to find athletes, students with learning disabilities, and students with problems with content in writing in their native language. On the other hand, the international students in English 106 do not have most of the difficulties that 100 students do. Their main problem is not having good grammar and organizational skills, which is a mechanical problem. They tend to be competent writers in their own language, but they have trouble with the academic style of English writing, and their grammar is weak. These observations about the two groups prevented the administration from offering mixed sections of English 100 and 106.

Teachers

The instructors for the mixed sections are carefully chosen depending on how experienced they are with the international sections and teaching of composition in general. The mixed sections are more challenging than the all-international and mainstream sections of composition; that is why they are not usually preferred by many teachers. Nevertheless, the instructors who teach them usually get fulfilling experiences through the challenge.

Instructors of mixed sections usually try to mix the two groups together and create an interactive and friendly atmosphere in which cross-cultural communication comes naturally and easily. However, because most students aren't aware of the fact that they are signing up for a mixed section, they may be shocked or even annoyed to find out they are in a mixed class at the beginning of the semester. When I am assigned to a mixed class, I talk about how

special our class is on the first day. I explain the idea behind mixed sections trying to relieve the confusion of being in class with people who seemingly are taking different classes (101 versus 107). Then, I ask if anyone signed up for it knowing that this was a mixed section. Having taught mixed sections 4 times, I have yet to receive a single positive response saying the students signed up with the knowledge that it was a mixed section. Sometimes worried students came to see me after the first class. Americans worry about not being able to understand their classmates because of their accents; international students worry that American are annoyed, or that they will be graded the same way as native speakers whose English, they think, is much better than theirs. I try to console both groups, telling the Americans how invaluable this opportunity can be and telling the international students their American peers have many problems in their writing; they are just different from the difficulties nonnative speakers have. After that I usually hope that they will grow to enjoy the class and start getting closer as a group.

Most instructors teaching mixed sections prefer small group activities and group conferences in order to create a sense of community in class and promote student-to-student interaction. Also, they choose reading texts that may create cross-cultural discussions allowing the students to talk about their own backgrounds. In my classes, one unit is devoted to reading folktales from different cultures and talking about the social conventions in different parts of the world, and another unit to analyzing movies and explaining how they misrepresent a culture or present prejudices about a group of people. The reactions from students vary greatly, mostly depending on how much the students are willing to and interested in learning about other cultures and peoples. When students are uninterested in

cross-cultural communication, the mixed sections can be challenging for the teacher and frustrating for the students.

The Research Participants

Having talked about these sections in detail, I will now address the participants of this particular research study and give more detailed and specific information about the two groups I worked with. For this study, classroom data were collected in two sections of composition: the all-international section (AIS) of English 107 that I was teaching in Spring 2002, and a mixed section (MS) of English 101-107 that a fellow teacher in the SLAT program was teaching during the same semester. The AIS was a Tuesday-Thursday class that met from 11:00 to 12:15, and the MS was a Monday-Wednesday-Friday class that met from 10:00 to 10:50. Not having a time conflict between the classes made my work as a researcher convenient and easy, because I could collect data five times a week when necessary.

A total of 40 students between the ages of 18 and 24 participated in this study; all of these students had different cultural backgrounds. Between the two sections, the international students represented a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and for most of them English was a second or foreign language; a total of 15 countries were represented in this project. The native speakers from the United States came from various parts of the country and had diverse backgrounds (e.g., Navajo Indian, Vietnamese-American, etc.). Half of the American students were white Anglo-Americans and other half were children of immigrant families or minority groups in the United States. A break down of countries represented, number of participants from each country, and a ratio of males to females can be seen in Table

3.1 followed by a detailed description of the students and teachers of the two sections under observation.

Table 3.1: Research Participants

		AIS	MS	Total	
Male-female ratio	Males	14	12	26	
	Females	7	11	18	
Countries/ regions represented	United States	-	9	9	
	India	4	4	8	
	Mauritius	1	-	1	
	Middle East (5)	UAE	1	-	1
		Kuwait	2	1	3
		Jordan	1	-	1
		Iran	-	1	1
	Asia (13)	Hong-Kong	1	2	3
		China	-	2	2
		Taiwan	1	-	1
		Vietnam	2	-	2
		Japan	3	1	2
		Malaysia	1	-	1
		Indonesia	1	-	1
		Europe (2)	Cyprus	1	-
		France	-	1	1
	South America (3)	Mexico	2	-	2
Brazil		-	1	1	

The All-International Section

Students

The AIS (English 107) consisted of 21 students from different parts of the world most of whom were in the United States for the first time ever. Some of the students had arrived only a few months before they started attending the English 107 class, so they were still experiencing culture shock and were going through the acculturation process. As presented in Table 3.1. above, the students had very diverse cultural backgrounds.

Despite great differences in their backgrounds and serious preconceived difficulties with academic writing and English (or maybe *because* of the latter), the students formed an immediate bond and became a community in a very short period of time. Starting the first day of class, they were very active and interactive in class without much reservation. Especially after some small group work activities and classroom discussions where they got to express their ideas and share their cultural perspectives with others, they started to interact more freely with the instructor and each other; they were comfortable talking to, joking with, and asking questions of the instructor and each other shortly after the first week of classes.

The AIS was a small group; usually composition classes have about 25 students enrolled in them, but this section was taught in the spring semester which is an irregular time. To clarify this, English 107 classes are offered in the fall semesters as the first required class in the first-year course series. English 107 classes offered in spring semesters have students who attended English 106 in the fall or who could not take 107 for academic or personal reasons (too many or too few credits, financial problems, being a transfer student, etc.). Therefore, 107 classes have smaller number of students in the Spring due to the fact that most students take it in Fall.

The class got smaller towards the end of the semester, because four students (Maki from Japan, Aziz from Jordan, Rich from Mauritius, and PJ from Taiwan) stopped coming to class for various personal reasons. Maki had a family emergency and had to leave for Japan and Aziz left for Lebanon for almost a month. Neither one of them could keep up with the classwork after they came so they dropped. Rich and PJ had some emotional/psychological difficulties, so they stopped attending class. Although they consented to the study and were in some of the earlier taped sessions of whole group discussions and conferences, they did not

take the questionnaire that was given at the end of the semester, and I couldn't interview them. Therefore, most of the data were gathered from the remaining 18 students who were in class until the end of the semester. The names (pseudonyms) of all the participants in the AIS and the information about where they are from and what their first languages are can be found in Table 3.2.

The writing skills in this class were as varied as the cultures represented. There were some very strong writers who had studied English for their entire lives or who had been in the United States for a long period of time, but there were also some very weak writers who could not form a coherent paragraph. Due to the aforementioned difficulties in the placement of international students (i.e., not enough qualified judges) and the lack of honors sections for ESL, these people all get placed in the same section despite the fact that they have a variety of needs and problems with English writing.

Table 3.2: All-international Section Student Information

Pseudonym	Country, Sex	Native language
Vivek	India, M	Gujurati
Mayar	India, M	Hindi
Ashok	India, M	Hindi
Anurag	India, M	Hindi
Nadihah	United Arab Emirates, F	Arabic
Aisha	Kuwait, F	Arabic
Ahmed	Kuwait, M	Arabic
Aziz	Jordan, M	Arabic
Maria	Mexico, F	Spanish
Elena	Mexico, F	Spanish
Costas	Cyprus, M	Greek
Rich	Mauritius, M	French
Ted	Malaysia, M	Chinese
Adam	Hong Kong, M	Chinese
PJ	Taiwan, M	Chinese
Ozzy	Indonesia, M	Java
Ayumi	Japan, F	Japanese
Maki	Japan, F	Japanese
Tatsuki	Japan, M	Japanese

Ann	Vietnam, F	Vietnamese
Dan	Vietnam, M	Vietnamese

Teacher

I was the classroom instructor for the AIS that I analyzed. My experience with the composition classes at the U of A started in the Fall of 1997. In my first year as a teaching assistant, I taught English 101 and 102 to American students. In my second year of teaching I was assigned my first all-international and mixed sections of composition. During that year, I observed some attitudinal and interactional differences in the two classes and began to cultivate an interest in doing comparative research in these two groups. Having taught five mixed sections of composition and eight all-international sections over these years, I became more experienced with the syllabus which I have altered to suit the needs of the international students and to promote cross-cultural communication in both all-international and mixed sections.

Syllabus

The syllabus for the AIS was designed around the three big essay assignments required for English 101: textual analysis essay, text-in-context essay, and the reader response essay. In order to promote more cultural interaction exchange, multi-cultural pieces which are easy to read and understand were chosen. The readings were folktales from Turkey, Iran, India, Japan, China, and Europe in general. The choice of these countries was intentional; there is a good chance to have a few Indian or Middle Eastern students, a few Europeans, and definitely a group of Asian students from Japan and China. This expectation has almost never failed in

my classes, so I always had cultural informants to give some background and detailed cultural perspectives about the folktales.

In the first unit (Textual Analysis Essay), the students are asked to do critical reading of the stories and analyze the writer's message, audience, and use of literary elements (e.g., setting, characterization, imagery, conversation, etc.) in the story. They explain how the writer gives an intended message to a target audience using these tools by illustrating their arguments using specific examples from the story.

In the second unit (Text-in-Context Essay), the students do close reading of a folktale and come up with assumptions about a certain cultural element, such as treatment of women, marriages, and family relationships in the country the story is from. After this they do library research to check the accuracy of their assumptions. In writing the essay, they synthesize the information from outside sources (books and articles from the library; Internet sources; and an interview with someone from that culture) with the analysis of the text and write an essay analyzing a text within its cultural context.

For the third unit, the students have several options. They can write a personal reaction to a folktale explaining how the cultural implications are unbelievable, unacceptable, inappropriate, or impossible in their own culture. Alternatively, they can write a comparative essay contrasting two versions of the same folktale (e.g., two written versions of Cinderella or a written version of Cinderella compared with the movie version). As a final option, they can rewrite a folktale keeping the storyline the same but changing the elements adapting it to their own culture in terms of characters and setting. All students do a short oral presentation in class in this unit.

The Mixed Section

Students

The MS consisted of 10 American students and 15 international students. One American student and one international student chose not to participate in the study; therefore, their interactions were excluded from my analyses. So data were gathered from 9 American and 14 international students. As it can be seen in Table 3.3, the international students were from a variety of countries and cultures, and the American students had a variety of family backgrounds. All the Americans indicated that they were native speakers of English and some of them had other home languages that they learned from their families. For most of the international students, English is a foreign language with the exception of Indian students who spoke it as a first or second language depending where they are from in India.

Table 3.3: Mixed Section Student Information

	Pseudonym	Country (ethnic background), Sex	Native language
International students	Brenda	India, F	Hindi
	Assad	India, M	Hindi
	Shah	India, M	Hindi, Kutchi
	Nihir	India, M	Hindi
	Nasreen	Iran, F	Persian
	Ali	Kuwait	Arabic
	Fabiola	Brazil, F	Portuguese
	Guillaume	France, M	French
	Tatyana	Slovenia	Russian
	Akiko	Japan, F	Japanese
	Jeanie	Hong Kong, F	Chinese
	Rosy	Hong Kong, F	Chinese
	Paige	China, F	Chinese
	Lee	China, M	Chinese
American	Tom	U.S., M	English
	Kevin	U.S., M	English
	Mark	U.S., M	English
	Darren	U.S. (Navajo Indian), M	Navajo
	Eli	U.S., M (Mexican American), M	English

	Donny	U.S. (Vietnamese American), M	Vietnamese
	Alison	U.S. (Mexican American), F	English
	Marianne	U.S., F	English
	Suzanne	U.S., F	English

Teacher

Karen, the instructor for the mixed group, is also a graduate student in the SLAT Program, she has been teaching freshman composition at the U of A for four years. Karen has a B.A. in Linguistics from the University of Georgia and an M.S. in Applied Linguistics from Georgetown University. Karen's research interests discourse analysis, ESL writing, intercultural communication, language variation, and second language pragmatics. She taught ESL in Texas and EFL in Argentina and studies in Spain for a year. Karen has taught 101, 102, 106, and 107 classes at the U of Writing program and this was her first mixed section in this program.

Syllabus

Karen agreed to change her syllabus slightly and have her students read the culture-specific folktales. Her students read these folktales in addition to some pieces from American authors from the anthology, "Writing as Revision." In her class, she had students representing the countries that they read the folktales from, so there was always a cultural informant in her class too. While observing her class, I was the Turkish informant and was part of the classroom discussions briefly.

Data Collection Procedures

This research study involved a variety of data collection techniques: classroom observation notes and teacher's journal; video- and audio-taped class discussions, small group work, and conferences; questionnaires completed by students; and one-on-one interviews with most of the participants. Data collection started in February 2002 and was completed by the end of May 2002. Some of the interviews were done after the semester early in Summer 2002 or Fall 2002 depending on the availability and preference of the participants.

Database

The database for this study consists of written data sources (observation sheets, observation notes, journal entries, topic transcriptions, interview notes, and questionnaires) as well as taped data sources (videotapes and audiotapes). The subdivision of these data sources and the amount of database can be found in the detailed discussions below. Tables 3.4 and 3.5 summarize the written data sources and Tables 3.6 and 3.7 summarize the taped data sources. More information about the procedures and research site applications of these data collection techniques will be provided in the next section.

Written Data Sources

1. Observation notes: This data source consisted of observation sheets with the direction, amount, and content of classroom interactions noted on them as well as hand written notes about classroom activities and participation in the MS. Observation notes were taken in eight 50-minute MS class meetings (total of approximately 6.5 hours) detailing the classroom activities, student participation, and content of classroom discussions.

2. Journal entries: Journal entries for the AIS were kept during the first three weeks of the semester. I wrote my reflections about the AIS in a teacher's journal for 6 class sessions (total of approximately 7.5 hours).

3. Topic transcriptions: For close examination of the videotaped classroom sessions, small group discussions, and teacher-student conferences, I did topic transcription of twenty-six 75-minute videotapes using a Topic Transcription Sheet (see Table 3.8 under Data Analysis).

Eleven 75-minute classroom meetings (including whole group and small group discussions), thirty-five 10-20 minute individual conferences, and five 30-45 minute group conferences of the AIS were transcribed. So for this section, a total of approximately 23.5 hours of interactions were transcribed. For the MS, ten 50-minute classroom meetings (including whole group and small group discussions) and eight 30-45 minute group conferences were transcribed. So a total of approximately 11.5 hours of interactions were transcribed for this group. A summary of the topic transcriptions can be found in Table 3.4

The topic transcriptions involved noting the time of the interactions (minute and second on the tape), the direction of the interactions (teacher-to-student; student-to-student, teacher-to-students, etc.), and the content of the interactions (verbal and nonverbal exchanges and responses using indirect reporting (e.g., "The teacher asks if anyone has any questions," "Nasreen shakes her head and says no," "The teacher waves her hand in the air and the students laugh," etc.) on the transcription sheet. In addition to these, specific observations about classroom interaction patterns were noted in the Topic Transcription Sheet, and general

observations and comments were noted at the end of the topic transcription (see Appendix C for a sample topic transcription of a lecture).

Table 3.4: Summary of Transcribed Database

Transcribed Data Source	AIS	MS	Total transcribed data (approx. hours)
Classroom sessions	11 sessions	10 sessions	22 sessions (15.5 hours)
Individual conferences	35 meetings	NONE	35 meetings (17.5 hours)
Group conferences	5 meetings	8 meetings	13 meetings (6 hours)
Total Data Transcribed	51 events	18 events	70 events (29 hours)

4. Interview notes: After each individual interview with 19 participants, I played the interviews back several times and noted the information provided by the participant. Each of the eight 90-minute tapes were listened several times if necessary in order to do a topic transcription and information relevant to the research questions of the study was noted in quote or paraphrasing format.

5. Questionnaires: A total of 16 students (out of 21) in the AIS and a total of 21 students (out of 23) in the MS filled out the questionnaire (See Appendix B). All 44 questionnaires were examined for general analysis and more than half of them were used in more focused analysis of cultural patterns and interpretation of the findings.

Table 3.5: Summary of Written Data Sources

Data Source	Group(s) collected	Place of collection	Quantity	Special Aspects
Observation notes	MS	In class	8 sessions	Focused and general notes on the spot
Journal entries	AIS	Out of class	6 sessions	Reflective and retrospective notes
Interview notes	AIS and MS	Out of class	19 interviews	Individual, face-to-face
Questionnaires	AIS and MS	In class	44 questionnaires	Likert-scale and open-ended questions

Taped Data Sources

1. Videotapes: Twenty-six 75-minute digital videotapes (mini DVs) of taped interaction included recordings of various meetings:
 - a. *Classroom sessions* in AIS and MS. Eleven 75-minute meetings of the AIS and ten 50-minute meetings of the MS were videotaped (total of approximately 22 hours).
 - b. *Individual conferences* for the first and second units in the AIS. Thirty-five 10-20 minute meetings with each student were taped (total of approximately 7.5 hours).
 - c. *Group conferences* for the second unit in the AIS. Five 30-45 minute group conferences with each group were taped (total of approximately 2.5 hours), and group conferences for the second unit in the MS. Eight 30-45 minute conferences with each group were taped (total of approximately 3.5 hours).

Table 3.6: Summary of Videotaped Data Sources

Data Source	Amount of Data	Length/Duration of Data Source	Total Hours of Data (approx.)
AIS class sessions	11 meetings	75 minutes	13.5
MS class sessions	10 meetings	50 minutes	8.5
AIS individual conferences	35 meetings	10-20 minutes	7.5
AIS group conferences	5 meetings	30-45 minutes	2.5
MS group conferences	8 meetings	30-45 minutes	3.5
Total Database	90 meetings	Variable	35.5

2. Audiotapes: Fifteen 60-minute tapes and eight 90-minute tapes (total of approximately 28.5 hours) were used as back-up audio sources for small group work and conferences and for the individual interviews. Eight 90-minute tapes and five 60-minute tapes were used for the interviews (total of approximately 17 hours); five 60-minute tapes were used as back-up audio sources for the group conferences of both sections (total of approximately 5

hours); and five 60-minute tapes were used for audio back-up for small group work discussions in both classes (total of approximately 5 hours).

Table 3.7: Summary of Audiotaped Data Sources

Data Source	Quantity of Tapes	Length of Tapes	Total Hours of Data (approx.)
Back-up audio for small group work	5 tapes	60 minutes	5
Back-up audio for group conferences	5 tapes	60 minutes	5
Interviews	13 tapes	60 or 90 minutes	17
Total Database	23 tapes	Variable	27

Classroom Observations and Teacher's Journal

In the AIS, I kept a teacher's journal for about one month earlier in the semester, because it was impossible to teach the class and take notes simultaneously. I wrote in a journal after each class session trying to recall what happened during my meeting with the students. I wrote about my impressions as well as any conversations or interesting patterns I observed in class. After the video recordings started, I stopped keeping a teacher's journal.

As an observer in Karen's class, I took notes during my first eight visits videotaping the sessions. Using an observation sheet (see Appendix B), I noted the interactional events marking the direction and type of interaction (e.g., student asking a question of clarification to teacher) as well as the cultural information pertinent to the conversation (Indian male commenting on classmate's idea in small groups). In addition to that, I did topic transcriptions of 10-15 minute segments of each observed session, specifying the interaction events (e.g. questions, comments, requests, etc.), and the interlocutors of this communicative event (e.g. teacher-to-whole class; student-to-teacher, etc.).

On the first page of the observation sheet, there were two charts: Observation notes and classroom layout. On the observation notes chart, the date of the observation, the total number of students present that day, the topic of the day, and the activities and assignments for the day were noted. On the classroom layout chart, which was basically a blank square, a seating chart of the class placing the instructor, the students, the researcher, the TV/VCR, the whiteboard, and other relevant classroom bodies were drawn. The students were identified with gender and native language, such as FNNS (female nonnative speaker) or MNS (male native speaker). After getting to know the students better, I started noting their cultural information as well (e.g., female nonnative speaker, Japan). On the second page of the Observation Sheet, I filled out a Verbal Interaction Chart, for which I focused on a 10 or 15 minute segment in class during a period when interaction was expected to be more intense (e.g. after the first 5-10 minutes of class, 5-10 minutes before the end of the session). The interaction flow was marked detailing the direction, type, and content of interaction.

In addition to this focused observation, I took notes throughout the sessions. This was different from the focused 10-15 minute topic transcription in the sense that I would write about classroom activities in a narrative style rather than a word-for-word transcription.

Videotaping Classes

Most of the class sessions in my AIS and a good portion of the MS were videotaped. In the MS, I did all of the videotaping including whole group and small group discussion. In my AIS, however, I received help from colleagues experienced in videotaping, especially during the small group work tapings. Camera-consciousness was inevitable of course, especially when the camera was on a small group. For example, when I approached one group of girls in the

MS, I realized that they changed the topic of discussion from Capri pants and shopping to answering the questions on the slips that Karen gave them. One of my cameraman colleagues noticed that when he brought in the small microphone for focused small group taping, the students sometimes stopped their discussion and started commenting on the camera and the microphone. He told me on one occasion that the students modified their speech (i.e., stopped cursing) when they realized they were being taped.

To enhance the quality of taping, a wide-angle lens and a shotgun microphone were used. The wide-angle lens enabled me to tape 30% more of the space than I could tape before and the microphone increased the audio quality. During the small group tapings, the camera wasn't situated too close to the groups so as not to disturb them, but this resulted in noise interference from other groups. Therefore, a clip-on microphone which was attached to one of the students' folders while audio taping their group conversation. The group conversations were taped into both the camera and a tape recorder attached to the clip-on microphone.

Questionnaires

At the end of the semester, when the videotaping was done, the students were given questionnaires which inquired about their attitude towards interaction in the classroom (e.g., participating in whole group discussion, working in small groups, being in an all-international group vs. in a group where they have native speakers to interact with, etc.). The purpose of the questionnaire was followed by a request for some personal information, such as age, sex, religion, country they are from, other countries they have lived in, native language, and other languages spoken in order to identify the participants during analysis and learn about their

personal background. The personal information they provided enabled me to have some context for the interpretations, especially in the case of students that weren't interviewed.

In the first part of the questionnaires, the students were asked to indicate their degree of agreement (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree) with statements relevant to how comfortable they are participating in class, working with people from different cultures or the opposite sex, and being critical of others' writing. Students were also asked whether the social norms they grew up with had an impact on their interaction patterns. After these short responses, students were asked to write brief answers to five open-ended questions asking them to explain how their cultural background affects their communication patterns; their feelings about being in a MS versus an AIS; their preference for small group versus whole group discussions and group conference versus individual conferences with the teacher. A sample questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

Interviews

As part of my multiple data collection methods, I interviewed a group of students after the videotaping was over. Six students from the MS (Paige, Rosy, Nasreen, Shah, Lee, and Kevin) and thirteen students from the AIS (Ann, Ashok, Ayumi, Adan, Ted, Nadiah, Aisha, Ahmed, Vivek, Elena, Tatsuki, Ozzy, and Costas) were individually interviewed. The interviews lasted between 15 minutes to 75 minutes depending on how much the students wanted to elaborate on their approaches to classroom interaction.

They were asked about their schooling, educational institutions, and family and regional cultures as well as how classes were conducted in their country and how this was different in

the American classroom. They also expressed their thoughts and feelings about being (or the possibility of being) in a MS of composition with American students.

Similarly, the native speaker interviewee was asked how his experience with the international students was and whether he had any difficulties in communication. I did not go into the interviews with a set of questions, but I noted some general points to talk about. When I managed to identify the students who filled out the questionnaires from the personal information provided in the first part, I brought the questionnaires of the students to be interviewed so I could ask them to elaborate on their answers. The students appeared to be open and honest in their responses and the interviews went very smoothly. These interviews were audio taped and most of the interactions were clearly audible for later usage.

Data Analysis

The variety of data collection tools required a variety of methods for analyzing data for this project. I had several different types of materials to analyze: hand-written notes, videotaped classroom discussions, videotaped conferences, audio taped interviews, questionnaires, audio back-up for small group work, and audio back-up for conferences. Each of these needed a different approach to extract different perspectives about the classes under observation.

Classroom Observation Notes and Teacher's Journal

The first data source that I examined closely while doing the analysis of the data was the hand-written classroom observation notes that from Karen's class. The notes were chronologically organized and the parts that provided relevant support for the research questions were

highlighted. For example, I looked through my notes to find instances when I wrote comments about students from the cultures I was focusing on, such as India, Japan or the United States. Then, I numbered these instances to later match them with the relevant points from the topic transcriptions of the videotapes.

The teacher's journal that I took during the first 3 weeks was useful in reminding me of my earlier assumptions and perspectives on the AIS students. I read my entries before looking at the videotapes and other written data sources to make comparisons of the classroom early in the semester and later on in the semester. These two data sources were used as warm-up data collection techniques before the sessions were videotaped. I wanted to form rapport with my AIS and allow some time for the MS students and the instructor to get used to my presence in their class before bringing in the video camera.

Videotapes

The videotapes provided the basis for the focus points for this project. The information from the videotapes was used to determine the interaction events in the classroom and the conferences that were interesting to focus on in detail. I checked all the recordings immediately after taping a class or a conference to make sure the audio was fine and to note the date and contents of the tape (e.g., English 107, April 11, whole group and small group discussions on the readings on "love"). The tapes were then numbered and organized according to the type of class type and interaction activity.

After organizing the tapes, I prepared a topic transcription sheet based on materials designed for previous interaction analysis studies (Eröz & Sadler, 2001a; Eröz & Sadler, 2001b). For the topic transcription of the tapes, the transcription sheet in Table 3.8 was used;

the statements in parenthesis are examples of the type of information provided in each column. A sample transcription of a whole class can be found in Appendix C. For the individual and group conferences, the structure of the sheet was slightly changed by taking out the column that indicated the direction of interaction. Especially in the individual conferences, the limited number of participants in interaction did not make this section essential. See Appendix D for a sample individual conference topic transcription. I transcribed the conversations when I wanted to use them as illustrations for my points.

Table 3.8: Topic Transcription Sheet

Tape Number: Date: Class: (English 101/107 or English 107)			
Type of class: (lecture, small groups, peer revision)			
Topic of the day: (reading texts, discussion topics, lecture themes)			
Time	Direction of interaction	Type of interaction	Specific observations
(Minute and second on videotape)	(Teacher-to-student; student-to-teacher; students-to-teacher; teacher-to students)	(Question of clarification; personal comment; joke; suggestion; objection; backchanneling)	(cross-cultural patterns; interesting observations)
General observations: (general impression of class)			
Patterns observed: (cultural or pedagogical points of interest)			

Questionnaires and interviews

In analyzing the questionnaire, I coded all the answers on a blank questionnaire indicating the country, sex, and native language of the participant who responded to it. Then, I noted the comments of the participants to the open-ended questions and categorized them according to culture. The examination of the questionnaires didn't involve a numerical analysis, because

the sample group is small and I was looking for possible cultural patterns among an even smaller group of respondents instead of statistical significance within the group. In analyzing the interviews, I listened to the interview tapes and noted the comments and reflections of students about their personal attitudes towards interaction in the classroom, their feelings about mixed sections and Americans, and their personal stories. I marked down the time on the tape while doing this in order to have the exact quote or a paraphrase of an utterance while reporting the results of the study.

Triangulation of Data

One of the strengths of this research project was its research design involving a triangulation of data collection techniques. Each data collection tool provided a special and significant contribution to the data analysis and interpretation process. Individually, each data source provided significant contribution in examining the data and approaching the research questions. The journal entries and hand-written notes served as reminders of the earlier stages of the two classes and provided a starting point for focused analysis and interpretation. The videotapes provided an objective and comprehensive look into the dynamics of in-class and conference interactions. The questionnaires gave all the participants an opportunity express their opinion about mixed sections, explain their classroom interaction patterns, and elaborate on the effects of their cultural background on these patterns. The interviews gave the students voice describe their experiences in the United States; express their feelings and thoughts about American culture and people; and explain their perspectives on classroom interactions reflecting on their own norms and values of educational practice.

Triangulation of data and using multiple sources in attending a research question or focus point provided consistency and credibility to the interpretation and explanation of data. Videotapes of classroom and conference sessions provided visual indications about cultural patterns in interaction among participants from the same culture. These cultural assumptions were then supported (or defeated) by the information provided by the students in the questionnaires or interviews. The students explained their classroom interaction patterns highlighting whether this can be considered a cultural generality or a personal choice. Similarly, making comparisons between the AIS and MS in terms of the students' sense of community in these two settings were possible by examining the videotapes. Combined with the interviews with the MS instructor, my personal insights as the teacher-research, and the students' statements in the questionnaires and interviews, the reasons behind these differences were articulated with more confidence.

Another cross-data source collaboration for consistent interpretation was in the examination of the feelings of the international students about being in a MS with Americans and the challenges that they faced during their acculturation process in the United States. The videotapes weren't indicative of these challenges or opinions, but in the open-ended section of the questionnaires and the individual interviews, the international students could express their actual thoughts about American culture and taking a composition class with native speakers. The questionnaires, therefore, provided a starting point for discussion of what the students thought about these issues, and the interviews complimented and strengthened these brief written statements with candid and personal reports of actual impressions and feelings of the students.

In reporting the results of this study, multiple data sources will be used to illustrate focus points. To present and explain cultural patterns, transcriptions of selected segments from taped data sources will be used. If the significance of the interaction can be shown more effectively by a narrative approach, summarized topic transcriptions of tapes will be used; the interactions will be reported as block paragraphs or integrated sentences in the text in a narrative format. When a detailed transcription is necessary to illustrate a point more clearly or accurately, word-for-word transcriptions of these interactions will be presented. Interview notes will also be used in quotation or paraphrase form to illustrate my points. If an exact reporting of a student's words is essential in clarifying or explaining the point, I will quote the student; otherwise, I will paraphrase or summarize the accounts of students.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the current study will be presented utilizing a variety of data sources and literature to illustrate, explain, and interpret the collected data in relation to the major research questions and foci presented in the Introduction and Research Design and Methodology chapters of this dissertation. This chapter consists of four parts each of which illustrate, explain, and support the findings and interpretations of the research foci: cultural patterns reflected in classroom interaction; comparison of the AIS and MS classroom; feelings of the international students about mixed sections; and the challenges that international students have encountered in the United States and their reflections on American culture and people.

Some of the themes that emerged from the analysis of data were cultural implications of classroom interactions of Indian, Asian, Middle Easterner, and American students; international students' display of solidarity as a community while placing Americans as the "other" (Us versus U.S.); and classroom manifestations of the cultural adjustment difficulties of international students. These themes, along with some other ones to be discussed in detail later in this chapter, emerged as salient patterns upon examination and triangulation of multiple data sources detailed in the previous chapter.

Part 1: Cultural Patterns

The students in the AIS and MS had their way of expressing who they were, where they were from, and how they saw the world. By reporting cultural patterns, I don't intend to make general cultural claims; I report behavior or attitude that seem to be recurrent among the members of a culture as represented in the participant sample. For example, when I mention Indian men's interaction patterns, I won't be referring to Indian men everywhere; I just refer to the Indian men I have observed in these two sections. I discuss these cultural assumptions by using illustrations of recurring instances on the tapes integrating these with the students' own responses in the questionnaires and interviews. As mentioned earlier, my focus is primarily Indian, Asian (Chinese and Japanese), Middle Eastern, and American students. These four groups are chosen, because they were each represented by 5 or more students, and these students revealed interesting cultural issues explained in detail during the interviews.

Indian Interruption

“I was like this in India too. I always got into trouble” (Shah)

There were 4 Indian males in the AIS and 3 males and 1 female in the MS. My focus will be on Indian men, especially on 4 Indian men whom I could interview and get to know better outside of class. The Indians participants were Ashok, Anurag, Vivek, and Mayar in the AIS, and Shah, Nihir, and Assad in the MS. I focus mainly on Ashok, Anurag, Vivek, Shah, and Nihir in my analyses of the Indian participants, because the other two didn't attend class very regularly, missed conferences, or didn't have an interview with me.

There were several common characteristics in the interactional patterns of the Indian participants from these classrooms. First of all, they were very active in class; they were generally first to respond to the teacher's questions about the readings or writing assignments, and they asked questions of clarification when they were unclear about a point in class. Also, due to their comfort in talking in public, they assumed leadership positions in small group work and became the natural spokespersons for groups. The final observation is that the Indian men had a tendency to interrupt and overlap constantly during interaction, whether they were in individual conferences with the teacher or in a group discussion with their peers. Their activeness, talkativeness, and tendency to interrupt, however, sometimes caused classroom management problems for the teachers who had to stop, warn, or snap at them during class if things got out of control.

Active, talkative, and responsive

The Indian men were a relief to have in class when I was hoping for vivid classroom discussions; they participated by offering insightful reactions to readings and asked intelligent questions. They seemed to be very outgoing, active participants in classroom discussions. In my AIS, three of the four Indians were the most active and talkative students in classroom discussions and they attended the sessions very regularly. Whenever I asked a question about the readings or the writing process, they had some comments to make. They had a good sense of humor and weren't shy about making jokes.

On the first day of class, I wrote in my teacher's journal, "We found the class clown, a loud Indian guy" referring to Ashok who started cracking jokes and engaging in the classroom

discussion early on in the semester. The second day he asked the possibility of getting 100 out of 100 from my class, and I told him it never happened but he could surprise me, which amused the whole class. Anurag was very attentive and asked intelligent questions about the syllabus and the writing assignments, which helped clarify things for the whole class. The Indian students contributed to the formation of our classroom community very early on in the semester. Shah, who could be considered the “life” of Karen’s class, was very active and responsive, asking questions of clarification and offering insightful comments about the readings all the time. On one of the very few days that Shah was absent, Karen couldn’t help but comment, “the class is so quiet without [Shah].” When the Indian men were absent, it was very obvious.

An example of their activeness and sense of humor is a discussion about the 3 reading pieces on love, one of which was a Turkish story. When I asked them what they thought of it, Ashok said he hoped it didn’t reflect Turkish culture, which made all of us laugh in class. The Turkish story had twisted plots, strange characters, and a confusing storyline. After Ashok explained his perspective, Anurag and Vivek overlapped to react to the story. Indian students dominated the conversation with their activeness and expressiveness as it can be seen in these notes³:

T moves to the discussion of the three stories they have read. Ashok overlaps to mention Turkish piece. Anurag overlaps. T asks what they thought. Ashok says he understood the first and second but not third. T asks him what he says. Ashok repeats. T says it is because of the translation. Anurag asks what the third one was about. T says this is a good question and asks it to the whole class. Ss look puzzled. T says let’s start with the one you had a clear idea about. Ashok responds by giving general comments. T overlaps to repeat his comment about what the colors in the folktale mean. Ashok jokes about the color being him and his girlfriend. T asks a question and Ashok responds. T laughs and says “a-ha”. T asks what about these two people.

³ “T” refers to the teacher and “Ss” refers to the students (whole group) in all the detailed transcriptions and notes.

Anurag interrupts to ask how it is possible for the girl to act like a boy. Ashok overlaps to say it is impossible. T reminds them of some details in the story. Anurag overlaps to complete her example. Ashok comments. T responds. Ashok overlaps to ask question. Anurag overlaps to comment. Aisha and T overlap to comment. T confirms and rephrases her response. T asks what happened after he found out she was a girl. Ashok responds.

Another striking classroom observation about Indian men was that they were generally the leaders in group work, engaging all the group members in discussion by asking them for comments and often taking on the role of spokesperson in the group (even when there were native speakers in the group), reporting to the class on behalf of their group mates. During his small group work with Dan, Nadiyah, Ann, and Ayumi discussing the Turkish folktale, Ashok led and controlled the group discussion; he gave turns to his friends by asking them what they thought, and he ended up being the reporter of the group. The other group members followed his lead and directed their comments to Ashok making him the information center. A similar pattern was seen in Anurag's group in the same session, where he reported on behalf of his group mates, addressing the questions directed by the teacher and his classmates. He felt confident enough to respond to inquiries about their small group discussion all by himself, and his friends seemed comfortable with his leadership.

Interruptions, overlaps, arguments, backchanneling

One distinctive characteristic of Indian men's interaction was the prevalence of interruptions and overlaps in their conversations. An inappropriate interaction behavior in classrooms in many cultures, interruptions are considered part of natural conversation in the social settings for Indians, especially men. This pattern occurred during lectures, group presentations, and conferences.

Interruptions and overlaps in class

During teacher lectures or whole group discussions, Indian students in the AIS interrupted and overlapped with not only their Indian friends but also with the teacher and other students, even on unexpected occasions. When I was introducing the second essay, the Intercultural Textual Analysis Essay, for which they had to do cultural research, I had a brainstorming session about what culture meant to them. Ashok, being the funny one, came up with the “bathing habits” suggestion which could be a culture-specific tradition. Ozzy, from Indonesia, started to explain how bathing habits are in his country, but got interrupted by the Indian students who were eager to talk about bathing habits in India. Ashok won the floor among all three overlapping Indians. Ozzy, then, switched his focus from Indonesia to India and asked about the lack of bathrooms.

One specific example for interruptions and overlaps during whole group discussion can be seen in the following excerpt. In this illustration the students are commenting on the Chinese folktale “Faithful Even in Death,” and the unbelievable elements in it:

- T: So.. what about what about..this...these two people? The guy and the girl being friends together..all their[lives]
- Anurag: [I don't understand] how she could be change clothes..How do you slip clean clothes underneath your old clothes?
- Ashok: Yeah that doesn't make sense. I can try ***
- T: So they're sleeping in the same bed with a b[owl of water]
- Anurag: [Bowl of water]
- T: in the middle of them
- Ashok: Why? Why.. that just shows that..somehow there was something...that both of them knew that the other one was the girl the other one was a boy
- T: But he didn't have any idea that[was a girl]
- Ashok: [But why] was the bowl between them? *** They should have slept together, I mean, if two girls are sleeping in the same bed they wouldn't have a bowl of [water]
- Anurag: [Yeah but] they would sleep separately

- Ashok: Yeah they would but they wouldn't have a bowl of water
 Aisha: He is upset [about the bowl]
 T: [That seems]..yeah that's..that's one of the interesting things in the story, yes so he didn't know that was a girl but then [wh]
 Ashok: [He] still had the bowl

The group presentations of the Indians in both the AIS and the MS displayed frequent occurrences of interruptions and overlaps as well. The AIS was reading "The Brahman and the Ghost," an Indian folktale, and the Indian students were asked to shed light on the cultural aspects in the folktale. It was difficult even for me to follow the presentation, because they all talked at the same time and overlapped with each other constantly:

Anurag and Vivek are trying to agree on the kind of tree mentioned in the story. Vivek comments the bride and groom don't see each other until a few days before the wedding; T asks about arranged marriages. Vivek takes over. Ashok and Vivek talk over each other. Ashok talks about the dancing. Maria and Aisha ask questions. T asks a question. Vivek responds, Anurag and Vivek talk over. Aisha asks about getting married in church, Ashok addresses this. Anurag starts additional explanation on his own, and once again the talk over begins among the three. Vivek talks about the servants while Ashok and Anurag provide additional information simultaneously. Vivek takes over and comments on servants. Aisha asks if they stay at people's homes or not, Vivek and Anurag respond. They talk about pilgrimage and Ashok elaborates on the description. Anurag talks over but Ashok raises his voice to continue. Vivek says he is stuck when it comes to analysis; Ashok overlaps to express his concern.

The same trend was seen in the presentation of the Indian students in the MS in which the two Indian men, Shah and Nihir, constantly interrupted and overlapped with each other while the Indian woman, Brenda, remained quiet mostly and didn't interrupt her friends. Karen indicated later that the two men kept interrupting and talking over each other, and it was really difficult to follow their presentation. She thought that the rest of the class was mainly surprised, but also confused and frustrated, because they couldn't follow what the Indians were saying. Karen said some of the students commented on this difficulty after wards. In a classroom discussion about India, the two Indian men, again, overlapped with each other and

dominated the discussion even though the instructor asked all three of them for feedback on Indian culture and Gandhi:

- T: Can maybe, can some of you guys like Brenda and Shah and Nihir especially explain ahm what Ghandhi's role in India was? (Silence in class) Any of you and I ahm and I am pointing to you guys because obviously you're from India. So we're considering you cultural experts.
- Shah: Ghandi was like..he was known as the father of nation, he was given a title Mahatma[the]
- Nihir: [Great soul]
- Shah: That means great soul..because he was a main leader for the India indepenence movement
- Nihir: And it was not just that he.. wanted Indians to get freedom, he wanted all the religions in the India to get freedom from the British people
- T: From the British right?
- Shah: [Yeah]
- Nihir: [It was] not just a *** for Hindu or Indians it was just for everybody, Persians , [Jews]
- T: So I think we need to back up a couple of steps. Some people might not know that India was ruled by the British. So when to when do you guys know?
- Nihir: Ahmm 15th and from later 16th century
- T: From late 16th century on to
- Nihir: [1947]
- Shah: 19[47]
- T: Oh okay (Writes on the board) 16th century.

Another interesting aspect of Indians in conversation was their readiness to start a debate or an argument with their interlocutors. They all seemed very eager to make a point and prove it until everyone was convinced. During the classroom discussion of the Iranian folktale "Cutie Cousin Cockroach," the AIS students expressed curiosity about the elaborate dressing of the cockroach, the main female character of the story. When I asked them if they really thought this was true, hoping they weren't taking things too literally, Anurag said "I hope not" and switched the discussion topic to the father of the cockroach and his behavior towards his daughter. Ashok interrupted him to express his idea. Aisha took a brief turn to clarify that if the cockroach had a brother, he would take care of her. Anurag started a

discussion with Aisha at this point and they went back and forth until Ashok interrupted them for a comment. I interrupted this discussion to ask them why they thought the character was a cockroach, which triggered some disagreement among Aisha, Anurag, and Ashok, and caused a mild argument between Ashok and Anurag who couldn't reach an agreement about whether cockroaches are brown or black in color.

Backchanneling in individual conferences

Overlapping in conversations was not unique to classroom discussions; the Indian men carried this behavior to the teacher-student conferences when they were supposed to talk to the teacher about their drafts and get ideas about how to improve them for the final draft. Their talk-overs came in two forms: 1) Verbal and nonverbal backchanneling (“OK,” “no problem,” “I see”) to show understanding of teacher’s points about the problems in their drafts; and 2) Interruptions to double-check their understanding of the teacher’s comments. They used both verbal and nonverbal backchanneling to indicate that they were following and understanding the instructor’s comments on their drafts. Ashok nodded constantly and dramatically during his conference to show his grasp of the suggestions. Vivek, on the other hand, used more verbal backchanneling structures, such as “OK” and “No problem” to assure the teacher of his understanding of her comments.

Indian men interrupted, overlapped, and backchanneled in order to double-check and prove their understanding of the problems in their papers. They repeated or paraphrased the statements made by the instructor to make sure they got her point right. This may be a reflection of their worries about grades. They were the most concerned group when it came to getting high grades, so they paid attention to the instructors’ suggestions. However, they did

not always listen to everything the teacher said; they often appeared more interested in explaining to the teacher what they were doing or saying in the essay or what they thought she wanted them to do with the assignment in order to make sure they were on the right track. My first individual conference with Vivek provides a good example of this pattern:

T overlaps to say “well”. Vivek continues with his comments about the differences. T says it has difference and continues to talk about what is important in the story...Vivek interrupts and says yes and tells why he was confused. Vivek asks about the topic restrictions in the essay. T shakes her head. Vivek stops and T explains that he can talk about festivals in that culture. Vivek interrupts and describes the tradition again. Vivek tells about the sources he recalled. Vivek talks about how he can elaborate on this festival.

For the second essay, I had another set of individual conferences with the students.

During our individual conference, Vivek did most of the talking interrupting me at times to explain what he was planning to do, what he thought the assignment asked him to accomplish. Therefore, it took me a long time to finally get my main point to him that he needed to change his folktale for the second essay:

T: But what does that say about the culture? That men and women love each other in Japan?

Vivek: It does not directly reflect the [culture]

T: Aa-hmm, so that’s my major con[cern] because when you look at..that’s the thing..you should read a text and that text should tell you something about the people or the way of life, the way of living in that context it was written in.

Vivek: [Okay] Okay

T: If it’s just like a legend [..]about a festival

Vivek: [Yeah] Okay

T: Then you cannot necessarily connect [the text to the context]

Vivek: [Yeah that is..that’s what] because of..when I went through and I tried to elaborate things, then I found that actually it’s on festival but does not elaborate anything context (T nods) to the folktale what I’m writing. (T nods) It just reflects that okay from the folktale I chose I got to know of festival on which I’m writing (T nods) but it does not reflect [in context] to..

T: [Yeah]

Vivek: in context..in context with it that I’m writing on a princess or something related to that.

T: So that’s..that’s on..that would be my only concern, and that’s..that’s a big one

- [because this is what the story is about]
- Vivek: [Okey so what would be] the solution for that?
- T: You need to find either a folktale or you need to find some cultural points in the folktale..that give you an idea about what this country is all about or a c.. certain aspect of Japanese [culture]
- Vivek: [Okay]
- T: because if it just tells you the history of a festival..then..when you say something, okay maybe you can say..[ahmm] (scratches her arm)
- Vivek: [Yeah] that's what because I was trying to elaborate on things, then I found that I can't ahm take out points.. and elaborate and then my way because it is..I'm writing on a festival so I just take out the points from the textbook and put it in the..essay because I can change those words because they're just simple words like on this day this is celebrated
- T: Yeah
- Vivek: I can write it in my [way] that
- T: [Exactly]
- Vivek: that means you can't analyze it completely
- T: The thing is there is nothing to be analyzed about a...let's say about a..celebration because it's celebrated on a certain [day because of this reason]
- Vivek: [Yeah but]
- T: [and that's what happened]
- Vivek: [those are all facts] which I will [use]
- T: [Exactly]
- Vivek: directly from the text and just put them in
- T: So facts are not really..there is nothing to analyze [cause] there's..that's a fact
- Vivek: [Yeah] Yeah
- T: this happens every year..on July 7th
- Vivek: Okay
- T: Ahmm so that'll be..ahm my concern about [what] you're saying
- Vivek: [Okay] then you prefer that I should change my folktale?
- T: It should be good for you so you can actually write a Text-in-Context essay
- Vivek: Okay

After our meeting, I was surprised, dizzy, and slightly amused with the way our conversation had progressed. I thought I should have had more turns talking and felt that I should have explained to him the problems in greater detail, but I decided to let him work on his essay more and send me an e-mail message when he felt like getting more feedback from me, which he did the next day. Similar to Vivek, Anurag also interrupted and overlapped during his conferences, mostly to ask questions of clarification and express difficulty with the

assignment. When we met for conferences for the first essay, the Textual Analysis Essay, he overlapped and asked many questions:

T explains she was laughing at a part in his essay. Anurag smiles and comments on the weirdness of sample essays. T asks “really?” Anurag refers to the Hansel and Gretel and food chain connection. T sarcastically says that is why they are interesting. Anurag and T overlap. Anurag gets floor and explains that the meaning is hard to get. Anurag and T overlap again. Anurag gets floor again and explains his confusion while T nods. T says this essay is his interpretation. Anurag asks if it really is. T starts to explain, but Anurag interrupts and asks a question about the Turkish folktale. T nods and laughs. Anurag says it is worst. T laughs and looks down at his essay.

His interruptions and overlaps to express difficulty with assignment and defend his work recurred in our second individual conference for the Intercultural Textual Analysis Essay. He used backchannel cues very frequently and often interrupted to ask for clarification or change the topic of conversation:

Anurag: So if I were doing the *** text with this, do I need more sources and everything?
 T: How many sources do you have?
 Anurag: Ahmm (looks at his essay)
 T: You need like 2 or 3 books or articles from the library, [you need]
 Anurag: [This is]
 T: An interview [and an] internet source
 Anurag: [I need an interview?]
 T: Ha? You need an interview with somebody from Mexico.
 Anurag: I got this from the Encarta website (shows her a part of the essay), the internet article.
 T: So one internet source, 2 or three library [sources]
 Anurag: Yeah it’s like two internet
 T: And [internet]
 Anurag: [This could] actually qualify as two articles right?
 T: Ahmm [not that one]
 Anurag: [The one from the web] ohhh
 T: I mean you can use that one but you still need library sources
 Anurag: Okay
 T: Cause I don’t trust the internet sources that much
 Anurag: Not even New York Times? (Smiles)
 T: Well if it is a New York [Times] article that is [fine]
 Anurag: [Yeah]..[Yeah]
 T: but then it should also have page numbers if it is a New York Times articles, then that should be fine. Then you.. cite it as a New York Times[article]

- Anurag: [In fact] this is from an educational website
- T: That's fine then that could be your one internet [source]
- Anurag: [Yeah] okay (Brief silence)
- T: Then you still need more like 2 or 3 books or articles, more legitimate ones.
- Anurag: Yeah (signs) I don't know, I could probably find more sources, I have a couple of books that I haven't really gone through yet. (T backchannels) But the thing is if I keep like..expanding the sources and the information I'm getting, how do I, you know proportionally expand the textual evidence?
- T: Well the thing is you can...well you cannot expand the [text]
- Anurag: [Yeah]
- T: But your sources will..you don't have to use everything in the sources
- Anurag: Yeah
- T: But even if there is like one really good sentence in one of your sour[ces]
- Anurag: [Yeah]
- T: that you might want to quote or you might wanna paraphrase in your [essay]
- Anurag: [Yeah]
- T: Then you take it from your source even if it's like a short thing
- Anurag: Okay
- T: The reason why I want you to deal with the library sources more than the internet ones, they are more..I think they would be more accurate, more reliable sources. So you guys will get definitely [the]
- Anurag: [Yeah] the only problem was the library sources are the old ones like 1960's, 70's. This one was 96.
- T: No I am sure there are..Hmm maybe in the Latin American or[ahmm]
- Anurag: [The] problem is Mexico is, the most of the books, especially recent ones, most of them are in Spanish.
- T: Hmmm
- Anurag: So it limits the number of books
- T: Hmm that's true, so when you're doing your search..limit it to English, the sources in English so you don't get frustrated with that
- Anurag: Hmm
- T: And you can always recall books if they're out [so don't have to]
- Anurag: [So you think] this qualifies as a textual analysis essay?
- T: Which, this one?
- Anurag: Yeah.
- T: Well there isn't enough text to make it textual analysis.

When I questioned my Indian students about overlaps and interruptions in conversation and their awareness of it, they confirmed that they can talk and listen at the same time, and it is normal in social conversations in India to interrupt or overlap while talking to someone. They were aware of the fact that they were interrupting and overlapping with not only fellow

Indians, but also with other students in the class and the instructor. However, when I asked them if this a cultural pattern in Indian schools, they said no. Apparently, the interaction in classes in India is very different from the classes in the United States. Ashok indicated that in India they weren't allowed to talk in class, and when he did talk in class he got into trouble. Teachers think they are disrespectful if they talked in class. Then, he "came here and everyone is talking in class, so [he] started to do that" and wasn't considered a trouble-maker as he would have been if he were in India.

Shah also highlighted this by referring to his talkativeness in class: "I was like that in India, too, but I was always in trouble. I can't sit in class. When I don't get a point, even if I get a point just to double-check, I ask question." He mentioned that one of his teachers asked to see him after class and told him he was confusing the rest of the students, so he shouldn't ask questions. Indian students believe that it is the instructors and the informal atmosphere of the American classroom that makes them so active; they enjoy this environment and prefer it over the stricter pattern in India. They bring their natural and social way of interaction, which involves overlaps and interruptions, to the American classroom that is informal, relaxed, and friendlier.

Contributions & disadvantages to class interaction

The interaction patterns of Indian students were mostly an advantage to classroom interaction. Having Indian students in class made the class environment more pleasant, because they were usually the most talkative and comfortable students in the classroom, and in some cases, this reflected on to the other students. During whole group discussions and lectures, the teachers

could count on them to respond and make comments when no one else was willing to express an opinion, and they did a good job in continuing the discussions and leading group tasks.

However, their talkativeness and activeness sometimes caused challenges for the teachers, because Indian men got carried away with conversations among themselves very easily instead of listening to other students or the teacher. They were always busy trying to explain themselves to whomever was sitting next to them when the teacher was giving turns to other students. This caused some chaos in the classroom from time to time and made it difficult for the teachers to control the direction of interaction. Both Karen and I had strategies in dealing with these situations depending on the context of the disruption. One strategy that I used, especially with Ashok, was to respond to him jokingly but firmly, stopping him very directly when he got out of control:

Anurag: Are you looking more at presentation style or the actual content?

T: (Overlaps) The content is very important. I don't ...you know chicken dance again, chicken dance, moving around talking to audience, but there is no content

Ashok: (Stands up) Can we... (Stands in front of class)

T: (Interrupts) We have to talk about this. (To Ashok) Sit down.

Ashok: move like this? (Starts walking in front of the class like a chicken)

T: (Gently pushes him into his seat)

Ashok: (Smiles and sits down. A noise comes from his chair) What?

Ss: (Giggle)

Sometimes a mild punishment in the form of a joke was necessary. For example, while I was trying to get the students to sign up for individual presentations for the third unit, Ashok kept nominating his classmates for the presentation days without their consent as a joke, and he nominated people who were absent in class. I joked back once, but later it became disruptive to the process. I had to deal with the confusion and protests of the other students while at the same time trying to get the task done as soon as I could. At one point, I

gave him a mild and joking, punishment and a semi-serious threat that stopped his interference with others' sign up:

T: So for next Tuesday...Ahmm

Ashok: PJ

T: Okay we'll put PJ down

Ss: (Laugh)

T: They're not here, too bad. Okay..I'll tell him he is presenting on Tuesday. So Thursday the one after that one?

Ashok: (Raises his hand) ***

T: Thursday the 25th. Aisha, you will do the Thursday the 25th, okay?

Aisha: Yeah

Ashok: Tuesday

Aisha: Thursday

T: No you're doing Tuesday.

Ashok: (His hand is still up) No I have an exam on Wednesday and I have another exam on Tuesday.

T: Well everybody has exams

Ashok: Noo I am [just

T: [Ohh you] you volunteered PJ, I am gonna put you down for Tuesday, definitely Ashok

Ss: (Laugh)

T: You're doing on Tuesday (Writes on her sign-up sheet)

Ashok: Nooo!

T: Yes

Ashok: Nooooo!.. Nooo!

Ss: (Laugh)

T: Aaa-ha

Ashok: No!

Ss: (Laugh)

T: Okay group work guys.. Everybody is signed up for a day?

After this I asked if everyone signed up for a day, and Ahmed said he didn't. Ashok started yelling, "Tuesday!Tuesday!Tuesday!" At that point, the other students started suggesting days for Ahmed to present thinking that this is a joking opportunity, and he got confused about the dates. I pointed my finger at Ashok, who kept making more suggestions, and said, "You! I'll move you up to Thursday!" which was coming up in a few days. The whole class laughed and he said, "No!" and stopped interfering with this discussions.

Sometimes a joking punishment wasn't enough to maintain the peaceful and quiet atmosphere needed at certain times in the classroom. I often had to tell Ashok and Anurag to respond one by one and asked them not to talk at the same time. When they repeated private conversation during lectures or while other students were talking, I had to put them on the spot and give a snap response to show that they were being disruptive:

- T: I wanna talk about those three readings that we started discussing last time.
(Ozzy changes his seat and sits close to Vivek)
- Vivek: (Asks him what it is about pointing to his new haircut. Ashok and Anurag start talking to each other. Vivek is talking to Ozzy.)
- T: Take out...If you guys have the questions that I gave you last time, take them out. And take out the notes you took in class. (Ashok turns to the back and makes an inaudible comment to his friends)
- Anurag: (Turns around and starts talking to Costas) OK one, two, three, what questions?
(Laughs and gestures to them like a maestro and starts looking in his bag)
- T: Aaghh (Brief silence in class while students look through their notes) Okay. So we will do a little bit more of (pulls her desk closer to the students) love, love stories today. We'll talk a little bit more of...we'll continue our discussion a little bit more today. (Anurag and Ashok start a discussion among themselves). And after that we'll talk about presentations. (Stops talking and looks at Anurag and Ashok)
- Ss: Sshhhh.
- T: (To the other students) I know, I'm like, hey I am tired . You guys.
- Anurag: (Stops talking and opens up his arm in an "I don't know" gesture)
- T: So we'll talk about your presentations and see how you can improve your presentations...

Karen had a similar experience in her group conference with Nihir who wouldn't stop expressing frustration about the essay assignment they were working on. Nihir got a snap response from Karen when he refused to listen and understand and kept on wasting the time of his group mate Akiko with his personal complaints:

T finishes commenting on Akiko's paper and moves on to Nihir's draft. T and Nihir talk about his topic and how it is similar to Akiko's paper. T reads from Nihir's essay comparing it to Akiko's essay. Nihir explains his focus and mentions Marxism. T comments on his knowledge on Marxism and tells him he should distinguish between philosophy and religion. T continues to read. Nihir interrupts her reading while she is commenting. T asks if she can continue to read, sounding a bit annoyed to be

interrupted. T tries to show him he is on the wrong path. Nihir keeps on explaining his point without waiting for her to finish reading. T says this is similar to Akiko's point and that they can help each other. T corrects his thesis and gives him Q's to think about Buddha. T asks where his thesis and Nihir tries to explain. T tells him what he needs to do and describes to him how to connect Buddhism to the story. Nihir asks how to connect one point to another. T says that he doesn't need to make that connection and that it's up to him. Nihir questions this suggestion expressing his frustration with having to write an 8-10 page essay. T interrupts him by exploding, "Nihir!!" Nihir stops complaining...T explains this isn't a paper about Buddhism; it's a paper about the story. T asks, "do you see what I mean?" Nihir confirms quietly and nods.

Another disadvantage, a more serious one, is the effect of their outspoken nature on other, quieter students. Some students didn't get a chance to respond due to the quick reactions of the Indian students. This probably made the other students passive, because they knew that they didn't have much pressure to comment on things; the Indians would say something. The others in class also didn't have to worry about leading the group work, because the Indians would be more than willing to be the leaders and spokespeople of the group. The activeness of the Indians may also have intimidated the quieter students, like the Chinese or Japanese students. They may have been discouraged because of the quick-thinking, fast-responding Indian men in class dominating the discussion. However, none of the students I interviewed expressed a dislike for the interaction patterns of the Indians, so I can't go beyond speculation about this issue.

Comparing Indian schools and American schools

I had interviews with three of the Indian students at the end of the semester after my taping was over. I talked to them about their life in India, the kinds of schools they went to, their perceptions about the American educational system, classrooms, and people. I am incorporating the information that I gathered from these interviews in various part of my

dissertation, but I want to provide some personal background information of the interviewed students and report what they revealed about schooling and teachers in India.

Ashok

Ashok was my student in the AIS of English 107 and starting on the first day, he was the center for fun and jokes for all of us. Sometimes I felt overwhelmed by his energy and activeness, but in general it was wonderful to have him in class. He never missed our class (the only student with no absences), even though he said he missed as many as he was allowed in all his other classes.

Ashok is from Delhi and his first language is Hindi. He went to a Christian Catholic school which was secular, but he was excused from religion classes and never had to study Catholicism. He finished high school in India and came directly to the U of A where he is planning on majoring in Business, Management Information Systems, or Accounting. He doesn't know if he is going back to India when he is done with his degree; he says it is up to his father and whether he needs him for his business.

As I mentioned earlier, he stated that classes were stricter in India, and the students weren't allowed to talk or ask questions. In class, he and his friends always talked to each other, and this got them into trouble all the time. Once they were suspended for 5 days, which turned into a Pepsi and pizza party outside of class making all other students envious. He refers to himself and his pals as "the trouble corner." In college, classes were too informal and relaxed and no one noticed his absence when he didn't attend class for six months. Ashok complained about the rigid system in India which doesn't allow them to use calculators, because "it is cheating". They had to "do everything by head, even finding square roots" when they took exams. For him, being in an American school is a good experience, because

he can express himself freely and isn't suspended for it. Ashok admits he adapted to this comfortable environment easily, but he can never put his legs up on tables or chairs and sit like that in the class; he says his legs "just won't go up."

Vivek

Vivek was also one of the four Indian male students in my AIS. He is from Gujarat, and his state language is Gujarati. He also speaks Hindi, the Indian national language, and English, their second official language. He is from a convent school where the classes are in English. It is important to note that students from Gujarati-medium high schools usually have difficulties in English-medium universities of India, because in high school they are denied the privilege of having access to English. Only the middle class, which Ramanathan (1999) calls the "inner circle of power and privilege" has easy access to English denying this opportunity to people from lower income families or lower castes. Vivek didn't seem to be deprived of English education, but his English wasn't as strong as that of Ashok or Anurag, and he needed more extra support on his writing than did these students.

He praised the American education system for being very interactive, which is something they don't experience in India. Vivek justifies the Indian system by stating that there are a minimum of "50-60 students in class and teacher can't interact with each person. Teacher just speaks herself. The ones who want to interact, do so but there is a limit due to class size." He complimented me for my friendly way of teaching which, he thought, made the students more involved in class work. Like, Ashok, he emphasized the sitting situation in class: "In India, we never put [our] leg up on a chair, or have a relaxed position. We're in perfectly strict position. We never call teachers by their name. We call you Betil, but it is never like that in India, we call them Miss or Ma'am, quite formal."

When asked to compare classroom participation in class in India to the United States, Vivek explained that it depends on the student:

[In India], if you ask, teacher responds, but you need to raise your hand. We put our hand up, but never start in between. Here it is very different. There it is very formal. After coming here the environment affects the behavior, some things you try to keep, some things you change. If all class is doing it one way, you don't want to go another way.

This is how he justified having a different behavior in an American classroom than he would have in India. Vivek expressed his satisfaction with the class and said he enjoyed doing the assignments because they were relevant to the essay. He also mentioned that it was a good opportunity for him to be able to e-mail me for questions or problems before class, which isn't a medium used in India to communicate with instructors. This is mainly because people don't have such easy access to computers or the Internet.

Vivek said he was shocked when he heard that they had to type all the assignments. He emphasized that India is a developing country, so there aren't many computers. However, these days they have some computer labs on campus but not like the ones at the University of Arizona. When I asked him in what ways he changed or refused to change after he came to the United States, he said,

I never used to party at the weekends, drinking, etc. People don't do that at this age; they do it when they are older. I am very limited for this. I am restricted to things like smoking and drinking. It's not good, but some people say once in a while what happened, but it always starts like that. Many people come like that. They say I will go to the United States, so I will forget about this and drink and be like that. That once in a while makes you sad and kills you. I have seen people doing it. Some cultural things I must have changed but not that. You try to get into the ways of the American culture; you don't want to be the dumb one.

Shah

Shah was one of the most colorful and interesting characters in Karen's MS. He was one of the four Indian students in her class, and was one of the most active students in class. Shah had taken the previous course in the international composition sequence with Karen, so he was familiar with the teaching style and personality of the instructor despite the fact that they had some conflicts at the beginning. Karen indicated that Shah constantly questioned her teaching style and she had to explain her teaching method choices to him. Finally, he understood and began to appreciate Karen's teaching style. He said that one of the reasons why he was so comfortable talking in class was the fact that he knew Karen from the previous semester.

Shah whose first language is Hindi went to English-medium schools where he always talked in big groups, like the morning assembly in the Catholic boarding school he attended, so he got used to public speaking. He attended college for one year in India and then came to the United States. He had nearly the same thing to say about the difference between high schools and universities in India as Ashok and Vivek: In high school, classes are stricter and students are dependent on the teacher. In college, students are left on their own. They don't need to submit assignments on a regular basis; they have final exams or final projects. He compares this pattern to his English 106 class for which they had to bring assignments all the time that made them "improve day by day." Shah thinks the instructors and schools in America are better than those in India, because "even if you go against teachers, they don't mind. In India, they take it personally. If you disagree with teacher, he thinks you are trying

to look smarter than him.” If students interrupt the teacher in class, this behavior can be perceived as a personal attack rather than confusion among students.

When I asked him why he was so talkative and comfortable in class, he explained that in his family they often had guests, so he interacted with different people: “They come to our house because we live in big city, they come for hospital. I took them out, I don’t mind. I was brought up that way, my mother sometimes had bad relationship with guests but said we have house so she was very kind and simple. I don’t agree with that. My mom said you have to be giving.” Because of his family, he learned to get along and interact with a variety of people, so he didn’t have difficulty adapting to a multi-cultural environment. He admitted that he felt closer to Mexican culture than to any other culture, because the people look similar and the food is similar, but he had nothing in common with the American culture because “they speak different English.”

Discussion

The Indian participants in these two sections were generally very active and responsive during class discussions, and were leaders in group work. Their competitive manner and concern with grades encouraged them to participate in class to show their preparedness. They also sought help from the teachers outside of class, paying frequent visits during office hours or having multiple individual conferences to improve their essays. Shah never missed an office hour with Karen, and he stayed for the entire time in her office unless another student showed up. Vivek always sent me multiple drafts of his essays to look at before he submitted his final draft. Anurag kept a close watch on his progress, often inquiring about my essay grading criteria with me.

All of the interviewed participants confirmed that in India, teachers are the authority in class and the students aren't really encouraged to ask questions. This seems to contradict their observed classroom behavior in this study. An Indian friend of mine interpreted this phenomenon as a reflection of the intense preparation they go through before coming to the United States. He emphasized that when Indian students know they are coming to America, they get instructed about the classroom practices and culture in the United States and come here prepared for the informal and discussion-oriented classrooms. This pattern is very striking and interesting. Indian students don't carry their cultural patterns of classroom interaction to the American class, but instead, they bring in the social pattern of interaction to their exchanges in an American classroom. Due to the extensive cultural adjustment preparations before coming to the United States, they arrive with the perception that classrooms are more informal, open, and friendly in America than those in India. Therefore, they leave behind the norms they were used to following in educational settings in India, and utilize the norms that underlie social interactions, which are the other set of rules that they are most familiar with.

The adjustment level and approaches of these students weren't exactly the same confirming that assimilation into the new culture is individualistic (Berry, 2003). Being well-adjusted in American culture is something that most Indian students may desire. Many of them plan to stay in the United States, so blending in may be crucial to avoid cultural conflicts and maintain mental health and comfort (Mehta, 1998; Farver, Narang, & Bakhtawar, 2002). Another interpretation for the better adjustment situation of the Indian when compared to some other international students can be that Indian students study English all their lives and consider themselves native speakers of English. Even if they aren't socially assimilated, their

English competence can enable them to succeed academically. Because they don't have serious language problems (despite self-consciousness with their accent, as Ashok and Shah mentioned), they survive in this English-speaking culture more easily than other students who have language problems, such as Asian students.

Asian Modesty and Respect

Students from different Asian countries varied in the way they participated in class and how they related to the teachers and other students. Also, most East Asian countries didn't have representation in this particular subject group, so my focus will be on the Japanese students from Japan (Akiko, Ayumi, Maki, and Tatsuki), and Chinese students from mainland China (Paige and Lee), Hong Kong (Adam, Rosy, and Jeanie), Taiwan (PJ), and Malaysia (Ted). I am including Ted in this group, because he identified himself as Chinese. Any cultural patterns suggested will be limited to my observations of the Asian participants in the two classes under examination, and these claims will be supported by the students' personal statements about their culture.

Distinguishing the Japanese and Chinese cultures

I am examining Japanese and Chinese students separately in this study instead of calling them Asian students and treating them as if they are the exact same culture. Even if the students from these cultures seem to have similar classroom interaction patterns, the social reasons behind their communicative choices are slightly different. Japan and China have influenced each other considerably due to their geographical closeness and shared history. Despite the fact that Japan "shares much with its Asian neighbors, it is actually quite separate,

as symbolically represented by its island status” (Donahue, 1998: p. 14). In recent history it has been identified as neither an eastern nor western country, but in its own independent category. The people of China and Japan are different from each other as well. Donahue (1998, pp. 16-17) reports the personal accounts of David Riggs who spent time in both cultures: “I sensed in the Japanese a certain inwardness, whereas the Chinese share more of their personal selves with others.” He suggests that it is more probable for a Chinese person to share pictures of her family without being asked than a Japanese person would. He thinks that it is because the Japanese “have developed behavioral patterns over many years to protect their individual privacy as compensation for the relative overcrowding.” He has observed that Japanese people tend to be more “controlled in how they interact with others outside of their immediate family or close friends...[and] tend to be quiet and less forthright with people who are on unfamiliar ground.” He compares this to the Chinese who are more vocal and boisterous. When he compares the classrooms in the two cultures, he emphasizes that it is much harder to get Japanese students to talk in class, which might be due to their “relative poorer command of English” when compared to the Chinese.

The Reserved Japanese

“In my country we should consider more about other people than we do ourselves. We sometimes feel shy to talk to other people, because we sometimes feel tired to care about others’ feelings.” (Ayumi)

An ancient Japanese proverb says, *deru kui wa utareru*, which means the nail that sticks out gets hammered down (Hayashi & Kurida, 1997). This is considerably different from the squeaky wheel gets the oil concept in America. Quietness and modesty are highly regarded as desirable qualities of a person (Hayashi & Kurida, 1997; Donahue, 1998); whereas sticking

out in public, talking longer and louder than others, and showing off are frowned upon. All four of the Japanese students in these classes seemed to be very quiet during whole group discussions. They preferred to be modest in their interaction, giving others an opportunity to speak first, and it was apparent that showing respect to the teacher and other classmates was very important to them. They sometimes appeared to be insecure about themselves and their language abilities, which may provide one explanation for their classroom interaction patterns.

Quiet public speakers and soft talkers

Japanese students didn't seem to like to have the spotlight in class; they were quiet during lectures and very soft-spoken if they ever offered a comment or answered a personally-directed question by the teacher. Ayumi, who had an American boyfriend and got to practice more English and had more American culture exposure, was the only one who asked questions in class from time to time. Even when she posed a question, she was very quiet and hard to hear. She was active and collaborative in small groups, but she didn't assume the group leader role at any point. Tatsuki and Akiko kept their gaze in their notebooks or on their desk most of the time and didn't ask questions of clarification or offer a comment about the readings unless they were personally selected by the instructors.

In-class interaction

In class, Japanese students were sometimes non-responsive even when the topic of discussion was relevant to their culture. For example, in the AIS, I was having a discussion about literary traditions and was trying to recall the name of a famous Japanese poetry style. Ashok and Anurag were trying to come up with guesses even though it wasn't from their culture;

whereas, the two Japanese students, Ayumi and Tatsuki, remained silent and didn't even try to guess. I didn't pick on them to ask what the name of this style was in order not to put them on the spot, because it was early on in the semester and I knew that it was normal for students, especially Japanese students, to feel uncomfortable and remain silent. However, my hope that they would get relaxed and contribute to discussions more as the semester progressed diminished slowly after the first couple of months with the class. In one of my earlier journal entries, I commented that the Japanese students were being very quiet and maybe I should consider calling on them just to hear their voices.

Even calling on didn't prove to be an effective tool in getting these students to respond. In the MS Karen assumed the role of a dentist while trying to get some response from Akiko. One day, when she was returning their assignments, she asked Akiko a question about a comment she made in her assignment, but she didn't respond; she remained silent. Shah diverted Karen's attention with a comment and Akiko got off the hook.

When the Japanese students talked, they were usually very soft spoken and quiet. For instance, when Ayumi or Tatsuki wanted to express their opinion or ask a question in class, which was rare, I always had to ask them to repeat it, and often times their voice got suppressed by the responses of the louder students in class, mainly the Indians or Middle Easterners. I felt guilty about not being able to hear and understand what my students were saying, and I felt frustrated thinking that I made them feel more insecure about their English than they might already feel by making them repeat the same thing several times. In the MS, Karen had the same difficulty with Akiko's comments:

Kevin: The wild flower gardens.They just raise the level of *** in the house besides **
 T: Very interesting. So what about in your..ahm like in Japan. Are there any traditions like folk traditions Akiko that you can think of?
 Akiko: (Looks at T. Doesn't respond)

- T: That came out of maybe ancient people's need to create? Can you think of any instruments, or anything like that? Or any kind of..performance?
- Akiko: Yeah.
- T: Yeah? (Brief silence)
- Akiko: Yeah, people make..ahm music...from..ahm animal's bone.
- T: (Doesn't understand) From what is it?
- Akiko: Animal's bone
- T: [(Doesn't understand, looks confused)]
- Akiko: Bone
- Shah: Animals' bone. Animal's bone.
- T: Animal bones! Okay, I am sorry.
- Akiko: And skin
- T: And skin? Interesting, is it like a drum?
- Akiko: (Nods) Yeah.
- T: Very interesting.

During another classroom discussion, Karen asked Akiko to shed light on the Japanese folktale "The Three Amulets" which was the reading of the day. Akiko responded very quietly, almost inaudibly. Karen couldn't hear so she asked her to speak up. Akiko repeated that this was an old story. Karen, hoping to get more information about Japanese culture in relation to the folktale, asked, "anything else?" However, Akiko didn't respond. She was quiet to the extent that she could be considered non-responsive.

During the individual presentations in the AIS, Tatsuki was very nervous and spoke mainly looking at his notes or the projector screen that displayed his Power Point Presentation. It was difficult to hear his voice, and despite the fact that some of the other students asked him to speak louder, we had a hard time hearing him even in our small classroom. Later on, when I asked him about presentations in our interview, he admitted that he didn't want to do his presentation and that he was very scared and nervous to talk in front of the whole class.

Small group interaction

Some students don't like public speeches and they try to avoid them as much as possible. I thought it might be more comfortable for them to work in small groups which are less formal and less intimidating than whole group discussions during lectures. However, the Japanese students were usually quiet in these groups; they kept their comments to themselves and let the others express their opinions instead. Akiko was one of these students who didn't contribute to or participate in the small group discussion she was part of. She often remained silent and seemed almost uninterested as this excerpt from her small group work with Nihir and Mark illustrates:

Nihir and Mark talking about the source they need to write a citation for. Nihir looks at it and then passes it to Mark. Akiko seems distant; takes a quick look at the source. Nihir and Mark discuss among themselves what the source is. Nihir is doing most of the talking. T comes and tells them to hurry up and choose an article to cite. T gives suggestions and asks questions for brainstorming. Nihir and Mark only now realize what the task is. T guides them through the style manual. Nihir asks Akiko if she wants to write because his writing is bad. Akiko nods. Nihir dictates the citation. When they report their citation, Nihir puts it on the board and Mark comments on it.

During one of the many group work activities in the AIS, Aisha (from Kuwait) tried repeatedly to get responses from Ted (from Malaysia) and Tatsuki who kept on repeating her questions and giving her very brief answers. Ozzy (from Indonesia) was more collaborative in this group and provided insightful comments about the folktale. The interesting aspect of this discussion was that the folktale of the day, "Faithful Even in Death" was from China, a culture closer to the culture of Japan and Malaysia than to Kuwait. Here is how the group work ended:

Aisha asks for comments from Ted and Tatsuki. Ted responds, Tatsuki nods and backchannels. Jiin (the Chinese graduate student who was the observer) comments on

the folktales. Aisha backchannels. Students are silent for a little while, and Aisha breaks the silence to ask a question to Jiin. Aisha asks for everyone's confirmation for the points they will report. Ted agrees verbally, Tatsuki nods. Ozzy and Aisha discuss a point briefly. Brief silence in the group.

It was hard to get Japanese students to contribute to the group discussion, but it was almost impossible to have them talk on behalf of the group as the spokesperson:

- T: So we'll move on to this group (points to Tatsuki's group). How about you first question, what was your first question? (Silence in the group) Tatsuki, you're the spokesperson of the group.
- Tatsuki: (Looks a little confused, looks down in his notebook)
- Aisha: Just read the question
- Ozzy: (Passes him their question)
- Tatsuki: (Looks at the notes)
- Aisha: Read it out loud.
- Tatsuki: Read it?
- Aisha: Yeah
- Tatsuki: Ohh (Reads the question with very low voice)
- Anurag: Tatsuki could you read it [louder?]
- T: Tatsuki, which one is the first question? Go ahead
- Ashok: Tatsuki are you talking about ***
- T: Is that the Chinese folktale that you guys are [doing?]
- Aisha: [No] we're doing Turkish.
- T: Ohhh you're doing the Turkish one as the first one
- Aisha: Yeah
- T: You're the lucky ones.
- Tatsuki: (Smiles and mumbles) Why?
- Maria: The extra credit one
- T: The extra credit one
- Ss: (Laugh)
- T: Okay, what did you guys think of the, the third story?
- Tatsuki: (Looking through his notes his head down)
- T: What does the lover complain about?
- Tatsuki: (Still looking down in his notes) Ahmm, the lover?
(The other groups members laugh)
- Tatsuki: (Mumbles a response reading from his notes) *** as much as the last time..
- T: As much as what?
- Tatsuki: As much as... as the..last time *** (Looks up)
- Ahmed: As much as the last time they met
- T: Ohh
- Aisha: (Takes over for the group) Like he had more feelings for her.. the first time he met and he even told her that.

This much pressure must have been very uncomfortable, even traumatizing, for Tatsuki who was nervous about public speaking. I didn't realize the level of his discomfort until I had a personal interview with him, in which he was surprisingly cheerful and talkative, but being asked questions and required to participate earlier on in his classroom involvement was probably disturbing for him.

Interaction in conferences

Having individual or small group conferences didn't change this behavior very much either. Unlike the Indian men, Japanese students preferred to listen to the teacher without interrupting or commenting on her suggestions. They didn't ask very many questions, except for what the illegible handwritten comments on their drafts said. In the AIS, I had two sets of individual conferences, and one set of group conferences with the students. The dynamics in the all-international group conferences were slightly different from those in the MS, but I will discuss the differences between these two classes later.

In her group conference, Akiko remained quiet occasionally backchanneling (“hmm,” “h-hm”) while Karen gave her suggestions. When Karen asked for clarifications or directions in the paper, Akiko gave very brief, quiet responses, which forced Karen to tell Akiko what she was doing in her paper to make sure she understands where the student was going with her thesis. As a response to this Akiko nodded or backchanneled quietly. This was similar to my conference patterns with Tatsuki who responded to my comments mainly with a short “Okay” and didn't overlap with me while I was talking about their essay drafts:

T: (Reads quickly from his essay) so it's like you're..you're relating the fact that if a woman has..doesn't have good education, she goes out and looks for somebody to marry.

Tatsuki: (Nods) Yes

- T: Instead of working
- Tatsuki: Yes
- T: But that doesn't necessarily, I mean it's little bit of a stretching of the meaning or interpretation that just because somebody is uneducated doesn't mean that she will go..and look for a husband or just because somebody has good education doesn't mean that [she'll be independent and]
- Tatsuki: [Haaaa] yeah
- T: She won't look for someone (Tatsuki nods). Cause, cause women *** actually you know that's some..one of the reasons why some women go to college is that they wanna find husbands (Coughs)
- Tatsuki: (Mumbles something in agreement)
- T: Education level..But I mean this is kind of relevant, I..I see you point (Tatsuki nods) But maybe if you can support it with some more examples from the story and form your sources cause these are like..this..this looks like you're..
- Tatsuki: Hmmm
- T: Giving all these examples or giving this explanation by yourself, so where's your support?...Right?
- Tatsuki: Yes
- T: Does that come over here? Is this the support for this one? (Points to his essay)
- Tatsuki: Ahmm (Silently looks at essay with hand on his chin)
- T: Cause if you're saying this, this is kind of like your personal opinion or your argument. But you need some sources to back this up.
- Tatsuki: And so..so I have to explain why..in this case..why the women ahmm...need to have more education
- T: Hh-hmm
- Tatsuki: Hmmm by themselves
- T: Hh-hmm (Silence)You need to start thinking about Turkish culture...ahmm by having the story as your starting point..What is the story telling you..about Turkish women? (Tatsuki nods)What is the story telling you about Turkish culture in general? (Tatsuki nods and hums) So you have all these ideas (coughs)...ahmm so (reads a sentence from his draft). You can say this. This is a good discussion point, but in our story we don't know the education level of these girls. (Tatsuki nods). So you cannot find a textual evidence so illustrate this point.

Tatsuki kept his head low and on his paper throughout almost the entire conference session nodding in agreement or understanding without eye contact with me. Even when he was asking questions or responding to my questions about his essay, often times he kept his gaze on his paper. This was clearly different from the conferences that I had with my Indian students which were more like casual conversations; the conferences with the Japanese students seemed more structured.

Modest but insecure

The Japanese students seemed to be uncomfortable and even quieter when it came to doing peer reviews. They didn't like criticizing the works of others and didn't offer any negative comments while making suggestions. However, the more important reason for their discomfort in peer review can be attributed to the fact that they didn't feel confident enough with their English skills to criticize someone else's work, though this pattern is not relegated only to Asian students. It was clear from the tapes that Asian students especially had the tendency to be quiet in peer revisions and group conferences, and to offer limited comments on their peers' papers, but this pattern could be seen in the interactions of several other participants as well (e.g., Elena from Mexico, Costas from Cyprus, and Darren who is Navajo).

The Japanese participants were very modest, especially about their English, writing skills, and in accepting compliments. This modesty sometimes came across as insecurity about themselves and their own abilities, like in the case of Ayumi and Maki as illustrated below with excerpts from my individual conferences with them. As it can be seen in the following conversation, Ayumi displays uncertainty about her essay and finds it hard to believe it is interesting:

T: So what do you think of the essay?

Ayumi: I think it's not that good.

T: Why not?

Ayumi: Because (points to her essay) my conclusion is too short and..ahmm they're not really..ahm..I mean they don't really conclude..the whole story the whole essay.

T: (Nods) Hmm

Ayumi: So..

(Brief silence)

Ayumi: Is that coherent? (smiles and shakes her head)

T: Ahm it's coherent. Let me give this to you, I would like you to go over this, ahmm.

(Brief Silence)

T: *** and ahm..prepare some questions for me

Ayumi: A-hm

T: I just need to go to the bathroom and come back (Gives her the essay)

Ayumi: Okay

T: Okay? Ahmm I'll be back in a couple of minutes

Ayumi: A-hm

(T leaves to go to the bathroom and Ayumi looks at T's comments on her draft)

...

(T comes back and they start talking about T's suggestions)

T: But I think this is a very interesting topic to focus on

Ayumi: (Nods) Really?

T: Because..I mean I like this proverb if a man relies on something he will be protected by it, it's the same theme. The amulets or for example the..evil eye in some cultures (Ayumi nods and backchannels).

Ayumi was very modest about her writing ability; she didn't think her essay was very good and seemed very surprised ("really?") when I told her the topic of her essay was interesting.

Maki showed the same disbelief in the value of her work by responding with the exact same question as Ayumi did and displayed modesty while accepting the teacher's compliments very humbly:

Maki:As you mention here... (points to a page in her draft)

T: (Reads the comment). This is the thing, through which elements or

Maki: Ohh

T: That's the only thing you'll have to add over here, okay?

Maki: Ohh okay (looks up)

T: (Joking tone) that's not that bad

Maki: (Chuckles) Really?

T: Yeah, no you're definitely on the right track (Maki smiles) Just you have to add some more clarifying points. Things are clear in your mind, you just have to make them clear in your writing too (Maki nods and hums) Okay?

Maki: Okay.

T: Cause your reader can't read your mind unfortunately

Maki: (Laughs) Okay

T: Okay?

Maki: Allright, okay.

Discussion

Some of the key aspects of Japanese culture identified as “interdependence (*amae*), respectfulness, . . . and back-channeling (*aizuchi*)” (Donahue, 1998: p. 126) were clearly seen in the interaction patterns of the Japanese participants. Their respect for their classmates was evident through the amount of talk they had in small group work and the difficulty they had in peer review. In small group work in class, they never dominated the conversation or took up too much time to express their opinion loudly, because “[Japanese people] should care about somebody else, like other people” as Ayumi puts it and “they don’t like the spotlight” as Tatsuki contends. Although the Japanese students confirmed that they feel more comfortable talking and being vocal in small group work, none of them seemed to assume the role of the leader or coordinator in the group. Ayumi explains in her questionnaire, “In my country [Japan] we should consider more about other people than we do ourselves. We sometimes feel shy to talk to other people, because we sometimes feel tired to care about others’ feelings.” This reflects the need to be humble in Japanese society “as one finds in an old *haiku* (a seventeen syllable poem containing a seasonal word): The heavier rice ears get, the lower they bow, or the boughs that bear most hang lowest” (Hayashi & Kurida, 1997: p. 62). Being humble and respectful is very traditional in the Japanese culture and it is considered a positive aspect of one’s character. The Japanese participants displayed their cultural perception of community into the classroom by thinking of others before themselves. As Tatsuki puts it, “Japan sense of identity is weak. Self versus group. Japanese people don’t want to stand out in the group in public. They don’t like the spotlight.” Despite the fact that she had been in the

United States for 8 months when I talked to her and had an American boyfriend to help her with her acculturation, Ayumi still believed that she should be modest and “not be selfish” in her social interactions or she would be conflicting with her desired self image.

Another cultural norm that was clearly seen in this study was the respect for the teacher and quiet participation in the Japanese classroom. All four students were quiet during whole group discussions, sometimes not even raising their head to look at the teacher or other students. Their conduct with their teachers during individual or group conferences and after-class consultations were extremely polite and respectful. They thanked the instructors sincerely and enthusiastically upon receiving an answer for a question or some help on their essays, and they never challenged a teacher’s comment or response during class or conferences.

This observation confirms the suggestions of the article “The Japanese Education System” which suggests that Japanese classrooms seem to reflect western classrooms as they were 30-40 years ago. Students sit in silence and listen to the teacher who lectures for most of the class period. Students don’t ask questions until after class, don’t interrupt the teachers, and don’t get involved in any discussion. The respect and importance given to the teachers is immense; teachers receive gifts from students just because they educate them and their recommendations about the children’s studies are taken very seriously by the parents and the students alike. Teachers often times become very close to their students (like a parent or a big sister/brother), and they know almost everything that is going on in the students’ lives. Teachers have a lot of credibility in and out of the classroom; the students don’t disrupt them in class and listen to their advice outside of class (available at <http://maljap.tripod.com/pkmj/id6.html>).

Masato Shinohara's (2001) personal experiences as a descendent of a Samurai family reveal that acquiring good manners was an important subject at school, and students stood up and bowed to the teacher when she entered the classroom. He elaborates on the teaching methods in Japanese schools:

The method of teaching at the faculties in social sciences was lecturing in general. Very few students asked questions, because there was a kind of a manner where lectures should not be interrupted by the questions. Some lectures were very interesting, but most of them were not. What is still common in the Japanese culture is to show enthusiasm in achieving something. This is trained time after time during the course of clearing the bars for higher education. This attitude is easily detected in the daily life in business as competitiveness, preciseness, dedication and hard working. On the other hand, what are not common among the Japanese are the skills to express themselves, to explain the situation, to organise cross-cultural collaboration etc. (available at <http://pws.prserv.net/shino/masato/work/japaneseeeducation.htm>).

Shinohara was a student in Japan a few decades ago, but the respectful behavior towards the teacher and quiet classroom behavior that are highlighted in his accounts still exists in today's Japanese classrooms. Japanese students, therefore, carry this classroom interaction behavior to their new educational setting.

The participants' backchanneling behavior during the conferences and prolonged silences in interactions are also significant characteristics of Japanese communication style:

Prolonged silence, in some situations, also appears to be more acceptable to the Japanese. If the other interactants in Japanese are silent, one may be silent as well. The vocalizing required from the listener need not be verbal. Thus the listener need not say anything substantive as long as he or she continues to show signs of involvement. This does not mean that a 'contentless' performance is desirable, but that vocalizations indicating involvement play a large role in Japanese conversations (Donahue, 1998: p. 148).

The listener is expected to not interrupt the speaker and to provide the speaker with verbal or nonverbal back channeling cues to show that she is still listening (e.g., in English these are *hmm, u-huh, really*). Another interactional pattern that revealed the collectivist nature of their traditional culture was the bashfulness of the Japanese students in working with people that

they weren't familiar with. Japanese people need to establish social relationship before engaging in cooperative tasks within a group (Donahue,1998); it is not common for the reserved Japanese to become close friends or reveal personal issues before they get to know someone well. Akiko stated in her questionnaire that she feels "shy and uncomfortable with strangers", which can be displayed in the earlier illustrations of her group work with Nihir and Mark.

Ayumi and Tatsuki displayed parallel behavior regarding this issue. Ayumi was very quiet and passive at the beginning of the semester; she was more sociable and outspoken in small group work, but she didn't feel comfortable enough to ask a question in class until after the first individual conference. After we met to talk about her essay, she started being more active and participated more willingly during the lectures. Tatsuki was extremely quiet in class. Despite my few attempts to get him to talk in class; he refused to take the spotlight and didn't voice his confusion or concern with the assignment and didn't provide comments about the readings. He took longer than Ayumi to warm up in class, but at the end of the semester, as I mentioned above, he and I had a very lively and long interview. However, all four students seemed reserved and controlled even at the end of the semester. One semester was apparently not a long enough time to establish a close relationship, but we could at least break the ice. I wish I had some more time to get to know these students, especially Maki who had to drop class because she lost her father and had to go to Japan for over a month.

The Respectful Chinese

“Chinese don’t want to show off and stand up and speak. They want to hide themselves”
(Rosy)

Like the Japanese participants, some of the Chinese students were the quietest members of these sections. Three interactional characteristics stood out among the Chinese participants: They were quiet in classroom discussions unless they had had extensive opportunity to speak English while growing up or during their residence in the United States; they paid extra attention to being modest and respectful to the teacher; and they used backchanneling cues extensively in conferences and small group work to highlight their attention and focus on the speaker.

Quiet in public, collaborative in small groups

The Chinese participants were soft-spoken as presenters when they had to talk in front of the whole class, and they were quiet in small group work unless they had attended American schools in their country or had been in the United States for an extensive period of time. The quietness of Asian students could be observed in the group presentations that Paige (China) and Jeanie (Hong Kong) did in the MS. At the beginning of their presentation, which was about Buddha, they didn’t look at anyone in the audience, and kept their eyes on their notes while talking. After a few minutes, Paige started to speak to the audience, while Jeanie’s gaze remained mainly on the teacher. This “temporary” quietness can be attributed to the fact that oral presentations and speaking in front of native speakers of English aren’t common practices in the Chinese education system. Students are usually the passive recipients of the information provided exclusively by the teacher (Su & Su, 1994; Hammond & Gao, 2002), and they don’t ask questions or challenge the teacher (Narayanan, 2002). However, their

moving from silent speakers to confident presenters even within the same presentation may be support for Liu (2001) interpretation of the Asian participants' silence in the content classrooms: Asian students have potential to speak up in class; they just open up gradually. They move from being silent observers to being more active participants with "environmental support, changing cultural perspectives, enhanced communicative competence, and increased self-confidence" (Liu, 2001: p. 178).

This kind of gradual participation occurred in the case of Adam. He started as a silent contributor to class work and became more active towards the end of the semester. His initial silence was observed in his group work with Maria and Ashok discussing some study questions about the folktale reading of the day. After the students got into groups of three or four, I announced that someone in the group had to take notes. Adam took out his notebook and assumed the role of the secretary immediately. Ashok and Maria discussed the questions about the readings I had given to them and Ashok dictated the answers to Adam who took notes silently. Maria started a conversation with the observer we had in class that day, but Ashok asked Maria to contribute to the group project.

The observer, who was a graduate student from China, helped them out with the reading text, the Chinese folktale, and Ashok said "Ohhhh" showing understanding of her explanations and pointed to Adam's notebook signaling him to write. Again, Ashok dictated and Adam wrote asking only one question of clarification and providing one comment about the reading. Adam's behavior could be interpreted as passive and non-responsive; however, knowing Adam well, I would consider this collaborative and modest. Adam may have been self-conscious about speaking up in the group, but he was at the same time cooperating with his group mates in one of many ways that he can contribute to the task. He was making notes

of the brainstormed ideas in order to prepare the group report they were responsible for presenting by the end of the activity.

Adam later on became one of the best peer editors in class, giving his friends insightful, confident, and invaluable comments about their writing in small groups during in-class peer review sessions as well as in group conferences with me. An excerpt from their group conference can be found in the comparison of the MS and AIS in Part 2 of this Chapter.

More time in America versus newcomer

Asian students' gradual integration and increased participation with the length of stay and improved confidence (Liu, 2001) can be seen in the classroom behavior of two of the Chinese students in the MS. The interactional comfort of Paige and Lee who had been in the United States for longer than a year seemed to be different from those who were newcomers. These differences may be attributed to social acculturation and more practice in English. Paige was born and raised in Hong Kong, and she came to the United States right after she graduated from high school. She is a transfer student at The University of Arizona and she has been in the United States for almost two years. She feels comfortable in the American classroom and has adapted to the different ways of interaction.

Lee was born in China but was raised in Thailand as a result of his father's business requirement. In Thailand, he attended American schools and was educated by American teachers. He didn't learn Thai very well, but he got accustomed to the American classroom patterns which he says are very different from those in China. Both Paige and Lee were more active and responsive than the other Chinese participants, especially when talking about their culture:

T asks how the musician in the documentary “The Bones” started playing the bones. Kevin comments. T confirms. T asks where the bones came from. Paige responds “China” and says they were Chinese bones. T asks “really?” and Paige confirms. T says it is interesting and mentions they were cow bones. T elaborates and asks Paige to talk about bones in China. Paige responds. T says it is interesting. Paige introduces a term. T asks what they call it. Lee attempts to explain and gives further information. T backchannels. Paige, Lee, and Kevin overlap. Kevin talks about spoons. T backchannels and says it is interesting for people to find ways of making music despite their poverty.

Lee compares himself to the other Chinese students by emphasizing his educational background in Thailand: “[Chinese students] don’t really talk, they are quiet. They aren’t active. Because I got American influence, I am not like that.” According to Lee the reason is simply because “Chinese people are raised that way.” Lee distinguishes himself from the other Chinese students. He feels that his background has given him the necessary preparation to participate in an American classroom, and, unlike most Asian students, he doesn’t feel as intimidated by the existence of native speakers in the MS.

The Chinese students that I interviewed discussed the differences between classrooms in their countries and in the United States, relating their interactional patterns to cultural norms and upbringing. Their discussions confirm some of the literature on Chinese and American classrooms. In a study comparing science education classroom practices in China and in the U.S, Su and Su (1994) observed and interviewed 41 visiting Chinese science instructors in the U.S during their one-year stay. The researchers investigated the perceptions of these teachers of the more individualistic and independent system in the U. S as compared to their collective, competitive, and teacher-centered system in China. The visiting scholars from China “were impressed by American students’ “boldness” and amazed to see American students raising questions freely and frequently in classes without their teachers’ formal permission and without standing up” (Su & Su, 1994: p. 265). They were also surprised by the informal,

smooth-flowing interaction and easy-going relationships between American students and teachers:

The informality of the American classroom makes it easy for students to participate in classroom discussions and activities, although it can reduce learning opportunities for some students. Students can come and go in classes, they can put their feet on the desks (this shocked the Chinese visiting scholars), they chew gum and some even eat and drink in classes, they kiss and hug their friends openly, they copy each other's notes and exercises, and they laugh and chat frequently with peers and teachers (Su & Su, 1994: p. 267).

Muehl and Muehl (1993) report their personal accounts as two American teachers in China teaching English to postgraduate students who are mostly teachers. In a comparison essay, one of their students, a postgraduate named Fan Rui, distinguishes between American and Chinese cultures:

Americans are more humorous than Chinese. Humour is one of the outstanding characteristics of Americans. They like to employ humour to face embarrassment, disappointment, and to enliven a serious atmosphere such as an important meeting, or a gathering of strangers. But Chinese are too formal in everything. This is mostly caused by the traditional Chinese education... Frankness is another major characteristic of Americans. Most Americans show their likes and dislikes, hatred and love, happiness and sorrow directly. They admit the mistakes they make immediately, if they know these, and show their success proudly. But this is not the case with Chinese. Chinese always prefer modesty, even though they make great achievements. Psychologically speaking, they are not so willing to admit the mistakes they make. Sometimes they even hate the man who points out these mistakes (Muehl & Muehl, 1993: p. 182).

Two of the Asian participants in Liu's (2001) study offered an interesting reason for being silent in class. These students suggested that asking very simple and basic questions in class was wasting class time. Therefore, they preferred to talk to the teacher and ask questions after class. They were surprised and annoyed to see Americans asking every question they had during class time taking up the teacher's lecture time. In our interview, Adam mentioned his dislike for this behavior: "they ask...I don't want to say stupid, but very simple questions.

They can just read it in the book.” However, some of the Asian participants in Liu’s research seemed to be taking advantage of the fact that Americans were active participants. They knew that one of the Americans would ask the question they had, so they wouldn’t have to lose face (*Mianze*) by forming a grammatically incorrect question with an accent.

Respectful and modest

Other distinctive characteristics of the Asian students were their respect for the teacher and their classmates, and their modesty. Their respect for the teacher was displayed in their interaction patterns. Unlike the Indians, Asian students didn’t interrupt the teacher or their classmates during class sessions or in conferences. In individual conferences they listened to the teacher carefully avoiding overlaps and waited for a clear pause in speech to ask questions. However, the Chinese students backchanneled constantly to let the teacher know they were following her advice and that they were paying attention.

In our individual conference, Adam backchanneled a lot, but never interrupted me while I was talking. Unlike my conversations with the Indian students, there were no overlaps or competition to win the floor when I talked to Adam. He listened, nodded, and asked questions when there was a pause in my speech, when I signaled a switch to new point, or when I asked him if he had any questions. This pattern remained consistent in the two individual conferences I had with him:

First individual conference:

T: (Looks through the draft) Let me see..Do you have any questions?

Adam: Ahm as you clarified..bad right?

T: Ahmm good and bad..are very interesting words

Adam: A-ham

T: Ahm..you can be..well if you talk about a good person...that person can be good in different ways, good is too general, you can say..has..is kind to other people.

Or..a good person is..can be kind to other people..or is helpful..

Adam: H-hm

T: to others. Ooor ahm is a good listener.. is ready to listen to his friends or her friends. All these things can be good (Adam nods)...but you need to be specific about good in what.

Adam: (Nods) Okay

T: Jealousy is..why is it bad?

Adam: (Nods) Okay

T: When you say, when it gets you into trouble..it is another step forward so you don't have to say that because getting into trouble is bad any way.

Adam: Hh-hm

T: So that's already implied..Ahm...you can clarify trouble..what would it do to you? Will it get you in trouble with the..with the law? Is it gonna send you to jail?

Adam: A-hm

T: Or is it gonna be self-destructive? Ahmm..is it gonna ruin your relationships with others? Bad in what way?

Adam: H-hm

T: Cause what kind of trouble? That's what I wanted to say, specify that.

Adam: Okay

T: Hmm

Adam: Okay. (Brief silence)

T: Well, that's good, I mean, it looks..like..you..you have these examples in mind. I just wa.. wished I could see like the essay format, but it seems to be on the right track and you will bring your written out essay to me on ahmm

Adam: Tu..ahm Tuesday

T: (Nods) Tuesday okay, so we will talk about..well I'll talk a little more about this in class on Tuesday .

Adam: Okay. So do..do we need to hand in the final draft on Tuesday

T: Ahmm we'll see what you have.

Second individual conference:

T: You have to give specific examples from the story (writes on his essay)

Adam: A-hm

T: From the story, and then you have to say..you have to explain what this means about the culture

Adam: Okay

T: What you think it means about the culture. And then you need to refer to your sources and say..you know.. in India traditionally the relationships between mothers and sons are like this.

Adam: Okay

T: That is coming from your outside sources (Adam nods) supporting the illustrations that you gave (Adam nods) and then the point that you made. So this is support for both of those things.

Adam: A-hm

T: Okay?

Adam: Yeah

T: But if you're not specific, if you're not direct..then it can be..it may not give the desired effect

Adam: Okay

(Brief silence)

T: What else? Anything else?

Adam: (Shakes his head)

The behavior of the Chinese students while interacting individually with the teacher can be ascribed to their cultural and educational background. In our interview, Adam highlighted this connection: "In Hong Kong whatever teacher say is right. No questioning the teacher." Similarly, Lee commented in his interview that Chinese people are raised not to challenge the teacher or ask questions in the class. He indicated that it is not common to "give own opinion or argue with teacher." Therefore, even in individual conferences they remained quiet out of respect to the teacher and to her suggestions about their work. In her questionnaire response, Rosy emphasized the effect of her cultural background on her classroom interaction: "Chinese thought: Respect. Teacher always right. If you have questions, ask personally or ask after class. Never interrupt or make teacher embarrassing." Jeanie asserted that her schooling and family upbringing in Hong Kong made her "not good at debating with others," which related to her group work and peer review attitudes.

In addition to showing respect for the opinion of others in their group, some Chinese students admitted that their comfort in small groups depended on their group mates. In peer review groups, Chinese students had a harder time than the other students in the classroom. In the questionnaires, almost all of the students who responded "strongly agree" or "agree" to the statement, "The cultural norms I grew up with prevent me from being critical of my classmates' work in peer revision" were Chinese. Ted and Dan's group conference illustrates this timidity in criticizing the work of their peers:

T: (Points to a chair) Come, sit. (Students sit)
 T: (Gives them a handout and gives Dan his essay draft with her comments on it)
 T: (Looks at students) Soo?
 Ss: (Silence)
 T: (To Dan) Did you read Ted's essay?
 Dan: Yeah.
 T: (To Ted) Did you read Dan's essay?
 Ted: (Nods)
 T: We'll grill the essays. Who wants to go first?
 Dan: Ted's essay is good, it's great.
 T: Come on that's not fun (laughs).
 Ss: (Smile)
 T: (To Ted) What did you think of Dan's organization and content?
 Ted: OK. (Pauses) Very nice.
 (Brief silence)
 T: (To Ted) Did you like his points?
 Ted: (Silent)
 T: Did you find them?
 Ted: (Silent, looking at essay)
 T: Sometimes I couldn't find them.
 (Brief silence)
 T: (To Ted) What do you think?
 Ted: OK. Better than me.

Ted was very brief with his comments about Dan's paper, and Dan commented that Ted's essay was great without making any suggestions. When they criticized each other's work, their statements were short and complimentary, rather than elaborate and critical. The Chinese group was uncomfortable criticizing the work of others because it is not part of their cultural or educational background. The students believe that the teacher is the only one who can criticize the work of the students and it is unusual and inappropriate for students to criticize each others' works. Adam elaborated on this in our interview:

Chinese students aren't comfortable criticizing other students' essays. It is rude. Criticizing brings a lot of shame. In Hong Kong, I never criticized others so I don't know. Criticism from teacher is OK, that is what happens in Hong Kong. You don't criticize even your classmates.

Clearly, these students were extremely uncomfortable about peer revision, because criticizing other students' work is culturally inappropriate and academically unfamiliar to them. The dialectic and traditional Chinese education system doesn't encourage collaboration and creativity; rather, it fosters competition and stress (Hammond & Gao, 2002). Coming from classrooms where discussion is discouraged and attentive silence is required in order not to disturb other students' learning, Chinese students don't find many opportunities to develop critical thinking skills or think for themselves (Su & Su, 1994, p. 260). Besides, as illustrated by the behavior of the Chinese students in these two classes, it is not expected to receive feedback from peers with whom they are competing. The pattern in the Chinese classrooms is changing, and some instructors are beginning to adopt communicative teaching methods. However, peer revision and peer feedback are still unfamiliar concepts for Chinese students.

Discussion

The Chinese philosophy of education has been deeply influenced by Confucianism which marked significant differences between Eastern and Western thinking styles. A Confucian social system "emphasizes social order through the maintenance of hierarchy in human relationships and conformity to prescribed social norms and rules of conduct. Confucian psychology focuses on dependency and interdependency of family, friends, and community" (Lu, 2002: p. 3). This belief was reflected in the Chinese education system in that dialectic learning, (i.e., authority-oriented traditional learning) became the norm. Confucius didn't believe in education for education's sake as "the motivation behind instruction. His aim was to provide, through education, the means for a student to become a *Jun Zi*—a superior person, a cultured man or a Confucian gentleman capable of sustaining dynamic dialogues between heaven and earth and among his fellow men" (Hammond & Gao, 2002: p. 230). Confucius

highlighted the “moral training of character and the restoration of the ancient rites” (Wong, 1998: p. 110) which are deeply rooted in East Asia despite its new recognition in the West.

Chinese philosophers were more interested in the practical aspects of life and knowledge than abstract thinking and spiritual beings that are more common in Western thinking. Academic thinking in Western cultures is logical and analytical; whereas, it is synthetic and dialectic in the Chinese culture. Most Western cultures are more individualistic, while Chinese culture is more communal (Wong, 1998: p. 108). The leaders or teachers were encouraged to develop strong social relationships with their students. However, during the Mao period (1949-1976) “Confucianism was considered inimical to Chinese minds and China’s social development. It was severely condemned in the official discourse and completely eliminated in the Chinese education system” (Lu, 2002: p. 3). However, this tradition still shows its influence in modern Chinese education system.

Hammond and Gao (2002) explain the quest for democracy in modern Chinese education referring to Zhang (1999):

While modern China has tried many times to become more democratic, the current Chinese educational system and management mechanism is a continuation of the model of the age of emperors. The reform in education has been left far behind the reform in economy; education is still at the stage of *chuandao* (knowledge carry), *shouye* (teaching for profession), and *jieshuo* (answering questions), meaning that it is still at the stage of accumulation, preservation, and transmission of knowledge (p. 232).

Instead of adopting a dialogic learning style which is “holistic, interactive, cooperative and diversified, emphasizing critical thinking, real time evaluation, hands-on experience, and overall educational quality,” a dialectic learning which is “fragmented, linear, competition-oriented, authority-oriented, authority-centered” (Hammond and Gao, 2002: p. 229) is the preferred style.

The Chinese students that I interviewed discussed the differences between classrooms in their countries and in the United States, relating their interactional patterns to cultural norms and upbringing. Chinese classrooms are traditionally teacher-oriented; students don't ask questions or work on collaborative tasks like small group or dyadic activities (Su & Su, 1994; Liu, 2001; Hammond and Gao, 2002; Narayanan, 2002). The teacher is seen as the authority figure that lectures for the most part and doesn't encourage students to ask questions or express their opinion, and the students are expected to stay quiet without asking questions or challenging the teacher (Su & Su, 1994; Narayanan, 2002). If the teacher provides too much freedom in class, students get puzzled and lost, and they may think that the teacher is lazy and unprepared to provide information; that is why Chinese teachers come to class with as much material and knowledge as they can to avoid criticism from students and the administration (Muehl & Muehl, 1993; Su & Su, 1994).

Rosy and Adam's quietness in class and their interview discussions seem to confirm these observations. They consider silence a sign of respect for the teacher and they prefer not to bring shame to themselves by challenging that authority. Likewise, Jeanie refrains from debates and arguments because of her Chinese family education. These students seemed to be bringing the traditional Chinese classroom interaction patterns to the American classroom. The roots of these traditions seem to be very deep and personal, but there is always the possibility that their ways of relating to the teacher and participating in class may change over time, like it did in the case of Paige and Lee. Personality factors, command of English, and the social situation may have an influence on these changes as well.

Chinese immigrants and students in the United States have some sociocultural difficulties due to significant differences between their cultures. Especially those who were

born in China have a hard time making friends with Americans at school, because they find their culture “superficial, cold, and insensitive” (Weisman, Snadomsky, & Gannon, 1972). They identify more with the Eastern cultures than the Western cultures or American culture even if they have lived in the United States for a considerable amount of time. Some researchers and authors (Weisman, Snadomsky, & Gannon, 1972; Buenker & Ratner, 1992; Cheng, 2001) also report that Chinese immigrants and students attending American schools have suffered from discrimination during their acculturation process, especially the foreign born Chinese who came to the United States at a later age as an immigrant or to study. The difficulties mentioned by Adam and Rosy in terms of talking to and getting along with Americans confirm the findings of studies investigating the acculturation processes of Chinese people in the United States. Paige and Lee’s statements about feeling well-adjusted and happy in the American society contradict these reports, but confirm Liu’s (2001) interpretations about Asian students moving from silent observation mode to active participation mode when they undergo cultural change, improve their communicative competence in English, and develop confidence in interacting with native speakers.

Students from cultural groups that are significantly different from the American culture have a hard time getting used being in the American culture and classrooms. One such group is the Middle Easterners, especially those who were in the United States through the tragedies of September 11th. In these two classrooms, I observed six Middle Eastern students, three of whom expressed more serious social and cultural conflicts than I could have imagined.

The Conflicting Middle Easterner

“When I am with girls who are more open than I am I tend to back off a bit” (Ahmed)

Students from the Middle East bring different cultural patterns with them depending on their educational setting in their countries. The striking patterns I observed were more pertinent to cultural perspective and social implications of religious practices than classroom interaction patterns. I observed four Middle Eastern students in the two classes: In my AIS, there was Nadiah (United Arab Emirates), Aisha (Kuwait), Ahmed (Kuwait), and Aziz (Jordan); in the MS Karen had Nasreen (Iran) and Ali (Kuwait). However, Ali didn't attend classes regularly and Aziz dropped the class towards the end of the semester due to personal reasons, so I couldn't collect enough data to form a solid impression of these two students. In this section, I will first talk about the differences among Middle Eastern women comparing the classroom and conference interaction behavior of Nadiah and Aisha in the AIS to that of Nasreen in the MS. Then, I will discuss the culture, religion and gender related issues evident in the classroom comments, interview, and questionnaire responses of these students.

Outspoken in class

A consistent interaction pattern among the Middle Easterners in the AIS was that they were active participants in class discussions; they responded to teacher's questions, expressed their opinion, disagreed comfortably with others, and displayed cooperation and collaboration in group work. Aisha and Nadiah, for example, were two of the main participants in my class. Whenever I planned a classroom discussion or the stories we read or on the essay assignments, I could count on Aisha to contribute interesting comments about the readings and ask intelligent questions about the assignments. She was one of the most active audience

members during the presentation of the Indian men; she asked challenging questions about Indian culture sometimes embarrassing even the comfortable Indians:

The Indian students finish their presentation. T asks if there are any questions from class. Dan asks about the dot on the forehead and whether it signifies virginity. Anurag refutes the connection. Dan explains about Vietnamese ways of finding out about virginity. Aisha asks, “What happens if a girl is not a virgin and getting married?”. Giggling from class. T exclaims in laughter. Ann asks a question about Taj Mahal and changes the topic. Aisha’s question is not answered. The Indians tell the story of the building and how some parts are restricted to visit. Aisha asks about the reasons for bride burning. Anurag rejects the existence of this practice today. T asks a question about the *hijrahs*; she tries to remember their names. The three Indians overlap to explain this topic. Maria and Aisha show interest and ask more questions. Vivek explains that they are considered unlucky and scary; they put curses on people. Ozzy asks about burning the body of dead people, says the practice in Indonesia is like that taken after India. Vivek and Anurag overlap to answer. Aisha asks if boys are more important in India; they confirm this. T asks if mothers are attached to their sons. They say it’s changing. Aisha asks about respect towards women.

Aisha was the boldest of all the female students, and she asked very challenging and controversial questions relevant to Indian culture. She was very active and engaging in other classroom discussions and expressed her opinion whenever she felt like it.

Nadihah who was older and more conservative than Aisha, was also very talkative in class, especially in small group work. She gave insightful comments and responses to her group mates while at the same time listening and responding to her friends’ perspective. In our group conference for the second essay, she worked with Anurag and Elena and gave them helpful and honest comments about their paper. Nadihah provided good comments and kept us all on task while we were talking about Anurag’s essay:

- T: (To Anurag) We would like to grill you first and then you’ll get a chance to talk (Elena laughs)
- Nadihah: Ahmm probably like he has a good summary, though it’s like short but you can tell what he’s going to write about
- T: I have the exact same [comment] (Nadihah laughs)
- Anurag: [What] you say..short summary?

T: More summary I said.
 Anurag: But last time you said it was a long summary
 T: Now it's short summary (Elena laughs. Anurag smiles) [Anurag, you're gonna kill me right?]
 Nadiah: [Though** but I said good] but you still have to write more
 Anurag: Yeah okay
 Nadiah: [Then he has thesis]
 T: [That's my fault]
 Nadiah: (To Anurag) Did you see that about the thesis?
 Anurag: Yeah
 Nadiah: Ahmm he has points... I can tell from here...at third page here when you say the treatment of the..Then he supported by giving some..you know information from the sources..Then you've got another point (reads it)
 Anurag: Yeah
 T: Hmm yeah that was good point [I put a check mark]
 Nadiah: [Yeah]
 (Brief silence while they all look at the essay. T smiles)
 Nadiah: Ahmm what else? Yeah [it's a good[conclusion.
 Anurag: [***]
 Nadiah: I don't know like well organized..I think so. (To T) What do you think?
 T: You don't like the conclusion?
 Nadiah: I like it, it's well organized I guess.
 (Brief silence as T looks at the conclusion)
 T: (Reads from conclusion joking) Mexican society might just find clouds in the shape of sandals for *** of Gods ah hah hah hah
 Anurag: (Laughs)
 Nadiah: But he is missing the interview right?
 T: Yeah
 Anurag: Ah yeah I can..I'll do the interview later so I'd put it in [***]
 T: [Yeah]
 Anurag: I wanna make changes and have different drafts you know send them
 T: (Nods) Elena what did you think?

Nadiah was very clear about her points in her peer review, and Anurag, despite being a native speaker of English, listened and respected her suggestions. As was his pattern, Anurag tended to interrupt these comments to defend his draft. My post-conference notes about this group read:

This was a very fun and easy group for me to have for conferences. The students were very active and talkative, and they commented on each other's papers seriously without feeling self-conscious. It seems like teacher attitude determines the comfort of Middle Easterners. It seems to me that because Nadiah had a good rapport with me

and wasn't feeling threatened in class (because they were all international students), she became more receptive and offered more support herself without fearing that she would offend someone.

Both Aisha and Nadiyah wore the "hijab," the head scarf that most Muslim women wear in Islamic cultures, and they had distinguishing Middle Eastern features. The difference in their appearance is striking for many people, as they confirmed during their interviews. Nadiyah complained that people (mostly Americans, according to her) believe that just because she wears a scarf, she can't think or she doesn't have any ideas, but that isn't true. Nadiyah refers to her different look to identify herself when contacting her professors. When she sends them an e-mail she says, "I am the girl with the black scarf," and they understand who the message is from.

Nasreen was the only female Middle Easterner in the MS. She, however, displayed a completely different classroom interaction behavior from Aisha and Nadiyah. She was quiet and didn't participate in classroom discussions unless the teacher addressed her personally. She offered brief comments (only when she was asked) when the topic of discussion was relevant to her cultural background. Even while commenting on issues so close to home, she was brief and quiet:

T asks what their reactions are to the Iranian folktale "Cutie Cousin Cockroach" and if they felt like they missed some points because they don't know Iranian culture. T says Nasreen will fill them in later; Nasreen smiles and looks down... T explains the social status of the mouse and asks rhetorical questions about the storyline (e.g. what does he do for his wife?). Paige offers some explanations referring to Chinese culture and traditions. T asks how marriages are in Iran. Nasreen responds briefly by giving an example. T asks for explanation and clarification. Nasreen explains. T elaborates on her answer for all the students and asks them to think of mourning and guilt. T asks another question about children singing and Nasreen elaborates. T presents her points of wonder. T and Nasreen exchange a short discussion about little girls' birthday party. T asks what the significance of the main character's being a cockroach is. Nasreen doesn't hear or doesn't understand, so she asks for repetition. T repeats her question. Other students laugh. Nasreen says she doesn't know and T asks the whole

class what they think and says she is really curious. T asks questions for brainstorming. Ss are quiet so T provides some insights herself. Nasreen comments that the cockroach isn't scary. T says she is scared. Students laugh.

Perspectives on marriage and relationships

One of the most significant cultural reflections that Middle Easterners displayed in class was their perspective on social issues, such as marriages, roles of men and women, and relationships. Most Middle Eastern countries are male-dominated communities and the gender roles for men and women are very clearly determined (Sanders, 1987; Ghaffarian, 1987; Abu-Ali, 1999), owing partly to religion and partly to a long history of traditions. Today some of these countries are becoming more westernized while trying to keep their Muslim essence, and women are gaining more respect and rights.

The Middle Easterner students that I observed had strong ideas about marriages and relationships, which were revealed by their comments in the classroom. When we were talking about the fairy tale "Cinderella," Dan brought up the issue of a poor woman marrying a rich man and whether that was realistic or not. Ahmed responded to this point very strongly, arguing that such an arrangement doesn't and shouldn't happen in real life, and he got strong reactions from his classmates.

T: (Rephrases and praises Dan's point about marriage) In a lot of cultures it is expected for the two families..ot the two parties getting married to be of equal status socioeconomically ahmm education wise[all those things]

Ahmed: [Actually] actually that should apply everywhere...I think

T: That should?

Ahmed: Apply everywhere..[because]

T: Everywhere?

Ahmed: Yeah [not..not]

Anurag: [That does or should?]

Ahmed: What?

Anurag: That does apply everywhere or you think it should?

Ahmed: No that should apply everywhere because of course

Maria: Why it should apply?
 Ahmed: [Just listen to the explanation]
 Aisha: [I thought love had nothing to do with money]
 T: Let him explain
 Ahmed: If..when two people are dating..they..they if a man is dating a woman he would expect to he would look for a woman that would be equal in thought equal in education similarly. Equal maybe perhaps wealth but so that they could understand each other better. So don't look at it from the financial perspective just so..it would more..it would be more likely that they could get divorced if they were of not equal status because they wouldn't understand each other as much.
 T: Okay [so]
 Aisha: Opposites attract no..because if she's [gone through something]
 Ahmed: [Opposite] genders attract yeah
 Aisha: No like if she's gone through something and he hasn't [because he's never] had to clean up after himself or whatever she can teach him a lot of stuff and he could teach her back.
 Anurag: [You can't say it either]
 T: So if[they are opposites]
 Ahmed: (To Aisha) [I..I] I am not saying that they have to be copies of each other, I am saying that they have to be like roughly similar.
 T: Compatible...in thought and education [not that]
 Aisha: [***]
 T: Ahmed is saying like they don't have to have like the same amount of money in the bank..but right is that correct?
 Ahmed: Yeah [forget the]
 T: [But] they should have the same thoughts the same way of looking at life..[so what do you guys think?]
 Maria: [We're not talking]
 Ahmed: [But if you think of it] if you think of it well relates to that..It's not solely because [they have]
 Maria: [Hmmm]
 Ahmed: because they have lots of money..it's because
 Maria: You're about to get killed
 Ahmed: Maybe a person who has lots of money has a different personality. [so]
 Aisha: [Allright what about teachers?]
 Ahmed: So it's not because of the money [because of the effect]
 Aisha: [Seriously] teachers are smart, they don't have money, is a millionaire [***]
 Ahmed: [***]
 Ss: (Giggle)
 Maria: So if money doesn't have to do with it then [it's totally]
 Ahmed: [It] it relates [it]
 Maria: [***] just people (Ashok and Ozzy imitate Maria's gesture laughing)
 T: Stop it. So you mean their personalities?
 Maria: Yeah it's just [about]
 Ahmed: [If you] think that money makes [people]

Ann: [Education]
 Ahmed: That's how it is traditionally
 T: What can..what can money buy us?
 Ozzy: Love
 Aisha: Lots of things cars and house and dog
 (Students overlap to comment)
 Dan: Money can everything (***)
 T: So money can buy love?
 Maria: Noo, no..sincere love? Noo
 Ashok: Yeah
 Ahmed: Look at Bill Gates
 (Overlapping statements from class)

Ahmed has a logical perspective about marriages, suitability of partners, and love. He believes that two people should be on the same level in terms of education and status in order to have a happy marriage and that if a man has money he can buy anything, including love. His ideas enrage the women, especially Aisha and Maria, who would like to look at these issues more romantically. Another interesting comment that Ahmed makes is his response to Aisha when she says "opposites attract." Ahmed's reply "opposite genders attract" show that the only kind of relationship he would talk about is a heterosexual relationship between a man and a woman. When Anurag implies that there are other possibilities by saying, "you can't say that either," Ahmed chooses to ignore this implication and doesn't comment on it.

Another instance in which the Middle Easterners revealed social norms in their countries occurred when the same discussion illustrated above came to the issue of arranged marriages. This time all three Middle Easterners in the AIS reached an agreement, although Ahmed was the one who did most of the explaining:

T: In the Middle East, how is it? Is it arranged marriage or?
 Ahmed: What do you mean by arranged marriage? What is your vision of an arranged marriage?
 T: [So
 Vivek: [They are] allowed to meet, they're supposed to marry a person of the same religion and caste, of subcaste and [the parents]
 T: [Someone that your family chooses]

- Vivek: The parents select the guy or girl
- Ahmed: Actually, first of all when it comes to religion, I mean 99.9% is Muslim, so that's no problem. It's sort of an arranged marriage, but sometimes when a son wants to marry a woman..he would just tell his parents that I like this woman and they would talk to that woman's parents. So it's that way.
- T: What if she is like lower class?
- Ahmed: It doesn't matter much..Sometimes it does, but those are exceptional cases.
- T: What about if the girl wants to marry a guy that is lower class?
- Nadiyah: Depends.[***] (Vivek and Ahmed overlap to offer inaudible comments)
- Nadiyah: It happens actually.
- T: Does it happen?
- Nadiyah: Yeah
- T: Would that be OK?
- Ahmed: Yeah
- T: So if like...
- Ahmed: There is one thing, you see...In my country, Kuwait most of the people are like, a third of them are from Iran, a third of them are from Iraq and..
- Aisha: Saudi Arabia
- Ahmed: And Saudi Arabia..So sometimes the descendents of Saudi Arabia would not like give their daughters or sons to sons of descendants of Iran or Iraq.
- Aisha: It's like a little political game they play.
- T: So [these are
- Ahmed: [But, but] those.. are.. rare cases. Mostly, they are arranged by..the son chooses a [woman
- T: [Ahm]
- Ahmed: He could tell his parents and his parents would go to the girl's parents And they would arrange it. And the girl has the right to reject or accept [it.
- T: Oh okay, so the girl has the right to reject?
- Ahmed: Yeah. [Actually that]
- T: [Wooh (does a sign of relief)]
- Ahmed: Actually that wasn't the case 1400 years ago before [Islam
- T: [Yeah I think nowhere it was like that.
- T: (Turns to the whole class) Guys, so this is the kind of thing, this is the kind of brainstorming that I would like you to do.

Nadiyah and Nasreen reflected Middle Eastern women's perspective about courtship and marriage arrangements when they talked about their personal lives in our interviews. Nadiyah mentioned being harassed by someone who kept calling her on the phone and saying "bad things" and puncturing the tires of her car frequently. She believes that she was stalked by a racist person who picked on her because of her scarf. She had unpleasant experiences such as people trying to hit her in her car after September 11th and people pointing or staring at

her. When she told me about these incidents, I was shocked and scared, and asked if there was anyone she could rely on to protect her. She explained that her fiancé (who is also from the UAE) answered the phone for her a few times because she and her roommate (also from the UAE) were very disturbed. I asked her if she felt safe and whether it would be possible for her to live with her fiancé. She responded with a strong, “Nooo!” When I reiterated my worry that this person might hurt her and it might be better to live with a man than a young woman from the UAE, she responded, “No, those are the rules.” Even when her security is in jeopardy, living with a man, even the one she is engaged to marry when she graduates, is out of question due to the rules of the society.

Nasreen’s story about how she married her husband was a reflection of the arrangement of marriages and social rules in Iran. Nasreen was born in the United States while her father was still in school. She and her family went back to Iran after he completed his studies, so she grew up in Iran and went to school there until her senior school of high school. After the Islamic Revolution, her family migrated to the United States and settled in Ohio. After coming to America, Nasreen didn’t abandon the Islamic way of living; she wears a headscarf and follows the requirements of Islam devoutly. After she graduated from high school, she started college in Ohio.

Her family was mainly friends with Iranians, as is very common among this group of immigrants (Ghaffarian, 1987). Because her family’s immediate circle of friends were all Iranians and she wasn’t socializing with her American classmates at school, it was almost inevitable for her to meet and marry an Iranian man. One night she went to a gathering at a family friend’s house with her family, and she met a young man at this house. This young man, also an Iranian, came to her family’s house to ask for her hand in marriage a few days

after the party. He didn't try to call her on the phone and ask her out, but he asked for the parents' permission to get to know her more under their supervision.

Nasreen debated this for a while because she was too young at that time, but with the encouragement of her mother, who liked the young man, she agreed to see him. He came over to their family house, met with the family, and talked with her in private in her father's study a few times. He proposed to her after the first few visits and she accepted. They got married shortly after she got accepted to the university he was attending. Nasreen and her husband didn't have much interaction outside her parents' house and out of their supervision; they didn't go on short trips, didn't live together, and didn't partake in premarital intimacy. Although they were both in the United States for an extended period of time, they were both very religious and followed the Iranian traditions in their relationship. Right now, her husband takes care of her schooling and is the main supporter of the household until Nasreen graduates.

Gender issues and moral values

One of my research questions when I started collecting data was whether there were any gender issues in the classrooms. I wanted to see if there would be a difference in the comfort of participants when they were working with peers from the opposite sex. When I interviewed the students from the Middle East, countries that are more conservative than Western cultures, I asked them how they felt about working in the same group with peers with opposite gender and whether this affected their comfort in the classroom. The responses were quite surprising; I assumed there would be discomfort due to the co-ed nature of classes, but the students seemed to have adjusted to this setting.

When I asked Ahmed how he felt about being in a coed class and whether he was more comfortable working with men versus women, or women from his culture versus women from other cultures, he gave me an interesting response. He ranked the groups of peers according to his comfort level, starting with the one with which he would feel most comfortable: “People from my own culture and my gender. I used to talk to Aziz a lot when he was in class. After that people from my gender not from my culture, like Ashok, Ozzy, mainly Indian guys. After that Muslims from my gender, Aisha, Nadiyah, and then non gender non culture, like Maria. I chose to work with Maria for the third essay, she is fine.”

I asked him to elaborate on the reasons why he would feel uncomfortable with this last category. He was quiet and timid at first, but then he responded referring to American society. He explained that Americans are the “most sexually open society” and if one’s culture is less sexually open or not at all, conflicts were bound to arise. He emphasized that he related to Arab or Kuwaiti women more, because they have common moral values, and he feels uncomfortable around other women: “When I am with girls who are more open than I am, I tend to back off a bit.” He describes one such experience in another class: “I was in a class in a group with 7 American girls, I lost my voice there. It was about the Middle East, and I was the one who was supposed to talk most.” Ahmed reflects the perspective of many Middle Eastern men about the liberty and freedom of personal choices of women. He reveals his discomfort with American women due to the fact that they are very sexually open, which conflicts with the way many Middle Easterners are raised.

Traditional Muslim women are raised to be very modest, refrain from private company of or courtship with men, keep their virginity until they get married, not be very loud in public, especially in the presence of men, and obey the guidance of their fathers, brothers, or husbands

(Mehran, 1999). Men are supposed to remain abstinent until they get married, but there may be serious double standards about this rule depending on the country. Ahmed is one of the men who don't have a double standard, and because of this he finds it difficult to relate to women in America. However, he highlighted that he felt the same way about male and female teachers; the gender of the instructor didn't matter for him. Unfortunately I can't say for sure whether this is his honest opinion or not because I was his instructor and the interviewer who inquired about this issue.

Nadihah, who went to an all-girls school until the end of high school, likes the coed environment in the United States. She says, "back home because of religion and tradition, school is different. It is good to see other gender, how they talk and act, how they feel." She thinks it is more fun to be in a coed class and that she can make friends with men better than with women. Nadihah occasionally feels uncomfortable with her male friends, but she doesn't react to them negatively: "Sometimes they ask me to do things and I am not supposed to do it, but I do it. Because they don't know it is my culture and tradition and I don't tell them. I don't want to hurt them or I don't want them to think I am weird person. So I just do quick [handshake] and I am done. It is something friendly." In her questionnaire she emphasizes this cultural difference by saying that her culture "frowns upon talking to males," but she does it in the United States knowing that it is a different culture and her family trusts her.

Nasreen describes that in the universities in Iran women sit in the back and men sit in the front, so the men don't get distracted by women. She had the same dilemma with the co-ed education when she came to the United States. She was appalled when men extended their hands for a handshake when she met them. Like Nadihah, she shows flexibility in most cases: "When someone shakes hand with me, I think he doesn't know my culture and I shake hands

with him...If I know that he knows and he wants to bother me, I don't." She refused to shake hands with an Iranian professor at the U of A, telling him "I don't shake hands with men" because she knew "he knows the rules, the culture," and she thought he was just trying to challenge her norms and being rude.

Discussion

The Middle Easterners, especially those in the AIS, were an active and participant group of students in the classroom, raising hands and contributing to the discussions all the time. They seemed to enjoy the discussion and classroom atmosphere. Nadiah commented in her end-of-semester evaluation and her interview that this was the best class she had ever taken, partly because she liked my teaching style and personality and partly because it was all foreign students in the class. Aisha praised the fun discussions which helped her broaden her knowledge. She commented that I came up with "weird but interesting topics" for discussion. Nasreen said she liked the class, but she would have preferred to be in an AIS; she was more comfortable in her previous all-international class which she had also taken with Karen.

All of the students that I interviewed appeared candid and uninhibited when it came to explaining to me the difficulties they are having in this culture and the hardships that they have gone through. They shared very personal information and stories and confided in me about very touchy subjects, some of which I choose not to reveal due to trust and privacy issues between the participants and me. I believe, however, that the reason why I got to be so close with these students and earned their trust is because I am also from the Middle East and, even if I don't practice, I am Muslim. Having that connection in a teacher who shows interest in their progress and social lives may have encouraged them to open up more and share things

that they wouldn't have shared with an American researcher. The cultural norms these students brought to the classroom through their comments about readings were fascinating. There were certainly some gender conflicts for some of them, and they reflected more of their religion related social traditions than the other students. I can see that sometimes they have a hard time adapting to the American classroom and culture. A detailed discussion of literature on Middle Easterners/ Muslims in American culture will be provided in Part 4 of this chapter. Now I would like to take a closer look at the interaction patterns of the American students in the MS under examination.

The Independent American

“I was taught that you have to get things for yourself so being active in educating myself is natural for me” (questionnaire response)

The American students formed the largest group in the MS with 9 participants, 3 females and 6 males. By definition, there were no American participants in the AIS. I had several assumptions about the American students based on my previous experiences in mixed sections. I expected them to be more talkative than the international students, because they are native speakers and they are from the host culture. I assumed that the Americans would be more active in classroom discussions following western rhetorical traditions. Because they are more familiar with those traditions, I thought they would be more likely to partake in them. In the MS I investigated, half of the Americans met these assumptions and the other half didn't. Therefore, for the purposes of discussion only, I will arbitrarily divide this group into two: The active participant group (APG) and the quiet group (QG). I feel the need to make this distinction, because some of the Americans fit the cultural patterns I expected of them, but I

don't want to assume these characteristics for all Americans students. In order to avoid such a blatant generalization, I want to call attention to the fact that some Americans in the MS didn't fit the assumed pattern.

My experience with all-American classes has shown me that there is a great diversity within the native speaker group in terms of classroom behavior and personality differences. I have had interesting discussions with some of my colleagues who confirmed that sometimes their students in the mainstream (all-American) classes were quiet and passive in classroom discussions and sometimes the class consisted of students that participated so actively that the instructor hardly ever had to prepare prompts for discussion. Having this information prevented me from generalizing activeness and talkativeness to all American students and led me into presenting this difference among the native speaker group that I observed.

The students that I would consider to be in the APG were Suzanne, Mark, Kevin, Marianne, and Tom who were all Anglo-Americans. These students had four distinguishing characteristics: They were active, outspoken, and relaxed in class; they were comfortable being the spokesperson or leader in small group work; they weren't comfortable with silence in interaction, and they filled in the gaps in conversation before everyone else in class; and they challenged and questioned the teacher and other students.

The QG students were more diverse in their background: Donny (Vietnamese-American), Alison (Mexican-American), Eli (Mexican-American), and Darren (Navajo Indian). All of the Americans considered themselves native speakers of English. In contrast to the APG students, the QG participants were quieter in class (i.e., they weren't as active as the APG in asking questions, responding to teacher's questions and comments, or joking in class). They usually spoke up when an issue was relevant to their interest, home culture, or major, but

they weren't nearly as outspoken as the APG participants. The QG didn't rush to fill in the silent gaps in conversation during lectures or small group discussions and they listened more than speaking when they were engaged in group work. As opposed to some students in the APG, the QG students didn't challenge or question the teacher's suggestions, teaching style, or classroom tasks, and they usually avoided expressing public disagreement with other students.

In addition to analyzing the interactional patterns of these two groups, I will focus on some comparative points distinguishing the interactions and behaviors between the international students and the American students. I will illustrate a comparison between the perceived teacher authority that is revealed during conflict situations between the teacher and the students. I will also focus on the outcomes of the mixture of Americans with certain cultures and having multiple numbers of American students in one group.

Active, outspoken, and relaxed

As some of them commented in their questionnaire, the APG participants are brought up to learn to talk for themselves and be outspoken about what they want. In American schools, students generally have freedom to criticize the curriculum and administration, have their own unions to voice the concerns of the student body, and can be informal in their classroom interaction. Unlike the Japanese students who believed in giving others a chance to talk and listening more to what others had to say, the APG students seemed to believe in expressing themselves clearly and having their voices heard in the classroom. This is a natural outcome of a more individualistic society (Donahue, 1998) where the individual self is considered more important and salient than the community (Hayashi & Kurida, 1997).

The APG students seemed comfortable with asking questions and expressing confusion whenever something was unclear to them, like Suzanne did when Karen was talking about the final exam procedures:

Suzanne asks if it is informal writing. T confirms and explains the assignment. T reads the preparation note in the handout and explains some of the points as she reads. Suzanne asks if they'll just choose one of the questions. T responds and explains how final exam questions will be. A student comes in late. T continues with her explanation. Suzanne interrupts and asks how she wants them to choose it. T confirms her suggestions. T says she will tell them the text next week and asks them to think of what they want to work on. T says the questions will be answered in the last two weeks. T says OK no questions. (Brief silence). T says she is going to give them the reading for Monday and starts passing them around. Suzanne asks if they need to write a reaction. T says no because they have essays due but recommends that they think about it because it can be a final exam text. Suzanne raises hand. T says yes and asks if she has a question. Suzanne says yeah but she forgot. Ss laugh. T says that happens and maybe it will come to her at the end of class.

Suzanne was one of the most talkative students in the MS and the most outspoken American student in the APG. She always asked questions about the assignments, offered comments about the readings, and expressed difficulty with the tasks. During the classroom discussion on the Japanese folktale "The Three Amulets," she commented on the differences between this folktale and "Hansel and Gretel," dominating classroom discussion for an interrupted period of 4 minutes, longer than any individual talk of the international participants in the MS.

On another day when Karen was talking about "The Yellow Wallpaper," the reading for the following class session, Suzanne asked about their next essay. She diverted the topic of conversation and the focus of the teacher to a completely different, and slightly irrelevant, discussion. When Karen mentioned it was going to be a research paper, Suzanne began to express her frustration with the 8-page requirement for the assignment. Karen in return defended the assignment and explained that it would be useful for their future studies,

addressing Suzanne's concern. Suzanne, however, took this a little personally and explained that she was a business major and she wanted to write about her field. These two examples show her active participation, tendency to question the classroom practices of the teacher, and comfort in criticizing the assignments.

The other APG students, such as Kevin, Mark, and Marianne, also asked questions about the assignments and commented on the readings and discussion topics. For example, when they read the piece on Gandhi. Marianne and Suzanne, despite the fact that they didn't know very much about Gandhi or India, did most of the contribution to class discussions after the two Indian men, Shah and Nihir. Kevin and Mark were also active in their comments and participation even when they didn't have very concretely laid-out opinions:

Mark: (Raises hand while Shah is finishing up his point about British rule in India)

T: Mark

Mark: I think it's like in this case the British people like being imperialist felt like out of place already. And if the people they're trying to govern weren't listening to anything they were saying anyways, and weren't doing, you know, they gave... Indian nation gave the British people no reason to go on there and start a war. And they couldn't like for all the law violations in prison like they couldn't put everybody in jail that like..ahm they weren't making any impact, had no control so why not just let have it all, let them be independent, giving it to them

T: Yeah, that's a good point, so it's kind of a loss of control on the part of the British. (Kevin raises his hand.) Kevin.

Kevin: Kinda works on like the empathy of humans because the person going to protesting is the *** The person who is the protest is against is the ahm the one who is gonna shock you because those are the ones resorting to violence.

T: Yeah it's kind of, yeah it's very interesting. It's kind of a way to ahmm to... your enemy..I don't wanna say your enemy, I am trying to avoid that word but the person that you're..or the group that you're trying to persuade or convince ahmm

Kevin: Be more excepting ***

T: But it's kind of..you put them in a position where if they do something they look, they'd look really vicious, they look, I mean, it looks really bad right? For the rest of the world to see this. Ahmm so passive resistance works that way. So that you put the aggressor in the position that if they are the aggressor, you know, then.. they lose the battle because of the aggressive, because of their aggressive nature, does that make any sense?

Kevin displayed a comfortable attitude towards interaction in the classroom. When he gave an individual presentation to shed light on the story, “Smokey the Bear” he appeared to be very comfortable in his gestures and appearance. He leaned against the white board and talked calmly and clearly. He looked at the audience and used many gestures throughout the presentation. In contrast, Paige and Jeanie (both from China), who were presenting on the same day, were more timid in their gestures and gazes at the audience, at least initially. Compared to the international students, the Americans students in the APG were more comfortable about public speaking, raising their voice in class, asking questions about the assignments, and expressing difficulty with the essays:

T asks if they all go the reading for next time. Akiko raises her hand and T gives one to Akiko. Suzanne is murmuring something in the back. T asks Suzanne if she has a specific question about essay three. Suzanne says she just doesn’t understand. Kevin interrupts to agree that he is lost too. Suzanne expresses her difficulty with understanding what they are supposed to do with culture in this essay. T interrupts to comment. Suzanne interrupts to ask a question. T continues to explain. Suzanne asks how their thesis will be like. Mark raises hand and T gives him turn. Mark asks giving an example from Little Red Riding Hood. T interrupts to say it isn’t a Text-in-Context essay like their second essay and explains the difference. T asks Shah if she can use his point that they talked about during her office hours. T explains referring to what Shah is doing.

Suzanne, Mark, and Kevin seemed comfortable in admitting that they didn’t understand an assignment without being self-conscious, and they appeared uninhibited about asking questions of clarification. These students didn’t escape the spotlight the Japanese students did; if they had a problem, it was out in the open to be addressed.

I didn’t ask the students to write their names in the questionnaires, but I could identify the respondents was by looking at the country they are from, their first language and gender. When I interviewed the Chinese or Indian students, they confirmed their responses on the questionnaires, so I could identify which questionnaire belong to which student. In the APG

group, however, I couldn't distinguish between Suzanne and Marianne or between Mark, Kevin, and Tom, because they all listed the United States as their home culture and English as their first and only language. Therefore, I will refer to them as female/male APG participant when I refer to their questionnaire responses. The QG ones were clear because of their native language or home culture indicators (e.g., Darren indicated he was Navajo Indian, Donny listed Vietnamese as one of his languages, etc.).

The questionnaire responses of the APG students for, "How do you think your cultural background affects the way you interact with people? How did your family or schooling in your country affect the way you talk to people?" usually emphasized the importance of speaking up. One of the APG males highlighted his activeness as a cultural reflection when he said, "In my country you are taught to be active and to participate. My family taught me to be polite and treat others with respect, as well. I was taught that you have to get things for yourself so being active in educating myself is natural for me." Another similar response came from one of the APG females: "The way my family and my schooling affected me I think in a positive way when looking at the aspect of being able to interact with others. I was always told that communication holds the key to everything." These responses clearly indicate the cultural importance of being active in interacting with others.

The responses of some QG students highlighted the importance of being respectful to other people, like Alison's statement: "I was always taught to speak up and give everyone a chance no matter where they are from." Her response underlines understanding and tolerance for members of other groups, and she was one of the few students who included this implication in her response. Eli, another Mexican-American student commented that because of his family culture he got used to interacting with a variety of people about different

subjects, and he is “more open-minded for discussing with anyone.” Eli’s parents got harassed at school when they spoke their native language, Spanish, so they didn’t want to make it their home language. Eli didn’t grow up learning Spanish from his parents who didn’t want him to go through the same ordeals that they did. Although they didn’t pass on their family language heritage to their children, Eli’s parents seem to have passed on the valuable knowledge that they should be open-minded when talking to people with diverse backgrounds.

Breaking the silence and leading the groups

One distinctive characteristic of most of the APG students was their dislike for silence and pause in conversations. They were active conversationalists in class, and they didn’t like long silences in communication. In general, they didn’t have much tolerance for pauses in interactions and filled in these gaps quickly. This aspect of their interaction was different from those of the Asian and Indian participants observed. The Indian men in both the AIS and the MS tended to overlap and interrupt considerably, and the Chinese and Japanese had more tolerance for silence and breaks in conversations.

In class, the APG Americans were generally the first ones to react during whole group discussions. When there was silence in class (which usually occurred after Karen asked what the students thought of the readings or whether the students had any questions about the assignments or the assigned readings), the APG participants were first to break that silence nonverbally by raising their hand to comment or verbally by getting the floor themselves and starting to respond. Kevin, Mark, and Suzanne’s interactions during the classroom discussion on the Iranian folktale, “Cutie Cousin Cockroach,” illustrate this clearly:

T: So what were your reactions to “Cutie Cousin Cockroach? (Brief silence) And I wanna ask you also..if you feel like because you don’t know Iranian culture...if

you feel like you missed something, you missed some of the points of the story? What do you think?

(Brief silence in class. [Mark raises hand])

T: [And then we'll get, we'll have Nasreen fill us in on some things if she can] (T laughs. Nasreen smiles).. later. (to Mark) Yes!

Mark: I kinda felt like the story wasn't more about a moral but to explain something that happens in nature like..kinda..

T: Okay, soo (writes on the board) Explain like..what? Do you have anything [in mind?]

Mark: Like they kinda explain like how all cockroaches are black instead of some other colors.

T: Yeah. Okay so that's interesting. So in the end it's kind of like..you know this why cockroaches are black.

Mark: Yeah but that doesn't really teach you like how to stay out of trouble or you know life lessons. Just kinda explaining something in the nature which is kinda different from the other stories.

T: Yeah that's a good point. (Brief silence) Did that surprise you guys..that that's the way it ended?

(Silence in class)

T: Just sort of this why cockroaches are black?

(Brief silence)

Kevin: Yeah I was kinda all of a sudden... They never said anything at the end of the story that this..we're gonna explain why cockroaches are black.

T: H-hmm good okay yeah so it's yeah..it's kind of.. we didn't get the idea that that was gonna be the point of the story..but ahmm what do you think..why, why were the main characters in the story a cockroach..and a mouse? I mean what are cockroaches..what do we think of when we think of cockroaches and mice?

Mark: Pests, rodents

T: Yeah pests right?

Even when they didn't have a striking opinion or comment to add to classroom discussions, these students were the ones to break the silence when the rest of the class was passive. In the following illustration, Mark is being repetitive with some insignificant and vague comments about the reading they have done for this day when the rest of the class is non-responsive.

Likewise, Suzanne fills in the gaps of silence with similar statements:

T: OK, I'll read the *** of Ortiz (reads the introductory piece in the book). So what did you think of this..long and I think very very interesting piece of writing? (Silence in class) Any initial comments?

(Silence in class. Mark raises hand)

T: Yes.

Mark: I felt like he is kind of holding back a little bit. Like he kinda wanna go

- through a little like.. He kind is like, I don't know, he kinda is like trying to be a little politically correct. He kinda wanna let loose and kinda wanted to.
- T: OK, would you say he is being very diplomatic?
- Mark: Yeah, very diplomatic. I felt like he kinda like, you know.
- T: (Nods)
- Mark: He is holding back, which I kinda..
- T: Trying not to offend?
- Mark: Yeah trying not to offend. I think he was like, I don't know, it seemed to be like a stern like frustrated, mad type of essay, I mean. He wanted to quote, he wanted to be heard, to let people realize.
- T: H-hmm. Interesting. Yeah, does anybody have anything to add to that?
(Silence in class)
- Suzanne: I think he did.. let go or whatever like the, I mean. So, something like how the United States needs to be more like..I don't remember how it went, but something about... (looks at her book)
- T: Yeah, let's see *** the last line, actually I underlines it (reads part of the essay).
- Suzanne: Yeah

Similarly, in small group discussions APG students were the ones that broke the silence more often than any other student. When Kevin was working on a small group task with Jeanie (Hong Kong) and Fabiola (Brazil), he was the leader, moderator, and silence-breaker despite the fact that both of these girls were comfortable with their English.

Focus on group with Kevin, Jeanie, and Fabiola. Kevin is talking to Fabiola and Jeanie taking notes. Brief silence. Kevin breaks the silence and starts reading their question to Fabiola. Fabiola doesn't respond verbally; she just nods. Jeanie listens to their exchange; Kevin is mainly looking at Fabiola. Jeanie offers a comment. Kevin says he is dead now, they all laugh. Brief silence. Kevin breaks the silence to read more. Fabiola comments on the way he writes, Kevin backchannels and responds. Jeanie nods to backchannel. Jeanie asks him a question about the writer and Kevin asks "Did he?". Fabiola offers a comment. Kevin comments briefly. Silence in the group. Kevin breaks silence to comment on what the writer was probably trying to do. Fabiola and Jeanie nod. Brief pause. Kevin continues with his discussion. Jeanie asks a question. Kevin nods. Silence in the group. Every time there was silence in their group, Kevin broke this silence to read their question again or offer a comment. The others had comments and points for the discussion as well, but they seemed to have more tolerance for silence than Kevin did. The same patterns could be observed with Suzanne and Mark's group work pattern. Whenever there was silence in the group, they threw in a comment whether it was relevant to the task or not or they started a new discussion.

The QG Americans, on the contrary, didn't seem to be distressed by silence in the classroom or group work. For example, Darren, the Navajo American, was very quiet during lectures. I think I heard him talk in class once, and it was when Karen directed a question to him personally. Darren wasn't very talkative during small group work either. Silence in conversation didn't seem to bother him as is common in his culture (John, 1972). Research has shown that it is common for Native American students to remain silent in the classroom (Dumont, 1972; Philips, 1972), so he could be bringing the patterns of his home culture to the university classroom. Darren commented in his questionnaire, "I interact with more people more often than I did when I live at home." I wanted to talk to him about his classroom interaction patterns and their cultural implications, but he declined my interview request.

Darren's participation in small groups was collaborative; he expressed his opinion when it was asked or when it was relevant, but he never rushed to fill in the gaps in conversation. Similarly, Eli and Donny seemed more comfortable with the silences in the classroom than Suzanne, Kevin, or Mark did. Their group work pattern was somewhat similar to that of Darren's; they were more talkative and outspoken when they were with a small group of peers, but they didn't seem to be bothered by silences.

Expressing concerns and challenging the teacher

Another characteristic of the APG Americans, which distinguished them from the QG Americans and the international students, was their challenging comments and responses to the instructor. These challenges weren't rude, but if the APG students were concerned, worried, or displeased with something about classwork, they were comfortable in expressing

this. For example, during the discussion about their proposals and drafts for the second essay, Suzanne was adamant about voicing her concern with how little time they had to finish the essay:

- T: So what I'd like to do now is to put you together in your groups and have you talk about..you should have a written proposal by now..If you don't then you're really behind and you need to probably talk to me.
- Suzanne: Our written proposal is like what was due on Friday?
- T: What was due on Friday. Some people I noted turned it in on Friday because they couldn't find me physically in the library.
- Suzanne: Yeah
- T: (Laughs) And it's fine, I understand that. Ahm but you should have a written proposal in class today and if you don't then...you know you need to kind of think ohh am I behind I need to go home and do some work. Ahmm because really we don't have a lot of time to write this [paper]
- Suzanne: [I feel] really rushed
- T: Yeah it is rushed...It really is rushed..and..there is a good reason for that. Ahmm I really need Spring Break to grade papers.

After this discussion and hearing Kevin and Suzanne express their concerns with the timeline of the final drafts louder than any other students, Karen decided to give them an extension. Clearly their philosophy to speak out to get what they want worked in this case; they got more time to finish their essay.

In another session while Karen was handing out some study questions for small group work, Kevin very bluntly told her in front of the whole class that he didn't like the question they were supposed to work on. He went on to explain why he didn't like the question and what he thought about the assigned text. It didn't appear that he was purposefully trying to undermine the teacher's authority or be rude, but he didn't think it was inappropriate and verbalized his dislike of that particular classroom material. Karen didn't get offended; she tried to understand why he was frustrated and explained the use of the task patiently. The

same pattern could be seen in Suzanne and Fabiola's group (pair) conference with Karen when Suzanne expresses her feelings about writing and her difficulty with the task:

T asks if they feel comfortable about the assignment, Suzanne says she doesn't, Fabiola looks a bit confused and remains quiet. Suzanne expresses worry about getting the writing done. T gives her encouragement saying she is a good writer and she is just learning about a new genre. T talks about a Brazilian woman who goes to the United States to study and has to relearn everything. Fabiola and Suzanne both say they hate writing, Suzanne explains why she hates writing. T's story is interrupted. T shows compassion and asks them to think why they hate it and tells them you will have to write in the future. Suzanne says she doesn't mind writing reports. T and Suzanne talk about writing reports and citing in reports and how it is different. T says they will have to write and it's not always fun. T gives advice for life.

Another characteristic of this group was their openness in disagreeing and challenging the teacher's ideas or comments. In his group conferences, Tom expressed his opposition with the teacher on one of her comments about a story and expressed his frustration with the essay assignment very openly. The group is talking about different children's stories that have social messages in them, and Tom doesn't agree with Karen's interpretation of a story that they both know:

T: What stories were you told when you were kids? "The Little Engine that could"
 Tom: Yeah
 T: (To Tom) I mean that's totally a socialization story.
 Jeanie: What's that?
 T: (To Jeanie) Do you know "The Little Engine that could"?
 Jeanie: (Shakes her head)
 T: It's about this little engine that's kinda broken down and has a really hard time making up the hill. It says I think I can I think I can, and it gets up the hill.. finally and you know, the idea is that you know no matter how weak you are you can always..achieve, you know you can always achieve success..So
 Tom: But that's a good socialization mechanism
 T: Well..yeah maybe, I mean ..is it? Or do we look at people who.. have a hard time in this world and say you know you should be able to be the little engine that could instead of maybe helping in some other ways.
 Tom: Ohh might take 'em like seven years to go up the way but you could do it.
 T: Well but see you've been socialized to think this way [that's the point] (laughs)
 Tom: [But] but anybody can do it, you just have to..[it might take longer]
 T: [Right, right]

- Tom: Like a lot of [times] but
 T: [But] you see like how that's a.. I mean you're socialized to think that way right?
 Tom: Everybody is socialized to think that way.
 T: (Shakes her head) I don't know, I don't know Tom
 Tom: I don't think I can do this paper (puts his pen down)
 T: (Laughs) But I..but you see..but..but you see what I'm saying
 Tom: Yeah..kind of..not..no not at all no actually.
 T: Well I mean, the point is you know that these stories are meant to teach lessons to children right? The folktales. Ahm now in the Brahman and the Ghost you're looking at this as a commentary on the caste system right?
 Tom: Yeah
 T: Which is..perfectly fine.
 Tom: Yeah
 T: Yeah. But Cutie Cousin Cockroach you know I am thinking if this is sang at little girls' birthday parties..then that's a big deal you know what is it that what, what role is it playing you know in socialization. That's all I mean. I am not trying to sound radical. (Smiles)

Tom was unhappy because he wasn't clear about the paper, and his approach didn't seem to fit what the teacher required for the assignment. Karen tried to explain to him what his problem was, but Tom was still frustrated and he wasn't shy about showing this. Karen later told me that she was really annoyed with his behavior in the conference, because he misunderstood her or refused to understand her real meaning and kept going on about his disagreement. The other students were a little bit put off by this, as Jeanie confided in Karen afterwards.

Discussion

The American students were mostly talkative and responsive in their classroom interactions. They responded to the teacher's questions more rapidly than most of the other students, and they offered comments and interpretations for the readings. The American group presented varying behavior and classroom attitude, though. Whereas one group (APG) was active and talkative, another group (QG) remained mostly quiet during discussions unless it was relevant to their home culture. For example, the only time Alison expressed strong opinion in class was when they read a piece on the border patrol (United States-Mexico border patrol). Other

times, these students preferred to be relatively passive and non-participant when compared to the APG students.

There were two interesting observations that I think are important to mention. First, the APG students were a lot more talkative and active than active participant students that I have observed in regular all-American classes. Even the most outspoken and talkative students I have had in my classes haven't been as active as the APG. Given this, I can only say that the APG behavior was an interesting phenomenon, but it was by no means universal. Therefore, it might be the case that American students tend to be more talkative and outspoken when they are in mixed sections. Americans in the mixed sections may have a stronger perception of "Americanness," because this is a mixed class and everyone is a representative of one culture. In other classes or in mainstream classes, this feeling of cultural representation isn't so strong, because they are all part of the default culture, and they don't need to be informants or representatives of their culture. If they perceive themselves (and their culture) as an active, social, outspoken, free-speech, and talkative people, this identity comes out more strongly. Goffman's suggestions about social interactions and how individuals perceive themselves and how they believe others to perceive them may have played a role in the self-presentation of the American participants in the MS.

This interpretation brings up another possible conclusion that related to the participants in the QG. The racial and ethnic profile of these two groups show some interesting patterns. The APG students were all Anglo-Americans and the QG students were from minority groups like native Americans and immigrants. The fact that the Anglo students showed conformity in their behavior and presented themselves in the particular way that they did as Americans, whereas the minority students didn't follow this pattern seems to be interesting. It can be

assumed that the minority group didn't have such a strong self-concept as Americans, because their family culture isn't the mainstream and majority culture. Therefore, they may not have felt the need to act like an "American" in the way this concept was perceived and represented by the APG students. This, of course, could be coincidental, because I have had and heard of many silent and passive American students in my class, but it is possible for the APG students to take on the role of Americans and the QG students to feel like outsiders or to feel marginalized within their own culture.

The active participation of some of the Americans students can simply be their intolerance for silence. The APG students were generally first to break the silence when the teacher posed a question that required a response to the readings of the day or a confirmation of their understanding of the assignments. This seemed to be one of the biggest differences between the native and non-native speakers as well as APG and QG Americans. Liu (2001) explains this by comparing the cultural implications of silence for Americans and Asians. He asserts that silence in the classroom after a teacher asks a question may have a negative meaning in an American class, but may be normal for Asian classes. American students become active in

classroom discussions if they feel uncomfortable when there is silence in the classroom. Students are uncomfortable when non one answers their question, so some American students may talk even if they had not planned to. But silence in classrooms is totally acceptable in Asian cultures. Students' silence not only shows their respect for the teacher but also shows appreciation for high-quality questions as the answers might take some time to think about. In Asian cultures, silence during lectures may also indicate students' attentive listening and active thinking, but it may well be interpreted as the result of boring or uninteresting class in American culture" (Liu, 2001: p. 192).

Americans' perceptions of silence in class may have been revealed in their active and no-break participation whether or not they had something significant to say. However, this was the only culture that had such willingness to fill in short gaps of silence.

Cultural Mixes in the Mixed Section

Before comparing the AIS and MS and reporting student perspectives about these sections, I would like to present some examples of American students collaborating with international students from various cultures in small group work. These illustrations will complement earlier discussions about specific cultures discussed in the Cultural Patterns section, and they will display some of the dynamics in the culturally mixed groups.

American—Asian—Indian

To observe the dynamics of a mix of these three cultures, I looked at the small group work of Akiko, Mark, and Nihir. Akiko seemed distant and was silent during group work; in contrast, Nihir and Mark were active in their interaction. Nihir dominated the conversation from time to time, but the two men exchanged comments and discussed the issues at hand thoroughly while Akiko listened passively or gazed at other parts of class. In the first illustration, the group is talking about citations using MLA style while working on a source given to them by the instructor, and they are trying to figure out a way to cite this source in a Works Cited page.

Nihir and Mark are talking about the source T has given them. Nihir looks at it and then passes it to Mark. Akiko seems distant; takes a quick look at the source. Mark and Nihir discuss among themselves which source to cite. Nihir is doing most of the talking. T comes and tells them to hurry up and choose an article to cite. T gives suggestions and asks questions for brainstorming. Mark and Nihir only now grasp what the task is. Akiko listens without questions or comments. T guides them through the style manual. Mark asks Akiko if she wants to write because his writing is bad. Nihir dictates the citation.

On another day, the same group discusses the assigned reading piece by Simon Ortiz. The two men are once again in a heated discussion while Akiko stays quiet and distant:

Group work on April 5: Ortiz piece. Nihir is talking to Mark, and Mark is responding to him. Akiko doesn't seem to be part of the conversation; she looks at her notes. Nihir explains his points, Mark disagrees and Nihir explains more. Mark says "that makes sense". Nihir and Mark can't agree on the Israel and Palestine issue. Akiko pulls away a little; she doesn't participate in this dialogue. She looks at other groups.

A female student being silent in a group with two men may bring to mind a question about gender issues. Was Akiko silenced by the two talkative men? Was she passive because she was in a group with two males? These are difficult questions to answer, but I don't have a definite answer to that. Akiko declined my request for an interview, so I couldn't ask her to elaborate on her classroom interaction patterns. However, a similar pattern was seen when Lee was working with Shah and Mark. Although he was one of the more talkative Chinese students because of the American education he received in Thailand, he was quiet in a group with Shah and Mark:

Shah explaining his idea giving an example. Mark says "Really?" Shah continues. Lee is looking at the two and listening. Shah talks about discrimination in United States through his personal experience. Lee nods. Mark interrupts to ask a question. Shah responds. Mark and Shah mainly talking to and looking at each other. Lee laughs at Shah's remark. Mark asks me a question (the researcher) about our interview time. Shah finishes telling Mark his story. I come into the group and tell Mark I'll e-mail him. Shah gives his sheet marked with his preferred interview time. Mark asks me a question. I respond and go back to my seat. Lee watches these exchanges. Mark stands up and leaves the group. Shah talks to Lee briefly. Shah starts to listen to the discussion of two other students. Silence in the group. Lee asks for the slip of another group. Mark comes back and gives hypothetical example to ask Shah a question. Shah overlaps to respond. Mark comments and Shah overlaps to respond mainly talking to Mark. Lee nods and listens. Mark and Shah exchange more comments about discrimination.

More than one native speaker in a group

The international students in the MS (with the exception of Indian men) seemed to get quieter when more than one American (APG or QG) was present in the group. This seemed to be true for even the most active and talkative ones like Paige and Lee. One example for the APG Americans dominating the group discussions was a pre-camera moment of Suzanne and Marianne when they were working with Paige and Nasreen. Before I brought the small microphone in (which signaled to the students that I was going to tape their interaction), Suzanne and Marianne were having a personal conversation on a topic irrelevant to their group task. Karen had given them slips with questions on them so they could have a guided discussion about the reading, but the two women were talking about shopping:

Suzanne is telling Marianne that she got pants that had “flare on the bottom” and Marianne backchannels and asks her questions about the pants. Nasreen and Paige listen to this conversation like they are following a tennis game. Suzanne directs her gaze at Marianne and talks mainly at her ignoring the other two. I bring the small microphone into the group and attach it to one of the folders. Suzanne stops talking about pants and Marianne reads the question on the slip quickly. Paige starts to give a response, but Suzanne interrupts her to tell them what she thinks about the writers’ points. Suzanne looks and smiles at the camera which gives Paige a pause in the conversation to gain floor and she finishes her point. Nasreen makes a very brief comment and Marianne backchannels nodding. Suzanne asks another question and gives the answer for it mainly looking at Marianne. Marianne reads another question and answers looking at Suzanne who giggles about the microphone. I go over there and take the microphone from them and before I turn the focus of the camera to another group, Suzanne starts talking about her contact lenses that bother her so much and Marianne starts rubbing her eyes.

The two APG Americans seemed to dominate the discussion in this group and changed the direction of the interaction to the topic they wanted to talk about. This, of course, is a common phenomenon in small group work. Students tend to get off the topic when they get together for discussions. It was interesting, though, to see that when they realized they were

being taped, they resumed to their group task, at which point the international students became more active.

I suspected that Suzanne's talkative nature and cheery personality had some influence on her dominating the conversation. However, even the less active and quieter Americans, like Eli and Donny, became more talkative in small group work with each other, quieting down the solo international student in their group. When Eli was working with Donny and Lee, he was more talkative than Lee, who was an active participant in class:

Lee reads the question out loud, there is no response or interaction. Eli asks Donny a question who responds mainly looking at Eli. Lee follows their conversation. Eli and Donny have some more exchanges laughing about things that aren't relevant to the question on their slip. Finally, Eli asks Lee's comment and Lee gives brief response smiling. Eli and Donny backchannel.

Most of the international students seemed to back off and quiet down a little bit when there was more than one American in their group or when the native speakers outnumbered them. One exception to this observation was in the case of Darren who didn't dominate or actively participate in small group discussions. He was usually quiet, but attentive in small groups.

The dynamics in the classroom seemed to be different when there were native speakers in the group, both in whole group discussions and small group work. In the next section of this chapter, I will discuss the differences between the AIS and MS giving more specific examples from classroom sessions, and I will report the feelings and thoughts of international students regarding being in mixed sections with native speakers.

Part 2: Comparing the Two Sections

“They like to have their friends their lives, they don’t like to mix with foreign students. They just like them in their class.” (Nasreen)

One of my main concerns about teaching mixed classes is the possibility of having segregation between native and non-native speakers of English. I have seen in some of the mixed sections I have taught that if the American students aren’t interested in learning about other cultures and are not patient enough to listen to and understand the non-native speakers, classes can be very tense. As a teacher, I have seen American students separating themselves physically and emotionally from the international students, and international students forming their own cliques when they don’t know how to deal with this separation. But is peace in the classroom only up to the American students? Not completely. International students sometimes form little groups in class and don’t let anyone in, especially when they are not confident with their English skills.

Some international students enter the American classrooms with a predetermined fear that they will be rejected or disliked by the host group, as some of the participants in this study mentioned. Nasreen commented that Americans are okay with having international students in their classes, but they don’t like to be friends with them; Costas pointed out that Americans don’t talk to international students at all; and Nadiyah and Ahmed expressed anxiety and discomfort about working with Americans in the classroom because they fear discrimination as Muslims. I examined various data sources to investigate this issue and present the differences between the AIS and the MS in terms of how students related to each other and whether having Americans in the MS caused differences in classroom dynamics. The examination of videotaped classroom sessions and group conferences displayed that there

were differences between the sense of community and solidarity in the AIS and the MS. The international students reported more solidarity and connection among themselves despite their cultural differences emphasizing distance from Americans. In addition to this, the AIS group acted more like a collaborative community while the MS group didn't display signs of connection other than cohabitating in the same classroom.

Us versus U.S.

The international students in the two sections reported more solidarity among themselves ("Us"), even if they were from different countries with different cultures, in comparison to how they felt about Americans whom they saw as a completely different group ("U.S.") that didn't understand the international perspective. In our interview, Rosy (Hong Kong) emphasized this solidarity by referring to the effects of being new in an environment and being different:

[International students] are more equal, we are all new we don't know the environment. We don't feel odd if people do odd things, because we understand. We do odd thing too...For Americans they are all the same thing. They are familiar with the environment. If we do odd things they all think you are odd, so strange. For international students if one person does odd thing they think ohh we do that in my country too.

When I asked Rosy what she meant by these "odd things" that they do, she said it was the way they talk, dress, or act which may seem unusual to Americans, but not to international students. Ozzy (Indonesia) also explained that he was comfortable participating in the AIS, but he would never be so comfortable in a MS: "I feel very comfortable because all of us are the same. From Asia, from India, the same thing, so why should I shame?" He considers all international students as members of one group and native speakers as another entity, despite the fact that they are close in age and year of study. It was interesting coming from Ozzy,

because he seemed to be one of the better adjusted and comfortable international students; his English was very good as a result of the mainly English-medium education he received in Indonesia.

In classroom discussions, the difference between the international students (Us) and Americans (U.S.) was highlighted by the comments of the students about Americans in the AIS and the teacher's efforts to mix these two groups in the MS.

In the AIS, the students made the distinction between themselves and Americans very clearly, expressing their opinion about Americans and their culture during whole group discussions. Some of their comments were related to their impression of the morality of American youth. During one classroom discussion about culture and what it entails, I said that every culture has different social rules and moral values. Ashok gave the example of American society and argued that they had bad morals. Anurag and Vivek overlapped to explain the differences between the India and the United States. This prompt reaction from students who had been in this country for a short period of time was surprising. This reaction may point to two things: First, these students haven't lived in the United States for very long, and probably most of their perceptions of the "American culture," an impossible-to-define concept due to the diversity in this country, were based on Hollywood movies. Second, the fact that I was a foreigner myself may have contributed to their uninhibited comments.

During one of the lectures, I asked an American friend of mine to help me with the taping because it was difficult for me to handle the camera and small group work at the same time. On the same day, I had a Chinese graduate student observing my class. As a lucky coincidence, we were talking about the Chinese folktale "Faithful Even in Death" and my observer was contributing to the classroom discussion. Students were very excited about the

topic and were overlapping to contribute comments. One comment was about the implications of how premarital sex was discouraged in China. When I said that it is the same in many cultures, Maria started to make a point by saying, “Except in...” and pointed with her head to my American friend who was taping giggling and didn’t finish her sentence. The other students laughed and looked at my American friend to see what his reaction would be. I commented that they didn’t want to offend him, but my friend laughed as well and let them off the hook. There were no Americans in the AIS, so the students talked about this culture as if it is a distant object from the reality of our classroom. I considered this as part of their acculturation and transition process, and didn’t interfere with these comments. They vented out their frustrations in class as if they were in counseling or therapy, and I observed this without interruptions.

In the MS, on the other hand, the fact that there were two distinct groups in class (international students and Americans) was made public only by the teacher when she wanted to respond to concerns expressed to her in private, and when she attempted to mix the two groups together in small group work. Karen emphasized the distinction between the two groups in an attempt to mix the international students with the native speakers, but this seemed to further highlight the difference, which is the dilemma of mixed sections in general. Earlier in the semester, Karen initiated this mix by predetermining the pairs in pair work and asking students to get together with the person she chose for them. For group work, she sometimes asked them to mix themselves:

T: Well, let me go ahead and put you into groups. I know it was a difficult read and I think it’s easier to kind of (waves her hands in the air)..think things out in groups, and then we’ll get back together as a class. Ahmm so (looks at the slips with questions) Actually you guys can just..kinda group the way you want to today.

We'll get *** And then I have..as..as you've seen before slips for you to talk about. So.. Why don't you guys just kind of ..I don't know. Try to mix American and international here that way (Smiles) [group that way]

Ss: [(Laugh)]

T: [Cause it's good to get] .. well it's good to get the different perspective. I think that's the important, that's the richness of this class, right? Is being able to hear different perspectives of from people who have different backgrounds. So if you can try to group that way with somebody who is near. Groups of 3, how is that? So groups of 3.

Ss: (Look at her and don't move)

T: Aand, soo (gestures motion) ... go to it (smiles)

Ss: (Start looking around and getting in groups. Karen starts walking around and handing the slips out.)

One concern that Karen had to address in the MS was the grading issue. She announced in class one day that she received an e-mail from an anonymous student explaining concern about being graded like native speakers. She explained that there was no difference no matter what the native language is. She elaborated that she gave different grades to content and style and that American students weren't perfect either. She added that she gave different types of comments depending on the students' individual needs and finishes by assuring them that she wasn't giving harder or easier grades to anyone.

I assumed that there would be many heated discussions about race, ethnicity, or gender because of the large diversity among students. However, this wasn't the case in the MS. The only time I heard students talking about these issues was when Mark and Shah were discussing Shah's personal experience in being discriminated against in the United States. Members of "mixed culture" groups which consist of both the "hosts" and the "guests," politely avoid sensitive and controversial topics like these, fearing that they may cause discomfort, embarrassment, or hostility within the group, which in return may cause more polarization. This avoidance, "in the guise of politeness, can take such forms as making light of the topic, shifting topics, or simply ignoring anything said that happens to relate to the

topic. This *code of silence* is a reflection of a societal denial that cultural factors matter, and that things such as sexism, racism, and White privilege exists” (Young & Davis-Russell, 2002). In the case of mixed sections, avoidance can be attributed to ethnocentrism or ignorance about other cultures and peoples as well as to timidity in expressing personal opinion about a people that they don’t feel completely comfortable with or have a very positive idea about.

Community versus cohabitation

Possibly as a result of their feelings of “oneness,” the students in the AIS acted more as members of a close community, like a family, than just classmates taking the same class. The classroom atmosphere was like a workshop in which the students were actively participating in the tasks and helping each other, making use of their learning resources and opportunities collaboratively. There was more of a collectivist and communal atmosphere in the AIS section than an individualistic and competitive one. The flow of discussions was very natural and even the quieter students often felt comfortable speaking up in class or at least in small groups. They were willing to relate the issues under discussion to their culture and explain the socio-cultural issues in their home countries, and the rest of the class seemed to be interested in and care about what they were saying.

As the similarities between cultures were revealed, the conversations became livelier and more personal, resulting in the active involvement of most of the students. The discussion about the Chinese folktale “Faithful Even in Death” triggered a chain of responses from the most talkative students like Anurag and Vivek (both from India) to even the quietest students

like Ann (Vietnam) and Ayumi (Japan). Vivek had just finished talking about the importance of sister- and brother-in-laws in Indian culture when the others started chiming in:

T: Who else has the same norm in their culture? (Ann and Ayumi raise their hands)

Anurag: I had actually similar points.

T: In Vietnam?

Ann: In the old days.

T: In the old days? Or is it still like that?

Ann: Some families.

T: Some families arrange marriages?. Japan too?

Ayumi: (Nods) Hmm

T: Still?

Ayumi: No, no (hand gesture for past)

T: ***[

Ann: [I don't think arranged marriages are still ***] in Vietnam, but the relationship between a girl and a guy. You don't really [***] before marriage.

T: You don't have, you don't have dates like you don't go out?

Ann: Yeah [you do

Ashok: [Yeah dating is ***

Vivek: [Yeah dating is done but basically you'll say, I'd say your family members are free in every way, OK they'll send you to *** everywhere it's free, but when it comes to social, they're a, still a bit attached.

T: Hmm to the old days?

Ozzy: I think it's like the same with most of the Asian countries. [I think most of the Asian countries are like that.

Ayumi: [Nods]

Vivek: [Yeah]

Anurag: [Yeah frequent]

Ozzy: [Yeah] like because in Indonesia, still happens but like ahmm like a blue blood family, you know what I'm saying?..Like a rich family, the rich family.

T: Aahmm

Ozzy: A family that [has]

T: [They have blue [blood?]

Ozzy: Blue blood we call them like that. They have, they used to arrange their marriages, used arrange their son or daughter with blue blood too.

T: Yeah.

Ozzy: Something like that.

Ann: So same class.

T: [Same class]

Ozzy: [Same caste]

Group conferences provide the best illustrations for how the AIS students felt like a community and collaborated to help each other out during the learning process. In the Cultural Patterns section, I reported some students' discomfort in criticizing their classmates in peer revision. However, most students seemed comfortable while commenting on and giving suggestions about each other's drafts during group peer review sessions. Most of the time, the students had such helpful suggestions for each other that I felt it would be repetitive for me to give any further comments. In their group conference, Costas (Cyprus), Ashok (India), Aisha (Kuwait), and Ann collaborate to comment on all the drafts in the group, providing critical and useful suggestions:

T points to Costas and tells him what Ann just said. Ann laughs. T says, "Talk to him." Ann looks through Costas' draft. Aisha compliments one element in his paper. Ashok comments, overlapping. Costas mumbles something and laughs. T comments and says, "OK." Ashok says it is his turn trying to snatch the essay from Ann. T says, "Shhh let her go over" and compliments her suggestions. Ann addresses Costas and comments about his essay. Ashok says, "She is the new teacher". Ann looks at T. T asks for explanation. Ann explains her points. T supports and elaborates her suggestion. Ann explains what he is doing in the essay. T raises eyebrows and points her gaze towards him. Ann turns to Costas and nods. Costas nods and laughs. Aisha laughs and says, "Talk to him". Ashok offers a comment. Ann asks T a question regarding Costas's paper. T confirms. Aisha and Ann overlap to comment on his weakness. Aisha asks a question. T explains a problem with a joke. Students laugh. Aisha says, "exactly." Ashok interrupts to ask for his essay from T. T asks why the girl's family gives money in the story. Aisha objects and corrects. T overlaps to backchannel. Aisha says yeah. Ann says yeah confirming T. Ashok overlaps to comment. Costas overlaps to comment. T and Aisha overlap. T says "Really?" Ann overlaps and asks Ashok a question. Aisha continues with her explanation. Costas overlaps to comment. T says "Oohhh" showing surprise. Aisha continues with the divorce settlement discussion. Ashok asks a question. T, Ann, and Ashok joke about this and laugh overlapping with Aisha. Aisha continues to explain. Ashok briefly inserts comment. Aisha asks a question and Ann backs up this question. Ashok comments briefly about his source. T agrees with these suggestions and says it was one of her comments too. Aisha overlaps to say "if that's the case people must be very poor in Iran". T takes the essay from Ashok and looks at it.

This group had the most talkative students in class (Aisha and Ashok), but despite that, the interaction was balanced. At the beginning I directed the flow of the interaction, encouraging them to talk to each other, but after a while they didn't need a reminder to address each other for suggestions. They quickly began speaking directly to each other instead of telling me what was problematic with their friend's essay. There was some interruption and overlap but this signals natural conversation flow, rather than a controlled one.

A similar collaboration was seen in the group conferences with Anurag (India), Nadiyah (UAE), and Elena (Mexico). Elena hadn't finished her draft, so they only talked about Anurag's and Nadiyah's essays. These two gave each other very critical comments that were helpful and to the point. Anurag was very direct and open in his criticism about Nadiyah's essay, and Nadiyah took these suggestions very seriously. In return, Anurag was very accepting of Nadiyah's comments, but tended to interrupt to defend his points from time to time. Elena, who is usually quiet in class, was friendly and talkative in the group. She was cheerful and supportive about the drafts and made good points about her friends' papers.

Another example of collaboration and community in the AIS can be found in the following excerpt from the conference of Adam (Hong Kong), Ozzy (Indonesia), and Mayar (India). Adam was one of the quiet ones in the classroom, and Mayar was the quietest among the Indian men in the AIS. Going into the conference, I assumed that I would have to do most of the commenting, but the group surprised me with their conference behavior. Ozzy and Adam both had insightful and direct comments about Mayar's draft, and I didn't have to give him any comments; most of the time I just nodded and backchanneled listening in amazement to the insightful comments of my students:

Ozzy: Okay ahmm the last thing is like the evidence you must need some evidence to make up

T: From the sources?

Ozzy: Yeah.

T: (Nods in agreement)

Mayar: I need what?

Ozzy: Ahh the evidence to back up your point, you know what I'm saying?

Mayar: Ahh from the text (***)

Ozzy: Ahmm I think on the text like it's pretty good but in the sources like

T: [From other] sources

Ozzy: [You need like] yeah contextual

Adam: Contextual evidence

T: Yeah contextual evidence

Ozzy: That's [all]

Mayar: You've mentioned it too

T: Yeah contextual evidence. (Looks at Adam)

Adam: Ahmm first of all thesis is not clear and ahmm I..I can't see the connection between the story and your contextual evidence you know what I mean?

T: So what you're presenting about the story, I think (***) (mumbling discussion with Adam to double-check). So he's presenting certain things about the story

Adam: Yeah

T: But he's not..giving..so he makes some points but he's not giving examples

Adam: [Yes]

T: [to] support that point?

Adam: Yes and..[and]

Mayar: Were you even to say that?

Adam: Pardon?

Mayar: You mean, I'm giving some points and I'm not..supporting them with..

Adam: No I mean maybe if you..if you gave some contextual evidence but I can't see the.. [the connection]

Ozzy: [the relation]

Adam: [the relation]

Ozzy: Yeah that's what I said too

(Brief silence)

This was really one of the best group conferences, mainly because of the students' attitude towards peer revision. Adam and Ozzy came prepared to comment on each other's drafts, and Ozzy was exceptionally well-organized and clear about his comments. I had a few extra things to say about their drafts, but the students covered all the important points themselves. They appeared comfortable talking to each other with and without me in the room (I had to leave for

a few minutes leaving the camera on), asking questions of clarification and explaining their plans for the assignment. They were all mature about taking criticism. Adam and Mayar, who were quiet in class, displayed strong attention and collaboration.

Adam was clear about his points, and he asked and answered questions comfortably, despite the fact that his nose was bleeding and he missed a small portion of the conference because of this. His transformation from the silent observer in class to an active participant in group work was illustrated in this last conference of the semester. Mayar, although he hadn't read the essays in detail, gave Adam good comments about Indian culture and corrected some of his points using his insider perspective. The flow of interaction, comment quality, and student-to-student interaction was strongest in this group. Clearly, the success of the conference depends on the relationship among students.

The dynamics in the MS group conferences were somewhat different. One of the few group conferences that involved student-student interaction was the one with Suzanne and Fabiola (Brazil). These two women worked in the same small group many times in class, so they decided to work together for the second essay. Only in their group conference could I see students showing an interest in collaboration. Suzanne and Fabiola talked about sharing sources; they complained about having tests; and they expressed difficulty in writing. Karen was pleased with their collaboration and she praised their work. In the other group conferences, as Rosy (Hong Kong) and Lee (China) highlighted in their interviews, Karen did most of the talking, commenting on student papers one by one. Students didn't comment on each other's papers even though they had read the drafts in class during their peer review session.

Different teaching styles and teacher approaches may have had an impact on this outcome. I used some definite tactics to get the students to talk to each other. For example, when Ann addressed me for comments on Costas' paper, I pointed to Costas, whose essay was being "grilled" at that point, using eyebrow pointing and gestures so she would turn her gaze towards him. Another strategy that I used was to look down at the essay under discussion; when students didn't have eye contact with me, they turned to the person to whom they were supposed to address the comments.

The international students in the AIS felt more comfortable with each other; because they were all non-native speakers, and they could comment on grammar and organizational problems without worrying about offending each other. Everyone had big mistakes, and it was clear that this was normal and acceptable. The fact that the AIS students could laugh about each other's mistakes made it easier for them to accept their problems in writing. However, in my mixed section during the present semester, as I write, I wouldn't have group conferences mixing international and American students. I don't see the same the sense of community and collaboration that I have clearly seen in many other AIS I have taught using the same materials. I have a feeling that my students this semester don't feel like a community; they are just cohabitating as classmates, which was the feeling that I got from the MS in this study.

Part 3: Feelings about Being in a Mixed Section

“If I were in a mixed section (God forbid) I wouldn’t dare and ask questions or even participate in small groups...” (Nadiyah)

One of the main research questions this study investigated was how international students felt about being in mixed sections with native speakers. As I explained in the previous section, there were some differences in the dynamics of classroom interaction and interaction among students in the MS and AIS. I focused on this inquiry in the questionnaires and the interviews I had with some of the students.

AIS Questionnaire Responses

Question 2 on the questionnaire for the AIS asked the following: “If you were in a mixed section of English 107/101 with Americans, how would your attitude be different in terms of asking questions in class, talking during lectures, working in small groups, talking about issues related to American culture, etc.? Would you feel uncomfortable? Why?”

Except for the Indian students, all the other students who responded to the questionnaire reacted strongly to the idea of being in mixed sections with Americans. All four Indian students in the AIS commented that there wouldn’t be a difference in the way they interacted in class. Vivek indicated that being in mixed sections with Americans wouldn’t affect his interaction, but “if there were many Americans it [would] as Americans are free and more interactive.” Another Indian student commented that he would interact more effectively. One said that his interaction “would be exactly the same if [I] were the teacher” and that he didn’t know any other teacher. Lastly, another Indian student stated that he already had classes with

a mix of American and international students and he hadn't "faced any problems communicating with either group."

The rest of the students expressed concern with such an arrangement and displayed unwillingness to take a mixed class. None of the students had taken an English class with Americans, but they were taking other classes with native speakers. Still they had worries about being in a mixed class. Costas commented that he would feel less comfortable and worry about making mistakes more. He also added that it would be harder to talk about American culture, one issue that the students felt free to discuss in the AIS. Ozzy, who was comfortable talking in class, said he would get quieter and wouldn't be able to "interact very far." Adam confirmed that he would be even quieter than he already was in our class. The strongest reaction came from Nadiah who expressed concern about being misunderstood and mistreated in a MS:

If I were in mixed section (God forbid) I wouldn't dare and ask questions or even participate in small groups. Excuse me for saying this but most people treat me badly so why should I set myself into that. My international friends and classmates understand what different cultures mean since they all have different culture and rules and beliefs.

Ayumi was concerned with the willingness of American students to be with international students and indicated that the attitude of the American students would play an important role: "I think most Americans like to be with other Americans. If so, I would feel uncomfortable to take class with them. However, if they are interested in international culture, we would have fun." Even the students who had more experience with English or had been in the United States for a longer time expressed concern. Ann said she wouldn't be active due to her English skills, and Dan confirmed that having native speakers in class would definitely change his classroom participation behavior. Maria, who had been in the United States for

more than 4 years, emphasized that her attitude would be “extremely different” when she is in mixed sections: “I tend to be really quiet and very uncomfortable while asking questions and participating in presentations.”

These reactions from the AIS students indicate that there was a concern among the group in terms of taking an English class with native speakers. Some of them expressed their uneasiness due to being nonnative speakers, which reveals their self-consciousness about their language skills. Some highlighted more culture-related conflicts and fear of possible mistreatment. The ones who think that Americans don’t want to talk to them or be friends with them seem to be thinking that this is a common characteristic of all Americans. They may be referring to one negative personal experience to make generalizations for the whole group, exemplifying what Bordens and Horowitz call the “out-group homogeneity bias” (2002: p. 135).

MS Questionnaire Responses

A total of 21 students completed the questionnaire in the MS, and 9 of these were American students. The question pertinent to feelings about being in a MS questionnaire was slightly different for this group: “If you were in an AIS of English 107, how would your attitude be different in terms of asking questions in class, talking during lectures, working in small groups, talking about issues related to American culture, etc.? Would you feel more comfortable? Why?” The Americans were asked to skip this question, but they responded to the rest of the inquiries. In retrospect, it would have been a good idea to ask the Americans how they felt in a mixed section with students or how their attitudes would have been different

if they had been in an all-American section. However, because my focus was on international students, I didn't think of this ahead of time.

The students had mixed responses to this inquiry. Some of them said it was a great idea to have mixed sections, while some compared their current class to the all-international class (English 106) they had taken the semester before. Rosy, for example, confirmed that she was more comfortable in her English 106 class and said that she was more active there. Her problem with the MS was the quick thinking and responding skills of the native speakers: "American students can react fast but we need time to think how to say our opinion out in English. By the time I got that, teacher has already switch to some other questions." Lee commented that he talked more in English 106, because he felt more comfortable in his AIS. He explained his preferences this way: "I would feel more comfortable because everyone has similar background, all foreign students. Some from similar culture, so it is more comfortable to talk." Guillaume, a quiet student from France, also agreed that he would feel more comfortable in an all-international section because it is "harder to speak in front of an American audience."

Similar to the Indian students in the AIS, the Indian students in the MS didn't express a preference for all-international sections. Assad said it wouldn't make much difference to be in an all-international section, and Shah thought it was advantageous to be in mixed sections because he would get to know more about other cultures and learn more about their viewpoints. Nihir complimented the MS by saying it is a "great idea" and compared his English 106 class where many students didn't talk about certain issues to his mixed class in which they talk about everything.

Some of the other students who indicated that they wouldn't have a different attitude had interesting comments on this. Fabiola said she would have the same attitude and feel the same way, because she was comfortable around Americans. Nasreen and Akiko stated that their attitude would be the same; they would still be very quiet and not participate much in class. Therefore, being in an AIS wouldn't make that much of a difference in their quiet classroom participation.

AIS Interview Responses

I interviewed 12 students from the AIS and 5 students from the MS. I asked them about their cultural background, schooling in their country, and their perspective about being in mixed sections. All of them had already taken classes with Americans, as the English classes are the only ones that have separate sections for international students. I asked them to compare these classes to the AIS they had been in.

In the interviews with the AIS students, I asked them whether it would be different for them if our section were a mixed section and how they would act or feel differently. They explained how their interaction frequency would change and the reasons for this. I also asked them if it would make a difference if they had an American instructor, but for most of them this didn't seem to be a relevant concern. There were some cultural patterns in their interview responses to these inquiries.

I interviewed Ashok and Vivek from India and both of them confirmed a preference for an all-international section, but they were the least worried about being in the same class with Americans. **Ashok** compared my class to his math class. He indicated that there were Americans in that class, and although he didn't mind being around so many native speakers,

he couldn't be himself: "I am what I am in your class, not like that in [my math] class...I talk so much in your class. I don't talk at all in this class, because in this class I am the only international student so I feel out of place. Everyone else is American. They are just different." He added that in our class he knew everybody and that made a difference. He suggested that his comfort in class depends on the American students: "All of us in our class, everyone talks to each other. If it was like that, no problem. But if Americans stick together, then we international students would stick together." He emphasized that he would still be asking questions and participating in class the same way. He wouldn't be any quieter in class, but there would be more tension and cultural polarization in the classroom. He didn't think it would make a difference if the teacher was American and he would participate the same way in a small group with Americans. He considers himself a native speaker, except for his problem with his accent: "English doesn't make me self-conscious in accuracy but my accent makes me self-conscious."

Vivek indicated that things would be different in a mixed section "if it is 10 Americans. If it is 1-2 it would be OK. That many would change things." He highlighted that when there are too many people from one culture, that group dominates the discussion. He didn't think it would make him uncomfortable to be with native speakers because he studied English all his life and always interacted in the social activities at his school. However, he admitted that if he were in a small group with Americans, it would make a difference. He explains, "If there is discussion, [Americans] are always very forward...I wouldn't be myself, [but] I wouldn't be quiet if I were in an all-American group. They know how to discuss, anywhere they can talk, they talk. They learn from childhood. So their level of talking and my level of talking would be different." He implied a preference for all-international small groups regardless of where

the group members were from as long as they were international students, because the other cultures are “at the same level.”

The Asians students had varied responses to these questions, but they all expressed a preference for an all-international English class and brought up different issues as their reasons for this. Ted, Adam, Ozzy, and Ann mentioned their poor English speaking skills, as they perceived it, as a reason for their discomfort in talking to native speakers. **Ted** said his English is “not good, so [he] wouldn’t talk in class” but he might participate more in small groups depending on who is in his group. If his group members were all Americans, he wouldn’t talk.

Adam expressed his amazement at the type and amount of questions American students asked in class, adding that as a Chinese person he could never ask such “simple” questions, though he agreed that they are essential in grasping the basic information provided in class. Like Ashok, he also didn’t think that having an American teacher would make a difference. His 106 instructor was American and it was the same to him. He offered an interesting example when he mentioned the Nutrition class he took the semester before. He was the only international student in that class and all the other students spoke a lot and had many ideas, and he was “just sitting in the group and contributing nothing, because they contribute too much.” When there are talkative people in his group, it quiets him down, which was a pattern I observed in his small group work with Ashok and Maria.

Tatsuki, who was one of the quietest students in the AIS, commented that “through interactions with Americans, I was also active” in his business class, because he had to discuss with native speakers. He stated that although there were differences between American and

international students in terms of background and manners, he liked both types of class. He added that in the all-international class, there were more interesting people giving, Aisha as an example. Tatsuki had an interesting perspective about being in a small group with Americans: “I can stay in American’s group but Americans won’t be comfortable with me. American students find me quiet and they don’t think of me good man. They think I am dull. But [my] presentation group [in the business class] is very kind, they treat me kindly. It is up to the student.” He worries about what his group mates might feel about being around such a quiet. Tatsuki reflects the Japanese norm of thinking of others before one’s self in a collective and collaborative community.

Ayumi had social concerns about being in a class with Americans. Like Adam and Ted, she believes her English is bad. According to her, this is why she can hardly make any American friends. She also believes that most Americans aren’t interested in international students, so they don’t make friends with foreigners. Ayumi believes that “it makes a difference to have nonnative speaker teacher, [because these teachers] understand how hard study English is.” She wants a teacher to understand how difficult learning English can be, so she emphasizes that the “teacher must be international.” To make her point, she mentioned an American professor who didn’t let her bring a dictionary to the exams, which made it difficult for her to understand the exam questions and form accurate sentences. Ayumi believed that in a small group with Americans, she would be quieter, because she can’t speak English fluently: “[I]f I can speak English as the same level as native speaker, I would join them. My problem is English. I can’t talk fluently, keep good tempo in conversation...I don’t want to break their conversation...by speaking weird English.” Like Tatsuki who is worried about not being

considered a “good man” due to his quietness, Ayumi is concerned about disappointing her group mates due to her poor English skills.

Ann commented that she feels comfortable expressing ideas because “our class is all-international [and] we don’t have native speakers.” She predicted that there would be differences in her attitude if there were native speakers, because she didn’t feel confident with her English skills despite the fact that she had lived in Australia for a year and had been in the United States for more than a year. She said she would still talk in class, but not that much.

In the Middle Easterner group, Ahmed and Nadiah had concerns about being in a mixed group, but Aisha felt comfortable being around Americans and said it wouldn’t matter to her. She is trying to be a pilot in the United States Air Force, so she thinks it is better for her to work with Americans. She had been to English-medium schools in Kuwait, so she feels comfortable with her English as well as her social skills. However, Ahmed and Nadiah didn’t share the same eagerness.

Ahmed admitted that being in a class with Americans is much different for him: “I tend to pretend more.” As mentioned before, he believes that the American culture is different from all other cultures in the world, and that any two countries would have similarities with each other, but not with Americans. Ahmed says his communication with Americans is “OK, but I communicate better with non-Americans.” He emphasized that being in a mixed section wouldn’t affect his talking very much, but he confirmed that international students understand each other better. He mentioned that he signed up to take a MS before September 11th, but after that he withdrew from all his classes and went back to Kuwait for a while following his parents’ request. After he got back, he signed up for our class because he felt more comfortable with the idea of an all-international class.

Nadihah had a similar but stronger preference for all-international classes. She suggested that there is more understanding in these sections: “[In an AIS] I can talk, and all the students are the same and they understand if I don’t talk perfectly.” When I asked her what would happen if she were in a MS, she responded, “I wouldn’t talk. I wouldn’t talk at all.” In one of her classes with 25 Americans students, she didn’t talk at all and never asked questions. She went to the teacher after class to ask questions. She was so disturbed by the idea of being in a mixed English class that she didn’t care if the only available all-international section was at 8:00 in the morning, she would take that one instead of a mixed section. Her frustration comes from some of the reactions she gets from her native speaker peers: “I get frustrated when I talk in public with American students in the group. Sometimes I don’t pronounce a word right and they are like, ‘what?’ you know what I mean? They don’t understand and that doesn’t help. They don’t give you a push to help.”

MS Interview Responses

In the mixed group, I talked to a variety of students representing different countries and backgrounds. I had interviews with Rosy from Hong Kong, Lee and Paige from China, Shah from India, Nasreen from Iran, and Kevin from the United States. I wanted to interview more students, but some of them didn’t agree to an interview and some of them didn’t get back to me to schedule an interview. I asked the international students how they liked their mixed class and whether they would prefer all-international classes, and I asked Kevin how it was to have nonnative speakers of English in his class.

Rosy had mentioned her problem with English in her questionnaire, so when I asked her to express her feelings about being with native speakers in class at our interview, she reiterated this concern:

Only problem I might have is they speak too fast. [English] is not my first language. I have to think and then react. By the time I...I want to speak up, but then I have my hand up, I interrupt someone, and then I think. But they talk again. I don't translate from Chinese but finding the words take time.

She explained that she talked more in the all-international English 106 section which she had taken a semester before: "Everyone thinks slow, I have the time to speak up. I like the class more." When I asked her about the dynamics in her MS, she referred to the physical layout of the class, international students sitting in the middle and Americans in the back forming a circle around international students, which, to her, symbolized segregation.

Nasreen was another student who preferred all-international sections, because she wasn't comfortable with her English skills: "I know that I am a foreign student and I know I don't speak completely accurately, so I don't want someone to laugh at me when I make a mistake. It is a good idea to separate the two." She wished the MS was also separate, because in that class she had to compete with Americans, which she felt made it harder for her to get a better grade. Nasreen, like Ahmed and Nadiyah, commented that she would be more comfortable speaking up more when the class was all international students. She added that she felt inequality because one of the American students in the MS said it was the easiest class she had ever taken and she was getting easy As while Nasreen was working hard and not getting the high grades she wanted. She also said she had difficulty understanding the native speakers, because they used words that she didn't understand. She started using an electronic dictionary which was somewhat helpful.

Lee and Paige, had some different ideas on this issue. Both students felt comfortable participating in the MS because they had extensive backgrounds with English. Lee studied in American schools when he was in Thailand, and Paige came to the United States as a teenager and adjusted to the culture and language. **Paige** compared her all-international English 106 to the mixed English 101/107 and stated that “it was better to have Americans in 107 in group discussions, [because] the way they think about problems is different; they have different perspectives, so it’s interesting.” She enjoyed being in a mixed class, because the American students “were pretty nice [and] they waited for [the international students] to say what [they] wanted to say.” Paige mentioned that it was hard to understand some international students, like Shah who had a strong Indian accent, so it helped to have native speakers in class. She didn’t think twice when asking questions just because there were native speakers in class; she just asked them. She thought it was because of Karen; she commented that if she doesn’t like the instructor, she doesn’t want to ask questions, but in Karen’s class it was no problem. However, Paige expressed reservations about being the only foreigner in a class full of Americans: “If the class is all American and I am the only international student, it’s a problem. I think I don’t want to talk in there. Just in small groups, 3-4 people, no problem.” She concluded that it was better to keep Americans and international students together.

Lee commented that although he was nervous about being around native speakers at first, after a while he got to know his classmates and he was fine with them. However, he admits that he used to talk more in his English 106 class. When I asked him why he talked less in the MS, he said, “In this class I talk less because there are some American students and they talk more, their pronunciation is better and they have more idea.” However, like Paige, he had no problem communicating with them. He emphasized that if he were in a group with

Suzanne and Kevin, two of the most active Americans, he wouldn't talk at all because they are "too talkative." He would stay quiet, because they are Americans and "they can talk better."

Shah, like the other Indian students, stated that he is comfortable participating in a MS and it is better to have Americans in class. He thinks it is unreasonable for international students to be scared of mixed sections: "How much can you escape Americans? You are in American country and you take classes with them. If not in English, in physics." He finds it unnecessary to stick with Indians just because they are Indians. Shah mentioned his accent problem, as he puts it, and explained that he knew he had a difficult accent to understand, but he got used to people, especially native speakers, asking him to repeat himself time after time.

Shah commented that his comfort in the MS can in part be attributed to Karen. He took English 106 with Karen, and he already knew her teaching style and personality, so that helped him be active in the mixed class. He said that in English 107, he felt like he was studying in an American school, because there were Americans around. He considers classes with Americans as a valuable learning opportunity, because his American classmates help him pronounce some words.

The only American student I could interview was **Kevin**. I wanted to see how an American felt about being in the MS. Kevin had positive comments about his experience in the MS. He didn't know it was a mixed class when he signed up for it and he was surprised the first day of class, even doubted he was in the right class when he saw all kinds of people sitting around. He was surprised, but not worried: "It was kind of wow, [but] it was no problem, I figured it's the same level, it's just people are from different places." He commented that the international students "had good ideas, the same as regular students. Their grammar wasn't very good, but their ideas were, just as educated." I asked Kevin to

compare his experience in English 100 which was an all-American class to the MS. He said in 100, he and his classmates seemed to agree more:

Someone would bring up a point, you have heard it before, just because it is coming from the culture...you're in...With a bunch of Americans, you are sharing more, you have more in common. You can say things that they are gonna understand...[With international students] you have to make sure it is clear what you're talking about. Focus the issue...explain it more. It makes you more professional and more formal...It is part of the deal, you have to put up with it. But it's a good experience, it is worth it.

Kevin thought that his international classmates were probably “a bit intimidated” because they had to convey their ideas in English, and he mentioned that when he was the only American in a small group, he got to talk more since he had a better opportunity as a native speaker. Finally, when I asked him if he accommodated his speech in any way, he thought he might have done it subconsciously, but he didn't recall specific instance, other than “try[ing] to say things in a simple way.”

Discussion

Most of the international students showed a preference for an AIS, and they had various reasons for it. Some were self-conscious about their language skills and thought their English wasn't good enough. Therefore, they had reservations about being around native speakers, thinking that their American classmates would judge them for their accent or poor grammar skills. Some, on the other hand, had more socio-cultural reservations. They thought that Americans didn't enjoy being with international students. It is possible that they think Americans find them strange or undesirable as friends, so they feel intimidated around them.

Given that some international students tend to think that Americans have low moral values, they may not have wanted to befriend them as well.

Interestingly, the AIS participants had stronger reservations about being in a mixed class than those who had already taken a mixed class. They expected more negative outcomes from a mixed English class because of how they believed the Americans perceived them. Language problems, however, seemed to be the underlying reason for most of these concerns. Not being understood because of heavy accent or ungrammatical speech or being misunderstood for misused words and expressions seemed to be the main worry that international students had. As a group, they confirmed their aversion to being in a class where they would be the only international student; all participants highlighted their anxiety about such a situation. The only American that I interviewed seemed to be very friendly and open to working with different cultures even though he confirmed more solidarity and mutual understanding in an all-American section. My experience with mixed sections, however, has been different. I have always sensed some tension between the two groups, and I have observed that the American students usually stay distant from the international students. They sit with their fellow Americans and don't mingle with the international group unless the instructor assigns them to the same group. This might be the fear of the unknown, but it damages the community formation and collaboration between students.

The interviews provided me with some interesting issues that I didn't expect. As I was investigating their feelings about being in a mixed section and working with native speakers, international students revealed the difficulties and challenges they have been through in American culture. While explaining their reasons their aversion for the mixed sections, they brought up many social and personal conflicts they have had to face in America, such as

discrimination and harassment. These issues seemed to have serious influence on the daily lives of some students; therefore, I am reporting this intimate information in a separate section next.

Part 4: Surviving in the United States

The experience of being a foreign student in the United States is frequently a difficult and unsettling one, involving periods of isolation and loneliness. The students are surrounded by many kinds of pressures and a constant demand: succeed! They often represent the intellectual and social elite of their countries and frequently return to positions of authority and influence, either nationally or internationally. What happens to them in the United States is important (Hull, 1978: p. 3).

As mentioned in the Introduction, my interest in international students and teaching the ESL sections of composition has a lot to do with the fact that I have been an international student and teacher in the United States for almost 7 years. When I first arrived in the United States, I was quite intimidated. I already had a degree in TEFL, and I felt confident with my English skills except for the apparent fact that I needed more speaking and pronunciation practice. I didn't have serious language problems; however, getting used to the culture and adapting to the social environment took longer than I had anticipated.

Teaching the international sections provided me with an invaluable insight into the world of foreign students in the United States. As I got to know this group better, I observed that some of them were having a hard time adjusting to this new environment, which affected their classroom participation and academic life in various ways. In many cases, their culture was very different from the culture they were seeing in America, so their adaptation process was slow and painful; they had a hard time figuring out how to talk, joke, behave, and react in

American culture and classrooms. In the interviews, the international students reported conflicts and challenges they have faced in American culture. This section is devoted to the painful experiences of the international students who were still going through their transitional process at the time of the research and my interpretations of what may have triggered these reported perceptions and reactions. For each sociocultural difficulty, I discuss the classroom manifestations of these challenges, explain what instructors can expect to see in their classes, and give guidelines about how they may be prepared to handle these issues.

“I think Americans don’t speak to internationals at all. If they don’t know you they won’t come and talk to you.” (Costas)

During the interviews some of the international students commented on what they believed Americans felt and thought about the international community. Some believed that there was some discrimination against foreigners and that their American peers didn’t enjoy talking to or getting to know them. Ashok commented that some of the Americans he knew were friendly and some weren’t. In his other classes he didn’t know many people, but in our class he knew and connected with everybody. Ashok thinks that “Americans want to hang out with Americans” and he distinguishes the attitude in the east coast, which he finds friendlier than that in the southwest, which he thinks is more racist. He believes there is some discrimination in the southwestern United States. He gave the example of a female classmate who approached him in a friendly way when they first met, but then stopped talking to him.

Ashok thinks that this change of attitude is due to racism or ethnocentrism. It is difficult to read the mind of another person, so he interprets this behavior using his belief and presuppositions about Americans. If he had lived in this culture for a long time, he might have

attributed this to a common social phenomenon that Americans can break acquaintances as quickly as they form them. Friendships can be transitory and temporary because this is a society on the move. People may seem friendly, because this is a form of politeness, but it doesn't mean that they actually consider a close relationship (Singh & Gopal, 2002: p. 21-22).

Ahmed also felt some discrimination, and he had different stories to tell. He mentioned that when he talks on the phone to Americans, "they understand me perfectly, but when appearance comes into the equation, they assume that I don't speak English well." He also complained about always being randomly selected at the airport: "It is funny when you go to the airport they always choose you randomly. In Tucson airport I was picked out 4 times randomly. How random can they be?" He believes it is due to his distinctive Middle Eastern features, and the increased security after September 11th.

September 11th, 2001 marked the beginning of significant changes in the attitudes and perceptions of many Americans towards the Arabic-speaking, Muslim community. There were many cases of verbal harassment or physical attacks on Arab students, which resulted in the withdrawal and escape of many Muslims from American universities such as Arizona State University, the American University in Washington D.C., Washington State University, University of Missouri, University of Colorado at Denver, and California State University at Long Beach (Plomin, 2001). These events have disappointed, scared, and disturbed many Muslims around the world, and their perceptions of the American government and people have changed considerably. People in the Arabic world went from being admirers and followers of the American educational system (Shaw, 1996; Waterbury, 2003) to having hatred and bitterness towards the U.S which they describe as "ruthless, aggressive, conceited, arrogant,

easily provoked, biased” in a Gallop poll to which 10,000 Muslims responded (Waterbury, 2003).

However, attributing the negative perceptions of Arabic students to just the aftermath of September 11th is not accurate. Hull (1978) reports that students from Arabic speaking countries were the “least likely to indicate that their contacts with American people were friendly” (p. 59), and they felt they were inadequately informed by the academic programs and the American culture before arriving in the United States. Waterbury (2003) implies that most of these conflicts arise from differences between moral values, not necessarily from the political conflicts; however, the recent conflicts have brought all the negative attitudes to surface.

Nasreen also commented that some Americans were good, but some of them were very prejudiced. She thinks that Americans “like to have their friends their lives, [and] they don’t like to mix with foreign students. They just like them in their class.” Costas emphasized the distance between the two groups comparing his culture to the host culture: “I think Americans don’t speak to internationals at all. If they don’t know you they won’t come and talk to you. If Americans came to Cyprus I would talk to them in some way.”

Feeling unwanted, disliked, and discriminated against in America impacts the academic experiences of international students. These feelings and perceptions manifest themselves in various ways in the classroom interaction patterns of these students. These manifestations can take a passive form as quietness and social avoidance in classrooms, like Nasreen and Akiko’s behavior in the MS or an active form as a conscious decision to avoid Americans in any way possible by enrolling in all-international sections whenever they can, like Nadiyah and Ahmed

did. In the AIS, the students found a safe place to communicate and interact with their classmates without being judged for their looks, accents, or English proficiency. As Ashok stresses, he is confident with his English skills but he can be himself only in the AIS. He is nervous in the math class he takes with Americans and doesn't participate as much as he does in the AIS, because there are Americans in that class.

Nadihah refers to the AIS as “the best class I have ever taken,” because she didn't feel negative vibes from her classmates and could express herself freely. She highlights that in her other classes, when she has to work with Americans, she gets quiet and hides in a corner. Nasreen, also, avoids elaborate social interactions in mixed classes. She reported that she was more talkative and more successful in the all-international class she took with Karen. She thinks that having Americans in the MS prevented her from getting an A; she had to compete with native speakers, which impacted her grade. Moreover, having terrible experiences as a teenager in an American high school changed her attitude towards Americans and schooling in America. She remembers Iranian schools with affection saying “classes in Iran were so fun” even though the classes were segregated and women were required to sit in the back of the room in order not to “distract” the men.

Experiencing -or thinking that they're experiencing- discrimination and perceiving dislike from the culture they reside in affects the classroom behavior and attitudes of international students. They become quieter and less social when there are Americans in the classrooms. This is a tough issue to handle, because the only all-international classes they can take are the segregated freshman composition classes such as the AIS under examination. In all other classes they take at the university, they need to be around or in collaboration with native speakers, which is a fact of education in the United States. As Shah emphasizes they

cannot avoid Americans; if there are no Americans in English, there will be Americans in Physics. Both groups have some responsibilities to overcome tension. Americans need to be more open and understanding to the feelings of foreigners in their country; they can try to leave their preconceptions and prejudices aside and try to form a deeper understanding of the international community. International students, also, can leave their fears aside and present their culture and beliefs patiently proving prejudices wrong, instead of waiting to be explored and understood.

This mutual understanding and acceptance can be accomplished with the help and coaching from instructors who have cultural sensitivity and awareness. Understanding the differences, troubles, fears, and perceptions of the two communities enables a teacher to build a bridge and form a strong bond between the two groups. Preaching to the students about better understanding doesn't help, but providing a classroom environment focusing on cross-cultural interactions can be an effective strategy. Having international students explain their perspective and talk about their culture to eliminate any biases on the side of the host culture, and having Americans share their ideals and world view with the others can enhance the sense of community.

“My cultures dislikes my interaction with males but I do it here.” (Nadihah)

Perhaps the most strongly expressed conflicts resulted from religious and moral clashes. As mentioned earlier, some students had a negative perception of morality in the American culture. While explaining Ahmed's preference for who he interacts with in the classroom, I reported that he thinks the American culture is too sexually open for him to feel comfortable as a Muslim man coming from a conservative background. Many Middle Eastern men don't

have a problem surviving in or adapting to the American culture and they don't mind the modern perspectives about intimacy. However, Ahmed personally had trouble fitting in a society that to him seems to be promoting sexual intimacy. This prevents him from making friends with Americans, especially American women, and he prefers the company of non-Americans because he believes that no matter where they are from he will have more things in common with them than with an American: "This is how I view the culture of America. It is different from not any country but from the world. Any other country would have similarities with each other, but not with the United States. They are OK, but I communicate better with non-Americans." This statement also supports the feelings of solidarity and "oneness" among international students in general. Ozzy (Indonesia) and Rosy (Hong Kong) also made similar comments indicating international students are a separate group that has common characteristics that distinguish them from Americans.

Vivek, like Ahmed, had trouble getting used to seeing such open-minded and independent women. He commented on the clothing of young American women comparing them to women in India:

Very rarely you will find a girl in shorts, maybe only in Bombay. Delhi also one out of 100 would wear shorts. They wear skirts but not short. And no tank tops; that is very very rare. You find them in only metropolitan cities and very rarely still.

This unusual clothing style, however, is being adapted by Indian women who come here, which he finds hard to understand and accept. He mentions some Indian women who come here and get "acquainted to wearing things like that," something they would wear only at home, but never in public in India unless their families are "very free and of high culture".

Nasreen went through a tough culture shock when she came to the United States from Iran, despite the fact that she arrived at a younger age than most international students. The

first shock came when she was asked to give the school administration some time to inform the rest of the students about her:

They told me to not come to school for a month to talk with you know students about foreign students, so they know how to act with you, especially because I wear a scarf. And when I went to school the first day they pulled my scarf up to see how long was my hair. And I came from a religious country and that was really tough for me to handle that... I tried to keep my culture, and that was hard. I didn't want to talk to anyone. The other students look at me as a stranger, I had really tough time.

She felt distressed when she was advised by her teacher to keep her head up, smile, and greet everyone she saw at school. As part of her Iranian social education, she was always told to look modest, be proper, keep her head low, look down, and not make eye contact, especially with men. She felt even more disturbed when the male students at her school started talking to her and tried to shake hands with her, something that her religion strictly discourages. When men came up to her to compliment her eyes and skin, she felt incredibly uncomfortable, and explained to these men that their behavior was inappropriate in her culture so they should refrain from such comments.

One researcher that studied Iranians in the United States focusing on their acculturation process and depression level was Ghaffarian (1987). She gave questionnaires to 110 Iranian students between the ages 17 and 27 attending American colleges. These questionnaires consisted of three scales measuring acculturation rate, depression and anxiety, and traditional family ideology. Ghaffarian found that

Iranian men have accepted more American values and behaviors than Iranian women, possibly because the men have been accustomed to freedom, self-determination, and exposure to the western world, whereas the women were repressed and lacked personal freedom. The move to the United States has put women in an entirely new situation, whereas the situation has not changed so greatly for men (p. 569).

She concludes that better acculturation leads to better mental health, and men acculturated more easily than women. She attributes this difference to that fact that Iranian women who are expected to be submissive, obedient, and passive in Iran feel more pressure to maintain the traditional Iranian culture in the United. Ghaffarian reports a devotion to traditional values and attributes this to the temporary relocation of many Iranians due to political instability in Iran:

Many Iranians have immigrated to the United States since the revolution in 1979, most coming from the middle or upper-middle class...Many Iranians hope for an improvement in the political situation of Iran so that they may be able to return home. They may resist assimilation because they perceive life in the United States as temporary. Therefore, Iranian immigrants tend to interact with each other almost exclusively, and have formed communities in different cities of the United States, the largest being in Los Angeles” (pp. 566-567).

Unlike the participants in Ghaffarian’s study, Nasreen likes living in the United States, and she doesn’t want to go back to Iran. Her family is in Ohio and she is married to an Iranian who is as religious as she is, so they have common values at home. However, despite then fact that Nasreen wants to live in the United States permanently, she seems to be confirming the general attitude of Iranian immigrants in the United States who have come to the United States after the Islamic Revolution.

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 caused many Iranians to flee their country unwillingly and changed women’s status and situation in Iran drastically (Moruzzi, 2001). The revolution “emerged as a coalition of religious and nationalistic forces to protest against such perceived deliberate attempts to change the culture (what the religious leaders called ‘corruption of soul and society’), rather than as a reaction to modernization, development, or industrialisation” (Tashakkori & Thompson, 1991: p. 213). Although the revolutionaries hoped for a return to

traditional social norms and family values, this desired outcome didn't happen. Tashakkori and Thompson (1991) compared the familial and marriage perspectives of Iranian adolescents of the pre- and post-revolution eras. Pre-revolution adolescents of both sexes reported that they wanted to have small families, didn't support polygamy, and agreed on egalitarian roles of women. Despite the reduction in marrying age and encouragement of polygyny after the Revolution, the young, educated generation was not willing to revert to traditional values or desire early age of marriage and large families.

Iranian women received considerable attention in research because of their social status in Iran and difficulty in adaptation in the United States. Women are under a lot of social pressure in the Iranian society. The "ideal" woman in Iran shouldn't be too Westernized; she shouldn't be banned from social life either, but she should follow the cultural and religious norms that require her to cover her head with a head scarf and be modest. Even in relatively new literacy movement textbooks, women aren't empowered and still have the traditional roles of being a good housewife and taking care of the children and husband imposed upon them (Mehran, 1999). These are all confirmed by the stressful and disturbed experience that Nasreen reports about her earlier years in the United States.

Nadihah, another Muslim woman, commented that coming to the United States "changed [her] whole life." She had a hard time like Nasreen, because she wasn't used to being in the same class with men and interacting with the other gender so closely. However, unlike Nasreen, she enjoys it now and doesn't mind shaking hands with her male friends any more. She adapted to the American culture in that respect instead of trying to fight a frustrating battle of explaining the same things to every man she met. However, after the

September 11th tragedy, which happened during the first semester Nadiah started school, she felt unsafe and scared and went back home.

She admits that being in America changed the person that she used to be, a phenomenon which commonly happens to people who spend a considerable amount of time in a culture that is very different from their own culture. She says she can't understand her friends any more when she goes back home to the UAE, because they have different mind sets: "I feel they are closed-minded, I am open-minded." All of her friends are married with children, and most of them have chosen not to complete their degrees. Those who have continued with their studies have picked easy programs instead of challenging ones so they can finish in a short time and get married. Nadiah sees this cultural difference between herself and her peers back home, and she knows that it is a result of what she has experienced in the United States. She considers herself lucky, and she cannot imagine herself in her friends' position.

Religious and moral conflicts are perhaps the most difficult to overcome and the hardest to compromise on. These conflicts impact the amount and nature of international students' interaction and participation in the classroom. For example, as Ahmed noted, it is difficult for a conservative Muslim men to be comfortable around women, especially those who are more open-minded and liberal than he can ever be. Similarly, interacting with male classmates becomes a challenge for Muslim women, as expressed by the troubled experiences of Nadiah and Nasreen in describing their discomfort in even shaking hands with men. Coming from cultures where men and women are segregated in classrooms and trying to adjust to the collaborative and communicative co-ed system in the United States can be tough for some students. In the American education system, group projects, presentations in front of the whole class, and small group tasks are very common practices. When students come from

segregated educational settings, they may feel discomfort in fulfilling the requirements of the American way of education at the beginning. They get used to the academic environment after a while, but this process can be anything from troublesome to traumatizing depending on the home culture of the student and the level of conservatism that s/he grew up with.

A good approach in dealing with these challenges is to help international students understand the philosophy behind collaborative education and help them see its merits. If their religion or home culture necessitates segregation, instructors can show sensitivity about placing the troubled student in single-sex groups and teams at least in the earlier stages of class. However, it may not be feasible in a classroom with hundreds of students working together. Therefore, it will be up to the guest student to try to adjust to the new setting and accept the conditions, which would take time and conscious effort. When students reveal or express such discomfort in class, the instructors can meet with them to bring the issues out in the open. They can communicate with the students about the reasoning behind such educational practices and help them understand that co-ed communication isn't an issue of immorality but it's an issue of collaboration and enhanced learning. Once the students see that this is a cultural and academic difference not an attack on or a challenge to their beliefs and traditions, their adaptation may be less stressful.

***“I practiced for one week in front of the mirror before I could call her
Karen” (Shah)***

Shah and Ashok expressed some sociocultural and sociolinguistic challenges in their adaptation process into the American educational system. Shah, like many international students, had a hard time with the way he addressed Karen: “I didn't know if I should say

[Karen] or Ms. or Respected teacher like they do in India at the beginning.” Then he decided to ask Karen, who told him that using her first name was fine. However, he was still uncomfortable addressing her by her first name, so he had to “practice for one week in front of the mirror” before he could call her Karen to her face.

Sociolinguistic differences don't affect the students' classroom participation as profoundly as religious or moral clashes do. However, the type of difficulty mentioned by Shah and Ashok can have various manifestations in and out of class. When an instructor announces that it is alright for the students to call her by her first name, American students usually think that she is being friendly and informal, and this makes the classroom environment more comfortable. However, international students may have different reactions to this. They may feel very uncomfortable to be on such informal basis with someone who has a higher status which needs to be affirmed through formal and respectful address forms.

In the case of Shah, for example, it was hard for him to call Karen by her first name simply because it isn't a common practice in India and doing so would clash with his traditional beliefs about how to approach and address a professor. In the AIS, some students highlighted this difference in their e-mail messages when they didn't address me in any particular way. I received many e-mails that started with “Hi” or “Hello” or just the text itself without an address form. Some students combined my first name with a formal address form and called me “Miss Betil.” In face-to-face interactions in class, there was a gradual shift from “Miss Betil,” “Ma'am,” “Miss Eroz,” to my first name. At the beginning of the semester, most of the AIS students called me by some formal address form while talking or writing to me, but towards the end of the semester, many of them felt comfortable enough to call me by my first name. Nadiah, for example, always called me “Miss Betil” to my face

and in her e-mails earlier in the semester, but later on she switched to “Betil.” I could see a similar change in Vivek and Ashok’s address forms as well; they didn’t put any address form when they wrote e-mails to me (started with “Hi” or “Hello”), but half way into the semester they were comfortable enough to call me by my first name.

I find it practical for them to call me by my first name, because in English there is no counterpart for what my students would call me in Turkey (“hocam” which means “my teacher” or “Betil hanım” which corresponds to “Miss Betil”). However, if I were in Turkey, I wouldn’t encourage my students to address me by my first name, because it is inappropriate for them to do that and it is culturally uncommon. Therefore, I understand Shah’s dilemma; it is very culturally engrained and difficult to overcome.

In order not to make this one more cultural challenge they have to overcome, I tell my international students that they can call me whatever they feel comfortable with. I tell them that I wouldn’t mind if they called me by my first name, but if they don’t feel comfortable they should call me in whatever form they would like to. I joke about this by saying that as long as they don’t call me “dude” or “yo,” I will be fine with a variety of address forms. Joking about this takes the tension away a little bit and relieves any anxiety students might be feeling. Therefore, it would be a good idea for instructors to welcome informal address forms if they are comfortable with these themselves, making it clear that the informal address form is not a requirement but an option. That way, students don’t feel pressured to use an address form that makes them feel awkward, but they know that they have the option to become more friendly and informal with the teacher should they feel comfortable enough later on in the semester.

“I can hardly make American friends because of my English” (Ayumi)

Some of the students expressed conflicts due to their language skills and their perceptions of what Americans feel about them. Tatsuki, as I reported earlier, thinks that Americans “don’t think of [him] good man.” He is under the impression that because he is very quiet, Americans think he is dull and boring, and they don’t want him in their group or classroom. Tatsuki seems to assume that American people are interested in making friends with only lively, talkative, and interesting conversationalists who happen to be fluent speakers in English. As he thinks he doesn’t have these qualities, he is convinced that Americans wouldn’t enjoy his company. This reflects the Japanese thought of considering others before considering one’s self. He is more concerned about what others would find in him than what he would get from his relationship with them. Similarly, Ayumi says she can’t make any American friends because of her English and because of the fact that Americans aren’t interested in international students. Ayumi also believes that if her English were better, she would have more American friends. However, interestingly enough, Ayumi has an American boyfriend who seems to admire her very much.

Ashok also reported some language problems. Like Shah, he doesn’t think his English is bad, but he is concerned about his accent. He thinks that he has such a heavy accent that Americans can’t and don’t care to understand it. Therefore, whenever he talks on the phone, he changes his speech and “put[s] on the American accent” which makes him a target of teasing from his roommate, Anurag. Incidents like the American woman who stopped talking to him after hearing his accent and finding out he was Indian have strengthened his belief that his accent disturbs others and scares people away. Ashok was upset about this incident, but he

tries to joke about it by saying that he “didn’t even do the chicken dance,” so he doesn’t know what turned her off from being friends with him.

Language difficulties may have a big impact on the academic success and socialization of international students in American classrooms. Insecurity about their English prevents them from asking questions to clarify confusing points in a lecture, which may affect their grades if exams are heavily dependent on information provided in lectures. However, the international students in this study reported more social difficulties than academic problems. Self-consciousness about their accent or English proficiency prevents them from approaching their native speaker classmates, which results in a frustrating social experience. Tatsuki and Ayumi think that because of their “bad English” Americans wouldn’t want to be friends with them, so they don’t make attempts to form friendship with Americans. In a way, they prevent themselves from exposure to the host culture because of their perceptions of what Americans think about them. Ashok consciously tries to accommodate his speech and makes it more “American” in order to gain social acceptability, because he thinks that if he talks the way he normally does, Americans won’t find him desirable.

The only place many international students feel comfortable and communicate without feeling self-conscious about their English is when they are communicating with their fellow countrymen in social life and in an all-international classroom in academic life. As Rosy, Ozzy, and Nadiah highlighted in their responses, in an AIS everyone has a foreign accent and everyone has difficulties with English, so they don’t feel very self-conscious. However, in a MS with native speakers, they become more aware of their “foreign-ness” and feel more uncomfortable in communication, fearing mistakes and misunderstandings. As a result, communication with their American peers becomes limited to teacher-assigned group work or

in-class tasks, not extending to the social arena in the form of friendships. This is what made the MS a “cohabitation” where students came to the same classroom and worked together in the same room during the given time; whereas, in the AIS, students formed a “community” and developed personal relationships with each other.

Dealing with language issues is challenging for instructors. It is difficult to persuade some international students that having an accent is okay as long as people can understand what they are saying and that many Americans would be willing to repeat themselves or show an effort to understand their English even if it’s not perfect. Especially in the early stages of their residence in the United States, which is when most of the study participants were observed, international students tend to think that unless their English is very good, they won’t be able to make friends with Americans.

An instructor can approach this problem in several ways using various resources on a university campus. She can initiate cross-cultural meetings and have international students meet Americans in social events. An example for this is the International Friends’ Dinner at the University of Arizona. This is a potluck event organized by volunteers and students from all over the world meet and share food from their country. In such a relaxed, social setting, international students can focus on and care about the content of their communication, rather than its form. Another example of a campus activity which can be adapted on any university campus that has an English as a Second Language program or school is the class-exchanges that the University of Arizona’s Center for English as Second Language (CESL) started in collaboration with the Writing Program. In these exchanges, international students meet with an all-American (mainstream) section for cross-cultural exchanges. This can help Americans learn more about other cultures, hear different accents, and form an awareness of the linguistic

and cultural difficulties of foreigners, and the international students would have a chance to communicate with native speakers.

In a MS, the teacher can try to mix the two groups as much as possible like Karen tried to do in her class. Providing opportunities for small group work and semi-controlled discussion activities based on class readings can be efficient. When the conversation is based on a topic of interest or familiarity (i.e., assigned readings, questions on a slip), international students can be more fluent and directed in their language use. Having done the readings, they would have previously formed opinions of and background for the content of the conversations, which takes away the pressure of instant reaction to on-the-spot questions or topics. The teacher can also design activities in which international students talk about an area of their expertise (i.e., their culture or their field of study). Being confident about the topic of conversation or presentation would increase their self-confidence and having an opportunity to prepare ahead of time would reduce their English language anxieties. This way Americans would respect their peers as cultural informants without judging them by their English skills.

Discussion

Our cultural background, in many ways, determines the way we act, talk, and behave in social and academic settings. In new social situations we express ourselves in the way that we presume to be appropriate and normal, mainly relying on our previous social experiences, or stocks of knowledge as Schutz calls them (Turner, 1988). International students go through this kind of adjustment, or acculturation, when they come to the United States to study. They bring their cultures with them into the daily life and classroom environment. Some of them

adapt more quickly, and some take longer to adjust. For some, the new environment is so alien and different that they can never feel a part of it and always feel and act like an outsider.

These reactions and feelings confirm the results of many research studies which focus on Indian immigrants or Indian students and their difficult acculturation process in the United States. One example is Hull's study on the adaptation process of international students from different countries in the world, including India. Hull (1978) reports that the Indian students observed were most likely to feel lonely and report depression. One Indian student interviewed "emphasized the difference between his friendships in India and his friendships in the United States. He felt he was accustomed to fairly deep friendships at home and he believed that people in the United States interacted on a more superficial level" (Hull, 1978: p. 216). Another student indicated that no matter how much he looked for a deep relationship with Americans, he couldn't find one. His impression was that Americans didn't seem to be interested in sharing personal feelings and developing close friendships.

In a more recent study by Mehta (1998), 195 Indian immigrants in the southeastern United States responded to a survey investigating the relationship between acculturation (perception of acceptance, cultural orientation, and language usage) and mental health (psychological distress, acculturative stress, and satisfaction) (p. 61). Mehta reports that immigrants who feel more accepted in the new community have better mental health supporting earlier mentioned research on acculturation. In this study, the immigrants who expressed

greater social and cultural U.S. ties and fewer traditional ones, independent of other social and demographic variables, had better mental scores than those reporting lower levels of involvement with U.S. culture and society, regardless of premigration

adjustment, age, sex, skin color, education level, income, years of U.S education, and length of time in the United States” (Mehta, 1998: p. 68).

Farver, Narang, and Bakhtawar (2002) gave questionnaires to 180 American-born Indian adolescents and one of their immigrant parents to measure their acculturation process, ethnic identity perception, and family conflicts due to cultural generation gap.

The researchers used Berry’s acculturation model which consists of four ways an ethnic group members can acculturate:

1. Assimilation—immigrants identify themselves with the dominant culture only and reject all ties with home culture.
2. Marginalization—immigrants reject both the target culture and native culture.
3. Separation—immigrants identify themselves with only their home culture and refuse the dominant culture.
4. Integration—immigrants become bicultural by keeping their home culture and characteristics of their ethnic group while acquiring selective characteristics of the host culture (Farver, Narang, and Bakhtawar, 2002: p. 340).

Results indicated that when one or both of the parents had a separated or marginalized acculturation style, there were more family conflicts than those instances when the parent(s) had an integrated or assimilated style. Adolescents were found to have higher self-esteem, less anxiety, and less family conflict when there were no apparent acculturation differences between them and their parents (Farver, Narang, & Bakhtawar: 2002: p. 338). Acculturation can be one area to investigate while looking at the classroom interaction patterns of Indian students, because not being able to fit in and be accepted by the general American culture might influence their self-esteem, personal and social relationships, and success in school. These discussions seem to be contradicting the results of this study, but it seems like there are might be different factors affecting my findings. The Indian students in this study seemed to

be well-adjusted in the classroom, but as Ashok and Vivek pointed out in their interviews, an international community might be the only place where they feel and act like themselves.

Along with their previous experiences and knowledge about social life, international students bring prejudices and preconceived notions about other cultures and peoples. It can be seen in the confessions of the participants of this study that some of them came to the United States in anticipation of discrimination, which formed the basis for their particular interpretations of the behavior and attitudes of the Americans they encountered. It is hard to determine whether some of these feelings and concerns are based in reality, but it is likely that these students went through some very tough times and they may have been badly treated.

Some of the international students, especially Muslim students, suggested a difference between their moral values and those of the Americans. Some international students were quick to accuse Americans of having little or no moral values even though they (international students) hadn't been in the United States for longer than a semester. When international students refer to moral values, they are usually talking about sexual freedom, dating patterns, and choice of life style in the United States. In many countries in the world, issues like premarital sex, living with a partner before marriage, and gay relationships are absolute taboos.

Morality in the United States seems to be a very controversial issue which is discussed from many different angles from a variety of perspectives. The essays in Hurley (2000) express various views on controversial issues in American culture mainly focusing on moral values. The definition of morality is left quite vague in this book, but the writers mainly seemed to be referring to sexual freedom and family unity. Most writers seem to agree that there is a decline in moral values, but they can't agree on what and who to blame for this;

some, like Hilfiker, blame capitalism for the loss of moral values, while others, like Yancey, claim that “America’s secularism has reduced the concept of morality to a question of personal choice” (p. 35). Bennett suggests, “We live in a culture which at times seems almost dedicated to the corruption of the young, to assuring the loss of their innocence before their time” (p. 82). Bennett, who has recently been exposed as an addictive gambler, questions the early sexual explorations of young people which he presents as an almost social pressure. On the other hand, Morone believes that the moral corruption and social decay are “popular fiction” (p. 92). Some engage in a debate about whether consumerism and materialism lead to more social problems or are a positive force in the American society without much agreement.

Such disagreement about social problems (e.g., increasing divorce and crime rates), their cause, and possible solutions to them seem to reflect the variety and diversity of opinion and perspective in the United States, which is not surprising for such a multi-cultural and multi-religion community based on freedom of speech and importance of personal choice and individual opinion. However, some writers don’t appreciate the acceptance of such diversity and suggest imposing moral values by advocating “shame” for the recovery of American culture. Twitchell (1997) believes that the people are becoming more shameless every day and that is destroying the society. Among some of the advice he gives these stood out to me:

- “We need to make people feel very bad for careless reproduction habits. You certainly don’t need to call the offspring bastard, but you should consider calling *both* parents something derogatory regardless of race, sex, or class” (p. 212)
- “We need to make such well-meaning but ill-conceived programs as race norming, affirmative action, minority set-asides, and quota shameful (to many they already are) by providing equitable rewards for hard work, and special help for the genuinely disadvantaged” (p. 214).
- “We should bring back “the penalty of public shame...shunning” (p. 214).

His suggestions seem too archaic and practically impossible, but such notions are very common among certain religious extremist groups who believe that their mission from God is to bring social order, chastity, and morality to the whole United States in one uniform way.

With such differences in perspectives and attitudes among Americans themselves, it should come as no surprise that the acculturation experiences of immigrants and international students vary depending on why they come to the United States, what part of America they live in, or which country they come from (Danquah, 2000). Surely, the American culture that the international student sees in Mormon cities in Utah is not the same as the America she sees in Venice Beach, Los Angeles. However, there are some stereotypes, or sociotypes (stereotypes that are generally true), that can be made about American culture that would help the international students with their acculturation process.

Singh and Gopal's (2002) book *Americanization of New Immigrants* gives advice and suggestions to international students or immigrants who are planning to move to the United States in their near future. The writers highlight the individual nature of the American culture and the fact that people can appear to be self-centered or selfish (p. 21). They warn the students that Americans, especially those who live in small towns and aren't exposed to the rest of the world, have little awareness of foreign culture and they take their material wealth for granted (p. 4). Similar to the reports of the Indian students in Hull's study, Singh and Gopal emphasize that "Americans are quick in forming acquaintances and quick in breaking them, too. Because of the highly mobile nature of the society, friendships and relationships may be transitory and temporary. People may seem incredibly friendly, but generally this is a form of politeness. If they seem rude, this is probably a personal characteristic" (p.21-22).

Singh and Gopal also try to correct some misconceptions that many international students, especially those from conservative cultures, may have about Americans:

Prior to their arrival in America, some immigrants from Asia and other countries may have had preconceived notions about the sexually uninhibited behavior of Americans. In many parts of the world, people perceive Americans as obsessed with sex. This may not be true...There is no doubt that sex and its related topics are openly discussed on American television, perhaps more so than anywhere else. Men and women may engage in conversations related to sex in a mature and adult fashion, but this does not make them sexually promiscuous (p. 39)

It is apparent that many international students and immigrants form an opinion of American people and culture based on what they see in Hollywood movies and soap operas that are popular all over the world. Due to a lack of real life references, they assume direct connections between the American culture and the events and characters in these movies and TV shows. This results in wrongful cultural generalizations that they bring along when they arrive in the United States. Whether or not these biases go away or get stronger after their residence in the United States depends on the place they live, the people they meet and become friends with, and the extent to which their culture and traditions differ from the culture they experience here. My mission, however, wasn't to investigate the truth behind their suspicions and blame Americans for the traumas of the acculturation process of these international students. My desire, in this part of my analyses, was to report their early insights and perspectives about the life of a foreigner in the American culture and classroom.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter reviews the research design and research focus of the present study. An overview of the findings for the various focus points are summarized and pedagogical implications are offered. Directions for further research and suggestions for future projects are also be provided. This study investigated classroom interaction patterns of 35 international and 9 American students enrolled in one all-international and one mixed section of composition at the University of Arizona. Data were collected through classroom observations, teacher's journal, questionnaires, one-on-one interviews with the participants, and videotaped lectures, in-class small group work, and teacher-student conferences.

This study attempted to identify common interaction patterns within five culture groups in the two classes: Asian Indian, Japanese, Chinese, Middle Easterner, and American. Classroom interaction patterns that revealed the students' home culture or conveyed information about the interaction norms in educational institutions in their country were examined. This study also compared classroom dynamics in the two sections to report whether mixing Americans with international students causes differences in the classroom environment. Finally, this study investigated international students' personal reflections on being in a mixed section with Americans, their thoughts and feelings about American culture and people, and their adjustment difficulties in the United States.

Summary of Findings

I expected to see some common cultural patterns among students from the same country and predicted differences between the classroom dynamics and sense of community in the two

class settings. I also expected to see adjustment and adaptation difficulties in adjustment of the international participants, especially of those who don't have confidence in their English proficiency very or those who are from cultures that are in essence very different from Western cultures. My assumptions about the participants and the classrooms settings were proven to be accurate through the analysis of videotaped interactions, observation notes, teacher's journal notes, questionnaires, and interviews.

Common patterns within specific culture groups

[I]t seems undeniable that culture as 'the way of life of a people' is today problematic: there is so much diversity and interrelation within each different society that we can no longer easily speak of 'Japanese culture,' or 'American culture,' or 'Chinese culture' as unified, distinctive wholes, as opposed to other unified, distinctive wholes. What values do the Japanese college professor, laborer, housewife, feminist, punk rocker all share, as opposed to all their American counterparts? What behaviors do the American fundamentalist Christian, lesbian separatist, inner-city drug dealer, yuppie stock broker, Vietnamese immigrant, and Hasidic Jew all share, as opposed to all Japanese and Chinese? (Mathews, 2000: p. 5)

I examined common patterns within the specific culture groups in attempt to get an idea about the socio-cultural influences that guided the international students under investigation. My intention was not to come up with cultural generalizations that would categorize these students in small segments and label them in a certain way; rather, I wanted to see what the international students brought to the classroom with them from their countries and whether there were any similarities between their academic behaviors. The interactional patterns and classroom behavior of international students from the same culture varied depending on their personality, length of residence in the United States, English language proficiency, and self-confidence level, but there were some obvious like-culture similarities that students confirmed when interviewed.

The four Indian students I focused on were active and responsive members of classroom discussions, and they were usually the leaders and coordinators in small group work. Competitiveness and concern with grades also seemed to be a common characteristic of these Indian students, which probably enhanced their participation in class. Another distinctive characteristic of Indian men's interaction was the frequent interruptions and overlaps in their conversations. An unacceptable classroom behavior in many cultures (e.g., Japanese, American, and Turkish), interruptions and overlaps were strikingly prevalent in the interactions of the Indian participants. When they were giving presentations, they overlapped with each other constantly, answering questions from the class simultaneously, which led to a chaotic classroom situation. In teacher-student conferences, the Indian participants provided the teacher with backchannels accompanied by dramatic gestures and head shakes as well as verbal affirmations such as "Yes," "OK," "No problem."

However, interruptions and overlaps in a classroom setting contradict their classroom behavior in India. As confirmed by the interviews with Shah, Vivek, and Ashok, in India classes are mostly teacher-dominated and the students aren't encouraged to ask questions or actively participate in classroom discussions. However, they seemed to have adapted to the communicative environment in American classrooms easily. This smooth transition is might be due to their confidence in English, as they consider themselves native speakers despite the fact that some indicated self-consciousness about their accent or due to the intensive preparation and adaptation process they go through before arriving in the United States. This was an interesting and surprising finding, which requires special attention; it may be worthy of a future study focusing on Indian men's classroom behavior in American schools, comparing it to that of Indian students in Indian universities. It would also be interesting to compare

Indian students' interruption and interaction in their English classes, where they are some of the most proficient students in English, to their behavior in content classes where they are mixed with native speakers.

The Japanese students were another group that had similar classroom interactional patterns. They were quiet public speakers, and they usually preferred to remain silent in class, rarely raising their hands to ask a question or comment on the readings. Most of the time, the teachers had to call on these students personally to get them to speak up in class. Even in those cases, the students would keep their comments short and brief. Being in small groups or having individual conferences with the teacher have much effect on this behavior. In individual conferences, Japanese students never interrupted the teacher, tended to look at their papers often, backchanneled mainly by nodding, didn't ask many questions, and never challenged the teacher's suggestions. The Japanese students didn't dominate the conversations in small group work and they didn't assume the role of the spokesperson or the leader in their groups. Ayumi was the most talkative of all the 4 Japanese students observed, but even she didn't become the spokesperson or leader in small groups. She began to participate more actively in classroom discussions after getting more acquainted with her classmates and her teacher. The Japanese group reflected a common pattern in the Japanese communication system of not taking the spotlight in public and establishing social relationships before engaging in cooperative activities in a group (Donahue, 1998). This was especially clear in the case of Tatsuki and Sachiko's earlier group interaction patterns; they didn't feel comfortable interacting in small groups and kept their gazes on their desk or on the floor, rather than interacting with their group mates. All the Japanese participants were very respectful, polite, and modest in their classroom, small group, and conference interactions.

The 6 Chinese students confirmed that in a traditional Chinese classroom the teacher is the main authority and the students are passive receivers of knowledge who aren't supposed to ask questions or participate in discussions (Su & Su, 1994; Hammond & Gao, 2002; Narayanan, 2002). Most of the Chinese students brought this traditional attitude to their American classrooms unless they had spent considerable time in the United States, like Paige, or had attended American schools in their home countries, like Lee. In that case, they were comfortable participating in classroom discussions and didn't feel as self-conscious about their language skills as the other Chinese participants. The Chinese participants, other than Paige and Lee, became more comfortable in classroom interactions toward the end of the semester. The change in Adam's group work pattern and peer review confidence is a good illustration of this. This particular aspect of the Chinese students confirms Liu's (2001) analysis of Asian students' changing patterns of silence in a collaborative environment.

Some striking characteristics of the Asian students were their respect for the teacher and their classmates and their modesty. Their respect for the teacher was displayed in their interaction patterns in the individual conference in which they didn't interrupt the instructors and waited for a clear pause in her speech to ask a question or offer a comment. Unlike the Indians, Asian students listened to the teacher's comments carefully in the individual conferences, avoiding overlaps and disagreement. However, they backchanneled to make sure the teacher could see that they were following her advice and that they were paying attention.

The Middle Easterners in the AIS were an active group that offered interesting insights and comments in class. The Muslim women in the AIS, Nadiah and Aisha, were two of the most talkative students in class; they were open and candid in their discussions and expressions of opinion. The Muslim men, Ahmed and Aziz, were also active and outspoken in

class, taking lead in their group and asking meaningful questions to clarify any vague points. However, the two Middle Easterners in the MS, Ali and Nasreen, were very quiet and passive during whole group discussions. This group revealed more of their cultural and religious norms, such as perspectives on gender issues, marriage, and dating through classroom discussions and interview responses than cultural influences on their classroom interactional patterns.

The Middle Easterners were the strongest proponents of the all-international sections and expressed strong reservations about being in a mixed section with Americans. They reported the toughest and most traumatic cultural adjustment experiences of all groups. The three participants, Nadiyah, Nasreen, and Ahmed had the strongest reaction and dislike for American culture for various reasons. Ahmed expressed discomfort about the openness of American people in general about intimacy, and the two women expressed traumatic experiences of harassment for being Muslim. Being very clearly identifiable as Muslim, due to their head scarves and facial features, these two women were chased, disturbed, and offended by American men on several occasions; they learned to deal with cultural differences the hard way, but now they are confident that they can take care of themselves in any given situation.

The American group was divided into two categories as active participants (APG) and the quiet ones (QG) as a result of my previous assumptions about this group. The active participants were outspoken and relaxed in class. They were comfortable being the spokesperson in small groups, but they displayed discomfort at silence during lectures and tended to fill in the gaps before any other student. The APG students didn't hesitate to challenge and question the teacher in class when they disagreed with a comment or were frustrated about an activity, question, or suggestion. Kevin and Tom's straight-forward

challenges to Karen's classroom discussions questions and conference essay suggestions, respectively, were clear illustrations of this pattern. In addition to this Suzanne and Marianne's frequent questions about anything they were concerned about or unclear with suggests that these students didn't have a problem being active participants in class. On the other hand, the QG Americans spoke up only when an issue was relevant to their home culture or major, and they weren't as outspoken as the active participant group (e.g., Alison's active participation in the discussion about Mexican border issues due to her Mexican background). This distinction between the two native speaker groups might be attributed to their differences in home cultures (the quiet students were children of immigrants and a native American), personality traits, or upbringing and previous educational practices.

There might be some racial and ethnic connections behind this distinction. The active group was predominantly Anglo-Americans who seemed to be presenting the "American" way of interacting in class. The quieter students were from minority groups and may not have felt the need to take on the expected or mainstream American attitudes. The Anglo-Americans perceived their culture as an active, talkative, and outspoken culture (as they indicate in their questionnaires), and therefore, they may have felt more of an obligation to behave as Americans than the participants from minority groups. The American group presented a diversity of characters and attitudes in the classroom, which wasn't surprising given the diversity of the American culture and people, and the fact that it was by far the largest group of students.

Classroom environment in the AIS and the MS

In general, the students in the AIS seemed more comfortable with each other and acted more as a community than the mixed group did. The international students in both groups reported solidarity among themselves as an international group and positioned Americans as a different entity (Us versus U.S.). Some of the international student participants commented that they were all the same whether they came from India or Indonesia or Japan, but they highlighted that American culture is very different from any other culture in the world. As Ahmed explained in his interview, any two cultures in the world can have some similarities with each other, but American culture is different from all other cultures. This distancing was out in the open and more apparent in the classroom discussions in the AIS than it was in the MS.

Naturally, when there were no Americans in the classroom (not even the instructor was American), the AIS students vented their anger, frustration, and criticism of American culture and people, expressing their unity as international students. Some of the international students I interviewed openly said “we are the same” when referring to the international community around them. Sharing their common perceptions of Americans and revealing similarities among the different cultures during classroom discussions enhanced the sense of community and unity in this section.

In emphasizing the differences between themselves and Americans, the international students in the AIS often criticized Americans for their weak morals and inappropriate classroom manners (e.g., putting feet up on chairs, eating, drinking, asking too many questions, talking too much, etc.) during classroom discussions or in interviews. The international students criticized Americans for, among other things, talking too much and too fast, asking simple questions and wasting class time, and being sexually promiscuous.

Another issue that came up in the classroom discussions and interviews was how little some American students knew of other cultures and the international policies of their country and their effects on the rest of the world. The Muslim students were especially enraged about being generalized and treated as dangerous criminals because of the September 11th attacks. These open criticisms about Americans were never brought up in the classroom discussions of the MS, but the AIS students often voiced their concerns and difficulties.

The AIS students reported a stronger sense of community rather than just classmates cohabitating in the same class for the determined class period. The AIS had a workshop environment where the international students collaborated in group tasks and actively participated in classroom discussions. This collectivist and communal atmosphere in the AIS contrasted with the individualistic and competitive atmosphere in the MS. Classroom discussions were lively and most of the students, even those who reported low self-confidence in their English skills, participated frequently and collaborated in small group work. Many students related the classroom discussion topics to their culture and enlivened the discussions with illustrations from their home countries while the rest of their classmates listened attentively and asked insightful questions. As the similarities between cultures were revealed, the conversations became more personal and heated, resulting in the active involvement of even the quietest students. Group work was fun in the AIS; the students connected on a personal level and discussed issues other than the given classroom topics when they got together in small group tasks. In the whole group discussions, the AIS students presented a very comfortable and relaxed approach in dealing with the topics, offering opinions and raising controversial issues freely.

The MS students, on the other hand, mostly “cohabitated” in the same class, working in small groups and engaging in teacher-directed discussions for the duration of class sessions without attempting to form friendships outside of class. These participants didn’t report a strong sense of community or willingness for collaboration. Especially between the American and international participants in the MS, not very many instances of out-of-class contact or discussions of personal issues were reported or observed. For example, during the MS group conferences, many students didn’t communicate with their group mates and depended mainly on the instructor for feedback and help on their essays. Students usually worked in culturally mixed groups (Americans and international students in the same conference group), and they didn’t offer any comments or suggestions for their group mates’ essays during the conferences. The conversations were directed by the instructor and the direction of interaction was mostly from teacher to student and student to teacher.

The group conferences in the AIS were more cooperative than those in the MS in the sense that students were more willing to offer constructive criticism to each other than the MS participants. The AIS group conferences weren’t as teacher-dependent as those in the MS. As the instructor of the AIS, I sometimes didn’t have to offer any comments on a student’s essay because his group mates would provide the suggestions that I had in mind. During some group conferences, I acted merely as the meeting organizer nodding and backchanneling in agreement with the students’ comments on each other’s drafts. In most of the groups, the direction of interaction varied from teacher to student, teacher to the whole group, and student to student. Sometimes there were overlaps in conversations when a student tried to clarify a point to his or her group mate while another student posed a question to the teacher, which was an uncommon phenomenon in the MS group conferences.

Mixed feelings about mixed sections

Being a 'stranger in a strange land' involves countless stresses. There is grief over loss of the familiar, feelings of homesickness and alienation, cultural nuances to grasp and interpret, new customs and ways of living to grow accustomed to, and often a foreign language to learn
(Hull, 1978: p. 61).

The international students, especially those in the AIS, indicated a strong aversion to being in a mixed section with Americans. Some of them were self-conscious about their language skills, so they didn't want to communicate with native speakers, fearing miscommunication. Not feeling proficient enough in their English skills was a discouraging point for some international students, especially the Asians. As Liu (2001) explains, low proficiency in English and not being able to speak fluently may result in a loss of *Miánzi* (prestige as a public figure) for Asian students (p. 204). This is especially important for the Chinese students:

Chinese face identifies a desire or hope to gain prestige and reputation through public acknowledgement. That is, when an individual obtains *Miánzi* in Chinese, that individual is recognized and accepted by the community. For instance, by keeping quiet in class, some Asian students can avoid making mistakes, and thus they will not lose their *Miánzi* (Liu, 2001: p. 205).

The possibility of making grammatical mistakes and being misunderstood (or not at all understood) because of their accent or choice of vocabulary while trying to communicate with native speakers causes great anxiety for these students. When these encounters take place in English classes, international students become more frustrated and anxious. However, in all-international classes there is the comfort of the knowledge that they are all non-native speakers of English and everyone can make mistakes.

Some of the international students were still not familiar with American culture and were having a hard time adjusting to a new way of life; they had cultural conflicts that worried them in their interactions with Americans. Some of them thought that Americans didn't like or want to talk to foreigners, and this perception prevented the international students from acting like themselves around Americans. Tatsuki thought that Americans didn't like talking to him and they thought he "wasn't good man" because he was very quiet. Similarly, Ayumi insisted that she can't make American friends because of her English and because they don't like talking to foreigners. Nasreen and Costas also believed that Americans didn't like talking to or being around foreigners; they speculated that Americans didn't dislike being in the same class with international students, but they didn't want to make friends with them.

The AIS participants reported stronger reservations about mixed sections than those who were already in the MS under observation. Some of the international students, such as Ashok, Ahmed, and Nadiyah, indicated that they had experienced discrimination in America, so they developed a rather negative attitude towards the people of this country. Some others had a negative self-image based on their perceptions of Americans' feelings about their language and social skills. They considered this perceived self image (Goffman, 1971) to be unattractive to Americans, because they were quiet and had weak language skills. They believed that because their English was bad and they were quiet in group work, Americans wouldn't like to be with them. Similarly, those who were self-conscious about their accents, like Ashok, believed that Americans didn't want to be friends with them because they couldn't understand their speech. Due to all these assumptions and perceived negative feelings, some international students avoid being friends with or being in the same class with Americans. The latter of course is very difficult in the United States, because as Shah mentioned in his

interview, “this is American land” and there is no escape from interaction with native speakers.

The international students in the MS had mixed responses to this issue. Some of them praised mixed sections emphasizing that it was a great idea to place native and non-native speakers in the same English class, but some expressed reservations about these sections for various reasons. For example, Rosy confirmed that she was more comfortable in the all-international English 106 class she had taken a semester before this class and stressed that she was a more active participant in that class. She attributed this reservation to her English skills and the speech rate of her American classmates. She was frustrated because her American classmates thought and talked fast and they responded more quickly than the international students. She complained that by the time she formed a response in her mind, one of the Americans had already answered the question or expressed the opinion she was planning on presenting, so she couldn't participate in classroom discussions very effectively. Some of the students mentioned that they felt self-conscious about talking in front of an “American audience,” because they weren't comfortable with their English skills. Like the AIS participants, the international students in the MS underlined the fact that the international students had similar backgrounds, which made it easier for them to relate to each other and have empathy about the language difficulties they had. Therefore, they thought it was less tense to speak up in a class of all foreigners.

The Indian students in the MS, like the ones in the AIS, didn't express a strong preference for all-international sections. Shah was a strong supporter of mixed sections, because he thought it was helpful in getting to know American culture and people better and Nihir explained that in a mixed section students talked about all kinds of controversial issues

that they avoided in the all-international section he took a semester before. Some students indicated that they wouldn't have a different attitude whether they were in a MS or an AIS. Fabiola said she would still be quiet in class but collaborative in small group work, because she was comfortable around Americans. Nasreen and Akiko stated that their classroom attitude would be the same; they would still be very quiet and not participate much in class. Nasreen highlighted that she would prefer an AIS, because she didn't want native speakers to laugh at her when she made a mistake. Her nervousness about being ridiculed for her English made her anxious in the MS. Nasreen also believed that the international students were disadvantaged in a mixed English class, because the Americans got better grades without much effort and she didn't get a good grade despite the fact that she worked really hard. However, when I talked to Karen, she agreed with me that the best writers in a mixed class are usually international students, and Americans had as much problems with their writing as non-native speakers. Nasreen's worries were probably based on a single incident or a single comment by a native speaker; the situation wasn't as unequal or unfair as she describes it to be.

Kevin, the only American student interviewed, had positive things to say about his experience in the MS. He thought that despite their language difficulties, his international classmates had good ideas and they were educated. However, he admitted that when he was in an all-American class (mainstream English 100), he had more in common with his classmates and they understood each other better. This seems to indicate that he felt more comfortable and better understood in an all-American class. Kevin didn't show a preference for mixed sections or didn't express any enthusiasm about being around international students and learning about other cultures. He seemed to fit in the description that Nasreen made about

Americans; he liked having them in his class when he had to, but would prefer the company of Americans in social life. Kevin didn't develop any social relationships with his international classmates, but he was very collaborative and polite in small group tasks with them.

In sum, the questionnaires and interviews showed that the international students in the AIS had stronger reservations about mixed sections than those who have already been in a MS. Maybe these students feared the unknown and their predictions of what a mixed section of English might be like scared them to the extreme that they made comments like Nadiyah's promise that she would take an 8 o'clock class even if it was the only available AIS, rather than taking a MS at a more convenient time. However, many international students in the MS reported that they were fine with the Americans in their class and that their classmates were nice to them. This may indicate that once international students work with Americans and participate in classroom work with them, their anxiety and fear about their native speakers peers may decrease. This is at least true for those international students who have been in the United States for a while and have had sufficient practice with their spoken English (e.g., Lee, Fabiola, Paige) to carry on conversations in English with confidence.

English proficiency and fluency seems to be the biggest concern for international students in their reactions towards mixed sections. Those who have a good command of English and can express themselves freely linguistically and socially seem to enjoy the mixed sections as much as (and in some cases more than) the all-international sections. Another issue that reflected on the feelings of international students about working with Americans was their negative experiences outside of class. Some of the students (e.g., Nasreen, Nadiyah, Ahmed, and Ashok) experienced harassment and discrimination in the United States, which resulted in negative feelings towards Americans. They generalize the negative attitude and

prejudice to all Americans and fear that they will be discriminated against or disliked by the Americans they meet in their classrooms. Therefore, they get nervous about being in a mixed class, because that signals the possibility of more bad experiences.

Living in America

[W]hen better adjusted people seek Americans for friends, they are more accepted by them. Those who are maladjusted and so not able to move about easily and comfortably with Americans are unlikely to form many solid ties. These two possibilities are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, they may work together to form a vicious cycle. Poor adjustment is conducive to rejection by Americans. Rejection, in turn, causes a worsening of adjustment, which hampers acceptance, and so on...[A]cculturative stress is associated with poor relations with the dominant society (Hull, 1978: p. 70).

All of the international students expressed difficulties with living in the United States. Some of them recalled instances of discrimination that affected them emotionally and hurt their self-image or their perceptions of the people in the United States. This feeling of rejection may have led to a maladjustment which could lead to psychological problems (Hull, 1978). The international students don't fit in this culture for different reasons. The Middle Easterners suffer from religious and moral conflicts, and they believe that Americans are hostile against them because of their religion. Their social codes and perspectives about social interactions are significantly different from those in the United States, so they face acculturation problems. Some other international students, such as Ayumi, Tatsuki, Ann, and Costas feel uncomfortable in social interactions because of their language skills. The added concern of weak English speaking skills make their cultural adaptation more painful than it might otherwise be.

In addition to facing the pressures of succeeding in a new academic environment, making new friends, and learning a new way of life in a foreign country, they face the challenges of overcoming daily communication problems. This leads to more stress and can also alienate them from the host culture, which in turn causes them to stick with their fellow countrymen or other foreigners, resulting in what Hull refers to as the “vicious cycle” (1978). Another explanation for the negative experiences of international students can be more internal than external.

When international students are emotionally vulnerable (i.e., they feel homesick or they can't adjust to the new environment), they tend to look for an explanation for this disturbance (Young & Davis-Russell, 2002). They may end up channeling their maladjustment and homesickness towards the American culture and blame the host culture for their depression. This means that the negative attitudes, discrimination, or unfriendly attitudes of Americans can be exaggerated perceptions of the individuals as a result of their homesickness or emotional difficulty in acculturating to the new social environment. Whether the negative attitudes towards Americans are perceived or real, they seem to be causing stress and anxiety in the international students to the extent that they don't want to be with Americans in the same class. As a result, they see the all-international sections as a haven where they can go and relax for a short period of time before they go out in to the jungle again.

These adjustment difficulties not only impact their social life and psychological state, but also their classroom participation and academic choices. Feelings of being unwanted, disliked, and discriminated against manifest themselves in the classroom interaction of these students. In this study, these manifestations took two different forms: one was passivity in

classroom participation, such as quietness and social avoidance, and the other was an active and conscious avoidance of Americans by enrolling in all-international sections instead of mixed sections. In the AIS, the international students had a safe zone where they could communicate and interact with their classmates without being judged for their looks, accents, or English proficiency.

Experiencing discrimination usually results in avoidance of social interactions with Americans in and out of class. Both Nadiah and Ashok reported that they enjoy all-international sections more than mixed sections with Americans, because they don't feel negative vibes from their classmates, so they don't feel the need to be quiet and hide in a corner like they do in sections with Americans. Similarly, Ashok highlighted that he felt more comfortable and could be himself in the AIS, because there wasn't a possibility of being judged and snubbed by Americans in that class. Dealing with this issue in academic life poses difficulties for the instructors. It is impossible for international students to avoid Americans, because they are in the United States and as Shah says they will be around Americans in all their classes. To overcome this cross-cultural problem, Americans need to be more open-minded and more understanding of the difficulties of foreigners in their country by leaving their prejudices behind and forming deeper understanding of the international community. International students also need to leave their fear and anxiety aside and attempt to present their culture clearly and patiently to overcome prejudice. International students can also try to approach Americans who may be interested in making friends with foreigners, but don't know how to initiate communication.

Instructors with cultural sensitivity and an understanding for both sides can initiate efforts to form a mutual understanding between these two groups. Helping students

understand the differences, troubles, fears, and perceptions of each other enables an instructor to create a collaborative and tolerant classroom environment in which students learn to communicate with people from different backgrounds. Also, having international students explain their cultural perspective to eliminate any biases on the side of the host culture and having Americans share their cultural ideals with the international community can enhance the sense of community in a classroom.

Religious and moral conflicts have also had an impact on the educational experience of international students. Middle Easterner students reported religious and moral issues as big factors affecting their social and academic lives. The manifestations of these conflicts are usually on a personal communication level in the classroom. Middle Easterners, those from strict Muslim communities, aren't used to working in co-ed classrooms interacting with classmates of the other gender. Nasreen and Nadiah mentioned this traditional norm and expressed some difficulties in working with men in class. Both women have got used to the American way of education, but they have trouble shaking hands with men when they meet them or accepting compliments from strange men no matter how innocent or casual they may be. One difference between Nasreen who was in the MS and Nadiah and Aisha who were in the AIS was that the women in the AIS were more outspoken. Nadiah explains this by saying that she felt more comfortable in an international community and didn't mind working with her male classmates as long as they didn't want to touch her or shake her hand.

This raises the question of what might be the impact of working with Americans in the same classroom. Ahmed clarifies this by admitting that he doesn't feel comfortable working with American women, because they are more open-minded and liberal than he is. He views America as the most sexually open society, so he has trouble relating to people whom he

perceived as having “weak morals.” Therefore, working with Americans or people of the other gender might be problematic for international students from conservative cultures, such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, or Iran. However, in American classrooms communicative and collaborative activities are often part of the syllabus and students are expected to work together in co-ed and mixed-culture groups. Even the most conservative students may get used to this practice sooner or later, but this process can be more traumatizing for some.

It’s important for instructors to explain the pedagogical advantages behind these collaborative practices and help students understand the advantages of group work and interaction in mixed-gender groups. An analogy can be made between working in mixed-gender groups and working in mixed-culture groups. If teachers can explain that working with people of the other gender is an enriching and interesting experience like working with people from different cultures is fun and informative, students might be more open to this idea. However, this perspective shouldn’t be imposed on the students at the beginning of their classroom experience, especially if they are from very conservative families or communities. Instructors can initially place these students in same-sex groups and give students some time to see the naturalness of this practice in the real life setting. Meeting with the students to talk about these issues on a regular basis might also be beneficial in conveying to the students that co-ed interaction and collaboration is not an immoral issue but an enriching educational experience. This coaching may help students see that American academic practice is a cultural difference they need to get used to, not a challenge to their beliefs and life styles.

Another sociocultural adjustment issue reported by the students was the way they were expected to address the teacher. Some students presented discomfort in addressing the instructors by their first names rather than by a formal address form. For example, Shah

indicated that he had to work for one week in front of the mirror before he could call Karen by her first name. Some other students showed this in their e-mails by avoiding an address form in the text (i.e., started the message by just saying “Hi” or “Hello”) or combining the first name with a formal address form (e.g., “Miss Betil”). Towards the end of the semester, most students felt comfortable enough to address the instructors by their first names, but some didn’t change their formal forms.

In many cultures, addressing instructors by their first names is an inconceivable educational practice, but in the United States, especially in higher educational institutions, many professors allow students to call them by their first names to be friendly, approachable, and less formal. When international students come to the United States with the idea that informal address forms are disrespectful, they have a hard time switching their norms of conduct with professors. This new practice can be surprising, relieving, shocking, or frustrating depending on the individual student. Getting used to this norm depends on the student’s former educational practices, experiences in American schools, and relationship with the instructor. Some need more time to get more acquainted with their instructor to be able to call her by her first name (e.g., Ayumi, Nadiah, and Shah) and some can never switch their style to an informal one (e.g., Akiko, Tatsuki, and Aisha) even at the end of the semester.

A final adjustment difficulty reported by the international students which caused difficulty in their academic life was their English skills. Students like Tatsuki and Ayumi think that because of their weak English skills they cannot make friends with Americans; therefore, they become timid and introverted when they are in a class. Having language difficulties and perceiving themselves as undesirable because of these difficulties impacts their classroom participation. Students get quiet and don’t participate in classroom discussions.

Tatsuki and Akiko are good examples of this issue, because they remained very quiet during classroom discussions due to their lack of fluency in English as well as their cultural norms of classroom conduct. Even Ashok, who grew up speaking English, was self-conscious of his accent. He was very comfortable and outspoken in the AIS, but he reports that when he is with Americans he gets quiet because he thinks his accent scares people away and prevents him from making friends with native speakers.

The fear of making mistakes in front of native speakers makes international students less talkative and less active in classroom discussions, especially when there are Americans in the classroom. This affects the classroom dynamics, comfort level and class satisfaction of students, and the collaborative atmosphere of the classrooms. As Ozzy and Rosy argue international students feel more free to talk in class when there are only international students around, but when they are in the presence of Americans, they don't raise their voice that much. As a result, their communication with their American classmates becomes limited to teacher-assigned group work and doesn't develop into social relationships.

Instructors can initiate social activities in which international and American students would meet and have informal conversations so that international students get to speak with native speakers and practice their English, and Americans would get a chance to become familiar with different accents and develop a cross-cultural understanding. Encouraging students to listen to the news, watch TV, read books and magazine, and engage in social relationships with native speakers can enhance their academic life and help reduce their fear of talking in mixed classes.

Pedagogical Implications

Attitudinal and cultural differences create major distinctions between international and native English-speaking students. In most basic writing courses, international students recognize the hostility among some native English-speaking students who resent being placed in the same class as international students (whose linguistic limitations may be wrongly interpreted as signs of stupidity) (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996: p. 249).

Native speakers of English and ESL students have different cultures and writing styles, which may make a mixed section challenging for the teacher and torturous for some students. L2 writers take longer to plan and organize their essays (Silva, 1992) and they have different rhetorical patterns (Severino, 1993). Therefore, it seems essential to place L2 writers in separate sections instead of being in the mainstream classes with native speakers. In addition, the teachers of L2 students should be ESL professionals with adequate experience and knowledge about the cultural and linguistic challenges these students are facing (Silva, 1993). It is important for the instructors to know about the linguistic and cultural background of their students in order to appreciate the insights and reflections of the ESL learners (Dong, 1999).

The international participants in this study displayed a strong preference for all-international groups over mixed groups for various reasons. Therefore, I think it would be better to keep them separate in their English composition classes, so they don't feel like they are competing with native speakers in their English skills. This can also enhance their learning experience because, as this study suggests and as I have observed in various all-international classes I have taught, they tend to form closer collaborative communities among themselves when they are in all-international classes.

They express themselves freely without worrying about making mistakes in the all-international classes because they don't feel intimidated by the presence of native speakers.

At least the Writing Program should give the students an alternative. Some Indian students, students who have been in the United States for a while, and students who are from a culture similar to American culture seem to enjoy the mixed group interaction, so they should have the option of being in these sections. This, of course, requires a clear announcement and identification of the mixed sections.

The mixed sections offered at the University of Arizona are available for sign up on-line. There is a short note indicating that these sections are open to both international and American students, but my experience has been that the students never read these notes. They usually look at the day, time, and availability of seats while signing up for classes, and register for a mixed section without realizing it. So it may be helpful not to open these sections for on-line sign up and to ask students to add these sections through the Writing Program. When students come to add the course, the classroom situation should be explained to them and they should be allowed to decide if they want to be in a mixed section. That way the American students won't be annoyed when they find out they have to spend the semester with foreigners with accents they can't quite understand and the international students won't feel intimidated by their native speaker peers and dread their English writing classes. Another way of raising awareness and knowledge of these sections is to prepare a brochure or handout to be sent to the applicants or be put in the orientation packages of newcomers. The orientation leaders, then, can draw the attention of the students to the fact that some sections of composition are open to both international and American students, so the ones who are interested in being in these sections can voluntarily join and avoid unpleasant surprises.

A classroom-based pedagogical implication that I would like to present is that small group activities seem to be efficient in enhancing interaction among students. Most of the

participants reported in their questionnaires and interviews that it was more comfortable to talk and express opinions in small group tasks than speaking up in large-group discussions. In discussion-based courses like these writing classes, letting students work in groups of 3 or 4 helps them to brainstorm on the topics and enables them get to know each other better. Small group activities give all students a chance to express themselves without feeling the pressure of making a mistake in front of the whole class and the teacher. Considering that the international students are self-conscious about their English language skills, it seems almost essential to take the spotlight pressure off their shoulders. This not only helps them with their social skills but also protects their mental and emotional health.

Another suggestion that I have to assist the international students through their challenging adaptation to the American university is to have required acculturation classes. It was very clear from the classroom discussions in the AIS that these students want to vent their anger and frustration. This anger may be coming from mistreatment or emotional instability resulting from being in a strange culture. Acculturation classes geared towards sharing cultural conflicts and ways of dealing with difficulties would enhance the adjustment process of foreigners. These classes would be places for students to ask questions about things they don't understand about American culture. Seeing that they are not the only ones going through difficult times might take the pressure and stress away, and belonging to an accepting community could empower them. This course could be designed through a collaboration of ESL instructors and counselors, and these two groups of professionals could co-teach the classes.

Undoubtedly, offering such classes brings financial burden to schools, and as the international students are a "minority" group in most universities, the administrators may not

be willing to spend the money to provide such a service. The University of Arizona has counseling services for students, but these are private sessions. Also, the counselor's awareness of the challenges of the acculturation stress may not be adequate in dealing with the troubles of these students. Therefore, a collaboration of a psychology professional with an instructor that is trained in dealing with the international population may be very fruitful.

I have suggested several different approaches for the various adjustment difficulties detailed in the previous chapter and the section above relevant problems, so I will not repeat them here. As teachers of international students, it is, to a certain extent, our responsibility to try to make the classroom experience of these students enjoyable and comfortable. Knowing the impacts of social adjustment problems on students' classroom behavior and participation would help instructors approach the students with more sympathy and empathy. Working with students to bring these problems out in the open, talk about them, and provide assistance in any possible way would enhance the learning environment and classroom interaction.

Recommendations for Further Research

Having a variety of data collection techniques and triangulating the data were incredibly useful practices, and these practices made the study valid and consistent. I suggest to future researchers to have a variety of complementary methods of gathering data, and I strongly recommend videotaping interactions. It is invaluable to be able to go back to the original interaction during analysis and interpretation. Taped data provides an objective perspective in looking at interactions during analysis. Especially for teacher-researchers who wish to study their own classes, videotaping the sessions is the only way to collect detailed

data. Teacher's journals are good for reflective analysis, but it is impossible to remember much of what went on in a classroom after it is over.

In this study, there are some aspects that can be strengthened by further, more focused research. For example, a separate question for the American students to respond to in the questionnaires can be prepared and the perspective of American students about mixed sections can be examined. My focus was mainly on international students and their feelings about the mixed sections so I didn't examine this issue, but it would be interesting to see how Americans react to being with the international group in their classroom. This study didn't aim to make cultural generalizations; however, for a more confident discussion of cultural patterns, more international students can be observed. The cultural interpretations in this project were limited to the analyses of the behaviors of a few participants from each culture. However, a larger scale study that involves observations of several mixed and all-international classes with a larger number of participants from all the cultures of interest could reveal more accurate and significant cultural generalizations. Observing these students in their content classes and comparing their interaction, participation, and confidence level to those in their English classes would be another interesting project. .

A further study can observe the international participants of this study interacting with their fellow countrymen or interacting with native speakers in other classes. In an ideal ethnography, the researcher is expected to observe the participants in a variety of social and academic roles, but such an extensive analysis on the lives of these participants requires extended time and resources. This study was limited to examining classroom interaction patterns, but a project with more funding and time can attempt to cover more ground by

having multiple interviews with the participants and observing them in both academic and social settings.

An interesting cultural pattern that came out in the analysis of the classroom behavior of Indian men was their active and almost aggressive enthusiasm in talking and expressing themselves. As all Indian participants reported, being active in class, overlapping with other speakers, and interrupting the teacher aren't common educational practices in India.

According to some Indian cultural informants, however, this type of behavior is very common in social life. Therefore, it would be fascinating to examine whether this behavior is a cultural contradiction or a social revelation.

Both of the instructors in this study were females, so it would be compelling to examine whether classroom interaction behavior of international students (or students from a specific culture of interest) would be different if they had male instructors. Most students reported that the gender of the instructor wouldn't make a difference in their attitudes, but it would be interesting to observe this in a real classroom situation. Similarly, examining a mixed class taught by an international or non-native speaker teacher and an all-international class taught by an American teacher would be fascinating in terms of making comparisons between classroom dynamics, students' participation behavior, and international students' comfort in expressing opinions about American culture and people.

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APPENDIX A

Observation Sheet

Date:	
Total number of students present:	
Students of special interest:	
Topic of the day:	
Activities and assignments for the day:	
Special notes:	

Classroom Layout

(Teacher, students, observer, etc.)



Check sheet for verbal interaction

Time	Speaker ✓							
	Instructor		NS Student			NNS Student		
	To NS	To NNS	To Inst	To NS	To NNS	To Inst	To NS	To NNS
:00								
:30								
1:00								
1:30								
2:00								
2:30								
3:00								
3:30								
4:00								
4:30								
5:00								
5:30								
6:00								
6:30								
7:00								
7:30								
8:00								
8:30								
9:00								
9:30								
10:00								
	Instructor		To Inst	To NS	To NNS	To Inst	To NS	To NNS
			NS Student			NNS Student		

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire

The purpose of this study is to examine the interactional patterns in multi-cultural composition classes during teacher lectures and small group work (e.g. peer review sessions, conferences, etc.). The researcher aims to look at the differences and similarities of interaction behavior between the students in the all-international sections and those in the mixed sections of freshman composition.

Personal information (to be used for research purposes only):

Age:

Sex (circle one): MALE FEMALE

Religion (optional):

Country you are from:

Other countries you have lived (including the USA) and the duration of your stay (DO NOT include places you visited as a tourist):

Native language:

Other languages you speak:

Part 1: PLEASE INDICATE HOW STRONGLY YOU AGREE/ DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS. TAKE YOUR ENGLISH CLASS INTERACTIONS AS BASIS WHILE ANSWERING.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel comfortable asking questions during teacher lectures if something is unclear to me.				
I enjoy working in small groups.				
I feel comfortable working with people from different cultures in small groups.				
I feel comfortable working with people from the other sex in small groups				
I do not participate in classroom discussions because I do not think my English is good enough.				
I do not participate in classroom discussions because I am uncomfortable about talking in public.				

I do not ask questions of clarifications to my teacher because I do not want to challenge his/her authority.				
I prefer to remain quiet in class because that is the way classes are conducted in my country.				
The cultural and social conventions I grew up in prevent me from being more active in class.				
The cultural and social norms I grew up with prevent me from being critical of my classmates' work in peer revision.				
In my country, it is not very conventional to be active in class and ask questions to the teacher, but I do it here in the US.				

Part 2: PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BRIEFLY:

1. How do you think your cultural background affects the way you interact with other people (i.e. how do the social norms in your country shape your attitude towards communication with others? How did your family or schooling in your country affect the way you talk to people?)

2. (For students in the all-international sections) If you were in a mixed section of English 107 or 108 and were together with American students, how would your attitude be different in terms of asking questions in class, talking during lectures, working in small groups, etc.?

(For students in the mixed sections) If you were in an all-international section of English 107 or 108, how would your attitude be different in terms of asking questions in class, talking during lectures, working in small groups, etc.? Would you feel more comfortable? Why?

3. Are you more comfortable talking in small groups than talking during whole group discussions? Please explain briefly.

4. Are you more comfortable talking to your teacher during individual conferences (or office hours) than in lectures? Please explain briefly.

5. What would help you to be more active and talkative in class or in small groups?

APPENDIX C

Sample Topic Transcription of a Lecture

Tape Number: Tape 22

Date: April 9, 2002

Class: English 107

Type of class: Whole group, lecture

Topic of the day: Discussion about the readings on “love”

Time	Interaction direction	Type of interaction
0:00	T→Ss; S→T; T→S	T is telling them she sent an e-mail telling Ss the handouts are on her desk. T gives away the schedule to Ss who don't have it. Maria says they didn't get them. T reminded them of the listserv. T and Maria talk about error messages and signing up for listserv.
1:17	T→Ss; Ss→T; S→T	T says so and changes topic to the readings she has for them. T tells them she has 3 readings. T says they are about her favorite topic and the most important aspect of the life of a human being (1). Ashok asks love life. T says bingo. Ss laugh. Some Ss make dramatic sounds. T imitates them and gives away handouts joking and imitating Ss' objection. Ss laugh.
2:02	S→T; T→Ss' T→S	Maria asks what is love and says chemistry jokingly. T says they will find out. Maria says love is torture. T comments. T says she will get her presents in a little bit (2). T says wonderful birthday presents (3). Ashok says happy birthday. Maria asks when her b-day is. T says Friday. Ss all say ohhh. Maria says she will too. T imitates the excitement yelling with Ss. T asks if she will be 22 as well. M says stop it jokingly and says 32. T says 22 and jokes with her about her age. T confesses she will be 28. Maria hints her age. Ss laugh.
3:17	T→S	Ozzy comes in late. T says come in. Ss look. T points to a seat for him and he sits there.
3:25	T→Ss	T talks about the readings. T says they are all about love. T talks about the Chinese folktale, English folktale, and mentions that the third one is by Ayumi. T asks if anyone heard of Sufism, Mevlana. Nadiyah says yeah. T discusses more about the writer. T wraps up that discussion.
4:27	T→Ss	T announces that they will talk about Cinderella. T says they are very excited about this sarcastically. T says first she will collect her presents.

5:05	T→Ss; S→T; T→S	<p>Ashok says happy b-day and gives her the essay. Anh says her present is their pain and smiles. T laughs and jokes. Ss talk among themselves while Ozzy asks her a Q. T keeps on collecting the essays. T come to Alan's and laughs.</p> <p>T tells the Ss to look at Alan's essay (4). Ss laugh and say aaaahhh. Ashok teases him. T thanks him. T continues to collect essays. Mayar asks if her can give a folder later. T says she needs a foldr and it has to be exactly like the one Alan gave her. T explains why it's important for them to put their tgs in a folder.</p>
5:48	S→T; T→S	<p>Aisha says she turned it in yesterday but she doesn't know if she got it. T asks where. K says English office. T says OK. K says she redid the essay and asks if it's OK. T says if she doesn't have two copies she should it to her on Friday. K says OK. T asks any more to class. T says Ahmed. A asks if she got his e-mail. T says no. A asks stg. T says they need to talk after class. T says they couldn't meet yesterday (5). Mayar asks if he can give it to her later. T asks only if it's like Alan's folder or not jokingly. Ss laugh.</p>
6:28	T→Ss; S→T; T→S	<p>T announces that the second essay is done and gestures exhaling and Ss make sound. T announces they have 2.5 weeks to go. Aisha says yeah. K asks if they can sign up for presentations. Ss talk among themselves. T says she doesn't have a sign up sheet, so they'll do it next time. T give sback the WA's. Ashok asks how they know their grade. T begins to explain. Aisha exclaims that she has the wrong one. T switches assignments. Anh asks what good means. T says when she says good it means good. Anh jokes about real good . T responds.</p>
7:57	T→SS	<p>T stops and looks around waiting for Ss to stop talking. T says her foot hurts so they should be nice to her. Ashok show sympathy. Ozzy asks Q about handout. T says readings for next time. Ozzy says it's a lot to himself.</p>
8:18	T→Ss	<p>T says they are very tiring today and asks what happened (6). Ashok jokes about dancing. T responds sarcastically. T says there was stg she wnate dot say. T asks who will call for order. T says the whole class and says attention. Ss hush down. T announces the beginning of third unit and that they won't have too much time for it. T asks for a schedule to see how much time they have. Ayumi gives her a schedule. Some Ss comment.</p>
9:20	T→Ss; Ss→T	<p>T says OK and announces they are looking at personal context today and tells them what they'll do next week. Ss follow from schedule sheets. T announces individual presentations. Ss make frightened voice. T continues to talk about them explaining. Aisha repeats 5 to 7 in amazement. Ss object. T asks if they know how long professional presentations are and mentions. Ss guess. T describes the situation and what they should wear. Ss show surprise. Ozzy asks if she can buy for him. T says no and he should buy it himself; it's a presentation.</p>
10:28	T→Ss	<p>T says guys should wear tuxedos and girls should wear evening dresses (7). Ss laugh and ask Q's believing her for a while. T says everyone should</p>

11:13	T→Ss; S→T; T→S	<p>come in a professional looking way. Maria asks if she can wear jeans, Ashok asks if they can wear shorts. T says she can't believe it and says they can wear whatever they want. Maria says she was kidding. Ss show relief. T says nobody gets her jokes.</p> <p>T says so and talks about audio-visual aids in presentation and says it will be the first draft. T says they will talk about the assignment in a minute so it will be clear. T says it is 10 percent but it's not a big deal it is just five minutes. Aisha says they can lose a whole grade in 5 minutes. T says probably not. T says if they are there presenting talking about the essay they won't lose grades. Ashok asks for confirmation that whether it is good or not they will get their 10 percent. T says no if it's bad they won't get the 10 percent.</p>
12:17	T→Ss; S→T	<p>T says so the third essay switching the discussion to talking about the essay assignment. T introduces the topic by saying some of the Ss have been waiting for this moment to say what they think of some readings. T gives example of Turkish culture and that they would like to say they treat women badly. Ozzy says yes. T says that was just an example and she is offended joking. Ss laugh. T gives example on Japanese folktale. T explains more about what they will do in this assignment.</p>
13:15	T→Ss	<p>T says she like shaving options and starts telling them about their options. T says it will make presentations interesting. T suggests to go over the assignment and hands out the assignment sheet.</p>
13:58	T→Ss	<p>T asks if they are ready and says she will go over this and tells them to stop her if they have any Q's. T reads first sentence which tells them it is the final essay. T says there is no enthusiasm. T continues to read. T says up to you about being creative.</p>
15:00	S→T; T→S	<p>Dan raises hand. T says go ahead giving him turn. D asks if they choose one of the options. T says choose one or do all four it is up to them joking. D says alright smiling.</p>
15:12	T→Ss	<p>T resumes to talking about their options. T reads option 1 which is writing their own folktale. Ashok says yeah. T reads the option description.</p>
16:02	T→Ss; S→S; T→S	<p>T pauses to talk about a cute presentation by two Indian Ss she had earlier. T describes the presentation. Anurag teases Ashok about his chicken dance. T says no chicken dance in class. Ashok asks what about Frankenstein. T says it is not relevant she is sorry. T moves to the second option. Some girls hush Ashok and Anurag. T keeps on reading.</p>
17:13	T→Ss	<p>T stops reading to elaborate on this option. T says it will be easy to find other versions of LRRH, Cinderella, and Snow White. T moves to third option which includes comparing written and movie versions of texts.</p>
18:08	T→Ss; S→T	<p>Viral asks about the movie version option. T doesn't understand, Ashok helps out. T responds. Ashok asks isn't next Thursday too early to write your own folktale. T says they don't need a complete draft. Ashok says it's</p>

		10 percent. T says it's just a presentation for 5 minutes. Maria says it's too much. Aisha comments on the percentage. Maria overlaps to say she thinks they should do presentation or paper. T says she thinks they should continue with the options. Maria laughs (8).
19:01	T→Ss; T→S; S→T	T starts to read option number four. Viral asks Q about which folktale to choose T responds. Anurag talks to Ashok. T says Anurag. Anurag apologizes and stops. T finishes her explanation. T reads option four.
20:23	T→Ss	T stops to give example of a students who wrote about an abusive stepmother like in Cinderella. T says they can't use someone else's experience. T continues to read.
21:43	S→T; T→S T→Ss	Ashok asks Q about differences between folktale and their own culture. T responds by saying they should have enough points. T dramatizes that if the two are too similar then the essay is uninteresting. Ashok interrupts to ask Q. T says he can't use an Indian folktale. M asks what if there is a slight difference. T explains it isn't good enough to write this essay. Ashok says or striking similarities. Maria overlaps to tease him. Ashok continues with his Q. T says then he has to choose another folktale. Anurag asks Q. Maria flirts with Ashok and Aisha talks to him as well. Nadiah tells them to hush. T responds Anurag repeating her points to Ashok. T gives example from Indian folktale and the cultural references in it.
24:41	S→T; T→S; S→S	Ashok asks Q giving example from Iranian and Indian cultures. Anurag helps him. Aisha overlaps to ask Q. Ashok continues. T asks Q's of clarification at some pts. Ashok responds and explains his Q. Aisha says ohh.
26:04	S→T; T→Ss	Anurag rephrases Ashok's point by telling T what he is saying. Aisha and Ashok overlap briefly. T interrupts to say got you. T says it will be a good point and repeats that there isn't much development if everything is the same. T says she can't phrase this right but she'll show them sample essays. T elaborates and explains the essay assignment in more detail.
28:22	T→S; S→T; T→S	T stops and says OK. Ss are silent. Ahmed raises hand.. T nods. Ahmed asks the percentage of written essay. T says 15 like the first essay. Ashok says 25. T repeats to confirm. Ashok asks about writing assignments. T responds explaining the grading of WA's. T mentions when she is collecting the WA folder. Ashok asks if she has been grading them. T responds no and says she wants to grade the whole portfolio so they should keep them in their folders and give it to her at the end of semester.
30:12	T→Ss	T switches topic. T says so this is our third essay and the options. T says very exciting and they can be creative, argumentative any way they want. T announces what they will do today. T says they will talk about Cinderella and asks who hasn't heard of this story.
30:57	S→T; T→S	Anurag asks if there is an assignment. T says yes and ask if he didn't get the e-mail. Ss comment that school is slavery. T says they don't have to be at

		<p>school and it is their choice. T says OK slaves. Ss laugh. T tells them to take out assignments. T says they are talking about Cinderella. Maria asks if they can just talk about it . Anurag says let's just talk about it. T says yeah yeah. Ashok asks where to find the essay. T asks what essay. Ashok says Cinderella. T says ayyy and asks if Dan is the only responsible person in class to ask it. T shows them the syllabus and the webpages on the syllabus. Ss laugh and say ahh. T says OK they will just talk about it.</p>
32:25	T→Ss	<p>T says she is getting really frustrated with the Ss (9). T says personal response. T asks who has the story from online. Tat-lun, Ozzy, and Dan raise hands. Nadiyah raises hand. T asks if she found it. Nadiyah says no and asks if they can hand it on Thursday. Ss laugh. Nadiyah says no serious guys to her friends and explains to T that they were working on the second essay which was due.</p>
33:26	T→Ss	<p>T says they need the reading to talk about it and continues to say that they have 3 readings for next time and that's why she wanted their essay on Monday. T mentions that they asked for another extension and they have no excuse because the essay were due on Monday but they knew about this. T says they have to hurry up because the second essay took too much time. T says she can't say she wishes they didn't have conferences because they were useful. T says they can't push any more because there is no time left, and asks when they will get ready for the final. T says they will have one day for the final. T says they cannot postpone anytg any more. T asks if everyone understands that. T continues to say it is because of the second essay. T imitates Ss who asks to do it on Thursday and says they don't have any more Thursdays.</p>
35:04		<p>Silence in class. Ss mostly looking down.</p>
35:11	S→T	<p>Anurag asks if they can take half an hour extra some day for class. T asks if they will have class on Monday. Anurag doesn't know. Ss comment inaudibly. Ahmed suggest skipping it. T says so we will skip the whole discussion of personal context. Ashok and Anurag overlap to comment. T repeats they can't skip it and explains that they will need this story for the third essay.</p>
35:58	T→Ss; S→T; T→S; S→S	<p>T says any way stopping the unnecessary discussion Anurag and Ashok are having and asks who doesn't know the story. Ashok raises hand. T asks he doesn't know the story. T asks who knows it. Some Ss raise hands. T says Ahmed and says she wants someone to summarize the story and asks if Ahmed can do it. Ahmed start summarizing it and stops in the middle to say everyone knows this story. Maria says yeah. Ashok says I don't. Maria says how can you not know. Ahmed says OK and continues. Ahmed stops at one point. Maria helps him out. Ahmed says thanks. T says you can chime in. Ahmed continues.</p>
36:54	S→T; S→S	<p>Ahmed mentions the cat. Maria asks what cat. Ahmed says he is talking about the Disney version. T asks if there was a cat. Ss overlap to express their knowledge about this version. Anh and Maria comment. T comments.</p>

37:25	S→T; T→Ss	Ashok asks about cat. Ahmed says let's forget about the cat. Ss laugh. Ahmed mentions the other characters. T backchannels. Maria overlaps to add. T comments. Ahmed continues. Maria says hold on and comments that she was a slave. T says just like you guys. Ss laughs. Anantand Aisha comment on this. T laughs and turns to Ahmed to say skip the mice. Ahmed laughs and continues. Anurag chimes in to say pumpkin. Maria says mice. T lists other characters. T says OK.
39:05	S→T; T→S; S→S	Ahmed continues. T nods and briefly jokes about slave. Ss overlap to comment. Ahmed mentions the shoe trial part and comments that it must have fit someone and that it doesn't make sense. Ss and T laugh. Ss overlap to comment. T mentions it was a glass slipper. Ahmed says if she was a size 7 someone must have that size. Ss laugh. T tells him not to confuse the story. Maria says don't be so negative.
40:26	T→S; S→T	T says so she fit into the shoe (11). Ahmed finishes story. T repeats. Anurag comments.
41:00	T→Ss; S→T	T asks what happened to the step sisters. Aisha mentioned what happened in "Ever After." T repeats and ask what else. T repeats they were hanged. Anurag says notg. T explains what happened in this version and everytg is perfect. Aisha comments. T says yeah. T says she wants to get to the ending of the movie and takes out her story. T finds the part in story and reads. Aisha says it is being too nice and it is stupid.
42:27	T→Ss; S→T	T says OK. T asks why it is stupid. T says let's talk about characters and writes on BB. T elicits from Ss the characters. Aisha says mam the boardmarker. T asks Josh for board marker and borrows one from him. T writes on BB. Ss offer response.
43:25	T→Ss; S→S; S→T	T says let's look at these and goes to the back of room and reads over the list. T tells Ss what she wants them to do. T asks which one they would want to be in order to change the actions. Ss don't understand. T repeats the Q. Ahmed asks Q. T clarifies. Ashok says stepmother. T asks who wants to be stepmother. T asks how he would act differently. Ss tease Ashok about femininity. Aisha comments. Ashok comments. T interrupts. Ashok responds. Aisha interrupts to comment. Ashok responds. Aisha asks who will be mean. Ashok explains he will change the story aournd and no one is mean. T asks if someone has to be mean. Aisha confirms. Ss laugh. M comments more. T asks how he came up with these points. Ashok says he mixed up the story with his interview with Nadihah
46:13	T→S; S→T	T asks Nadihah what she did to him. Ss laugh. Ashok continues. Josh leaves. T says that is a lot of imagination. T asks Anh to express her point. Anh is quiet for a while. T encourages her. Anh continues. T backchannels.
47:28	T→S; S→T	T gives turn to Ahmed. Ahmed says he will be the fairy godmother. T asks what he would do differently. Ahmed says magic and explains. T asks explanation giving example. Ahmed responds.

48:02	T→S; S→T	T says Dan. D says you could change the king and explains. Aisha objects. Dan says it will be better. Maria asks Aisha what he says. Kahd repeats. Anh comments. T asks if you were the king you wouldn't let your son. Dan says no and explains. Maria objects and explains. T says it was a well-off family. Dan explains that they should match. T overlaps to say it is an interesting pt. Ashok overlaps to comment that slaves can marry rich people .T asks if he could do that. Ashok says he wouldn't mind if he was a slave. T and Ss laugh.
49:30	S→S; T→Ss	Maria comments. T says they went over this and they are all slaves. T comments that he can get his millionaire wife. Ashok says billionaire.
49:45	T→Ss' S→T	T brings discussion back to Dan's comment pointing to him and repeating his idea and explains why it is interesting. Ahmed interrupts to say that should apply everywhere. T says that should. Ahmed says everywhere. Anurag asks if it does or it should. Ahmed emphasizes it should. Maria asks why. Kahd starts to comment. Ahmed says listen to the explanation. T says let him explain. Ahmed explains that people who date should be of equal status in terms of education. T says OK so.
51:14	S→S; T→S	Aisha interrupts to comment that opposites attract. Ahmed interrupts to say opposite genders attract. Kahd continues to explain. Anurag say to Ahmed he can't say that either. Kah comments about partners teaching each other. Ss overlap. Ahmed wins floor. T says in thought and education supporting Ahmed's point. T explains what Ahmed is saying. T asks if that's correct. Ahmed confirms. T says what do you guys think. Maria comments. Ahmed interrupts to support his point. Aisha says what about teachers. Maria and Ahmed overlap to win floor. T asks Q. Maria responds. Ahmed, Anh, and Aisha overlap to comment.
52:42	T→Ss; Ss→T	T asks what money can buy us. Aisha starts a list. Ss overlap to contribute. T asks if money can buy love. Ahmed confirms. Maria objects to his statement. Ss overlap. T says money can buy a 85 year man a playboy model. Maria and Ashok overlap to say that isn't love. T says it is love. Maria comments. Ss overlap. T says we can't read people's heart.
53:46	T→Ss; S→T	T asks if money can buy brains. Ss say no. Aisha says yes it can and explains. T says what if you're not smart. Ashok says it doesn't make you study. Ahmed says it can make someone else study for you. Kahd agrees. Maria objects. Ss overlap. T gives floor to Maria. Maria says it can't buy love. Ahmed tells her to look at Bill Gates. Maria comments back to him. T interrupts to explain he found his wife before he was rich.
54:30	S→T; S→S T→S	Ahmed says see and says but money was a factor. Maria objects. Ashok interrupts. Ahmed comments. T say OK so trying to change topic. Ozzy gives example of their president. Ashok overlaps to comment. Ozzy continues. Maria interrupts to say it isn't love. Ashok and Viral overlap. T comments. T and Maria exchange comments. Ahmed is trying to get T's

55:31	T→Ss	<p>attention pointing to Ashok who is talking on his own. Ss get loud.</p> <p>T says OK and signals and gestures for Ss to stop and take a break. Ashok imitates her gesture. T says time out. Aisha gives suggestion about what to do if you have a lot of money. Ahmed asks what it means. Aisha explains. Ss overlap. T gets floor by raising voice to tell them ot be a teacher so no one is with you for your money because you don't have nay. Ss laugh.</p>
56:07	S→T; S→S; T→S	<p>Dan comments that they are crazy and says money is important and asks what schooling is for. Aisha, Maria, Ashok overlap to respond. T gives turn to one student. Ashok gets floor by raising voice and says girls go for money not for the man. Girls and T object. T pretends like she will hit him. Ahmed says that is a good point and that is true love. Maria and Ashok overlap to comment.</p>
57:00	T→Ss	<p>T says OK and gives an imaginary scenario. Maria says that rarely happens. Ashok comments. T comments back and says there would be too much competition. Dan tries to comment. T tries to hush class. Anurag asks about her competition comment. T responds. Aisha says money is for survival. T says you don't' need to much money to survive. Ashok agrees. Ss overlap. T explains her point.</p>
58:00	T→Ss	<p>T explains what they can do with the assignment connecting the discussion to the topic. T refers to Dan's point that initialized the discussion. T elaborate son what they can do with that. T refers to Dan's point again to say it a is a good starting point. T talks about Cinderella.</p>
59:41	T→Ss	<p>T says she will get their reactions next time and say they will have other readings. T tells them what she wants them to do and reminds them they cannot postpone anytg else. Anurag asks for clarification of assignments. T repeats and emphasizes the importance of the readings. T says they will talk about love next time. Man says yeah. Ayumi asks Q. T responds.</p> <p>Mayar comes to ask Q. Ashok talks about the chicken dance in the back. Maria asks about essay. Anurag and Aisha ask Q's. Dan and Ozzy ask about lost WA's. Ahmed stays behind to talk to T.</p> <p>End of class.</p>

Specific Observations:

- (1) T is half-joking when she says this; she is trying to get Ss to guess the topic.
- (2) The presents are the final draft folders for essays
- (3) T sharing personal info announcing her birthday is on or near the day.
- (4) Alan put a little bow on the essay as if it's a gift, which seemed very cute to T.
- (5) Ahmed didn't show up for his conference and didn't send Tan e-mail. A will probably ask for an extension which is late.
- (6) Ss have constant conversations among themselves and don't seem to be listening or paying attention to T.

(7) T takes this objection opportunity to joke with Ss; this way maybe the formality of presentations will decrease. It will be easier for Ss to accept the presentations the way they are if T presents an exaggerated picture as a joke.

(8) T deals with Ss challenging her decisions about the percentage of assignment and the upcoming presentations. She tries to convince them it is not a big deal to present, but they try to come up with decision that she should be in charge of which annoys her. So T changes topic and ignores comments. Even though she sounds like she is joking, she doesn't address their request.

(9) T is at the end of her patience with this class and she verbalizes her feelings.

(10) T explodes in this part of the class. She had been feeling frustrated with the way Ss behaved in class today and on top of it when the majority turned out without the assignment and even without the reading for the day, she got mad. She is talking very seriously, which means she is angry. She isn't yelling but she is clearly out of her normal communication style.

(11) T cue to hush Ss and tells Ahmed to continue with his story.

(12) Ashok is being silly with his response.

General observations: The class was overactive and tiring today. T had a hard time hushing them. T was frustrated today and expressed her feeling by giving a long speech to class. She didn't speak angrily, but didn't sympathize with their comments about having too much to do for class. She asked Ss to bring essays on Monday, but they asked for an extension despite the assignment due on Tuesday. So she tries to show them their responsibility and their lack of time with the third unit and final exam.

Patterns observed: Especially Maria, Aisha, and Ashok make too much overlapping and private discussions that disturb the class. They are very talkative and they contribute to class discussion, but when they are close together, they disrupt the flow of class and make too much noise. Maria tends to object to many things and asks irrelevant Q's and makes irrelevant comments, even when she doesn't know about the reading or topic of discussion, which is kind of annoying. It might be a semi-American attitude. The American Ss in the mixed section also ask a lot of Q's some of which may be due to not paying enough attention.

APPENDIX D

Sample Topic Transcription of Individual Conferences

Class: English 107

Type of interaction: Second individual conferences for Intercultural Textual Analysis Essay

Tape 15 → Conference with Ayumi (March 26, 2002) (pseudonym Ayumi)

Time	Type of interaction
21:49	Ayumi comes in and sits down. F mentions her outline and T confirms that she got it and they will talk about it. F explains that she doesn't know what kind of stuff she has to write. F mentions the sample essay and what she saw in them. T backchannels by a-haa. T praises the choice of story and asks where she found it. F says in the library. T repeats as question. F confirms and gives background to story. T gives her the draft and asks her to go over it and she runs to the cubicle for some Kleenex. F agrees.
23:18	T leaves and F starts looking at her outline reading T's comments.
24:09	Ayumi smiles at T who is coming back in. T enters the conference room and fixes the camera commenting on it.
24:22	T sits down and asks if they make sense. F confirms by a-ha. T says let's see. T goes over one comment and starts explaining what she is doing. F backchannels and confirms by h-hmm and yeah. T points to a problem. F says ahh yeah. T explains more giving examples. F shows understanding. T says she hasn't seen the text so she doesn't know for sure. F says OK and nods. T explains the content that the story should have in order to develop her thesis.
26:27	T looks at the comments and says that is her only concern. T asks if she has the story with her. F says no. T explains that if that point is in the story it would be fine. F shows a point and says that is in the story. T tells her to go over the story and make sure these points have enough textual evidence. F backchannels and nods. T emphasizes and restates these point and tells her she doesn't want her to be frustrated later. F smiles and says OK. T does predictive imitation of F saying she can't find any text in this. F laughs. T asks OK. F says OK.
27:46	F says she should focus on more than 2-3 tgs rather than what she has in thesis. T says it depends on the text. T says if she has any Q's she can send her an e-mail or can have another appointment on Friday. F shows interest and asks about times. F tells her when she is available. F says OK. T explains the purpose of the second visit. F says OK. T says to send her an e-mail. F says OK. F thanks T. T says sure.

28:42	<p>F expresses problem with finding source. T shows compassion and says if she has Mongolian friends it is good. F confirms. T says she will see her later and to let her know if she has any Q'. F says OK and she will. F asks the length of the paper. T confirms. F says she doesn't know if she can write so long. T says she can. F thanks again and leaves. T asks F to send the crazy guy (Ashok) in.</p> <p>End of conference.</p>
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Tape 15 → Conference with Ashok (March 26, 2002) (pseudonym Ashok)

Time	Type of interaction
29:49	<p>Ashok comes in and says vegetable shop owner, T asks if he was mad and laughs (1). Ashok is trying to look angry, but he is not. T laughs and says she knew he had a good sense of humor. M says he knew stg was coming when he saw the e-mail. T and M laugh.</p>
30:19	<p>T begins the conference by saying she has a lot of comments for him. T asks if Zinon is there. M looks at her comments and T gets up to check the camera.</p>
31:13	<p>M repeats one of her comments with questioning tone. T explains. M was confused about the comment which was directed to the content of the essay. T asks what about him and his run-on-sentences and continues to ask if he wants some lotion. T says he has lots of r-o-s and M overlaps to say he does. T tells him to look and says she was mad. T reads out one sentence and stops at some point and says that is the end of the sentence. M overlaps to say yeah yeah yeah. T raises voice and reads on. M nods. T asks what he should use as punctuation when one tg is explaining the other. M says semicolon. T repeats and confirms and explains the use of comma.</p>
32:35	<p>M asks about the point for elaboration. T says OK and tells him to read all her comments and they will start on page one and go over all of them. M starts reading.</p>
33:32	<p>T says so and pulls the paper to herself. T comments on the fact that she is dying (2). M raises his eyebrows and smiles. T says OK and smiles and teases M by dramatizing his introductory sentence with gestures and change of voice (3). T swings arms to sides in disbelief while M laughs. T tells him what it looks like. M says he thought he would write about the country. T asks if it is relevant. M says it isn't. T says then he doesn't need it. T points to a statement and they both laugh. T says he can write books about this and explains he doesn't need this in the essay. T tells him to move to his analysis.</p>
34:50	<p>T begins to explain. M interrupts. T continues by showing more run-on-sentences. T threatens him by saying if she sees one more r-o-s she will take one whole letter grade. M smiles and repeats the punishment in amazement. M objects laughing. T confirms and makes note of this (4). T repeats threat, M nods. T tells him no more r-o-s and that he is almost a native speaker so he shouldn't</p>

35:38	<p>have any r-o-s. M nods and smiles. T looks at the essay and repeats no r-o-s.</p> <p>T explains a problem of expression. M shows understanding. M rephrases his sentence. T rephrases again using a different tense. T looks at the intro and tells him to give more summary. M asks if he should mention all themen CCC met. T says no not separately but in general. M nods. T says just to add more juice. M nods enthusiastically.</p>
36:28	<p>T reads a sentence. M says OK yeah. T dramatically expresses how he should be argumentative using hand gestures. M nods and ask for clarification. T does an imitation of a weak writer who says I think it might be stg like this. M smiles and nods. T restates seriously this time and continues to read. T asks him how women are treated. M says yeah. T dramatizes the Q. M explains what it looks like he is doing. T says exactly. M nods. T tells him to turn the Q into assumptions. M nods. T asks what his point is after intro. M says he doesn't know. T comments. M responds. T says he can break paragraph. M overlaps and explains what he can do. T starts writing what he says.</p>
38:23	<p>T outlines possible point for body paragraphs. M asks Q. T continues to explain by referring to the sample essay. T reads from the sample essay. M nods. T breaks down the parts of the thesis. T compliments the sample essay writer and M smiles. T cotinues to look through the sample essay commenting the writer is extraordinary. M asks if the other one is better. T looks at another essay but reads a point from the previous sample essay. T moves to the second sample essay and reads the thesis. T points out to the parts in this essay. M nods. T explains how the essay is clear. M nods. M asks how to organize a paragraph. T confirms and restates relating the discussion to his essay. T sees Zinon passing and rushes out to tell him where the conference is and give him his draft.</p>
41:42	<p>T comes back and apologizes. T asks "does this make sense?" M says yes. T overlaps and explains what he should focus on. M nods and backchannels by "hmm." M point to another comment. T explains briefly. M says OK. T explains more. M asks Q. T goes over P-I-E structure and that he should give more examples. T explains how he should explain th examples. M nod. M asks how he can relate the point to the text. T says he should focus on the tgs in the story. M asks Q. T explains more. M nods. T tell shim he should save his feelings to the third essay. M says OK. T elaborates on this and M laughs.</p>
44:00	<p>T points out to another irrelevant tg in essay. M nods. T says this isn't his focus and explains how he can use it. M responds briefly. T explains more. M overlaps to comment. T confirms that it is his conclusion. M confirms. T tells him he needs an interview still. M says there is no one. T knows someone. M says he tried. T says he knows someone from Iran. T says he has to find so from Iran. M says yeah. T tells him he has to use MLA style citation. T shows him citation rules from handbook. M asks Q. T explains signal phrases. M nods. T goes over the different ways. M nods and nods. T says she wants him to lookat these.</p>
46:00	<p>T starts writing that if he doesn't (use MLA) she will take one more grade off. M smiles. T says his A essay will become C essay and this is her special treat for</p>

46:19	<p>him. M says OK laughing. M thanks for the kindness. T says OK (5).</p> <p>T tells him to e-mail her for Q's. M nods. T shows conference schedule and tells him to bring a second draft on Tuesday. M asks on Tuesday to class. T confirms. T says she will see him next week. M says maybe tonight meaning the salsa class. T says she doesn't think she will go tonight but she will go next week. M thanks her. T tells him to have a good weekend. M leaves.</p> <p>End of conference.</p>
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Specific observations:

- (1) T sent the schedule of the conferences to the class listserv and put “vegetable shop owner” in Ashok’s time slot. Ashok, in Turkish means, someone who sells vegetables, and T was joking with Ashok. She had mentioned the meaning of his name in class before, so she knew he would understand.
- (2) T has been sick and she has been coughing during all these conferences. She is referring to her frequent coughing.
- (3) Ashok’s introduction is too general and irrelevant. He talks about oil in the world while introducing the story “Cutie Cousin Cockroach.” The story is completely irrelevant to oil. T chooses a joking and sarcastic approach to tell him this is no way of starting the essay. T is avoiding direct criticisms but doing dramatization; she is teaching while making him smile, without hurting his feelings.
- (4) T is very comfortable while talking to M. She tells him what is on her mind and what is wrong with the essay very easily and mostly in joke form knowing he has a good enough sense of humor that he can handle it. Ashok is the only student that T can do this and say these tgs without being misunderstood or considered as rude or crazy. M seems to be OK with the criticism and sarcasm because he laughs.
- (5) They both have the shared understanding that this is a joke, but T also delivers the message that it is an important point.

Patterns observed: T seems very comfortable with Ashok, because he is very open and funny and also he has a good sense of humor. T picks on him a lot. T seems to be picking more on guys than girls, maybe thinking they can handle jokes by a female teacher better than girls.

APPENDIX E

Transcription Conventions

.	end of a sentence or utterance
,	listing or continuation in speech
!	exclamation in speech indicated by rising volume
[]	overlapping speech
..	short pause
...	long pause
***	it is not clear what the speaker says due to the quality of sound, low-pitch voice of talker, or interference of outside noises
()	non-verbal interaction or body movements of subjects