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Remembering the Future
记忆未来

Compiling Knowledge of Another Culture
积累异国文化知识

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INTRODUCTION

In the study of language, nothing has been discussed more and with less effect than the relationship between language and culture. The works of eminent scholars reporting extensive observations on the relation of culture to language would fill the shelves of a good-sized library and inform many disciplines — philosophy, anthropology, linguistics, psychology, education, and literary criticism — all of which have extensive literatures on this topic.[i] In what is easily conceptual overkill, writers have repeatedly demonstrated that whenever language is used for communication, it is a component of a specific situation in a specific culture.

As early as in 1955, the Northeast Conference of the Teaching of Foreign Languages appointed a committee to investigate the place of culture and civilization in foreign languages and teaching (Wylie).[ii] In his preface to another Northeast Conference Report dedicated to culture in language (Dodge 1972:10-11), Edgerton states: "It is naïve to choose to believe, as some people — both old and young — do, that a human being is a free spirit, that he is not 'programmed' from childhood on by his culture." We have all read from these works; however, like all others whose occupations revolve around language (with the possible exception of advertisers), language teachers and second-language acquisition researchers still conduct their affairs as if language and culture have only an incidental relationship.

Twenty-five years after Edgerton's observation on the deep relationship between culture and language, culture in our language programs "seems to be superficially included in the forms of songs, food, and games" (Lange 1999:113). The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning [SFLL]: Preparing for the 21st Century*

(National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project 1996) go beyond this superficial list to a more elaborate list that is categorized into perspectives, products, and practices and that conceptualizes culture as one of the five components of foreign language study: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Even when culture was demoted to one part in five of the foreign language study formula, the result was to produce lists of perspectives, products, and practices that daunt even the most complete programs of foreign language study. For example, the 1998 draft of *Standards for Japanese Language Learning* has extended the already ambitious K-12 training period proposed by *SFLL* to K- 16 in order to meet the demands of training Americans to communicate with the Japanese. When confronted with the idea that the instructional equivalent of sixteen years of training is necessary to produce culturally adept users of Japanese, even the most competent of instructors, who at best have 400-600 classroom hours with their students, would be unsure of how to act. The German poet Heinz Johst supposedly declared: "When I hear the word *culture,* I reach for my gun." Foreign language teachers, being more peaceable than poets on the whole, just tend to head for the door or turn the page.

The enormity of the task may explain why we have continued to ignore the conclusions of some of the most important intellectuals of this century by failing to integrate their teachings into our practice in any systematic and consistent manner. When we put aside academic ideologies and allegiances to attend to the practical matters of teaching and learning languages, the matter becomes clear: Culture and language are two of the most complex concepts we will ever encounter and life, unfortunately, is short. If in the course of a learning career, we can deal with either language or culture in a moderately competent way, we feel extremely fortunate. If language and culture are indeed inseparable components of communication events, however, language pedagogues have no choice but to raise their sights and deal with this issue head on.

This is what we shall do here. The authors have between them five decades of teaching Americans to participate in the cultures of China and Japan — cultures that are historically and formally distinct from the cultural inheritances of most Americans. Inasmuch as the large majority of students of Chinese and Japanese undertake their studies with the intention of communicating with people from China and Japan as part of their careers, we have been forced by the needs of our students to look at culture as the primary focus of our instruction.

We have come to recognize that, when learning to communicate in a foreign language, our students are really learning the cultures. Their increasing abilities in the languages make the learning of culture all the more effective. This discussion addresses teaching language as teaching culture, getting to that discussion straightaway by brazenly ignoring the subtleties and delicacies of all those elegant discourses on culture and treating the concept in the most utilitarian manner. The Chinese have a way of expressing this kind of brashness: 抛砖引玉 *pao zhuan yin yu* (throw-bricks-attract-jade). In this emboldened spirit, we offer our unrefined suggestions in the hope that they will inspire loftier and more refined responses from our readers.

CULTURE AS PERFORMANCE

First, we offer our operational concept of culture: Culture is what we do (those folks out in Oregon who sell athletic shoes to the known universe got that part right!) and, also, how we know what we have done. In other words, culture frames our behaviors and gives us the means to recognize the completion of events and artifacts in our worlds. On the personal level this implies that culture is behavior by one individual that is understood by that individual and others in specific contexts. It is situated knowledge: the situations are social, conventional and many — but constrained — not everything conceivable is possible in every culture. What we do in our cultures can be understood by our intentions and our understanding of the intentions of others (that is, our interpretations of them). What we do is what we *are* — and what we *are* is what any specific culture allows us to be.

The flow of social life occurs in a sequence of *performances:* discrete frames of specified times, places, roles, scripts, and audiences. We understand the intentions of specific behaviors of others because our cultures provide possible performances in which to situate that behavior. If the behavior is speech, we construct performance frames to create or interpret meanings. A common Japanese expression *sumimasen* can provide an example.

TABLE 1. Performances Involving *Sumimasen* **in Japanese.**

Interpreta-tion	Time	Place	Role(s)	Script	Audience
"I apologize for not turning in my assignment."	at the beginning of a class	in the classroom	student and teacher	T: *Hai shukudai o Teeshutsu-suite kudasai.* "OK, turn in your homework assignments." S: ***Sumimasen.***	other students
"I want attention (service)."	as a customer waiting to place an order	at a restaurant	customer and server	C: ***Sumimasen.*** S: *Hai, omatase itashimashita.* "Yes, sorry to have kept you waiting."	other customers and restaurant staff
"I want you to move over to make space for me to sit."	when a new group of passengers just boarded the train	on a train	two passeng-ers one sitting, another standing	Standing: ***Sumimasen.*** Sitting: *Doozo*. "Please (go ahead)."	other passengers, sitting and standing
"Thank you."	upon receiving a typed document	in the office	office worker and a secretary	Secretary: *Hai.* "Here you are." Worker: ***Sumimasen.***	other workers

Note in Table 1 the various interpretations (given in English) that are possible for this expression when it occurs in different commonplace performances. Readers who speak languages other than Japanese might experiment with the effect of moving from one performance frame to another by reflecting on how a single expression would or would not be appropriate in all the given situations.

The implications of this concept of performed culture for language study is that no one really learns a foreign language. Rather, we learn how to do particular things in a foreign language; and the more things we learn to do, the more expert we are in that language. Successful teachers of foreign languages

create learning environments in which they present the particular things that are accepted in and typical of the target culture. Successful learners compile these presentations into memories that underlie acceptable behavior in cultures and languages that they have yet to experience outside their courses or classrooms, In short, they are trying to remember how to behave in a social environment that will occur in their futures. The nearest analogy we can give is that of a coach preparing someone to play in a future game by inculcating the rules and moves of the game. In this context, a *game* can be understood as nothing more than a performance with an agreed-upon scoring system.

Performances that are appropriate to a specific culture are not simple to stage. The main reason is that the culture of everyday life — especially our own — is largely invisible. The distinctive features of greetings, leave takings, apologies, expressions of concern — the behaviors that make up the flow of daily life — are not remarkable enough to encourage notation or declaration. We live our lives as automatically as we speak our native languages. Most of us are no more capable of explaining why we greet others the way we do than we are of giving an accurate account of how we indicate definite and indefinite objects or events in our speech. But language teachers and others who spend much time on the interaction of two cultures and languages are better equipped than most to notice culturally determined behavior. As Hall (1976) pointed out, we notice the hidden or covert culture only when we observe outsiders misusing it. Because most language teachers speak at least two languages and spend time in the cultures of the languages we speak, we are constantly in the company of culture "dashers," even, alas, when we are alone. When we note inappropriate or counterproductive behaviors of others or ourselves, we are a mere step away from noting the behaviors that are appropriate to that situation in that culture. By analyzing behavior (including linguistic elements) in specified situations in the culture our students are studying, we can prepare the "performances" for our students that will most benefit their future needs.

Coaches are concerned with preparing their players to score in contests: training their minds and bodies to react in specific ways in specific situations and making sure their behavior in the heat of the action conforms to the rules and expectations of the game. Language teachers prepare their students to negotiate a new culture successfully, developing a memory that can be effectively drawn upon in the rapid flow of interactions or transactions with members of that culture. How do we get students to know the procedures for situated

performances in the culture being studied? How can they successfully navigate new experiences without a coach or a rulebook to consult? This is the direction in which we wish to take this discussion from here.

CULTURAL MEMORY

> Remembering is the mind's method of coordinating past events with current events to enable generalization and prediction. (Schank 1990: 1)

We each have had the experience of building a complex and deep memory for social interaction in our native cultures through years of socialization within our families and communities. When we later add knowledge of a foreign culture learned in or shortly before adulthood, we cannot begin to compile a memory that comes close to the complexity and richness of the native culture (Walker, forthcoming). We can, however, develop a memory that equips us to enter into the flow of the foreign culture and can continue to increase our capacity to meet its social demands.

Depending on the type and the extent of experiences, the memories we construct are arranged in different architectures of knowledge, or schemata. Operating with schemata that lack certain types or areas of knowledge can lead to individual stress, for example, when we are suddenly expected to perform in a novel situation for which we lack experience and, thus, the appropriate memory, we can only fill the gap with analogous memories or consult with persons who have the appropriate knowledge. Whether at such times we succeed or fail in the actual performance, the novel experience of encountering the unknown provides the possibility of adding to our memory a set of possible behaviors that we can use in the future.

Usually, these novel situations occur as minor events that we manage with little difficulty: making a purchase at a new kind of store, for example. Our memories constructed from previous experiences allow us to hypothesize about the new situation, and our subsequent success or failure at achieving our intentions informs us of the correctness of the hypothesis. On the other hand, we can imagine the difficulty of having to cope with a major novelty where our accumulated memory is inadequate. The excessive publicizing of Princess Diana in Great Britain and Empress Michiko in Japan are the most conspicuous

examples of this in recent years. Both women had to develop rather quickly the personas of functioning royalty in early adulthood. They succeeded in bringing about some changes in their respective households by being creative and innovative in "scoring points" within the rules of the nobility "game." We followed them in the popular media as they set about to build their cultural memories as members of royal families through numerous engagements and official functions followed by criticisms — sometimes behind the scenes, sometimes painfully in public. In Britain, the game was in the end lost. In the case of Empress Michiko, the game continues. By now, however, Empress Michiko, like any accomplished performer, is able to monitor, evaluate, and adjust her performance on the basis of the specialized knowledge of expectations placed on Japanese nobility that she has compiled over decades of playing the role.

CLASSROOM MEMORY

If a course of study is not forgotten completely, the concern of a language teacher is the nature of the memories taken away from the course: Have the learners retained memories of the class and the teacher or a memory of the skill? A student of Chinese who remembers only that the teacher was agreeable and that the course was difficult is like the chess student who remembers only that his coach smoked a pipe and that the sessions were held in a closed room. Both are unable to use that knowledge to play the game. Pat Schroder, a member of the House of Representatives from Colorado for twenty-four years, recalls a Chinese class at her university that seemed to build her self-esteem but, as reported by her, did not provide her with any practical knowledge of the language and culture:

> I also took Chinese, a ferociously difficult course. We were taught to write the intricate Chinese characters by holding an egg in the writing hand. If you did it wrong, the shell broke and you had egg dripping from your arms and sleeves — the embarrassing Chinese equivalent of getting egg on your face. Chinese made me really listen because different tonal inflections can make one word take on many meanings. ("Ma" can mean mother, horse, linen, or chicken pox, so you'd better be careful or you end up saying something unflatteringly equine about your

mother.) But, it was a mental workout and made me confident I
could tackle anything. (Schroeder 1998:101)

Language programs have a beginning and an end. If the goal in offering
these programs is for students to function successfully in the languages and
cultures being studied, it behooves us to consider the memory they are con-
structing from what teachers present in a course. A course may succeed on one
level if students fondly remember their experiences in a language program: how
much they liked the teacher, how enlightened they feel, how confident they feel
about themselves as a result, or how many friends they make in the course of
their participation. But if they do not have a usable cultural memory that
prepares them for future performances in the target culture, the course has failed
as part of a language program. Learners should be able to present themselves in
ways that are required and accepted in the target culture. Even the most
comprehensive program cannot prepare its participants for all possible
interactions; for a program to be successful, however, its graduates should have
accumulated a sufficient level of performance experience and cultural memory
to permit them to recognize and learn from new situations. As is the case of any
performer, students of a foreign language have to be able to analyze their own
performance critically and use that knowledge to develop improved
performances.

RECOGNIZING ANOTHER CULTURE

Students of a language are apt not to recognize behavioral culture when they
encounter it. They are very likely to mistake a culture for the artifacts of that
culture. For example, Japanese culture has provided us with easily recognized
elements: *anime, sumo, haiku, sake, kabuki,* and tea ceremonies. A student may
come to the study of Japanese as an aficionado of these or other specialties of
Japanese life and be genuinely motivated to learn the language. However, she or
he may be completely unaware of what sort of behavior is expected in that
society. The following passage is a self-introduction of a young man who wants
to succeed in Japanese culture but is unaware of a basic requirement for doing
that:

I have a passion for Japanese language, culture and people. I want

to know the language really well so that I sound just like an educated native speaker, so that I can interact with the Japanese in a seamless manner….. I believe we are all created equal: I am proud of the fact that I am not good at using the polite language in Japanese. (student)

Language always operates in a culture. The default culture in which beginning language learners use language is their native culture (base culture) unless the teacher creates an alternative, such as the culture's being studied (target culture). American culture operates on the overt expression — some might say the *myth* — of equality. No matter how clearly an individual may understand his or her relative place in a group and how emotionally powerful that identification may be felt, Americans are likely to expect the outward trappings of social equality. This occurs even when a hierarchy clearly exists within a particular group structure. Corporations often advise their employees to be on first-name basis with managers and CEOs; the same is often true with college professors and their students. The same hierarchical arrangement may exist both in American culture and Japanese culture, but it may be overtly ignored by a cultural preference for the expression of social flatness by Americans and systematically encoded in the linguistic behavior of the Japanese. Americans feel comfortable with the masking of hierarchy; the Japanese, on the other hand, feel comfortable with the practice of indicating the position of the speaker in the hierarchy by the choice of verbs or verb-endings. To insist on the American treatment of hierarchy when using the Japanese language is analogous to insisting on dribbling a ball across a volleyball court because it is an accepted way to transport the ball in basketball. Different cultures and different games are played according to different sets of shared rules and expectations. Once you start dribbling a ball you are no longer playing volleyball. When you ignore social position in Japanese speech, you cease to communicate in Japanese culture.

The main purpose of a pedagogical emphasis on gamesmanship is to foster a long-term metaphorical association of culture to game. If students of Chinese can think of playing Chinese culture rather than American culture in the same way they might play tennis rather than baseball, they may gain a more durable attitude toward the undertaking (Walker 1994:viii). Games do not have to "make sense" in any absolute way. No one will seriously contend that baseball is a more rational game than tennis or vice versa. Different games share features, but

shared features may have contrasting, even conflicting meanings and outcomes. Competence in one game often does not translate into competence in another. Both baseball and tennis utilize the basic concepts of a hitting instrument, a ball, hitting the ball, and boundaries to the playing field, but exceeding boundaries is a gain in one game and a loss in the other. Each game has its own written rules, but the rules and the books of rules are not the game. No one confuses a summer afternoon at the tennis courts or baseball diamond with reading books of rules in the library. Finally, no one competent in baseball would expect to walk onto the tennis court one day, with no knowledge of the rules of tennis and no prior experience hitting the ball with a racket or volleying with a partner, and display an equal mastery of the game of tennis.

If we consider a game a performance with a shared system for keeping score, this is where playing games is beneficial to the general enterprise because games are conducive to creating the kind of openness and spontaneity that many recognize as necessary for successful language learning. Games can be devised around specific transactions that are repeated a sufficient number of times to inculcate automatic responses. Games draw spectators and cause excitement because different instances of the same game bring about plays that are different from plays previously seen or recorded. The possibilities are infinite, but not chaotic. The natural question to ask then is how we inculcate in our students rules for performance in the target culture, or how we help our learners construct memory to perform effectively in their target culture.

COMPILING CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

> Knowledge, then, is experiences and stories, and intelligence is the apt use of experience and the creation and telling of stories. Memory is memory for stories, and the major processes of memory are the creation, storage, and retrieval of stories. (Schank 1990: 16)

> Wisdom is often ascribed to those who can tell just the right story at the right moment and who often have a large number of stories to tell. (Schank 1990: 14)

We can go to considerable expense and effort to arrange opportunities for our students to learn foreign languages and cultures. If we assume that our

reason for this is to make our students appear intelligent when they are living and working in those languages and cultures, the job of a language teacher is to present the kind of stories that will bring about that effect. At the same time, the main activity of a foreign language student is to learn to tell and participate in these stories. Successful careers in language learning progress through a series of such stories, necessarily going from simple to complex and practically going from the most common to the less common.

In the pedagogy of performing a learned culture, learning stories is a part of a larger process of compiling the memories that will support participation in the target culture. Just as it is with anyone learning to play tennis, someone learning to function in a foreign culture must go through the process of being introduced to new concepts and then experience reconciling the concepts to physical movement. The process for the language learner in the learning environment is diagramed in Figure 1:
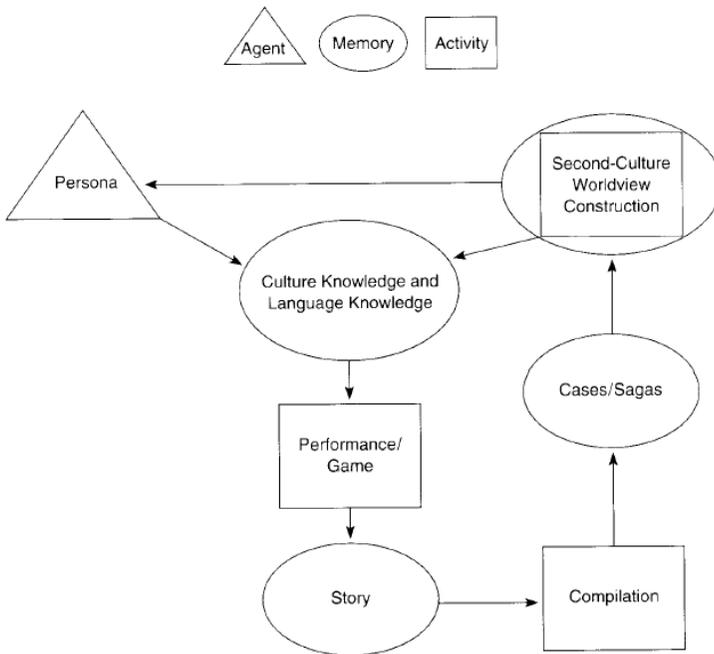

Figure 1
Cycle of Compilation

The seven elements in the "cycle of compiling culture" (Figure 1) are divided into agent (triangle), activity (rectangle), and memory (oval). This cycle is conceived of as a series of steps in a continually expanding spiral of information and experience.

1. *Persona* is the starting point and the sole agent in the learning of a foreign language. Persona refers to the personal information that the learner is willing to commit to the learning experience. The persona of a learner can vary considerably from one learning environment to another: the physics whiz may be hesitant and unsure in the language class. Not confusing the persona of the individual with the individual him — or herself is important because the persona can change rapidly in a period of language study, a change that is much faster than a change in the personality of an individual. If as language instructors we are ever tempted to make rash judgments about our students, we can reflect on how little the Chinese teacher of Evelyn Waugh's fictional student Miss Aimée Thanatogenos must have known about her as she sat through his classes:

> "And what else did you take at College?"

> "Just Psychology and Chinese. I didn't get on so well with Chinese. But, of course, they were secondary subjects, too; for Cultural background."

> "Yes. And what was your main subject?"

> "Beauticraft."

> "Oh."

> "You know — permanents, facials, wax — everything you get in a Beauty Parlour. Only, of course, we went in for history and theory, too. I wrote my thesis on 'Hairstyling in the Orient.' That is why I took Chinese. I thought it would help, but it didn't. But I got my diploma with special mention for Psychology and Art." (Waugh 1948: 90-91)

2. *Culture knowledge and language knowledge* is the memory based on information about culture and language. It is the grist of textbooks and lectures, but it is also

conveyed in the interactions, interpretations, and presentations in the daily operation of a class. Learners bring with them to their foreign language classroom an immeasurable amount of knowledge of culture and language based on their native cultures and languages. They may also know something about the target culture: they may have read volumes on Chinese history, studied Japanese flower arranging, or even had daily dealings with a Japanese businesswoman to whom they solemnly bow every time they meet her. All of this is possible without knowing a word of Chinese or Japanese.

Language knowledge is what is conveyed about the linguistic code, from phonology to pragmatics. This knowledge base consists of the rules for producing well-formed utterances and the examples extracted from the language sample that compose the pedagogical corpus of a language. Stable language knowledge allows the learner to manipulate linguistic forms easily, without premeditation. In a course of language study, students may learn, among other things, that Chinese does not have the past tense or necessarily distinguish plural from singular nouns, that Japanese does not always express a grammatical subject and that it borrows extensively from English. Students may even be able to produce the complex script of Chinese or Japanese and to form sentences, using a given word. All of this is possible with little or no knowledge of the target culture.

It is easy to be preoccupied with language knowledge, which is more accessible than culture knowledge. When a student uses an English word in the middle of a Chinese conversation, the teacher can detect the problem right away, but cultural inconsistency is less conspicuous. A well-intended teacher may even encourage students to focus on procedures for expressing the base culture in the sample of the target language that is being taught. In such an instance the cultural information may be drawn largely from the base culture.

The success of a student in a language course is determined by the teacher or manager of the course. The teacher establishes what a student must do to be judged a good performer in the class. If success in the course is predicated on giving the student an exotic experience, something like avoiding breaking an egg when writing or folding a paper crane will signal success. If the goal is to inform students about procedures, products, and perspectives of the target culture, as implied in *SFLL,* students who demonstrate comprehension of lectures and demonstrations on topics related to these aspects of culture are deemed successful.

If culture is a necessary component of communication and we assume that classrooms are places where communication occurs, every foreign language class will be dominated by either the base culture or the target culture. If learners are to use the forms and communicative strategies of the target language, they must know the features of the performance — when and where something is said or written, who initiates and receives the message, what the linguistic inventory is, and who might be observing.

Assessment of students' knowledge of culture and language involves the most traditional of paper-and-pencil tests — translations, filling in of blanks, matching, and sentence analysis, for example. Occasionally, students' skills on isolated linguistic or cultural practices may be included. No matter how well students perform on such assessments, performance here is not a clear indicator of how well communication in the language has been learned. If the goal of the course is to develop proficiencies in the language and culture being studied, target cultural information will predominate, and the assessment procedures will shadow the demands of the target culture. In such a situation students will focus on what it takes to succeed in the target culture, beyond what it takes to succeed in the course — and what it takes is more than knowledge about language and culture. Students need to engage in performances.

3. *Performances and games* are the enactment of scripts or behaviors situated at a specified time and place with roles and audiences specified. Knowing what to say and when to say it does not directly lead to being able perform in ways that are recognized as appropriate to the target culture. Participation in a culture is for the most part not premeditated — culture is made "on the fly." There is no more time to recall rules in a target-culture interaction than there is in the production of a well-formed sentence or accurate pronunciation. Automatic response must be learned, and such reflexive behavior is achieved one performance at a time.

Performances are communicative events. In a foreign language class a performance consists of a pedagogical sample of language in a cultural context. The cultural context can be provided by either the base or the target culture. Chinese greetings can provide an example: Among the first expressions foreign learners of Chinese encounter is *Ni hao:* This is often translated as "Hello," or " How are you!" and thus is expressed in the contexts in which these English greetings occur in Western culture. The assumption that a Chinese expression of

greeting will be universally appropriate leads to Americans' saying *Ni hao* to everyone with whom they establish eye contact, part of the stereotype of Americans speaking Chinese that one sees in comedy sketches and movies. In the Chinese-American film *A* Great *Wall* one of its characters scolds a young man who has used *Ni hao* to greet a young woman to whom he has not been introduced:

> "What's with this *Ni hao?* You're not an American going around yelling *Ni hao, ni hao* everytime you see a stranger."
> 你好个什么呀？又不是美国人，见了生人还得你好你好的。
> (Wang and Sun 1986)

If, on the other hand, learners of Chinese as a foreign language have this greeting in the context of Chinese culture, they know it as a way to greet acquaintances in particular circumstances and will not go down the street saying *Ni hao* to bewildered folks to whom they are not known and who do not know them.

Figure 2 presents greetings that would be appropriate in a pedagogical sample of basic Japanese. A performance would be one of the options for greeting or not greeting considered appropriate in Japanese culture when encountering someone. The *actor* participates in one possible performance of greeting in Japanese as he responds to the various elements of performance: the need to make a greeting, the person whom he is greeting, the place and time of the greeting, the audience of the greeting, and the appropriate body posture and verbal utterance. If one morning the actor encounters in close proximity a person he knows and has no reason to avoid, he greets this person, usually with a gesture — a bow, a nod, or a raising of the right hand. If the person is someone who occupies a higher social status, the actor utters *Ohayoo gozaimasu* ("Good morning") as he bows. This is just one performance within the schema of performances of face-to-face greetings in Japanese, as shown in figure 3.
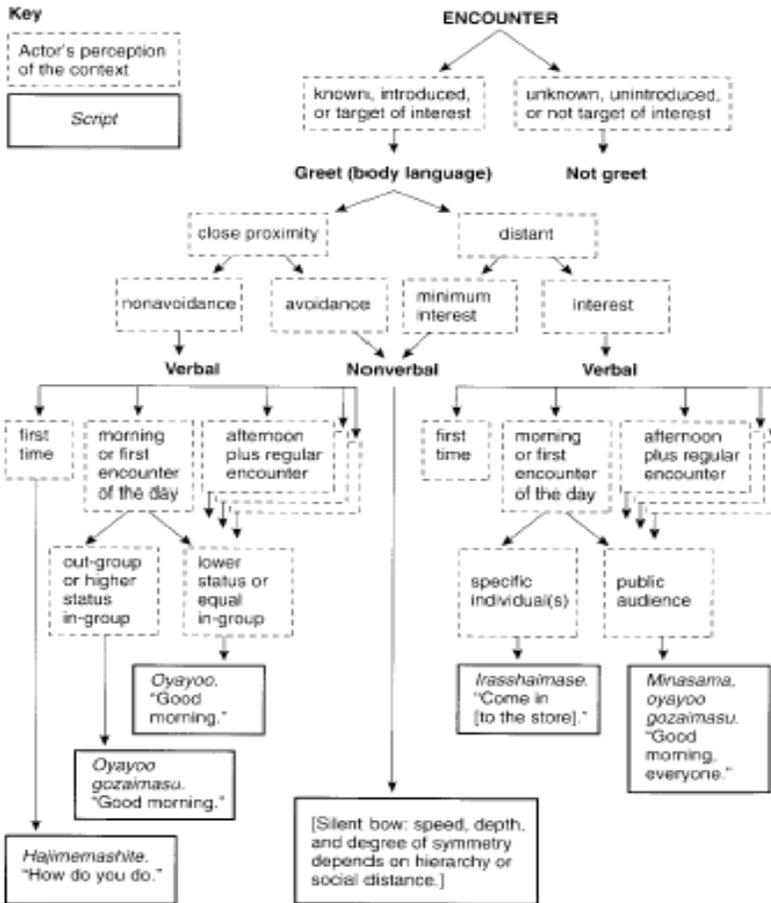
Key

Actor's perception of the context

Script

ENCOUNTER

known, introduced, or target of interest

unknown, unintroduced, or not target of interest

Greet (body language)　　**Not greet**

close proximity　　distant

nonavoidance　　avoidance　　minimum interest　　interest

Verbal　　**Nonverbal**　　**Verbal**

first time | morning or first encounter of the day | afternoon plus regular encounter

out-group or higher status in-group | lower status or equal in-group

Oyayoo. "Good morning."

Oyayoo gozaimasu. "Good morning."

Hajimemashite. "How do you do."

first time | morning or first encounter of the day | afternoon plus regular encounter

specific individual(s) | public audience

Irasshaimase. "Come in [to the store]."

Minasama, oyayoo gozaimasu. "Good morning, everyone."

[Silent bow: speed, depth, and degree of symmetry depends on hierarchy or social distance.]

Figure 2
Schema of Performances of Face-to-Face Greetings in Japanese

Key

Actor's perception
of the context

Script

ENCOUNTER

known, introduced,
or target of interest

Greet with body language

close proximity

nonavoidance

Verbal

morning
or first
encounter
of the day

out-group
or higher
status
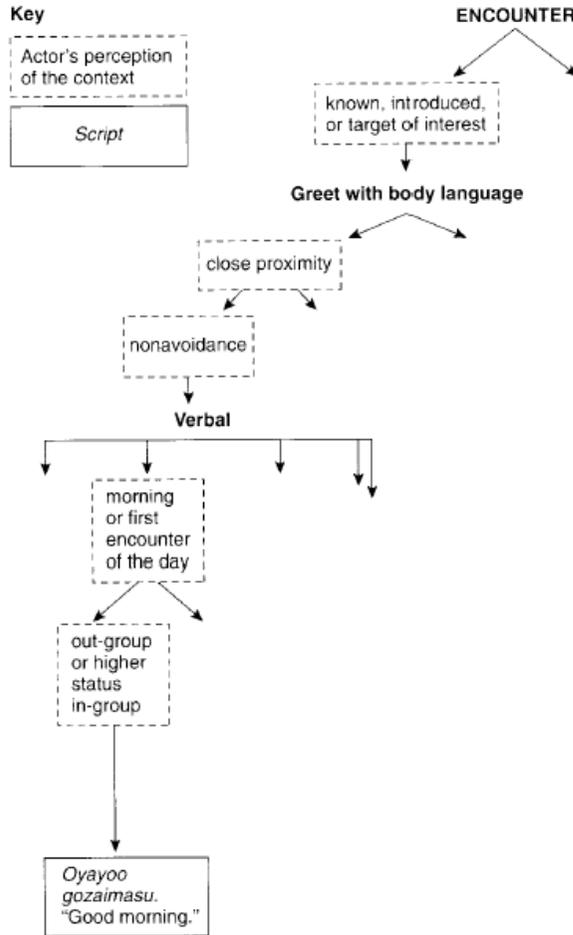in-group

*Oyayoo
gozaimasu.*
"Good morning."

Figure 3
A Performance of Morning or First-Encounter Greeting

A different greeting script, such as *Irasshaimase* "Come in (to the store)," will be interpreted as appropriate to a different time, place, role(s) of those involved in the interaction, and audience. *Irasshaimase* is commonly used by a worker in a store or an eating establishment to an entering customer, or by a worker in an inn or a hotel to an arriving guest. Hence, its usual translation into English is "welcome." Japanese visitors to the Cincinnati Airport encounter *Irasshaimase* along with "Welcome," "Bienvenue," "Wilikommen," displayed on a large

billboard in the international arrival concourse. Unfortunately, this expression, used in this particular context fails to convey the intended message of "welcome to a visitor." Instead, it sounds as if the state of Kentucky, the location of the Cincinnati Airport, is welcoming a commercial guest (from whom the state would like to benefit financially). To use *irasshaimase* in this context is an example of an ineffective performance in which language knowledge and culture knowledge are not matched in a way acceptable to members of the target culture.

As *performances* can be small (an apology) or great (a novel of redemption), so too are *games* (that is, performances with a defined scoring system). We can imagine a spectrum of performances with scoring systems (games) that range from the momentary (a sale), to the intermediate (a game of Monopoly), to the long term (the stock market). Games inject a clear meaning into the associated activity and add the possibility of emotion as players risk their interests in win-or-lose situations. Thus, games that conform to expectations of the target culture provide a powerful learning experience, while at the same time they create an operational analogy to participating in a culture that differs systemically from the learners' base culture(s).

4. *Story* (memory) is the personal memory of having experienced a performance or a game. Underlying the ability to participate in a culture is a memory for that culture, and that memory, according to Schank, consists of stories. When learners leave a foreign language class or some other form of instructional session, they take away a memory of that experience. It can be a memory that has little relation to the ultimate purpose of communicating in the language — holding an egg while writing difficult graphs, translating a sentence into the base language, or creating a sentence from a given element in the context of a classroom requirement. Or it can be a story of having done something in the target culture. As illustrated in the "Schema of Performances of Face-to-Face Greetings in Japanese" (Figure 2), a story would be the memory of the experience of having greeted or not greeted someone you met. If you had only the experiences of greeting acquaintances in the morning and meeting people for the first time, the stories of the performances of *Ohayoo, Ohayoo gozaimasu,* and *Hajimemashite* would at some point constitute your memory for greetings. If you were subsequently to take a job hosting a morning television show, you would soon add the story for a public greeting in the morning —

Minasama, ohayoo gozaimasu — and thereby increase your memory for greetings. If you did not get the glamorous television job and instead found yourself working as a clerk in a bakery, you would have to add *Irassyaimasu* to your memory for greetings. Or you might have created this entire memory structure by performing simulations and role-plays in the classroom.

5. *Compilation* results, once learners have gained the ability to tell or enact a story, add to their memory by putting the story together with other stories they know, to form larger knowledge domains. This compilation can be assisted through the structure of the curriculum, the design of study materials, the design of assessment instruments, and classroom activities. Learners compile functional memories of target culture behavior in processes of memorizing and remembering that take the form of the enactment of dialogs, playing of target-culture roles, participating in monitored simulations, and creating improvisations that are acceptable to members of the culture. By being trained to be aware of the features of specific performances, learners can associate a newly learned *story* with previously learned stories.

6. *Cases and sagas*: The memory constructed around even one simple utterance such as *sumimasen* (see Table 1) or one speech act such as greetings can be complex. We can simplify our management of such memories by categorizing the target culture memory into *cases* and *sagas*. A *case* is a series of stories about doing something in a culture; for example, figure 2 could represent a case for greeting in Japanese. A *saga* is a series of stories about a specific set of people or a specific location. It would represent what a learner knows about behaving around particular people or at particular places. In a course of foreign language study, one saga would undoubtedly deal with the classroom situation and the people involved in the course. It is highly desirable, however, that the "classroom saga" not be the only saga the learner learns.

Sagas and cases represent what a learner is capable of dealing with in the target culture. The use of narrative, both in print and in video, is a common way to create a saga. Successful films, television programs, short stories, and novels are coherent treatments of sets of characters often in particular settings — that is, they create sharable worlds. This makes these works effective culture-learning devices, especially if the study of these artifacts leads to learners who gain the ability to tell tales and to recognize and participate in common performances of

the target culture. Being able to tell tales from popular target-culture artifacts, such as a television show or a novel, is one of the surest ways to establish a bond with members of that culture. Although what passes for creative works in the popular media often contain situations that are uncommon — and hence appealing to popular curiosity — believability, or adhering to cultural possibilities, is usually necessary to make the productions accessible to large portions of the potential audience. It is this quality that lends these works to the learning of the target culture. Textbooks that follow particular characters or that provide extensive treatments to particular settings, such as places of employment or a household, also contribute to the construction of sagas. The value of a particular saga can be measured by the applicability of the content to successful communication in the target culture. In foreign language study, this quality far outweighs any appeal to any base-culture interests of the learners. The concept of saga reflects a commonplace notion that we perform better socially with familiar people and in familiar places. The compilation of sagas in the course of language study gives learners the impression of continuity and connectedness in their studied language even though the quantity of information in their knowledge of the target culture is much less than natives of that culture.

Cases are compiled into knowledge structures of the world — what you know of the world and what you can do in it. The number system or systems of a particular culture; how prices are conveyed in signage, speech, and gesture; how a purchase is negotiated; how to ask for information in a department store — this could be a series of stories within a larger case for "shopping." In addition, each of these could be a story in other cases, such as "mathematics," "advertising," or "getting around a city." Cases are rich with notions and functions. They can be compiled by direct presentation, by extracting elements from dialogs and narratives, and by combining these elements with previously learned knowledge.

7. *Second-Culture Worldview Construction* is the compilation of stories into the knowledge of a learned culture, a lifelong undertaking leading to a new repertoire of attitudes and skills and even the sense of a new self. As learners, their ability to function in the target culture improves; stories become subroutines in other stories and are compiled by experience into large, complex knowledge structures that become increasingly separated from the knowledge of

a base culture. A student of Japanese may begin compiling a case for greetings with a simple story for greeting a friend in the morning. At that point, greeting in Japanese would probably be an added component for conducting greetings in American culture. When he meets his Japanese teacher, he will have to consciously decide to greet her in Japanese or English, perhaps confusing the appropriate greeting for the time of day and not knowing whether to bow or not. But after having experienced a number of performances of greetings in Japanese, he will have compiled a case that is separate from English, and he will not have to decide consciously how to greet his teacher when he meets and bows to her. When this happens, his worldview will have been changed, and he will have a set of behaviors that is distinct and new. He will never again conceptualize "greeting" in the same way as when he did not have a sufficient case for greeting in Japanese.

Having learned a case or a saga in the foreign language they are studying will change the way learners approach new culture and language knowledge. As students move from being novice to expert learners of the language, the old information conditions the new, and the new rehearses the old. This is the reason for the "first in, last out" phenomenon remarked upon by many veteran language learners and is a strong argument for accurate culture and linguistic performances from the beginning of a course of study. The new worldview may also influence the persona a learner is bringing to the language-learning experience, creating remarkable changes in the course of learning a foreign language. A rude student, having compiled a case for politeness in Chinese, may add that to his persona in the Chinese learning environment, giving the impression that his initial rudeness was perhaps the result of not having a sufficient case for politeness in English.

STORY AS THE BASIC UNIT OF ANALYSIS

> This is the common situation of all language: expressions do not mean; they are prompts for us to construct meanings by working with processes we already know. In no sense is the meaning of an *XYZ* metaphor or any utterance "right there in the words." When we understand an utterance, we in no sense are understanding "just what the words say"; the words themselves say nothing independently of the richly detailed knowledge and powerful cognitive processes we bring to bear. (Turner 199

1:206)

Foreign language teachers have long relied on the sentence as the basic unit of analysis, presentation, and performance of the language code. When we expand our focus to include the culturally determined contexts of the language — what Mark Turner refers to as "richly detailed knowledge" — the story becomes the basic unit of analysis. In a given communication event, there is more information in the context than in the message. The sense lies not in the words but in the interaction of the words with the listeners, with the cultural context, and with present circumstances.

The story of a given communication event is the knowledge of culture, context, code, and performance that permits one to participate in that event. If we assume a conventional structure of memory as including working memory and long-term memory, stories function in the metabuffer to convert working memories to long-term memories and long-term memories to default behaviors. There is evidence that stories exist in the mind independently of other communicative capacities (Schank 1990). In some cases of physiological injury, stories may be the only communication functions an individual retains. There are reported cases in which people remember stories after they have forgotten words associated with a given domain (Martin and Romani 1995). Using this general concept of story, we can state that, from excuses to gossip to great literature, stories convey the knowledge that has or will become privileged by a culture.

KNOWING THE STORY

To realize the construction of a second-culture worldview in the classroom, the cycle of compilation and give them means to continue the compilation beyond their classroom experiences. After all, compilation of culture is a lifelong task even for first cultures, and our time in the classroom is limited. The classroom memory we want to establish has two parts: compilation of a target-culture worldview through a suitable collection of cases and sagas, and the process of compilation itself. The only way we could hope to build such classroom memory is performance by performance — and for each performance, step-by-step until each learner possesses a story of that performance. Throughout this process, the target culture is the outer shell within which all activities are organized, situated,

and evaluated.[iii]

There are levels of "knowing" a story, ranging from ignorance to automatic inclination, as illustrated in the well-known progression: (1) don't know you don't know; (2) know you don't know; (3) know you know, and (4) don't know you know.[iv] Every beginning learner of a foreign language claims to know that the language they are about to study is different from his or her native language. Despite such general awareness, American learners are often surprised to learn that *Xiexie,* an expression of gratitude in Chinese, is not used in response to a compliment and that the choice between the "formal" and "informal" endings in Japanese is not merely a stylistic variation.

The cultural characteristics of some stories are obvious. For example, Chinese and American stories on how to serve a cup of tea have clearly contrasting elements. An American host tries to be polite by giving the guest options and not imposing on the guest the host's predictions or assumptions about what the guest might want. A considerate Chinese host will know that a good guest would not make overt demands on the host and tries to surmise what might please the guest even when the guest overtly declines any offers of tea or another beverage. Most stories that underlie extended and prolonged communication are not as simple and clearly contrastive between the target and base cultures as we might think. They require closer attention and greater effort to learn. To help learners recognize the elements of performance, we show a demonstration of the performance, whether it be a scene from a movie or an episode from a novel or a short dialogue prepared for pedagogical purposes, and we define the constituent elements. Having recognized that the culture they are studying is different from that of their base culture, learners have reached the level at which they "know they don't know."

Learners can then proceed to the next level of knowing, "know that they know," through enactment and role-play activities. Students first imitate the scripts involved in the performance. The enactment requires much repetition practice, which can be done outside the classroom provided that students we need to devise activities through which we can initiate our students into have easy access to the model performance. They develop memory of language and culture knowledge through visualization and practice. Pedagogical materials serve as an important source of language and culture information for this activity. In classrooms, enactment leads to role-play and monitored simulations. For simulations, students play specified roles with specified scripts in the

specified time and place in front of a specified audience. Unless these elements are *specified,* usually by the teacher or the instructional materials, individuals predominately play the roles of teacher and students. Such defaults ensure the development of classroom sagas rather than memory that will be more useful in the target culture. It is crucial that these various elements be specified for the target culture and that students have the opportunity to engage actively in a variety of performances of the target culture. This is the only means through which they will have personal memories of those performances — the stories that make up the target culture worldview.

Having a memory of a story is an important step along the road to knowing. The next activity, improvisation, expands the repertoire of stories that students possess. To start the improvisation, one or more of the performance components are altered, and students compile new but related stories. If the script they hear or read changes, they may have to conjecture about changes in the actor's perception of the context or in the actor's intentions. If the time or roles are altered, students will have to adjust the script they utter or write accordingly. The teacher's job is to bring about these alterations in the context of performance and to monitor the students' behaviors to discern whether the stories they are developing are acceptable to members of the target culture.

Teachers can also participate in the performance and react to the students' performances. Here, the teacher could respond with one of the typical teacher responses, such as "That was good" or "That is incorrect." If that is what happens, that is the story students will remember — that of being praised or being corrected by the teacher in the classroom. If, on the other hand, the teacher responds as a member of the target culture would, this reaction is a memory of the potential story of the future. If the initial performance is not acceptable, the teacher can provide language information or culture information necessary to modify the performance. If the story ends there, however, it is just another story of being corrected by the teacher or, at best, a story of a helpful teacher. The teacher can go one step further to give the student the opportunity to engage in a culturally more plausible performance and respond to it as a member of the culture. This will lead to a memory of a successful interaction (or interpretation or presentation) in the target culture — the kind of memory that will help learners navigate through new experiences in the future without the help of the teacher. Such controlled improvisation should be repeated many times until students are able to respond to changing contexts automatically.

When they can do this, they have reached the highest level of knowing: "they don't know that they know." They can expand their sagas and cases without conscious analysis or extensive practice, as the well-rehearsed stories have now become second nature to them, part of their constructed worldview. The complex and interconnected sagas and cases form the base of target-culture knowledge structure from which learners can continue their discoveries about the target language and culture, discoveries that will then feed into the next cycle of compilation.

In the course of several hundred hours of classroom activities, students will have gone through this compilation cycle many times. This experience then leads to memory of the process of compilation, which will stay with learners beyond classrooms. When they encounter new situations, they are able to identify the elements of performance, recognize the new elements, incorporate them into their culture and language knowledge, develop a new story through performance, compile the new story into the structure of sagas and cases to adjust their own knowledge structure of the target culture. This equips them to critique their performances in light of reactions from members of the target culture as well as from their own knowledge and to seek ways to modify their story.

The choice and arrangement of stories, sagas, and cases to be developed in a given program of study must be guided by the level of significance of any given story in the target culture. All are specific to the target culture. In addition, their arrangement should foster effective compilation — that is, from simple to complex and from frequent to infrequent.

REMEMBERING THE FUTURE

This proleptic conceit of remembering the future focuses on the single most important task confronting a teacher of Chinese or Japanese: giving the language student the opportunity to create a memory in a pedagogical situation that he or she can apply to a later opportunity to interact with people from or in China or Japan. Compiling knowledge of a culture one has not yet experienced firsthand is a simple notion our field has recognized from the l950s — language and culture are inseparable. The question confronting those of us in foreign language study is, which culture is associated with the language being taught in the foreign

language classroom — the target culture or the base culture of the student? The answer to that question depends on how well those of us responsible for foreign language study formulate the concept of culture for our own purposes.

Culture in foreign language classrooms cannot be demonstrated simply by commanding information about the practice, perspective, and products of the target culture. It should go beyond the concept of cultures as sets of topics that we see in *Standards for Foreign Language Learning (SFLL)* and directly deal with the understanding of cultures that shapes the way we use linguistic knowledge. If we analyze textbooks in terms of their treatment of culture, we cannot be content to list the reading passages that explain an aspect of the target culture. We should look instead to see that all instances of language use are tied to target-culture assumptions and then how those assumptions subtend classroom interactions, interpretations, and presentations.

Furthermore, being able to recall language knowledge and culture knowledge is not sufficient by itself. Such knowledge must be used to inform memories of personal involvement in the performance of culture events such as stories. Thus, performed culture becomes the foundation of a memory that can be drawn upon when needed in the future. An essay about travel in China makes an interesting reading about culture. The reader may learn about Chinese train systems, what to expect in a typical Chinese train, and what people do to purchase train tickets. However, for the purpose of gaining such knowledge, it is more efficient and far simpler to read a well-written article in an English publication. A Chinese artifact, an article about travel from a Chinese publication, or a video tape about a train trip offer a chance for performed culture, assuming that students' reading level frees them from heavy reliance on bilingual dictionaries. Working too far above their linguistic and culture level, the students' memories may focus on their struggle — how difficult and time consuming a chore it is. Provided they have sufficient language and culture knowledge, our students can play the roles of people who want to consult the article to plan a trip. Their interpretation of the article will be framed by the specified purpose for reading it. Assessment of their comprehension will not be likely to take the shape of true-or-false questions about every piece of information in the article but, rather, how well they accomplished their plans.

Finally, and this again takes us beyond the *SFLL* concept of culture, if we take performed culture seriously, we cannot be content to observe the understanding and performances of our learners, even if they seem to reflect the

assumptions of the target culture. We must also evaluate the receptivity of their performance in the target culture. It should not be enough that they have conveyed their intentions or comprehended another person's intentions successfully. We need to be concerned with how the persons with whom they interact view the success of the communication. Only when our students are made aware of the reactions of their interlocutors in the classroom and beyond will their memory of the future serve them well.

NOTES

[i.] To mention a few: Ludwig Wittgenstein, John L. Austin. Paul Grice, John Searle, Edward Sapir. Benjamin Whorf, Lev Vygotsky, Edward T. Hall, John Dewey, Dell Hymes, Clifford Geertz, G. Lakoff, Eleanor Ochs, Gregory Bateson, Mikhail M. Bakhtin, Nelson Goodman, Jerome Bruner.

[ii.] In 1953 a group of anthropologists, philosophers, and linguists held a conference on the "interrelations of language and other aspects of culture" (Hoijer 1954: iii), suggesting that language is but an aspect of culture.

[iii.] Hector Hammerly (1985:157) proposes a concentric set of cones. the outermost layer of which is cultural competence. Enclosed in the shell of cultural competence are communicative competence and linguistic competence.

[iv.] This idea of levels of knowing was taken from Robert Smith, an engineer, in a lecture on creative thinking at Cornell University in the late 1970s. When he proposed it in his lecture, as a student of Chinese literature I did not think much about it. When I became more involved in language pedagogy, however, I found myself using it frequently through the years (Walker).

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