“HEI MITÄ TÄÄ NY TARKOTTAA?” :

Experiences of intercultural communication and linguistic shock while using English abroad

Master’s thesis

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Globalisaation ja kansainvälistymisen myötä korkeakouluopiskelijoiden kansainvälinen liikkuvuus on lisääntynyt huomattavasti. Ulkomailla oleskelu on tarjonnut monille hyvinkin positiivisia kokemuksia, mutta uudessa kulttuurissa eri kielellä toimiminen voi aiheuttaa myös yllättäviä ongelmatilanteita.

Tutkimuksen teoriataustan aloittaa katsaus kansainväliseen opiskelijaliikkuvuuteen, jonka jälkeen esitellään muutamia tärkeimpiä kulttuurienvälisen viestinnän teorioita. Kulttuurienvälinen viestintäkompetenssi on myös olennainen tässä tutkimuksessa, joten myös siitä keskustellaan. Kielishokki ilmiönä esitellään aluksi sekä kulttuurisesta että kielellisestä näkökulmasta, jonka jälkeen tarkastellaan lähemmin kulttuurienvälisiä eroja ja mahdollisia esteitä viestinnälle.

Tutkimuksen pääasiallisena tarkoituksena oli selvittää, millaisia kokemuksia suomalaisilla korkeakouluopiskelijoilla on kulttuurishokista, kulttuurienvälisestä viestinnästä sekä kielishokista ulkomailla englantia käyttäessään. Pääpaino oli kuitenkin kielellisissä haasteissa, sillä kielishokki on vielä suhteellisen uusi tutkimuskohde. Tutkielma on luonteeltaan laadullinen, ja sen aineisto kerättiin haastattelemalla viittä vastaajaa, joilla oli kokemusta opiskelusta tai työskentelystä ulkomailla, ja jotka olivat käyttäneet kohdemaassa pääasiassa englantia. Haastateltavat valikoitiin myös eri maiden perusteella, ja niinpä aineistossa on kokemuksia Tansaniasta, Japanista, Australiasta, Iso-Britanniasta sekä Intiasta. Yksilöhaastattelut olivat puolistrukturoituja teemahaastatteluita, jotka myös nauhoitettiin ja litteroitiin. Analyysimetodiksi valikoitui aineistolähtöinen sisällönanalyysi, sillä haastatteluiden perusteella esiin nousi muutamia keskeisiä teemoja.

Tulokset osoittivat, että osallistujat huomasivat monia kulttuurienvälisiä eroja viestinnässä ja kokivat jonkin verran kielishokkia kielen eri osa-alueilla: oma puheen tuottaminen, erilainen puheen aksentti, kehonkieli, kohteliaisuus, tervehdykset ja small talk, sekä hiljaisuus että tunteiden ilmaiseminen keskusteluiden aikana. Kielishokin vaikutuksia opiskelijoiden kielenkäyttöön ja oppimiseen olisi kuitenkin hyödyllistä tutkia lisää. Näin ollen yleinen tietoisuus kielishokista voisi lisääntyä niin opiskelijoilla kuin laajemminkin kulttuurienvälisen viestinnän ja kansainvälisyyden kentillä.

Asiasanat – Keywords In English: internationalization, intercultural communication, sociolinguistics, linguistic interaction, English language
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1 INTRODUCTION

> "(Language) is one of the most important differences between many cultures, and one of the greatest barriers." (Argyle 1982: 63)

Due to growing migration, globalization and internationalization, there is an increased need for understanding of intercultural communication along with developing one´s intercultural skills. The present study falls within the area of cross-disciplinary field of studies, that is, applied linguistics or pragmatics and sociolinguistics to be more specific, as well as intercultural communication. While there is a variety of study-abroad programs, the present study focuses mainly on university-level study- or work-abroad programs. The objective is to find out what kinds of linguistic challenges Finnish university students have experienced while living and studying abroad. Furthermore, this study is interested in finding out how the possible linguistic shock can influence one´s language skills in English.

The study of culture and communication seems to be of interest in a variety of academic disciplines, such as languages, anthropology, psychology, sociology, and ethnology to mention some of them (Klopf and McCroskey 2007: 63). Indeed, language is deeply embedded in culture: in order to have a culture, language is needed so that group members can share knowledge of beliefs, values and behaviors; culture is needed to form groups so that those aspects can actually develop (Samovar et al. 2010: 228). For this reason, culture shock and linguistic shock are also interrelated. In other words, linguistic shock can be considered a subcomponent of culture shock. Culture shock has been widely discussed in many disciplines, however, linguistic shock is hardly mentioned in research. Consequently, the present study aims at filling this gap by examining the phenomenon in more detail. In addition, it has to be mentioned that students´ own experiences, opinions and motivations are basically lacking in the literature, and that is another reason why this study wanted to take them more into account as well.

At this early stage, it is essential to clarify some basic concepts that will be used throughout this study. First of all, intercultural research typically makes a distinction between different kinds of individuals or groups who travel abroad, that is, sojourners and other intercultural travelers such as immigrants and refugees (Ward et al. 2001: 6, 21). This study, however, is interested specifically in sojourners and international students to be more exact. *A sojourner* can be described as a temporary resident, between-society culture traveler, who voluntarily goes abroad for a set period of time that is usually associated with a specific assignment. He or she has the intention to return to his/her culture of origin once the purpose of the visit has been achieved. The term *context* here is an essential part of communication, which refers to the environment, in which the communication occurs and which helps in defining the communication (Jandt 2004: 33).

This study is organized in the following manner. After this introductory chapter, in Chapter 2, international student mobility will be reviewed. Then, intercultural communication will be introduced in Chapter 3 by first discussing some key definitions as well as some well-known theories, and finally intercultural communication competence will be discussed. Furthermore, Chapter 4 focuses on linguistic shock as follows: Section 4.1 discusses the foundations of linguistic shock from both cultural and linguistic perspectives. Section 4.2 deals with cultural variations in communication and 4.3 reviews different barriers to intercultural communication. Section 4.4 introduces the reader some previous studies conducted in the area. In Chapter 5, the focus will move from the theoretical background to the present study, and the aims, research questions, participants, methodology, as well as methods of analysis will be explained in detail. Chapter 6 is dedicated to the findings of this study. Finally, in Chapter 7, these findings will be discussed, the methods will be evaluated, along with some suggestions for further research will be provided.

2 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY

The following three chapters provide a theoretical background for the present study. *International student mobility* as a concept refers to students studying in a foreign country (Gürüz 2011: 20). Especially after the Second World War to the present, governments and foundations have supported international student mobility (Furnham and Bochner 1982: 162). Quite surprisingly, however, even though there is more academic literature on the internationalization of higher education, it seems that students´ own experiences and motivations are lacking (Brooks and Waters 2011: 2).

The amount of foreign students in European countries has increased significantly since the 1980s as a result of EU programs aimed at increasing mobility (Gürüz 2011: 210, 353). In brief, the Socrates Program was Europe´s general education program until 2006; the Leonardo da Vinci Program covered professional education; and the Youth Program was developed for the needs of informal education and extracurricular activities. In 2007, the new Lifelong Learning Program 2007-2013 replaced these aforementioned programs. This program focused on fostering interaction, cooperation as well as mobility between education systems within the community. Currently, it includes the programs on school education (Comenius), higher education (ERASMUS), vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci), and adult education (Grundtvig).

Indeed, ERASMUS (*European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students*) was established already in 1987, and its aim has been to increase student mobility in the EU area as well as to encourage international cooperation between universities (Gürüz 2011: 353-354). Furthermore, ERASMUS seemed to be a highly versatile program, for instance, it included student and teacher exchanges; joint development of study programs (curriculum development); international intensive programs as well as language courses. The latest update to these programs is called ERASMUS+ as

the previous ERASMUS and other programs were included under the same label, which aims to support education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020 (EACEA 2015). As one could expect, the dominance of English as the language of science and higher education has strengthened during these programs.

The popularity of major *host countries* has varied throughout the decades, however, the countries that receive the most foreign students today include the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, France, Germany, China, Japan, Russia, Canada as well as New Zealand (Gürüz 2011: 204-211; Brooks and Waters 2011: 78). It is worth mentioning, however, that China, Japan and New Zealand are newcomers to the global higher education market. As far as European students are concerned, they tend to favor strongly other European countries, as Germany, the UK, France and Spain are the most popular European countries for mobile European students. Obviously, the reasons for the popularity of specific countries are varied; for instance, the United Kingdom has always been a major destination based on colonial connections and the reputation of its institutions; Australia has adapted active recruitment practices since the 1980s; Canada has the reputation of high-quality Anglo-Saxon type of higher education at lower costs compared to private US institutions; and the use of English in general has attracted students from all over the world. In contrast, the major *countries of origin* that send students abroad include China, the United States, India, Korea, Japan, Germany, France, Malaysia, Canada and Morocco to mention some of them.

The current reality in Finland is that higher education institutions and research have become international. According to the *Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009-2015* (Ministry of Education 2009: 12, 17), *internationalization* has actually long been one of the key objectives of the Finnish science and higher education policy along with the core of higher education institutions´ own strategies. In fact, in just three decades, the

international mobility of students has quadrupled. Over the years, study abroad has provided significant personal and professional international and intercultural experiences for a number of students both in Finland and worldwide.

Internationalization can be seen to result in a variety of positive effects not only as far as an individual is concerned, but also the larger community – even a nation. However, the focus here will be on the individual, that is, the student who leaves abroad for an exchange. Even if many people find intercultural experiences challenging, they also consider them as an enriching part of their lives, and some of them are even ready to change their career plans as a result of their experiences abroad (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 2). Studying and working abroad will improve an individual´s language skills and position in the labor market and also increase understanding between cultures and societies (Ministry of Education 2009). In addition, internationalization is considered to promote an individual´s mental growth and understanding of global responsibility. More generally, studying in another country is also considered an important means of encouraging further learning (Brooks and Waters 2011: 73). A student´s international competence is supported by well-executed mobility periods abroad along with high-quality courses including international elements in Finland. Even if the forms of internationalization have changed in a variety of ways in recent years, short study and research periods overseas are considered to be essential ways of increasing the international mobility of adult and postgraduate students.

It is pointed out in *An Evaluation of International Degree Programmes in Finland* (The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council 2013: 14-15) that the internationalization of higher education is part of a fundamental process for improving the quality of Finnish higher education, and at the same time, also the competitiveness of Finnish society. Internationalization will contribute to Finnish society, businesses and higher education institutions become more

competitive within a global context. To sum up, ability to work in international environments has become a major requirement for employment in the global labor market, and for this reason, the development of intercultural skills has gained more attention especially in institutions of higher education worldwide (Gürüz 2011: 175).

To sum up, this chapter discussed international student mobility. To be more specific, some well-known EU programs were reviewed that aim at increasing mobility within Europe, such as Lifelong Learning Program, ERASMUS and ERASMUS+. In addition, the most popular host countries that receive students from all over the world as well as the countries of origin that send out the most students were briefly presented. Finally, internationalization was reviewed from the perspective of Finnish higher education as well as its positive effects for an individual and the community at large.

3 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

This chapter focuses on intercultural communication as follows: Section 3.1 introduces related terminology, Section 3.2 presents some well-known theories on intercultural communication, and finally Section 3.3 discusses intercultural communication competence in detail.

3.1 Related terminology

To begin with, in communication studies there are various concepts referring to communication across cultures, and one might quite easily get confused with them (Jandt 2004: 38-39; Guirdham 1999: 93). For this reason, it is necessary to have a brief look at them to notice the differences between them. First of all, *communication* in one sense simply means the exchange of messages and the creation of meaning, however, it is worth mentioning that scholars argue that only messages can be transmitted and received, while meanings cannot be transmitted. Second, *international communication* usually refers to the study of the flow of mediated communication between and among countries, as well as to the study of comparative mass communication systems and communication between national governments. Third, *global communication* deals with the study of transborder transfer of information, data, opinions, and values held by groups and governments, and issues arising from the transfer. Fourth, *interracial* and *interethnic communication* are used by some scholars when the goal is to examine how race or ethnicity influence discourse processes (Gudykunst 2003: 163). Furthermore, *cross-cultural communication* is concerned with comparing phenomena across cultures. Finally, *intercultural communication* is the principal concept applied in the present study, which generally means face-to-face interactions among people from different cultures. From now on, the focus will be on intercultural communication, which will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

Intercultural communication (from here on referred to as ICC) has been studied since at least the 1960s (Guirdham 1999: 193; Jandt 2004: 39). Actually, it was already in 1959 when Hall published his well-known book *The Silent Language*. There are various ways to conceptualize the topic and for this reason some major definitions will be provided here. One way to approach ICC is to define it as follows: "whenever a message producer is a member of one culture and a message receiver is a member of another" (Samovar and Porter 1985, as quoted by Guirdham 1999: 193). To be more specific, ICC is commonly defined as communication between people from different national cultures, especially as far as face-to-face communication is concerned (Gudykunst 2003: 163). In other words, ICC is basically a communicative exchange between persons of different cultures, and they affect and influence each other by what they say and how they say it, what they perceive, and how they think, all of which stem from their own cultures (Klopf and McCroskey 2007: 58). The following definition takes into account also the different cultural perceptions and symbols as it states: "Intercultural communication involves interaction between people whose cultural perceptions and symbol systems are distinct enough to alter the communication event." (Samovar et al. 2010: 12).

It is also argued that ICC occurs when one´s cultural group membership factors, such as cultural norms, beliefs, and values, have an influence on one´s communication process, whether one is conscious of them or not (Ting-Toomey 1999: 16). Nonetheless, one still needs to learn the knowledge and skills in order to manage these differences constructively. In case one is not aware of some cultural differences between oneself and others, one might not even recognize that problems in communication might result from different cultures. These common cross-cultural differences and barriers to ICC will be elaborated on in Chapter 4. One perspective is also to view ICC as *difference-based* as opposed to monocultural communication which is *similarity-based* (Bennett 1998: 2-3). On the one hand, similarity-based refers to similarities in a common language,

behavior patterns, and values, which form the basis upon which members of the culture exchange meanings with each other. As a result, individuals are usually able to predict the responses of others to certain kinds of messages. On the other hand, difference-based refers to differences between cultures concerning the aspects mentioned above.

3.2 Theories on intercultural communication

For the purposes of this study, however, it is necessary to obtain a basic understanding of how complex and multidimensional the topic of ICC actually is. Currently, in research on ICC, there is a huge variety of theories that examine the topic from somewhat different perspectives. However, this has not always been the case as the theories have been developed during the past 30 years or so, as among the first attempts to theorize about ICC was by Gudykunst in 1983. With respect to these theories, two different approaches can be identified: the objectivist and subjectivist (Gudykunst 2003: 167). On the one hand, the *objectivist approach* considers a "real world" external to individuals, and attempts to discover regularities behavior-wise, as well as describes communication as "determined" by different situations and environments. On the other hand, the *subjectivist approach* argues that there is no "real world" external to individuals, and thus the focus is on individuals as they are able to communicate out of their "free will". Now four relatively well-defined contemporary theories provide with their understandings for ICC.

3.2.1 The culture learning approach

The culture learning approach puts emphasis on the significance of *social skills* and *social interaction*, that is, the essential processes by which one acquires culturally relevant skills in order to survive and interact effectively in one´s new environment (Ward 2004: 188-190; Furnham and Bochner 1982: 164). In this

approach, there is a difference between "adjusting" and "learning" a new culture, since the former seems to be quite ethnocentric as it implies that one should abandon one´s culture of origin and adjust to the values and customs of the host culture. That is why this approach focuses on learning the features of a new culture.

The language of communication, rules as well as customs of social interaction vary considerably across cultures (Ward 2004: 188-190; Furnham and Bochner 1982: 166). To be more specific, these barriers to effective ICC include differences as far as nonverbal behavior is concerned, for instance, eye contact, culture-specific gestures, body postures, use of silence, or expression of feelings. Sojourners who are in a new culture have not been socialized in these rules and routines of behavior, and that is why at least at first they are socially unskilled in their new environment. Many sojourners, however, are highly skilled both in verbal and non-verbal interaction of their own culture, and consequently, they may find their inadequacy in the new culture highly frustrating and even embarrassing. In other words, the risk of unsuccessful and unpleasant experiences in intercultural encounters is much greater than in monocultural ones. It is important to point out, however, that these failures and problems experienced by sojourners are due to a lack of the necessary cultural skills and knowledge. Different kinds of standard social skills training methods have been suggested, such as instruction, modelling, role-playing, video-feedback and homework.

Furthermore, one hypothesis in this approach suggests that cross-cultural transitions are less difficult when the contact cultures are similar (Ward 2004: 189). Furthermore, quite many studies with sojourners, both international students and business people, have demonstrated that there is correlation between cultural and ethnic similarity and fewer sociocultural difficulties. More specifically, students who belonged to the culturally "far" group (Middle Eastern and Asian countries) compared to the UK, experienced more difficulties

than those from the "intermediate" group (Southern European and South American countries) and the "near" group (Northern European countries).

3.2.2 Anxiety / uncertainty management theory

Anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) theory is a well-known model focusing on effective communication, developed by Gudykunst (1985, 1993, 1995, 2002), and it is based on the uncertainty reduction theory (URT) to intergroup encounters of Berger and Calabrese (1975) (as quoted by Gudykunst 2003: 168-169). It is worth noticing that ICC is one type of intergroup communication in this theory. AUM theory seems to be a fairly complex theory including dozens of principles, and that is why it is impossible to cover all of them here, but only some major arguments.

First of all, it is essential to provide definitions for the two major concepts here: anxiety and uncertainty (Gudykunst 2003: 169; Guirdham 1999: 207). Accordingly, *anxiety* refers to one´s feelings of being uneasy, worried, tense, or even apprehensive. On the one hand, if one´s level of anxiety is too high, one may want to avoid encounters with others or one´s attention is distracted from the situation, and that is when stereotypes and misinterpretations are more likely to occur. On the other hand, when anxiety is too low, one does not necessarily care that much what is going on in the situation, and as a result one might miss some important cues. *Uncertainty* is concerned with one´s inability to predict or explain others´ attitudes, behavior, or feelings. In case uncertainty is too high to handle, one typically tries to reduce it with the help of information or end the interaction. In contrast, if uncertainty is too low, one may become too bored to act effectively. Furthermore, the concept of *stranger* basically means individuals engaging in communication but who are not members of the ingroup as they come from a different culture. The basic argument of AUM theory is that one experiences uncertainty and anxiety in initial interactions with strangers, however, one is motivated to reduce both

through communication. The more cultural and person-based knowledge one has, the lower one´s anxiety and uncertainty levels are at the same time (Ting-Toomey and Takai 2006: 712). Thus, it can be argued that in effective communication there are only minimal misunderstandings as anxiety and uncertainty are mindfully managed.

The first version of AUM theory from 1985 included only 13 axioms, which focused on effective communication and cross-cultural variability (Gudykunst 2003: 169-170). Later on the theory has been developed, for instance, the number of axioms has increased to 49 so that the theory would be easier to understand and apply. Consequently, it has been discovered that there are so called *basic* and *superficial causes* of effective communication. The former refer to the management of anxiety and uncertainty, the latter deal with a number of other variables, which are mediated through how one is able to manage one´s anxiety and uncertainty. To be more specific, these other variables include: 1) *self and self-concept*: identities and self-esteem; 2) *motivation to interact with strangers*: need for group inclusion, need to sustain self-concept, need for predictability; 3) *reactions to strangers*: ability to tolerate ambiguity, ability to adapt behavior to and empathize with strangers; 4) *social categorization of strangers*: ability to understand group differences and similarities along with positive expectations for strangers; 5) *situational processes*: informality of interaction situation and normative support for interacting with strangers; and finally 6) *connections with strangers*: attraction to strangers, quality and quantity of contact with strangers, interdependence and intimacy of relationships with strangers. As can be seen from the list of different variables, there are quite many of them, and it is argued that they have an influence on how (in)effective one´s communication with strangers (which is also the *outcome*) can be.

Over the decades, AUM theory has been greatly discussed and criticized by a number of scholars. For example, it has been argued that as the theory defines effective communication as communication with only minimal

misunderstandings, it is quite a simplistic way to view communication (Yoshitake 2002). In addition, it has been found out that the cultural perspective of the theory seems to be a Westernized one, so it may not necessarily represent other possible cultural views reliably. In contrast, there have also been many researchers (e.g. Gudykunst and Shapiro 1996; Hubbert, Gudykunst and Guerrero 1999; Gudykunst and Nishida 2001) who have examined anxiety and uncertainty with respect to communication (Gudykunst 2003: 170). Their findings actually seem to support AUM theory as they have found out, for example, that anxiety and uncertainty have an impact on the effectiveness of communication both in terms of ingroup and outgroup relationships.

3.2.3 Communication accommodation theory

Communication accommodation theory (CAT), originally developed by Giles (1973) and subsequently expanded by other scholars (e.g. Coupland et al. 1988; Gallois et al. 1995), focuses on accommodation or adaptation (Gudykunst 2003: 171-172). Even though it was developed about four decades ago, it generates research even today. First of all, *accommodation* can be defined as follows: "the constant movement toward or away from others by changing your communicative behavior" (Griffin 2012: 395). CAT is a comprehensive communication theory, which is in fact a development of speech accommodation theory (SAT), which states that when at least two people are communicating face to face, they often tend to adjust features of their speech or behavior, for example, their accent, speed, loudness, vocabulary, grammar, voice tone as well as gestures (Guirdham 1999: 151, 214).

Furthermore, there might be various reasons for this kind of adjustment of speech (Guirdham 1999: 151; Griffin 2012: 396-397). On the one hand, one wants to adjust one´s speech more according to the other person´s speech possibly to gain approval and identify with him/her (also called *convergence*). For example, if one is talking with an elderly gentleman, one could talk in a way that it

would be easier for him to understand, such as by using louder voice or examples to illustrate what one is saying. On the other hand, one may wish to distinguish oneself from the other person also by the speech in case one wants to emphasize one´s own group membership (also called *divergence*). For example, a young speaker could say to an elderly man *Okay, mate, let´s get it together at my place around 3:30 tomorrow.* At the same time, the elderly might reply *Fine, young man, we´ll meet again at 15:30, at your house tomorrow.* In this case, both speakers wanted to maximize the differences between them.

Occasionally the speaker may attempt to adjust his/her speech to achieve clearer communication with the other person, for example, if there are major differences in terms of age, gender, nationality, religion, language, and so on (Guirdham 1999: 151; Griffin 2012: 394). It is argued that speech accommodation is a frequently used strategy to gain the appreciation of those people who represent different groups or cultures. It has also been discovered that people in more collectivistic cultures apply more politeness strategies and their language tends to be more formal when interacting with outgroup members compared to people from more individualistic cultures. Clearly, this is one way of showing the communicative distance between them, and obviously it can cause misunderstandings and linguistic shocks as well.

One can identify different components of CAT theory (Gudykunst 2003: 172-174). First, the *socio-historical context* of the interaction relates to the relations between groups in contact, along with the social norms that guide the intercultural contact. In addition, cultural variability is also included here. Second, the communicators´ *accommodative orientation* refers to their tendency to perceive encounters with outgroup members in interpersonal and/or intergroup terms. This orientation further comprises intrapersonal factors (such as personal and social identities), intergroup factors which mean factors reflecting communicators´ orientations to outgroups, and initial orientation which stands for perceived potential for conflict, as well as long-term

accommodative motivation toward outgroups. Third, the *immediate situation* is concerned with five aspects, which are: 1) sociopsychological states (e.g. one´s interpersonal/intergroup orientation in the situation); 2) goals and addressee focus (e.g. motivation in the situation, both conversational and relational needs); 3) sociolinguistic strategies (e.g. approximation and discourse management); 4) behavior and tactics (e.g. language, accent, topic); and finally 5) labeling and attributions. To sum up, these five aspects are interrelated in the situation. Ultimately, CAT also mentions *evaluation and future intentions,* which means communicators´ perceptions of their interlocutors´ behavior in the interaction. In case interlocutors are evaluated in a positive sense, it is more likely that one communicates with them also in the future.

Finally, CAT has also received some criticism among researchers as it has developed a great deal since the beginning, and as a result the contemporary scope seems to be quite wide (Griffin 2012: 403-404). In addition, scholars use multiple versions of the same theory and various terms referring to same perceptions, and that is why the theory seems to be fairly complex. However, some basic ideas of it were introduced here and they seem applicable for the present study.

3.2.4 Developmental intercultural competence model

This is a highly influential model, also known as Development of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS), developed by Bennett (1986). Accordingly, it is acknowledged that one may be able to become a more efficient communicator as a result of interaction, which produces learning (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009: 21-23). DMIS has been used to explain people´s reactions to cultural differences as well as to assess their level of cultural adaptation (Gore 2007: 150-152). It is common that developmental models identify several stages of progression, which helps to perceive if and when one has reached a higher level of interaction. Basically, DMIS consists of six different stages which

demonstrate one´s predominant orientation to cultural differences, which are: 1) denial; 2) defense; 3) minimization; 4) acceptance; 5) adaptation; and 6) integration (see Figure 1).

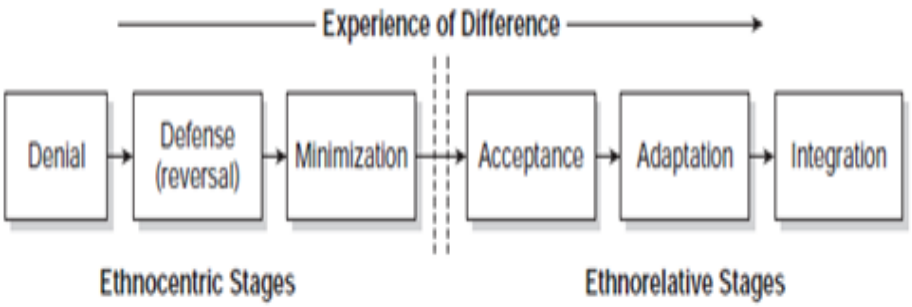

Figure 1. Developmental intercultural competence model (adapted from Bennett 1986, cited in Spitzberg and Changnon 2009: 21-23).

Accordingly, the first three of these stages are considered to be *ethnocentric,* which means that one experiences one´s own culture being more real than other cultures, as opposed to the latter three stages, which are viewed as *ethnorelative* stages referring to one´s understanding that one´s culture is one of many equally complex cultures in the world. First of all, at the *Denial* stage of development, one is separated or isolated from cultural difference as only within a homogeneous group, other cultures are quite irrelevant, and there is no respect for diversity. This means that one lacks the opportunity or motivation to comprehend cultural differences. Second, at the *Defense* stage one is already abler to perceive cultural differences but from a very limited perspective (we good - you bad); one might also have negative stereotypes towards different cultural groups; others might be seen as a threat against whom one needs to protect. Third, the *Minimization* stage is associated with one´s tendency to minimize cultural difference and apply universalistic thinking. To be more specific, one is able to recognize and accept only superficial cultural differences, for example, eating customs, but one still thinks that all people are essentially the same (so called tourist-like perspective).

Moving on to the ethnorelative stages, *Acceptance* is described as a phase, in which one is not only curious about other cultures but also able to recognize cultural differences and admit that cultures are equally sophisticated but in different ways (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009: 21-23; Gore 2007: 153-154). One might still judge cultural differences in a negative way – this time, however, it is not ethnocentric anymore. The penultimate stage is *Adaptation,* in which one is actually able to adapt to another culture. This means that one is able to intentionally change one´s behavior in order to communicate more effectively in the foreign culture. Ultimately, *Integration* refers to a situation in which one´s communication has become ethnorelative and one is constructing one´s identity with the help of intercultural experiences. In other words, at this stage one has internalized bicultural or multicultural frames of reference.

This section has dealt with intercultural communication theories developed by a number of scholars over the decades, including the culture learning approach, the anxiety/uncertainty management theory (AUM), the communication accommodation theory (CAT) as well as the developmental intercultural competence model (DMIS). Hopefully this review has broadened one´s perspective on issues related to ICC. The next section will address ICC competence in more detail.

3.3 Intercultural communication competence

Intercultural communication competence is the ability to communicate effectively with people who come from different cultural backgrounds (Gore 2007: 137). ICC competence has become a highly popular topic in research literature, and attempts have been made to identify the skills one needs in order to communicate effectively in intercultural encounters. Obviously, there are many approaches to the topic, however, the present study is interested in the

communication approach, since the focus here is on ICC and linguistic shock. This section will address definitions of ICC competence as well as various dimensions of it.

To begin with, trying to define ICC competence is not as straightforward as one might think as the reality of the research field is that there is a variety of definitions which can be highly diverse in their nature (Kim 2001: 98; Jokikokko 2005: 90; Spitzberg and Changnon 2009: 6). There seems to be no consensus as far as the existing academic conceptions of *communication competence*, which is also called interpersonal communication competence, interpersonal competence, social competence, and human competence; and *intercultural communication competence*, which is also referred to as intercultural or cross-cultural or multicultural competence, intercultural skills or intercultural effectiveness or efficacy or expertise or awareness or responsiveness or sensitivity, are concerned. Furthermore, the concept of *intercultural* has also been used concurrently with terms such as *transcultural* and *cross-cultural*. In addition, the term *competence* has been used in varied ways among researchers; at times combined with notions of successful performance, internal capacity, or understanding (e.g. accuracy, clarity), relationship development (e.g. attraction, intimacy), satisfaction (e.g. communication satisfaction, relational quality), effectiveness (e.g. goal achievement, efficiency, negotiation success), appropriateness (e.g. legitimacy, acceptance, assimilation), and adaptation.

This study, however, finds two definitions of *communication competence* particularly clear and useful. The first one suggests that competent communication is both *effective* and *appropriate* (Spitzberg and Cupach 1984, cited in Arasaratnam 2013: 48-49). A communication exchange can be considered effective if one has accomplished one´s goals in the given exchange, that is, when a message is understood in the desired way. Appropriateness of the exchange relates to one´s manner of reaching these goals, as the manners should be expected and accepted in that particular social context. The

intercultural challenge here is that what is considered effective and appropriate in one culture is not necessarily the same in another culture, and consequently, this may easily cause problems in social encounters. The second definition states that competence is always considered *interactional,* which is also an essential but not sufficient condition for a successful performance or its outcomes (Kim 2001: 98). In brief, this definition emphasizes the complex nature of performance and its outcomes in any communication encounter which is, on the one hand, affected by the individual´s own internal capacity to communicate, and on the other hand, by other features such as the other interactant´s communication competence and the relationship between them. To sum up, ICC competence includes the knowledge, motivation and skills to act effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures (Klopf and McCroskey 2007: 265). This means that one needs to have not only knowledge about the interlocutor but also motivation to communicate, as well as the appropriate verbal and nonverbal skills that are essential in the interaction process.

There are various views on the *dimensions of ICC competence*. Researchers have quite different ideas on how many dimensions, components or skill areas are included, and they emphasize them differently. However, a number of scholars provide their approaches to the discussion here, which hopefully serves the reader to view the competence from various perspectives. To begin with, there are typically four dimensions: 1) attitudes; 2) knowledge and awareness; 3) skills; and 4) action, which will be discussed here (Jokikokko 2005: 93-94; Martin and Nakayama 2004: 412-414). First of all, *attitudes* in this context mean one´s general orientation towards diversity, tolerance for ambiguity (the ease in dealing with what is different), empathy (the capacity to imagine oneself in another role), and nonjudgmentalness (not judging others according to our own cultural beliefs). It is worth noticing that attitudes are the most complex and long-lasting dimension of intercultural competence. It might be difficult to tolerate differences, to understand other people without knowing something

about their life experiences, and not to judge people who behave and speak in a different way compared to our own. Regarding positive intercultural interactions, there are particular features that are considered essential, for instance, the appreciation of diversity, willingness, courage, and commitment to promote equity, along with openness towards new people and ways of life.

With respect to attitudes, *motivation* also has a significant role, as it includes one´s intentions, such as plans, objectives, goals, and feelings (Martin and Nakayama 2004: 407-409). Motivation can be considered possibly the most important of all, as one needs motivation in order to take part in communication encounters. On the one hand, people are not always motivated enough to communicate with strangers from other cultures. There might be several reasons for this, such as the conception that there is no need to understand other cultures (large and powerful groups); ICC is perceived uncomfortable and perhaps it is associated with the emotions of anxiety, uncertainty and even fear; and/or communication breakdowns (e.g. historical and political events). Fortunately, one might become more motivated to learn more about other cultures and to communicate in intercultural situations. On the other hand, one might have different reasons for being motivated to engage in ICC, such as increasing one´s understanding and knowledge of other worldviews, getting to know people from other cultures, and so on (Arasaratnam 2013: 53). The major challenge here, however, is that one´s attitudes have developed throughout one´s life since one´s early childhood, and for this reason, it is relatively difficult to try to change them later as an adult.

Second, *knowledge* and *awareness* are interconnected (Jokikokko 2005: 94-95; Spitzberg and Changnon 2009: 10-11; Martin and Nakayama 2004: 410). Knowledge is concerned with how one relates to cultural identity, similarities and differences across cultures and how they affect communication, along with understanding other elements such as race, gender, class, religion and so on. In addition, *self-knowledge* and *linguistic knowledge* are included here, as they deal

with how one is as a communicator with one´s strengths and weaknesses as well as what one knows about other languages. Cultural awareness as a concept means the historically, geographically and culturally constructed values, norms, ways of thinking and behavior, which affect the actions of people from different cultures. The awareness of the self and of cultural differences and similarities is the basis for effective and appropriate communication. It is also important to be aware of one´s own cultural background and cultural codes, as well as of how one´s community and background affects different features of one´s identity, such as beliefs, attitudes, values, and traditions. To sum up, awareness includes exploring, experimenting, as well as experiencing, and it can be developed through reflection. In addition, knowledge about different cultures is also needed, as otherwise it is more likely that one interprets the various meanings of other people´s messages incorrectly, as well as manifests behaviors that are interpreted in an inappropriate way in the target culture. Once again, there is a challenge here, as cultures have the tendency to change continuously as a result of different political, economic and other external changes.

Third, *skills* are associated with one´s ability to identify and articulate cultural similarities and differences, and thus take multiple perspectives, as well as understand differences in multiple contexts, ability to engage in self-reflection, challenge discriminatory acts, and above all, the ability to communicate in intercultural situations (Jokikokko 2005: 96-97; Spitzberg and Changnon 2009: 10-11). In other words, one needs different kinds of social and affective abilities in order to perform in intercultural encounters; for instance, the use of language, negotiation skills, conflict resolution skills, empathy, the ability to tolerate uncertainty, take perspectives as well as to adapt oneself to new kinds of situations. To sum up, an interculturally competent person could be defined as follows: "(one) has an ability to interpret intentional communications (languages, signs, gestures), unconscious clues (such as body language), as well as customs and cultural styles different from one´s own" (Bennett 1995: 262).

Finally, *action* refers to an interculturally competent person´s behavior in intercultural contexts, such as commitment to act against prejudice, racism, inequality, and discrimination in the community (Jokikokko 2005: 96-97; Martin and Nakayama 2004: 412-418). The challenge here seems to be the issue of different aspects of behavior, such as being respectful towards others; the way one expresses this kind of behavior might be different in different cultures, and as a result, it can be interpreted in the wrong way leading to cultural misunderstandings. It is also necessary to take into account *contextual components* which are concerned with varied contexts in which intercultural communication occurs, such as the historical, relational, cultural, gender, and racial contexts. Regarding context, the communicator´s position within a speech community is also one aspect that should be taken into consideration, as it might help us better comprehend what is actually going on in the intercultural encounter.

The term *host communication competence* incorporates two different dimensions: the "*culture-specific*" and "*culture-general*" (or intercultural) (Kim 2001: 98-99). The former refers to abilities that are necessary to encode and decode linguistic and nonlinguistic codes and practices which are specific to a given (sub)cultural community. In practice, one needs to acquire knowledge of these codes and practices so that one could be able to understand, respond to, and coordinate one´s social interactions. The latter, that is culture-general or ICC competence, is comprised of one´s ability to communicate in all types of encounters, despite the specific cultural context. This competence is about one´s ability to manage various cultural and other kinds of differences between communicators, and also about one´s ability to handle the uncertainty and stress that might be present in these encounters. It has also been argued that ICC competence is more than just interacting effectively and appropriately with other people and environment, as it is also assumed that one knows how to fulfill one´s own *communication goals* with the help of this competence (Chen and Starosta 2005: 241-242).

Furthermore, there are other kinds of skill areas that have also been discovered, such as: 1) *personality strength*; 2) *communication skills*; 3) *psychological adjustment*; and 4) *cultural awareness* (Jandt 2004: 45-46). There are some essential personal traits that actually have an influence on ICC, and these include self-concept, self-disclosure, self-monitoring, along with social relaxation. To be more specific, *self-concept* simply means the way how one thinks about oneself. *Self-disclosure* refers to whether one wants to openly and appropriately reveal things about oneself to others. *Self-monitoring* deals with how one uses social comparison information in order to control and modify one´s self-presentation and behavior. Ultimately, *social relaxation* stands for one´s ability to show little anxiety in communication situation. It is important that one expresses a friendly and positive personality in order to be competent in ICC. In other words, a positive (global) attitude toward people from other cultures facilitates one´s intercultural interactions and might also help in understanding unfamiliar cultural practices (Arasaratnam 2013: 54).

As far as communication skills are concerned, one should be competent both in verbal and nonverbal communication (Jandt 2004: 45). To be more specific, ICC skills call for message skills, behavioral flexibility, interaction management as well as social skills. *Message skills* basically mean one´s ability to understand and use the language and feedback. *Behavioral flexibility* refers to one´s ability to behave appropriately in diverse situations. *Interaction management* is related to conversational skills, such as initiating a conversation along with one´s attentiveness and responsiveness. In this connection, *interaction involvement* has been used, which calls for both active listening, that is, asking relevant questions and displaying appropriate nonverbal cues to show listening to the interlocutor, as well as mindfulness (Arasaratnam 2013: 53). *Mindfulness* simply means that one is an engaged and involved participant in the conversation. Last but not least, *social skills* have to do with empathy and identity maintenance, that is, to maintain a counterpart´s identity by communicating back an accurate

understanding of that person´s identity. In summary, a competent and effective communicator is able to interact with different kinds of individuals in a variety of contexts. Psychological adjustment is also associated with the degree to which one is able to adjust to a new environment, which typically arouses a variety of emotions, such as frustration, stress, and alienation in ambiguous situations (also called culture shock). Finally, one needs to be culturally aware, that is, understand the social customs and social system of the host culture in order to interact effectively in it.

This section has dealt with ICC competence in detail. As can be seen from the definitions and approaches provided above, there are various of them, and scholars might have different opinions on which features of ICC competence are more important than others and why. However, they all seem to emphasize the development of skills, and consequently, it is believed that one is able to develop from a monocultural person into a multicultural person. A multicultural person respects different cultures and has tolerance for differences (Jandt 2004: 44-45). To sum up, one is still never able to become totally interculturally competent, as competence is an ideal that one can try to reach while in the process of intercultural learning (Jokikokko 2005: 102). The next chapter will focus specifically on linguistic shock along with many kinds of barriers and cross-cultural differences occurring in communication.

4 LINGUISTIC SHOCK

The previous chapter presented ICC and now that one has a broader understanding of it, it is more reasonable to discuss linguistic shock in more detail. First, the foundations of linguistic shock will be discussed in Section 4.1, from both cultural and linguistic perspective. Second, some major cultural variations in communication will be reviewed in Section 4.2. Third, common barriers to ICC will be presented in Section 4.3. Finally, some previous studies related to the topic will be examined in Section 4.4.

4.1 Foundations of linguistic shock

4.1.1 Cultural perspective

Linguistic shock can be interconnected with the previous and current research related to cross-cultural adaptation, and more specifically, it can be considered a subcomponent of culture shock. If one were to compare the amount of research literature on culture shock and on linguistic shock, the difference still seems to be quite huge, as culture shock has been studied much longer and in greater detail. Furthermore, it has been argued that it is not possible to understand linguistic shock without any knowledge of culture shock, and that is why it was necessary to include the cultural perspective here as well before proceeding to the linguistic one. Crossing cultures during a study-abroad experience is considered a significant transition event, and it typically brings some stress when one is confronted with a new culture and one tries to adapt to unfamiliar physical and psychological experiences and changes (Cushner and Karim 2004: 292; Cushner and Brislin 1996: 3). In practice, sojourners differ from each other considering how quickly they are able to overcome the difficulties of cross-cultural interaction and really begin to obtain the advantages of the whole experience. There has been a tendency to view sojourners´ intercultural

adaptation principally as undesirable, that is, the perspective has been mainly *problem-based* especially as far as culture shock is concerned.

Culture shock, initially established by the anthropologist Oberg (1960), is a widely used concept to describe negative experiences and feelings one encounters in a new cultural environment as a result of unexpected cultural differences (Fan 2010: 42). Culture shock can also be defined as a state of distress when one transfers to an unfamiliar cultural environment (Hofstede 1991: 260). This means that one no longer has the same protection of cultural safety in this unfamiliar environment as one had in one´s home country (Ting-Toomey and Chung 2012: 93-94). Consequently, this unfamiliarity creates perceived threat and arouses fear and emotional vulnerability. Some scholars also discuss the ABC´s of culture shock, which refers to dimensions of *affective*, *behavioral*, and *cognitive* disorientation (Ward et al. 2001). First, it is quite common to experience anxiety, confusion, bewilderment, disorientation, and perplexity along with a strong desire to be somewhere else when one is in the initial culture shock stage. Second, as far as behavior is concerned, one might be quite confused about the norms and rules that guide communication appropriateness and effectiveness. Finally, the cognitive dimension explains that one simply does not possess cultural interpretive competence, which is needed to explain many of the "bizarre" behaviors occurring in that particular unfamiliar environment.

Various models have also been developed to describe different stages of the adjustment process, though there seems to be no clear consensus on the number of stages. In short, at first the following four stages were proposed: 1) *a "honeymoon" stage* (fascination and optimism), 2) *a hostility stage* (emotionally stereotyped attitudes toward the host society), 3) *a recovery stage* (increased language knowledge), and 4) *a final stage* (no more anxiety, adapting to the new culture) (Oberg 1960, cited in Kim 2001: 19-20). Since then, new insights have been developed, and six new stages have been introduced: 1) preliminary, 2)

spectator, 3) participant, 4) shock, 5) adaptation, and 6) reentry (Klopf and McCroskey 2007: 252-253). First, during *the preliminary stage*, one is still at home and is making plans and preparations to leave abroad, such as transportation arrangements, paying possible registration fees, seeking an apartment, packing, and so on. Second, at *the spectator stage*, one has arrived in the new culture and observes many new and even strange sights and gets many new experiences and meets new people. This so called honeymoon stage can last from a few days up to six months, depending on the circumstances. One might occasionally find it hard to understand what is happening in the process of culture shock when one is actually experiencing it. Third, at some point the honeymoon stage ends, and this means that one enters *the participant stage,* in which one now has to cope alone and look after the most basic aspects of everyday life, such as arranging the daily schedule and developing social networks.

Fourth, the actual *shock stage* commonly begins after one has been in the new culture for a while (Klopf and McCroskey 2007: 253-254). It is quite typical that one does not even recognize this stage at the moment it sets in, as one might feel depressed, irritated, or lonely, the food may be distasteful, and it feels problematic to try to communicate one´s feelings to others. One might even have hostile or aggressive behavior towards the host culture resulting from the difficulty to adjust to it. Consequently, the exchange period might end for some people already at this stage if one wants to give up and go back to one´s home country. This would be unfortunate as the following stage would have been *the adaptation stage* in which the identification with the new culture has progressed satisfactorily. At this stage, one has already developed some ingroup relationships with the locals and thus one feels a sense of belonging and acceptance, in other words, one is likely to feel at home. Finally, the sixth stage in the culture shock process is the compulsory *reentry stage* when one returns home if one does not decide to stay abroad for some reason.

Over the decades, it has also been debated what causes culture shock. In fact, three broad categories have been found that can provide explanations on this issue (Furnham and Bochner 1982: 171). First of all, *cultural differences* refer to the differences between a sojourner´s culture of origin and new culture. One is identified by the cultural group that one belongs to and it has been concluded that the greater distance between home culture and host culture, the more cultural difficulties are likely to arise (e.g. Furnham and Bochner 1982, 1986; Triandis 1990, cited in Fan 2010: 43). Second, *individual differences* simply mean a sojourner´s ability to cope with the new environment. There are personality variables, such as age, gender, cognitive ability, socioeconomic class and education, that may have an impact on how well one is able to adapt to the new culture. For instance, it has been claimed that younger, more intelligent and better-educated sojourners are more able to adjust compared to older, less intelligent and less-educated sojourners. Finally, *sojourn experience* and especially the beginning of it has a major role as, for example, it has been shown that if a sojourner has close and sympathetic host culture friends, he/she may have fewer problems related to cultural adaptation.

One possible explanation is provided by a *similarity-attraction hypothesis,* which argues that one is more willing to communicate, understand, trust, enjoy, work or play with those sharing similar essential characteristics with oneself, such as language, age, interests, religion, and values (Fan 2010: 42-43). Consequently, as one enters a new cultural and linguistic environment in which people have different cultural and linguistic characteristics, the similarity-attraction is likely to interfere with one´s communication, and at the same time, culture shock may appear. Language differences may also be one of the major factors leading to culture shock. However, these linguistic features of culture shock have been less recognized in research literature for decades, and for this reason, there is a greater need to emphasize them as well. Culture shock often causes disruptions to the process of culture acquisition, and consequently it might also hinder foreign language learning (Fan et al. 2011: 199). It has also been claimed that all

sojourners experience some degree of identity loss and grief in an unfamiliar environment (Ting-Toomey 1999: 245). Hence, it can be argued that culture shock is an inevitable experience for everyone going abroad.

Attempts have been made to define *successful adjustment*, and here a summary of four factors will be briefly presented (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 3-4). First of all, *good personal adjustment* refers to feelings of happiness and well-being; one is able to feel comfortable in the new culture. Second, development and maintenance of *good interpersonal relations with hosts* is marked by respect for people in the other culture. In addition, one is able to share personal information with others as well as spend time with those of the other culture. Third, *task effectiveness* means that one is able to reach one´s work goals in the other country. Obviously, these goals will differ from person to person, such as obtaining high school or university degrees or credits, establishing trade agreements and completing various projects. Finally, one should not experience greater stress or culture shock than one would in the home culture when moving into a similar role. This means that one experiences only the natural period of culture shock that any person would experience, which is comparable to the situation in one´s own culture.

To sum up, even if culture shock is commonly considered stressful, confusing and disorienting, and it is associated with negative feelings, there is more to the phenomenon. In other words, culture shock experience can lead to profound learning, growth, and self-awareness (Kim 2001: 19). Furthermore, it can actually have some positive effects in case it is managed effectively; for instance, it can enhance one´s sense of well-being, self-esteem, cognitive openness and flexibility, tolerance for ambiguity, confidence in self and others, and competence in social interactions (Ting-Toomey 1999: 246).

4.1.2 Linguistic perspective

Basically, language can be described as the verbal expression of culture (Gore 2007: 95). To be more specific, language is a set of shared symbols or signs that a cooperative group of people has mutually agreed to use in order to create meaning (Samovar et al. 2010: 225). Language is a tool for communication, delivering a message – but what makes it a more interesting topic to examine is the fact that it is used in different ways in a variety of countries and cultures. One continually exchanges information with the environment by using various communication activities (Kim 2001: 36, 47). One also constantly learns new things specifically in and through *communication*. One uses both verbal and nonverbal ways of expressing oneself in order to communicate one´s feelings, intentions, needs as well as personality, that is, one´s subjective culture (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 289). Furthermore, one uses communication to link oneself to others, however, this typically occurs with those who share a mutual understanding of meanings - as occasionally the meanings may have more or less different significance which can result in confusion and misunderstandings.

It is worth mentioning that culture and communication are strongly connected, which can be seen when one communicates with people from different cultures (Jandt 2004: 46). Intercultural encounters can be considered "situations" whose characteristics have an effect on communication behavior (Guirdham 1999: 92). Individuals from one culture interacting with individuals from another culture, even if they are sharing a common foreign language, can experience problems, communication gaps, and misunderstandings as far as communication is concerned, even though they are consciously attempting to escape those kinds of problems. The daily encounters become different as people speak different languages and come from different cultures. The main reason for this challenge is that one is socialized within one´s own culture, which defines how one is expected to behave and interact with others (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 12). This implies that people from different cultural backgrounds are not always able to

understand each other since cultural rules that govern their communication behavior may be quite different (Liu et al. 2011: 51).

The term *linguistic shock* (or *language shock*) is a relatively new concept in research literature, and it has gained more attention in the recent decade or so. It seems to me that a number of scholars generally use somewhat vague and ambiguous terms, such as communication problems or gaps, cross-cultural misunderstandings, lack of social skills, interpersonal difficulties, social inadequacy, and so on. For this reason, I think linguistic shock as a term has earned its place academically and can bring some clarity into the current discussion. Linguistic shock may appear when the language system is being switched to another system (Kramsch 1998). Furthermore, it can occur both in everyday communication and in the process of foreign language learning. Typically, speakers of one language feel strong dismay, bewilderment and discomfort by the features of the target language, which they did not expect to encounter (Fan et al. 2011: 203). Similarly, it can be a genuine surprise for visitors to find out that the English used in the home country and taught as a foreign language can be quite different than the English demanded by native speakers in a new environment (O´Neill and Cullingford 2005: 108). In other words, socio-linguistic differences occur between non-native and native speakers of English, but also between native speakers even if they come from a same country without mentioning from a different continent. It is also worth mentioning that linguistic shock, along with culture shock, is one of the affective variables, which might influence both the process of acculturation and language acquisition.

To be more specific, linguistic shock can occur at different linguistic levels: 1) phonology, 2) morphology, 3) syntax, and 4) semantics as well as 5) sociolinguistics (Fan et al. 2011: 203). For instance, native speakers of Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese may find the English interdental sound (spelled as "th", e.g. in the words *thank* or *thin*) difficult or even unpronounceable.

Similarly, European and Asian speakers might have difficulties in producing a sound called the labiodental flap which occurs in some African languages but not in Asian or European languages. Morphologically, speakers of languages which do not have affixes may consider "infix" as something totally weird and perhaps that is why they find them difficult to use. Syntactically, languages have a number of differences and consequently language learners learn to use some of them more easily whereas some features cause them more confusion. For instance, in some Asian languages plural nouns are not marked, whereas they are marked in English. Some Asian learners may find the articles *le* and *la* in French illogical and not understand why they should be used in the first place.

Since language and culture are closely related, culture can have a prominent impact on linguistic shock (Fan et al. 2011: 203-204). In practice, every culture has its own ways of expressing thoughts, feelings and of sharing speakers´ inner world. For example, a Vietnamese speaker may ask foreigners some personal questions about their age, salary, or even about their political party, whereas for Western speakers this could be a shock, as such personal inquiry is considered a sociolinguistic taboo in Western cultures. Again, sociolinguistic shock in ICC often occurs in speech acts, such as greetings, complementing, criticizing, swearing and euphemism, as they are most culturally and socially constructed. For instance, in some cultures it is considered acceptable for men to swear while it would be a shock to hear women swearing.

Linguistic shock can occur in a situation when a sojourner´s foreign language experiences are somehow problematic, for instance, difficulties in expression and comprehension (Patron 2007: 95). Furthermore, the shock tends to occur during the initial period of adjustment, and consequently, it can manifest in stressful situations until one has developed coping strategies against its adverse effects. In addition, on the one hand, these linguistic difficulties may originate from a significantly different pedagogy in language teaching in the countries

involved. On the other hand, difficulties may arise as a result of insufficient preparation of the sojourner who arrives in a foreign country expecting to cope with only minimal practice. For instance, international students might expect to communicate well believing they have adequate competence in the target language. In practice, they might get disappointed and frustrated when they are confronted with different accents and colloquial expressions that form part of that particular culture´s competencies. In fact, there is evidence that international students occasionally have linguistic problems, especially those who have only little practice in or exposure to English in their home countries (Yue and Lê 2011: 241-242). It has been discovered (e.g. Rosenthal et al. 2006; Ward and Masgore 2004) that students have difficulties with English writing skills, oral expression and presentations, taking exams as well as expressing one´s opinions to the teacher. As a result, these difficulties caused by inadequate language ability could result in failing one´s academic studies causing shame and depression. To sum up, it has been argued that lower level of English language skills significantly predicts one´s acculturative stress and also has harmful effects to one´s psychological well-being.

There might be various reasons that lead to linguistic shock and some of them will be addressed here. First of all, *contrastive analysis* explains that one´s first language tends to interfere with the target language learning (Fan et al. 2011: 202). In short, some language errors can be predicted by contrasting the similarities and differences between the two languages. From this point of view, linguistic shock is a matter of *linguistic differences* between one´s first language and target language. It has also been argued that speakers who have never been exposed to a second language might be more prone to experience linguistic shock compared to those who already have some exposure or awareness of another language (Agar 1994). Second, one reason for linguistic shock could be related to *learners´ fear of criticism and ridicule*. When adult learners are speaking a foreign language, they often feel uncertain whether they have chosen the right words to convey their messages compared to children who usually are more

willing to use words incorrectly or even form new words if necessary. Third, *the lack of sociolinguistic knowledge* about a language might lead to linguistic shock. For instance, a study conducted by Marr (2005) focused on language-related problems experienced by English teachers with a Chinese background studying a master degree in London. The study revealed that the teachers experienced linguistic shock due to the differences between standard British English and the diversified Englishes encountered. Thus, it was concluded that their linguistic shock experiences were caused by their insufficient sociolinguistic awareness. To sum up, sociolinguistic awareness and knowledge may help language learners who need to use a foreign language in the target culture in adapting to the new linguistic environment.

Interestingly, it has also been found out that in case sojourners are prepared to expect such linguistic difficulties, it may actually diminish their impact and the overall stress caused by the adjustment process (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 290). Indeed, sojourners should realize and accept the process that they will experience an awkward learning stage which also includes negative feelings such as discomfort and failure. Obviously, they might feel threatened by this as it may affect their self-worth and self-esteem, however, they need to understand that these emotions are relatively normal and only temporal; and this way their adjustment and learning process will improve significantly. It can be considered a learning experience, and when it works, communication can be efficient – and vice versa, when it does not work, communication can turn out to be more or less inefficient.

4.2 Cultural variations in communication

> "Since all of these features of social life tend to vary from culture to culture, persons unfamiliar with the "correct" patterns are likely to misunderstand and be misunderstood." (Bochner 1982: 59)

Communication differences are one of the most obvious problems that one needs to overcome in the crossing of cultural boundaries (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 40). There is a variety of cultural variations in terms of verbal communication and more specifically communication styles. In this study, however, it is impossible to cover all of them, and that is why some critical variations have been chosen that may influence one´s ICC: linear-active, multi-active and reactive cultures; high versus low context communication; as well as individualism versus collectivism.

4.2.1 Linear-active, multi-active and reactive cultures

A commonly used approach to categorize cultures is in terms of linear-active, multi-active and reactive cultures (Lewis 2008: 29-34). This categorization helps in understanding and even predicting the cultural behavior. However, it is also necessary to familiarize oneself with it as it will provide us with framework which can also be utilized when explaining cross-cultural differences in communication encounters (see Table 1).

Table 1. Common traits of linear-active, multi-active, and reactive categories (adapted from Lewis 2008: 33-34)

Linear-active	**Multi-active**	**Reactive**
introvert	extrovert	introvert
patient	impatient	patient
quiet	talkative	silent

minds own business	inquisitive	respectful
likes privacy	gregarious (outgoing)	good listener
does one thing at a time	does several things at once	reacts
dominated by timetables	timetable unpredictable	reacts to partner´s timetable
sticks to facts	juggles facts	statements are promises
gets information from statistics, reference books, Internet	gets first-hand (oral) information	uses both first-hand and researched information
job-oriented	people-oriented	people-oriented
unemotional	emotional	quietly caring
brief on telephone	talks for hours	summarizes well
dislikes losing face	has ready excuses	must not lose face
confronts with logic	confronts emotionally	avoids confrontation
limited body language	unrestricted body lang.	subtle body language
rarely interrupts	interrupts frequently	doesn`t interrupt

First, individuals who belong to *linear-active cultures* (e.g. Germans, Swiss, Americans, Scandinavians, Austrians, British, Canadians, New Zealanders, Australians and South Africans) are described to be introvert, patient, quiet, punctual with time, job-oriented, unemotional, do one thing at a time, like privacy, they rarely interrupt other people in conversation and their body language is considered to be quite limited. Second, people of *multi-active cultures* (e.g. Latin Americans, Arabs, Africans, Indians, Pakistanis, Spanish, Mediterranean peoples and Polynesians) are seen as extrovert, impatient, talkative, not punctual with time, people-oriented, emotional, do several things at once, outgoing, they frequently interrupt others and their body language is unrestricted. The final group consists of people of *reactive cultures* (e.g. Finnish, Turkish, Japanese, Chinese, Taiwanese, Singaporean and Korean) who are

portrayed as introvert, patient, silent, punctual with time, people-oriented, quietly caring, they react to others instead of doing one or several things at once, good listeners, they do not generally interrupt others and their body language is often considered quite subtle.

Obviously, there are various minor and major differences between these cultures as described above, which also have an influence on communication between individuals who come from these cultures. For instance, for a person who represents a linear-active culture, such as an American, it might be challenging to sympathize with a person who comes from a multi-active culture, such as a Spaniard, when the latter comes half an hour late for a meeting and is probably used to working in a slightly different manner. Indeed, linear-active people are used to doing one thing at a time and really focusing on it within a scheduled time period. Their perception is that in doing so they are more efficient and get more done as a result. In contrast, multi-active people are not that keen on schedules or punctuality and they tend to be doing many things at the same time as they think they get more done in this way.

From now on, a variety of attributes concerning reactive or listening cultures, such as Finland, will be addressed in more detail as they provide us with explanations to different kinds of communication styles and even misunderstandings in ICC (Lewis 2008: 32-39). First of all, the members of these cultures quite rarely initiate action or discussion, instead they prefer to listen and establish the other person´s position first before reacting to it and finally coming up with their own. In fact, it is claimed that in Europe, only Finns are strongly reactive, even though Brits, Turks and Swedes might fall easily into the "listening mode" on occasion. It is characteristic of people of reactive cultures to concentrate on what the speaker is saying without interrupting the discourse, and not responding right away, as silence can be interpreted as respect for what the other person has just stated. For example, even if Finns are perceived quite straightforward and direct, they have a tendency to avoid confrontation as long

as they possibly can by formulating an approach that suits the other person. Multi-active people, such as Mediterraneans, are more used to extroverted behavior and they can find reactive people such as Finns mysterious as a result of receiving only little or no feedback from them.

Second, it is noteworthy that in reactive cultures the preferred mode of communication is *monologue* – pause – reflection – monologues. This is completely different from linear-active and multi-active cultures, in which the communication mode is *a dialogue*. It is extremely common that one interrupts the other person´s monologue with frequent comments and questions but they actually show interest in the other´s message. The turns of speaking change promptly and silences are not tolerated as well as in reactive cultures. Interestingly, people of reactive cultures regard silences as a highly meaningful part of discourse, which can be difficult for people of liner-active and multi-active cultures to understand. Third, the reactive "reply-monologue" is *context-centered,* which means that it is not that important what one said, but how one said it, who was the speaker and what is behind one´s message. Moreover, a considerable amount of knowledge will be assumed on the part of the listener. In practice this means that, for instance, Finns might use only *half-utterances* or semi-statements, which mean that the listener him/herself can fill in what is missing and in this way the conversation keeps on going. As a matter of fact, they can be seen as kinds of compliments a Finn pays his or her interlocutor. The next feature has to do with the vague, impersonal nature of discussion which refers to the use of impersonal pronouns (e.g. *one is leaving*), the passive voice (e.g. *one of the machines seems to have been tampered with*), and also names are being used less frequently. The fifth attribute can be described as *self-disparagement*, however, this underestimation of self is not connected with a weak position as others might assume. Last but not least, reactive cultures distinguish themselves in subtle, nonverbal communication, which is the case especially with Finns, Japanese and Chinese, who are noted for their sighs, groans and grunts. To sum up, one could say that when members of different

cultural categories begin to interact, there are more differences than commonalities.

4.2.2 High versus low context communication

There are consistent and systematic cultural differences in the way how people send and receive information, prescriptions (commands and wishes), and affect (Ward et al. 2001: 53; Jandt 2004: 61-62). A well-known perspective to perceiving differences between cultures is between high versus low context communication, which was originally developed by Hall (1976). Today, low context cultures, such as the USA, Germany, Switzerland, and Nordic countries, are those in which only little of the meaning is determined by the context as the message is encoded in the explicit code. In addition, in these cultures verbal messages are on average elaborate, highly specific and detailed, and for this reason one´s verbal abilities are also remarkably appreciated. Logic and reasoning are also expressed in those verbal messages. In contrast, cultures in which less has to be said or written since more of the meaning is in the actual physical environment or alternatively already shared by people, are called high context cultures, such as China, Japan, Korea, American Indian, most Latin American cultures, Southern and Eastern Mediterranean cultures e.g. Greece, Turkey, and Arab countries. This means that there is actually very little in the coded, explicit, and transmitted part of the message; instead, nonverbal messages are more valued. One concrete example of a high-context experience is the Japanese tea ceremony, in which nothing is spoken, but all the meanings originate from the context of shared experience.

In practice, this means that members of low context cultures convey information directly and also count heavily on verbal communication (Guirdham 1999: 60-61). In contrast, members of high context cultures convey only limited information in coded messages, instead, they tend to make use of

situational cues and their communication usually is more indirect and ambiguous. Furthermore, people in high context cultures adopt a role-orientated communication style which highlights the social roles the participants hold. For instance, work meetings in Eastern countries tend to be highly formal by Western standards, and thus interaction is also formal and ritualistic. In contrast, people in low context cultures prefer a personal style which considers personal identity more important than social position. Consequently, as role relationships and status differences are less important, communication is also less formal and usually more intimate.

4.2.3 Individualism versus collectivism

Another perspective of cross-cultural differences in communication includes differences in broader social values, that is, *individualism* and *collectivism* across cultures. These concepts are among the most comprehensively studied of all the concepts in the field of ICC (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 302). It has been argued that this distinction might also be the most important concept to understand in case one wants to explain differences and similarities that may occur in ICC encounters. It is worth mentioning that even if cultures tend to be predominantly either individualistic or collectivistic, it is possible that both tendencies occur in all cultures (Gudykunst and Lee 2003: 10).

In individualistic cultures, such as the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, Belgium, France, Spain, and Nordic countries, the interest of the individual dominates over the interests of the group, that is, personal achievement is emphasized (Jandt 2004: 184-185). It is typical that one takes care of oneself and one´s immediate families. In contrast, in collectivistic cultures, such as China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Indonesia as well as Latin, Arab, African and southern European cultures, it is the interest of the group which prevails over the interest of the individual. In addition, individuals are integrated into

strong and cohesive in-groups. Consequently, it might often be quite challenging for individuals from highly individualistic cultures to understand values that are appreciated in collectivistic cultures.

Furthermore, individualism and collectivism are also related to *direct* and *indirect communication styles* (Jandt 2004: 186; Gudykunst and Lee 2003: 12; Ward et al. 2001: 53-54). Basically, this refers to how much one is willing to reveal one´s intentions through explicit verbal communication. On the one hand, with regard to the direct style (individualism), one typically expresses one´s wants, needs, and desires in the spoken message. Clarity in conversations is regarded necessary for effective communication more than in collectivistic cultures. On the other hand, in the indirect style (collectivism), these features of the speaker are not usually that obvious in the spoken message. For instance, one typically is more concerned with avoiding hurting others´ emotions and not imposing on others when compared to individualistic cultures. In addition, there are differences regarding how requests are made, and how they are denied or refused. When people from two different cultures meet, they may have difficulty in communicating with each other as their respective "codes" differ and possibly they are not even aware of this. Even if these persons share the same linguistic forms, problems may arise because of any differences in their subjective cultures. As a result, the participants may not even realize that they are sending some unintended messages and distorting incoming messages. For instance, if a North American says *Would you like to…?* (e.g. finish a report on something at work), it should not be considered a question but a polite order. If the other person was to answer *No*, the American would probably be offended. As can be seen from this example, direct and indirect styles of communication also deal with the polite usage of a language, that is, the etiquette. To sum up, in general as differences, including differences in language, between the cultures of the participants increase, so do the difficulties in communication.

It has been argued that people from Western and Asian cultures typically have the greatest chance of misunderstanding each other (Jandt 2004: 46-47). The main reason for this is that these cultures have highly different views of communication. On the one hand, Western cultures, especially the United States, focus more on the speaker (also known as *a source*) than to the receiver. For instance, in case the source encodes a message using English, the receiver has to use his/her knowledge of the English language to understand it. On the other hand, Asian cultures have the tendency to think about communication in a way in which communicators cooperate to make meaning. In short, the Asian view is largely based on Confucian collectivist values and ethics, as respecting the relationships through communication is considered more important compared to the actual information that is exchanged in the interaction. To sum up, the values one holds have an influence not only on one´s communication decisions, but also on how one interprets the messages others send.

There is an enormous amount of research literature on the topic; however, it is impossible to discuss, within the scope of this study, all the possible factors that influence differences in ICC. However, in this section, some major differences communication-wise have been identified, such as linear-active, multi-active and reactive cultures; high versus low context communication; as well as individualism versus collectivism. Now it is time to proceed to actual barriers, which typically occur in ICC contexts.

4.3 Barriers to intercultural communication

In addition to the cross-cultural differences described in the previous section, there are different kinds of barriers that are likely to cause breakdowns and challenges concerning effective ICC, which are: 1) anxiety; 2) assuming similarity instead of difference; 3) ethnocentrism; 4) stereotypes and prejudice; 5) nonverbal misinterpretations; and 6) language (Jandt 2004: 74). Even though

language is the focus of this study, it is necessary to gain a broader understanding of other barriers, which typically interfere with ICC encounters. For this reason, each of these barriers will be briefly explicated below, with special reference to their negative effects on ICC. In practice, it is worth taking these barriers into account, would one want to improve one´s ICC skills.

First of all, if one is anxious because it might be unclear what one is expected to do in a new cultural setting, it is quite natural and understandable to concentrate on the feeling of being new and somehow out of place. As a result, one might not be totally present in the communication transaction, and this might become apparent as one makes common mistakes and might seem awkward to others. The findings of Sugawara´s study (1993, cited in Jandt 2004: 75) seem to support this assumption, as there were 168 Japanese employees of Japanese companies working in the United States and their 135 U.S. colleagues who were examined in regard to how the Japanese felt about using English when abroad. The findings revealed that only about 8% of the U.S. colleagues felt impatient with the Japanese coworkers´ English, while 19% of the Japanese felt their spoken English was poor or even very poor; 20% of the Japanese felt nervous when using English their U.S. colleagues; 30% of the Japanese felt that the U.S. colleagues were impatient with their English accent; and as many as about 60% of the Japanese were under the impression that it was the language which caused problems in communication with their U.S. coworkers. Unfortunately, some Japanese employees´ anxiety over speaking English properly resulted in avoiding those interactions with their U.S. workmates and interacting only with other Japanese, which obviously is not the ideal situation when working and communicating in a culturally diverse workplace. Second, when one has no information about a new culture, it might occur that one assumes there are no differences between one´s home culture and the new target culture, and as a result one might behave and communicate just the way one would in the home culture. However, each culture is different and unique, and this means that the norms and socially acceptable ways of behaving and

communicating may also vary to some degree. To sum up, assuming similarity instead of difference can function as a barrier to ICC as well.

Third, *ethnocentrism* can be understood as one´s belief that one´s own culture is somehow superior to other cultures, and as a consequence, aspects of other cultures are typically considered in a negative way (Jandt 2004: 76-96). Ethnocentric attitudes have negative influence on effective ICC since a person with ethnocentric attitude is not able to view another culture as equal in value (e.g. Gudykunst and Kim 2003, cited in Arasaratnam 2013: 52). In anthropological research, also the concept of *cultural relativism* is being used for ethnocentrism, which means that one attempts to understand other people´s behavior in the context of their culture before judging it. Furthermore, one should recognize the arbitrary nature of one´s own cultural behavior and be open to re-examine it while learning more about other ways of behaving manifested in other cultures. Extreme ethnocentrism can be considered as harmful, restrictive, and counterproductive with regard to ICC. On the one hand, the concept of *stereotype* includes both negative and positive judgments made about persons based on any observable or believed group membership. On the other hand, *prejudice* refers to the irrational suspicion or even hatred of a particular group, race, sexual orientation, or religion. There are some common negative effects that stereotypes and prejudice can have on communication, for example, they cause us to assume that a widely held belief is true (concerning a specific group or an individual) when it may not be; continued use of the stereotype reinforces the belief; and finally the stereotype can become a "self-fulfilling prophecy" for an individual stereotyped. Unfortunately, prejudice can have serious effects as it can result in discrimination, racism, and hate crimes.

Nonverbal communication, in a narrow sense, can be defined as intentional use of a nonspoken symbol to communicate a specific message (Jandt 2004: 122-128, 143-144). One generally recognizes that languages are different from each other, however, one is less likely to expect that also the nonverbal symbols can be

different, and this frequently causes misinterpretations between people from different cultures. Furthermore, nonverbal communication as a research field is vast, and it is impossible to cover here all the possible problems or barriers nonverbal communication might cause with respect to ICC. The relevant point here, however, is that nonverbal misunderstandings do occur, because a variety of nonverbal expressions or codes vary from one culture to another. To illustrate the wide spectrum of nonverbal variations, they can be categorized as follows: *proxemics* is the way personal space is used; *kinesics* includes gestures, body movements, facial expressions and eye contact; *chronemics* refers to how time is perceived and used, including politeness related to time; *paralanguage* means sounds and other nonverbal elements produced by the mouth and voice, such as laughter, the loudness or pitch of the voice; *silence* can actually communicate a great deal of different meanings depending on culture; *haptics* is communicating by touch; *clothing* and *physical appearance* can also communicate information and meaning, such as about one´s (sub)group membership or marital status; *territoriality* refers to how space can be used to communicate, such as home, office, or public area; *olfactics* means communicating by smell; and finally *oculesics* is concerned with communicating with the eyes.

The final possible barrier to ICC is language. Probably the most influential theory that has attempted to describe the relationship between language and culture is known as the *Sapir-Whorf hypothesis* (SWH, also called the *Whorfian thesis*, 1956), which helps in understanding differences in languages across cultures (Jandt 2004: 149-153). In short, the hypothesis includes two versions: linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity. First of all, *linguistic determinism* suggests that the structure of a language controls one´s thoughts and cultural norms. In other words, one´s worldview is not only affected by but more like predetermined by the language of one´s culture. Therefore, it can be argued based on this hypothesis, that the differences that exist between languages reflect basic differences in the worldviews of different cultures. However, not all subsequent researchers concurred with this view, and for this reason the

linguistic relativity view was developed. The *linguistic relativity* view provides an explanation, in which linguistic characteristics and cultural norms influence each other.

Furthermore, one can conceptualize SWH on various levels, such as vocabulary, grammar and syntax (Jandt 2004: 149-153). First, with regard to vocabulary, it can be assumed that if a specific language has a highly rich vocabulary for a thing or activity in contrast to other languages, that item is considered important in that particular culture. For instance, it has been found out that Eskimo languages have many words for *snow*, thus, it has been concluded that it is an essential part of their culture. It is worth noticing that other languages, such as English, may demand several words instead of just a single word in order to refer to the same item. Another example, compared to English, is Japanese which has a rich vocabulary for seasons of the year; the four seasons are divided into 24 subseasons and further into beginning, middle, and end. Second, on the grammar and syntax level of SWH, one can recognize differences between languages, such as the following example between English and Japanese; English word order is usually SVO (subject, verb, object), that is, the emphasis is on an action taker or a doer, and thus only about a third of English sentences lack a subject versus 75% of Japanese sentences lack it. For example, it is more likely that one is confronted with *I brought my textbook with me* in the United States versus *Brought book* in Japan. For a Japanese person there is no need to express the subject as it is already known by the context. In summary, SWH suggests that languages differ from each other as far as vocabulary, grammar and syntax are concerned, and these can create barriers to ICC.

However, there are five more specific dimensions of language which may cause miscommunication (Gore 2007: 94-95). First of all, *degree of (in)formality* is an aspect that is used in different ways by various speakers. For instance, Germans seem to appreciate formal use of language with titles, especially when talking

with a boss or a teacher as compared to English, which prefers informality at least in the USA. However, British English is typically considered more formal. Second, *precision* or *vagueness of expression* simply refers to how precisely or vaguely a language is used. For instance, French is claimed to be a precise language as opposed to Japanese which is sometimes considered vague in its various expressions. Third, *brevity* (succinct, to-the-point) or *detail* (elaborate) means how little or much one is willing to talk about a topic. For example, Finnish speakers have a tendency to answer with the bare minimum without giving extra comments, such as *Did you like the movie?* could be easily answered with *Yeah*. In contrast, Russians tend to elaborate on their answers with more personal and emotional involvement. Fourth, *directness or indirectness* can be briefly illustrated with two examples: *Please close the window* versus *Brrr, it sure is cold here*. Finally, *high* or *low volume* is used in various ways and one might make judgments about other speakers on the basis of their speech volume. For example, higher volume could be misinterpreted as meaning argumentative even if it was totally normal for the speaker.

One is adjusted to use one´s own language in ways which are totally acceptable and "correct" in one´s own language community (Gore 2007: 95). However, there are differences between language communities, and these may easily cause prejudiced assumptions and miscommunication when communicating with people from other cultures. Even though one masters a foreign language well, it is possible to make serious mistakes (Argyle 1982: 63-64). Furthermore, language fluency is a necessary condition for one´s adjustment in a foreign culture, though the confidence in the use of language regardless of ability has also been mentioned. There are also variations in different aspects of language, such as in accent, dialect, speech style, and grammar. In addition, linguistic problems may arise because of different forms of polite language use, structure of conversation, nonverbal communication, and so on. For instance, Americans tend to ask questions which are actually orders or requests, such as *Would you like to…?* Another example comes from Asian countries, where *No* is rarely used

and that is why *Yes* can actually mean *No* or *Perhaps*. The reason for avoiding *No* is that it would lead to a loss of face by the other person, and consequently indirect methods are used. To sum up, if it is natural for a person to speak indirectly, others may misinterpret it as meaning that one is insincere, because one does not express exactly what one means; if one answers directly, others may think one is rude and does not have manners; if one tends to use many words in order to express one´s feelings, others might presume that one is not honest, because one has to use so many words; and finally if one answers succinctly, some people could think that one is boring and emotionless (Guirdham 1999: 173).

There are five more precise linguistic challenges that have been identified, that is *translation problems,* which include the following: 1) vocabulary; 2) idiomatic; 3) grammatical-syntactical; 4) experiential; and 5) conceptual equivalence (Jandt 2004: 154-155). To begin with, languages that are different often simply lack the equivalent words, and consequently, cannot always be directly translated on a word-for-word basis without losing at least some of the original and more descriptive meaning. For instance, as mentioned above, Eskimo languages have many different words for *snow* (e.g. equivalents for falling/fluffy fallen/drifting snow), and if one was to translate those words into English, the equivalent would be *snow,* which cannot capture the original meaning to the fullest.

Occasionally one might use a specific word or phrase in the target language in a similar way as in one´s first language without realizing that the meanings are not the same between the two languages, which can easily lead to misunderstandings (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 291). It can be difficult to learn how to use the new meanings and lack of them correctly in the new culture. Misunderstandings typically occur, for example, with phrases that are associated with sociolinguistic-type rules, such as an American could say *Well, I´ve got to go. See you later!* In practice, this is actually governed by a leave-taking rule, which is well known to other Americans, but some speakers of other

languages might not know that it does not necessarily mean that the speaker will in fact see the other person later. For this reason, Americans have been accused of being insincere as a result of using such expressions. Similarly, *message (language) ambiguity* is usually discussed in relation to the understanding of a message as a receiver might be confused or uncertain about what the actual meaning of the message is (Guirdham 1999: 94). The reason for this ambiguity could be that the receiver simply cannot construct any probable interpretation of the message, or otherwise he/she realizes that there are far too many possible interpretations and it is difficult to choose the right one. Consequently, one should try to remember that learning to use another language always takes time and one needs to be alert to such problems, however, one can learn from one´s mistakes.

Second, the *idiomatic equivalence* causes various problems particularly as far as English is concerned since idioms are commonly used in that language (Jandt 2004: 156). For example, the idiom *the old man kicked the bucket* could easily be misunderstood by other than native speakers of English, since one cannot translate it literally without losing the original and intended meaning, as the real meaning would be that the old man actually died. Even if idioms of a language can be a challenge for a foreign language learner, learning them can actually be an effective way of learning the culture as well. Third, *grammatical-syntactical equivalence* deals with the reality that not all languages have similar grammars, and that is why one is often required to understand a language´s grammar in order to understand the meaning of specific words. To sum up, it can be justified that learning grammar is obviously a meaningful part of foreign language learning.

The fourth problematic feature of a language is concerned with the *experiential equivalence,* which simply means that if an object or experience does not exist in one´s culture, it is difficult to translate specific words when there are no exact words for them in another language (Jandt 2004: 156-157). Finally, the *conceptual*

equivalence refers to abstract ideas, such as freedom, corruption, democracy and human rights, which may not exist in a similar way in different languages. A variety of concepts may have quite different meanings in different cultures, and thus, can result in ICC misunderstandings. One solution for this language problem is to use *back translation,* which simply means first translating into the target language, then back into the first language, and finally comparing the result to the original.

In regard to linguistic barriers, *language variation* includes accent, dialect, argot, slang and branding, which often create misunderstandings (Samovar et al. 2010: 227-228). To be more specific, *accents* are basically variations in pronunciation, which occur when individuals are speaking the same language. As far as English is concerned, it is evident that it has billions of speakers world-wide, and thus the amount of various English accents is also incredibly high. At this point, it is also worth mentioning that not only accents of English native speakers can cause problems, but also the increasing number of specific accents of English as a second or foreign language learners. *Dialects* are concerned with differences concerning one´s vocabulary, grammar, and even punctuation. In fact, it is not always that straightforward to differentiate between a language and a dialect. *Argot* refers to a private and specialized vocabulary of a co-culture or group, such as professional or sporting groups. Professional vocabulary is typically referred to as *jargon* which is used by particular professional fields such as medicine, education, or engineering. *Slang* obviously means specific kinds of highly informal terms which are used as a way of showing social or linguistic identity. *Branding* deals with marketing that uses corporate names or symbols to identify a product (e.g. Coca-Cola). Branding is related to language differences in a way that even if people using products do not speak the same language, they are often able to recognize the brands.

To sum up, this section has dealt with some major barriers to ICC, which included anxiety, assuming similarity instead of difference, ethnocentrism,

stereotypes and prejudice, nonverbal communication, and last but definitely not least language. With respect to language, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis was briefly introduced, presenting the views of linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity, along with the five translation problems typically occurring in ICC contexts. As far as language learning is concerned, it can and should be a rewarding process, however, it is essential to have a learner´s attitude and be cautious in the use of new expressions (Cushner and Brislin 1996: 291-293). Furthermore, mistakes and failures are part of the learning process and one does not need to take them too seriously. Members of the host culture commonly appreciate a sojourner´s efforts to use that specific language and communication style, which is often quite different from the sojourner´s own language. Even if members of the host culture could not always understand the sojourner´s utterances, it is essential that one still keeps on trying. However, a language is always more than just its vocabulary, idioms and grammar – it represents the worldview of the people who speak it and reflects their thinking. That is why a sojourner´s attitude toward the host language will obviously affect his or her attitude toward the host people and culture as well. Once again, language and culture are interconnected.

4.4 Previous studies

This section introduces some previous studies on the experiences of overseas students related to the topic of this study. At first, the focus will be more on cultural adaptation and what kinds of experiences and feelings students have in their new environments. After this, the focus will move to linguistic aspects of adaptation, including linguistic shock. In general, previous studies actually seem to be quite consistent in their content and conclusions, since it has been found out that students may have practical difficulties with everyday matters, such as housing and finances, but also with more complex issues, such as with adaptation to local culture and education system (O´Neill and Cullingford 2005:

107-108). Furthermore, one reason for this negative approach could be that it seems to be easier to describe cultural differences than similarities. Students who travel abroad may also feel their differences to the extent that they may forget that their own culture also had variations. For this reason, it could be argued that being abroad emphasizes one´s sense of otherness and also one´s sense of identity. A study on international students and their adaptation by Ward and Kennedy (1993, cited in Guirdham 1999: 295) found out that the students who had the most host-national contacts also adapted the best to the new environment. Furthermore, it was also concluded that language ability correlates with the students´ feelings of being comfortable and satisfied with their international student experience.

Ayano (2006) carried out a longitudinal study with the help of interviews and questionnaires focusing on what kinds of psychological experiences Japanese students in higher education had during their period of study in Britain. To be more specific, her findings suggested that the students suffered from psychological distress and homesickness, there seemed to be no optimistic honeymoon period or significant adjustment period, and all in all, their general level of well-being remained very low throughout their sojourn. In other words, the experience seemed to be quite difficult for much of the time. It was concluded that the distance from home and the degree of differences and unfamiliarity in a host environment were positively related to the degree of homesickness. Also the quantitative results showed that the students tended to experience difficulty in their new surroundings.

Pearson-Evans (2006) focused on six Irish university students and their experiences during a year-long sojourn in Japan. She collected her data in the form of personal diaries written by the students while abroad, and she then analyzed them qualitatively using a grounded theory. Her findings revealed three significant themes influencing the students´ adjustment process: social networks, food, and language. First, the study seemed to emphasize the

importance of social networks, since the students needed support from others in order to cope with the temporary loss of their familiar home networks, but they also needed to maintain contact with home as well as create new networks in the host country. Second, becoming familiar with new kind of food culture seemed to be quite challenging for the students. In general, it could be concluded, based on the findings, that even if there are differences in aspects such as food and they may cause cross-cultural problems, core values of cultures are far more relevant in terms of adjustment to the host country. Finally, she argues that host language proficiency is one of the most important aspects of successful culture learning. To be more specific, language was considered to be a highly symbolic medium, which was made use of when maintaining and developing relationships within students´ networks in Japan.

Furthermore, it was interesting to find out, based on the study of Pearson-Evans (2006), that English, which is the typical language among foreigners in Japan, was associated with students´ foreigner identity in their host culture. As far as linguistic shock is concerned, even students with good host language skills experienced frustration in Japanese. In addition, their linguistic progress seemed to depend on the context and their relations with host culture members. On average, high language skills were associated with better adjustment. However, the study showed that language proficiency alone did not diagnose the level of their adjustment. For instance, if their language skills were low, they could make use of non-verbal behavior as well. However, it should be mentioned that low language skills can turn out to be a barrier when students would like to reach a deeper level of communication with members of the host culture. To sum up, the students experienced the level of `clash of consciousness`, which has been identified as the most challenging level in cross-cultural encounters producing frustration and negative attitudes towards the host culture and its language. However, the students with high language skills experienced this sooner and they had more positive expectations of themselves being able to handle it compared to the students with lower language skills.

O´Neill and Cullingford (2005) conducted a longitudinal study on 15 adults travelling to the UK for a year in order to upgrade their professional qualifications. The aim was to examine the participants´ experiences of living and studying abroad in a new environment as well as some of the cultural implications. In practice, mainly interviews were used to collect the participants´ opinions and experiences. The findings suggested that the participants had mainly friendly, polite and supportive social interactions with other people. The participants also reported some feelings of homesickness, uncertainty and discomfort. In addition, they needed some practical and useful tips on everyday matters. At the same time, one major concern for them seemed to have been what was expected of them academically. Some participants also noticed some linguistic challenges as others could not always understand their English accent or pronunciation, and as a result, they started to feel their English was not that good anymore. In addition, some participants had noticed differences in language use, for example, how calling people by their first names seemed to be acceptable in the UK but not in their home cultures. To sum up, it can be concluded, based on the study, that language problems are highly expected in a new environment.

Fan (2010) examined ten Asian university students´ experiences on both culture and language shock in Australia and what kinds of effects they had on learning English. The participants were learning and teaching English as a second language, and the length of their sojourn ranged from four months to four years. The results revealed that the participants experienced linguistic shock while abroad, both from linguistic (e.g. grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) and sociolinguistic (e.g. greetings, criticizing, complementing, and phonology) perspectives. Linguistic problems concerned, for example, the use of articles, plural nouns, prepositions, tenses, along with the pronunciation of certain syllables. Sociolinguistic challenges occurred as far as linguistic etiquette was concerned, for instance, students calling their university lecturers

by names instead of using the titles *Mr*. or *Mrs*., or hearing *Hi, love!* as a greeting in shops by people they did not know. In their home countries this would not have been acceptable among people who do not know each other well enough. Some of them also had negative experiences about language impoliteness and how they managed to overcome it. They also reported feelings of anger, frustration, and discomfort.

As a consequence, it was uncovered that linguistic shock can actually have a negative influence on students´ views of and attitudes toward foreign language learning (Fan 2010). Students who have stronger confidence in their language abilities are able to adjust themselves and progress gradually. Unfortunately, other students may start doubting their language skills and even give up learning the language. For this reason, it is important that students are supported by their teachers so that the adjustment could turn out to be successful. Interestingly, it was also concluded that language shocks follow a similar process as culture shocks, that is, these participants´ language learning experiences followed the stages of honeymoon, language shock, adjustment, and mastery. To sum up, culture shock occurs when one is transferred from one culture to another; linguistic shock occurs as one´s language environment is switched to another language environment.

To conclude, this section addressed some previous studies that were closely related to the topic of this study. It was found out that students occasionally suffered from psychological distress, homesickness, uncertainty and discomfort while abroad. These difficulties also had a negative impact on their general level of well-being. Furthermore, language proficiency was considered one of the most important aspects of successful culture learning. In general, high language skills were associated with better adjustment to the new environment in contrast to low language skills, which were seen a possible barrier to ICC. All in all, there is a variety of studies focusing on students´ psychological adjustment and culture shock in international contexts, however, linguistic

aspects of adjustment have been less recognized. That is why more research is needed, and consequently the present study aims at finding out what aspects of ICC result in linguistic shock.

5 THE PRESENT STUDY

The following sections explain the research procedures of the present study in detail. First, the aims and research questions will be introduced in Section 5.1. Second, the participants will be described in Section 5.2. Third, research methodology will be addressed in Section 5.3, and finally the data analysis will be reviewed in Section 5.4.

5.1 Aims and research questions

The purpose of the present study is to examine what kinds of experiences Finnish university students have of ICC and linguistic shock while studying or working abroad. Even though ICC as a research field is vast covering a wide range of topics, however, linguistic shock has hardly been investigated. One reason for this might be that the concept itself is still quite new. In my opinion, language is an essential part of the acculturation process, including the culture shock. Furthermore, it seems that many previous research have ignored the role of language as such and simply treated it as a part of the culture shock process without giving it too much attention. Culture and language are interrelated, however, I think language deserves more attention in research literature, and this study also aims at filling the gap by providing more insights into the topic.

More specifically, the main research questions are as follows:

1. How do the participants feel about adapting to the new culture?
2. What aspects of intercultural communication result in linguistic shock?
3. How does the sojourn affect the participants´ language skills in English?

These research questions will be examined qualitatively with the help of semi-structured interviews (see Appendices A and B). Five participants were

interviewed: the interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed for their content. The focus was particularly on the participants´ personal real-life experiences and opinions.

5.2 Participants

In the present study, there were five participants altogether, of these four were women and one man, and they were interviewed individually either face-to-face or online via Skype. The main criteria for choosing the participants was firstly that they were preferably university students who had experience of studying or working in another country at least for one month, and secondly that they had used mainly English while abroad. Thirdly, the aim was also to find participants who had sojourned in different countries around the world in order to find out if different kinds of cultures aroused different kinds of linguistic and/or cultural challenges. Finally, the time of their stay was also taken into consideration, that is, how long time ago they had sojourned abroad, as obviously it is more difficult to remember specific details if they have occurred a long time ago. Some prospective participants were reached by using the personal social networks and also by contacting an international office of a higher education institution. Next, a brief description of all the participants will be provided as follows:

Participant 1, is a 24-year-old **Kaisa**, who is a recent graduate and lived in Tanzania from January to April in 2014, that is, for about four months. Her reason to go abroad was for her practical training at school to become a paramedic and thus she worked at a local hospital.

Participant 2, is a 29-year-old **Saara**, who is a doctoral student in biology and was in Japan from September 2011 to September 2012, that is, for 12 months altogether. She took part in an internship program and worked in a Japanese company specialized in telecommunications.

Participant 3, is a 25-year-old university student **Emma**, who was in Australia from July to December in 2013, that is, for about six months altogether. She took part in a student exchange program organized by her university, which was part of her studies in finance.

Participant 4, is a 22-year-old student **Riikka**, who was in the United Kingdom from April to June in 2014, that is, for about three months. She did her practical training at a local restaurant, which was part of her studies in hospitality management.

Participant 5, is a 41-year-old **Jouni**, who is a former student and now working. He was in India in fall 2013 for about one month. He did his practical training at a local service center, which was part of his studies in social and health care.

5.3 Research methodology

As far as research types are concerned, empirical research can be divided, for example, into qualitative and quantitative study (Holopainen and Pulkkinen 2008: 20-21; Mackey and Gass 2005: 162-167). Typically, also the research questions tend to be quite different, as in qualitative research the focus is on questions such as "why?", "how?" and "what kind(s) of?" in comparison to quantitative research questions such as "what?", "where?", "how often?" and "how much?". Furthermore, in qualitative research, there is a wide variety of different commonly used measures of collecting data, such as ethnographies, case studies, interviews, observations as well as diaries and journals. All of these techniques have their advantages and disadvantages.

As far as ICC is concerned, there are two major research approaches: ethnographic and cultural (Jandt 2004: 73). First of all, *ethnography* is concerned with direct observation, reporting, and evaluation of the natural behavior of a

culture, which commonly requires that a researcher actually lives and studies in a specific community participating in the group´s activities and making use of many observational and recording techniques. In addition, it is worth mentioning that modern ethnography aims at avoiding questionnaires and formal interviews in artificial settings, that is, observation in natural settings is considered more preferable. The ultimate goal is to create an analysis of cultural patterns in order to develop a theory of the rules in terms of appropriate cultural behavior. Secondly, *a cultural approach* is concerned with developing an ideal personification of the culture, which is used to explain the actions of individuals in the culture, in other words, finding more background knowledge about the specific topic. Thus, ethnography is not used in this study since it would have required me as a researcher to actually observe the participants in different cultural settings in many countries, which was not achievable time- or moneywise nor reasonable in terms of finding answers to the research questions. To sum up, the approach here is a cultural one. Regarding other methods, even if a questionnaire as a form of quantitative research method is quite a widely-used method of gathering data in many contemporary disciplines, and it has also been used to investigate a number of questions in linguistic research, however, it was not the most suitable option here.

Consequently, a *qualitative approach* was chosen for this study since it is based on descriptive data and statistical procedures are not used. To be more specific, a semi-structured interview, that is, a theme interview was chosen as the method of collecting data (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 48). The main reason for this choice was that the goal was to gain and interpret the participants´ in-depth subjective feelings, opinions and personal real-life experiences of ICC and linguistic shock rather than generalizable quantitative results from a larger group. As Dufva (2011: 131-132) points out, interviewing as a method of collecting data has been used for a long time in linguistic research. In addition, interviewing is typically used when a researcher wants to get more information

about a certain topic, but also in order to find out participants´ own opinions and perceptions.

There are different types of interviews that can be employed to gather data for qualitative research: structured (or standardized), semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Mackey and Gass 2005: 173; Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 48). First of all, *structured interviews* mean that a researcher usually asks the same questions of all respondents, and that is why they resemble verbal questionnaires and it is easier to compare answers from different participants. Second, in *semi-structured interviews,* there is more freedom, as a researcher typically uses a written list of questions as a guide during the interview but he/she is still able to ask for more information if necessary. Finally, in *unstructured interviews*, a researcher does not use a list of questions at all, but instead he/she develops his/her own questions and lets respondents to really express themselves as they wish, and that is why these interviews may be quite similar to natural conversations.

Interviews have certain advantages, for example, a researcher can better choose the right kinds of participants who are supposed to know something about the topic and are able to discuss it (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2002: 76). Interviews also allow a researcher to examine phenomena that are not directly observable, such as participants´ perceptions or attitudes (Mackey and Gass 2005: 173-174). Another essential advantage has to do with the nature of interviews, as they are interactive a researcher has the possibility to ask for additional questions in case the original questions are not specific enough. Furthermore, an interview may be more suitable for some participants who are not that comfortable with other types of collecting data; for example, for some participants it may be more natural to speak rather than write. Finally, interviews can usually be conducted also in the participants´ first language, as in this study as well, so that the language does not become a barrier to research. To sum up, qualitative interviewing can be described as conversational and flexible, and the objective

is achieved by active engagement of both interviewer and interviewee on relevant topics and experiences during the interview (Mason 2002: 225).

For a researcher, it is also necessary to be aware of possible disadvantages concerning interviews (Mackey and Gass 2005: 174). For instance, interviewing many different respondents may cause problems in terms of subjectivity when the researcher is recording and interpreting the data. Furthermore, it is worth remembering that good interviewing is a skill and it is not always that easy for a researcher to try to motivate and encourage his/her respondents to express themselves especially in unstructured interviews. One challenge is also the so-called halo effect, which simply means that interviewees try to find cues from the researcher according to what they think he/she wants to find out and this might have an effect on their responses. Finally, there is always the possibility of cross-cultural pragmatic failures referring to questions that might be considered inappropriate in some cultures, and this may cause miscommunications in interviewing.

The interviews were semi-structured and that is why the main questions were common for all five participants. The interview schedule was designed in advance and it was divided into three categories, which were: 1) cultural adaptation and culture shock; 2) intercultural communication; and 3) linguistic shock (see Appendix A)**.** Furthermore, the interviews were conducted between October and December 2015, three of them in the form of face-to-face interviews and two of them online via Skype. In case the participant lived in the same town as the interviewer, the interview was conducted face-to-face either at the interviewer´s home, on the university campus or at the city library, and as some participants lived in other locations, it was more convenient and faster to interview them online. All interviews were conducted in Finnish, which was also the first language of the participants. The main reason for this language choice was firstly to create a more relaxed atmosphere, in which it would be more comfortable to express oneself, and secondly to avoid any possible

linguistic barriers or miscommunications on the topic. The participants had been informed about the topic in advance, although they had not been given the specific questions. The length of each interview was about 35 to 90 minutes, and they were also digitally recorded with the permission of the participants and later transcribed. I made some notes during and after the interviews as well. The interviews began with introducing myself and presenting the topic. I also explained to them that the information they gave me was to be used only for the purpose of this study and their anonymity was guaranteed throughout the study. Consequently, the participants´ real names are not used in this study, instead they have been given pseudonyms.

The transcription conventions in this study are adapted from Leppänen, Nikula and Kääntä (2008: 430-431). However, the focus of this study is on the contents (*what* is being said) rather than on the interviews themselves (*how* it is being said), and for this reason the interviews were transcribed mainly word-for-word, however, leaving out unimportant speech such as *hmm* or *noh*, and not including details such as lengths of pauses, intonations, tones or volumes. In the transcriptions, short gaps or pauses are indicated with a full stop *(an exotic location as India is. Of course).* Long gaps or pauses are indicated with three full stops *(to see what it´s like there…).* In addition, other activities than speech are indicated in brackets (*((laughter))*). The researcher´s clarifications are written in square brackets (*[from Finland]*). Finally, unimportant speech that has been left out of the transcriptions is indicated with *[-].* After transcribing the interviews, I carefully read through them making some notes at the same time.

5.4 Methods of analysis

There is a variety of different methods of analysis since there are only few standardized techniques as far as qualitative research is concerned (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 136). It is quite common that the analysis begins already

during the interviews as the researcher can make various observations about the topic and as a result begin categorizing them. One major difference is that in qualitative study the data remains in verbal data form compared to quantitative study, which focuses more on numbers and statistics. For the purposes of this study, however, content analysis was chosen as the method of analysis, because there were clear topics or themes based on the interviews.

Content analysis is a basic method, which can be applied to many kinds of qualitative studies (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2002: 93-110). To be more specific, there are three different approaches, from which content analysis can be conducted: on the basis of the theoretical background, on the basis of the data, or combining these two. In the present study, the analysis was conducted on the basis of the data, that is, inductively. Furthermore, the purpose of content analysis is to provide a clear and verbal description of the topic itself. In addition, this method enables the organization of the data in a compact and clear way without losing the important information. Finally, a researcher tries to increase his/her understanding of the participants from their points of view. After completing the transcription process, the data was processed according to the principles of content analysis. The first step was to re-read the data several times and familiarize oneself with it. The data was divided into three different themes according to the interview schedule. Then, the most important and relevant sections of the data were marked based on the research questions. Thus, some other less important sections had to be excluded as it is impossible to cover everything in one study. The next step was to find more specific subcategories and collect items from all the participants that belonged to the same theme or category and transfer them into a separate document. In other words, the data needed to be conceptualized. This is actually the most critical phase of the analysis, because the researcher decides which items belong to the same category and on what grounds.

Furthermore, some extracts from the original interviews were also included as examples and observations from the real life in order to give more voice to the participants. The number of extracts from each participant may vary depending on what and how much they had to say about each topic, since at times some of them did not have much to report on, while at other times there was more discussion. Obviously, the researcher´s own interpretations and conclusions were also added to strengthen the analysis. At last, an attempt is made to answer the research questions based on the categories created earlier, examined and finally brought together in order to develop a synthesis. To sum up, qualitative analysis is based on logical reasoning and interpretation, in which the data first needs to be categorized, conceptualized, and finally synthesized, which results in a new kind of logical entity (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2002: 110).

6 FINDINGS

In this chapter, the findings of the present study are reported. To be more specific, the analysis is divided into three main sections. First, cultural adaptation and culture shock are discussed as they create the basis for understanding linguistic shock. Second, intercultural communication and linguistic shock are reviewed in more detail. Finally, the effects of the sojourn on the participants´ language skills in English are also discussed. The findings also include extracts from the original interviews in order to illustrate the participants´ points of view. The most essential words or phrases in the extracts are emphasized with **bold**. The original extracts are in Finnish and they can be found in Appendix B.

6.1 Cultural adaptation and culture shock

This section covers the first research question which aims at finding out how the participants adapt to the new target culture. First, their motivation to go abroad is reviewed, then their observations of what they considered different in the target culture in general are presented, and finally the focus is on the actual culture shock and adaptation to the new culture.

6.1.1 Motivation to go abroad

To begin with, it is justified to begin by discovering the participants´ personal reasons to go abroad since motivation can be considered the basis of one´s actions. Obviously, all the participants had quite a high motivation to go overseas as they actually went there voluntarily and also stayed in the target culture until the end of their sojourn. Partly this section also serves as an introduction to get to know these five different individuals who stayed in different countries around the world, which may help us later on in

understanding their cultural and linguistic challenges. First of all, Kaisa discusses her long-term dream to go to Tanzania in extract (1):

1) Kaisa: I have always wanted to go abroad, and anyway I have liked traveling, and **Africa was a dream since I was a kid**. And also **the experiences there** as I was at the hospital for my practical training, and after all, the care work is so different and to see what it´s like there… And the animals (laughter).

Furthermore, she had an acquaintance who had been at the same place for a student exchange or internship and thus she received some information from him/her. As a result, she had decided to go to Tanzania with her classmate. Second, Saara commented on her various reasons for choosing Japan as the destination for her year-long internship program:

2) Saara: **This program was so interesting** as you can go on a long-term internship. And then during high school, **I got very interested in Japan and I studied the language**, so that´s why I was keen on going to Japan in particular. I don´t know, I guess some kind of small wanderlust, have wanted to leave Finland a bit, just this kind of **love of adventure** that you want to experience something else as well.

As it was mentioned in example (2), an interesting internship program had aroused the participant´s motivation to go to Japan as well as she had also been very interested in Japan and its language already back in high school. As a consequence, she thought it was only natural to go to Japan as, in her opinion, one learns a foreign language best by staying in the target culture, and that was why she had decided to go and live there for a while. Third, Emma also had many reasons to go to Australia for her study exchange, for example, she wanted to live in another country for a while and get new challenges:

3) Emma: Maybe it was that overall **I was keen on going abroad also for a longer period of time**, maybe for work, maybe moving to a warmer country in the future. So **that was maybe the biggest inspiration** as I was pretty bored with Finland or basically I didn´t have anything here that holds me back. And **new challenges, adventures, new people, culture**, so many reasons. I wanted to go to a country, where I knew the local language. It didn´t have to be English, I thought about a German-

> speaking country as well, but then again I preferred this kind of Aussie culture, kind of relaxed and so on.

As example (3) shows, the participant had been interested in living abroad also for a longer period of time in order to experience new adventures, challenges, people and culture. In addition, Australian culture was considered relaxed as well as English was the local language, too. Next, Riikka explained that she had wanted to do her internship in a country where English was the first language since she had really wanted to improve her language skills:

> 4) Riikka: Internship in a country where English is the first language felt like **a natural choice to prep the language skills** for real. I thought about going to Germany but then I would speak German… English like a German (laughter). Actually, I haven´t really traveled before, but… and I would gladly have gone to some other country as well, but it was the language in particular, **I wanted to learn to speak it like natives do**. And there I felt after that, it was around the last month that I felt I could speak it quite well already.

As example (4) illustrates, it was argued that living in a country where English was the first language had felt like a natural choice to improve one´s language skills. Furthermore, the participant acknowledged that her level of English had improved quite much during the sojourn in the UK. Finally, Jouni reveals in example (5) what had aroused his interest in going to India in particular:

> 5) Jouni: Right at the beginning of my studies at some point, there was this kind of info event on international exchange for all new students, and it was pretty much right after this event that I really thought to myself that **I want to go abroad** and I want to go somewhere else but not Europe. **It was such a unique opportunity to go to such an exotic location as India is**. Of course as a tourist you can go and pretty much you end up to Europe at some point, but to this kind of hinterland in India you are probably not going to go very easily or any other similar place. It is, after all, a place so far away apart.

It was claimed in example (5) that he had gotten interested in going to India after having attended an international briefing session and received more information. In addition, he thought that it had been such a unique experience to choose India as it was not considered a basic tourist destination at all.

In conclusion, as could be seen from these five extracts, all the participants had their own personal reasons to go abroad, and some had been thinking about it for years, but some had made the decision quite quickly. To be more specific, they had wanted to travel to another country, get new experiences both professionally and in their free time, meet new people, improve their language skills, and finally it seemed that some had been especially interested in the target culture and language as well.

6.1.2 Differences in the target cultures

This section deals with some cultural differences that the participants had noticed during their sojourn in different countries as these have a major role in terms of culture shock. All participants discuss these differences compared to their home culture, that is, Finland.

First of all, it was pointed out that the conception of time and use of personal space had been quite different in Tanzania compared to Finland:

> 6) Kaisa: Maybe **the biggest thing was the conception of time** and that **Finnish people tend to keep such a large personal space**, you know, when someone sits in a bus and nobody probably sits next to him/her but people stand instead. Whereas in Tanzania, there were these minibuses that the locals used a lot, and there were seats for 15 people and 30 people were stuffed into it (laughter).

Furthermore, as example (7) shows, people had been more relaxed in Australia compared to Finland, which seemed to be a major cultural difference. In addition, it had also seemed easier to get to know new people there, which was also very different to what Emma had been used to in Finland:

> 7) Emma: In my opinion, there was a difference in that **people were somehow a lot more relaxed there**, like they also had everyday problems, but they didn´t make them larger than life, like "No worries!",

> things tend to work themselves out… So it was somehow, **I think it was a huge cultural difference**. **It was easier to get to know new people there** and somehow like you didn´t necessarily know a person properly, but still he/she was ready to take care of your things, that´s interesting somehow, totally different [from Finland].

Riikka had a similar kind of experience with Emma in that getting to know new people had been much easier also in the UK. However, as example (8) shows, she had noticed some differences at her workplace concerning an employee´s independent working and taking own initiative. At the same time, also flirtation had seemed to be more straightforward, which had been somehow unexpected for her. Surprisingly, the conception of time had also been different, as timetables seemed to be more important to Riikka than to the locals:

> 8) Riikka: In my opinion, **people there didn´t seem to expect independent working and initiative like we´re expected in Finland**, so it was interesting in that work community as well. Flirtation was so much more straightforward, I didn´t really expect that, even if of course it is such a cliché, that I should have known, but wasn´t really thinking about it. And **getting to know people was somehow so much easier**. And **conceptions of time**, following timetables was something that seemed to be much more important to me than to the locals.

In his part, Jouni describes in extract (9) how the amount of people, traffic and noise everywhere had been disturbing for him as he had not been used to them to that extent in Finland. In other words, it seemed to be a kind of shock for him and his co-travelers:

> 9) Jouni: **It was the people, traffic and noise**, which was everywhere, and you can´t escape it anywhere else than in a hotel room, to few places only. And it didn´t really bother you during the first days or weeks, because everything was new, that explains it. But when you spend some more weeks there, it´s about to be too much, when you´re used to go for a walk in a forest where birds are singing and that´s all. But there the amount of people was unlimited. **It was probably a shock for everybody**, of course we were aware of the amount of people, but when you´re in the midst of all that chaos, it might be the most concrete thing happening there.

As was discussed in example (9), the participant had not been that bothered by all that chaos at the beginning, however, after some time he had started to feel anxious about it all.

To sum up, according to the interviews, there had been some cultural differences concerning the conception of time, use of personal space, general attitude to life, getting to know new people, expectations at a workplace, use of body language as well as the large numbers of people. It has been suggested in the culture learning approach (see section 3.2.1) that cross-cultural transitions are less difficult when the contact cultures are similar (Ward 2004: 189). Furthermore, it is normal that at the beginning one may be socially unskilled in the new environment as obviously it takes some time to learn new social rules and routines of behavior that are considered appropriate in the target culture.

6.1.3 Culture shock and adaptation

Culture shock describes negative experiences and feelings one encounters in a new cultural environment as a result of unexpected cultural differences (Fan 2010: 42). As cultural differences were already discussed in the previous section, now it is time to move on to culture shock.

In example (10), Kaisa contemplates that she had not really experienced culture shock, although she mentioned having experienced some anxiety while working at the local hospital as some things had been done very differently compared to Finland and she had not been able to follow all the procedures that she had learned in her home country. In addition, at the end of her sojourn she had also felt some anxiety about leaving Tanzania for Finland:

> 10) Kaisa: At the end **I felt some anxiety because I had to go back to Finland**. It was like I would have liked to stay there.

However, she considered it very easy to adapt to the local culture since the people had been very open-hearted and that was why she had enjoyed her stay to the fullest. Thus, it could be argued that Kaisa had experienced some culture shock in Tanzania, however, she had been able to adapt to the new culture.

Saara seemed to have quite similar thoughts about culture shock as she had not really experienced culture shock in Japan since she had not really even felt homesick when abroad. It is worth mentioning, however, that she thought that as she had studied the Japanese language and culture in advance, it had a major role in her adaptation to the culture. She also revealed a couple of things that she had found frustrating. First, she had missed some foods and when at a local store she had felt that "normal food" that she would have eaten was too expensive and in too small sizes. Second, it had been a little challenge for her when at the beginning they had been together on the language course with her co-travelers for four months before actually starting the job, and after this the group had fallen apart as people had been moving around, and she had had to find her own place even though she had not been that adapted to the culture yet. To sum up, she thought she had adapted to the local culture quite well during her year-long sojourn:

> 11) Saara: Usually I haven´t experienced these kinds of shocks very strongly when entering a country. Maybe I have realistic visions or something like that, which affects that **I don´t usually experience that kind of strong culture shock**. Certainly there´s still more to accomplish, so you can´t be perfectly adapted.

As far as Emma is concerned, she also reported not having experienced culture shock at all. When discussed further, however, she admitted that the first week in Australia had been exciting as she had been alone and she had needed to find an apartment, which had caused her some stress. She explained that her university had organized some info sessions right at the beginning, which she had found useful. Moreover, knowing other exchange students had been important for her as she had not been left all alone but could share things with

other students. When she finally had had to return to Finland, she had felt some anxiety going back to the dark winter season and she had thought about staying in Australia instead. She summarized her thoughts about her adaptation to the local culture as follows:

> 12) Emma: **I felt that I had adapted there much better than to Finland**. Somehow the people were so outgoing and as I said, that somehow they took care of everybody there, I never felt I was like alone. Somehow I like that culture so much, I have nothing negative to say. And as there were **other exchange students** as well, so of course it also affected that we took care of each other as we all had the same goal or purpose there. And also **the locals who were really friendly**, so I had no problems whatsoever in this respect.

Riikka revealed that she had not really had previous travel experiences and that was why the flight to the UK had also been distressing for her. Furthermore, she thought that the first month of her sojourn had caused her some anxiety, whereas during the second month her adaptation had become easier and much faster, and finally as her last month began, she had not even wanted to leave as she had already felt like being a part of the community. Going back to Finland had also caused some feelings of anxiety, as stated below:

> 13) Riikka: …I felt like oh no, I have to go soon, right when **I have become part of this**. Then I was actually counting the days and the final two weeks I barely slept as I felt it was a waste of my time, **I just wanted to jump around and talk to people**.

This finding illustrated in example (13) seems to be consistent with Klopf and McCroskey (2007) since it has been suggested that anxiety is a typical emotion of the shock stage of the culture shock process. Furthermore, as the example above shows, after the shock one is able to better adapt to the new culture since one already feels a sense of belonging and acceptance.

Finally, it is also believed in example (14) that everything was different in India compared to Finland, which obviously had caused the participant some stress:

14) Jouni: Somebody asked me how I would briefly describe my journey to India and I have replied that "**In India, everything is different**", which means that what works or doesn´t work in Finland, is something totally different in India. You coped with the beginning just because everything was new and amazing. But then at some point, you got the feeling, as everything was so different and you didn´t really know anything, that how did these things really finally work around there, so **that must have been quite stressful**.

He further explained that he and his co-travelers had gotten frustrated as they had felt nothing was happening there. In addition, he had not really felt homesick, however, he thought that as a result of the amount of people there and all the pollution, quite many of them had been relieved to finally go back to Finland. In other words, it seemed that he had not really reached the adaptation stage, which is quite typical considering that he had only spent there one month and the culture had been quite different from Finland.

To summarize, the examples presented above illustrate that all the participants had experienced culture shock to some extent. It is a different thing how the participants understood the essence of culture shock and whether they were able to recognize its typical emotions and symptoms even afterwards. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that occasionally the participants had felt some anxiety, stress and frustration as a result of adaptation. In addition, returning to Finland had also caused some anxiety among some participants. It was also noticed that studying the target culture and language in advance had been considered useful also in adaptation. Other people had also been considered supportive while in a new environment.

6.2 Intercultural communication and linguistic shock

This section covers the second research question which examines what aspects of intercultural communication result in linguistic shock. To be more specific, there are nine different aspects that are discussed here in the following order: 1) understanding others; 2) speaking ability; 3) pronunciation and accents; 4)

vocabulary and grammar; 5) body language; 6) politeness and impoliteness; 7) greetings and small talk; 8) silence in conversations; and finally 9) expression of emotions.

6.2.1 Understanding others

First of all, understanding others means how well one thinks one is able to understand others while they speak English. Kaisa was able to recall a situation when she had gone to a fair to buy some cloth for her dress, and she had found out they had not had a common language with the vendor because she had not spoken Swahili at that point and the other had not known English at all. She explains in example (15) how she eventually had resolved that communication problem:

> 15) Kaisa: We resolved this problem, as we were bargaining about one cloth, **we resolved this problem by writing some prices on pieces of paper** (laughter) and used them for bargaining.

Riikka claimed that she had not really had difficulties in understanding others:

> 16) Riikka: Almost never, and maybe it was more like **I just didn´t know the topic or I didn´t know the circumstances**, but it wasn´t really about the lack of language skills.

However, she admitted that use of sarcasm had been strange for her as she had not really been used to it before:

> 17) Riikka: I knew that Brits might be sarcastic, however, they also joked at the same time, so **it was a linguistically strange feature**.

According to Jouni in example (18), understanding others had caused him some confusion almost daily while in India:

18) Jouni: **I could say that probably every day one way or another**. But as I said, one didn´t need to stress about it at all in that country because everybody else spoke and understood as poorly so…

Furthermore, Saara pointed out that this also depends on the interlocutor as she had discovered in Japan that with native speakers of English problems had almost never occurred as opposed to Japanese non-native speakers of English with whom problems had occurred more frequently.

To sum up, the data shows that the participants had occasionally experienced some kinds of problems in terms of understanding others. For instance, use of sarcasm was considered a linguistically strange feature. In addition, it was also mentioned that problems in understanding had occurred more often with non-native speakers of English compared to native speakers of English.

6.2.2 Speaking ability

Speaking ability refers to one´s own speaking skills in English with other people. In general, the participants had experienced confusion or problems with this aspect of language only occasionally. As example (19) illustrates, it was mentioned that occasionally one had not remembered a specific word in English, which may also occur in one´s first language:

19) Saara: I don´t think I find myself speechless, so never, some basic things that **sometimes I lost a word [in English] like in Finnish too**, but maybe it´s normal.

In addition, Saara continued that it had been a little challenging to be able to know and evaluate her Japanese interlocutors´ language skills in English, as every now and then she had felt she had been talking too fast or had not pronounced English in the Japanese way:

20) Saara: Well yeah, it was with the Japanese mainly because **I couldn´t always evaluate what the other one was able to understand**. **I guess I**

> **created some confusion by speaking too fast or pronouncing English in a too non-Japanese way**, which probably happened quite a lot actually…

Kaisa seemed to have had some similar experiences with Saara as she also mentioned that at the beginning of her sojourn she had sometimes forgotten some specific words:

> 21) Kaisa: Maybe occasionally, at least when you think of during the whole journey, so maybe at first a bit more, and those had to do more with some **specific words that you just didn't remember**.

Furthermore, Riikka illustrates in example (22) a communication encounter that she had found highly stressful:

> 22) Riikka: For example, **going to a pharmacy was totally horrible** in my opinion as I didn´t understand how it works. Like it just worked a bit differently over there and as there wasn´t really anybody to ask from, so of course **I was nervous** about how to express myself and whether I was even supposed to stand in the queue. Perhaps it was the one and only really **unpleasant situation**.

In other words, as the example above shows, going to a pharmacy was considered horrible since the participant had not understood how to behave in that social context and she had felt that she had not had any support or guidance from anyone. As a result, she had felt nervous about expressing herself in the situation. Obviously, this had had a negative effect on her speaking ability.

Jouni revealed that there had been situations when others had not really understood him when he had spoken English:

> 23) Jouni: I guess there were those situations quite commonly too, but you just had to… **you just needed to use other words to communicate**.

Finally, in example (24), Riikka is able to clearly summarize a major idea of speaking ability in a foreign language:

> 24) Riikka: But really I would say that the most significant thing concerning use of English was that **you learned to really think in English**. So as long as you think in Finnish and just translate your thoughts into English, you´re not that good, you´re not that fast. But as soon as you start thinking in English… it´s a different thing.

To conclude, the findings of this study show that the participants had experienced some linguistic shock regarding their own speaking ability in English. To be more specific, it was stated that occasionally some specific words had been forgotten while speaking. In addition, it had sometimes been difficult to evaluate other people´s language skills in English, which had also influenced the participants´ own language use. For example, one participant had occasionally talked too fast or pronounced words in a too non-Japanese way, which had caused some confusion. It was also acknowledged that there had been some stressful situations, which had caused anxiety and uncertainty to express oneself. Finally, a major insight was also made in one interview as it was suggested that in case one thinks in Finnish and only translates one´s thoughts into English, one is not that good at speaking. In other words, it was believed that one should ideally learn to really think in English, and as a result one´s speaking ability also improves.

6.2.3 Pronunciation and accents

Accents are considered variations in pronunciation, which occur when individuals are speaking the same language (Samovar et al. 2010: 227-228). Pronunciation and accents had caused some confusion or communication problems every now and then. For example, Saara discusses this in example (25) as follows:

> 25) Saara: Maybe occasionally, like you had to try, but on the other hand **it was something you were learning about** and became more competent in.

Furthermore, it is pointed out in example (26) that the Australian English accent had been quite unique, and in case one´s accent had been really strong, it had occasionally been slightly difficult to understand it:

> 26) Emma: Well, they did have their own Australian accent. And it also depended a bit, as there were people from all over the place who had been there all their lives and longer periods of time, so their Australian accent might have been quite strong. But on the other hand, there were people whose parents might have been from Europe, and their accent might not have necessarily been that strong. Yeah, you clearly noticed these differences in accents, like if one had a really strong Australian accent, **it might have sometimes been even a bit difficult to understand**.

Surprisingly, the Tanzanian English accent was not considered difficult as one could think that the accent is slightly different from other English accents.

Riikka explained that she had experienced some kind of linguistic shock when having met her Scottish neighbor for the first time:

> 27) Riikka: My neighbor was Scottish as well and he/she was the first person I met in the UK. And then came **the shock** as he/she started to speak to me, I remember thinking to myself "**I guess I don´t know English at all**", as I should have reacted to that right away, but then I got used to it.

As the example above shows, one may start thinking that one does not even know the target language anymore as a result of linguistic shock. However, it is important to realize that one feels uncertain because of the new situation that was somehow unexpected. Similarly, the Indian English accent was also considered different from the English learned at school:

> 28) Jouni: It happened often, **it was so different from the English taught at school** that you hear and what you hear on Finnish television.

Example (28) illustrates that linguistic shock may also occur due to the difference between the English learned at school and English used in the real world, especially in another country.

To summarize, it can be stated that pronunciation and accents had occasionally caused some confusion and uncertainty. For example, especially Australian English, Indian English as well as Scottish English were considered different and unique, and thus these accents had also been difficult to understand every now and then. However, it was also acknowledged that one is able to learn more about new accents and become more competent in understanding them.

6.2.4 Vocabulary and grammar

On the one hand, as far as vocabulary is concerned, Kaisa admitted that she had quite often encountered some new words that she had not known before while working at a hospital in Tanzania. These new words had seemed to be part of the vocabulary used by the hospital staff, that is, their jargon:

> 29) Kaisa: Well yeah, but they were mainly… they weren´t words invented by themselves or anything like that, but more like those **English words that were a bit more specific used at the hospital**, that I hadn´t needed that much here in Finland.

Emma thought that new words and expressions had not been that difficult for her in Australia as she had spent most of her time with other students and their English had tended to be quite "neutral". However, she was able to recall that at the beginning she had noticed that there had been some particular words that she had not even heard of before, which had not occurred in American or British English:

> 30) Emma: Not really, perhaps at the beginning **there might have been some words in their language that American or British English don´t have**, some were like that. So at first I thought to myself "**Wait, what does this mean?**", like something I had never even heard of.

Riikka did not find new words a problem for her, even though she had encountered them every now and then, she had actually started collecting them

in her notebook and later on had checked their meanings. For instance, one of her colleagues had said something like *You can´t have a cake and eat it, too* and she had not really understood its meaning until her workmate had explained it to her. This is how she described her experiences of learning new vocabulary in the UK:

> 31) Riikka: It was very interesting, like **I tried to be like a sponge that absorbs everything**. I remember how I had a small brown notebook in my pocket and I wrote all kinds of sayings into it that I heard and so on…

Finally, Jouni reckoned that the Indians he had met used mainly basic English words and that was why he had not really had problems with jargon or some other specific vocabulary:

> 32) Jouni: I think that the English that was mainly spoken there included only basic vocabulary, so **very vivid expressions were not used**.

On the other hand, grammar did not seem to be a problem for the participants as they reported that it had caused them confusion or problems only quite seldom, as stated below:

> 33) Riikka: The non-natives spoke a bit wrong and I just tried not to correct it. But of course from the English people **you learned new ways of expressing things**, but I don´t know if they were really grammatical or just some habits.

It was also proposed that grammar had not really had a major role in the Indian communication context:

> 34) Jouni: One didn´t pay any attention to things like that, one´s skills are what they are, **as long as one is able to communicate**, that´s the main thing.

In summary, it was mentioned in the interviews that the participants had encountered some new words in their new environments. For example, specific vocabulary (jargon) used in a hospital setting had occasionally caused some

confusion. Furthermore, it was also observed that Australian English had had some particular words that are not typically used in American or British English, and thus it had occasionally been difficult to understand those words. Similarly, also some idioms that had been used in British English were occasionally considered confusing. Considering grammar, it was not really considered problematic.

6.2.5 Body language

Body language, including eye contact, facial expressions and personal space, seems to bring forth some highly vivid memories among the participants. Kaisa and Emma did not really remember having experienced confusion or problems in this respect while in Tanzania and Australia, whereas the others did. For instance, Riikka recalled that body language in the UK had not really caused her problems, however, some major confusion had occurred quite often:

> 35) Riikka: For example, as I started to get **kisses on the cheek** every now and then, **it really felt difficult** (laughter). I was confused by how to behave there and coming to my personal space. **This was one of the most difficult things** and the eye contact. **The Finnish eye contact is so different**, and afterwards I had to go to my first workplace and apologize to my manager: "I´m sorry that I´m staring (laughter), as I´m showing that I´m listening in a very Finnish way and staring, and I´m waiting for your speech coming to an end and then I stop [staring]." And as I had learned that, I had to go and apologize for my gaze, as I had been told not to stare.

As example (35) illustrates, it was mentioned that kisses on the cheek had felt really difficult as well as use of personal space and eye contact. To be more specific, Finnish eye contact was considered different from British eye contact. Furthermore, another feature of British communication culture was the difference in power relations, which had become apparent in use of laughter during conversations. This is how Riikka narrated about her experiences at work:

> 36) Riikka: As laughter is mainly about using power, and being in a lower position you are supposed to laugh at their stories who are above you in their position so to speak. In Finland, in my opinion, it doesn´t appear that strongly, you can please people with it. But in England more than that, **I experienced pressure to laugh at stories by my superiors** and so on. [-] And the **difference in power relations was pretty shocking** in my opinion.

Smiling as a part of body language, as observed in example (37), had also been used and interpreted in a different way:

> 37) Jouni: And something we encountered there, which is not really related to language but to this kind of body language, is that **smiling** from morning till night. And if I was like this (no smile), they thought I was angry at something. I was asked if I was upset about something as I was not smiling, because **it just was part of that culture** that those people smiled all the time. If someone passed you by on a moped, he/she drove like this (smiling). So if you are not used to that, as in Finland we are like we are, you go there and if you try to be like the local people, after the first day your face will hurt.

Furthermore, Jouni explained that it seemed to him that the Indians had not seemed to understand that he had come from another culture and that was why he had not smiled as much as they. Instead, they had really seemed to think that he had genuinely been upset about something. He admitted that this had been a misunderstanding or a communication conflict. But at the same time, he had also felt that smiling all the time would have been as if cheating on body language as it was not who he really was but something part of the target culture. However, he had tried to adapt to the Indian culture and smile more than what had been natural to him.

To conclude, the data clearly shows that body language had caused confusion and misunderstandings in ICC contexts. In other words, body language had caused some linguistic shock. For example, kisses on the cheek as part of greeting people was considered difficult as well as use of personal space, eye contact and laughter during conversations. Furthermore, even smiling had caused some misunderstandings as it had been used in a different way in some cultures compared to Finland.

6.2.6 Politeness and impoliteness

Politeness and impoliteness refer to using a language in a polite or impolite manner, such as giving compliments or using bad language. To begin with, Kaisa thought that Tanzanians had been much more polite than Finnish people. However, she had been able to get used to that quite fast:

> 38) Kaisa: It became like a norm, for instance, when you greeted in Swahili, there was **a specific greeting** for older people, and somehow, you know, **you learned it by heart**, it didn´t take long.

A similar remark is also made in example (39) as it was suggested that Japanese people had been very polite:

> 39) Saara: Principally **people there were very polite**. I can recall this one rainy morning when there was a queue of hundreds of meters to a bus stop, people were just kindly standing there in the queue, there was no noise whatsoever but everyone was in that neat queue. Like at least I didn´t behave too politely nor notice anyone else´s bad behavior as I didn´t know. Maybe with the language… maybe once in a while as **it´s hard to totally avoid misunderstandings**.

Furthermore, from Emma´s perspective, Australians´ behavior had been highly polite and she did not remember anyone having been impolite or rude to her during her sojourn. Riikka, on her part, admitted that politeness and impoliteness had quite often caused some amusement and confusion for her as, for example, receiving compliments had been a highly difficult thing for her to grasp as a Finn. In addition, it was also suggested that at first British people had seemed very intrusive and too polite to the extent that it had appeared even suspicious. However, as example (40) illustrates, it seemed that her opinion had changed as she had gotten more used to the new way of communicating:

> 40) Riikka: At first I felt **they were really intrusive and over-polite**, and I remember saying to one of my colleagues that "You´re so suspicious, you´re so polite and it is terribly suspicious!" But when I came back, I noticed that it actually bothers me this Finnish culture and this difficulty in meeting with people. So as I got used to it, I really enjoyed it so much

> and I can´t come up with another similar thing, so **I think it was a major resource especially in that culture**. In other words, **you were able to share your thoughts and ideas more easily**, just when you went to a pub, for example, and **you had really vivid conversations with total strangers**.

Furthermore, Riikka admitted that she had occasionally spoken too directly in the new cultural environment as she discussed:

> 41) Riikka: **I apparently spoke a bit too directly**, although my language skills were good and I know that I spoke correctly, but in a way it was wrong after all, since the cultural context admitted it.

Example (41) demonstrates speaking too directly, and this finding is comparable with Lewis (2008), as it is argued that Finns have a reactive communication style, and thus it is typical of Finns to be quite straightforward and direct in their approach.

In addition, impolite behavior and language use by some British youngsters was also observed, as it had seemed that they had spoken in an incredibly impolite way and somehow they had seemed to get away with it, which was also found confusing:

> 42) Riikka: I think that Brits under the age of 20 who were no longer at school but working, **they somehow spoke in the most vulgar way**. Older people were really polite.

Finally, Indians were also considered more polite than Finnish people, as stated below:

> 43) Jouni: Probably at the beginning **it caused a kind of confusion**, like does this really exist, people smiled all the time and paid attention to you in a different way than in Finland, where one comes and goes however one wants to, but not in India. I guess that **politeness was part of that culture,** in which one paid attention to other people. And especially when addressing superiors, one always had to keep in mind whom one was addressing. In my opinion, **people were more polite than in Finland**, if I could say it like this.

Furthermore, the participant was able to recall a situation when he had gone to a local shopping center to buy some shirts and had been surprised at the good customer service he had received along with how he had been addressed by the staff. For example, he had often been addressed as *Sir*, which can be considered a polite and respectful way to address a man especially in customer service. Another example of politeness or impoliteness was the way Indians had tended to refuse something, as assumingly it had been considered impolite to say *No* directly, and that was why it had been completely avoided:

> 44) Jouni: **One didn`t refuse anything there**. One said "Yes, yes", smiled and promised it was okay "yes, yes", as one went away you never heard about that person, as actually he/she said "No", even if it was "Yes" spoken aloud.

To sum up, politeness and impoliteness had occasionally caused confusion, problems and even amusement among the participants. Thus, it can be argued that politeness and impoliteness had caused some linguistic shock as well. In general, other cultures were considered more polite compared to Finland. However, some polite manners were occasionally considered difficult, such as receiving compliments. It was also argued that at times politeness had seemed even too polite, and thus it had been interpreted as suspicious. Finally, it was also discovered in the interviews that different kind of politeness can also be learned, and as a result it was considered a major resource in another culture.

6.2.7 Greetings and small talk

Greetings and small talk had occasionally seemed to cause some confusion. First of all, Saara depicts in extract (45) how greetings had confused her at times while in Japan:

> 45) Saara: Maybe sometimes, in many places they said "Good afternoon!" or "Good evening!" at a certain time of the day, so maybe it didn´t work out

> everywhere, I felt that at work they always said just "Good afternoon!" regardless of the time of the day.

As far as Riikka is concerned, she described that it had taken her some time to get used to greetings in a British way, which had actually been difficult as well:

> 46) Riikka: Simply **learning to greet bravely along with a quick and polite small talk**, even if you really didn´t have the time. And that you learned that you didn´t actually have to answer that, you could pretty much ignore it, or just say something like "Not too bad". You just had to say it, it didn´t even matter if you answered anything back if you just bumped into your workmate in the stairway as one was coming to work and the other was leaving, both in a hurry, but you just had to say it. But anyhow, **getting used to saying more than just "Hi!", it was difficult**.

According to Jouni in example (47), one had greeted basically everyone and everywhere in India:

> 47) Jouni: In Finland, you can go to an elevator and nobody says anything, but not in India. I guess it was because of the amount of people as they were so many, so **you had to pay attention**. In Finland, the contacts are so few, so you can look down on them, like the same face will come to you again whether you want it or not. In India, if you said something bad to someone, you really didn´t know who he/she was, he/she might have even been a leader of some kind of an empire there.

He also admitted that at the beginning of his sojourn, he had not really known how to greet or smile like the locals and it had confused him a little, but he had learned it with time and he had felt this had helped him gain the locals´ trust.

Considering small talk in different cultures, Kaisa had noticed that the Tanzanian way of having small talk had been different from what she had been used to. However, she had not found it a barrier, but had adapted her own communication style to it:

> 48) Kaisa: **They had their own norms again when you start a conversation and greet someone, and how you are supposed to answer that**, like everything was always fine even though that wasn´t the case, and then you just had to keep on talking… **It was different**, but I didn´t find it problematic in any way.

Saara discovered that once Japanese people had noticed that she was a foreigner, it might have affected their attitude towards speaking with her:

> 49) Saara: I reckon it was that **one was so distinctly a foreigner, and how it affected people´s attitudes**, as they automatically thought that with that person one had to speak English. When one went to run errands, maybe **one was a bit scared of the customer service situation** in advance as one noticed that people might have avoided a bit… (laughter)

Emma explains in example (50) that Australian small talk had not been a problem for her, however, she had experienced some differences that had surprised her especially at the beginning:

> 50) Emma: **It was about small talk**, just when you went to a store there, it was totally awesome if you went to buy cosmetics, for example, and the sales assistant came right away asking "How are you doing?" and inquired, without knowing, about what kinds of plans you had for the weekend and so on. So the small talk went quite far, like you could have a really good conversation with her. It was really good that I could talk this and that about where I had studied and where I had come from. **I thought it was absolutely admirable, it was really fantastic**, it gave you a totally different feeling as a customer. It was pretty wonderful and I thought it would have been totally awesome if we had had the same in Finland. But there when you went to a store, it´s like "Hi!" and then the price and "Bye!".

Furthermore, she thought that this aspect of language has been ignored quite much by Finns. For example, it was argued that Finns do not necessarily even ask how one is doing as opposed to Australia, where that is always the first thing when initiating a conversation.

However, some experiences of small talk can also be quite different as they can also cause confusion, difficulties and anxiety. This was the case for Riikka mainly during the first month of her sojourn in the UK:

> 51) Riikka: **It caused a lot of anxiety just to be able to ask "How are you?"** as I thought it was none of my business (laughter). Like everything you knew you were supposed to say, it´s… I mean it felt so difficult on the whole, which is the most illustrative aspect about transferring from one culture to another in my opinion. Like **although you knew exactly what**

> **you should have said and how you should have acted and you were able to, but it just felt so difficult**.

The example above illustrates appropriately that the participant had felt a great deal of anxiety when she had tried to ask *How are you?* as she had thought it was not her business to know in the first place. Furthermore, one may find some specific topics difficult in small talk. For example, as rationalized in example (52), people had often wanted to talk about football and motorsport, which had been found slightly problematic since the participant had not been keen on sports at all:

> 52) Riikka: Well, it was the time of football World Cup, which was a very powerful and shared thing for them, and I am not keen on sports at all, so it was a theme that came along all that time. And **I wasn´t able to talk anything about it, and I felt it was like an ongoing annoyance**. It was like some big English thing for the whole nation, in which I wasn´t part of at all, it was basically just one thing, but it was present kind of all the time that "Riikka doesn´t like football". On top of that, there was a bit bigger boss who knew about "the Finnish and motorsport, and that´s something we can talk about!", and as I wasn´t able to talk about that either, so **I often found it a drawback that I wasn´t able to talk about sports**.

Finally, it was also observed that personal hierarchies had seemed to have an effect also on the communication practices in India. To be more specific, it was argued that if one feels that communication does not work well enough, the reason might be that one simply tries to talk to a wrong person who cannot really help or make the decisions:

> 53) Jouni: It was the **personal hierarchy** there that came up probably in everything, and probably **a Westerner or a Finn doesn´t understand how it works**. Firstly one doesn´t know all those social networks existing in the background and all those personal hierarchies, how they operate. So at times if things just won´t go forward, it might be that you´re talking to a wrong person, and he/she cannot do anything about it and even if he/she could but there´s someone superior in between, so it means that it just won´t work out and nothing ever happens. But if you just keep on smiling at people and find the right people, you will get normal, contemporary, Western medical treatment, that´s not a problem.

In conclusion, the data clearly shows that greetings and small talk had caused some confusion and anxiety but also fantastic experiences while abroad. However, it could be stated that some linguistic shock had been experienced in this respect as well.

6.2.8 Silence in conversations

Silence in conversations had been treated differently in other cultures compared to Finland. First of all, it is claimed in example (54) that the attitude towards silence had been different in Japan compared to Finland:

> 54) Saara: You learned it, like **in Finland we can be silent, but not in Japan**. **You had to maintain the conversation, like you had to talk about something.** And another thing, which on the other hand suits the Finnish people, was this what we have been using here; answering like "Mmm", and that was like really strong for the Japanese, which conformed that you were listening and you repeated it if another person was speaking, and it could be really strong, too. So a difference like that, so **you could cause some awkwardness when being silent**. But on the other hand, it was something you were aware of that the other person wanted to maintain the conversation and was not necessarily so comfortable about if I could stay silent as well.

It was argued in the example above that one may be silent in Finland, but not in Japan. Furthermore, it was believed that one has the responsibility of maintaining a conversation with another person, otherwise the silence could cause awkwardness.

Second, it is also discovered in example (55) that there had been a clear cultural difference in use of silence between Australia and Finland:

> 55) Emma: Yeah, **silence like that didn´t really exist there**, however, it was not like Southern European speaking style culture. But it was something like in-between, like I didn´t find it a problem.

In addition, Australian people had also tended to ask about one´s opinions more easily and long silences during conversations had not existed at all.

Third, Riikka was able to elaborate on her experiences of silence during conversations with Brits, as obviously there had been some cultural differences:

> 56) Riikka: Just the way that **in English it would have certainly been polite to pose some more questions and in that way show that you´re listening**. And at first I was of course the kind of Finn who waits for his/her own turn and just listens – "I do listen to you" and I nodded. And I was thinking to myself that of course it´s obvious that I enjoy your utterance, but anyhow I expressed it a bit poorly according to them. So **silence according to them was perhaps a bit awkward**. And sometimes if it was a hasty situation and you were really supposed to work in a rush, and as I was doing something difficult for me, and then a manager came and I knew that he/she should have been doing something much more important than having a chit-chat with me. So I, as I am a direct person, could say like "You don´t need to feel the pressure right now or anytime to have a chit-chat with me, like **it´s totally fine with me if we´re silent and keep on working**." And they were like "Whaaaaaaat?!"

She explained that especially when there had been a rush at work, it had been difficult for her to understand the meaning of having a chit-chat, since she had also enjoyed the silence as it had been easier to focus on working. It had seemed to her that it had not mattered how much hustle there was, her workmates and managers had still wanted to chit-chat. Considering her managers, she had felt as if she had been stealing their time when chatting with them, so she had wanted to be polite and considerate and let them continue working. To sum up, it could be concluded from example (57) that different meanings of silence had caused the most challenges:

> 57) Riikka: **It [the use of silence] was, along with body language, one of those things that resulted in the most challenges**. I mean the different meaning of silence in different cultures.

Finally, it was also assumed that silent moments had not really occurred in India either:

58) Jouni: **I guess there weren´t silent moments like this** [silence of 13 seconds]. I think that as those people have lived in the midst of all that amount of people, so they are in a different way… they have grown up in such a different environment, so they are used to having people around all the time, you can chit-chat about something with everybody.

To summarize, the findings of this study show that silence in conversations had been treated quite differently in other cultures compared to Finland. The participants had noticed that in case they had used silence as they had normally been using, had caused some awkwardness and resulted in some kinds of challenges in interactions.

6.2.9 Expression of emotions

It was argued that one had not really showed that much emotions in communication in Tanzania, which had been found confusing:

59) Kaisa: **One didn´t really show that much emotions there** or did not necessarily talk about things related to oneself. And I could notice that particularly when I was working at the delivery ward… As in Finland, all women moan, as there only few did, and if someone moaned, she was beat. And these were usually situations like a really difficult delivery, in which the beating was used as a punishment and push and…

In contrast, this area of communication had not been considered difficult in Australia, however, it is suggested in example (60) that it was different as Australians had tended to show their emotions and body language in a much clearer way compared to Finnish people:

60) Emma: **They clearly expressed emotions more obviously**, as one quite often has to ask a Finn "Hey, what do you really think?". So in a way **they also had quite much body language** [in Australia].

Furthermore, the British way of expressing emotions was also considered considerably more open than in Finland, which was found a little confusing as well:

61) Riikka: **It was totally different, much more open and they didn´t understand introversion**. For example, if they asked me something simple, such as what my favorite drink was. And of course I could intuitively recall my favorite drink right away, but I felt like I didn´t want to share that, even if I knew that it was such a neutral thing and a good topic for small talk as such. But anyhow, **they just didn´t comprehend why I didn´t want to share it**, and I should have quickly lied about it and I could have let go with it (laughter). Moreover, I learned so much, like towards the end I abundantly told them "Gosh, it has been so lovely with you and I really don´t want to go home at all!", and that tied us up much more at the end. But there was the difference that my barriers regarding my privacy were much bigger than theirs, like they told everything about their wives and so on.

As was mentioned above, it had seemed that introversion had not really been understood in Britain. Furthermore, the participant had noticed that there had been a difference in how much information she and others had been willing to reveal about themselves.

In the interviews, it was also pointed out that in the Indian context people had tended to avoid showing negative emotions, that is, it had seemed to be a kind of taboo in that culture:

62) Jouni: Probably **showing negative emotions was somehow a taboo**, I don´t know. It´s just my own analysis that it was the compulsory smile that they had all the time. And if you didn´t smile, you were sad. And if you said something negative, in practice that was like raging already. So their forced **smiling was day-to-day**, something we also had to adjust to, because it was part of that culture, and perhaps they hid something with it.

It was claimed in extract (62) that it had seemed that if one had not smiled all the time, it had easily been interpreted that one had been sad about something. Thus, the participant had tried to adjust to smiling, however, he had wondered whether they had hidden something with it. As an outsider it may be challenging to interpret and understand true meanings of such cultural practices, such as smiling.

To conclude, the data shows that expression of emotions had varied in different cultures. For example, it was argued that emotions had not really been shown in Tanzania in contrast to emotions had been quite clearly shown in Australia. Even in the British context, the expression of emotions was considered totally different as introversion had not really been understood. Furthermore, it was believed that showing negative emotions had somehow been a taboo in India, which was also found confusing.

Ultimately, these nine subsections have focused on nine different aspects of ICC, and the findings appropriately show that the participants had occasionally experienced linguistic shocks in terms of understanding others; speaking ability; pronunciation and accents; vocabulary and grammar; body language; politeness and impoliteness; greetings and small talk; silence in conversations; and expression of emotions. All in all, the participants also reported having used a variety of methods in order to overcome their linguistic shocks, for instance, pointing at things, making their questions simpler, using other words and descriptions, giving examples, asking for repetition, reasoning from the context or resorting to humor.

6.3 Effects on language skills in English

Finally, this section deals with the third research question, which aims at finding out how the sojourn affects the participants´ language skills in English. The participants´ own perceptions on their English skills before their sojourn are presented as well as how their language skills improved while abroad.

To begin with, Kaisa assessed her English skills as good already before her sojourn as she had been able to understand and speak English very well, however, she admitted that it had taken courage to actually use it. She found one aspect of language more difficult than others, that is, grammar, which she

had not really known before or after her sojourn. After her sojourn in Tanzania, she had felt it was remarkably easier to meet and interact with new people:

> 63) Kaisa: As I had to use it [English] there, **I wasn´t that nervous about it anymore**. And maybe earlier I stressed terribly about whether I was able to say these things right and if they were grammatically correct. While I was there, I didn´t really care about it too much, I just explained things as well as I could and didn't stress about whether it went according to all the rules, **as far as I was understood, as it was the most important thing**. But maybe it also facilitated as they didn´t speak perfect English either.

In other words, as stated in example (63), she thought her English skills had improved considerably while overseas, especially her speaking, reading comprehension as well as listening comprehension. Furthermore, she explained that in her opinion Finnish and Swahili were quite similar, as both languages are pronounced the way they are written, and that was why it had been really easy for her to learn Swahili, too. She also stated that Tanzanians´ way of pronouncing Swahili also had had an effect on their English pronunciation and thus their speaking had been very similar to hers.

Saara considered her English skills excellent even before her sojourn, since she had previously lived in the USA for six months and she had also completed her Bachelor´s and Master´s theses in English. However, she argued that it was quite difficult to learn a foreign language without staying in a country where it was spoken. Thus, the sojourn in Japan had developed her language skills especially in Japanese as English had already been like a second language for her, however, her ability to understand different kinds of English accents had also improved:

> 64) Saara: Probably it was the spoken [language skill], but also understanding the Japanese accent developed, I got wideness in listening comprehension so that **I´m able to understand different kinds of spoken Englishes**, again more accents.

However, Saara also pointed out that it was necessary to take into account the interlocutor´s level of English as she had noticed that her English had been very strong compared to her Japanese colleagues, and that was why she had tried to speak more clearly and perhaps had pronounced English in a more Japanese way:

> 65) Saara: On the use [of English] at the work environment quite a lot. To be more specific, **you learned to take the receiver better into consideration**, like you had to speak more calmly and clearly in order to be understood.

To sum up, Saara continued discussing the development of her language skills in English:

> 66) Saara: Maybe it expanded or developed, diversified or something similar, as you learned to take different kinds of language users into account also in a foreign language. If you think about the situation where you are a language learner and you would like to use language that is the best you can, as well as use words variously and show your own language skills. However, it didn´t work in every situation, and **that was like a good lesson learned that you were able to take your interlocutor´s level of language skills into account also in the foreign language.**

As example (67) illustrates, Emma believed that her level of English had been very good even before her sojourn in Australia as her major subject had been in English so she had been able to understand and speak it very well even if it had not been her native language:

> 67) Emma: Especially in language use, as before my exchange I did speak English, but I was somehow more careful and vulnerable like "Help what if I say it wrong?" But after my exchange, I found out that everyone speaks English willy nilly, so you really didn´t think about whether you said it all right anymore, but **you were braver to take the initiative**.

Consequently, she found that all aspects of her language skills had improved, but especially her speaking and oral communication. In Emma´s opinion, her way of thinking and mentality had also changed, which had influenced the way she had used English:

68) Emma: I don´t know really, but in a way **it changed my certain kind of mindset**, as before I was terribly critical about saying things just right. So after that I was more like it´s not that strict if you say it just right, it´s more important that you´ve been understood right. **It has changed my mentality**, because I still don´t speak the perfect perfect English. But somehow **you accept that at times you might say something wrong** as well. But that´s how it is also in Finnish, as sometimes you might say something totally funny or wrong, **and that´s like totally fine**.

Considering Riikka, she thought her written English skills had been very good and spoken skills good before her exchange in the UK. However, she believed that after her exchange her speaking had developed to the level of her writing in English. She further justifies the development of her language skills in extract (69):

69) Riikka: [They developed] radically, **the most development in courage**, and it enables it all, even though you have the skills but if you don´t go into the situation, you´ll never know if you were able or not. But I think I am… **I react more positively to these kinds of situations** and this way I have developed as I have gone into those situations. People told me a lot that "You do know English well" before I left, but I thought I was a lot better when I came back. As **it is very different after all how they have always taught at school and what I learned there**.

Furthermore, she explained that her listening comprehension had improved as well as she had gotten more used to hearing different kinds of accents, dialects and intonations, as she argued that she had learned to listen to these properly for the first time in her life. In addition, she was also able to recall a situation in Finland about one week after her return as she had attended a party organized by a friend of hers, and she had met an unknown person at the door and had been quite surprised at the interaction:

70) Riikka: According to my logic, he should have said "Hi, how are you? My name is…", instead he said nothing, he just opened the door and went away, and I was there like really, you just turned away, you just opened the door. And then I realized that previously I would have thought that okay he just opened the door. But **now I had started to expect more**; **that one first of all asks me how I am doing along with introducing oneself as well as using names**. So it was unbelievable how impolite they seemed to me then.

Riikka also agreed that linguistic shock had influenced the way she had used and learned English. In addition, she had made a major discovery as far as linguistic shock was concerned, since she believed that it had eventually resulted in a personal insight and learning experience. In other words, after this insight, it had not had a negative influence on her, but instead her language use had increased:

> 71) Riikka: Well, they did [influence], after surviving it in the end, even though it´s called a shock, but actually it´s also an insight. **You won´t have a shock unless you notice that something is different**. So you also learned that okay this is how you act here, so of course **it had a positive effect** before long.

Jouni stated that his level of English had been sufficient enough to survive in another country even before his sojourn in India. Moreover, he discovered that his speaking ability and listening comprehension had also improved:

> 72) Jouni: I guess **speaking** and also **listening comprehension** to some extent, because you heard the local Indian English there.

He had also noticed that the variety of English skills had been huge as some locals had spoken it very well, while others had not spoken it at all or very poorly. Consequently, at times it had been easier for him to understand his interlocutor and at other times it had been quite challenging. Even if he had experienced some major differences in terms of Indian culture, he had kept on using English persistently on a daily basis and had not given up. All in all, he also acknowledged that English had seemed to have an essential role in India, where hundreds of different languages had been spoken.

In conclusion, the effects of the sojourn on the participants´ language skills in English were reviewed in this section. To be more specific, a variety of effects were found that had typically been experienced by the participants. For example, the participants reported that after their sojourn it had been easier to

meet and interact with new people; they had not been that nervous about using English anymore; they had been braver to take the initiative and start conversations with others; their speaking, reading and listening comprehension had developed, they had better understood different kinds of English accents, dialects and intonations; they had felt they could take other language users better into account; their way of thinking and mentality had changed in a way that they had better accepted that occasionally one had made mistakes in English; they had had a more positive attitude towards new intercultural encounters; their own expectations in terms of polite and impolite communication and small talk had changed; as well as they had also been able to find linguistic shock a learning experience after all.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, the major findings of the present study are summarized and discussed, the research is evaluated as well as some implications and suggestions for future studies are also made.

7.1 Summary of the major findings

The main objective of the present study was to increase the understanding of university students´ experiences of differences in ICC and linguistic shock while living abroad. The first research question studied how the participants feel about adapting to the new culture. The second research question examined what aspects of ICC result in linguistic shock. Finally, the third research question focused on how the sojourns abroad influence the participants´ language skills in English. In addition, there is a gap in previous research, since there are many studies focusing on students´ psychological adjustment and culture shock in ICC contexts, however, linguistic aspects of adjustment have been less recognized. Consequently, more research is needed, and the present study aimed at filling the gap by focusing more on linguistic aspects of shock and finding out students´ own personal experiences in this area.

The present study was qualitative in nature and the data was collected by interviewing five participants individually who had sojourned in five different countries around the globe using mainly English. The interviews were theme-based meaning that the topics had been planned in advance. However, the order of questions was quite flexible and the participants had the possibility to discuss each question more or less according to their own experiences and opinions. All interviews were also digitally recorded and transcribed. Finally, the data was analyzed by using content analysis. To be more specific, the data was analyzed inductively for its contents, which means that the findings arose from the data instead of the theoretical framework. The findings of this study

have already been reported, and in this chapter they are also discussed and evaluated, in terms of the knowledge presented already in the theoretical background and in previous studies on the issue.

The findings regarding the first research question showed that all the participants had had their own personal reasons to go abroad. In addition, they had also noticed some cultural differences, for example, regarding the conception of time, use of personal space, general attitude to life, getting to know new people and use of body language. Finally, it seemed that all the participants had experienced culture shock to some extent along with its typical emotions of anxiety, stress and frustration. However, it could be stated, based on the findings, that on the whole the participants had adapted quite well. It was also acknowledged that studying the target culture and language in advance had been useful in the adaptation process. Interestingly, the findings also revealed some indications of reverse culture shock, that is, when the participants had had to return to their home culture.

The second research question examined ICC in relation to linguistic shock and it was found out that the participants had occasionally experienced linguistic shock in terms of various aspects of ICC, such as understanding others; speaking ability; pronunciation and accents; vocabulary and grammar; body language; politeness and impoliteness; greetings and small talk; silence in conversations; and expression of emotions. Furthermore, these aspects had also caused them anxiety, confusion, stressful and unpleasant situations, uncertainty, awkwardness, amusement, suspicion, and also misunderstandings. At the same time, some of these aspects had also been considered positively as a major resource in the target cultures having resulted in personal learning experiences.

Finally, the third research question focused on the participants´ language skills in English after the sojourn, and according to the interviews, it seemed that

their courage and confidence to interact with new people had increased as well as their speaking, reading and listening comprehension had developed. In addition, it was also reported that their understanding of different kinds of English accents had increased as well as their ability to take other language users into account had also improved.

7.2 Evaluation of the findings and methodology

In general, it seemed that the participants´ understanding of culture shock was slightly simplistic as everyone admitted having experienced some stress, anxiety or frustration at some point of their sojourn, and at the same time, some of them argued not having experienced culture shock. As it was discussed in the theoretical framework of the present study (see section 4.1.1), these emotions mentioned above are typical of the culture shock process. Crossing cultures during a study-abroad experience is considered a significant transition event, and it typically brings some stress when one is confronted with a new culture and one tries to adapt to unfamiliar physical and psychological experiences and changes (Cushner and Karim 2004: 292; Cushner and Brislin 1996: 3). According to the anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) theory, anxiety means one´s feelings of being uneasy, worried, tense or even apprehensive (Gudykunst 2003: 169; Guirdham 1999: 207). It almost seemed that some participants´ view of culture shock had been quite negative, as if culture shock was something to be avoided. However, culture shock is an inevitable and natural process for everyone going abroad.

On the one hand, the findings of the present study in terms of culture shock and adaptation seemed to be quite different from Ayano`s (2006) study, since she suggested that Japanese students´ general level of well-being remained very low throughout their sojourn in the UK. Based on the findings of the present study, however, this kind of argument cannot be made here since all the

participants seemed relatively well adapted to their new cultures. On the other hand, the findings of this study seemed to be quite consistent with the study by O´Neill and Cullingford (2005), as they found out that even if participants had some feelings of homesickness, uncertainty and discomfort, they mainly had polite and supportive social interactions. In addition, differences in ICC and linguistic challenges were also found in their study as well as in the present study.

According to the theoretical framework of this study (see section 4.1.2), one may experience problems, communication gaps, and misunderstandings as far as ICC is concerned. To be more specific, pronunciation and accents seemed to have occasionally caused confusion and problems, as it has been acknowledged that language variation often creates misunderstandings (see section 4.3). As pointed out by Jandt (2004), idiomatic equivalence may also cause various problems especially in English as idioms are typically used in it. This means that idioms can easily be misunderstood since one usually cannot understand their real meanings if one translates them literally. A similar observation was also made in the present study.

Furthermore, the data of this study showed that body language seemed to have caused some major confusion and misunderstanding, for example, kisses on the cheek as a part of greeting, the use of personal space, eye contact, laughter as well as smiling. It has been claimed that Finns, who represent a reactive communication style, show only little body language especially during conversations, which might easily be considered confusing in other cultures (Lewis 2005: 68-73). Body language also communicates interpersonal closeness, such as warmth, approach as well as accessibility, or vice versa, avoidance and distance (Andersen et al. 2003: 74-75). In “high-contact cultures”, such as South Americans, Arabs and southern Europeans, people are more used to showing interpersonal closeness compared to “low-contact cultures”, such as Asians and northern Europeans. This might partly explain why some of the participants

had been confused by the different kind of body language they had encountered, that is, because they were Finnish and came from a low-contact culture. In terms of politeness and impoliteness, as was mentioned in section 4.2.3, there is a difference between a direct and indirect communication style, since India for example, typically represents a collectivistic culture and thus indirect communication style is preferred. The findings of this study seemed to support the view, since it has been argued that one tries to avoid hurting others´ emotions in collectivistic cultures. For example, *No* is rarely used in Asian countries since it may be interpreted as hurting one´s interlocutor´s emotions and leading to a loss of face. Consequently, *Yes* can actually also mean *No* or *Perhaps*, which also came up in the present study.

The observations of this study regarding greetings and small talk are also supported by Lewis (2005: 68) as he describes that talking has another function in the Anglo-Saxon cultures compared to Finland. He continues that, for example in Australia, conversation has a vital role in getting to know people and creating quick relationships with them. The explanation for this difference is the different kinds of communication styles, as Finns have a reactive communication style versus Australians have a linear-active style (described in section 4.2.1). The findings also illustrated the difficulty of learning to use more small talk, as it has been argued that it does not come easily to people from reactive cultures (Lewis 2005: 74). For example, Finns may even consider questions such as *How are you?* as direct questions and open up about their problems to the other person. According to Jandt (2004: 74), anxiety is considered a barrier to ICC, because when one focuses on the feeling of being anxious, one might not be totally present in the situation, and that is why one may make common mistakes and seem awkward to others.

In terms of silence during conversations, the findings of the present study also confirm the observations made by Lewis (2005: 69-73) about Finns who tend not to interrupt others while they are speaking as it is considered a sign of respect.

Furthermore, Finns have a tendency to give careful consideration to the opinions and proposals of others. In other words, silence is well tolerated and considered a highly meaningful part of conversation in reactive cultures. Thus, silence as such does not have a negative meaning as it is associated with respect and consideration towards other speakers. However, in other cultures silence may easily be misunderstood and create linguistic shock and problems in ICC. Interestingly, another finding of the present study was that silence had not really been accepted in Japan. This seems to be contrary to Lim´s (2003: 61-62) observations, as he argues that silence is typically valued rather than feared in Asia. He explains that two friends can actually sit side-by-side for hours without talking to each other. Furthermore, Asian cultures value knowledge, however, they tend to discourage verbalizing it. Though, he also admits that silence is not always valued in Asia either. On the one hand, it is considered more appropriate to be silent in situations of disagreement, challenge, talking back to superiors, interrupting others, breaking peace by initiating a conversation as well as speaking out one´s knowledge. On the other hand, when a response or active participation is expected by the other person, silence is considered impolite. After all, it has been found out by some scholars (e.g. Hasegawa and Gudykunst 1998) that Japanese people consider silence highly negative especially when communicating with a stranger.

The findings of the present study on linguistic shock seem to have some similarities and differences with a study by Fan (2010), as her findings revealed that Asian university students experienced linguistic shock both from linguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives (see section 4.4). On the one hand, the findings of the current study suggested that the participants had experienced linguistic shock slightly more in sociolinguistic aspects, such as in terms of politeness, greetings, small talk, silence as well as body language. As proposed by Fan, sociolinguistic problems occurred due to linguistic etiquette, as some participants of her study avoided talking to local people because they did not want to offend them with questions or they were confused by the direct

comments of criticizing and complementing by the local people. It was also discovered in her study that the participants had some negative experiences about language impoliteness due to their Asian appearances and their inadequate level of English. The findings of the present study did not seem to support this finding even if language impoliteness had been noticed, but it did not seem to stem from the participants´ cultural background or English skills.

On the other hand, it seemed that linguistic aspects of shock, such as grammar and vocabulary, had caused fewer problems. In contrast, as discovered by Fan (2010), the participants of her study experienced linguistic difficulties mainly in terms of using articles, plural nouns, prepositions, tenses as well as the pronunciation of certain syllables. It has also been argued that one´s first language tends to interfere with learning the target language, which means that it is more likely that one makes mistakes in those aspects of language that are different or do not even exist in one´s first language (Fan et al. 2011: 202). Some linguistic features of English are very different from Finnish, such as articles and prepositions as such do not exist in Finnish, and thus it could have been predicted that these had caused some problems. Quite surprisingly, none of these linguistic aspects were mentioned by the participants of the present study even though grammar and pronunciation were also covered in the interview questions. Even if linguistic shock seemed to have caused the participants some negative feelings of being anxious, nervous, uncertain or frustrated, it seemed that the sojourn as a whole had had a variety of positive effects on their language skills in English. Finally, both the study by Fan and the present study seemed to imply that linguistic shock can be considered a learning experience in the end.

Obviously, there are some limitations concerning the methodology of this study. First of all, it was challenging to include both culture and linguistic shock in the present study, however, previous research has shown that it is not possible to fully understand linguistic shock without any knowledge of the

culture shock. Second, the topic of ICC seemed to be quite vast and complex covering a variety of theories and definitions. Third, there were not many previous studies on linguistic shock as such, and thus it was difficult to compare the findings of the present study to those. Fourth, a theme interview was chosen as the method of collecting data. Especially in the past it was emphasized that a researcher should be as if a neutral outsider, who should not present his or her own thoughts during interviews (Dufva 2011: 133-134). This view has been justified by the objectivity of the study and researcher. However, today the view has changed more in the direction, in which interviewing is considered one type of interaction. That is, a researcher him/herself is able to take part in the interview and actively involve in it with the help of questions and interaction. For this reason, it has been acknowledged that this kind of subjectivity is a natural part of human science, and it should not be considered a weakness as such.

In qualitative research, validity and reliability deal with a researcher´s accurate description of his/her own research process and analysis of data (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 189). Some essential extracts from the original interviews were also included in the present study, on the one hand, as examples and observations from the real life in order to give more voice to the participants. On the other hand, the authentic extracts from the data also provide with more reliability in the present study. It is worth mentioning here that as one major aim of this study was to describe and interpret the participants´ experiences and observations, which is typical of qualitative research, as supported by Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2002: 87), generalized knowledge was not considered a goal by any means. In this respect, there were only five participants in this study, as it is quite a common feature of interviewing that the number of participants is relatively small. In addition, as there were five participants´ experiences in the data analyzed by the researcher, there are also different human interpretations that need to be taken into account. In other words, as the researcher needs to

make his/her own interpretations of the data, it could be argued that the data cannot be considered objectively.

It has to be acknowledged that it was not possible to include everything in a single interview with a limited amount of time and resources. In general, the interview method strongly depends on how well participants can remember the past, understand the present and consider the future (Gerson and Horowitz 2002: 211). Furthermore, there might be considerable differences between participants concerning what kind of information they are able to offer and how easy it is for them to express themselves to the researcher. One challenge was also to find suitable participants in a reasonable amount of time. There might also be one limitation here, as it is probable that the participants had felt comfortable enough about their level of English as they had decided to go abroad knowing they would have to use it. In my opinion, if one feels one´s level of English is not sufficient to live in another country, it is probable that one stays in one´s home country instead. Another challenge occurred during interviews, as I tried to find out if the participants had had some difficult situations, confusion or problems while using English abroad, and occasionally some participants did not feel or remember having problems there, so their answers were quite short and did not give me much information. In addition, some participants seemed to get more tired towards the end of the interviews, which was regrettable, as I think the most interesting questions and topics were in the last section of the interview.

To sum up, one interview can offer only limited insights into specific social processes, and that was why it was necessary to have a look at several interviews in order to resolve the research problem. Obviously, there were other possible methods available as well, for example, observation, surveys or diaries. As content analysis was chosen as the method of analyzing the data, it needs to be admitted that this method allows the researcher quite much freedom in terms of interpretation. However, the main objective of all

qualitative research should be trying to understand the participants´ points of views (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2002: 70). In the present study, it seemed that the study methods were chosen appropriately, because on the basis of the interviews and content analysis, the participants´ own subjective opinions and experiences on the relevant topics were clearly discovered.

7.3 Implications and suggestions for further research

The findings of this study pointed out that there were differences in ICC, and consequently, linguistic shocks are highly possible when studying or working in another country. That is why it would be important that university students who are planning to go abroad have the possibility to prepare themselves as much as possible in terms of new culture and language already in their home country. Typically one´s home university organizes some kinds of pre-departure events and information sessions or offers some kinds of courses on intercultural matters. In addition, also the host universities could take linguistic shock better into account and help their new international students to adapt to new linguistic environments. It needs to be understood also by language teachers that intercultural and sociolinguistic awareness and knowledge are likely to help language learners in adapting to the new linguistic environment. It also seems that students are more or less aware of culture shock, however, the awareness of linguistic shock is considerably poorer. The first step is to be aware of the possible linguistic shock and then prepare oneself to encounter differences in ICC. This view is supported also by Cushner and Brislin (1996: 290), who argue that if one is prepared to expect linguistic difficulties, it may actually diminish their impact as well as the stress caused by the adjustment process. Finally, on a larger scale, studying and working abroad should be supported also by the government and EU programs in order to increase intercultural awareness, knowledge, understanding as well as cooperation. To sum up, one needs to accept the processes of culture and linguistic shocks even

if they are likely to arouse negative emotions. In the end, one´s adjustment and language learning are likely to improve significantly.

In conclusion, based on the findings of this study, there are several recommendations for future research. First, more research is needed on linguistic shock in general, especially with students´ own experiences. Second, it could be interesting to compare linguistic shock experiences also across different languages, nationalities, age groups or genders. Third, it would be fascinating to include people who do not really speak the target language at all or quite poorly and compare their experiences with those who have better language skills in order to examine the extent of linguistic shock. Fourth, a useful topic could also be to study the relation between one´s attitudes and/or motivation towards the target language in relation to linguistic shock. Fifth, it could be helpful to compare the stages of the culture shock and linguistic shock to discover if there are similarities or differences. Concerning possible methods of collecting data, one could apply a group interview to let participants discuss the topic together or critical incidents, which are brief descriptions of problematic situations in ICC (Fowler and Blohm 2004: 58). Finally, as the present study was conducted using qualitative methods, it could be rewarding to conduct some future studies with the help of quantitative methods with a larger number of participants. This could produce more generalizable results, and it could also be more reasonable to make comparisons between different kinds of participants.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Schedule of the interview

Taustakysymykset

- (Sukupuoli?)
- Ikä?
- Opiskelupaikka ja pääaine/opintolinja?
- Kohdemaa ja kaupunki, jossa oleskelit? Milloin (kk-kk/vuosi)? Oleskelun syy?
- Pääasiallisesti käytetty kieli kohdemaassa?

1) Kulttuuriin sopeutuminen ja kulttuurishokki

- Miksi halusit lähteä ulkomaille opiskelijavaihtoon/työharjoitteluun?
- Miksi valitsit juuri kyseisen maan? Oliko se jo ennestään tuttu vai täysin uusi?
- Oliko sinulla etukäteen ennakkoluuloja tai -käsityksiä siitä, millaisia sen maan ihmiset saattaisivat olla?
- Kuinka valmistauduit oleskeluasi varten jo etukäteen Suomessa?
- Kuinka sopeuduit kohdekulttuuriin?
- Mikä oli huomattavan erilaista uudessa kulttuurissa?
- Mitkä asiat edesauttoivat/häiritsivät sopeutumistasi uuteen kulttuuriin ja maahan?
- Kuinka usein oleskelusi aikana koit olosi huolestuneeksi, jännittyneeksi, levottomaksi, epävarmaksi tai jopa ahdistuneeksi uuden kulttuurin takia eli koitko kulttuurishokin? Muita oireita? Vain oleskelun alkuaikoina, keskivaiheilla, lopussa, koko ajan vai et juuri ollenkaan?
- Helpottuiko sopeutuminen ajan kanssa, jos niin kauanko siihen meni?
- Ajattelitko tai suunnittelitko lähteväsi takaisin Suomeen kesken oleskelusi, jos niin miksi? Jäikö oleskelusi kesken vai olitko kohteessa loppuun asti?
- Miltä kotiinlähtö tuntui oleskelun lopussa? Millaista oli palata takaisin

Suomeen tuttuun ympäristöön? Oliko jotain muuttunut tai olitko itse muuttunut, jos niin kuinka?

2) Kulttuurienvälinen viestintä

- Millaisia tietoja ja taitoja tarvitaan, kun kommunikoidaan toisesta kulttuurista tulevien ihmisten kanssa?
- Millaisia kulttuurienvälisiä eroja huomasit viestinnässä?
- Kehittyivätkö omat kv-taitosi kohdemaassa oleskelun aikana?
- Millainen oli englannin kielitaitosi ennen ulkomaan oleskelua?
(Arvioi kouluarvosanalla 4-10 + perustelu)
- Paraniko englannin taitosi ulkomailla oleskelun aikana? Mitkä kielen osa-alueet erityisesti (esim. puhuminen, kirjoittaminen, tekstin /kuullunymmärtäminen, sanasto, kielioppi)?
- Millaisissa tilanteissa käytit englantia ja keiden kanssa yleisesti?
- Kuinka kuvailisit paikallisten englannin kielen käyttämistä, millaista englantia he käyttivät? Oliko se erilaista kuin mihin olit aiemmin tottunut, jos niin kuinka?
- Miltä englannin käyttäminen tuntui? Jännititkö, mitä erityisesti (puhuminen, kirjoittaminen, ymmärtäminen) vai oliko sen käyttäminen sinulle luontevaa erilaisissa tilanteissa?
- Minkä verran käytit suomea ulkomailla oleskelun aikana?

3) Kielishokki

- Millaisia ongelmatilanteita tai hämmennystä koit seuraavien asioiden kanssa, kun keskustelit muiden kanssa *englanniksi*? Vertaa kokemuksiasi Suomeen eli mihin olit aiemmin tottunut ja mikä oli sinulle ”normaalia”.

- Muiden puheen ymmärtäminen
- Oma puheen tuottaminen

- Puheen aksentti eli kielen omaperäinen korostus ja ääntäminen
- Puhenopeus oli liian hidas tai nopea
- Kehonkielen käyttö (mm. katsekontakti ja kasvojen ilmeet, fyysinen läheisyys, eleet)
- Kohteliaisuus/epäkohteliaisuus (esim. kehuminen, kiroilu)
- Tervehtiminen
- Negatiivisen palautteen tai kritiikin vastaanottaminen/antaminen
- Small talkin käyttö ja sen aiheet
- Hiljaisuuden käyttö keskustelun aikana
- Tunteiden ilmaiseminen
- Sanasto ja sanonnat (esim. uusia tai vieraita sanoja)
- Kielioppi (esim. uusia tai vieraita/vääriä kielioppirakenteita; artikkelit, prepositiot, aikamuodot)
- Kohdekulttuurille tyypillisten keskustelutapojen omaksuminen ja ymmärtäminen
- Muuta?

- Kuvaile tilanne, jossa englannin käyttö aiheutti sinulle ongelmia tai väärinymmärryksiä?

- Minkä verran kokemasi kulttuuri- ja kielishokki vaikuttivat englannin kielen käyttämiseesi ja oppimiseesi ulkomailla?

- Millaisia keinoja käytit kielishokista selviämiseen eli kun kieli aiheutti sinulle ongelmia?

- Kuinka tärkeää on etukäteen tietää kulttuuri- ja kielishokista ennen ulkomaille lähtöä?

- Oliko ulkomaan oleskelusi positiivinen vai negatiivinen kokemus (arvosana 4-10)?
- Millaisia neuvoja antaisit henkilölle, joka on kiinnostunut lähtemään ulkomaille vaihtoon tai työharjoitteluun?

APPENDIX B: Original Finnish quotations from the data

(1) Ulkomailla mä nyt oon aina halunnu käydä, muutenki tykänny reissailla ja Afrikka oli ihan kersasta asti sellane haave. Sitten ne kokemukset siellä, et mähän olin siellä sairaalassa työharjottelussa niin se on kuitenki niin erilaista se hoitotyö ja nähdä minkälaista siellä on… Ja eläimet (nauraa).

(2) Tää ohjelma oli niin mielenkiintonen, et pääsee työharjotteluun niin pitkäks aikaa. Ja sitte mua alko joskus lukiossa Japani kiinnostaa hirveesti ja mä opiskelin sitä kieltä, nii sen takia sit kiinnosti nimenomaan Japaniin lähteminen. Emmä tiä, varmaan sit joku tämmönen pieni kaukokaipuu, on halunnut lähteä vähän Suomesta poiskin, ihan vaa joku tälläne seikkailunhalu, et haluaa vähän kokea jotain muutakin.

(3) Ehkä se et mua ylipäänsä kiinnostais lähtee ulkomaille pysyvämmäkskin aikaa, ehkä sinne töihin, ehkä muuttaakin jatkossa johonkin lämpösempään maahan. Niin se oli ehkä suurin kimmoke siinä, et mä olin aika tylsistyny Suomeen tai siis silleen et mulla ei oo täällä periaatteessa mitään mikä sitoo mua. Ja sit uudet haasteet, seikkailut, uudet ihmiset, kulttuuri, tosi monta syytä. Mä halusin johonkin maahan, missä mä osaisin sitä paikallista kieltä. Ei sen ois ollu pakko olla mikään englanti, kyl mä saksankielistäkin maata mietin, mut sit taas mä tykkään ehkä enemmän tälläsestä aussikulttuurista, semmosesta rennosta ja sellasesta.

(4) Työharjottelu sellasessa maassa, jossa englanti on äidinkieli tuntu luontevalta vaihtoehdolta sitten prepata sitä kielitaitoa oikeasti. Että mä aattelin, et jos mä meen Saksaan niin sithän mä puhun saksaa… englantia niinku saksalainen (nauraa). Mä itse asiassa en oo oikeastaan matkustellu aiemmin, mutta... ja kyllä mä oisin mielelläni lähteny johonkin muuhunkin maahan, mutta nimenomaan se oli se kieli, mä halusin oppia puhumaan sitä silleen ku natiivit sitä puhuu. Ja siellä kyllä tuntu sen jälkeen, että siinä viimesen kuukauden aikana osas jo aika hyvin.

(5) Heti opintojen alkumetreillä oli jossain vaiheessa tällänen kansainvälisen vaihdon tietoisku kaikille uusille opiskelijoille, ja kyllä se sitten siitä aika pitkälti lähti, että mä otin heti tän kyseisen tilaisuuden jälkeen asiakseni, että mä haluan ulkomaille ja mä haluan jonnekin muualle ku Eurooppaan. Kyllä se on niin ainutlaatunen tilaisuus lähteä näinki eksoottiseen paikkaan ku Intia. Että turistina tietysti pääsee ja melko väistämättä joutuukin Eurooppaan jossain vaiheessa, mutta tälläselle Intian takamaille ei kyllä ihan hepposin perustein tule koskaan varmaan lähdettyä tai mihinkää vastaavaan paikkaan. Se on kuitenki niin kaukana siellä syrjässä se paikka.

(6) Ehkä kaikkein isoin asia oli aikakäsitys ja sitten tää ku suomalaisilla me pidetään hirveen iso etäisyys fyysisesti, siis tiedäkkö ku joku istuu bussissa niin siihen viereen ei luultavasti istuta vaan ihmiset seisoo. Kun taas sitten Tansaniassa oli näit tämmösiä pikkubusseja, millä paikalliset liikku tosi paljon, ja se oli siis semmonen et siellä oli viidelletoista ihmiselle istumapaikka ja sinne änki kolmekymmentä ihmistä (nauraa).

(7) Mun mielestä siinä oli ero, et siellä ihmiset oli jotenkin paljon rennompia, silleen et on niilläkin jokapäiväsiä murheita, mutta ne ei tee niistä asioista elämää suurempia, silleen et ”No worries!”, asioilla on tapana järjestyä… Et se oli jotenkin, mun

mielestä siinä oli tosi iso kulttuuriero. Siellä on helpompi oppii tunteen uusia ihmisiä ja jotenki silleen et sä et välttämättä tunne ihmistä kunnolla, mut silti se on valmis myös huolehtiin sun asioista, se on mielenkiintosta jotenkin, aivan erilaista [ku Suomessa].

(8) Siellä ei sillä tavalla mun mielestä tunnuttu odottavan itsenäistä toimimista ja aloitekykyä niinku Suomessa meiltä odotetaan, eli se oli siinä työyhteisössä kans mielenkiintosta. Sellanen flirttailu on hirveen paljon avoimempaa, että sitä mä en osannu silleen ihan ennakoida, vaikka tottakai se on sellanen klisee, että ton ny ois pitäny tietää, mutta ei sitä kuitenkaan ihan ajatellu. Ja ihmisiin tutustuminen on jotenkin hirveen paljon helpompaa. Ja sitten aikakäsitykset, aikatauluista kiinnipitäminen oli yks, että ne tuntui olevan mulle aika paljon tärkeämpiä ku sikäläisille.

(9) Se ihmiset, liikenne ja melu, joka oli ihan joka paikassa, etkä sä pääse sitä karkuun mihinkään muualle ku hotellihuoneeseen, johonki harvoihin paikkoihin. Ja se nyt ei ensimmäisinä päivinä tai viikkoina kauheesti haittaa, koska kaikki on uutta, se menee sen piikkiin. Mutta sitten ku siellä on useamman viikon, niin sit siinä alkaa tulla mitta täyteen, ku on tottunu siihen et voi mennä tonne metsään kävelemään ja siellä linnut laulaa ja siinä kaikki. Mutta siellä se ei koskaan lopu se ihmismäärä. Se oli varmaan kaikille shokki, kyllä se tietysti tiedossa oli, että siellä ihmisiä on, mutta sitten kun sen kaiken sekamelskan joukossa on, niin se on ehkä se kaikkein konkreettisin asia, joka siellä tapahtuu.

(10) Lopussa alko vaan ahistaa se, et piti lähteä Suomeen. Se oli semmonen et ois mielellään jääny sinne.

(11) Yleensä mä en oo kovin vahvana kokenu tälläsiä maahansaapumisshokkeja. Ehkä on sit realistiset kuvitelmat tai jotain vastaavaa, mikä vaikuttaa siihen ettei yleensä koe sellasta vahvaa kulttuurishokkia. Toki jotain saavutettavaakin jäi, että ei voi täydellisesti olla sopeutunu.

(12) Musta tuntu, et mä sopeuduin sinne paljon paremmin ku Suomeen. Jotenkin ne ihmiset oli niin sosiaalisia ja niinku mä sanoin, et jotenkin se et siel huolehditaan kaikista, ei tuntunu ikinä siltä, että jäis mitenkään yksin. Jotenkin mä tykkään tosi paljon siitä kulttuurista, mulla ei oo mitään negatiivista sanottavaa. Sit kun siellä oli muitakin vaihtareita, niin tottakai sekin vaikutti siihen et huolehdittiin toinen toisistamme ku kaikilla oli sama päämäärä tai tarkotus siellä. Ja sit myös ne paikalliset, et ne oli myös tosi ystävällisiä, et mulla ei ollu minkäänlaisia ongelmia sen suhteen.

(13) …Et tuntu et voi ei, kohta mun pitää lähteä, et just ku mä oon päässy osaks tätä. Sit mä laskin oikeesti päiviä ja viimeset kaks viikkoa mä hädin tuskin nukuin, ku tuntu et se on ajanhukkaa, mä vaan halusin hyppiä ympäriinsä ja jutella ihmisten kanssa.

(14) Joku on kysyny, että millä sanoilla sä kuvailisit lyhyesti sitä Intian reissua, niin mä oon vastannu siihen, että ”Intiassa kaikki on toisin”, mikä tarkottaa sitä, että se mikä pätee tai ei päde Suomessa, niin se on jotain aivan muuta Intiassa. Se alku menee pelkästään jo sillä painolla, että kaikki on uutta ja ihmeellistä. Mutta sitte jossain vaiheessa alkaa tuntua sille, kun kaikki on niin erilaista eikä mitään

oikeen tunne, et miten nää asiat oikein lopulta toimii täällä, niin se on varmaan aika stressaavaa.

(15) Me sitten ratkaistiin tämä ongelma, me siis tingittiin yhdestä kankaasta, me ratkaistiin tämä ongelma sillä lailla, et paperinpaloille kirjoteltiin hintoja (nauraa), ja sen avulla tingittiin siitä.

(16) Ei juuri ikinä, ja sekin tais olla enemmän sellasta, et mä en vaan tienny sitä aihetta tai mä en tuntenu niitä olosuhteita, mutta ei niinkään kielitaidon puolesta.

(17) Mä tiesin et englantilaiset saattaa olla sarkastisia, mut se et ne kujeilee siinä samalla, niin se oli sellanen kielellisesti kummallinen ominaisuus.

(18) Kyllä varmaan vois sanoa, että päivittäin tavalla tai toisella. Mutta niinku mä sanoin, niin siitä ei kannata ottaa mitään stressiä siinä maassa, koska kaikki muutkin puhuu ja ymmärtää yhtä huonosti että…

(19) En mä kyllä varmaan sanattomaks jää, että ei koskaan, jotain tälläsiä perus että joskus kadottaa jonkun sanan [englanniksi] niinku suomessakin, mut ehkä se on normaalia.

(20) No joo, japanilaisten kanssa kyllä varmaan lähinnä sen takia ku ei aina osannu arvioida mitä toinen ymmärtää. Et sit pysty aiheuttaa hämmennystä sillä, että puhu ite liian nopeesti tai lausu liian ei-japanilaisittain englantia, ja sitä varmaan sattu aika paljonkin itse asiassa…

(21) Ehkä kans se sillon tällön, ainakin jos aattelee koko reissun aikana, et ehkä sillon aluksi pikkasen enemmän, ja nekin ehkä enemmä liitty tälläsiin yksittäisiin sanoihin, mitä ei sitten muistanu.

(22) Esim. apteekissa käyminen oli mun mielestä ihan kamalaa, ku mä en ymmärtäny miten se tapahtuu. Että siellä se vaan toimii vähän eri tavalla ja sitku ei oikeen ollu ketään keltä ois voinu kysyä, nii sitte sitä tottakai jännitti et miten mä asiani esitän ja kuuluuko mun edes seistä tässä jonossa. Se oli ehkä semmonen ainoa oikeesti epämiellyttävä tilanne.

(23) Kyllä varmaan niitäkin tilanteita oli tämän tästä, mutta siinä täytyy sitten vaan... se asia vaan täytyy sitte saada toisilla sanoilla toimitettua.

(24) Mut oikeestaan mä sanoisin mikä oli sen englannin käytön kannalta merkittävin asia, niin se että opit oikeesti ajattelemaan englanniks. Että niin kauan ku sä ajattelet suomeks ja vaan käännät sun ajatukset englanniks, niin sä et ole kovin hyvä, sä et ole kovin nopea. Mut sit ku sä alat ajatella englanniks niin… se on eri asia.

(25) Ehkä sillon tällön, et joutuu pinnistämään, mut toisaalta se oli sitä asiaa, mitä oppi ja minkä kanssa harjaantu.

(26) No onhan niillä se australialainen oma aksentti. Ja sekin vähän riippuu, että siellä on kuitenkin ihmisiä kovin hyvin eri suunnalta, jotka on ollu siellä koko ikänsä ja pidemmän aikaa, ni niillä saattaa olla aika vahvakin se australialainen

aksentti. Mut sit vastaavasti, siellähän on jotain muitakin, joittenka vanhemmat saattaa olla Euroopasta ja niiden aksentti ei sitten välttämättä oo ihan niin vahva. Joo kyl siellä oli semmosia aksenttieroja ihan selkeesti, et jos on tosi vahva australialainen aksentti ni sitä voi joskus olla jopa vähän hankalakin ymmärtää.

(27) Mun naapuri oli kans skotlantilainen ja mä tapasin hänet ihan ensimmäisenä maahan tultuani. Ja sitte se shokki ku se alkaa puhumaan mulle, mä muistan et ”mä en taida osata yhtään englantia”, ku siihen ois pitäny sit heti avauksessa reagoida, mut siihenkin sit tottu.

(28) Usein kyllä, se oli niin kaukana siitä sellasesta kouluenglannista, mitä tuolla kuulee ja mitä Suomen televisiosta kuulee.

(29) No siis joo, mut ne oli lähinnä... ne ei ollu mitään niiden omakeksimiä sanoja tai sellasia vaan siis ihan tommosia englanninkielisiä siellä sairaalassa jotain vähän erikoisempia, mitä ei oo täällä Suomessa niin kauheesti tarvinnu.

(30) Ei juurikaan, et ehkä jotain siinä alussa niiden kielessä saattaa olla jotain semmosia sanoja, mitä ei amerikanenglannissa tai brittienglannissa oo, jotkut oli sellasia. Et aluks se oli et saatto tulla vähän sellasia et ”Hei mitä tää ny tarkottaa?” ja tolleen ettei oo ikinä kuullukaan.

(31) Joo ja erittäin mielenkiintoista, et kyl mä yritin olla semmonen kaiken imevä sieni. Että mä muistan, että mä kuljetin pientä ruskeaa vihkoa mun taskussa ja mä kirjotin sinne kaikkee sanontoja, mitä mä kuulin ja sellasta…

(32) Mä luulen, et se englanti, jota siel pääsääntösesti puhuttiin niin oli aivan perussanastolla, ei mitään kovin lennokkaita ilmaisuja kyllä käytetty.

(33) Kyllä ne ei-natiivit puhu vähä väärin ja mä yritin vaan olla korjailematta sitä. Mut sit tottakai niiltä englantilaisilta iteltänsä oppi uusia tapoja ilmaista asioita, mut en mä ny tiiä onko ne niinkään kieliopillisia vaan sellasia tapoja.

(34) Ei sellasiin kiinnitetä mitään huomiota, et niillä mennään mitä on, ja kunhan saadaan vaa asiat toimitettua niin se on pääasia.

(35) Esimerkiks kun alko saamaan poskisuudelmia aina joskus, niin kyllä se tuntu vaikealta (nauraa). Hämmensi että miten päin tässä ollaan ja just se kosketusetäisyydelle tuleminen. Tää oli yks vaikeimmista asioista ja katsekontakti. Suomalainen katsekontakti on niin erilainen, ja mä jouduin jälkeenpäin mennä sinne mun ensimmäiseen työpisteeseen ja mä pyysin mun esimieheltä anteeks: ”Anteeks, että mä tuijotan (nauraa), ku mä osoitan kuuntelevani hyvin suomalaisesti ja tuijotan, ja sit odotan ku puheenvuoro lakkaa, et sitte minä lopetan [tuijottamisen].” Ja sitte ku oli oppinu sen, niin pitihän sitä katsetta mennä pahoittelemaan, ku mulle oli selitetty, et älä killitä.

(36) Nauraminenhan on pitkälti vallankäyttöä, ja sitten kun oot alemmassa asemassa, niin sun kuuluu nauraa niitten jutuille, jotka on sun yläpuolella niin sanotusti arvoasemaltaan. Suomessa se ei mun mielestä näy niin hirveen voimakkaasti, sillä voi miellyttää ihmisiä. Mutta Englannissa enemmän ku se, että mä koin, että mulla ois ollu painetta nauraa mun esimiesten jutuille ja sellasta. [-] Ja se valtasuhteiden ero oli mun mielestä aika shokeeraavaa.

(37) Ja se mikä meillä tuli vastaan, mikä ny ei suoranaisesti kieleen mutta tälläseen kehonkieleen liittyvä asia, on se hymyily siellä siis aamusta iltaan. Ja sit jos mä oon näin (ei hymyä), niin sit mä oon suuttunu jostain. Multa kysyttiin, et oonko mä pahoillani jostain, ku mä en hymyile, koska se vaan kuuluu siihen kulttuuriin et ne ihmiset hymyilee koko ajan. Siel ku joku ajaa mopolla ohi, nii se ajaa näin (hymyillen). Et jossei oo tottunu sellaseen, niinku Suomessa ollaan miten ollaan, meet sinne ja jos yrität olla niinku ne paikalliset, ensimmäisen päivän jälkeen sulla on naama kipee.

(38) Siitä tuli semmonen normi, esimerkiksi swahiliksi ku tervehti niin vanhemmille ihmisille oli tämmönen oma tervehdys, niin se sitten jotenkin tiedäkkö, se tarttu aika hyvin sitten takaraivoon, siinä ei kauaa menny.

(39) Pääasiassahan siellä ollaan hyvin kohteliaita. Että mä muistan yhen tälläsen sadeaamunkin ku jono bussipysäkille oli satoja metrejä, siellä vaa kiltisti seisottiin siellä jonossa, ei ollu minkäänlaista möykkää vaan kaikki oli siinä siistissä jonossa. Et semmosesta et ite ei ainakaan liian kohteliaasti käyttäytyny tai huomannu että joku toinen sit törttöilis ku ite ei tiiä. Ehkä sen kielen kans vois olla sit… ehkä sillon tällön ku ei sitä varmaan vältykään täysin väärinkäsityksiltä.

(40) Aluks ne tuntu hirveen hysääviltä ja tungettelevilta ja ylikohteliailta, ja mä muistan mä yhelle kollegalle sanoinkin, et ”Sä oot niin epäilyttävä, sä oot niin kohtelias, et se on kauheen epäilyttävää!” Mut sit se ku tuli takas niin huomas et kyl mua itse asiassa vähän painaa tää suomalainen kulttuuri ja just se ihmisten kohtaamisen vaikeus. Että sit kun siihen tottu, niin mä nautin siitä niin kauheesti, että en keksi toista samanlaista asiaa, et mä nään et se oli hirvee voimavara nimenomaan siinä kulttuurissa. Just se et pystyy jakamaan helpommin ajatuksia ja ideoita, ihan vaikka vaan ku kävi pubissa ja sit siinä synty ihan vieraiden ihmisten kaa tosi lennokasta keskustelua.

(41) Mä ilmeisesti puhuinkin vähän turhan suoraan, että vaikka se kielitaito oli hyvä ja mä tiedän, että mä puhuin oikein, niin se kuitenkin tavallaan oli väärin, koska se kulttuurikonteksti myönti sen.

(42) Mun mielestä alle 20-vuotiaat englantilaiset, jotka on työelämässä eikä koulussa, niin ne puhu jotenkin ällistyttävän roisisti. Vanhemmat ihmiset oli tosi kohteliaita.

(43) Se varmaan aluks aiheutti sellasta hämmennystä, että voiko tällästä olla olemassa, ihmiset hymyilee koko ajan ja ottaa huomioon toisella lailla ku Suomessa, et tosta tullaan mennään kuka mitenkä haluaa, mutta ei Intiassa. Varmaan se kohteliaisuus kuuluu siihen kulttuuriin, että huomioidaan toista ihmistä. Ja sitte varsinki ku niitä ylempiarvosia puhutellaan, niin aina muistetaan se, että ketä puhutellaan. Mun mielestä ollaan kohteliaampia ku Suomessa, jos näin voisin sanoa.

(44) Siellähän ei kieltäydytä mistään. Sanotaan ”Yes, yes”, hymyillään ja luvataan et näin tehdään ”yes, yes”, sitte ku mennää tosta, nii sä et ikinä kuule siitä ihmisestä vaan oikeesti se sanoo, että ”Ei”, mutta ääneen se sanoo ”Kyllä”.

(45) Ehkä joskus, mones paikkaa sanotaan ”Hyvää päivää!” tai ”Hyvää iltaa!” tiettyyn vuorokaudenaikaan, niin se ei ehkä ihan kaikkialla täsmänny, tuntu et töissä sanotaan aina vaan ”Hyvää päivää!” oli vuorokaudenaika ihan mikä tahansa.

(46) Kyllä ihan vaan se, että oppi moikkailemaan rohkeasti ja että siihen sai sen nopean kohteliaisuusjutustelun, vaikka sulla oikeesti ei ois aikaa. Ja se että sä opit sen, että sun ei oikeesti tarvi vastata siihen, sen voi oikeestaan periaatteessa jättää huomiotta, tai heittää vaan jotain et ”Not too bad”. Se nyt vaan pitää sanoa, ei väliä edes vastaatko mitään jos vaan juoksette toisianne vastaan portaissa ku toinen tulee vuoroon ja toinen on lähössä, kummallakin kiire, mut et se pitää kuitenkin sanoa. Mutta tosiaan se siihen tottuminen, et sä sanot muutakin ku ”Hei!”, niin se oli vaikeaa.

(47) Suomessa voit mennä hissiin sillai et kukaa ei sano mitää, mutta ei Intiassa. Se varmaan johtuu siitä ihmismäärästä ku niitä on nii paljon, ni pitää ottaa huomioon. Suomessa niitä kontakteja on niin vähän, että sä voit ylenkatsoa niitä, että se kuitenkin tulee sama naama uudestaan vastaan halusit sää tai et. Jos Intiassa sanot pahasti jolleki ihmiselle, sä et yhtää tiiä kuka se on, se saattaa olla vaikka minkälaisen imperiumin johtaja siellä.

(48) Siellä oli tämmöset omat normit taas, kun keskustelun alottaa ja tervehtii, niin miten pitää vastata siihen, et aina kaikki oli hyvin vaikkei oikeasti ollukaan, ja sit siitä piti lähteä sitä keskustelua viemään… Se oli erilaista, mutta en mä kokenu sitä mitenkään ongelmalliseks.

(49) Veikkaan, että se oli se et on niin selvästi ulkomaalainen, että miten se vaikutti siihen ihmisten suhtautumiseen, että ne automaattisesti ajattelee, että ton kanssa täytyy puhua englantia. Kun menee asioille niin ehkä vähän pelottaa se asiakaspalvelutilanne etukäteen, kun huomaa että ihmiset saattaa vähän karttaa… (nauraa)

(50) Just se small talk, ihan jo se et ku sä meet kauppaan siellä, et se on aivan mahtavaa, et jos sä meet ostaan vaikka jotai kosmetiikkaa tai näin, niin myyjä tuli heti silleen et ”How are you doing?” ja kyseli vaikka ei tunne et millasia suunnitelmia sulla on viikonlopulle ja tällästä. Et se small talk menee aika pitkälle, et sulla voi olla tosi hyväkin keskustelu jonkun myyjän kanssa. Se oli tosi hyvä, et mä voin puhua ummet lammet siitä missä mä oon opiskellu ja mistä mä oon tullu. Se oli musta aivan ihailtavaa, se oli siis aivan mahtavaa, siitä tulee ihan erilainen fiilis asiakkaana. Se oli aika hienoa ja musta ois aivan mahtavaa, jos Suomessakin vois olla sellasta. Mut tääl ku meet kauppaan, ni se on vaan ”Hei!” ja okei maksaa sen verran ja sit ”Moikka!”.

(51) Siinä oli kyllä paljon kipuilua, että sai ees alotettua kysymään et ”How are you?”, ku mulla on semmonen et ei se kuulu mulle (nauraa). Että kyl se, kaikki mitä sä tiedät, että sun pitäis sanoa, niin…tai siis se tuntuu niin vaikealta ylipäänsä se, se on just se kulttuurista toiseen siirtymisen havainnollistavin puoli mun mielestä. Että vaikka sä tiedät just, mitä sun pitäis sanoa ja miten sun pitäs toimia ja sä osaat, niin se vaan tuntuu niin vaikealta.

(52) No sillon oli ne jalkapallon MM-kisat, niin se on niille niin voimakas yhdistävä asia, ja mä en oo kiinnostunu yhtään urheilusta, niin se oli semmonen

teema, joka kulki sen koko ajan mukana. Ja mä en osannu puhua siitä mitään, nii musta tuntu, että se oli semmonen jatkuva riesa. Että semmonen joku suuri englantilainen koko kansan juttu, jossa mä en oo yhtään osana, niin se oli vain yks asia periaatteessa, mutta se oli läsnä tavallaan koko ajan, se ku ”Riikka ei tykkää jalkapallosta”. Sit ku siellä yks vähä isompi pomo ties, et ”suomalaiset ja moottoriurheilu, ja siitähän me voidaan jutella!”, ja sit ku mä en siitäkään osannu jutella, ni kyl se tuntu usein tää ettei urheilusta osannu puhua haittaavan.

(53) Se henkilöhierarkia tuolla tulee varmaan joka asiassa vastaan, eikä sitä varmaan länsimainen tai suomalainen ymmärrä, miten se toimii. Ensinnäkään ei tiedä eikä tunne kaikkia niitä sosiaalisia verkostoja, mitä siellä taustalla on ja kaikkia niitä henkilöhierarkioita, miten ne toimii. Että toisinaan jos vaan asiat ei mene eteenpäin, ni voi olla vaan et sä puhut väärälle ihmiselle, et se ei voi tehdä asialle mitään ja vaikka voiskin tehdä, mut ku joku ylempi on siinä välissä, niin se tarkottaa sit, et se ei vaan toimi, eikä ikinä tapahdu yhtään mitään. Mutta sitte ku sä jaksat vaan hymyillä niille ihmisille ja luovia oikeitten ihmisten luo, nii sieltähän saa ihan tavallista, nykyaikasta, länsimaalaista lääkehoitoa, ei se oo mikään ongelma.

(54) Siihen oppi, ku siis Suomessahan pystytään olemaan hiljaa, mutta Japanissa ei. Sitä keskustelua on pakko pitää yllä, et on puhuttava jostain. Ja sit toinen, mikä toisaalta suomalaisille sopii, on tämmönen mitä mekin ollaan tässä käytetty, et vastataan sillai ”Mmm”, ja se on sit japanilaisille jo tosi vahva, millä sit myötäillään sitä, että ollaan kuulolla, et sitä sit toistetaan jos toinen puhuu ja se saattaa olla tosi vahvakin. Et sellanen ero, et sillä pystyy aiheuttaan kiusaantumista, jos on hiljaa. Mut toisaalta sekin on sellanen asia, minkä ite tietää, et toinen haluu pitää sitä keskustelua yllä ja ei välttämättä oo niin sinut sen kanssa jos mä vaikka voisin olla hiljaakin.

(55) Joo, ei siellä sellasta hiljasuutta kyllä oo, mut ei kuitenkaan mikään sellanen eteläeurooppalainenkaan puhetapakulttuuri oo. Mut se oli sellanen aika jotain siltä väliltä, et mä en koe sitä ongelmaks.

(56) Justiinsa se kun englanniks ois tietenkin kohteliasta esittää jatkokysymyksiä ja sillä lailla osottaa kuuntelevansa. Ja aluks mä olin tottakai sellanen suomalainen, joka odottaa omaa puheenvuoroaan ja jää kuuntelemaan - ”Kyllä minä kuuntelen sinua” ja nyökyttelin kyllä. Ja mä aattelin et tottakai se on ilmiselvää, että mä tässä nautin sun puheenvuorosta, mutta että sitä kuitenkin ilmaisi vähän heikosti heidän mielestänsä. Että silleen se hiljasuus oli heidän mielestään ehkä vähän kiusallinen. Ja joskus jos oli kiireinen tilanne ja oikeesti piti tehä jotain töitä hirveen vauhilla, ja mäkin tein jotain vaikeaa itselleni, ja sitten siinä joku sellanen esimies, jonka mä tiedän että pitäis olla tekemässä jotain paljon tärkeämpää ku rupattelemassa mulle. Ni sit mä, suora ihminen kun olen, saatoin sanoa, että ”Ei sun tarvi just tällä hetkellä tai muutenkaan kokea painetta jutustella mun kanssa, että mulle on ihan okei et me ollaan hiljaa ja tehään töitä”. Ja se oli niille niinku semmonen et ”Mitäääääh?!”

(57) Se [hiljaisuuden käyttö] on, ruumiinkielen lisäksi, yks eniten haasteita tuottaneista jutuista. Just se hiljaisuuden eri merkitys eri kulttuureissa.

(58) Ei varmaan sellasia hiljasia hetkiä ollu, mitä ny esimerkiks oli [13s hiljaisuus]. Mä luulen, että ku ne ihmiset on eläny sen kaiken ihmismäärän keskellä ittekkin,

niin ne on eri tavalla… ne on kasvanu niin erilaisessa ympäristössä, että ne on tottunu siihen, että on koko ajan ihmisiä ympärillä, kaikkien kanssa voi toimitella jotaki.

(59) Siellä ei kauheesti näytetty tunteita eikä välttämättä kerrottu semmosista omista asioista. Ja sit sen huomas erityisesti, kun oli tuolla synnärillä… Niinku Suomessahan kaikki naiset huutaa, siellä tosi harva huusi, ja jos joku huusi niin sit sitä lyötiin. Ja ne oli yleensä tämmösiä tilanteita, et oli tosi vaikee se synnytys, et lyömistä käytettiin rangaistuksena ja kannustuksena ja…

(60) Kyl ne selkeesti ilmaisee tunteita selkeemmin, koska suomalaisista ihmisistä saa aika monesti et ”Hei mitä mieltä sä oikeesti oot?”. Eli tavallaan myös sitä elekieltä on aika paljon [Australiassa].

(61) Se oli aivan erilaista, paljon avoimempaa ja sulkeutuneisuutta ei ymmärretty. Niinku multa saatettiin kysyä jotain ihan yksinkertasta asiaa, et mikä on mun lempijuoma vaikka. Ja sit intuitiivisesti tottakai sieltä tulee sit heti mieleen se mun lempijuoma, mut mulla on sellanen et en mä halua jakaa tätä, vaikka mä tiedän, et se on tosi neutraali asia ja sinänsä hyvä small talkin aihe. Mut sit se ei vaan mene niille käsitykseen, että minkä takia mä en halua jakaa sitä, ja ois vaan pitäny jotenki nopeasti valehdella jotain, niin ois päässy vähemmällä (nauraa). Ja sitä sitten oppi tosi paljon, että mä sitten tosi vuolaasti loppua kohden jaoin et ”Vitsi ku teidän kanssa on ollu niin ihanaa ja mä en yhtään halua lähteä kotiin!”, ja se sit sito meitä loppupuolella paljon enemmän yhteen. Mutta kyllä se ero säily, että mun muurit oli paljon korkeammat yksityisyyteni suhteen ku heillä, että ne kaikista vaimoistansa kerto kaiken jne.

(62) Varmaan se negatiivisten tunteitten ilmaisu on jollain lailla tabu, emmä tiä. Se on ihan mun oma analyysi siitä, että se on se pakkohymy, mikä niillä on koko aika päällä. Ja sit jos sä et hymyile, niin sä oot surullinen. Ja sit jos sä sanot jotain negatiivista, niin se on käytännössä jo aivan sellasta raivoamista. Siis se on ihan päivittäistä se niitten pakkohymyily, johon meijänkin piti sopeutua, että se on osa sitä kulttuuria ja ehkä sen taakse sit kätketään jotain.

(63) Siel ku sitä [englantia] joutu käyttämään, niin se ei enää jännittäny niin paljoo. Ja sit se, että ehkä aikasemmin hirveesti stressas sitä, että osaankohan mä nyt sanoa tän asian oikein ja meneekö tää kieliopillisesti oikein. Sit ku oli siellä, niin sit siitä ei enää kauheesti välittäny, selitti vaan asiat niin hyvin ku pysty ja ei stressanu enää siitä, että meneeks nyt kaikkien sääntöjen mukaan, et kunhan tuli ymmärretyks ni se oli se tärkein pointti. Mut ehkä sekin sit taas helpotti, että kun nekään ei puhunu ihan täydellistä englantia.

(64) Varmaan sit se suullinen [kielitaito], mut myös sit japanilaisen aksentin ymmärtäminen kehittyi, tuli laaja-alaisuutta kuullunymmärtämiseen et ymmärtää erilaista puhuttua englantia, lisää taas aksentteja.

(65) [Englannin] käyttämiseen varmaan siellä työympäristössä ni aika paljonkin. Justiin siihen et oppi paremmin ottamaan huomioon sitä vastaanottajaa, että on pakko puhua rauhallisemmin ja selkeemmin, jotta tulee ymmärretyks.

(66) Ehkä se sit laajenti tai kehitti, monipuolisti tai jotain vastaavaa, et oppi ottaan vieraallakin kielellä sitten erilaisia kielenkäyttäjiä huomioon. Jos aattelee sitä

asetelmaa, et on ite kielenoppija ja haluais käyttää mahdollisimman hyvää kieltä mitä ikinä osaa, ja käyttää monipuolisesti sanoja ja osottaa sitä omaa kielitaitoa. Mutta se ei ihan joka paikkaan sovi, niin se oli sitten semmonen hyvä läksy, et osaa sitten myös sillä vieraalla kielellä ottaa huomioon sitä, et mikä sen vastapuolen kielitaitotaso on.

(67) Kyl sit varsinkin ihan kielenkäytössä, et ennenku meni vaihtoon ni okei kyl mä puhuin englantia, mut oli jotenki varovaisempi ja herkempi et ”Apua mitä jos mä sanon väärin?” Niin sen vaihdon jälkeen, ku tietää et kaikki puhuu englantia vähän miten sun sattuu ja näin, niin sitä ei enää oikeesti mieti, et sanonks mä kaiken oikein, et on rohkeempi tekeen aloitteita.

(68) Emmä tiiä muuten silleen, mut just tavallaan et se muutti mun tiettyä ajattelumallia, ku ennen mä olin kauheen kriittinen et sanonks mä asiat just oikein. Et tommosen jälkeen olin enemmän silleen, ettei oo niin tarkkaa sanooko just oikein, et enemmänkin tärkeää on se, et on tullu oikeen ymmärretyksi. Mentaliteetin se on muuttanu, koska en mä edelleenkään puhu ihan täydellistä täydellistä englantia. Mut et tavallaan hyväksyy sen, et saattaa sanoa välillä jotain väärinkin. Mut niin se on suomessakin, et välillä saattaa sanoa jotain ihan hassusti tai väärin, et se on niinku ihan fine.

(69) [Ne kehittyivät] radikaalisti, että eniten kehitty se rohkeus, ja sehän mahdollistaa sen kaiken, että vaikka ne taidot olis niin jos siihen tilanteeseen ei mene, niin et sä sit ikinä tiiä et osasiksä. Mutta kyl mä näen, että mä olen… suhtaudun myönteisemmin tälläsiin tilanteisiin, ja sitä kautta mä olen kehittynyt, että niihin tilanteisiin on menny. Mulle kommentoitiin paljon, että ”Kyllähän sä ny osaat hyvin englantia” ennenku mä menin, mutta kyl musta tuntu, että mä kuitenkin olin paljon parempi ku mä tulin takas. Että on se kuitenkin hyvin erilaista se, miten aina on koulussa opetettu ja mitä siellä oppi.

(70) Mun logiikan mukaan hänen ois pitäny olla että ”Hei, miten menee? Mun nimi on…”, mut ei se sanonukaan mitään, se vaan avas oven ja käänty kannoillaan ja lähti ylös, ja mä olin siinä kannoillani, että oikeesti, oikeesti sä vaan käännyt, niinkun sä vaan oikeesti avasit sen oven. Ja sillon mä tajusin, että niin ennen mä oisin vaan ajatellu, et no joo se nyt vaan avas oven. Mut nyt mä olin alkanu odottaa enemmän; että multa ensinnäkin kysytään miten mulla menee ja sit se esittäytyminen ja just se nimellä puhuminen tai puhuttelu. Et se tuntu uskomattomalta miten epäkohteliaalta ne sit tuntu.

(71) No kyllähän ne [vaikutti], sit ku siitä selvis niin se loppujen lopuks, vaikka sitä sanotaan shokiks, niin sehän on myös oivallus. Että eihän sulle tuu shokkia, jos sä et hoksaa että joku on erilaista. Nii siitä sit kans oppii sen, että okei täällä pitää toimia näin, niin kyllähän se sit myönteisesti tottakai ennen pitkää vaikutti.

(72) Varmaan puhuminen ja jollain määrin myös kuullunymmärtäminen, koska siellä kuuli sitä paikallista Intian englantia.