

“Today the United Nations is more important than ever before”

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, June 2nd, 1999

Really?

Analysis of the Finnish and Swedish Communication Styles in the General Debate
of the United Nations General Assembly 1990-1999

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SANI SILVENNOINEN: “Today the United Nations is more important than ever before” Really? – Analysis of the Finnish and Swedish communication styles in the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly, 1990-1999.

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The purpose of this study is to compare and contrast Finnish and Swedish political communication styles in the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly. I selected to examine speeches that Finland and Sweden have given in the General Debate from 1990 to 1999. I set out to find out whether Finland and Sweden communicate differently in an intercultural context, and whether the possible differences could be explained with cultural theories. As a secondary research question, I wanted to find out how Finland and Sweden view the United Nations, its status today and tomorrow.

As the main theoretical frame of reference, I used the classical rhetorical theory, which suggests that ethos, pathos and logos are evident in each act of argumentation. Through ethos, pathos and logos the culture of the communicator is reflected in the act of communication. A question sheet based on rhetorical theory was used to analyze each speech. Other secondary theories were used to describe neutrality, power, language, communication, culture and intercultural communication.

The results of the analysis suggest that Finland acts in a careful and hesitant manner, likes to support others, bases her arguments on logos and relies mostly on factual information. Sweden, on the other hand, relies more on pathos, is willing to speak her mind, and likes to introduce new ideas and uses language and different styles more to her advantage. The cultural observations that this study made are very context related and cannot be used to evaluate or describe Finnish and Swedish cultures as a whole. The results show how Finland and Sweden have acted in situations of political communication in an intercultural context.

Finland and Sweden both view the United Nations organizations as a valuable forum and an indispensable tool to work toward global peace, security, human rights and sustainable development. Both agree that the world organization must reform itself in order to be effective to battle the new challenges of today and tomorrow.

Keywords:

United Nations, Finland, Sweden, Intercultural Communication, Speech Culture, Rhetorics

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1. Introduction

Last spring, when I heard the Secretary General of the United Nations (UNSG) Kofi Annan announce that the “United Nations is more important today than ever before”, I was somewhat taken back by his bold statement. I suppose it should be expected that the UNSG would say something to that effect since that is his job. But more important today than ever before? What about the NATO bombings in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), NATO, or should I say the United States, did not consult the primary organ at the UN dealing with global security issues, the Security Council (SC), on whether these bombings should take place or not. NATO did not bow to the wishes and pleas of many UN member states, including the FRY (although there is serious discussion going on whether the FRY is indeed a member, but that is another question all together), or the UN organization to put an early halt to the bombings. When a missile mistakenly hit the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, it took days for the US to

apologize formally, thus effectively putting a stop to Security Council activities. So is the UN really more important today than ever before? I was fortunate enough to work at the UN last year and I got a sense of where many feel that the UN stands today. The outlook of many was not as positive as Kofi Annan's. Because of my personal interests in the UN and its future, and due to my previous studies in the field, I decided to try to find out how Finland and Sweden see the UN system and where they think it is going, where it should and where it should not be headed.

Finland and Sweden are two countries similar enough to warrant some comparisons in their foreign policies, yet they are different enough to be successfully contrasted as well. Ralph Enckell, a former Permanent Representative of Finland to the UN, has defined the difference between Finnish and Swedish foreign policies by stating that Finland is evenly good to both East and West while Sweden is evenly bad¹ (a loose translation). In other words, Finland wants to appease both sides while Sweden boldly states what it wants.

In order to find out whether Finnish and Swedish attitudes have recently changed toward the United Nation, I will be analyzing speeches that those countries have given in the General Debate of the UN in the 1990s. I chose that time period because the question on the future of the UN has been discussed widely in the recent years. I want to find out if there exist differences between Finland and Sweden, and their opinions of the current and future status of the world organization. I will be trying to find out how and why the possible differences are brought forward in the communications of the two governments. I will then try to explain these possible differences through some select political, communicational and cultural theories.

The speeches that are given at the UN, as any other political speeches, have had a wide range of topics, reasons and styles. The communication that takes place from the podium, for example, between Israel and Lebanon is very political, emotional, loud,

¹ In Finnish: "Suomi pyrkii hoitamaan suhteensa sekä itään että länteen yhtä hyvin, Ruotsi yhtä huonosti", from Jakobson 1983, p. 79

attacking and aggressive while speeches by, for example, the Solomon Islands or Liechtenstein, on the other hand, are without any differential characteristics. The UN General Debate is a historical situation of its own because it takes place every year and all member states look forward to voicing their opinions and politics. The content of these speeches or messages always reflect the times very strongly, the speakers eagerly attack verbally those states who have done wrong and applaud those who have done well. Some countries do not care who they offend and others are very careful to shy away from any words that can be understood in a wrong way. The United States leaves its seat when Cuba speaks, and o counter that Cuba goes on to viciously attack American policies. Politics definitely equal language in the UN General Debate.

As most of the speeches at the General Debate, Finland's and Sweden's are quite general by nature. The speeches that I am about to analyze are straightforward and attempt to bring forth the "hot topic" of that time. In 1990 the hot topics were Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Namibia's independence from South Africa, decline of the Iron Curtain and Apartheid as well as the ever-present topics of human rights, environment and development. Also present were questions regarding the current and future status of the United Nations, and those are the questions that I will ultimately look at. In my analysis of the speeches I will look at the speech as a whole. Then in the end when I compare and contrast speeches by Finland and Sweden I will concentrate on those parts of speeches that directly or indirectly applaud or criticize the UN or comment of the future of the world organization.

2. Brief history

In the following section I will quickly cover the history of the United Nations and I will try to briefly describe the organization. I will then give short accounts of Finland and Sweden in the United Nations.

2.1. United Nations

The United Nations was established in 1945 by the Allied nations as an organization to maintain world peace and order. The organization has grown tremendously since its inception and today boasts a membership of 191 states, a great

increase from the original 53 states. The signatories of the UN Charter, and thus the members of the UN, have promised among other things

...To save succeeding generations from the scrounge of war... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small... to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.²

The United Nations is a co-operative organization of national states. It is not, against popular belief, a world parliament or a world government. No member state of the UN has given up their sovereignty and the world organization can only operate with the backing of the member states. The successes and the failures of the UN and its operations essentially mirror the wills and ambitions of its members. The UN Charter dictates that all member states are equal and they are to be treated in that way³. In theory all states are being treated equal within the organization, but in reality the stronger and more powerful members may have the strength to bully the smaller states. On the other hand, the membership the UN is often seen as the ultimate recognition of a state – without it they do not belong into the global system, but with it they are “nation states among nation states”⁴.

The UN organization has remained the same during its existence. The roles and relationships between the different organizations within the UN system have varied and changed, but all in all the UN is very similar today as it was at its inception in 1945. The United Nations organization can be divided into three main systems: primary organizations, sub-organizations and special organizations. The first is the UN, as we

² Excerpt from the Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice. The Charter was signed on 26 June 1945 in San Francisco, at the conclusion of the United Nations conference on International Organization, and came into force on 24 October 1945.

³ Kiljunen, 1994, p. 12-13.

⁴ Ibid. p. 13.

know it, and it has four sectors, each which operate on their own: Secretariat, General Assembly, Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

2.1.1. Primary UN organizations

The Secretariat (housed in the UN Headquarters in New York) consists of approximately 15000 international experts and personnel from all fields. It is the Secretariat's task to take care of the UN operations globally, make sure the meetings of the member states are running smoothly and so on. The General Assembly is made up of each of the member states and in the meetings of the GA all the resolutions and decisions are discussed and ultimately decided. The General Assembly takes care of the many of the issues that the UN deals with. The GA has been divided into six sub-sections: First Committee deals with disarmament concerns, Second Committee works on economic and financial affairs, Third Committee discusses social, humanitarian and cultural issues, special political and decolonization issues come under the umbrella of the Fourth Committee, Fifth Committee deals with budgetary and administrative issues, and Sixth Committee is the main arena for legal affairs.

The Security Council is the UN arm, which deals only with issues, which threaten global security. The SC is made up of fifteen members, five of which (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States) are permanent members. The remaining ten slots are filled with rotating members which serve two-year terms on the Council. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) consists of 54 members that are elected by the General Assembly. ECOSOC's primary function is dealing with development issues, although lately there has been discussions of its involvement in peacekeeping operations in order to help create sustainable development in the war-torn areas.

2.1.2. UN sub-organizations

The second part of the UN system consists of the UN sub-organizations⁵. For example, UNICEF (UN Children's Fund), UNDP (UN Development Programme), UNFPA (UN Population Fund), UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees), UNEP (UN Environmental Programme) and WFP (World Food Programme) are some of the more prominent sub-organizations. The headquarters of these above-mentioned organizations are spread globally, with some based in New York and Geneva, while others have found home in Rome and Nairobi⁶. These organizations, while under the UN umbrella, operate individually through various programmes and operations.

2.1.3. Special UN organizations

The third part of the UN system is made up of special organizations that were originally separate from the UN but have been included in the system at a later date. Such organizations include WPU (World Postal Union), ILO (International Labor Organization), WHO (World Health Organization), UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization). Some of these organizations are older than the UN itself. For example the WPU was established in 1874 and ILO was established in 1919. In this third part are also included the so-called Bretton Woods-organizations, which are loosely connected to the UN. IMF (International Monetary Fund) and World Bank were initially created to assist member states financially as well as to reconstruct the post-World War II world. The voting in these organizations is not conducted in a one vote - one state manner⁷, but rather the power is perpendicular to the economic strength of a state. WTO (World Trade Organization) is also run in this manner⁸.

⁵ Organizations which have been created by the United Nations.

⁶ Kiljunen, 1994, p. 14.

⁷ The UN Charter is very clear on the point that every country has one vote, regardless of their size or power. Therefore the entire UN system is ran in that manner. Bretton Woods-organizations are thus only "loosely" connected to the UN.

⁸ Kiljunen, 1994, p. 15.

2.1.4. Communication in the UN

The General Assembly is the main negotiating body of the UN system. It decides the main guidelines of UN operations, the yearly goals, budget and potential new members⁹. The resolutions, which come out of the GA, are only as strong as the list of signatories is long. Consensus is the target of each negotiation but so many issues on the GA agenda make that impossible. From year to year same items appear on the agenda and many of these are either not passed or they gain only a slight victory in the voting. These marginal resolutions often have no true meaning; they are simply there to show that the UN and its member states care about everyone “equally”. The UN political process focuses on the adoption of a resolution. But what are the consequences of this action? Will the resolution be enforced, ignored, or acted upon in any way? There is no single answer to these questions because UN resolutions are not all alike and much depends on the circumstances at the time. But can the resolutions be taken as valid expressions of “world opinion”?

The resolutions, by very fact of their adoption – and be that adoption consensual or marginal – become intangible resources for their supporters and liabilities for their opponents. UN’s decisions may not confer the legitimacy of law, but they do confer the legitimacy of majority approval in a body representing virtually every sovereign state. But the United Nations is not a super-government. Its resources are limited and its words are seldom the law. Its mandates can only be enforced if member states are willing to enforce them and/or use the necessary coercion¹⁰. But its decisions do make a difference, bigger to some than others.

In terms of communication, the UN generates a constant stream of information that must be evaluated by many people, inside and outside the UN, and especially by different foreign offices. The UN also stimulates a heavy flow of information directly between

⁹ The Security Council discusses the new members and the “recommends” to the GA which should be included and which excluded. Very often the GA follows these recommendations, but ultimately the decision comes from the GA.

¹⁰ Riggs&Plano, 1994 71-72.

governments. The approach of a General Assembly session (I worked with GA issues after my internship) for example is usually the signal for increased intergovernmental consultations both through regular diplomatic channels and in New York via the unofficial networks. Members with special interests in certain issues use discussion and widespread communication to obtain the widest possible support for their positions. The UN provides both formal and informal channels of communication and information. Heated formal debates and arguments are often only reconciled in the “hallways”, the term used for the unofficial flow of information. These casual gatherings often provide occasion for exchange of significant, and at times, secret information¹¹.

The United Nations at its inception was, and still is, a very unique global forum. In the UN system, each country is seen equally as valuable, and each country has been given one vote within the organization. The UN has always been an invaluable tool for smaller states to bring forth their opinions, concerns and ideas. No other organization provides similar opportunities for small countries. Small countries can, vis-a-vis the system, affect decision making that would otherwise be left to the stronger and bigger powers of the world. Without the UN these smaller states would be left without any kind of political strength to survive.

The fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly began in September 1999, and as each year, the General Debate was held at that time. As the tradition has been, each member state sent a head-of-state or a high ranking official of their government to speak at the two-week long debate. Each member had an allotted time slot during which they were permitted to speak. These statements have become highly politicized events during which states may freely voice their opinions on issues concerning the world, the UN, global conflicts and so on. These official statements are closely followed and then studied by other governments in order to find out where every one stands at that time.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 59-60.

2.2. Finland at the United Nations

For a long time after World War II, Finland was very careful in its foreign political actions and words. As early as 1947, Finland had toyed with the idea of joining the UN but was not very disappointed when its application was rejected. In the post-War period Finland tried to pursue the Paasikivi-policy of passive and cautious neutrality, fearing that joining the UN would be incompatible with its non-aligned status. Finland's geopolitical position was fundamentally different from that of other neutral states in Europe. The formal difference was that Finland had a security treaty with the Soviet Union while the others were not bound to such treaties. The real difference was that Finland, which possessed similar cultural and ideological attitudes as the other neutral European states (Sweden, Switzerland and Austria), was located in an area that had vital importance to the security of Soviet Union. Finland's policy of neutrality was designed to resolve the latent conflict between ideological ties and strategic realities inherent to the country's situation. Unlike the other neutral states, Finland had to base her security on an unsentimental calculation of national interest, be that decision moral or not¹².

Having written Finland off after the World War II as a loss to communism, western opinion at first regarded the Finnish claim to neutrality with disbelief. Finnish President Kekkonen tried to explain the "Finnish paradox" by stating that the better we succeed in maintaining the confidence of Soviet Union in Finland as a peaceful neighbor, the better are our possibilities for close cooperation with countries in the western world¹³. This paradox eventually began to grasp hold and countries started to recognize Finland's neutrality. As the relations between east and west improved, it was assumed that Finland's neutrality would finally be completely accepted by both sides. For both sides détente was perceived as a threat to the cohesion within the respective alliances. In Moscow, it was feared that the implications of the Finnish policies may affect negatively the situation in eastern Europe, while the west grew uneasy about the possibility that

¹² Jakobson, 1987, p. 99.

¹³ Ibid., p. 120.

western nations could live peacefully side-by-side with the Soviet Union without the protection of a strong military alliance¹⁴.

In the first ten years of the UN's existence the organization turned out to be a different sort of an organization that Finland originally assumed it to be – a military alliance. Instead, the UN proved to be an impartial international organization whose primary goal was to promote peace and human rights. In the mid-1950s Finland began to think about the possibility of a membership in the world organization. By this time the government had realized that maybe the best way to protect its and at the same time promote Finland's own policies of neutrality. Finland was admitted as a full voting member of the UN in 1955.

From 1955 onwards the UN has provided a foundation on which Finland could base her foreign policies. Although this has changed somewhat in the last five years since Finland joined the European Union (EU), the UN is still seen as an important playing ground¹⁵. Finland has promoted her own policies throughout her years in the UN and has even served two tenures in the hot spot of global power politics, the Security Council. Finland's current agenda in the UN is extraordinarily comprehensive in that it covers human rights, humanitarian assistance, development issues, environment, disarmament, peacekeeping, as well as legal, political, administration and budgetary issues. The Finnish mission, one of Finland's largest embassies, has to actively follow everything that goes on in the UN system.

The UN has provided Finland with much of the political strength that it has longed for. Finland has enjoyed the opportunities that the organization has given her. In the UN, Finland has been able to introduce topics that are close to the hearts of the Finns, and Finland has been able to contribute to the safety of other small countries in the world – possibly the main incentive for Finnish politics in the UN. The UN has also given

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 121.

¹⁵ Finnish Mission to the UN in New York was seen as an integral part of the European Union Presidency in the second half of 1999. New York and Bruxelles (Mission to the EU) offices were the two centerpieces of the Finnish foreign policy outside of Finland at that time.

Finland the valuable arena in which to be “evenly good to everyone”. Finland has paid much attention to the UN institution as a whole and has sought ways to improve and strengthen it. To Finland, without a working institution, the UN will never reach its goals of global peace, security and sustainable development.

Finland’s approach to the issues on the UN agenda is influenced by her traditional values as a Nordic country as well as by her membership in the EU. As a strong advocate of international co-operation on issues of global concern, Finland gives its full support to the UN, endeavoring to strengthen the UN’s role in the maintenance of global peace and security. Finland pre-supposes that human rights are a primary consideration in the decisions of the UN, and believes that advancement of women and alleviation of poverty are leading concerns for sustainable human development. Finland is also a strong proponent for disarmament in both the nuclear and conventional weapons fields and supports the efforts to achieve this end. It is also a point of honor for Finland to pay all her membership dues promptly, in time and without conditions¹⁶.

Now that the Cold War is over and the threat of another World War has diminished is there still need for a neutral Finland? Is the policy so ingrained in the Finnish ideology that we need to grasp on to it, even if it is out-dated? What has changed in the last ten years is that Finland does not need to worry about making the neutrality-policy obvious at every turn. That is simply because Finland is not under such scrutiny anymore. But then again, why change policies unless something better comes up? It can be argued that Finland’s membership in the European Union has violated neutrality. But at the same time, it can just as easily be said that Finland has not violated her neutrality. Finland also has been adamant about not joining NATO, a military alliance so prominent in Europe, and Finland has taken part in a common European security only vis-a-vis her own forces, thus simply assisting in common security¹⁷. A good term for Finland’s

¹⁶ The above description of current Finnish approach to the UN has been taken from “Finland in the United Nations”; web pages of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the UN: [<http://www.un.int/finland/welcome.html>] 5 April, 2000.

¹⁷ Törnudd, 1993, p. 24 -28.

current policies may be “limited neutrality” or “non-alliedness”, while still maintaining the historical tendencies of the Paasikivi-Kekkonen ways.

2.3. Sweden and the United Nations

Sweden became a member of the United Nations in 1946; the year after the organization was founded. Because Sweden had not been involved¹⁸ in World War II, she was welcomed into the organization with open arms. Although Sweden claimed neutrality, she has always been seen leaning more toward the west. The unspoken assumption of Swedish policy was that the country could come under attack only from the east, and if attacked, Sweden would surely seek assistance from the west.

Since that time, an active commitment to the UN has been a corner stone of Sweden’s foreign policy. The second Secretary General of the UN, Dag Hammarskjöld, was from Sweden and he was widely seen as a man who helped create the UN system of today. Sweden has served in the Security Council as recently as in 1998 and has usually been seen as a country which will help others in need while remaining neutral and fair to all.

Sweden is active within a broad spectrum of the UN’s field of operations, including its agencies, and is a strong promoter of issues dealing with human survival such as disarmament, environmental protection, abolition of capital punishment, women’s and children’s rights, combating narcotics, the Convention against Torture and the abolition of Apartheid. Swedish government considers essential the multilateral co-operation between international, regional and other organizations in these fields. Sweden has a long tradition of participation in peacekeeping, and is one of the countries to which the Secretary General turns to when a UN mission is needed.

¹⁸ Volunteers from Sweden fought alongside the Finnish against the Soviet troops, and many Swede’s have been connected with helping Jews during the war. Sweden, as a state, never entered the war.

Sweden's support for the UN has been considerable and she is one of the few¹⁹ countries who pay their whole assessed contribution on time. Sweden is the fourth largest contributor to the UN budget and is also one of the largest troop contributors to the many UN missions that has taken place worldwide²⁰.

Sweden, like many other countries, has worked endlessly within the UN system that has provided Sweden with the chance to step up in the world politics and be "evenly bad to everyone". Without the UN, Sweden might never have had the opportunity to become an important figure in global politics. Sweden's "real politik"-style has been based much on the UN and Sweden's abilities in the organization. Sweden has generally viewed the UN as its ultimate foreign political forum, a forum that Sweden tries to hold on to. Without the UN, the floor might fall from under the Swedish foreign politics.

¹⁹ About 30 countries pay their dues on time. That is only approximately 16% of all UN members.

²⁰ The above description of Swedish UN policies has been taken from the web-pages of the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the UN: [<http://www.un.int/sweden>], 5 April, 2000.

3. Theoretical background

The goal of this study is to analyze, compare and contrast political speeches given at an intercultural setting. This involves three sets of theories that the reader must be familiarized with. In this section, the theories that are being used in this study are being explained. The three sets of theories that are being used are political, communicational and cultural theories. Political theories are important because the speeches are given by high-ranking government officials in a political event. The speeches are also political because of their purpose and content. Communicational theories are important because the study is analyzing situations of communication and the ways in which the speech is constructed, read and understood. In many cases, politics and communication are very close and inter-relate. Cultural theories are used to describe the potential differences between Finnish and Swedish communication tactics, uses of language and ways of presenting arguments. In the Method-section are described the theories that will be used

in the actual analysis of these speeches, while keeping in mind the three sets of theories. In the end of this section are introduced some research problems that may be encountered along the way.

3.1. Political theories

At the UN, each country gets to communicate to the world their foreign policy for that year. But what are they saying? Are they simply using the opportunity to get their voice heard or do they have something to say? The making of a country's foreign policy begins with the gathering of information about developments abroad. A key element in the success of a foreign policy is whether the policymaker's image of the world is accurate. If there is a disparity between one's image and reality, there is a strong possibility that the policy will fail in the end. The policymaker(s) has to examine the situation with which one is dealing and its implications for the country's policy objectives, consider the different courses of action to deal with the situation. Then, depending on whether the policy maker is minister or someone of a lower rank, recommend or decide upon the course of action which best fits national interest²¹. Once action is decided, the words must be formulated and the language must be created to reflect the situation in a manner that the policymakers meant their policies to be. Then, and only then, can the policies be communicated forward. The UN General Assembly is an excellent forum to discuss foreign policies and to state world affairs as everyone in the room sees the same situation differently.

3.1.1. Morality and Power

As I mentioned above, Finland and Sweden have applied different types of neutrality policies in the past. Finland has been "bound" to Moscow while Sweden has been free to go as they please. It could be said that the difference between the two countries' foreign politics is the same as the difference between modern and postmodern political thoughts. Pulkkinen (1997) states that the two traditions differ significantly as to

²¹ Cohen, 1986, p. 21

their conceptions of freedom. Liberty in the liberal tradition is characterized by the Hobbesian metaphor of free motion of bodies in space. A free man, according to Hobbes, is a man who is able to act and to make decisions based on his interests and will without external influence or obstruction. In other words, freedom is the absence of obstacles²². In the German tradition the concept of freedom is based on Kant's moral philosophy. In the Kantian thought, freedom has nothing to do with "free motion" but rather it has everything to do with morality. According to Kant, humans inhabit two empires: on one hand they are creatures of nature and subject to the laws of nature, while on the other hand they are capable of acting on other than natural motivations by deciding to do so. Thus, freedom in this tradition is not a capacity to follow one's will unobstructed but almost the opposite: the ability to control oneself morally²³.

According to those above mentioned definitions, it could be argued that Finland falls under the German tradition for she has usually had to make the moral choices on whether to voice her opinions on global issues, sensitive or not. On most occasions Finland has not said anything, but rather hoped that quietness would also be seen as a statement of opinion. Finland's politics have been based on deliberate actions to remain quiet and "out of the way", even if the natural tendency may have been to say or act on some occasions. Had Finland been able to act without any obstacles, Finnish political history may have been quite different. Of course, had Finnish natural tendencies been to remain quiet, then no choices would have had to been made morally and nature could have taken its course.

Sweden, on the other hand, is a good example of the Hobbesian tradition for she has usually spoken regardless of what others might have thought about it. Sweden has been able to roam around freely without obstacles while Finland has had to analyze Moscow's or Washington's reactions to Finland's words. Just as Hobbes defined a free man, Sweden has been able to define herself: a state, which has been able to act and make decisions, based on her interests and will, without the external influence or obstruction.

²² Pulkkinen 1997, p. 90

²³ Although Corax's text is the oldest, no known copies of it exist thus making Aristotle's text the oldest known textbook on the subject.

Sweden has had the chance to be “evenly bad to every one” because her politics have not been bound down by the need to make proper and moral choices. By remaining neutral and alone, Sweden has not needed to explain her politics to any outside powers.

Neutrality always implies the denunciation of another alternative. Theoretically, a small state lying between superpowers or two military rivals can either join one side or another or remain alone and neutral. In practice, it is very unlikely that the state could join one side or another for geopolitical and ideological reasons. In reality, therefore, the decision to remain neutral is the only remaining alternative. If neutrality, for one reason or another, cannot be maintained, the option to side with one of the rivals remains as a fallback position. In any case, the pressure applied by the rivals on the small state is immense. To put it in Machiavelli’s words, *the one who is not your friend will want you to remain neutral, and the one who is your friend will require you to declare yourself by taking arms*²⁴. Neutrality, as John Foster Dulles has described it, was an immoral position for a small nation to take, but for small states especially in the post-war Europe, it was the position to be taken²⁵.

In the last ten years or so, the conventional ways of looking at power have been challenged tremendously. In fact, most of the uncertainties and problems arising from our inability to predict world events stem from the fact that power has been and continues to be defined largely in conventional frameworks. Concept of power, from Macchiavelli to Morgenthau, was usually defined from the standpoint of tangible resources. Although power contains a dynamic quality – a range within which states can decide between active and passive roles – power has been seen as the aim of international politics or as the simplest connotation of the cost-benefit equation arising from human nature. Recently power has been seen in other lights. An integrated approach facilitates conceiving of power in terms of control over particular base values and the flow of interchanges between main sectors of society. In other words, power is composed of two dimensions: the access to necessary resources to act and the ability and will to act²⁶.

²⁴ Jakobson, 1987, p. 98.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 100.

²⁶ Mowlana, 1996, p. 70-71.

Lukes (1974) describes three dimensions of power. The first dimension focuses “on behavior in the making of decisions on issues which there is an observable conflict of interests, seen as expressed policy preferences, revealed by political participation”. His second dimension of power examines power, which resides in non-decision-making and the structural forces, which mobilize a certain bias into the mechanics of social and political organizations. Lukes’ third dimension of power uses a dialogic theory of language. This particular dimension of power focuses on decision-making and control power over the agenda, issues and potential issues, observable and latent conflict and subjective and real interests²⁷. In each of these cases, conceptualizing language as a dialogic meaning-producing activity illustrates how, through structures of distorted and controlled dialogue, power can be subtly exerted²⁸. A fourth dimension of power, it could be argued, would focus on issues that are not brought forward in communication or in the formation of an agenda. This ability may be just as influential and powerful as the ability to bring forth topics.

Now why is the notion of power introduced? It is not like Finland and Sweden are very powerful actors in today’s world. The notion of power is relevant to this discussion because today the UN has some power over global politics, although the scope and depth of that power may rise or sink depending on the situation. Each country speaking at the UN General Assembly also has the power when they speak, be it for only approximately fifteen minutes. They are the states with the will to act, and they need to persuade the rest to provide the necessary resources and abilities to act. Each of these countries has the power to introduce or not introduce topics and concerns. With each act of communication, the remaining members are left to analyze and conclude why some issues were raised while others were not. Many times, the affairs that were not introduced may tell more about the politics of a country than the topics that were in fact introduced.

²⁷ Lukes, 1974, p. 14-25.

²⁸ Bybee & Hacker, in Thomas, 1990, p. 58-59.

3.1.2. Political Rhetoric

The practice of political rhetoric is far more than uses or misuses of language. It is the engagement of motives, principles, thoughts, arguments and sentiments in communication. It is an engagement, which functions pragmatically to form attitudes and assist judgements regarding the broad range of civic affairs. Political rhetoric serves the art of politics at every turn, both as mode of thought and as an instrument of expression and action²⁹. The territory of political rhetoric today is diverse. It ranges from campaign rallies to the most somber deliberations in capital offices; from robust persuasive speeches in quest of victory to quiet, informative discourses meant to assist decision making; and from passionate speeches of competing advocates to reflective statements by judges and critics of what is morally and legally just and proper. All these messages are political in the sense that they either conduct the public's business or they bear on it. Most political messages occur in specific historical situations and are essentially responsive to them. Political speakers find themselves in situations that present problems, crises, obstacles or other kinds of exigencies which they seek to modify by addressing messages to mediating audiences, that is, to audiences which have sufficient power to modify those exigencies³⁰.

Metaphorical and mythical modes of viewing the political scene and situations are central to the shaping of political values, attitudes and perceptions. Political events and speeches as described in the previous paragraph can become infused with strong affect stemming from psychic tension, from perceptions of economic, military or other threats or opportunities, and from interactions between social and psychological responses. And because politics = language, language forms a crucial function by creating shared meanings, perceptions and reassurances among the audience. According to Edelman (1971), language does not mirror an objective "reality", but rather creates it by organizing meaningful perceptions abstracted from a complex world. The reality that is linguistically created is not random or accidental. It is the constraint under which the process of

²⁹ Bitzer 1981, p. 225.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 239.

creating meaning operates that makes it peculiarly relevant to political behavior³¹.

Pekonen (1991) states that the most important political process from the symbolic point of view is when situations have changed and are changing into meaning. He concludes that if language is more than an instrument describing facts, political communication is then more than offering a detailed account of the situation³².

The classical rhetorical thought will be the primary theory used when analyzing the speeches of Finland and Sweden in the United Nations General Debate. The roots of this theory and tradition go way back to Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire.

According to Summa (1995), the history of classical rhetorics begins from the Syracuse revolution in approximately 400 BC. When the democratic system was applied, citizens were forced to argue in front of courts with regard to ownership of land. Both sides had to try to persuade with words the judge to rule in their favor. A teacher named Corax noted the poor speaking skills of the people and wrote up an essay titled "Skill of Rhetorics"³³, an essay which was the first guide into the rhetorics. Corcoran (1990) has stated that politics based upon talk was what emerged in the Athenian Constitution as a form of open, eventually democratic, government based upon persuasion rather than superior force³⁴.

Summa (1996) holds Perelman, Burke and Toulmin as the revivers of Rhetorics. In the 1950's, they began to question the contemporary and demeaning approaches to rhetorics and natural argumentation. Although they each approached Rhetoric in different ways, they together helped bring rhetorics "back". Perelman and Toulmin analyzed argumentation, and their goal was to put forth a theory through which the validity of the argument or the speech could be analyzed. Burke, as opposed to Perelman and Toulmin, was interested more in understanding the reasons behind the rhetorical elements of natural behavior³⁵.

³¹ Edelman 1971, p. 65-66.

³² Pekonen, 1991, p. 46.

³³ Summa 1995, p. 72.

³⁴ Corcoran 1990, p. 52.

Aristotle, a student of Plato, created the oldest known textbook³⁶ on Rhetorics, “Art of Rhetorics – Ars Rhetorica”. Aristotle sees Rhetorics as a skill, which applies ways of persuading others. Rhetoric gives the basis and the theory from which the speaker can find information, words, arguments, material and a way to present evidence³⁷. Aristotle divided the ways of persuasion into three different categories, each depending on one another.. He called them ethos, pathos and logos. These three parts are, in one form or another, included in every argumentation or in every situation where one person has to justify his reasons to another. Ethos and pathos are connected to the process of discussion or argumentation, while logos refers to the message itself. The first two parts examine the relationship between the speaker and listeners while the third part does not depend on the people involved³⁸. These terms will be described in more detail in the “Analytical theories” section of this paper.

Hicks and Langsdorf (1999) use the three normative conceptions of democracy formulated by Habermas as a point of departure to identify three distinct models of public deliberation. The first model is the liberal view, underwritten by a logical argumentation theory, which view deliberation as a *modus vivendi* for mediating competing claims of special interest groups whose differences can be settled either by force of universal reason or strategic bargaining. The second model is a republican view, accompanied by a rhetorical theory of argument. This model views deliberation as an opportunity for the citizens of a community to participate in the formulation of a substantive vision of good life – a vision that is woven into the historical memory of a community and that serves as the foundation of civic virtue. The third model applies the pluralistic view. It presupposes a dialectical theory of argumentation, and it views deliberation as a method for regulating disagreement and resolving differences of opinion through critical discussion, understood as a method that shifts political power from interest groups and ethical commitments to an institutional framework constituted by a set of rules for managing difference³⁹. These

³⁵ Summa, in Palonen&Summa, 1996, p. 52.

³⁶ Aristotle’s text is the oldest known textbook on rhetorics. There exist no known copies of Corax’s “Skill of Rhetorics”.

³⁷ Haapanen, in Palonen&Summa, 1996, p. 26.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 74.

³⁹ Hicks&Langsdorf, 1999, 139-160.

above-mentioned conceptions, with some generalizations, can be used to categorize the speakers and their styles within the UN General Debate.

3.2. Communicational Theories

There are several forms of communication and there are many more theories on communication; how we do it, should do it and should not do it. For many reasons, it would be extremely interesting to be able to analyze foreign political dialogue in the sense that the immediate responses to each of the arguments presented – success in communication does not only rely on the communicator, it also depends on the willingness of the listener⁴⁰ - could be analyzed and examined. Unfortunately that is impossible in the context that of this study. The official communication that takes place at the UN is most often one-way communication without replies. Of course it is possible, even at the UN to reply as any one can do so at the end of each meeting. But analysis of those replies requires being present in the meetings. So in this study, concentration will be on the one-way communication and some of its theories.

Communication is essential in a democratic world. Questioning of the government or authority is healthy, provided that such suspicion does not become obsessive. Communication, planned but not a form of propaganda, is therefore very important if any government is to be understood and if the democratic way of life, i.e., freedom of expression, freedom of movement, liberty, justice and so on, is to survive and thrive. Misunderstanding of a message can be dangerous to the governments or the democracies. But as long as the government in all its forms uses communication to inform the public or when applicable consult the public, then democracies as we know can go on⁴¹.

Communication's role in international relations is vital because it governs the ability of international opinion to fully come to grips with problems that threaten

⁴⁰ Evans, 1973, p. 3.

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 81.

mankind's survival – famine, poverty, population growth, environmental issues, gender discrimination, etc. These are problems that cannot be solved without consultations and cooperation between countries. The importance of communication in pursuing these objectives is increasingly recognized and governments are taking, on the whole, these responsibilities more seriously. The international dimension of communication has its origins in the realities of the New World situation. More particularly, the problems, concerns and issues that generate international debate stem from certain negative repercussions adopted many years ago, which have taken form of imbalances and inequalities. At the time of post-WWII and at the time of the foundation of UN, the international community set itself a certain objective: to guarantee freedom and free flow of information⁴².

Intercultural discourse (especially via a lingua franca, when the interlocutors have a false impression that they are speaking the same language) adds another dimension to the theory and practice or argumentation: facework (the establishment of culture-sensitive politeness strategies). This dimension has been taken from several perspectives, specifically from ordinary argumentation discourse, the interpretation of the concept of incommensurability, and the conduct of international communication. Politeness systems relevant for different cultures are not predictable, but represent linguistically and cognitively a highly generalized universal system that can be adopted by interlocutors and used in practice. Politeness expressions are governed through several linguistic components, or by language forms of certain type and specific discourse patterns. The proper choice of language forms and discourse pattern adds a special dimension to the argumentative schemata. The politeness-relevant packaging of discourse establishes relations as such, and needs permanent alignment of these relations, by using correct language forms and discourse patterns⁴³.

Politeness systems are very important in intercultural communication as states and speakers tend to be very polite to each other, thus allowing for the “evenly good to

⁴² Report, 1980, p. 34-35.

⁴³ Feeley&deTruck, 1998, 189-203.

everyone” tendencies. Only on some occasions is politeness forgotten, and on those occasions the speakers tend to be emotional and have very strong and genuine feelings with regards to the topic. Finland has been always tended to be very careful in this department – being polite is being good. Sweden has more often than Finland left politeness aside and concentrated more on the message, not on the act of communication.

3.2.1. Emotion and Communication

Every day persuasion attempts to rely heavily upon the use of emotional appeals to achieve persuasive ends, and the use of emotion is a valuable resource in reaching these persuasive goals. Arguably, logic is a superior dimension that has been favored as the ideal means by which to secure persuasive ends. Yet, according to Arnold (1985), a perfectly constructed argument may appear dull and cold and, despite perfect logic and excellent argumentation, may fail to alter the attitude of the receiver significantly simply because the message fails to reach the listener on an emotional level. Indeed, persuasive messages have been found more likely to achieve their persuasive goals if a receiver’s emotions are aroused⁴⁴.

Is emotion a natural trait or is it learned? Actually, it has been argued to be both. Research from the past twenty years has provided evidence of both universal and culture-specific influences on the expression and perception of emotion. According to Porter and Samovar (1998), universalism posits that emotion, just as perception, cognition and learning, is a basic mechanism of human functioning that is relatively the same over races and cultures. Differentialism, on the other hand, posits that emotions as identified by different language labels, are differentiated with respect to expressive behavior, motivation, physiological symptoms and subjective feeling⁴⁵. In the UN context, it has been evident that cultures bring forth emotion in different ways, thus supporting the differentialist view, but at the same time there has been unified concern for many issues, thus supporting the universalist approach.

⁴⁴ Arnold, 1985, p. 26-27.

⁴⁵ Porter&Samovar, 1998, p. 451.

Context plays a big role when it comes to expressing emotion. The notion of context has two dimensions according to Porter and Samovar (1998). First, social context influences the interpretation of emotions. The environment in which the communication takes place also reflects this notion of context. The emotion shown in business meetings varies greatly from eulogies delivered in funerals; or the amount of emotion expressed after winning in the Olympics differs tremendously from the amount shown at the grocery store after they ran out of milk. The social environment helps determine which emotions may be displayed and aids in the interpretation of those emotions. The second dimension of context refers to Hall's concept of high- and low-context cultures. Hall (1976) specified that "one of the functions of culture is to provide a highly selective screen between humans and the outside world. In its many forms, culture therefore designates what we pay attention to and what we ignore". He categorized cultures as being either high- or low-context depending on how much meaning the members attach to settings. Context is defined as "the information that surrounds the event; it is inextricably bound up with the meanings of the event."⁴⁶ Whether a culture is high- or low-context, therefore, strongly affects the types of communication that are being created and communicated to others by those cultures.

When compared to the relatively large amounts of literature produced on message design factors and source characteristics, there is very little research or literature focusing on emotional appeals, especially from a communication perspective. Although considerable research has been done in the area of nonverbal communication and emotion, the relationship between verbal communication and affect continues to be virtually ignored⁴⁷. According to Jorgensen (1998), additional research clearly needs to focus on providing a better conceptual and theoretical understanding of the role emotional appeal plays in the persuasion process⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 463.

⁴⁷ Jorgensen, 1998, p. 404.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 404.

3.2.2. Charismatic Communicator

Sometimes persuaders are successful because of their image or charisma. Audiences believe them because their presentations are convincing and dynamic, or because they have a reputation for being truthful and knowledgeable. Aristotle, who called it *ethos*, or ethical proof, recognized this kind of proof. Recently, researchers have worked on identifying exactly what causes or creates high *ethos* in some people or speakers and low *ethos* in others. Some researchers have discovered in repeated tests that choices seem to cluster around three traits of dimensions of source credibility: expertise, trustworthiness (sincerity) and dynamism⁴⁹.

The expertise component of source credibility means that highly credible sources are perceived as having knowledge and experience regarding the topic they address. In studies, listeners have found that the “expert” is much more believable than a “non-expert” is. The second dimension, trust, involves, according to Larson (1998), receivers analyzing the communicator’s motives or secret agenda. A person’s motivation is a key to his or her sincerity. Some audiences may also judge sincerity from the speaker’s reputation. Trustworthiness or sincerity has been observed as being stable factors in credibility. Dynamism has also been labeled compliance or image by various researchers. Dynamism is the degree to which the audience admires and identifies with the source’s attractiveness, power or forcefulness, and energy⁵⁰.

Charismatic communicators need to be very skilled in order to be respected. They need to have, or at least appear to have, intimate knowledge of the topic that they are discussing, and they need to possess the proper skills of communication. If the communicator lacks either one, the act will ultimately fail to reach the receiver. But when knowledge and skill are combined, it is more likely that the receiver will be affected by the communication and/or persuasion.

⁴⁹ Larson, 1998, p. 225-227.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 227-228.

3.2.3. Communication and the Audience

Politicians and governments need to be skilled enough to handle the public in a manner that is at the same time moral and persuasive. Palonen (1996) notes that Skinner calls evaluative and descriptive terms the basis of speech-act theories. According to Skinner, the locational influence, which the actor is reaching for by using these terms, is such that the listener is urged or persuaded to adopt certain viewpoints. The dislocational effects, which the actor may accomplish by using these terms, are support or concurrence to accepting or denouncing the points, which he is describing. Skinner goes on to say that dislocational effects are proper use of ideological terms. The ideologist can either manipulate existing descriptive terms' potential use in speech, or alter applications of existing positive connotation of descriptive or evaluative terms so that the positive connotation may be moved over to the target, which the speaker has chosen⁵¹.

Political communication can have many target audiences. In the case of the speeches at the UN, the primary audience consists of representatives of UN member states – and through them the governments of UN member states - UN organizations and the Secretary General. The secondary audience is made up of the public at home and to a certain extent abroad. The primary audience is very interested, willing and capable of listening to each speaker. The primary audience is the one who can correct the problems indicated in the speeches. The secondary audience is less interested and further removed from the speaker, yet most affected by his words and actions. It is often only through the media that the public find out what has been stated in an act of political communication. Thus the information first has to pass through the filter of the news media. Elliot (1972) has indicated several degrees of competence or freedom for mass communicators to determine which news would pass through such filters, ranging from direct access for society, in which the message is shaped or interpreted, to the case of artistic creation. Direct access is through news and documentaries. Artistic creation is when the media determines the entire message. Elliott also expressed a view of the audience as mainly a

⁵¹ Palonen, in Palonen&Summa, 1996, p. 150-151.

passive receiver of mass communication, at best a contented spectator, and at worst a victim of manipulation⁵².

All things being equal, the more political communication available for the public, the more chances there are for audience members to make relevant choices or to recognize a strand of political belief. There are many information outlets (i.e. newspapers, radio, television, Internet, books and so on), available from which the public may draw their conclusions. A variety of outlets help to make comparisons and at the same time lessen the chances for misleading information⁵³. The political communicators in intercultural settings must be careful with the choices they make, the words they use and issues they speak about for two reasons. First, their choices must reflect the primary audience and their abilities to comprehend the message put forth. Second, the choices must reflect the media back home. The message does not necessarily reflect the public, which is the secondary audience, but the media who can then communicate that message to the public must understand it. According to Elliott (1972), mass communicators draw on society for material suitable for their purposes. The audience is largely left on its own, to respond to the material presented to it by the media⁵⁴.

When governments of democratic states tell the news media, and through them the general public, about their problems, plans or achievements, the public and the press like to think that the main reason for this is the people's right to know. A government that does not agree to freedom of information or freedom of press as a basic element proves itself a non-democratic regime. Of course, in principle this is so. However, often there is considerable difference between theory and practice. The natural and human characteristic - that we like information much better when it hurts our opponents or when it helps us, than when it hurts us – leads governments into temptation of being generous with the first kind of information and a little more abstemious with the other kind⁵⁵. Political speeches are at the same time communication to audiences and statements to the

⁵² McQuail, in Golding, 1986, p. 133.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 137.

⁵⁴ Elliott, 1972, p. 164.

⁵⁵ Frychius, in Lee, 1968, p. 16.

press. Information or a message delivered in these situations is more often than not positive. Rarely is the communication self-criminating or hurtful to self. The political communication, which takes place in the UN General Assembly, is mostly self-promoting, critical of superpowers and fearful of the future. These messages have been created to be delivered through the media to the public.

3.3. Cultural Theories

Culture has a tremendous effect on our daily life and activities, the way we act, think, feel and communicate. In terms of communication, culture affects the way we speak and the way we use our language. This paper discusses political communication and intercultural communication. For those purposes, culture refers to the values, experiences, precepts and other lasting factors that have been transmitted by human beings through generations, or at least for over one generation, because they were considered valuable in the maintenance of societies. These above-mentioned factors are not necessarily clearly understood nor are they recognized as cultural factors by members of that cultural group. In other words, people often have difficulties in understanding components of their own culture⁵⁶. In the same sense, culture can also be defined as aspects of subjective culture, perceptions of the individual shared with only some others belonging to the same collectivity, that govern behavior⁵⁷. These perceptions have been gathered over time and today they may exist simply because “they always have”. Understanding culture is important to understanding communication, because it has been widely accepted that culture is, if not the main factor, at least a very significant factor in communication. Communication as a component of culture must be analyzed in a cross-cultural context, since it has different meanings form society to society.

⁵⁶ Casmir, 1978, p. 260.

⁵⁷ Stewart, in Casmir, 1978, p. 294.

3.3.1. Cultural Communication

The different communication models include numerous details outlining features of many basic components in communication. While considering communication as a whole, however, there is an additional element, which rather decisively influences the process. This element is culture with its many related aspects of societal life and social relationships. When culture significantly influences people in their communication, that act by sheer definition is intercultural communication. According to Dodd (1982), communication, be it interpersonal, organizational or intercultural, holds potential for widening deep-seated differences rather than narrowing gaps. Communication descriptions cannot expose hidden intentions or mask ulterior motives, which surface because of communication⁵⁸.

In attempting to determine generally applicable and acceptable communication norms, students of human communication in the past have heavily relied upon methodologies, which were devised for the discovery of natural laws, and which therefore primarily relied upon the approaches used by natural sciences. In the recent decades, the emphasis and the development of theories have switched toward the social sciences. Human communication has been found to be a product of generative mechanisms, results not of factors in the natural order of things, but results of systems constructed by humans. These systems can be defined as a unique whole made up of interacting and interdependent parts, containing people and things, whose effectiveness is the degree to which planned-for goals are achieved within the environment.”⁵⁹

According to Lull (1995) the development of critical communication and cultural theory has brought with it the attention to ideology, consciousness and hegemony. These important concepts are interrelated and overlapping, though each has a unique emphasis and role. Each of these three terms applies well to the idea of communication in the UN. Ideology can be defined as “a system of ideas expressed in communication”,

⁵⁸ Dodd, 1982, p. 8.

⁵⁹ Casmir, 1978, p. 243.

consciousness is “the essence or totality of attitudes, opinions and sensitivities held by individuals or groups”, and hegemony can be defined as “the process through which ‘dominant’ ideology is transmitted, consciousness is formed and social power is exercised”⁶⁰.

Mead (1998) introduces two terms, one-way and two-way communication, to describe different ways of communication. He describes one-way communication to be a linear process where the addresser communicates to the addressee who listens but makes no substantial verbal contribution to the communication (beyond, perhaps, acknowledging and/or acting upon the message). The message given to the addressee is often straightforward, and does not need clarification. The two-way communication, according to Mead (1998), involves the addressee in making significant verbal contributions to the interaction thus making the conversation a back-and-forth event where the addressee might question the message or respond to it positively etc⁶¹.

The distinctions between one- and two-way communication can also be observed as differences between cultures. Especially in the political community and corporate world, one-way communication will occur in countries with great power distance. Hofstede (1996) describes power distance as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations accept that power is distributed unequally and that power is accepted as a part of the society⁶². In Latin America and Japan, for example, whatever the boss says, goes. His orders are not to be questioned nor are they to be disobeyed. In these countries hierarchy and authority are respected and equality is not expected in the corporations. On the opposite side of the coin, in countries with small power distance such as Scandinavian countries and North America, the boss is seen more as a guide rather than “God”. Hofstede (1996) found that members of low power distance cultures see respect for the individual and equality as antecedents to freedom. In these countries the two-way communication is expected within corporations in order to gain success. Mead (1998) did find that countries that with low power distances favor one-way

⁶⁰ Lull, 1995, p. 6.

⁶¹ Mead, 1998.

⁶² Hofstede, 1996.

communication in some situations, but in general, two-way communication has been seen as the proper approach in most low power-distance countries.

There exists a strong link between power distance and one- and two-way communication as I argued above. On top of that, there exists a powerful link between those two and high- and low-context cultures. More often than not, a country of a high-context culture will have a large power distance and thus it is also more likely to experience one-way communication within the society. Countries with two-way communication are usually low-context in their communicational style and also experience low power distances. High-context cultures do not experience as much two-way communication because it is considered rude to ask for clarifications or give comments, especially negative ones, to the speaker. No one wants to lose his or her face or have another lose theirs. In a low context culture the problem of losing face is not as dramatic and thus responses are welcome and often expected. Lack of a response in the United States can be seen just as rude as a negative response in Japan.

The United Nations is an intercultural organization, and therefore all communication that takes place there is, in one way or another, intercultural. The term intercultural means that a person or persons have been placed into positions where they have to go beyond, or cross lines of cultural demarcation, cultural barriers, or cultural lines of separation in order to accomplish their purposes⁶³. That term has a wide array of meanings and use, but one of them describes the UN. As I have discussed earlier, the UN is comprised of many different sectors. Each of these sectors is comprised of hundreds and thousands of officials from all over the world. In order for the UN to function, workers must be able to communicate and operate across cultural lines.

The definitions of culture I mentioned above are very simple and broad, but they do capture the essence of “culture”. Culture also, as Pekonen (1991) has stated, includes society’s symbolic systems such as religion, art, sciences and politics. Intercultural communication or, what I will be analyzing, intercultural political communication is an

⁶³ Casmir, 1978, p. 261.

integral part of the functioning of the global society. Since culture is seen as a symbolic system or language, then how can two cultures communicate together? The argument is that language and culture do not produce concrete meanings and resolutions, but rather the meanings and interpretations are determined by situational factors, (i.e. who said what, where and why). Language does not only describe situations and events, but it is an integral part in situations by constructing meanings and images of events⁶⁴. Hence, by analyzing political speeches, it can be argued that hidden cultural meanings could be decoded, understood and interpreted.

Culture can also be thought as referring to the common value-based interpretations, artifacts, organizational forms, and practices of a group of human beings related to a specific environment. They are more than individual experiences and interpretations. In effect, they depend on sharing, transmission, and maintenance for the purpose of bringing a group of human beings together in specific efforts or enterprises, which are judged significant to the survival, maintenance, and continuity of a societal system. Intercultural communication develops when people with different value systems and ways of interpreting events in their environment find it necessary to interact because they have to share specific settings, situations, and limited resources. Such interactions become international when political or economical entities have to deal with each other across frontiers⁶⁵.

The communication, which takes place at the UN is also intergroup communication along with being intercultural. Study of intergroup relations focuses on relations between members of a large-scale social categories. A social group can be defined as two or more individuals who share a common social identification. When social identity predominates, intergroup behavior occurs. In the context of this study, it is important to note that all diplomatic interactions involve both intergroup and interpersonal processes. However, diplomats, as well as politicians delivering speeches in an international scale or in international matters, represent their nations⁶⁶. Although there

⁶⁴ Pekonen, 1991, p. 46-47.

⁶⁵ Casmir, 1991, p. 8-9.

⁶⁶ Gudykunst&Asante, 1990.

is no general or accepted theory of diplomatic communication, Andrews (1979) claims that foreign policy is intentional and rule-governed, and therefore, analogous to the use of language, and through the use of language to the culture⁶⁷.

3.3.2 Language and Culture

The study of language has been heavily influenced by semiotics and vice versa. De Saussure, the modern founder of structural linguistics, made substantial contributions to the structural tradition in communication early in this century, along with figures such as Peirce, Ogden, Morris, Langer and Eco. De Saussure argued that signs, including language can be arbitrary. He noted that different languages use different words for the same thing and that there is usually absolutely no connection between the word and its referent. Therefore, signs are conventions governed by rules. Not only does this assumption support the idea that language is a structure, but also reinforces the general idea that language and reality are separate. De Saussure, then, saw language as a structured system representing reality⁶⁸.

Each culture is made up of codes, which in turn are made up of signs, icons and indexes. The codes are a way in which the culture views and understands reality. Fiske (1990) describes two ways in which signs are organized into codes. The first is by paradigms, which are sets of signs from which the one to be used is chosen. De Saussure's second way is syntagmatic. A syntagm is the message into which the chosen signs are combined. In language, we can say that the vocabulary is the paradigm and a sentence is the syntagm⁶⁹.

All messages, including political speeches, involve selection and combination. But these codes are not just systems for organizing and understanding data, they perform communicative and social functions. Representative codes are used to produce texts, that are messages with an independent existence. A text stands for something apart from itself

⁶⁷ Andrews, 1979, p. 267-289.

⁶⁸ Littlejohn, 1999, p. 70.

⁶⁹ Fiske, 1990, p.56-57.

and its encoder. Presentational codes are indexical; they cannot stand for something apart from themselves and their encoder. They indicate aspects of the communicator and of his or her present social situation⁷⁰. All of these variables differ between cultures and sometimes even within cultures. When these codes are used in an intercultural context, there is great danger of misunderstandings and confusion.

The speeches that I have studied represent both of the above-mentioned codes. They have been constructed to “stand alone” and still have the same meaning as it did when the speaker communicated that text to the audience. At the same time, much of the “effectiveness” of the speech depends on the delivery. But what is meant by “effective”? Process school of communication, as Fiske (1990) defined it, is concerned with only the process of communication, or the transmission and reception of a message. In those terms, the only way a political speech at the UN would fail is if the microphone was not on or if the earphone or the translators were not working. The semiotic school, on the other hand concentrates primarily on the text, and it has three main areas of study: sign, code and culture⁷¹. In semiotics, the receiver (or reader) also plays a more active role in communication.

The main transmitter of the representational code is, by definition, the text itself. As the syntagm of codes, it presents to the reader one culture’s view of reality. The human body is the main transmitter of the presentational codes. Fiske (1990) suggests some such codes, which are important. These include body contact, proximity, orientation, appearance, head nods, facial expression, gestures, posture, eye movement and contact, and non-verbal aspects of speech such as tone, volume, speed, accent and errors⁷². For a researcher to be able to properly analyze presentational aspect of the UN speeches, he should have either been present or seen a video of the speeches. for this study, neither aspect was possible. Thus, the observations in this study are based on author’s personal experience from the General Debate in 1999.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 66.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 40.

⁷² Ibid. p. 69-70.

De Saussure made an important distinction between formal language, which he called “langue”, and the actual use of language in communication, which he called “parole”. These two terms correspond to language and speech respectively. “Langue” is a formal system that can be analyzed apart from its use in every day life, while “parole” is the actual use of language to accomplish any given purposes. Language is not created by users, but speech is. In other words, when you are speaking, you are using language, but you are also adapting it to enable you to achieve your goals⁷³. According to this definition, a political speech would be the use of language to reach goals. The speeches at the UN are exactly that. Those speeches use language to reach their respective goals. Because the language being used may be foreign, the texts tend to be somewhat more formal because the speakers lack in-depth knowledge and skill of the primary language.

Misuse of language is much more than a matter of mere words. Contrary to popular belief, as de Saussure argued long time ago, language does not reflect reality. Instead, language helps to create our sense of reality by giving meaning to events. Language is not neutral – the words we use to label an event determine to great extent how we respond to it⁷⁴. Porter and Samovar (1998) argue that a culturally devised linguistic device is the framing of communicative behavior. To ensure the success of emotional communication, there must be a large reduction of uncertainty in terms of possible interpretations that can be made. When affect is conveyed unsuccessfully, the reason generally is that the cognitive frame for the interpretation of the behavior was insufficiently established⁷⁵. Culture and language must be presented to the outsider in a fashion that is interpretable and understandable to that receiver.

According to Lucas (1992), words have two kinds of meanings – denotative and connotative. Denotative meaning is precise, literal and objective. It simply describes the object, person, idea, event or place to which the word refers. Connotative meaning is more figurative, variable and subjective. The connotative meaning gives words its intensity and emotional power. It arouses in receivers feelings of guilt, anger, friendship,

⁷³ Littlejohn, 1999, p. 70.

⁷⁴ Lucas, 1992, p. 213.

⁷⁵ Porter&Samovar, 1998, p. 467.

love, fear, greed, nostalgia, pity and so on. Speakers, like poets, often use the connotation to enrich their meaning and to appeal to the emotions of the listeners⁷⁶.

3.3.3 Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication examines the situation in which a message is encoded in one culture for use in another. The correct interpretation of verbal and nonverbal messages encoded in another culture is largely dependent upon one's proficiency in social perception and experience in intercultural communication. Cultural diversity in social perception adds to the complexity of intercultural communication because the meanings that we give to messages and the sense that we make of our social environment depend largely upon the amount of influence that our own culture has upon us⁷⁷.

Some cultures are high-context cultures (implicit communication), some are low-context cultures (explicit communication). Hall (1989) argues that while no country exists at either end of the spectrum, the United States is placed toward the lower end, only slightly above the German, Scandinavian and Swiss cultures. Most Asian cultures such as Japanese, Chinese and Korean cultures fall toward the higher end of the curve⁷⁸. A difference in communication styles between two international business-partners can lead into tremendous problems during negotiations and other such situations.

Cultures that are low-context have little nonverbal and more verbal communication. The American culture, for example, "calls for clear and direct communication. It expresses itself in such common injunctions as 'Say what you mean,' 'Do not beat around the bush,' and 'Get to the point.'" Such style leaves little room for interpretation and is more encoder-centered since it is more important what is said than how it is understood. Specific information is passed through explicit messages and often on paper. Communication, for example in a traditional Japanese way is nothing like the way in the United States. People in the high-context Japanese culture expect the listeners to be able

⁷⁶ Lucas, 1992, p. 214.

⁷⁷ Porter&Samovar, 1998, p. 451.

⁷⁸ Hall, 1989, p. 204.

to place the pieces of the puzzle together themselves. The result, according to Hall (1989), is that “he or she will talk around and around the point, in effect putting all the pieces in place except the crucial one. Placing it properly - this keystone - is the role of the interlocutor.”⁷⁹ Emphasis is placed on personal communication where nonverbal clues are important.

Doing politics in “the other” way can turn out to be problematic to everyone involved. When people from different cultures are placed together around a negotiating table, problems may arise. One side might seem rude or overly aggressive to the other side while they at the same time can seem too “round-about” and mysterious to the other. Both sides might have problems decoding the proper meaning from the conversations and negotiations, or in UNGA terms, from the speeches. Westerners may not understand why the Asians might be repeating the same things, while not actually getting to the point. Westerners might take the wrong issue as the “point” or they might miss the point completely, the Asians on the other hand might not be expecting the “point” to be stated clearly and thus they might be looking for something that is not there. They might also question the Western way of not respecting the abilities of the opposing side to understand the deeper meaning of the issue.

Further problems can rise when resolutions are being discussed. Americans, as is the style of a low-context, explicit communication, use memos and other written documents willingly while Japanese, or the high-context, implicit style, emphasizes on the need for oral communication. Japanese want to have face-to-face situation where they can read and express nonverbal clues, while Americans would rather have documented information as a proof of any given situation that has happened.

The clash between the low- and high-context cultures in the political, diplomatic or business world can be dramatic to someone who is not expecting any problems. Both sides of the negotiating table should be well trained to deal with the “other” side. If the Westerners on their business trip to Asia expect high-context communication from the

⁷⁹ Hall, 1989, p. 217.

Orientalists they will then properly be able to respond to it. Obviously it would only be fair that both sides would research each other's communicational styles before, but since that will not always happen, it will be important that the visiting team will know how to act in a proper manner. Both sides should also be patient with each other. If the Westerners know that the Orientals will not get to the point directly, they should not hurry them nor should they force them to state their point, unless absolutely necessary. In the same situation, the Orientals should not be threatened by the directness of the Westerners. Also, both should realize the other's needs for oral and written communications. Without this realization it will be difficult for both the Westerners and the Asians to find common "trust" between them.

Uncertainty between different cultures is not uncommon in intercultural activity and communication. Berger and Calabrese (1975) developed the uncertainty Reaction Theory (URT). URT assumes that people try to reduce uncertainty when having encounters with strangers. Berger and Calabrese (1975) divided initial encounters into three different levels. At the first level, in the entry phase the two people meeting try to find out information about the other in order to find out something that they have in common. At the second level, the personal phase, the two people interacting share something more personal such as feelings, emotions, values and attitudes. At the third and the final stage, the exit phase, the future of the relationship will be decided – whether to continue it or to end it⁸⁰.

Berger and Calabrese (1975) posited several axioms and theorems "specifying the interrelations among uncertainty, amount of communication, nonverbal affiliative expressiveness, information seeking, intimacy level of communication content, reciprocity, similarity and liking".⁸¹ Gudykunst and Kim further state that communication can be seen as varying along continuum from involving total strangeness to total familiarity⁸².

⁸⁰ Lecture notes. University of Jyväskylä. 24 February, 2000. Dos. J-P Puro.

⁸¹ Gudykunst, 1988, p. 123-124.

⁸² Ibid. p. 125.

3.4 Methods

How is it possible to study relations between Finland, Sweden and the United Nations as interaction based only on speeches and documents? According to Alasuutari (1995), the rhetorical method can incorporate in its analysis the interaction context even when the material does not portray the actual communicational situation⁸³. The classical rhetorical thought gets into both the logic of the argument and the use of language as a tool of persuasion. Ethos, pathos and logos are present in arguments and speeches, and they serve very well my purpose when I am studying and analyzing Finland's and Sweden's foreign political communication at the UN.

Ethos features the speaker standing with the audience and by extension the relationship between the speaker and the audience, and it points toward the ancient category of goodness. Modern cultures tend to reduce ethos to mere atmosphere or tonalities on the one side or to sheer questions of credibility on the other side. But postmodern appreciation of ethos might regard rationalities as ties, exchanges and other interactions among members of a community, and definitely it would recognize the rhetorics move within their specific practices from ethos to ethics – that is, to moralities and their sustaining cultures⁸⁴. The underlying meaning of Greek ethos was the personal disposition. Gradually the meaning broadened out to trait, character, and then custom, or in plural, manners or morals⁸⁵.

Pathos targets the speaker's invocation of emotion, imagination and volition to evoke particular feelings from the audience, and it drives toward the ancient category of beauty. Modern philosophers tend to make pathos liminal or subliminal, banishing the feeling to the hazy horizons of experience, but a postmodern appreciation of pathos might regard rationalities as decentered or multicentered complexes of diverse passions and

⁸³ Alasuutari, 1995, p. 100.

⁸⁴ Nelson 1998, p. 138.

⁸⁵ Ayto, in Nelson, p.138.

images⁸⁶. Pathos inheres in the audience and may be defined as the emotional reactions the hearers undergo as the speaker “plays upon their feelings”⁸⁷.

Greek logos have a remarkably wide spread of meaning, ranging from speech and saying to reasoning, calculation, reckoning and ratio⁸⁸. Logos emphasizes the speaker’s reasons and evidence as shared with the audience through rigorous dialectic. It strives toward the ancient category of truth. Plato places truthful, pure knowledge against incorrect and wrongful rhetorics. For him to know the truth was the basis of ideal rhetorics⁸⁹. The logos of a speech includes the logical meaning of it taken away from the context in which it is given. Logos does not reflect into the argument itself, but rather into the logical construction of that argument⁹⁰. The modern impulse is to deify logos as singular logic and to methodize dialectic as analytical rationality. But a postmodern appreciation of logos might regard rationalities as institutional networks of topics and tropes for argumentation⁹¹.

In my rhetorical analysis there are several questions that I need to find answers for:

1. What is the rhetorical situation? What occasion gives rise to the need or opportunity for persuasion? What is the historical occasion that would give rise to the composition of this text?

2. Who is the speaker? How does the speaker establish personal credibility and authority, or ethos? Does the speaker come across as knowledgeable and/or fair? Does the speaker’s reputation convey authority?

3. What is the speaker’s intention in speaking? To attack or defend, to exhort or dissuade from certain action, to praise or blame, to teach, delight or to persuade?

⁸⁶ Nelson 1998, p. 141.

⁸⁷ Kennedy, in Nelson, p. 141.

⁸⁸ Ayto, in Nelson, p. 139.

⁸⁹ Summa, 1995, p. 72.

⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 75.

⁹¹ Nelson 1998, p. 140.

4. Who makes up the audience? Who is the intended audience? What values does the audience hold that the speaker appeals to? Who are or might be the secondary audiences?

5. What is the content of this message? The main idea? What are the principle lines of reasoning or kinds of arguments used? What topics of invention are employed? How does the speaker appeal to reason, emotion, or pathos?

6. What is the form in which it is conveyed? What is the structure of the communication, how is it arranged? What figures of speech are used? What kind of style and tone is used and why?

7. How do form and content correspond? Does the form complement the content? What effect could the form have, and does this help or hurt the author's intention?

8. Does the speech succeed in fulfilling the speaker's intentions? Does the speaker effectively fit the message to the circumstances, times and the audience?

9. What does the nature of communication reveal about the culture that produced it? What kinds of values or customs would the people have that would produce this? How do the allusions, historical references, or kinds of words used place this in a certain time and location⁹²?

3.5 Research problems

I have chosen to analyze the political speeches through the three Greek ideas ethos, pathos and logos. It is obvious, that ethos and logos will be readily available from the texts that I will be reading. However, it can and has been argued that pathos will not be present in a written text. And since I have not been able to view the actual communication that I am analyzing, how then will I be able to detect emotion from these speeches? I am arguing that pathos is present in these written texts. There are several reasons for my argument. First, I am analyzing foreign political speeches, which are delivered as they were written. In such a case, the pathos (if so decided by the government) can be written directly into the wordings of the communication. Second,

⁹² From the WebPages of the Department of Humanities at Brigham Young University: [<http://www.humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/rhetanal.htm>], 5 April, 2000.

texts have been prepared by a collection of writers. All oral suggestions have been written down, thus bringing emotion and pathos into the written text. Third, I am not analyzing these speeches as acts of the speaker, but rather I am viewing the speeches as communication by a government. Because of this, the speech is what is on paper, not what or how it has been spoken by the speaker. Fourth, other governments and states through the written text only analyze these texts, including pathos. And finally, these texts have been prepared and delivered by people other than native speakers of English. They are not necessary capable of delivering proper emotion or pathos during the act of communication, and thus the pathos has to be applied into the speech beforehand.

Do some occasional speeches mirror a culture? Can I argue that once I have decoded the speeches I will then know enough about Finnish and Swedish culture to draw conclusions about them. Dodd (1982) argues that “describing communication is like taking a snapshot rather than shooting a moving film”. According to Dodd the former freezes some view of reality and attempts to convey a portion of the total action. For good or bad, verbal descriptions or illustrations fall into the “snapshot syndrome”⁹³. I have tried to minimize that syndrome by choosing texts from ten consecutive years. Thus I have multiple speeches that are close to each other on the timeline. Because of the limitations of this study, I could not have possibly chosen any more speeches. I strongly argue, that I can, on the basis of these speeches, get a view into the two cultures.

Although I am Finnish, I have lived and studied in the US for an extended period of time, and, therefore, feel confident that my English is good enough for me to be able to detect qualities of tone and style from the text and that I am able to properly identify characteristics of ethos, pathos and logos from these communication acts. All speeches, except for two, were in English. The speeches by Sweden in 1994 and 1995 were in Swedish. As my Swedish language skills are not as strong as my skills in English, it is possible that I may have misunderstood some things or failed to grasp some hidden meanings from these two speeches. I have included them in my analysis, but I will not rely on them to draw conclusions due to potential misunderstandings..

⁹³ Dodd, 1982, p. 9.

Another research problem I have is the question of reliability. Have I analyzed the speeches properly? Have I missed something? Have I misinterpreted signs of emotion? Would someone else have answered by research questions differently? Because of my limited resources, I was not able to have other researchers analyze the texts based on my research questions and thus I cannot provide an “average” response that may be more reliable. In the case of these speeches, there is a good chance, however, that even with multiple researchers the responses would have been very similar. To add more reliability to my research, all the material will be readily available for future studies or for the repetition of my work. All the speeches are available in written form and can be easily reviewed. I have included in the appendix the questions, which I have used in the analysis of each and every speech. And I hope that I have described everything along the way carefully enough so that my research may be repeated.

4. Analysis⁹⁴

4.1. 45th Session of the UN General Assembly, 1990

Finland's speech for the General Debate in 1990 was given by Foreign Minister of Finland Pertti Paasio. As Foreign Minister⁹⁵, and the text was written specifically for the purpose of the General Debate. The speech was given by the Foreign Minister of Finland who established his authority and credibility via his title and via the known

⁹⁴ I did not have a chance to either listen to or view all of the speeches that I have analyzed in the following section. In fact, I have only seen the speeches from 1999, no others. The observations that I have made with regards to the tone and style are purely from the texts that I have read. Although my views and opinions may have been different had I witnessed all these speeches being delivered, I do not think that I am too far away from the actual ways that the speeches were given.

⁹⁵ What usually happens is that the first speaker each year is selected randomly, after which all the Heads of State who are present will speak. After these Presidents, Kings etc. the next level of hierarchy, the Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) gets its turn. Foreign Ministers get their turn next, and usually last

reputation of Finland. The speaker came across as knowledgeable and fair, and his words were probably listened to carefully. The intention of the speaker was to address the world in order to convey to public Finland's current foreign political views and opinions on global issues.

The audience was made up of representatives from other Member States and through them all the governments of the world who made up the intended audience. The speaker appeals to the audience in order to make the world a better place because the targeted audience is the only one that can make the world better. The secondary audience of the speech was media and through them, Finnish citizens, who can see that Finnish government is working hard to bring forth its own ideas.

The main idea of the speech was that the world is changing toward the better but that more needs to be done. More can only be done if everyone pulls together. Speaker reasoned that since Europe has done well during the changes and since Namibia has held free and fair elections, these changes can occur successfully everywhere else too. Another principal argument that the speaker used was that humans need to be good to each other and that changes for the better can occur only when human rights are respected. The speaker probably did not use much emotion but rather laid down facts, which then could only be interpreted in a way that world needs to be, and indeed, can be a better place for all.

The form of the message was a speech given at an annual gathering of UN member states and the message was structured in a simple and straight-forward way, without any figures of speech in order to make it easy to listen to. The speech began from close to Finland and spread out to cover the rest of the planet. The form of the message corresponded well to the message itself and helped the speaker's intentions. Those intentions were fulfilled in the sense that other governments took note of what Finland

are Permanent Representatives and Ambassadors. Most countries usually send their Foreign Ministers to the event.

said. The speaker was also able to effectively fit his message to the circumstances, times and the audience.

The speech by **Sweden** was given at the General Debate of the United Nations 45th General Assembly. Ingvar Carlson, Sweden Prime Minister gave the speech. Because the speaker was of the highest rank, he immediately had credibility and coming from Sweden he had authority as well. The speaker did not have to personally establish his ethos. The situation that gave rise for the need of this speech was the annual debate that was held at the UN. Carlson's intention in this speech was to convey Sweden's foreign policies to the world and to urge everyone else to think of the future of the world.

The primary audience was the entire membership of the UN. The audience at hand was made up of representatives from these other member states and through them the intended audience, other governments of the world, could be reached. The speaker appealed strongly to the morals and the strength of the audience to get things accomplished and to make the world better. The secondary audience of the speech was the public in Sweden who could be shown that Sweden takes a strong stance on global issues.

The contents of the message were political ideas that, if put to practice, could help billions of people. The main idea of the speech was that only by working together can these people be helped and that the UN was an integral part of this task. The speaker used many adjectives to describe situations that either had already taken place or were to take place in the future. Many of these adjectives were strong and very descriptive. Adjectives such as "peaceful", "tragic", "deep", "grave" and "joyous" were accompanied by strong verbs as "must", "have to", "need to" and so on. Words that were used were all strong and most likely carefully selected to appeal to the morals and conscience of the listeners. The speaker used the pronoun "we" throughout the text, but not to describe the Swedes, but rather in order to pull every person in the audience and in the world into the picture.

The form of the message was conveyed through speech and the message was arranged in a way that it started from the problems that needed immediate attention (Iraq's invasion of Kuwait) and worked its way into greater issues of long-term effects and thus a need for long-term solution (environment). The speaker did not use figures of speech, but rather appealed strongly to the emotions and morals of the listeners. The form of the message corresponded to the message in a good fashion and helped the speaker's intentions. The speech would have succeeded better had the audience been made up of higher authorities⁹⁶ than it actually was.

4.2. 46th Session of the UN General Assembly, 1991

Foreign Minister Paavo Väyrynen spoke on behalf of **Finland** in the General Debate of the 46th Session of the UNGA. As Foreign Minister of a respected UN member, Väyrynen immediately had respect from the audience. The speech was fair and laid down facts properly, thus making Väyrynen seem fair, just and knowledgeable. The basic political language in the communication also helped create ethos.

Väyrynen spoke in order to communicate Finland's foreign political ideas to the rest of the world. The immediate audience was the representatives of other UN member states and organizations, while the intended and secondary audiences, governments of member states and public at home respectively, were not. The government's were informed of Finnish ideas through representatives while the public at home was informed via the media. The audience, or in other words other governments, are the people with abilities to affect change, thus making them very important targets.

The speech itself was of general quality and it dealt with many of the global issues present at the time. The main idea of the entire speech was that "the world is going down fast, but we can stop it". Väyrynen gave examples, both good and bad, and then either described what had been done or what should be done to avoid the same mistakes

⁹⁶ The speakers themselves rarely listen in on the speeches thus the audience is often made up of lower level government officials, lower level diplomats or even interns who then transfer the messages to their respective authorities.

at a later date. Väyrynen appealed to the pathos a few times when proclaiming magnificently that the “state and the future of mankind depends on us” and “the children’s welfare depends on us”. He also added that “we must act soon if we want the world to be a good place in the future”.

The speech was a straight-forward and basic political speech. It was arranged in the way that good things of today were introduced first, then bad. In the end the concentration was on the future of the world. The language used was very simple and figures of speech did not play an important role – not much was left for guessing. The style and tone used were practical, logical and could easily be understood by others with small margin of error. The form and content of the communication fitted well together. The speaker was able to successfully introduce Finnish political ideas to others with this text.

Such a text was definitely a product of the Finnish culture as I view it. It was logical, direct and did not play with words. The text was not very controversial, rather it supported others’ ideas. According to this text, it seems that the Finnish people want to be a part of the global community and but they somehow need to get acceptance to that community. Although Finns care very much about other people, it was also important to protect themselves first. The speech reflected worries of the future and the status of Finland and countries like Finland. Emphasis was placed on small nations and environmental concerns were centered on forestry issues.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Margaretha af Ugglas spoke on behalf of **Sweden** in the 46th session of UN General Debate. As a Swedish Minister, af Ugglas already had a respected status and her fair and logical speech probably gave her even more ethos. Global change, recent Gulf War and the end of the Cold War gave rise for the opportunity of persuasion and also strongly affected the composition of this text. Af Ugglas discussed environmental and disarmament issues, the importance of regional co-operation, and how we must all work together in the changing world. The main idea of this speech was to set guidelines on how to solve global problems.

Af Ugglas' intention, along with introducing Sweden's foreign political framework for the year, was to make sure that everyone in the UN co-operate in order to make UN stronger and better. Her target audience, the governments of UN member states, is the only group that can affect co-operation, and thus, making the UN better. Public at home was undoubtedly happy with the way that Sweden presented herself before the UN.

This particular speech was, unlike Sweden's previous speech, very straightforward and it appealed very little to the emotion of the audience. Rather, this text was presented with logical arguments with little room for mistakes. Arguments were presented in a "problem-solving" manner. In other words, af Ugglas showed first what had happened, and then gave instructions on how these problems could or should be dealt with and prevented in the future. Af Ugglas used very vivid and grand words like "bloodshed" and "historic" to make sure that the audience grasped her meaning. The style of this text suited its content well, and a more emotional tone might have hurt this message. A more emotional approach could have easily been viewed as preaching.

If this speech was to be used as a window into the Swedish culture, then that culture could be seen as a strong one. The people would not be afraid to bring forth their own ideas nor would they be afraid of the consequences of their words. People in this sort of a culture would walk their own paths while making sure that other cultures would not fall from their respective paths. Swedes seem to care tremendously about developing nations and the future of the world. They want to make sure that the UN remains a strong entity and that the world organization will always help those in need.

4.3. 47th Session of the UN General Assembly, 1992

Finland's speech at the General Debate in 1992 was delivered by the Foreign Minister Paavo Väyrynen. Secretary General's "Agenda for Peace" and the recent Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, gave rise to the composition of the text. The theme of "changing world" was the main theme of the speech. As Foreign Minister, Väyrynen

immediately commanded respect from the audience which was made up of representatives of other UN member states and organizations. Väyrynen presented himself as being well aware of world issues with his speech and certainly was able to convey the authority required to bring forth Finnish political ideas for the year 1992.

Väyrynen's speech was targeted toward the governments of the other UN members, as well as to the different UN organizations. To this audience Väyrynen wanted to support Secretary General's "Agenda for Peace" and emphasize the importance of development, environmental protection and global co-operation. Another main theme in the speech, along "changing world", was the need to reform the UN to reflect the times. Väyrynen used arguments such as "the world has changed since 1945 and it will keep changing", and suggested that we must make sure that the UN will be able to operate in today's world. Väyrynen's speech did not come up with many original ideas, rather it reiterated Secretary General's ideas and what had been said and done in the past. The speech was not very emotional nor did it really appeal to the pathos of the audience.

The speech was a direct and straight-forward political speech. It was arranged in a very basic manner. Change in the UN, on the basis of Secretary General's ideas, was supported in the beginning, then change in the world was supported second. In the end Finland simply looks forward to these changes. The style and tone that were selected for this text were unoriginal in the sense that other people's ideas, words and actions were repeated and supported. The form of the message suited its content well, although had the form been a little more original, it could only have helped. A sense of hind-vision seemed to be present all throughout the text.

If this speech was used to describe Finnish culture, it would seem that Finnish people are afraid to be original and would rather support well respected ideas. Since no negative ideas were mentioned in the speech, it seems that Finns would rather be quiet about the negatives and only note the positive issues. The Finns appear to care for the future and other people, especially those from poor and less developed states. Finns also probably would rather root for the "underdog" rather than the superior side.

Sweden's speech for this year's General Debate was given by their Minister for Foreign Affairs, Margaretha af Ugglas. It discussed a wide array of topics centered around the idea that the world is changing and we must make sure that the UN changes with it. Af Ugglas, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, already had credibility and ethos when she began to speak. Her knowledge of global affairs only helped that authority. The intention of this speech, along with bringing forth Sweden's policies, was to get everyone to co-operate in building a peaceful and prosperous world.

In order to get everyone to co-operate, af Ugglas had to convince the target audience, the government's of UN member states as well as the representatives of UN organizations who hold the power to change things, that her point of view was correct. Although af Ugglas commanded ethos, it did not mean that her presence solely would affect change. She based her arguments on the fact that many things in the world had changed recently – communism had fallen, Cold War was over, new kind of problems were arising, environmental concern were increasing – and if we were to meet the new challenges we were to work together. Af Ugglas kept emphasizing on both "we" and on the need to work together, thus appealing very strongly to the morals of the audience.

The way af Ugglas approached the problems were in a "problem-solution" approach. She first described the problems and then showed how we together can affect change for the better. She also kept repeating many times what Sweden had done, but that was a very obvious attempt to promote Sweden's candidacy for the Security Council for the term starting 1993-94⁹⁷. The self-promoting style of the speech did not seem to fit the content and main idea of the speech. A more "moral" approach might have worked better with this content and the form could have been downplayed a little to make it a little less obvious.

The nature of this communication revealed some traces of self-promotion and self-importance from the Swedish culture. But it also showed the willingness to take risks

⁹⁷ That campaign proved to be unsuccessful, but probably laid the grounds for another campaign, this time successful for the seat at the Council in 1997-98.

and not be too shy. Swedes do not seem to care if they lose as long as they give a good fight. They are not afraid to promote their own ideas or themselves and as long as that is done in a proper manner that can only be viewed as a good trait. Sweden seems to be ready to act and have strength and courage to be a "player".

4.4. 48th Session of the UN General Assembly, 1993

In 1992, **Finland** sent a Foreign Minister again to speak on behalf of the country. This time Heikki Haavisto was the Minister. His title again gave him ethos and credibility although he probably was not seen in the same light as his predecessor for he was new to his job. He came across as knowledgeable and fair as his speech concentrated on general global issues as well as the successes and failures of UN in the recent years.

Haavisto reminded his audience, the representatives of governments and UN organizations and through them the government of the UN member states, that "it is our responsibility to reform the UN". He went on to argue that "we all" must work together to help the UN into the next century. He based his arguments on the fact that the UN is a world organization and, therefore, the world must help it. He argued also that because the world has changed tremendously, the UN must be reformed to reflect the changing times. Haavisto appealed to reason and pathos by giving examples of failures and making everyone feel responsible for these failures. He then suggested solutions to the problems and made everyone feel responsible for the success of these solutions and reform.

The form of the message was a careful examination of problems. It was arranged in a way that first the speaker gave examples, then ideas and solutions. The whole set-up was very careful and nothing too adamant was said or too political was suggested. The suggestions which were given were very hesitant and theoretical, as if to make sure that no pressure was to be laid on anyone. The style and tone were also hesitant and careful. The form and content were not compatible because the content had good ideas but the form was too hesitant. A stronger form would have helped the communication.

This speech shows that in the Finnish culture communication is careful and very hesitant. People appear not to be willing to suggest their own ideas, be they good or bad. The people of the culture seem to be shy and even somewhat afraid to voice their opinions, and the people seem to be worried about what other may think of them. The message in the communication – UN must be reformed – was stated but the ways in which that reform could take place were only whispered. All these ideas could have been said years ago, proudly and out loud if the Finns wanted to do so.

Margaretha af Ugglas, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for **Sweden** came back to New York again in 1993 to speak on behalf of the Swedish government. Because af Ugglas had been a Minister for a long time and had come to the UN several times already, she had some extra authority and credibility compared to others who were more newer to the event. The speech was delivered in order to introduce Sweden's foreign policy for that year and to suggest the need for reform in the UN. Af Ugglas suggested to the other governments of the world, the target audiences, that the "struggle for ideas" in the world is not over and the UN needs to be able to respond to its tasks properly.

Sweden's speech was very direct in its suggestions. Af Ugglas laid down key areas in which change and reform were of most importance and stated very adamantly what needed to be done. Speech was somewhat different because it concentrated on a few key issues rather than discuss every problem facing the world. The speech appealed to emotion and reason at times when af Ugglas suggested that the UN could be judged harshly by history if "we did not" act now.

The form of the message was instructive – it gave detailed directions on what should be done. It's arrangement corresponded well to both the form and the content. The speech began with introducing key problems, then stated what needed to be done and why. In the end af Ugglas gave detailed accounts of what has, might or would happen if nothing or little was done. The style and tone were very direct and authoritative, but because the content already was very direct, a slightly "lesser" form and tone might have been more proper.

The speech showed that in the Swedish culture peace and human rights are highly valued and that Swedes are willing to help others in need. The communication also showed that Swedes have the strength to say that "here is what we need to do and this is what we must do". They also have the strength and courage to criticize others who have done wrong. People who come from a culture which produces texts like this most likely have morals, compassion and warmth. They care about the underprivileged people and want to ensure their freedom and good life.

4.5. 49th Session of the UN General Assembly, 1994

Finland's speech at the 49th UNGA was given by the Foreign Minister, Heikki Haavisto. He spoke in order to bring forth Finland's policies and to focus the target audience's, the government's of other UN members, attention to some select issues. Issues which gave rise to the composition of this communication were the changing world (because "problems are now being discussed without the veil of ideology"), the need to reform the UN (because "UN must meet the challenges of tomorrow, not yesterday") and the need to co-operate globally. Haavisto possessed ethos and credibility because of his status as the Foreign Minister of Finland.

The content of the message was that there have been some problems and some success, but reforms are now needed to make the successes more common. But simple reforms are not enough, global co-operation is necessary for the reforms to be successful. Haavisto argued for his points by showing what had and had not been done in the past. And since times have changed, new ways need to be applied to fighting the problems. The speech was quite unoriginal and it mainly reiterated words and argumenst from the past. The speech appealed to emotion very little. Rather, it laid down historical facts and claimed that things are different now and will be different in the future.

The form of the message was very straight-forward and simple. The message did not attempt to bring forth any complex ideas or scenarios. Instead it showed what had been done and what should be done, as stated by many in the past. The style and tone of

the speech were also very basic since no figures of speech were used and emotions were not toyed with. The form and the content were compatible - the form was basic and the content was flat. If either the form or the content had been changed, then the speech would have been more lively and probably more effective. Now the speech was just another speech among many others.

Characteristics of unimaginative, simple, direct and basic behavior and communication were reflected from this speech. Finns seem to be careful of introducing any provocative ideas, or any ideas for that matter, and would rather support other well established (and supported) ideas. This speech does not portray the Finnish culture in a flattering or exiting way. Instead it makes the Finns appear happy with the status quo, be that good or bad for the rest of the world. Although it is probable that Finns care very much about human rights and other global concerns, this speech makes it seem that those issues are raised just because everyone else has them in their speeches.

The new Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lena Hjelm-Wallen spoke on behalf of **Sweden** in 1994. She had the required respect and ethos vis-a-vis her job title to be speaking before the representatives of other UN member states. This year's speech centered heavily around the need for reform at the UN. Sweden brought this topic up very strongly because of the nearing 50th anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations. Hjelm-Wallen discussed the need for reform in the UN on the basis of the argument that all the main problems in the world are interlinked, and the UN must be in the center of that linkage. The UN and the member states must face up to the new challenges brought forward by problems concerning peace and security, development, human rights and environment.

Because all these issues are linked, Hjelm-Wallen argues, many reforms are needed and now is a very good time to begin applying these reforms. Faithful to tradition, Hjelm-Wallen listed some key points where changes and reforms are most desperately needed: "These are the changes that are required...". Hjelm-Wallen described in her statement what would or could happen if these instructions were not followed and thus

appealed to the reason and emotion of the target audience, the governments of other UN member states.

The message was delivered in a very straight-forward and instructional manner. Sweden's speech suggested ways to solve problems and described what could happen if these instructions were not followed. Issues were listed and described in an orderly fashion, thus leaving little room for misinterpretation. The style and tone of the communication were simple and the speaker concentrating on the facts. Because of its basic style, the form and content corresponded well to each other. If the form was more emotional, that might have hidden the main message altogether.

This speech again reflected the strength and courage of the Swedish culture. The Swedish people do not seem to be afraid of suggesting ways to do things, be these instructions followed or not. The content of the message showed that Swedes have good morals and care strongly for others. They want to make sure that the world will be a better place for everyone in the future.

4.6. 50th Session of the UN General Assembly, 1995

Tarja Halonen, as the Foreign Minister of Finland, gave **Finland's** speech in the General Debate in 1995. She had ethos and credibility through her status as a member of the Finnish Cabinet, and her knowledge of world affairs established respect also. Her intentions of speaking to her audience, the representatives of other member states and UN organizations, and target audience, the governments of other member states, were to mainly support the speech already given by the EU president (Spain) as well as to emphasize further the role and importance of the UN because the UN was turning fifty years old.

The content of her speech was that a strong UN needs reforms in many areas, and the main idea of the message was that "the world needs a strong UN and the strong UN needs its members". Halonen argued on the importance of the member states by saying

that the UN's financial affairs must be in order, human rights must be respected everywhere, and that the UN must not and cannot replace member states when dealing with many issues. Halonen appealed to the reason and pathos of her audience when emphasizing the need for a strong UN and the great part that member states play in such a strong organization.

The form in which the message was conveyed was very self-promoting. Unlike before, Halonen was now describing what Finland had done on many issues. The communication was structured to be a direct political speech and it was organized into three main parts: 1. what should be done, 2. what should not be done and 3. what has not been done. There was very little play with words as the tone and style of the speech were very direct, basic and simple; very much in conformity with previous Finnish traditions. The form and content corresponded well, but the form could have been a little more emotional in order to emphasize more strongly what Finland had done.

This speech gave a little different view, or I should say a changed view, into the Finnish culture. This time Finland was able to bring forth herself a little more. The way that was done was still the same direct way, but it showed that Finns have a little more courage to speak up. That may be because of the recent acceptance to the European Union⁹⁸ and the courage that brought. This speech still showed, however, that Finnish people do not want to be different and/or provocative, and want to have that feeling of "belonging to a group".

Sweden's speech in 1995 was given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lena Hjelm-Wallen. She spoke in order to present Sweden's ideas about reforming the UN. The UN at fifty, she argued, must be reformed because the current world is much different from the world in 1945. Hjelm-Wallen wanted to make sure that her audience, representatives of governments, and target audience, governments of other UN member states, would have learned lessons from the past fifty years and would then apply those

⁹⁸ Finland was accepted into the European Union, along with Austria and Sweden, on January 1st, 1995.

lessons learned to the future. The Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs always commands ethos and respect, and so did Hjelm-Wallen, too, because of her title and knowledge of global issues.

The main idea of Sweden's speech was that we must learn from the past for the sake of the future, and in order to meet the challenges of the future, we must work together and reform the UN. Hjelm-Wallen argued that because the world is very different from when the UN was created, we need to look at the times today and make sure that UN reflects today and tomorrow, not yesterday. She appealed to reason and emotion by describing many instances from the past when something had not been done – from these we need to learn the lessons.

The message was a direct speech given in order to reform the UN, but at the same time it was an emotional account of what could happen if these changes and reforms did not take place. Hjelm-Wallen gave a long list of lessons that we have learned and then must apply into actions for today and the future. The style and tone of the message were very descriptive and factual because of the effectiveness of such an approach. There was very little room left for misunderstanding because there were not many figurative descriptions. Things were stated as they were. The form and the content thus corresponded well, and had the form been any different, the message might have been hurt.

This speech shows, that the Swedish communication style can be emotional or direct and factual, depending on the situation. This text was a good combination of pathos and logos. Swedes care very much for the rest of the world, and they have the strength and courage to stand up for what they believe. This speech was created for every culture in the world to listen to and to understand. That shows that the Swedes want to help everyone while they do not want to be enemies with anyone.

4.7. 51st Session of the UN General Assembly, 1996

In 1996, **Finland's** Foreign Minister Tarja Halonen returned for her second speech at the UN General Debate. She was there to both endorse the statement made by Ireland as the EU president country and to point out how peace, human rights and development are connected. Halonen had credibility vis-a-vis her job and also because she had already established herself as a credible speaker the year before. With her statement she appealed to the only people capable of affecting change in the world and in the UN, the governments of other UN member states.

The main idea of the communication was to make sure that everyone knows that peace, human rights and development are key issues that the world needs to deal with, and that they are closely connected. In the message she also wanted to emphasize that peacekeeping needs strength and development requires global co-operation. She based her arguments on the fact that many of the problems in the world today would not take place in democracies or developed states, thus all the developed nations should work together to help the developing states. Halonen did not appeal to emotion very much, but she did appeal to reason by making her arguments seem like the obvious choice in solving the problems of the world.

The speech was mainly a statement created to support and endorse the EU position, and when Halonen spoke about what Finland had also done, the text became somewhat repetitive. The style and tone of the text were direct and to some extent self-proclaiming. Halonen brought up some Finnish ideas on what should be done. Since this text was created to support EU's position, the form had to be what it was. Had the form been more emotional, the message would have been hurt.

The nature of this communication reveals about the Finnish culture the fact that Finns do not want to deviate from a norm, and if Finland belongs to a group, the Finnish people will do everything in their power to support that group. A Finn could be seen as a "man of his word". A culture, which would produce this text has people with good

morals and people who keep their promise. These people may be unoriginal and unimaginative, but loyal and honest.

For the 51st General Assembly, the Prime Minister of Sweden, Göran Persson, came to speak on behalf of **Sweden**. As a Prime Minister of any country, and especially of Sweden, the speaker immediately has much respect and credibility. The speaker's reputation also conveyed authority. Persson's intention was to support the UN organization, but he also addressed his target audience, the governments of other UN member states and officials of the UN organizations, with the intention of asking for cooperation in order to ensure UN's readiness for the future.

The text's main idea was to support, applaud and criticize the UN, and to gather support for a stronger UN, as well as to promote Sweden's candidacy for the Security Council. Persson argued that "we all need the UN and the UN needs us". Persson set out some "steps as immediately required" for reforming the UN. He made everyone feel that they need to work together to make the UN and the world better. Persson appealed to pathos of his audience by repeating over and over how important the UN is for all of us. Because everyone in the room is a part of the UN, then they must all agree that UN must be made stronger.

Persson's speech was a political speech about Sweden's candidacy to the Security Council, although that was well masked behind the need for a better and stronger UN. The text was organized in a basic manner. First was introduced what we have, then what we need, and then in the end, what we must have. "We" was used all throughout the speech to describe the world. When Swedish ideas we mentioned, they were distinctly marked as such. The style and tone were very "we must" and "we need" oriented. It was an emotional text based on what the world needs. The form and the content corresponded well. If the content was presented differently, for example in a less emotional manner, the communication would not have been as reflective.

Swedish culture, according to this speech, is more a collective culture. The people in the culture have good morals and will to help those suffering. Swedes have strong a will for action, especially when it comes to helping the world. A culture that would produce this sort of text would have to be well organized and goal-oriented. Such a culture would do anything to reach its goals as long as that "anything" was within moral guidelines. The people of that culture are strong and willing to act, not just talk. They are ready to take lead if asked and they are very well aware of their stature in the world.

4.8. 52nd Session of the UN General Assembly, 1997

Foreign Minister Tarja Halonen gave **Finland's** speech in the General Debate in 1997. She arrived to support and endorse the speech given by Luxembourg as the EU president country, as well as to support Secretary General's recommendation on UN reform. Halonen's reputation conveyed authority and as Foreign Minister of Finland she had ethos as well. Halonen spoke to the audience, the representatives of other UN member states, in order for them inform to their respective governments about Finland's foreign policy for the year 1997.

Halonen's main idea was that both the EU and the Secretary General have great ideas with regard to changing and reforming the UN – let us act upon them. The content of this message discussed problems regarding peace and security, human rights violations and development issues. Halonen reminded the audience that all these problems and linked together. Finland's speech did not use many original tactics, rather it argued on behalf of EU's and Secretary General's well-established arguments. The speaker seemed to say that since the Secretary General is well respected, we really should listen to him.

The style of the message was repetitive of previous arguments. Halonen reiterated previous recommendations and then emphasized the importance of those recommendations. The message was organized so that first Halonen informed what Finland supports, then why Finland supports those ideas, and finally why every one else should support them, too. The text did not use any figures of speech, so it was very

simple and no misunderstandings were possible. Because of its content, the form and style corresponded well with it. If there had been less emphasis on what someone else said and more on what Finland has said or thought, the message would have been more effective. Then again, the points that Finland supported were already strongly argued so the message was fine as it was.

This speech showed that Finns like to follow others instead of making their own paths. They are not willing to state their own ideas if there are other ideas to support. This trait conveys loyalty and good morals, but it does not show courage, strength or belief in self. Technically everything that the EU says is Finland's opinion as well, but those ideas could be presented in Finland's speech as Finland's policies, not EU's policies, which the Finnish government supports.

Sweden's Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen returned to New York, after being absent for one session, to give Sweden's speech at the 52nd GA. She came to introduce Sweden's ideas on the UN and its future to the target audience, the governments of other UN member states, because that audience is the only one which can affect true change. Hjelm-Wallen emphasized the need for reform and also supported Secretary General's recommendations for reform.

The content of this message was that the UN must be strengthened and reformed especially in the areas of peace and security, sustainable development, human rights issues and disarmament. Hjelm-Wallen appealed to the emotion of the audience by repeating over and over how "we" must do this and "we" must do that and how everything is "our" responsibility. She appealed to the reason by giving examples where change and reform were required. She also emphasized the need for co-operation in all of these areas.

This speech appealed to the audience for co-operation because "reforms are based on urgent need". The message was organized into two main sectors, first Hjelm-Wallen spoke about what we need and, second, why we need them. Style of the speech was very

descriptive of events and problems, and there was no need for figures of speech. The tone was more emotional than before because the speaker kept referring to everything as “our” responsibility and she kept saying how “we” need to do things. The form and content corresponded well because of the personal nature of both the form and the content.

This speech makes the Swedish culture appear as adamant, courageous and as a culture which is willing to act on behalf of others and for the benefit of others. The people who would produce a text like this would have to be very moral, supportive and strong. They have a will to change things and to help people in need.

4.9. 53rd Session of the UN General Assembly, 1998

Finland’s speech in 1998 was again given by Tarja Halonen, the Foreign Minister of Finland. By being a long time Minister and a UNGA veteran, she had respect and her reputation conveyed authority. Finland’s intention, when speaking to the representatives of other UN member states and UN organizations was to support and endorse Austria’s speech as the EU president country as well as to bring forth Finnish policies.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1998, thus giving rise to the composition of this text. Halonen argued that human rights must be respected and a good tool to battle human rights violations would be the establishment of the International Criminal Court. The main idea of the message was that the UN requires reforms so that it can effectively fight problems of today and tomorrow. It was “high time to act” now, as the “member states must” work together. Halonen appealed to the reason and emotion of her audience by referring over and over again to the requirements of member states.

The message in this speech was mainly reiterative as it brought back old arguments by others from previous years. The form of this message was a basic and straight-forward political communication which was organized in an equally basic manner. It discussed three separate issues, human rights, disarmament and UN reforms,

and at the end an attempt was made to link all issues together. The style and tone were very monotonous and direct. The text used very little inventiveness and was flat overall. Because both the content and form were evenly flat, they complemented each other fine. The content and form could have both been changed to be more emotional in order to make the text more memorable.

This text makes the Finns appear as followers and the Finnish culture as eager to "point fingers" at others as long as they themselves are not at risk. Finland kept separating herself from the rest of the UN during this speech by referring to what the "member states must do" instead of using "we" or "us" as it has done previously. The text made Finns seem as people who care for other and have loyalty and morals to the group to which they belong.

Lena Helem-Wallen returned again as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of **Sweden** to speak on behalf of her government. Just as Halonen had instant credibility, so did Hjelm-Wallen because she had already represented her government many times before the representatives of the UN member states and UN organizations. Her speech had two main issues that it discussed: first it celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and secondly it discussed many issues of peace and security.

Hjelm-Wallen's intention was to introduce Sweden's recommendation for a better UN and a better world to the governments of the other member states, her target audience. She pointed out five key areas for global action while keeping in mind that peace, sustainable development and other issues are all linked together. Sweden's arguments were based on accounts of what is happening without proper attention and/or action. Hjelm-Wallen wanted to let everyone know how much Sweden has done in the past on all these problematic issues and she also promoted a resolution which is being introduced later by Sweden and some other countries. She appealed to emotion and reason by repeating how "we must do this" and how things are "up to us" to decide.

This text was a basic political speech, which tried to gather votes for a resolution that was to be introduced. The text was organized in such a way that at the end of each segment Hjelm-Wallen could point out how much and how well Sweden has acted. The style and tone were played down a little bit so as not to make the intentions of this speech so obvious. Overall, the form and content corresponded well. Had the form been more self-promoting the good intentions for a better world could have been lost. Had the content been less like a list, the message might also have been a little more expressive.

The culture that produced this text has to be well organized and direct. The people have strength and courage to speak about the issues that concern them, and they have a will to change things for the better.

4.10. 54th Session of the UN General Assembly, 1999

The 54th Session of the GA presented **Finland** with an opportunity that it has never had before. For the latter half of 1999, Finland served a term as the President country of the European Union. Tarja Halonen, a well-seasoned veteran of the UNGA, returned as the Foreign Minister of Finland and as the representative of the EU to speak on behalf of the EU. Halonen had probably more respect, credibility and authority than she had ever had before in this forum because she represented such a strong player, the EU. Halonen's intentions of speaking were to introduce EU's foreign policies to governments of the other UN member states.

As the EU president, Finland decided to discuss most of the problems going on in the world at the time. The speaker appealed to the reason and emotion of the audience by speaking mainly about depressing issues and showing how these problems could be solved by the co-operation of every member of the audience. Halonen's main argument was that "all these have gone wrong – something must be done to change them for the better." The text was not very inventive as the message was delivered in a form of a list.

The text was very formal and not very emotional at all. Every possible problem in the world seemed to have found its way into the body of the text. The probable reason for the formality of this text was the fact that it had gone through many sieves and filters, many EU governments and many departments within the Finnish government. The style and tone were very simple and flat. The form corresponded well with the content, but that was because the content was so overwhelming and formal. Had the content been centered around some key issues, the form could have been more emotional.

Because the text had been approved by all the different governments of the EU, it does not reflect many things from the Finnish culture. It does, however, show that Finland wants to make sure that she does what others want her to do. As the President, Finland could have made the text more "Finnish" without anyone complaining. Or maybe the text as it was now was very "Finnish" because it was not against wishes of others.

Sweden's speech in 1999 was given by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh. She possessed credibility and ethos because of her title and because her speech was fair and knowledgeable. Her intention was to speak to the governments of other UN member states through their representatives and to introduce Sweden's policies for the year. The governments were the target audience because only they can reform and change the UN. They are the people that need to be persuaded to ensure a better world and a stronger UN.

Lindh introduced four key areas which require immediate reform within the UN organization. She was very critical of the Security Council and its ways of working. She reminded the audience that everything in the UN is linked and thus many things require reform, because if the "UN fails, we fail, too." Lindh gave examples of good and bad to show how things could be if "we" work together or if "we" do not co-operate. Lindh used "we" and "us" many times trying to appeal to the pathos of the audience.

This speech was a list-like political speech which was very critical of the way many things are being done in the UN today. Very few figurative expressions were used

and the style and tone of the text were very basic. Toward the end, the style changed a little to become more emotional and heated as the message became more and more critical. The form, especially because it became more intense toward the end, complemented the content well. Had the form remained the same throughout the text, the message might not have had the same effect.

This text shows that the Swedish communicators are courageous enough to criticize others if so required and willing to act to make things better. It is interesting to note that Sweden's speech was filled with old criticism concerning the Security Council, yet Sweden said nothing while being in the Council in the past two years.

4.11. Need for Reform

The content of the speeches were very similar. Both Finland and Sweden spoke about major events and problems that had surfaced in the previous year. The UN turned fifty years old in 1995, and thus the future of the organization was discussed on most speeches during the decade. Finland and Sweden had many similar concerns and many of the same applauds; they concentrated on the same issues and supported many of the same ideas. Both countries had many ideas on how the UN should be reformed so that the organization could better serve the world.

4.11.1. Finland and the Future of UN

Finland feels very strongly for the UN, but only if the organization is properly reformed. Finland stated that "UN still has shortcomings, but it is our responsibility to launch a process of reform. It must cover all agencies, programmes and funds of the organization both in political and development field" (1993). According to Finland, the "world needs a strong UN" (1995) because it has a "global mandate and a global

legitimacy” and notes that “UN has a unique role to play because of its global reach” (1997). Finland pointed out, that “the UN was born to prevent war. That primary responsibility remains”(1991), and that the organization was created in order to help nations and the world peacefully – that is still the aim of the United Nations” (1990).

“There is ample reason for a thorough review of the challenges the UN is facing, and of the adequacy of its structures and mechanisms, including the Charter, to respond to them” (1991), and that the “primary issue is how we can best build on the Charter, and even amend it, where necessary” (1992). Finland pointed out throughout the years that reforms are needed in all areas, including economic and social fields, as well as in fields off peace and security. Preventive diplomacy would be essential to help solve many conflicts, but when that is not enough, the UN must have the required resources to be able to respond in the forms of peacekeeping, peace-making and peace-building. Finland pointed out, that “it is not enough that the Security Council agrees on resolutions setting up new operations. All the conditions for their implementation must also be at hand” (1993). The member states must “provide the financial means that [the organization] desperately needs to serve us for the future” (1995). The UN must have “proper funds and human resources” (1993), and Finland also suggested the “establishment of a rapid deployable headquarters unit at the UN as soon as possible” (1996).

“Reform of the Security Council is of particular urgency” (1996). There should be a limited increase in the number of both permanent and nonpermanent members in order to make the Council more representative. There exists a need to review the organization and methods of work of the Council, and its work should be made more transparent and open to the general membership. Along with reforming the Council, “we must seek new ways and approaches” (1994) and “the time has come to consider even some radical methods to enhance the effectiveness of the General Assembly” (1993). There must also be better co-operation between the UN and regional organizations and between the UN and the Bretton Woods organizations. In all, there is need for “renewed focus and streamlining” (1996).

Finland views the UN very highly, and is very willing to work with the organization to make sure that it is ready “to meet the challenges of tomorrow, not those of yesterday” (1994). Finland emphasized the point that “peace, development and human rights can no longer be neatly separated. They interact, and nowhere more than at the UN” (1996). Finland makes UN’s success dependent on its member states. Without its members, the UN will not function. “The question remains: can the UN deliver? Do we, the member states, want our organization to be able to deliver? And do we make it our responsibility to realize our commitments? Then, and only then can the UN deliver” (1998).

4.11.2. Sweden and the Future of the UN

Sweden has a “strong interest in a forceful UN” (1990) because the “UN symbolizes our dream of a world together” (1990). But for the UN to be successful, it “must be strengthened to meet demands of today and expectations of tomorrow” (1992). “We need the UN as a meeting place; as a guardian of international norms and principles; to prevent conflicts and to find peaceful solutions; to cope with global threats to human security; as a safeguard against environmental threats and in favor of sustainable development; to provide democracy and human rights; as a focal point for global solidarity – We need a strong UN” (1996).

According to Sweden, “we need fundamental UN reform – not piecemeal improvements, but major change” (1997) because the “Swedish government insists on a UN reform” (1997). By quoting the former Secretary General Hammarskjöld, Sweden pointed out that “UN is and should be a living, evolving experimental institution”(1993) and that extensive reform is needed if the UN is to be able to respond to the new challenges (1993). "Reform is a process, not a one-time event" (1997). Sweden points out, though, that “any change in UN practice must take place in the broadest possible agreement” (1992).

The UN must be an effective system for security, co-operation and development. It has to have the capability to identify problems and intervene early, to act quickly and in a coordinated manner. The UN must have sufficient and flexible resources, and emphasis needs to be placed on preventive action. The UN must be able to “react quickly to dynamic situations” (1993). “The UN has the fundamental responsibility for the interpretation and application of international law” (1992). Peace keeping, peace making and peace building capabilities must be reinforced, peacekeepers should be trained, and there must be cooperation between military and humanitarian operations. There is also a need for cooperation between the UN and regional organizations. “The uniqueness and strength of the UN lies not in any single field of activity, but in the totality of them all” (1998).

The Security Council also requires reform. The Council’s membership must be increased, its membership must better reflect geographical balance, its work must be made more transparent, and the question of veto should be discussed. “The reform process must continue” (1999), while still maintaining the effectiveness of the Council. The troop contributing countries should be consulted when discussing operation in the Council. “We need a renewed UN to focus on the tasks which it was once established, and to meet the new challenges of today and tomorrow” (1997), because “we need a strong UN at the time of growing interdependence and global challenges” (1991).

Sweden views the UN as a very important tool, because “the UN can establish genuine security in the world” (1992), and because the “UN represents the moral authority of the world community” (1996). Sweden views the member states as essential in the future of the organization. “We will have to work hard to allow the UN to realize its potential. We owe it to the UN – and to each other – to give it a chance to succeed” (1998). All in all, Sweden finds that “the UN has a central role” (1993).

4.12. Conclusions

After fifty-four years of UN General Assembly, things are still being done in very much the same way as they were in the beginning. Every member state gets their turn to speak to the others, and after that speech is over, the next member speaks, and so on. The contents, forms and styles of many of these speeches have undoubtedly been forgotten soon after the speech was over. Unfortunate as it is, small, marginal, and unimportant states do not get as much attention as do the powerful ones. In 1999, the President of the United States of America spoke to an auditorium full of attentive, responsive and respective ministers, ambassadors and the like. The media was present to cover that speech closely, and people were actually buying tickets to see President Clinton's speech. After the speech was over, a Head of a small African state rose to the podium. I sat in the back of the vast UN General Assembly Hall and missed at least half of his speech because people every where was scattering and leaving the room. People around me were talking about the previous speech and how excited they had been to have seen Mr. Clinton live. When the African gentleman ended his speech, the General Assembly Hall was, at most, one-quarter full of interns and low-level diplomats.

It is clear, that for the speech to be remembered, it must have something special about it. The content of it should grab a hold of the listeners, maybe by introducing something new, or the style of the speech should be very emotional and attractive for the listeners. All in all, it has to be different from the other almost two hundred speeches. In 1999, the USA's speech was different because the President, who is well respected, admired and credible gave it. Many other speeches were able to add something to the mix, but most reiterated the same points and concern in the same way, while recommending same reforms and changes.

For Finland and Sweden to stand out from the crowd, they therefore, had to present themselves in a manner different from the masses. In the ten years that were covered in my research, it was very unfortunate to note that those speeches, as a whole, were not very attention grabbing. Sweden was able to introduce some new and strong ideas, especially concerning the reform of the UN, but Finland stuck with her ways and supported others. Finland's strongest moment was in 1999 when Foreign Minister

Halonen spoke on behalf of the entire EU - on that day more governments were listening than probably ever before. Unfortunately, the content of that message did not stand up to the expectations that many may have had. But for Finland that was nevertheless an important moment because the Finnish Foreign Minister represented so much and she was perceived as a very important speaker, both because of her experience, knowledge and credibility, and her status as Foreign Minister of the EU President country.

As I have shown above, Finland and Sweden felt very much the same when it came to the current and future role of the UN. The reason for the same arguments and points, that the Nordic group⁹⁹ often coordinates their ideas, especially when it comes to reforming the UN, in order to give their opinions more weight. Both Finland and Sweden view the UN as very important for the world today and tomorrow. They both demand reform in order for the organization to be successful. Only with proper and fundamental reform can the “UN be more important today than ever before”.

Although Finnish and Swedish speeches were very similar in content, the styles and forms of their arguments differed tremendously. Some traces of certain traits were evident throughout the decade, and even though Finland and Sweden both used various styles, the main styles became evident. The main traits that were found are illustrated in figure 4.1. It must be remembered that no widespread conclusions of these two cultures can be drawn by these findings. Any conclusions that can be drawn only apply in the scope of intercultural political communication in the UN context.

Finland relies mostly on logos-based argumentation. This liberal mode¹⁰⁰ of deliberation lacked much of the emotion that has been argued to be a big part of successful persuasion. Finland attempts to make her arguments seem as direct and logical as possible, thus leaving little for the audience to guess. Sweden’s style of speaking is more emotional. Sweden’s republican mode of deliberation targeted the audience’s moral and emotion by making everyone feel responsible for both good and bad. Sweden’s

⁹⁹ Includes Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland
¹⁰⁰ see p. 22

arguments seem to be based more on the feelings rather than “brain”. Finnish speeches suggest that the “UN membership must...” while Sweden argues that “we must...”. That is a big difference in attitude.

Finland – Speech culture	Sweden – Speech culture
Emphasis on logos	Emphasis on pathos
Factual	Appealing
Support	Suggest
Reiterate	Introduce
Unimaginative	Original
Hesitant	Courageous

Figure 4.1 Observations on Finnish and Swedish intercultural communication styles

To go along with her logos-centered arguments, Finland tends to back up her arguments with facts. Finnish speakers give detailed accounts of what has happened, thus leaving room for arguments on how things could or should be different. Sweden, while basing her style on emotion, appears to appeal to the audience quite often. Sweden, instead of trying to show what has happened, tries to suggest what might have happened if things had been done differently, and at the same time appeals to the audience to make sure that problems do not reoccur.

Finland voices her opinions very loudly whenever it was appropriate to support someone else’s ideas. If Finland thinks someone, be it Secretary General, EU or another member state, has done something good, they will be noted, applauded and supported. Sweden, on the other hand, wants to push for her own ideas rather than support others. Sweden can support ideas of others, but at the same time Sweden can add something more to those new suggestions.

Much of Finland’s speeches tended to be repeating what others’ have said and done. And because Finland likes to support what others have done, repeating is done very

often. Sweden liked to suggest new ideas and Sweden wanted to always add something new to the mix. When Finland repeated what others had said, Sweden was busy bringing forth her own ideas. Because both Finland and Sweden intend to introduce their respective foreign policies to the rest of the member states, it could be argued that Sweden succeeds better in that department because they introduce things while Finland reiterates.

Finnish style of speaking tends to be very similar year after year. The form and content of the message rarely changes, and the style is always very direct and logical. The language used is usually very basic and uses very little imagination. The speeches rarely leave room for guessing – the role of the receiver is played down. Swedish style is more original and imaginative. Sweden is capable of changing styles while maintaining the arguments. The receiver is asked to take part in the communication because the language can, at times, be quite challenging. By varying styles, Sweden is more capable of targeting the emotions of the receiver.

Finnish style appears to be very careful and hesitant. Finland does not criticize much, only applauds or supports, and Finland does not like to voice her own opinions on many issues – it is safer to let other suggest. Sweden does not seem to care quite so much what others think. Sweden likes to introduce new things and suggest different ways of doing things, and is willing to take the risk of offending someone else or hurting somebody else's feelings. To Sweden it is most important that things are done right, no matter what the consequences, while Finland prefers the status quo to outright criticism, even if everything is not perfect. In each speech Finland is being very careful and tries not to argue too much, criticize too much or, in general, say too much. Only by saying general things and supporting others can Finland be good to all sides. Sweden, on the other hand, argued more and introduced more, without much inhibition, and at time was evenly bad to all.

5. Discussion

When member states are speaking in the UN, they are most often using a foreign language¹⁰¹. The ability to communicate is often, as the language used, is non-native. The language used in communication is always made up of culture-specific codes. The verbal codes used in the speeches of the UN General Debate are mostly representational – they stand independent and apart from the encoder. These codes tend to become more universal as the language used is changed. Successful communication in an intercultural communication is difficult as it is. When communicators are using foreign languages, difficulties grow exponentially. The language used often becomes very simple and the act of communication tends to be very polite. Finland and Sweden appeared to handle

¹⁰¹ The UN has six different official languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Languages of many countries are covered, but even more languages are left out.

communication in a foreign language very well, suggesting that both countries are aware of the importance of good language and communication skills.

Finland and Sweden both view the UN as an important forum, and both have centered their foreign politics around it. But that is where the similarities end. The approaches that the countries take are different, the styles they use are different, and they even see the importance of the organization in a different light. The differences can be explained in many ways, but one underlying theme is evident in most of the explanations: Finland has wanted to be evenly good to everyone while Sweden can afford to be evenly bad.

According to the definitions of Hicks and Langsdorf (1999), Finland's argumentation style was based on the liberal conception. Such a style was underwritten by the logical argumentation theory that viewed deliberation as a tool for mediating arguments by force of universal reason or strategic bargaining. Finland based her arguments on reason because the Finnish communication tradition appeared to lack the required amount of emotion that could be used instead of excessive factual accounts. By basing her argumentation on facts, Finland did not have to worry about offending anyone or hurting anyone because that facts are facts – every one already knows them. With her language and argumentational styles, Finland tried to reduce uncertainty as much as possible – the audience tends not to be uncertain of such communication.

According to the same definitions by Hicks and Langsdorf (1999), Sweden's more emotional style could be categorized as a republican concept, which views deliberation as an opportunity to participate in the formulation of a substantive vision of good life – a foundation of civic virtue. Sweden wanted to emphasize the emotional side of arguments more, while not forgetting to use factual information when required. With the help of emotion, Sweden could try to collect everyone to act collectively for the common good and the good life.

Ethos, pathos and logos are important parts of argumentation, and they could all be found in my research, too: Finland's low-context style was logos-centered while Sweden relied more on pathos. Finland's willingness to emphasize on logos went along with all other traits that were evident in my study. By stating only factual and certain things, Finland played it safe and did not risk being bad to anyone. Sweden, with more experience with the UN and global power politics, was able to vary her styles a little more. Sweden was capable of mixing pathos and logos more, and thus making the speeches somewhat more interesting. Sweden was able to use the English language more to her needs than Finland was, or at least Sweden used it in many different ways to reach various goals. Finland used the language in limited ways, and maybe reached her goals effectively by not saying much.

Ethos was evident in my research, but it was not as obvious as logos and pathos. By producing factual information about global events, Finland and Sweden tried to help the speaker to portray the required ethos to the audience. In general, the ethos that existed in Finland was on the shoulders of the institution of the Foreign Minister of Finland, while Sweden's speakers used language a little more to create more ethos. Sweden relied heavily on the institution of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but not as heavily as Finland.

The coverage of the UN General Assembly very much depends on the times. In 1999, the coverage in and of Finland was probably at its highest because Finland spoke in New York on behalf of the European Union. In other years, Finland's speeches probably appeared in short in the corner of some of the Finnish newspapers, and they most likely did not raise questions or bring about heated debates on the home front. In New York, the local papers discuss UN affairs when those affairs are deemed important enough. With the exception of Finland's unique role in 1999, it is doubtful that either the Finnish or Swedish speeches have ever been discussed in the New York media. The UN publishes a document which has all speeches in writing, but those documents do not go out to the public, unless specifically requested. Those documents end up in the archives of all the UN members as well as in the various UN libraries. Overall, the media, and because of that the public, is not very interested in what takes place during the General Debates.

Fortunately for everyone, the United Nations has for very long been a melting pot of cultures. Everyone is respectful of each other while still trying to maintain their own ways. And if cultural mistakes are made in an informal context, they are not seen as something terrible. Only when those mistakes are made in formal situations are they noted and frowned upon. All in all, however, the culture of UN is unlike any other culture in the world – it is a unique mix of everything. That culture is governed by many written (UN Charter) and unwritten rules which most everyone seems to abide by. That culture provides other cultures with unique opportunities to interact and communicate. With proper reform and change, the UN can retain that uniqueness far into the 21st century.

6. Appendix 1

1.

What is the rhetorical situation?

What occasion gives rise to the need or opportunity for persuasion?

What is the historical occasion that would give rise to the composition of this text?

2.

Who is the speaker?

How does he/she establish personal credibility and authority, or ethos?

Does he/she come across as knowledgeable and/or fair?

Does the speaker's reputation convey authority?

3.

What is his/her intention in speaking?

4.

Who make up the audience?

Who is the intended audience?

What values does the audience hold that the speaker appeals to?

Who are or might be the secondary audiences?

5.

What is the content of this message?

The main idea?

What are the principle lines of reasoning or kinds of arguments used?

What topics of invention are employed?

How does the speaker appeal to reason, emotion, or pathos?

6.

What is the form in which it is conveyed?

What is the structure of the communication, how is it arranged?

What figures of speech are used?

What kind of style and tone is used and why?

7.

How do form and content correspond?

Does the form complement the content?

What effect could the form have, and does this help or hurt the author's intention?

8.

Does the speech succeed in fulfilling the speaker's intentions?

Does the speaker effectively fit his/her message to the circumstances, times and the audience?

9.

What does the nature of communication reveal about the culture that produced it?

What kinds of values or customs would the people have that would produce this?

How do the allusions, historical references, or kinds of words used place this in a certain time and location?

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