Building Intercultural Communication
Through Community Building Activities

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Abstract:
This project investigates methods for building intercultural communication through an effective learning community. Understanding *culture* (which may refer to nationality or certain aspects of an individual's personality) is necessary for intercultural communication. My concept of culture in this project includes an individual's personality. I am concerned with the idea that culture can be learned and taught in traditional ways. While I was doing my teaching internship at the Riverside Language Program, where some of the teachers employ the Community Language Learning (CLL) teaching approach, I learned that it is possible to facilitate intercultural communication for students, and that culture can be learned and taught through classroom experiences. The CLL approach is based on community building, which requires that students interact with each other cooperatively. In the process, students develop intercultural communication through their interactions. In this project I research community building activities in theory and practice. I describe two community building activities undertaken in a Middle School program and report on students' responses to the activities. I examine how such activities make learning effective and inspire students to intercultural communication.

This project by Ayana Inoguchi is accepted in its present form.

Date

Project Advisor

Project Reader

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ERIC Descriptors

Communication Skills
Teacher Attitudes
Class Activities
Cultural Awareness
Cultural Exchange
Cultural Inter-relationships
Intercultural Communication

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Introduction

The purpose of this project is to investigate and evaluate classroom "community building" activities as a method for building intercultural communication in an educational context. In order to accomplish intercultural communication, it is necessary to have increased cultural sensitivity and awareness, improved ways of communicating with others, and new perspectives on various aspects of culture. This paper will describe how community building activities foster intercultural communication.

There are 6 chapters in the paper. Chapter 1 defines an idea of intercultural communication. Chapter 2 examines various definitions of "culture" that are used in the context of intercultural communication. Chapter 3 discusses ideas of teaching and learning culture based on coursework in the "Intercultural Communication (ICC)" course at the School for International Training (SIT)." Chapter 3 also explores shortcomings of some traditional and current approaches to teaching and learning culture. Chapter 4 presents the Community Language Learning (CLL) approach for building effective cultural communities in an educational context largely through an account of my intern experience at the Riverside Language Program, where the CLL approach is practiced. The success of the program suggested that its method for teaching and learning culture was worthy of further study. Chapter 5 explores ideas about "community" and "community building" to evaluate the effectiveness of CLL in promoting intercultural communication in the classroom. Finally, Chapter 6 evaluates the CLL/community building activity approach through surveys of students who participated in community building activities in actual classroom settings.

Chapter 1

Definitions of Intercultural Communication

This first chapter will define "Intercultural Communication" and "Community," and will illustrate the relationship between intercultural communication and a classroom community. For the purpose of this paper, intercultural communication is the verbal and nonverbal interaction between individuals of different cultures, both at the community level and individual level. Culture is traditionally described as a national, ethnic, social class, and gender. However, culture is more complicated than these simple categories; cultural differences exist in individuals, and are derived from individual cultures such as beliefs, values and norms. We shall see this in more detail in Chapter 2. This chapter cites a few authors' definitions of intercultural communication and community to support my definitions.

The goal of intercultural communication is to encourage individuals to consider their differences and to share various cultural meanings. According to Stella Ting-Toomey, the goal of intercultural communication is to create shared meanings between dissimilar individuals in an interactive situation. Effective intercultural communication requires that each member of the community should respect and support others' self-concepts including cultural, ethnic, gender and personal identities. Ting-Toomey defines intercultural communication in *Communicating Across Cultures* as follows:

Intercultural communication is defined as the symbolic exchange process whereby individuals from two (or more) different cultural communities negotiate shared meanings in an interactive situation. (1999:16)

Ting-Toomey posits five characteristics of interaction: "symbolic exchange," "process,"

"different cultural communities," "negotiate shared meanings," and "an interactive

situation."

*The first characteristic, symbolic exchange, refers to the use of verbal and nonverbal
symbols between a minimum of two individuals to accomplish shared meanings.*
(1999:17)

*The second characteristic, process, refers to the interdependent nature of the
intercultural encounter. Once two cultural strangers make contact and attempt to
communicate, they enter into a mutually interdependent relationship.* (1999:17)

*The third characteristic, different cultural communities, is defined as a broad concept. A
cultural community refers to a group of interacting individuals within a bounded unit
who uphold a set of shared traditions and way of life. […] Broadly interpreted, a cultural
community can refer to a national cultural group, an ethnic group, or a gender group.
(1999:18)*

*The fourth characteristic, negotiate shared meanings, refers to the general goal of any
intercultural communication encounter. […] The word "negotiate" connotes the creative
give-and-take nature of the fluid process of human communication.* (1999:19)

*The last characteristic, an interactive situation, refers to the interaction scene of the
dyadic encounter. An interactive scene includes both the concrete features (such as the
furniture or seating arrangements in a room) and psychological features (such as
perceived formal-informal dimensions) of a setting. Every communication episode occurs
in an interactive situation.* (1999:20)

In conclusion, she sums up intercultural communication as "*a symbolic exchange process*

between persons of different cultures." (1999:21)

Her definitions explain that intercultural communication is an interdependent

action to negotiate shared traditions and way of life. In the process, individuals create

communication, a "give-and-take", based on interdependent relationships. When

communicating, in a classroom, students negotiate with other students who have different

culture. Under Ting-Toomey's framework, students should not judge someone's culture

by their own criteria. I saw an example of an infringement of this dictum when I was teaching Japanese at a Japanese language school in Japan to students who were preparing to enter Japanese University. Two students, a Thai and a Chinese, discussed the Thai student's habit of taking off his shoes in class. The Chinese student pointed out that he should not do that in a classroom. The Thai student insisted that it was not a bad habit in Thailand, but the Chinese student was uncomfortable with this habit. I am not sure if the difference of opinion depended on their national cultures or on their individual characteristics. However, it is obvious that the Chinese student judged the Thai student's habit by his own criteria. This example shows a failure or a difficulty in communication between individuals of different cultures.

Ting-Toomey also makes certain assumptions about intercultural communication. These assumptions increase our understanding of the goal and process of intercultural communication:

Assumption 1:
Intercultural communication involves the simultaneous encoding and decoding of verbal and nonverbal messages in the exchange process. (1999:22)

In a classroom, students understand others and express themselves both verbally and nonverbally while communicating. For example, in the case of the disagreement between the Thai student and the Chinese student, the Chinese student understood the Thai student's nonverbal habit (taking off shoes), and he expressed his opinion to the habit verbally. The communication, which decoded the nonverbal action (taking off shoes) and encoded the response to the habit verbally, took place simultaneously.

Assumption 2:

Many intercultural encounters involve well-meaning clashes. […] "Well-meaning clashes" basically refer to misunderstanding encounters in which people are "behaving properly and in a socially skilled manner according to the norms in their own culture" (Brislin, 1993, p.10; emphasis in original) (22)

Students usually encounter difficulties communicating with other students because of their conflicting cultural norms. Since they believe that they behave properly and follow appropriate social conventions, they cannot find reasons why misunderstandings occur. For example, the conflict between the Thai student and the Chinese student is because of the differences of their cultural norms. The Thai student believed that his behavior, taking off his shoes in a classroom, followed appropriate social conventions, while it was an inappropriate behavior for the Chinese student. The disagreement occurred because of their conflicting cultural norms.

These assumptions lay the groundwork for intercultural communication in a classroom setting. Intercultural communication in the classroom occurs when students encode and decode verbal and nonverbal messages in communicating. Miscommunications arise when students are behaving according to the norms in their own culture.

Next, I will discuss "community" in the context of intercultural communication in the classroom. In my view, community in the classroom is a psychological space that students and a teacher share and develop together for the purpose of pursuing effective learning. According to Paul W. Mattessich in *Community Building: What Makes It Work*, *"The term community can include the dimensions of geographic location, psychological ties, and/or people working together toward a common goal."* (1997:56) According to

Mattessich, students and a teacher should be tied psychologically with the same goal of

learning and work cooperatively for that goal.

However, it is common to interpret community geographically. Mattessich cites

two definitions under this geographic interpretation:

*"[A] grouping of people who live close to one another and are united by common
interests and mutual aid." (The National Research Council, 1975)*(1997:56)

*"[P]eople that live within a geographically bounded area who are involved in social
interaction and have one or more psychological ties with each other and with the place in
which they live." (Christenson and Robinson, 1989)* (1997:56)

A learning community in a classroom emphasizes psychological ties rather than

geographic location, and it values working together with a common goal. This dimension

of community is described as follows:

*"Community is whatever sense of the local common good citizens can be helped to
achieve. This perception of community is an achievement, not something given by reason
of geographic residence. It is not fixed; it changes as a result of experience or purposeful
effort. It may even shift according to the problem that catches the attention of the
citizens." (Biddle and Biddle, 1965)*(1997:57)

*"Community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter
to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met
through their commitment to be together." (McMillan and Chavis, 1986)*(1997:57)

Finally, community as referred to in this project may be described as a sense of belonging

of members; these members share a feeling, and help each other to achieve their goals. In

the sense that students should be able to share their feelings and opinions, and to

cooperate with each other in a classroom, classroom community has much to do with

psychological ties.

With these definitions in mind, it is worthwhile to briefly consider the benefits of intercultural communication in a classroom. In teaching a language, or any subject, a well-organized and supportive community provides students with a positive learning environment. In such an environment, students tend to respect and trust each other, need not be anxious about making mistakes, will be willing to learn by trial and error to pursue improvement, and will be motivated. This, in turn, increases intercultural communication. We will see examples of this in Chapter 4.

In conclusion, "intercultural communication" is the interdependent understanding of individuals' culture. In addition, "community" refers to a sense of belonging of students and a teacher. Developing an effective community is crucial to fulfill the goal of intercultural communication. A few authors' definitions are cited in this chapter to support my definitions of intercultural communication and community.

As intercultural communication involves interactions among various people from different cultures, various definitions of "culture" will be discussed in the next chapter. These definitions make "intercultural" clear in this context.

Chapter 2

Definitions of Culture

In chapter 2, I present various definitions of culture in the educational context in order to properly consider the idea of "intercultural communication" in classroom settings. Defining culture helps us identify in which situations intercultural communication takes place, and which cultural aspects play an important role in intercultural communication.

While the traditional view is that culture should be defined in terms of nationality, in my opinion, culture is defined as much by individual personality and personal experience as it is by nationality. Individual personality and experience influence one's assumptions, beliefs, and values. People having the same nationality do not necessarily share the same culture, and will perceive events through unique assumptions, beliefs, and values. First, I will survey other authors' definitions to examine traditional and newer definitions of culture. I will then explore perspectives on culture in the classroom setting.

A traditional way to define culture is by nationality. Under this definition, culture is represented by nationality, and a nation shares unified cultural norms. According to Susan Wright in *The Politicization of 'Culture,'* culture under the old definitions features the following characteristics. It is a:

--bounded, small scale entity
--defined characteristics
--unchanging, in balanced equilibrium or self-reproducing
--underlying system of shared meanings: 'authentic culture'
--identical, homogeneous individuals

(1998:3)

Under this traditional definition, individual personality and personal experience do not influence culture. "Bounded" culture is a culture limited to a small society. "Defined characteristics" are individuals' characteristics defined by a limited social rule or system. "Unchanging" means that culture is not changeable in any situation. "Authentic culture" refers to a system of culture shared by all members of a society. "Identical and homogeneous individuals" means that individuals who are members of the same society have the same easily identifiable culture. The characteristics of this definition have nothing to do with cultural individuality.

In contrast to the traditional defining characteristics of culture, Susan Wright provides characteristics of culture under newer definitions that view culture as follows:

--'culture is an active process of meaning making and contestation over definition, including of itself' (Street 1993:2)

--people, differently positioned in social relations and processes of domination, use economic and institutional resources available to them to try and make their definition of a situation 'stick', to prevent other's definitions from being heard, and to garner the material outcome

--sites are not bounded – people draw on local, national, global links

--the way clusters of concepts form is historically specific, and ideas never form a closed or coherent whole

--in its hegemonic form, culture appears coherent, systematic, consensual, like an object, beyond human agency, not ideological – like the old idea of culture
(1998:5)

Under these newer cultural definitions, culture includes a number of different aspects such as politics, economy, religion, geography and personality. These cultural aspects can also be of primary importance when describing a culture and deciding how culture is

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described. Defining culture as a process of meaning making, which is explained in

Wright's first definition is important when teaching intercultural communication because

culture cannot be defined by a limited rule set and system. In my idea, ideally, students

cooperate in order to make meaning of others' different cultures, and those students'

attitudes encourage intercultural communication. Moreover, as illustrated by Wright's

second definition, the idea of people using their own resources to make their cultural

definitions is also important for intercultural communication. When students are

communicating with others interculturally, their own opinions and situations would be

respected.

Roger M. Keesing in *Theories of Culture* provides an additional definition:

We can no longer say comfortably that "culture" is the heritage of learned symbolic behavior that makes humans human. And standing amid the swirling tides of change and individual diversity, we can no longer say comfortably that "a culture" is the heritage people in a particular society share. (1974:73)

Unlike the traditional cultural definitions, the theory of culture suggested by this

definition says that culture cannot be shared by all members of a society because of

individual personality, personal experience and social status. Individuals each have their

own culture and that individuality makes culture diverse. I agree with his statement. My

cultural definitions also focus on individual diversity. In a classroom, as intercultural

communication takes place by students who have various individual cultures, students'

personalities and experiences would be respected as factors of culture.

Moreover, Myron W. Lusting insists in *Intercultural Competence* that:

Not all cultural members will necessarily share all of those preferred choices, nor will they share them with the same degree of intensity. The immediate consequence of this conclusion for the development of intercultural competence is that every person

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represents the cultural group with which he or she identifies, but to a greater or lesser degree. A cultural pattern may be the preferred choice of most cultural members, but what can accurately be described for the culture in general cannot necessarily be assumed to be true for a specific individual. (1993:106)

According to Lusting, each person does not always share cultural patterns uniformly with the rest of his group, but represents them to a greater or lesser degree because of his own individuality. For example, I used to believe that all Americans strongly insisted on their opinions in a discussion. However, the cultural characteristic, which is generally described as one characteristic of Americans, is not always applicable to all Americans. The strength with which an individual insists on his opinion depends on the individual's own characteristics and personality. Lusting discusses individual diversity in the same way as Keesing.

To sum up, while traditional cultural definitions emphasize a shared cultural rule and system, newer cultural definitions emphasize individual personality, personal experience and social status. This project uses the newer definitions as its model. Respecting individual personality and personal experience as "culture" is necessary to fulfill the goal of intercultural communication. It is also useful to explain in which situations intercultural communication takes place and which cultural aspects have important roles for intercultural communication.

Culture cannot be defined in a simple way with a simple word, but is comprised of various cultural aspects. As for cultural interaction among people, it is worthwhile to consider individual personality and personal experience as part of a culture. For example, in order to fulfill the goal of intercultural communication in a classroom, students should consider other students' cultural individuality such as personalities, attitudes, emotions,

opinions, and experiences as a culture. Since cultural individuality is not shared, even by students who have the same national culture, understanding students' cultural individuality encourages mutual understanding and intercultural communication.

Multicultural and mono-cultural learning settings are presented here as contrasting examples of a community in a classroom and to discuss the importance of individuality as part of culture. Although it is well known that students will have difficulties communicating with other students in a multicultural classroom, communication difficulties also occur in a mono-cultural classroom. In a mono-cultural setting, students misunderstand and mis-communicate because of their individual personalities and personal experience. Students' individual diversity influences their intercultural communication in the same way as their nationalities.

When a class is in a multicultural setting, such as when students come from all over the world, it is not easy for students to interact and understand one another smoothly since they have different cultural systems and rules influenced by their nationalities. Those differences often interfere with communication among students, and misunderstandings can occur easily. For example, students in English as Second Language (ESL) classes in the US come from many countries and they have their own national-culture systems and rules. When students are interacting in a classroom, they will find their cultural rules are not always applicable to others. Students need to be helped to apply the idea of intercultural understanding to their cultural behaviors so that classroom communication is improved.

Similarly, intercultural understanding should be articulated even in a "mono-cultural" classroom in which students are from only one nation. Even though students

have the same nationality or grew up in the same country, they each have their own

assumptions, values, and behaviors which transcend national culture. Craig Storti

describes the effects of individual personality and personal experience on culture in

Figuring Foreigners Out:

While shared assumptions, values, and beliefs guarantee that people from the same culture will be similar in many ways, personal experience guarantees that no two people from that same culture will be identical. To put it another way, each of us is in part a product of culture (and to that extent similar to others from the same culture) and in part a product of our own unique life circumstances (and to that extent like no one else anywhere). […] *It means that the behavior you might predict or expect of someone, based on what you have learned about his or her culture, will not necessarily occur in any given interaction because a personal influence might override a cultural inclination.* (1999:15-16)

According to Storti, no two people with the same nationality will be identical due to

"personal experience" and "personal influence." Personal experience and influence have

important roles in the mono-cultural learning setting, and nationality has an important

role in the multicultural learning setting.

Different students may assign different meanings to the same behavior or event

because of their various perspectives influenced by personality and experience. I found

an interesting example of this when I taught Japanese to Chinese immigrants in Japan.

Students started to discuss how to express their gratitude to a teacher. When a student

said "thank you" to me because I gave him extra Japanese practice material, another older

student insisted that the student express his gratitude more politely. The older student

insisted that he receive the practice material from me with both hands not with one hand,

and also that he say "thank you" more gently. The older student might emphasize age,

status, and career more than the younger student. It might be because the older student

had working experience, and the younger student had never worked before. Or, it might have something to do with their age and personalities. Even though the two students had the same nationality, Chinese, their attitudes and perspectives toward expressing gratitude were different. They disagreed on how to thank the teacher because of their individual personalities and personal experience. In other words, their values and assumptions toward thanking were different. Therefore, the development of intercultural communication and understanding is necessary to build a community in both a multi-cultural learning situation and in a mono-cultural learning situation.

Regarding these observations, individual personality and personal experience can be categorized as cultural matters. Personal differences such as innate characteristics and individual experiences highly influence respective assumptions, values and beliefs in the same way that national differences influence people's perspectives and behaviors. Although these assumptions, values and behaviors appear to be shared by members of the same country, people in the same group do not necessarily share them but will perceive assumptions, values and behaviors in their own ways. As in the example of the mono-cultural classroom, students who share the same nation-based cultural perspectives often have different viewpoints because of their specific personalities and experience. Obviously, personal diversity transcends a general shared culture, and also makes the general culture variable.

In conclusion, culture should not be defined only in terms of nationality, but should also be defined in terms of individual personality and personal experience. When considering culture, cultural difference, and intercultural communication, it is important to consider individual differences as well as considering specific nationality.

These newer cultural definitions help make intercultural communication clear

and encourage it in a classroom. Intercultural communication transcends different

cultures among students who have diverse personalities and experience. When

introducing intercultural communication, it is important for a teacher to consider

students' individualities as aspects of culture in addition to students' nationalities.

Finally, intercultural communication is practiced in the multicultural classroom as well as

in the mono-cultural classroom.

Chapter 3

The Idea of Teaching and Learning Culture

In chapter 3, I will examine the idea of teaching and learning culture in a classroom for the purpose of developing intercultural communication. Chapters 1 and 2 explained that intercultural communication is interdependent understanding which transcends different cultural aspects, not only nationality, but also individual characteristics. These cultural aspects greatly influence one's interactions and the goal of intercultural communication. Therefore, whether and how culture can be taught and learned in a classroom should be discussed to help us learn to teach intercultural communication to students effectively.

This chapter discusses the limitations of various ideas about how culture can be taught and learned in a classroom while the next chapter discusses an alternative method to overcome these limitations. From my perspective, the idea that one can teach and learn culture in a classroom is not always realistic. Because culture cannot be defined in a simple way, and because it includes individual diversity such as individual personality and personal experience, not all aspects of culture can be taught and learned in a classroom. Individual personality and personal experience are cultural aspects that are difficult to be taught and learned. Because of individual diversity, individual personality and personal experience cannot be defined in a simple way that may be taught and learned.

I learned the ideas of teaching and learning culture in a classroom mainly from my class "Intercultural Communication (ICC)" at School for International Training (SIT).

I also learned about the limitations of the idea that culture can be taught and learned in a

classroom from this class. The goals and objectives of ICC are cited here:

GOALS
To become acquainted with the field of intercultural communication and its implications
for language education
To develop further intercultural competence for oneself and one's students
To integrate culture and intercultural exploration as intrinsic dimensions of the language
experience
To further integrate culture into the theory and practice of one's foreign/second language
teaching

OBJECTIVES
To articulate one's cultural identity and processes of enculturation and acculturation
To build skills in ethnographic interviewing
To build skills in cultural description and interpretation
To identify and enhance one's strategies as a culture learner
To practice skills of participation and facilitation of discussion and inquiry
To identify strategies for teaching culture

As I understand them, the goals of ICC are to encourage intercultural communication and

to develop intercultural competence for language education. In order to fulfill these goals,

its objectives are to articulate cultural identity and process to students, and to build skills

in cultural interpretation. In my view, based on the ICC course goals and objectives and

from my classroom experience, the ICC course aims to develop cultural awareness of

one's own culture and others' different cultures.

From my point of view, building cultural awareness through cultural learning is

useful in order to develop intercultural communication, but at the same time, teaching

and learning all aspects of culture in a classroom is extremely difficult. I find that there

are several difficulties with teaching and learning culture in a classroom. I will address

three of them. First, because culture includes individual personality and personal

experience, some cultural aspects such as beliefs and values are difficult to be taught and

learned. Because of individual diversity, cultural beliefs and values are difficult to define

to teach and learn in a classroom. Second, it is impossible to make all cultural dimensions

concrete to teach and learn in a classroom. Non-concrete cultural dimensions are values

and beliefs. It is impossible to fully describe, generalize and categorize them. Third, the

simple practice of a single cultural behavior in order to learn it does not teach the original

cultural meaning but it only mimics the original cultural behavior. Below I will discuss in

detail these three difficulties with teaching and learning culture.

First, culture includes individual personality and personal experience, which

vary by individual diversity. There is a limitation on how cultural beliefs and values can

be taught and learned in a classroom because they are variable depending on individual

diversity. In other words, a certain aspect of culture cannot be precisely observed,

analyzed and described since it depends on individual personality and personal

experience, as suggested by Pat Moran's definition of perspectives in "The Five

Dimensions of Culture," an approach for analyzing culture. In addition to perspectives,

Moran's posits four other dimensions of culture, "practices," "persons," "communities"

and "products." Moran defines "perspectives" as follows:

Perspectives *represent the perceptions, beliefs, values, and attitudes that underlie the*
products and that guide persons and communities in the practices of the culture. These
perspectives can be explicit but often they are implicit, outside conscious awareness.
Taken as a whole, perspectives provide meaning and constitute a unique outlook or
orientation toward life - a worldview. (Moran 2001:25)

I learned from Moran's definitions that perspectives cannot be accurately generalized

because perspectives represent perceptions, beliefs, values, and attitudes that are

influenced by individual personality and personal experience. Moran's description of

perspectives demonstrates my viewpoint that there is a limitation on how cultural beliefs

and values influenced by individual personality and personal experience can be taught

and learned in a classroom.

For example, it is difficult to teach and learn Americans' cultural characteristics

in a classroom because the characteristics vary among individuals. Americans are

believed to be individualistic, which is usually understood as a representative of

Americans, but some Americans may be more collectivistic and respect being a member

of a group. In this case, it is not appropriate to teach that all Americans are individualistic

and value individualism, because some may not. Therefore, since culture includes

perspectives influenced by individual personality and personal experience, cultural

beliefs and values are difficult to observe and analyze. They also cannot be described as a

characteristic of all members of that culture.

On the other hand, there is also the "worldview" or "shared national perception"

theory of culture in which a nation shares the same culture. The ideas of "worldview" and

"shared national perception" are explained by Pat Moran in the following excerpts:

*One way in which perceptions are commonly described in cultural studies is as
"worldview." […] The assumption underlying the notion of worldview is that of a
unified, shared outlook on the world. Worldview is used most often to describe the
fundamental perceptions shared by members of a culture.* (2001:79)

*Understanding perspectives, in my opinion, represents the most challenging aspect of
teaching culture. The task, simply put, is to identify the perceptions, values, beliefs, and
attitudes of the culture. However, culture consists of numerous communities, all
coexisting under the umbrella of a national culture. These communities, in theory at
least, share common perspectives. In fact, by its very nature, the national culture
presumes such common perspectives.* (2001:83)

Those descriptions in the end conclude that there is a common perception of a unified and

shared national culture. The notion of a "worldview" and a "shared national perception"

do not consider perspectives, and so tend to unify cultural beliefs and values. The idea

that "all Americans are individualists" is an example of "worldview" and "shared

national perception."

However, as Roger M. Keesing states in *Theories of Culture*, there is not a precise

cultural theory shared by everybody:

We can recognize that not every individual shares precisely the same theory of the
cultural code, that not every individual knows about all sectors of the culture.
(1974:89)

By Keesing's statement, people understand their cultures in their own ways because

people have various perspectives. The idea of a national shared culture fails to account

for this individuality. Since culture connotes many points of view, the various views

make it difficult for perspectives to be unified.

The descriptions of worldview and shared national perception are opposite to my

understanding of culture because the descriptions do not take perspectives into account.

In my idea, various perspectives cannot be reduced to a "worldview" and cannot be

shared as a national perception by all members of a culture. When I learned this idea of

unified perspectives in the ICC course, I also learned the difficulties of teaching and

learning cultural perspectives in a classroom. As I understood from the ICC course,

perspectives are a part of culture, represent beliefs and values, and they include

individual personality and personal experience. I am concerned that when perspectives

are unified for the purpose of teaching and learning about culture in a classroom, they are falsified.

There is a similar criticism of the idea of "worldview" and "shared national perception" by Susan Wright in *The Politicization of 'Culture'*.

Anthropologists of various persuasions were also criticized for treating 'culture' as if it were a set of ideas or meanings which were shared by a whole population of homogeneous individuals—which empirically was not the case. (1998:3)

In Wright's statement, culture is not a shared as a set of ideas or meanings by all members of a society. Perspectives are diverse and depend on individuals. A definition of culture that concentrates on "worldview" and "shared national perception" is an artificial construction since it has no empirical basis.

In conclusion, it is difficult to teach and learn cultural beliefs and values in a classroom because they vary among individuals. As suggested by Pat Moran, culture includes perspectives, which refer to individual personality and personal experience. Perspectives cannot be precisely observed, analyzed and described since they vary by individual. Although there is a theory of "worldview" and "shared national perception," those theories fail to account for individual perspectives. According to Keesing and Wright, culture is not shared by all members of society because people understand their cultures in their own ways. As culture connotes many points of view, there is a limitation on how cultural beliefs and values can be taught and learned in a classroom.

Second, whether culture can be taught and learned in a classroom is questionable because not all aspects of culture are always concrete and observable. A specific aspect of culture that is not observable nor concrete cannot be taught and learned in a classroom.

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An abstract and unobservable cultural dimension refers to perspectives as suggested by Pat Moran, because perspectives refer to values and beliefs, which cannot be observed nor formalized. Elisabeth Marx explains "Value," an aspect of perspectives, in *Breaking Through Culture Shock*:

Most of the time, we are quite unaware or cannot verbalize what our values are because they are very complex, were acquired a long time ago and are often subconscious. Ask yourself what your most important values are and you will see how difficult it is. (1999:46)

According to Marx, perspectives are difficult to observe and analyze because of their complexity and because they are often subconscious.

Unlike grammar rules in language, an abstract and unobservable cultural aspect does not have formal and concrete rules that can apply to all experiences. Roger M. Keesing cites Geertz, an anthropologist, in *Theories of Culture.*

Geertz has no ethnoscience optimism that the cultural code can be formalized as a grammar [.] (1974:79)

Geertz does not think culture can be formalized as well as a language is formalized by grammar rules. I agree with Geertz since I think all aspects of culture are not always sufficiently concrete and observable to be formalized. For example, religious belief is not concrete and observable. How much people believe in religion cannot be measured concretely. The beliefs of religion cannot be exactly explained and formalized like language grammar rules.

Beliefs and values are unobservable. Attempts to make unobservable cultural dimensions concrete tend to stereotype and generalize culturally diverse and unique ideas. For example, Japanese are known as diligent, polite, and shy. But those general

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cultural characteristics do not precisely explain the values of Japanese people. A value is

abstract and unobservable, and it can not apply to all members of a society since there are

various values among individuals in that culture. Therefore, the definitions of the

Japanese cultural characteristics are just generalized characteristics. When "Japanese

people" is explained in "culturally concrete" terms, the explanation reduces the diversity

and uniqueness of each Japanese person to a stereotype.

There are aspects of culture that are concrete and observable. Moran calls these

observable features "practices." He defines practices as concrete cultural dimensions.

Practices comprise the full range of actions and interactions that members of the culture carry out, individually or with others. These include language and other forms of communication and self-expression as well as actions associated with social groups and use of products. These practices are both verbal and nonverbal and include interpretations of time, space, and the context of communication in social situations. Practices also involve notions of appropriateness and inappropriateness, including taboos. (2001:25)

In my idea, practices are concrete cultural dimensions such as customs, traditions and

folkways, which are observable and easy to copy. For example, while the religious beliefs

are not observable, the rituals are observable. As for Catholicism, it is possible to explain

and formalize how Catholics attend Mass and what they use in Mass. Since the rituals are

observable and concrete, it is easier to deal with them than their religious beliefs.

Accordingly, from my point of view, cultural practices are possible to teach and learn in a

classroom, in contrast to perspectives, which are difficult to teach and learn in a

classroom.

Craig Storti, in *Figuring Foreigners Out,* breaks culture into an *"Invisible*

dimension" which includes assumptions, values, and beliefs, and a *"Visible dimension"*

which includes behavior (1999:5). As practices are comprised of behaviors from customs, traditions and folkways, they fall into Storti's "Visible dimension." The "Invisible dimension," on the other hand, strongly suggests unobservable perspectives. Practices are assumed to be a most appropriate cultural aspect to observe and analyze because they are visible and concrete. Yet, perspectives cannot be dealt with as well as practices when analyzing a culture. As Lee Cronk says in *That Complex Whole*:

We can observe [culture] only through its effects on behavior, not directly, inferring its presence when behavior forms certain patterns and its absence when those patterns are not present. (1999:13)

In his idea, behavior presents its effects so that behavior patterns can be observed. Consequently, culture, as defined by observable cultural practices, is possible to teach and learn in a classroom. On the other hand, culture, as defined by unobservable cultural perspectives, is difficult to teach and learn in a classroom.

To summarize, whether culture can be taught and learned in a classroom is questionable, because all aspects of culture are not always concrete and observable. Cultural practices such as customs and traditions are concrete and observable. Cultural perspectives such as values and beliefs are not observable. Practices are possible to teach and learn in a classroom because customs and traditions are observable, but perspectives are difficult to teach and learn in a classroom because values and beliefs cannot be explained in simple rules. Geertz suggested that culture cannot be formalized into a set of rules the way a language is formalized by grammar rules. The "culture" that Geertz mentions here is cultural perspectives, and I agree with his idea because cultural perspectives are not sufficiently concrete and observable to formalize in rules. Moreover,

the attempt to make unobservable cultural dimensions concrete tends to stereotype and generalize culturally diverse and unique ideas. However, even observable aspects of culture can present problems when teaching and learning them in a classroom, as I discuss next.

A third reason why attempts to teach and learn culture in a classroom fail is because while a single cultural behavior may be observed and practiced so that it may be learned and taught, this observation and practice does not explain the behavior's original cultural meaning, but only mimics the original cultural behavior. In this sense, even observable cultural practices are problematic to teach and learn in a classroom because the observed and practiced cultural behavior does not explain the original cultural meaning. In a classroom, the practiced cultural aspect is a learned cultural behavior. The learned behavior simply follows a pattern of a culture, which means it only mimics that original culture.

In *Theories of Culture,* Roger M. Keesing comments on David Schneider's *"American Kinship: A Cultural Account":*

Culture, [Schneider] tells us, is a system of symbols and meanings. It comprises categories or "units," and "rules" about relationships and modes of behavior. The epistemological status of cultural units or "things" does not depend on their observability; both ghosts and dead people are cultural categories. Nor are rules and categories to be inferred directly from behavior; they exist, as it were, on a separate plane. "The definition of the units and the rules is not based on, defined by, drawn from, constructed in accord with, or developed in terms of the observations of behavior in any direct, simple sense." (Schneider 1968:6). (Keesing 1974:80)

Schneider suggests that "rules and categories cannot be inferred directly from behavior" and "the definition of the cultural units and rules is not developed in terms of the observation of behavior in any direct, simple sense." In my understanding, he mentions

that cultural rules cannot be learned from observing cultural behavior. In other words, the observed cultural behavior does not explain the original cultural meaning.

For example, it is impossible for non-Japanese students to understand the cultural meaning of the Japanese cultural behavior of bowing from observing and practicing the bow. The practiced bow does not explain its cultural significance. A student may bow perfectly, but bowing without understanding its real value as an action merely mimics a Japanese cultural practice.

In conclusion, the third reason why culture is difficult to teach and learn in a classroom is because a practiced cultural behavior does not explain its original cultural meaning. The practiced cultural behavior does not imply an original culture but it is a learned behavior that mimics the original culture. Learned behavior is not intrinsic culture, but mimics a pattern of life. Even a perfectly performed behavior cannot illustrate intrinsic culture.

Throughout the ICC course, I was skeptical of the effectiveness of teaching and learning culture in a classroom. To teach and learn "culture" in a classroom, especially when it refers to cultural perspectives, is not an easy task. From my point of view, cultural individual diversity, cultural abstractness, and the likelihood of an outcome of mere mimicry make it difficult to teach and learn culture in a classroom. When teaching intercultural communication, it is useful to consider the possible reasons for the difficulties in teaching and learning culture in a classroom, because intercultural communication requires interdependent understanding between different cultures.

Chapter 4

The Review of Community Language Learning (CLL)

Having discussed the idea of teaching and learning culture in chapter 3, this chapter examines a method for teaching and learning culture in order to develop intercultural communication in a classroom. As intercultural communication is the interdependent understanding of different cultures, developing a method of teaching and learning culture is necessary to fulfill the goal of intercultural communication.

This chapter considers a method for teaching and learning culture, called "Community Language Learning (CLL)." I studied this method during my internship at the Riverside Language Program in New York City. CLL is a language learning approach, but it is also effective for cultural learning. In my viewpoint, CLL is a possible way for teaching and learning culture, including cultural perspectives. CLL is a teaching approach based on a community; students are encouraged to interact to build a learning community for developing mutual understanding. Through this process, students learn about the varied cultures of their peers through their every day interactions in the classroom. The understanding of peers' cultures will result in intercultural communication. Therefore, with the CLL approach, intercultural communication is accomplished by students' interactions in a classroom. In addition to examining CLL, in this chapter, a specific successful community from the internship is presented, and ways the community was built and how students learned each others' culture are also discussed.

First, the teaching approach of CLL will be examined in order to show how it

relates to intercultural communication. The two most basic principles of CLL are

summed up in *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* by Diane Larsen-

Freeman as follows:

(1) 'Learning is persons,' which means that whole–person learning of another language takes place best in a relationship of trust, support, and cooperation between teacher and students and among students; and (2) 'Learning is dynamic and creative,' which means that learning is a living and developmental process. (2000:105)

She explains "whole-person" as follows:

This method we will examine in this chapter advises teachers to consider their students as 'whole persons.' Whole–person learning means that teachers consider not only their students' intellect, but also have some understanding of the relationship among students' feelings, physical reactions, instinctive protective reactions, and desire to learn. (2000:89)

These principles focus on developing an effective learning community in a relationship of

trust, support, and cooperation between a teacher and students and among students. It is

also important to consider students as "whole-persons" since this attitude toward students

advances their positive feelings. The supportive and cooperative relations provide

community, and the community, by considering students as "whole persons," also

provides students with positive feelings. The community helps students to learn about

their various cultures from each other through their interactions. Intercultural

communication can be developed in this kind of community.

Earl W. Stevick provided these defining principles of CLL in *Working with*

Teaching Methods:

See and hear the other person as he or she is, without turning away, without fighting back, and without trying to control the other person.

(1998:79)

In Stevick's definitions, CLL method encourages a student to respect other students as they are, without judging them by one's own criteria. The definition suggests that students ought to respect each others' different cultures. Culture here includes all dimensions of culture such as practices and perspectives. Although perspectives are a difficult cultural aspect to teach and learn when teaching intercultural communication, respecting perspectives is a possible way for students to learn about others' perspectives. When a student respects others' cultural perspectives and individualities "without turning away, without fighting back, and without trying to control" them, students will learn various cultures, and then intercultural communication may develop.

The CLL method emphasizes building a community among people in a classroom with relationships that are trusting, supportive and cooperative. Through a cooperative and positive community, students are inspired to understand each other. Moreover, the CLL method encourages students to respect different cultures without judging them by their own criteria. It makes it possible to teach and learn culture, especially cultural perspectives. Under the CLL method, intercultural communication is promoted while students interact in a cooperative community and they learn different cultures through their interactions.

Therefore, with the CLL approach, intercultural communication succeeds by students' interactions with each other in a classroom. When students communicate with each other, the CLL approach enables them to recognize different perspectives that are otherwise invisible and impossible to observe perfectly because of individual diversity. CLL also prevents students from stereotyping and generalizing cultural values and beliefs

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when they interact with each other because students see and hear the other person as he or she is without trying to control the other person. Therefore, the CLL method retains original cultural values and beliefs, and promotes cultural diversity and uniqueness.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of CLL, I would like to present three specific techniques that Thomas Miller, my mentor teacher, applied in the classroom during my internship at the Riverside Language Program. The three specific techniques are not always and specifically applied under CLL principles. However, it is my idea that because Tom focused on the CLL approach in the classroom, his practical techniques provided the same outcome as CLL.

First of all, he divided the class into three small groups of 5-8 students and directed each group how to engage in a group learning activity that could be done without a teacher. The small groups worked very well to encourage students to learn how to learn and how to cooperate with one another. From my viewpoint, the idea of working in a small group relates to building an effective learning community. As students will have more time to interact with each other in a small group, they may build a trusting, supportive and cooperative community.

Secondly, he instructed students not to help peers unless they needed help. He inspired students not to give a quick answer to another student who was struggling to learn, but to wait to give him or her enough time to figure out problems by himself/herself. After students got used to this idea, they came to be respectful and tolerant of each others' language learning. In my idea, this technique advances students' mutual respect when they communicate with each other. Students respect other students' learning attitudes, feelings and perspectives without judging them by their own criteria.

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Finally, he never interrupted students' interactions to point out their mistakes, but rather, let them work together to correct one another's mistakes. Students discussed their mistakes so as to correct them by themselves. Letting students work together to correct mistakes helps to develop a collaborative learning community, and in the process, students' mutual respect is developed. As they need to interact with each other when they try to find an answer, the interactions provide a trusting community. Then, students learn how to respect other students through the interactions in the community.

During my internship, I witnessed an example of a small group of students who built an effective learning community and became respectful toward each other. Their assigned activities were to listen to a tape of English, dictate sentences from the tape, find mistakes from their dictation, and to correct their mistakes. This sequence of activities was spread over four days, about one hour each day. For example, students listened to a tape and dictated sentences from it on Monday and Tuesday, and found and corrected mistakes on Wednesday and Thursday. Tom, my mentor, divided the class into three small groups of 5-8 students for this small group activity. The groups were divided based on the students' personality and English competence.

I joined a small group among the three groups. The small group had Russian, Chinese, Pakistani, Mongolian and African students. There was a great diversity in nationality, age, gender, educational backgrounds, career, and, above all, personality. The group was completely disorganized at the very beginning. One student tried to take initiative for the group, but he was sometimes so assertive that he made other students uncomfortable. Another was too shy to speak in front of everyone. There was a student who put his questions before the other students' questions, and he kept asking his

questions to the teacher during small group activities. Some students were impatient with slow learners, and others would stop the class while they translated the teacher's English into their native languages.

Although the students at first did not respect each other when working in a group, they gradually changed their attitudes toward the group members as they were doing activities collaboratively. For instance, the assertive student who had tried to take initiative for the group was changed into a considerate leader who took care of slow learning students. Because of Tom's instruction not to give a quick answer to a student who was struggling to learn, he learned the importance of waiting for the answer, encouraging the student to figure out the answer by himself, and finally, respected others' learning. The shy student became comfortable with speaking in front of everyone because other students respected her learning style. She trusted other students in a cooperative and supportive community that was developed by the members of the small group. The student who had kept asking the teacher his questions started to ask other students. Tom directed him ask his questions to other students so that he could work cooperatively and find an answer by himself. From the process of the activities, he came to trust other students in the cooperative community. The impatient students became more patient with a student who would try to figure out an answer. They waited without interrupting, or would help the student find an answer without simply telling the answer. It was because Tom instructed them not to give a quick answer to other students but to be patient with respect to their learning. As the students became more patient with others' learning styles and characteristics, their respect for each other grew. The students who relied on translating English into their native languages stopped translating, and started to ask their

questions to other students. They came to trust the members of the small group while the collaborative relationship was developed.

Through the activities, students learned other students' various cultures, which include cultural perspectives. The supporting and trustful community makes it possible for students to recognize different cultural values, beliefs and individual personalities. The community, then, prevents students from stereotyping and generalizing individual cultures. In conclusion, students respect individual cultural perspectives, and it is a way for students to learn about others' cultures.

For instance, the assertive student and the impatient students learned about others' different values toward learning. In the case of the shy student, other students learned her learning style, which was based on her values and beliefs, influenced by her individual personality and personal experience. Cultural learning includes recognizing and respecting each others' differences toward values and beliefs. It is an outcome of intercultural understanding.

After the students did several activities, their respect and patience with others started to develop. A learning community was also developed with students' trust, collaboration, and support. The students built the learning community successfully, and they respected each other. In addition, those students' achievements were developed by their teacher's support. For effective students' activities, a teacher's proper instructions for the activity are necessary. In this point, Tom gave specific instructions and had a specific approach for managing the activities. Students could contribute to the activities more effectively because of Tom's support. Therefore, the teacher's ability determines whether students can successfully accomplish the activity and their learning.

In conclusion, as I saw during my internship, the small group activities under Tom's directions built a trusting, supportive and cooperative community, and students' mutual respect through every day interactions between a teacher and students, and among students. Then, through respecting and recognizing each others' differences toward values, beliefs and individual personalities, students learned other students' various individual cultures.

Eventually, the CLL approach encourages intercultural communication in a classroom. Because of the community and students' interactions, the CLL approach provides interdependent understanding of students' different characteristics, which is a definition of intercultural communication. In other words, the trusting, supportive and cooperative community provides students with more interactions, and then the interactions further promote students' interdependent understanding and respect to different cultures. Considering that the CLL approach encourages students to respect different cultures without judging them by their own criteria, students could learn various individual cultures through the CLL approach. This demonstrates that it is possible to teach and learn culture, and it is essential for intercultural communication since intercultural communication occurs across students' different cultures. In short, the CLL approach is an effective tool for teaching and learning culture, and for achieving intercultural communication.

Chapter 5

The Research and Examples of Community Building Activities

I realized the importance of community building as a means for helping students develop intercultural communication through my experience with the Community Language Learning (CLL) approach at Riverside Language Program discussed in the previous chapter. Despite my concern that learning and teaching culture is not always possible, and the perceived difficulties of practicing intercultural communication in a classroom, the students at Riverside built a successful community, fostered mutual respect from their community and eventually developed intercultural communication using the CLL method. The students learned about their various cultural differences through everyday communications in their community. The community made students respect each other's learning styles and individual characteristics in spite of their diversity. Their respectful interactions with one another produced acceptance and understanding of cultural differences, and this understanding promoted intercultural communication.

Based on my experience with the CLL approach at Riverside, I decided to study the connection between community building activities and how they promote intercultural communication. For the purpose of examining this connection, this chapter discusses the idea of community building, and later, presents concrete community building activities. The first goal of this chapter is to investigate the relationship between the ideas of community building and intercultural communication, and the second goal is to investigate concrete community building activities.

First, I will discuss theories of community building. While an exact definition for the context of intercultural communication may be difficult to construct, from my experience and according to various scholars in this area, community building in a classroom generally refers to a committed effort to achieve mutual understanding among students so that they may respect different cultural values and norms. The community then becomes a learning place for students and a teacher to share different values and norms, work cooperatively, and to understand each other.

Paul W. Mattessich provides examples of definitions of community building in *Community Building: What Makes It Work*:

"Community building is an ongoing comprehensive effort that strengthens the norms, supports, and problem-solving resources of the community." (Committee for Economic Development, 1995)(Mattessich 1997:60)

Community building is "the practice of building connections among residents, and establishing positive patterns of individual and community behavior based on mutual responsibility and ownership." (Gardner in Leiterman, 1993, p.6)(Mattessich 1997:60)

Based on these quotes, one could say that the purpose of community building in the classroom is to strengthen the cultural norms, build support and connections among students, and establish positive feelings and behaviors. For the purpose of this project, community building encourages students to make connections and to share a sense of belonging.

The idea of community building is important for intercultural communication because an effective community provides students with an ideal learning situation that encourages students to understand each other and to work cooperatevely. Considering the example of Riverside from the previous chapter, the students were encouraged to

understand each other and to work cooperatively because the community was trustful, supportive and cooperative. Since the community strengthens the students' mutual support, connections and positive attitudes, students were practicing intercultural communication.

Ting-Toomey, citing Brewer in *Communicating Across Cultures*, identifies the following conditions that can produce favorable intercultural attitudes:

1. *The interaction encourages behaviors that disconfirm stereotypes that the groups hold of each other.*
2. *Cooperative interdependence among members of both groups is involved.*
(Ting-Toomey 1999: 179)

According to Ting-Toomey, favorable intercultural attitudes can be produced by conditions, such as cooperative interdependence and behaviors, which disconfirm stereotypes. In a classroom, students tend to judge classmates depending on race, gender and appearance: students from western countries are more aggressive than Asian students, boys are more athletic than girls, and tall students are good at playing sports. The stereotypes are reduced when students cooperate to work interdependently in a classroom. When students interact interdependently and cooperatively through classroom activities, their understanding is promoted and may overcome their stereotypes. When students do not interact interdependently and a classroom is not cooperative, students' stereotypes do not change and students do not learn different cultural values and norms. Based on my experience, the favorable intercultural attitude Ting-Toomey promotes is encouraged by the idea of community building since it furthers better mutual understanding through respect for different cultural values and norms. In this sense, community building has an important role in intercultural communication.

I will now turn to examples of community building activities. The concept of community building is a main idea of CLL. In a community, the CLL method develops intercultural communication through students' daily interactions with a knowledgeable teacher's instruction. Tom, my mentor teacher at Riverside Language Program, developed an effective community in a classroom by the CLL method. However, not all teachers are able to develop an effective community and to encourage intercultural communication in a classroom like Tom did. It requires experience and specific techniques of teachers. I discuss community building activities here. The activities discussed herein provide an idea how to build an effective learning community. Community building activities require a teaching plan for building a community. On the other hand, CLL builds a community through students' daily classroom interactions.

The goals of the activities are to encourage and share positive feelings, and to build a satisfactory and successful community in the classroom. The examples listed below are categorized by when in the school year they are introduced, whether at the very beginning of the school year, later in the school year, or at any time during the school year. There are two activities for the beginning of the term: "A Touching Experience," and "Fortune Cookies." There is also one activity for later in the school year: "First and Last Impressions." These three activities were developed by Gertrude Moskowitz in *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class* (1978). In addition, "Jigsaw Puzzles," developed by Cohen (1994) can be introduced at any time. I provide herein detailed descriptions of these activities, with commentary.

A Touching Experience (Moskowitz 1978: 53-54)

Purposes:
        Affective-
● To energize the class at times when students may be tired and less alert
● To encourage being observant of others
● To encourage creativity in responses
● For fun

        Linguistics-
● To practice the vocabulary of colors, parts of body, articles of clothing, and accessories that people wear
● To afford practice in speaking spontaneously
● To practice giving and comprehending directions

Levels: Beginning but can be used at all levels

Size of groups: About six (five to eight can be used)

Procedures:
Divide the class into groups and have each group stand up and form a circle. The students should have nothing in their hands. Explain that they have learned a number of colors, parts of the body, articles of clothing, and accessories and are going to practice using this vocabulary.
        State something like this:
        "I'll call out an item. Everyone in your small group must touch that item on someone else in the group while repeating all together the name of it as you touch it." Demonstrate this with one group as the others watch. Then call out other items, one at a time, for all groups to carry out. Here are a few examples:
        "Touch a left hand."
        "Touch a watch."
        "Touch a thumb."
        "Touch a ring."
        "Touch white."
        "Touch a shirt."
        "Touch short hair."
        "Touch green."
Be certain that the class remembers to repeat "left hand," "a watch," "a thumb," etc., after each command.
        After you have named about twelve items for the class, give the responsibility for saying the commands to the students in their individual groups. Tell the class:
        "Now you will think up things to touch in your group. Whenever someone in your group calls out an item, everyone in the group will touch it on someone else and name it at the same time. Remember, you can use colors, parts of the body, articles of clothing, jewelry, or designs you see in fabric, such as flowers or stripes."

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Comments:
You can allow this activity to continue for five to seven minutes. It will put the students in a lively, awakened, spirited mood. They will want to participate by creating commands for the others to carry out. Part of the fun is in thinking of less obvious commands, for example:

"Touch a dimple."
"Touch curly hair."
"Touch a fingernail."
"Touch long hair."
"Touch a button."
"Touch an arm with your elbow."

It is also reinforcing to have others notice what you, in particular, are wearing; "Touch a plaid shirt," or "Touch flowers on a sleeve."

Intermediate classes can add the kinds of fabric students are wearing, that is, cotton, nylon, wool. The color of hair can be included as well: "Touch blonde hair." Colors, clothing, and fabric can be combined in the commands: "Touch a green blouse," "Touch a yellow sweater," "Touch a red velvet ribbon."

Rather than chorally responding with only the name of the item being touched, students can be asked to say, "I am touching" plus the item. The pace is not as lively this way, but it affords practice in the present progressive.

For any cultural groups or classes, where touching someone else would cause a concern, you can vary this activity by saying "Point to" or "Show me," instead of "Touch." As a rule the "touching" in this exercise is viewed as fun and harmless and part of showing knowledge of the target language. However, use this activity after students have some experience with humanistic techniques.

This activity is mainly geared toward young students because adult students often feel uncomfortable touching each other. This activity makes students closely interact by touching each other. I chose this activity for further study in Chapter 6 because I emphasize the importance of physical communication as well as psychological communication as a means for community building. I expect that the students enjoy the physical connections and have positive feelings toward the classroom and their classmates because of them. From my experience, this activity encourages community among students because they build connections through both working together and

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touching each other. The community strengthens students' collaboration and positive

attitudes which promotes intercultural communication.

Fortune Cookies (Moskowitz 1978: 56)

Purposes:
  Affective-
- To encourage students to wish good things for their classmates
- To try to project what would make others in the class happy
- To provide fun, mystery, and a bit of excitement

  Linguistic-
- To practice writing in the future tense

Levels: All levels

Size of groups: About four

Procedures:
Students are placed in groups and told to make fortunes for the persons to their right, something they think would make them happy. Each fortune is written on a slip of paper. One at a time the fortune is passed to the person for whom it is intended and is read aloud by that person. The students must make a comment or react after reading it, and the others can discuss the fortune, if they wish, before going on to the next one. Some fortunes from each group can be read in front of the class.

Variations:
1. In groups of four, have each student write a fortune for the other three people. The slips of paper are folded and placed in front of the person whose fortune it is. Have three rounds of turns, with each person reading one of his/her fortunes at a time.
2. Have each student write a fortune for him/herself. As each student reads all four fortunes a once, the group guesses which was written by that student.
3. Have each student write a wish for students in any of the above formats. In this case the subjunctive mood will be practiced in some languages.
4. Fortunes can be collected and read in front of the class rather than in groups.

Comments:
This activity should be done after students know one another fairly well so the students can predict more accurately what would make specific classmates happy. Be sure they make up some fortunes for you, too.

This activity is an opportunity for students to say positive things to their classmates. In

traditional classrooms, students hardly ever have an opportunity to say positive things to

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classmates in class. I think students feel happy when listening to good wishes from

classmates, respond with positive feelings, and build trustful relationships. The trustful

relationships are essential for building community because students' positive feelings and

behaviors further students' mutual understanding and respect. Intercultural

communication is made possible by trustful relationships through students' mutual

understanding. For these reasons, I selected this activity for further study in Chapter 6.

First and Last Impressions (Moskowitz 1978: 100-101)

Purposes:
       Affective –
- To provide positive feedback to class members
- To illustrate how getting to know people based on a positive focus can enhance one's perceptions of others

       Linguistic –
- To practice the past tense(s)
- To practice the use of adjectives

Levels: Intermediate to advanced

Size of groups: About six to eight so that more feedback is received per person

Procedures:
       It would be helpful to have this activity follow another one and to keep the students in the same groups. Tell the class:
       "We all know that first impressions count. We have had first impressions of everyone in this class. But we also have been able to get to know one another in our class a lot better than usually happens in school. So, many of our impressions may have changed from the first time we met. This may be true even if you have known some of the students for quite a while outside of our class.
       "We are now going to find out how impressions of us have changed as the students in the class got to know us better. In your groups, focus on one person at a time. The group members each tell that person how their first impressions have changed since they first met. After everyone speaks to one person, move on to another person in the group until everyone has had a turn to be the focus."

Comments:
       This exercise may concern the students at first as they might fear hearing negative things about themselves. If the class is cohesive and a warm spirit of oneness has developed in the group, the impressions of people, whether initially favorable or not, should be more positive now. Although the exercise feels somewhat threatening, it has proved to be very valuable and an eye opener to students. They often hear exceptionally favorable feedback about themselves that they otherwise would be unaware of.
       You may wish to qualify the instructions in this way: "How have your present impressions grown more favorable than your first impressions of each other?" This would point out that everyone should present positive feedback, which is what the students seem to give anyway. By the end of the year, they are quite accustomed to dealing positively with each other. This activity should be presented at the close of the school year.

The students are mainly young students in this activity because young students may be more willing than adult students to give their opinions. This activity provides positive feelings and attitudes in the classroom. Moreover, it enhances students' perception of other students by illustrating how they got to know each other. Through this activity, students learn what kinds of impressions the classmates had of them at first and how those impressions changed. They also understand their own first impressions of their classmates and how those impressions have changed. It is difficult for students to be aware how they initially felt about their classmates and how their impressions changed. Students rarely care about it, but it is important for building a community and intercultural communication. Being aware of their classmates' and their own feelings helps understanding and respect for different ideas and values, and this awareness fosters intercultural communication. In addition, learning how their impressions and the impressions of their classmates changed after sharing some time in classes gives students positive feelings toward each other. The positive feelings further develop a trustful and supportive community.

Jigsaw Puzzles (Cohen, Elizabeth G 1994: 167)

Pick out some simple jigsaw puzzles. Each group member has a bag with one quarter of the pieces (for a four-person group). They have to complete the puzzle without a picture of the product in front of them. They may talk, but the task cannot be completed without each individual contributing his or her share. One child may not take another's piece and do it for him or her. Hints and encouragement may be given, but all the members must do their own part.

This activity is applicable to adults even though it was originally geared toward children. This activity is structured around students' cooperative work. Each student is required to contribute to the group in order to complete the task. Without contributions from all the members of the group, the task cannot be achieved. Because of the sense of cooperation, this activity is effective for building a community. As students need to ask each other questions and discuss the puzzle to complete the activity, their common work develops their community. In the community, students share the responsibility for their shared task. From this process, I expect that students promote mutual understanding and respect for their classmates, which will promote intercultural communication.

In conclusion, all of these selected activities are designed to promote building a trustful, supportive and cooperative community, and the resulting community furthers intercultural communication among students in a classroom. All the activities facilitate students' positive emotions and attitudes, being aware of their own and their classmates' perceptions, and encourage students' mutual respect, cooperation and support. "A Touching Experience" enables students to build attachments to each other through physical communication. "Fortune Cookies" fosters students' positive feelings towards others and themselves. "First and Last Impressions" focuses on encouraging students to be aware of their emotional and attitudinal changes towards others and themselves. Lastly, "Jigsaw Puzzles" focuses on students' interactions and cooperation by pursuing a common task.

By examining these community building activities, I learned that there is a relationship between community building and intercultural communication. Building a trustful, supportive and cooperative community is necessary to fulfill the goal of intercultural communication. Discussing effective community building activities is important for developing intercultural communication in the classroom.

In Chapter 5, I investigated the relationships between community building and intercultural communication, and examined community building activities in order to make clear the relationships. In Chapter 6, I analyze students' responses to two of these community building activities: "A Touching Experience" and "Fortune Cookies."

Chapter 6

The Surveys of Community Building Activities

This last chapter examines some of the community building activities that were presented in the previous chapter through surveys of students who participated in these activities. As we discussed in Chapter 5, introducing an effective community building activity into a classroom advance intercultural communication because community building strengthens students' connections, develops mutual support and positive attitudes, and encourages students to work cooperatively and understand each other.

In order to examine the effect of community building activities on students and the classroom, I conducted a survey of students who participated in two of the community building activities introduced in Chapter 5, "A Touching Experience" and "Fortune Cookies." I chose them because the aims of the two activities -- to encourage students to build a connection and an attachment, and to foster students' positive feelings towards each other -- are important for students to develop a community and to practice intercultural communication. In this chapter, I review students' responses to surveys on the two community building activities, and I then analyze how these community building activities influenced students. First, the survey methodology and its results are presented and analyzed, and second, I discuss lessons learned for future community building activities and intercultural communication based on survey results and my own experience.

Through these surveys, I wanted to see how the community building activities worked in a homogeneous classroom, and how they helped to build a community so that I

could consider ways to use them in heterogeneous classes. In my view, a community building activity helps to build a community both in a homogeneous classroom and a heterogeneous classroom. I hypothesize that these community building activities can promote intercultural communication in a heterogeneous classroom by encouraging an effective community, mutual understanding and respectful attitudes.

The survey was conducted at Bellows Falls Middle School in Vermont in fall 2004. The school had set up a cultural experiential learning program, the purpose of which is to promote students' cultural understanding. The cultural experiential learning program was designed to develop students' skills to work cooperatively, to understand cross-cultural communication and to communicate across different perspectives. I was involved in this cultural learning program by teaching introductory Japanese. I taught one lesson per week to two classes of students for four weeks there in November. Before each lesson, I introduced a community building activity, and I surveyed two of them.

In the cultural experiential learning program, there were five classes of about fifteen students each from the seventh and eighth grades who attended the program every other weekday. Each lesson was fifty minutes. The students had already known each other and they tended to communicate only with students they were already close to. They liked to take a seat close to the students they were already close to and to work with them. The students were not good at communicating with students with whom they were not close. Moreover, the students did not pay attention to other students who were answering questions or talking to the class.

The students participated in two community building activities and they completed surveys based on their experiences. The survey was conducted by a

questionnaire with eleven questions with three to five multiple choice answers for each question and a section for students' comments on certain questions. The questionnaire was adapted from *Cohen* (1994)*.* Additional questions were also added. The community building activities were referred to as "warm-up activities" in classes and in the survey.

"A Touching Experience" was conducted in five class sessions, and "Fortune Cookies" was conducted in three class sessions. In "A Touching Experience," forty-seven students completed the questionnaire and in "Fortune Cookies," thirty-two students completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire, the raw data and percentages of students' survey results, and students' comments for selected questions are provided herein.

EVALUATION

1. How comfortable were you while you were doing the warm-up activity?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
Very comfortable.	16 (34%)	25 (78%)
Fairly comfortable.	14 (29%)	5 (16%)
Somewhat comfortable.	16 (34%)	1 (3%)
Not very comfortable.	1 (2%)	1 (3%)
I was not comfortable at all.	0	0

2. How interesting did you find the warm-up activity?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
Very interesting.	12 (26%)	16 (50%)
Fairly interesting.	20 (43%)	9 (28%)
Somewhat interesting.	11 (23%)	5 (16%)
Not very interesting.	4 (9%)	1 (3%)
I was not interested.	0	1 (3%)

3. How difficult did you find the warm-up activity?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
Extremely difficult.	2 (4%)	3 (9%)
Fairly difficult.	8 (19%)	0
Sometimes difficult.	20 (43%)	10 (31%)
Not too difficult – just about right	14 (29%)	5 (16%)
Very easy.	3 (6%)	14 (44%)

4. Did you understand the purpose of the warm-up activity?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
I knew just what to do.	13 (28%)	26 (81%)
At first I didn't understand.	31 (66%)	1 (3%)
It was never clear to me.	3 (6%)	5 (16%)

5. If you were uncomfortable doing the warm-up activity, or if you found it uninteresting or difficult, please explain why.

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
The purpose of the activity was not clear.	8 (17%)	4 (13%)
The activity was inappropriate.	0	3 (9%)
I didn't like the classroom discussions.	1 (2%)	2 (6%)
Other reasons (below).	9 (19%)	1 (3%)
No Answer.	29 (62%)	22 (69%)

(Other reasons)
<u>A Touching Experience</u>
1—I found it embarrassing and silly.
2—it was difficult
3—difficult
4—I didn't get it at all
* 5 didn't explain the reason.

<u>Fortune Cookies</u>
* Students provided no reasons for this activity.

6. Did you get along with your classmates while you were doing the warm-up activity?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
With few of them.	8 (17%)	9 (28%)
With half of them.	1 (2%)	2 (6%)
With most of them.	15 (32%)	9 (28%)
With all of them.	22 (47%)	11 (34%)
With none of them.	0	1 (3%)
No Answer	1 (2%)	---

7. Did the warm-up activity change your feelings and attitudes towards your classmates?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
Very much.	1 (2%)	3 (9%)
Fairly.	7 (15%)	4 (13%)
Somewhat.	5 (11%)	3 (9%)
Not very much.	13 (28%)	4 (13%)
Not at all.	20 (43%)	18 (56%)
No Answer.	1 (2%)	---

How?

-I knew my classmates better after the activity.	6 (13%)	4 (13%)
-I felt more comfortable about talking with my classmates after the activity.	4 (9%)	4 (13%)
-I became more patient towards my classmates after the activity.	7 (15%)	1 (3%)
-Others (below)	11 (23%)	6 (19%)
-No Answer.	19 (40%)	17 (53%)

(Other reasons)
A Touching Experience
1—I didn't feel any difference.
2—Some people who usually don't participate in class got involved for this.
3—It didn't change my views of my fellow classmates.
4—I knew my classmates pretty well before and after.
5—My feeling are the same after the activity.
6—It didn't really change anything

Fortune Cookies
1—I felt the same. (2)
2—I have already knew my classmates.

8. Did the warm-up activity change your feelings and attitudes about yourself?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
Very much.	2 (4%)	3 (9%)
Fairly.	2 (4%)	1 (3%)
Somewhat.	11 (23%)	4 (13%)
Not very much.	13 (28%)	2 (6%)
Not at all.	19 (40%)	22 (69%)

How?

-I felt more comfortable about speaking in front of my classmates after the activity.	7 (15%)	9 (25%)
-I felt more comfortable about making mistakes.	12 (26%)	2 (6%)
-I enjoyed working with my classmates after the activity.	9 (19%)	2 (6%)
-Others.	4 (9%)	3 (9%)
-No Answer.	15 (32%)	16 (50%)

9. How helpful and effective was the warm-up activity in making you comfortable in the group and in the class?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
Very much.	7 (15%)	8 (25%)
Fairly.	17 (36%)	5 (16%)
Somewhat.	17 (36%)	8 (25%)
Not very much.	3 (6%)	5 (16%)
Not at all.	3 (6%)	6 (19%)

10. Did you get to know your classmates better through the warm-up activity?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
Very much.	4 (9%)	9 (28%)
Fairly.	3 (6%)	4 (13%)
Somewhat.	9 (19%)	4 (13%)
Not very much.	14 (30%)	3 (9%)
Not at all.	17 (36%)	12 (38%)

11. Would you like to do another warm-up activity in your next class?

	A Touching Experience 47 respondents (out of 79)	Fortune Cookies 32 respondents
Yes	31 (66%)	24 (75%)
No	15 (32%)	8 (25%)
No Answer	1 (2%)	---

According to the survey results, both "A Touching Experience" and "Fortune Cookies" were generally considered comfortable, interesting, and understandable. However, the students responded differently to the two activities. The students found that "Fortune Cookies" was more comfortable, interesting and understandable than "A Touching Experience." Because these activities have different approaches to communicating, with "Fortune Cookies" being primarily verbal communication and "A Touching Experience" having an element of physical communication, the students responded to them differently.

The goal of "A Touching Experience" is to build a community by a connection through touching. I expected that the activity would make students work collaboratively and provide them with positive attitudes. But the students were not sufficiently comfortable with physical communication. In contrast, the goal of "Fortune Cookies" is to foster students' positive attitudes by sharing good wishes between classmates. A positive attitude is crucial for community building. According to the answers in the survey, the verbal form of communication and the content of what students said helped students to be comfortable and to get to know each other.

For example, considering question 1, "How comfortable were you while you were doing the warm-up activity?" the students found "Fortune Cookies" a more comfortable exercise than "A Touching Experience." This may be because of a negative response to physical communication. Moreover, as for questions 2, "How interesting did you find the warm-up activity?" and 10 "Did you get to know your classmates better through the warm-up activity?" the verbal form of communication and the content of what students said in "Fortune Cookies" were evaluated by students as being more interesting and

useful for getting to know their classmates. Considering question 2, as "Fortune Cookies" was considered more interesting than "A Touching Experience," I think the students' comments in the fortunes may have made the activity more interesting. In question 10, the students found "Fortune Cookies" more worthwhile for building relationships than "A Touching Experience." In addition, as for question 4, "Did you understand the purpose of the warm-up activity?" 66% of students responded "At first I didn't understand" in "A Touching Experience," while only 3% of students responded "At first I didn't understand" in "Fortune Cookies." According to the survey results, "Fortune Cookies" is more understandable for students, which makes students more comfortable while doing the activity.

My interpretation of these results is that the verbal form of communication helped to make the activity more understandable, and the content of what the students said made the activity interesting, made the students more comfortable, and helped them get to know each other. Students evaluated verbal communication more positively than physical communication, and they appreciated the positive words by their classmates. There was much more personally relevant and interesting content in "Fortune Cookies," and much less interesting content in "A Touching Experience."

In addition to the students' differing responses to the two activities, the survey indicated that the two activities positively changed some students' feelings and attitudes toward their classmates and themselves. According to the answers to question 7, "Did the warm-up activity change your feelings and attitudes towards your classmates? How?" after the activity, the students knew their classmates better, felt more comfortable about talking with their classmates, and became more patient towards their classmates.

According to the answers to question 8, "Did the warm-up activity change your feelings and attitudes about yourself? How?" after the activity, the students felt more comfortable about speaking in front of their classmates and about making mistakes. They also said they enjoyed working with their classmates after the activity. To sum up, after the activities, the students learned about their classmates, and they said they felt more comfortable toward their classmates, the classroom and themselves. The students' feelings and attitudes toward their classmates, the classroom and themselves were changed positively by the community building activities.

On the other hand, many students responded to questions 7 and 8 that their feelings and attitudes towards their classmates and themselves did not change. From my point of view, it is partly because some students believed they already knew themselves and their classmates. It is important to shift students' viewpoints from the preconception that they fully knew each other, to the open minded ground of being more sensitive to their familiar relationships. As it requires sufficient time to make students aware of new viewpoints towards their peers, the classroom community, and themselves, students need time to get used to the idea of community building activities and time to become sensitive to their own changes.

These surveys suggest that verbal form of communication and the students' positive words are important for students to be comfortable in the classroom, and to get to know classmates and communicate with classmates. In Chapter 5, I cited Ting-Toomey, who identified the conditions that can produce favorable intercultural attitudes. She said, "The interactions encourage behaviors that disconfirm stereotypes that the groups hold of each other," and "Cooperative interdependence among members of both groups is

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involved." The survey confirms this opinion. As verbal form of communication and positive words made students comfortable and the activities interesting, they also encourage students to cooperate interdependently, and to disconfirm existing stereotypes. Therefore, when considering community building activities, a teacher should consider the effect of verbal form of communication and students' positive words in order to develop favorable intercultural attitudes.

In addition, I learned that encouraging students to be aware of their familiar relationships is important for community building activities. Considering that students may think that they fully know classmates and themselves, they have a difficult time being aware of their new viewpoints towards classmates and themselves. In order to shift students' viewpoint to being more sensitive to their familiar relationships, it is worthwhile for students to take time to get used to the idea of community building activities.

In conclusion, the survey shows that the students need verbal help when communicating, they recognize positive words as worthwhile, and they need more time to get used to the idea of community building. The survey also shows that the students have preconceptions that they fully know each other. It is necessary for the students to take time to become aware of their familiar relationships. In this sense, the survey contributes to understanding how to build effective classroom communities for intercultural communication. Taking advantage of these surveys may be of value for future study and successful community building activities and fulfilling the goal of intercultural communication.

Conclusion

This paper suggests that intercultural communication can be taught to students. It evaluates cultural definitions, ideas about teaching and learning culture, the CLL approach, and community building activities. Through the surveys, the project also presents methods of building a community based on cultural understanding, and for evaluating and improving these methods.

Before learning the CLL approach during my internship at Riverside Language Program, I had been skeptical about the idea of encouraging intercultural communication in an educational environment because of problems with cultural complexity and individuality. Throughout my teaching experience, helping students realize the idea of intercultural communication had been fairly challenging. Students often did not respect or cooperate with others, and they were less tolerant of people from cultures other than their own. However, classes in which CLL was applied were surprising successes for me. Despite my doubt, the students proved the possibility of understanding and learning culture over individual diversity -- they were practicing intercultural communication.

Although it is quite difficult to develop a satisfactory community similar to the Riverside Language Program's, this paper hopes to further community building and to promote intercultural communication. The purpose of this paper is not to build a perfect method that can be applied to any situation, but to present models and surveys of community building activities so that they may be improved. The ultimate goal, of course, is to produce effective learning.

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