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UNDERSTAND YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Towards smoother intercultural communication in
Nepal

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Tiivistelmä <p>Tämän työn tarkoituksena oli ymmärtää Suomen ja Nepalin kulttuuriarvoja sekä sanallista viestintää. Tavoitteena oli löytää keinoja vähentää haasteita näiden kahden kulttuurin välisissä kohtaamisissa. Kuusi Mikkelin ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijaa suoritti harjoittelunsa Nepalissa vuosien 2010–2015 välisenä aikana ja heidän kokemuksensa olivat tämän työn tutkimuksen kohteena.</p> <p>Työn teoreettinen viitekehys sisälsi Hofsteden kulttuurillisen vertailumallin sekä Gudykunstin ja Ting-Tooneyn sanallisen viestinnän tyyliä. Kulttuurienvälisen viestinnän kehittäminen seurasi näkökulmia, jotka painottivat yksilön sisäisten ominaisuuksien ja kykyjen merkitystä mm. tunteiden käsittelytaitoja sekä tietoisena olemista. Ajankohtaisia uutisia, kulttuurillista kirjallisuutta sekä blogitekstejä liitettiin mukaan tuomaan työhön syvyyttä. Tutkijan omat kokemukset tulivat työssä myös esiin.</p> <p>Tutkimus oli laadullinen ja empiirinen osuus toteutettiin teemahaastattelujen avulla, jotka muodostettiin teorioiden pohjalta. Haastattelujen perusteella nostettiin esille teemoja, jotka johtivat tutkimustuloksiin. Haastatteluissa kävi ilmi, että väärinymmärryksiä ja negatiivisia tunnetiloja, mutta myös oivalluksia ja oppimista esiintyi kahden kulttuurin välisissä kohtaamisissa.</p> <p>Työn tulokset esitettiin suosituksina vieraaseen kulttuuriin matkaavalle opiskelijalle. Suositukset antoivat vinkkejä siihen, kuinka ymmärtää paremmin paikallista väestöä ja päästä kohti sujuvampaa viestintää heidän kanssaan. Todettiin, että mm. hiljaisuuden hyödyntäminen, kokonaisuuksien hallitseminen sekä ihmissuhteiden vaaliminen auttavat meitä kulttuurienvälisessä viestinnässä.</p>	

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The purpose of this work was to understand cultural values and verbal communication styles of Finland and Nepal. The objectives were to find out ways to reduce the challenges in intercultural communication. The work focused on six individuals' experiences who visited Nepal for internship during 2010 and 2015. The interns were students of Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences.</p> <p>The theoretical part considered Hofstede's cultural dimension model and verbal communication styles based on Gudykunst and Ting-Tooney's approach. Developing intercultural communication with the framework of Storti and Isaac took note to individual's internal aspects while intercultural encounters. In addition quotes of current news, cultural literature and blogs were collected to bring depth to the research. The researcher's own experiences were introduced in the work, too.</p> <p>The empirical part was conducted with qualitative method and the theme interviews emphasized the interns' experiences. Interviewing the interns strived for finding out their perspectives on cultural values and verbal communication in Nepal. The interviews confirmed different cultural backgrounds and communication styles may lead to misunderstandings and negative feelings towards the locals, but also to realizations and increasing the knowledge. The results contained recommendations; ways an individual can obtain smoother intercultural communication and learn from oneself when knowing the others.</p>	

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1 INTRODUCTION

According to Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Finland has had development co-operation with Nepal since 1983 (Kehitysyhteistyön määrärahat 2015). Since then Finns have discovered this South Asian country of mountains, its various ethnic groups and mystique. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, a country of approximately 26 million inhabitants (Suomen kehitysyhteistyö Nepalissa 2015).

In summer 2015 the Finnish government announced cuts on the annual budget of development co-operation, starting from 2016 (Kehitysyhteistyön määrärahat 2015). These actions will affect the work of the Finnish non-governmental organizations (NGO) in developing countries; Mikkeli Association for Sustainable Development (KEMA) is one of those NGO's.

KEMA is the employer of this work. The organization is founded in 1986 in Mikkeli. The objectives of KEMA are to support sustainable development cooperation by implementing projects with NGOs in development countries, lobby for better Finnish development policy and promote public support for sustainable development cooperation. In addition they aim for increasing fairness in trade between Finland and development countries. (Kema 2012.)

KEMA started Livelihood and Environmental Awareness -project (LEAP) in the village of Devichaur in Nepal in 2010 which continues until the end of the year 2015. Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences (MAMK) has sent annually two students to execute their internships by working together with the local NGO Codef in Nepal. MAMK sponsored the interns' trip to the country and also enabled them to collect more experiences and improve professional skills. (Kema 2012.) I was one of the lucky interns, who entered the country for three months.

When arriving a new country and leaving behind the basic routines, adjusting to new culture starts. Three months in a totally different environment and culture is a short time to adapt and carry out the work. The previous interns prepare the next individuals for the journey by sharing their experiences and feelings. All of the experiences are

important and exploiting them in this work has been a great journey for me. Listening to the others' perspectives has opened up new worlds of experiences for me.

This work will take into account the experiences of the interns and how their perspectives correspond with the theoretical framework and my perspective. The focus is on the verbal communication (speech), because words and speech we use is the majority of the work in the field. Each culture is reflected in person's speech, where discussions of cultural values associate with it. After reading the interns' reports I found there have been e.g. misunderstandings and negative feelings among people. I wanted to find ways to reduce those during intercultural communication, so for the next interns' recommendations introduced in the end may be used for preparation before and during the internship abroad.

Developing intercultural intelligence and dialogue-skills are also involved, because the essential part of the abroad internship is to learn from the other cultures. I think instead of traveling to the country with our own highlighted, strict ideas, we should learn to see the world from locals' perspective. William Isaacs' (2001) recommendations for building up dialogue are shown in this work for finding that consensus, neutral stance in verbal communication situations.

2 PROBLEM SETTING AND CONCEPTUAL FRAME OF REFERENCE

2.1 Purpose and objectives

The purpose of the work is to help Finnish interns understand local cultural values and ease intercultural communication when travelling to Nepal. Thereby working in foreign culture can be more efficient and refine intercultural skills. I formed the following research questions:

- How do Finland and Nepal differ from each other with regard to cultural values?
- How are the Finnish and the Nepalese verbal communication styles when compared to each other?
- What are the challenges in intercultural communication between Finns and Nepalese?
- What can Finnish interns do to reduce such challenges?

Theoretical framework includes comparing cultural values and different verbal communication styles to each other, which emphasizes differences and possible similarities among the Finns and the Nepalese. The main challenges are discovered with theme interviews and they point out the interns' experiences in Nepalese culture. The outcome of the work is formed with exploiting all that information together with my perspective. The outcome answers to a question "*how to reduce those challenges?*". Recommendations are formed to help future interns to prepare for the internship in Nepal and in foreign cultures.

The objectives of the work are as following, created alongside with the research questions:

- To understand Finnish and Nepalese cultural values and verbal communication styles.
- To compare Finnish and Nepalese verbal communication styles.
- To find challenges and possible similarities in verbal communication between Finnish interns and Nepalese.

2.2 Conceptual framework

Comparison of cultural values is formed with Hofstede's five dimension model, which includes the following aspects: power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term vs. short-term orientation. Main topics discussed considering verbal communication follow Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey's three dimensions of communication styles: indirect/direct, personal/contextual and elaborated/succinct style. Those affiliate with cultural values and they are implemented in this work. High and low context communication and language barriers are addressed, too. Referring to developing intercultural communication skills the ideas of Storti and Isaacs are employed in the end of theoretical part.

2.3 Delimitation of the work

Culture, values and intercultural communication can be seen as a vast subject. Overall Finns perspective itself narrows the topic. Phenomenological approach emphasizes personal experiences; thereby making generalizations is not favorable. Discovering relations between things and seeing experience as a whole is more relevant.

This work encompasses human as a creature, who gives different meanings to everything. Those meanings are subjective and together with context and mental models they differ from one culture to another. Culture is only one actor in the theater of incredible life, and as stated later, even though knowing someone from a particular cultural background, predicting his/her communication style is impossible. All situations are different.

3 WHAT IS CULTURE?

Intercultural communication includes the word "culture", which is full of diverse definitions. Also the word "communication" needs to be understood before going further. Culture is the core of intercultural communication. (Martin & Nakayama 2014, 31.) It can be defined many ways. According to Hofstede (1991) it is a collective programming of human mind, which separates different groups from each other. Edward Hall (1973) announces culture is communication. Culture emerges in people's daily life and the commonly used metaphor "iceberg" describes its hidden parts. (Salo-Lee etc. 1998, 6-7.)

Culture is a constantly changing system, which is a collection of coincidental characteristics. Understanding it a whole, instead of examining its parts individually reveals culture as being constantly connected with the world, with multiple contexts and situations. (Aneas & Sandin 2009.)

Culture can be identified with two main approaches of the term. The first one is a traditional conception, which contains a more static and popular approach. It perceives culture with a group of products (skills, knowledge etc.) developed by a community during history. Another conception approaches culture with a more dynamic way. It identifies culture with extensive matter and takes into account the role of the individu-

al in the community, how the world is interpreted and how culture is situated. (Aneas & Sandin 2009.)

The first conception claims culture is something people “possess” and it's statically “given”. The development of culture is seen linear and progressive, because outputs are countable. This conception may lead to stereotyping of cultural traits as the others are identified with trivial and superficial fragments. Intercultural hierarchy considering relations between cultures is sometimes deducted through this first conception. (Aneas & Sandin 2009.)

The second conception is more complex with more dimensions. It sees that people are related to world and interpret it. According to this conception people don't possess culture, but culture is an inherent part of the person. Individual and collective identities are contributed by culture: a complicated identity which can be expressed across many social aspects and belongings. Culture is a mechanism for understanding and interpreting the world, which attains instrumental and adjusting meaning. (Aneas & Sandin 2009.)

Usually we don't think about our own cultural background and assumptions until we encounter people from other cultures (Martin & Nakayama 2014, 32). In order to adapt to the new culture we need to learn how people think, what they value and what life means to them. Besides, learning about the others going abroad is also beneficial for us. (Shaules 2010, 2.)

As mentioned earlier, iceberg is the well-known metaphor of describing a culture's hidden features. When travelling abroad adjusting to new food and hassle in traffic are easier to handle. Subtle things like struggling with communication, difficulties to understand what is expected from us and learning attitudes or behavior that look rude or insufficient are more complex. (Shaules 2010, 3.)



PICTURE 1. Culture is like an iceberg (Salo-Lee, Malmberg & Halinoja 1998, 8)

Hofstede (1991) considers the relation between individual, group and culture. He mentions three layers in a mental programming of human mind: universal, collective and individual. (Salo-Lee etc. 1998, 10.) Also it's important to note that several things have an influence on communication. Besides culture there are also subcultures, contexts, individual matters and relations which impact communication, where phenomenological approaching takes a note for these aspects. (Salo-Lee etc. 1998, 11.)

Phenomenology is a philosophical orientation, arguing the idea of man affiliates with viewpoints of historicity, culture, practice, background and language. Human has realness, which is experienced through those aspects. (Pernecky & Jamal 2010, 1067.) Individuals are experiencing creatures, who give meanings to all (Aaltola & Valli 2010, 28-29). Culture defines our communication, but also personal, context and other issues are related.

Communication is complex and can be defined in many ways. According to Martin and Nakayama (2010, 38) communication is symbolic, thus words only get meanings when people agree on them. Linguistic Janne Saarikivi (2015) argues that freedom as a word has a different meaning when compared between Finnish and Russian: it means chaos and disorder in Russia. As for Finns *freedom* is the highly appreciated goal of an individual. Communication is also a process. It involves people who com-

municate via messages (nonverbal or verbal) and a channel where this takes place. (Martin & Nakayama 2010, 39-40.)

Culture influences communication. (Martin & Nakayama 2010, 41.) Culture concerns groups; thereby it's crucial to see people also as individuals when making cultural comparisons (Lehtipuu 2010, 39). Verbal and non-verbal communication is hard to separate, but this work concentrates on mainly in verbal communication, which answers to the question ‘‘*what is said*’’ (Salo- Lee etc. 1998, 36).

Lehtipuu (2010) acknowledges that recognizing different cultural styles can reveal possible collide points beforehand. All humans got a mental model which includes a mixture of inherited temperament and nature, but also flavors from the surrounding cultural reality, influence of family, school, experiences and environment. People have a mental model with all those aspects and they may feel cozy, natural and right. When reflected to the other cultures they become visible. (Lehtipuu 2010, 39.) Next chapters take a look at those different cultural and communication styles of Finns and Nepalese.

4 COMPARISON OF FINNISH AND NEPALESE CULTURAL VALUES

Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede has implemented five value dimensions, which help us to understand cultural differences between countries. The dimensions are employed in this work. They are: 1) power distance 2) masculinity vs. femininity 3) uncertainty avoidance 4) individuality vs. collectivism and 5) long-term vs. short-term orientation to life. (National culture.)

Country comparisons are implemented with scores. Scores describe the cultural values, as in first dimension ‘‘*power distance*’’ Finland has 33 in power distance index and Nepal has 65. The scale runs between 0-100, where 50 is the midlevel. The rule is that if score is under 50, the value is considered relatively low. If a country scores over 50, it's high in that value. With dimension individualism, if a country scores under 50 it's considered collectivistic thus above 50 refers to more individualistic features of cultural values. (National culture.)

This first section compares Finnish and Nepalese cultural values. However it's important to notice that generalizations concerns groups and scores are relative like humans. (National culture.) All cultures have same features, and realizing those aspects may reveal new sides of person's own culture. Chinese have a saying: *'it's not hard to know another person, but to know self'* or in west: *'fish get conscious of water when pulled to the ground.'* (Salo-Lee 1998, 12-13.)

4.1 Power distance

Power distance describes the dependence relationships of a country. Hofstede etc. (2010, 61) defines it as:

'the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.'

Table 1. Power distance in Finland and in Nepal (Modified from Hofstede, 2005)

Finland (33)	Nepal (65)
Hierarchy means inequality of roles	Hierarchy reflects existential inequality between higher and lower levels (caste-system)
All should have equal rights	The power should have privileges
The ideal boss is resourceful democrat	The ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat or a "good father"
Power is decentralized	Power is centralized
Subordinate-superior relations are pragmatic	Subordinate-superior relations are emotional
Communication is direct and participative	Communication is indirect
Status symbols and privileges are frowned upon	Status symbols and privileges are normal and popular

Finland had a higher power distance 50 years ago, but nowadays low distance and dependency of subordinates and bosses can be seen in most organizations (Helkama

2015, 65). When looking back at Finland's history, roots of egalitarianism can be found there. Until the 1917 Finland was under Russian rule and prior to 1809 country was part of Swedish kingdom. Long periods of foreign rule lead to the lack of indigenous aristocracy and complicated class structure. After the World War II Finland was mostly a poor agricultural country, but soon industrialization and high-quality education boosted the middle class and brought up a sense of equality. (Chaker 2014, 27.)

Mines (2010) acknowledges that Nepal, the country of several ethnic groups in South Asia implemented the caste system for distinguishing different kinds of humans from the others. People tend to get married with a person from the same caste and people from the upper caste avoid eating with those from the lower level. Although nowadays research appears that caste boundaries have expanded and people are more flexible, there's still four-class division of humans: *Brahmans* (priests and scholars), *Ksatriyas* (warriors and kings), *Vaisyas* (merchants and farmers) and *Sudras* (servants of the other three). (Mines 2010, 145-146.)

Strong strives of egalitarianism affects the business culture of Finland. Management can be criticized openly and the heads of major companies, government ministers and other high profile individuals are accessible to public. (Chaker 2014, 28.) Social viewpoints between the public and the elite are pointed out to be quite similar in Finland. According to researchers it is a good for democracy and characteristic of short power distance country. (Helkama 2015, 124-125.)

“‘Sauli Naantalista’ soitti radion luonto-ohjelmaan” in Yle news (2015) introduced how the President of Finland phoned to radio's nature show, willing to discuss plants. This surprising moment may reveal the value of equality values in Finnish society. Famous historical writing ‘Sinuhe the Egyptian’, authorized by Mika Waltari, has a powerful meaning in Finns' mind. The following citation reveals the values of universalistic equality (Modified from Helkama 2015, 117):

*There's no difference between humans. Everyone born into this world naked. The heart is the only measure between them.
Nor can human be measured by their skin color or their language.
Nor can human be measured by their clothes or jewelry.
Nor can human be measured by their wealth, only by their heart.*

Leadership styles in organizations reflect power distance. As Table 1 illustrates, Finnish leadership style favors team leaders more than solo leaders. Power is decentralized among the upper-middle managers, who have a limited role. They build diversity, seek talents, develop colleagues and create a mission. (Lewis 2005, 92-93.) Relationships between managers and subordinates are pragmatic, whereas more emotional approach is involved in Nepalese leadership style. India, the neighbor of Nepal, shares a common understanding of business, which is strongly considered as personal. Friendship and companionship are more crucial criteria for choosing partners. (Lehtipuu 2010, 179.) Leaders are ‘‘good fathers’’ who are expected to give both personal and emotional support. Power is centralized in Nepalese business culture, where top managers hold the executive power and decisions and orders are top-down. (Lewis 2005, 90-91.) As in India, these hierarchical orders cannot be passed. All social situations are colored with hierarchy: who can initiate, who will obey and how to behave. (Lehtipuu 2010, 182.)

Brown (1995) announces the political system in Nepal continues its hierarchical and centered nature, despite the end of authoritarian rule. Distribution of power is still in the hands of the elite, the Indo-Aryan men from the hills. Those men, known also as Khas, were originally from the west and the south. Over several centuries rule they established few principal elements in Nepal. One was Thakuri aristocracy, second priestly Brahman caste and warrior caste of Chettri. The elite language of Khas ended up to be the official language of Nepal, Nepali. (Brown 1995, 1-2.)

Behavior in negotiation of Finns is different from the South Asian and Nepalese style. First names are used quickly in Finland and what is said is more crucial than who says it. A humorous, informal atmosphere is also favored. (Lewis 2005, 139-140.) When negotiating in India and the South Asia, meetings usually start with announcing all participants’ names and titles. A person in lower level doesn’t usually question opinions of upper level and if ordered even may act consciously wrong. (Lehtipuu 2010, 177-178.)

4.2 Individualism vs. Collectivism

Most of the people in our world live in societies where the interest of the group dominates over the interest of an individual. Those societies are called “collectivist”, referring to the power of the group. In collectivist societies an extended family consists of several people living together. A child learns to be part of the “we” group and all the members of the group are dependent on each other, both practically and psychologically. (Hofstede etc. 2010, 90-91.)

The minority of people in our world live in individualistic societies, where the interest of individuals rule over the interest of a group. Family with two parents and one or two children form nuclear family. Children learn to see themselves as “I” and personal identity is distinguished from others. Education targets to independency, where children are able to stand on their own feet. (Hofstede etc. 2010, 91.)

Hofstede’s (2010, 92) definition of this dimension goes as follows:

“Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him- or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.”

Table 2. Characteristics of individualism in Finland and in Nepal (Modified from Hofstede, 2005)

Finland (63)	Nepal (30)
The same value standards for everyone: universalism	The value standards differ among in-groups and out-groups: exclusionism
Speaking one’s mind is encouraged	Harmony should always be maintained and direct confrontations avoided
The employee-employer relationship is a contract between parties in a labor market	The employee-employer relationship is moral, like a family link
Task prevails over the relationship	Relationship prevails over the task
Management is management of individuals	Management is management of groups

As earlier discussed, a strong strive to egalitarianism in Finland refers also to universalism. People are treated predominantly on the basis what they are as individuals and their group connection is ignored (Hofstede etc. 2010, 98.) Small power distance countries are more individualistic and countries with larger distance more collectivistic (Hofstede 2010, 103). Modified from Salo-Lee etc. (1998, 90):

‘Individualistic countries, small power distance, modern, industrialized society, wealth and protestant religion are usually linked together. Also location in the northern hemisphere can be added here. Cold climate has forced people to be independent and self-reliant.’

Nepal has exclusionist features and people treat each other on the basis of group affiliation. They aspire to harmony and good relationships within one’s in-group. At the same time they can be rude, inconsiderate and indifferent towards people from out-groups. (Hofstede etc. 2005, 98.) Preferring relatives in hiring process is a part of responsibility taking and reducing risks in business, whereas conversely nepotism has negative sound in business culture in Finland. (Hofstede 2005, 120; Lehtipuu 2010, 171).

Helkama (2015) announces Finland was more collectivistic in the 1950’s. The agricultural Finland had only one radio station, people from southern parts to Lapland were listening to the same programs. It was common that there was only one phone in the family, and when a person answered to a call, he or she replied with family name. (Helkama 2015, 67-68.)

Honesty and directness are encouraged in Finland. There’s a different kind of honesty in the world and Finnish kind of honesty is a combination of blue-eyed, uncompromising, law-abiding mixture, where truth is truth in scientifically sense. Straightforwardness is a character of a Finn. (Lewis 2005, 60.) Directness refers to language; when Finns talk, they are very direct and once an opinion is given, they tend to be frank. Even though an issue is unpleasant, sidestepping is rarely an option. (Lewis 2005, 62.)

Harmony of in-group is part of Asian cultures. Finns prefer directness and honesty, where most Asian countries strive for indirectness. Direct confrontations are consid-

ered rude and the word “no” is barely used. Politeness is the way. (Hofstede 2005, 106.) We will discuss more about indirectness and directness in the next chapter.

At work Finns prefer well-defined tasks and responsibilities. When uniting capable individuals the team is able to reach their goals. Finns want to know their exact responsibilities and work within those perimeters. (World Business Culture 2013.) When it comes to Asian cultures, working in groups is preferred (Hofstede etc. 2005, 121).

Relationships between the employer and the employee are mostly economical in Finland and that relationship can be broken socially or legally acceptable way. Kinships are not preferred, because they might lead to conflicts. In order to do business more efficiently, positive or negative feedback from the employer accounts. Incentives are personal. (Salo-Lee 1998, 92-93.) Salminen (2014) introduces Finland’s Conciliator General Minna Helle's opinion in Yle news (Modified from Salminen 2014):

“An important principal for me is that issues argue, not people. Labor market negotiations can get harsh and unaccustomed person might take language as fierce, but everyone promotes their own issue. After a moment parties can drink coffee together and talk this and that.”

4.3 Masculinity vs. Femininity

Masculinity and femininity refers to country’s degree of valuing gender-specific roles and the degree of valuing masculine or hard values (ambition, acquisition of material goods and achievement) or feminine or soft values (quality of life, serving others and nurturance) (Martin & Nakayama 2010, 49).

There’s variety among the modern and the traditional societies where behavior is considered masculine or feminine. This is most visible in occupations. (Hofstede etc. 2005, 137.) After discussing with my nurse friend in Nepal, it was brought up that nurses are mainly females. According to my female nurse friends, male nurses in Finland are wanted; Finns prefer equality and also different talents of men are beneficial at physically hard work. Two Finnish nursing students, Sipilä and Jokipalo (2015)

carried out an internship in Nepal 2015 and the same aspects can be perceived from their blog. Modified from their writing:

‘‘At the breakfast we discussed with the owner of the guesthouse and it came up that we were nurse students. At first he didn’t understand we both were nurses, because he thought Iiro was a doctor. The man told us that there are only a few male nurses in Nepal and they don’t dare to tell it when asked. Traditionally nursing is an occupation for women in Nepal.’’

The role pattern where men are expected to be assertive, competitive and tough, women are nurturing and tender has most likely developed as followed: when a mother bore a child and breast-fed the baby, she needed to stay close to her offspring. At that time, men were more free to move and able to protect family from other men and animals. (Hofstede 2005, 138.)

According to anthropological studies, fertility (number of children in the family) is related to masculinity in traditional cultures. Those studies conclude population increases in those societies where women are subservient to males. Smaller child number in wealthier countries means aging population and turning towards more feminine values. The improvement of technology reflects to jobs as development brings out new jobs and traditional ones get eliminated. Those new jobs may include creativity and human contacts, which supports shifting towards more feminine values. On the other hand, the poor part of the world shifting towards feminine values is not likely. In many Asian countries female births are prevented and having sons is more desirable. According to Valerie Hudson and Andrea den Boer (2004), this domination of young men is connected to more violence and authoritarian political systems. (Hofstede 2005, 184-185.)

Hofstede etc. (2005, 140) determine masculinity vs. femininity as follows:

‘‘A society is called masculine when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.

A society is called feminine when emotional gender roles are overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.’’

Masculinity is not correlating with economic development of a country. There are countries with high masculinity score along with high economic development. For instance Japan is the second in masculinity index. (Hofstede etc. 2005, 140-141.) It's also crucial to make distinction between individualism and masculinity, because those are independent dimensions. Where individualism concentrates on in-group and out-group dependency, masculinity points out a stress on ego versus stress relationship with others. (Hofstede etc. 2005, 146.)

Age is a factor that effects to masculinity. When people grow older, they tend to become more feminine in values. At the same time the gap between women and men's values get smaller. Conversely young people prefer values related to more technical interests and masculinity. (Hofstede etc. 2005, 150.)

Table 3. Masculinity in Finland and in Nepal (Modified from Hofstede, 2005)

Finland (26)	Nepal (40)
Careers are optional for both genders	Careers are compulsory for men, optional for women
There's a higher amount of working women in professional jobs	There's a lower amount of working women in professional jobs
More leisure time is preferred over more money	More money is preferred over more leisure time
Christianity: equal roles to both sexes	Hinduism: caste system, stress the male prerogative

Gender equality has strong roots in Finnish society. Finland was the second country in the world to give women right to vote and in 1906 women got the right to stand for election. The language reveals this as well; there's no "she" or "he" distinguishing women and men. There's been one female Finnish President and Prime Minister, besides half of the past government ministers have been women. (Chaker 2015, 30.)

Nepal has more masculine values. Together with many South Asian countries, gender roles and nature of women's work are dependent on caste and class. Upper-status women of rural areas are more educated, but tend to stay at home for the family. Lower caste women work hard on fields, with road construction and informal sector. (Mines 2010, 76.) Agriculture is the major source of incomes and occupations in Ne-

pal and only a few women work at high-level or technical jobs in urban areas. (World Trade Press 2010.)

Marriage has a huge impact on South Asian women's life, also in Nepal. Arranged marriages are still common, usually organized by the elder family members. Love marriages are getting popular among the urban families but relationships before marriage are rare. Child marriages are still part of Nepalese culture. (World Trade Press 2010.)

Madisson (2015) discussed about common child marriages of Nepal. Some small rural areas of Nepal apply child marriages to preserve cultural traditions. Dowries are illegal, but because of the loose and defunct law enforcement, fathers give their daughters away with high price. Depending on the husband's status and the girl's age, the price varies between thousand and ten thousand euros. Kailash Patel, father of a 13-year old Rinku, announced (Modified from Madisson 2015):

"I cannot wait too long or accept love marriage. Others would laugh at me if I would act against traditions. We have that kind of rules here."

South Asian men don't need to go through so many transformations during their life. Man can move outside for work and marriage usually demands wife to move away from her childhood home. Men are generally expected to marry, have children, to be economically productive and when getting old, surrender much of their power to the juniors. Basically men are more free to move along with job, hang out at the tea stalls and play cards with other men. (Mines 2010, 77.)

Approximately 80 % of the Nepalese people are Hindus (Tiimonen 2005, 207). Religion affects to masculinity and gender roles, so it's relevant to mention here. Hindu ideologies emphasize men's higher position where a man is god for his wife. Thereby respect and serving husband refers to women's lower status. (Mines 2010, 77.) Illegal dowries and child marriages indicate that as well. Interesting is, how basic scripts of Hinduism, *Vedas*, disclose totally opposite viewpoints. According to Ramarajan (2009), those scripts manifest women's right to make choices on husband and family. Also their freedom and divinity is present:

“Where women are worshipped, there Gods are pleased. But where they are not honored, no sacred rite reward yields”

There’s a fading position of women in Hindu societies today. The changes in politics and society affect the interpretation of religious philosophy, even though the Hindu faith is the same (Ramarajan 2009.) Different aspects and traditions vary between the rural areas and the city. For example many Buddhist Newars of urban Kathmandu see the marriage more like matter of fact- issue and divorce is not much criticized (Bista 2013, 25).

Christianity includes both feminine and masculine values. Catholic tradition maintains more masculinity, while Protestants are more feminine in values. (Hofstede etc. 2005, 176.) The western legislation is based on Ten Commandments concepts of ethics and morality. Egalitarianism, justice, truth and non-violence are a part of Christian teachings. New Testament requires honesty and Old Testament spreads the word of loving a neighbor. Human's value is not dependent on race, social status or sex and under-privileged people are taken care of. People are the picture of God, which reflects both loving a neighbor and taking care of God-created earth. At the modern age conserving nature and consumption habits are taking into account. (Airaksinen 2010, 166-167.)

4.4 Uncertainty avoidance

Avoiding uncertainty is a part of every society its people: we don’t know what will happen tomorrow. The insecure future can be eased with technology, laws, rules and religious ways. Technological development has helped societies to tame unpredictable nature. Laws prevent uncertainties towards other people’s behavior and religion helps dealing with otherworldly forces, which controls personal future. Uncertainty is a subjective feeling that may be shared with other members of the society. Learned and attained feelings of uncertainty and how to cope with them are a part of the cultural heritage. (Hofstede etc. 2005, 189-190.)

Hofstede etc. (2005, 191) again defined this fourth value dimension as follows:

“the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations.”

Table 4. Uncertainty avoidance in Finland and in Nepal (Modified from Hofstede, 2005)

Finland (59)	Nepal (40)
There's an emotional need to be busy and inner urge to work hard	Work hard only when necessary
There's an emotional need for rules, even if they won't work	There should be no more rules than necessary
Need for precision and formalization	Tolerance of ambiguity and chaos
Focus on decision content	Focus on decision process

Finns have strong urge to work. Working is part of the social identity and it bonds person to their community. Hard work is essential in historical and geographical reasons: short summers and cold winters, scarcity of natural resources and sparsely inhabited country needed all capable workforce of the community to the fields. Martin Luther, the father of the protestant reformation taught that people should serve God through their work and all occupations were equal. (Chaker 2015, 113-114.)

War against Soviet Union, population of two hundred million, brought small Finland to international awareness. The western press reported the viscous resistance of Finnish soldiers in extreme winter conditions. (Lehtipuu 2010, 29.) After the Second World War Finns needed to work even harder. Soviet Union imposed huge war reparations; infrastructure, new factories, metal products and ships needed to be built almost out of nothing. Finnish people were working for their survival. (Chaker 2015, 114-115.)

Sisu of Finnish people came to picture during the tough times. According to Lewis (2005, 59), it implies courage, toughness, stamina, stubbornness, single-mindedness and tenacity. It is ‘‘ an ability to endure hardship and adversity.’’

Punctuality and law-abiding belong to Finnish nature. Finns are individualists and value freedom, but breaking the law or a promise is not appreciated in Finland. Facts are facts and when something is said, Finns hold their view and mean it. (Lewis 2005, 57.) According to Hofstede etc. (2010, 218-219) individualistic countries with strong uncertainty avoidance the rules are exact and written into laws.

Vikman (2014) reported how Finns law-abiding preempt moral. Approximately 1000 citizens were interviewed and asked if breaking the law was justified; even though it fights against their own moral. According to survey more than 50 % gave the opinion law-abiding more important. Professor of General Laws, Panu Minkkinen wasn't surprised (Modified from Vikman 2014):

“Comparably we Finns are law-abiding people, we may be crumple, but in the end we respect the law.”

Countries with stronger uncertainty avoidance, laws can satisfy a need of security, although they are not always followed. They are like religious commandments. People in those countries believe that many problems can be solved without formal rules. When people in Finland (strong uncertainty avoidance country) like to work hard or to be busy, Nepal with weaker uncertainty avoidance is a country where working is necessary when there's a need for it. Relaxation is the thing. (Hofstede etc. 2010, 216, 210.)

4.5 Long-term vs. short-term orientation

The fifth dimension strongly refers to teachings of Confucius and deals with a society's search for Virtue. Confucius was a Chinese teacher of practical ethics, without religious content. Here is the difference between the East and the West; In the East, people are searching for Virtue and for Western people Truth is the key. (Hofstede etc. 2010, 247.)

Hofstede etc. (2010, 239) determines this dimension as follows:

“long-term orientation stands for the fostering of virtues oriented toward future rewards – in particular, perseverance and thrift. It's opposite pole, short-term orientation, stands for the fostering of virtues related to the past and present – in particular, respect for tradition, preservation of “face” and fulfilling social obligations.”

The problem of this dimension is that it's only available for fewer countries and there's no index for Nepal. According to the Hofstede Centre, Finland is considered

short-term orientation country. He states that Finland is one of the normative societies, which refers to people's urge to establish the absolute Truth. (Finland. The Hofstede centre.) When it comes to business and ways of thinking, the key values for Finns are listed below (Modified from Hofstede etc. 2010, 251):

- Main work values include freedom, rights, achievement and thinking of oneself
- Leisure time is important
- Concern with possessing the Truth
- There are universal guidelines about what is good and evil
- Matter and spirit are separated
- Analytical thinking

This chapter concentrates on different ways of thinking between East and West, Nepal in the east and Finland in the west. Religion and psychological matters are discussed.

Western religions (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) are separated from Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Shintoism) by deep philosophical gap. Western religions belong to the same ideology group and historically they share same roots. As mentioned earlier, Truth is the key and it's achievable for true believers. If we take a look at the east and those three religions or philosophies, they have a different approach. Respecting the demands of Virtue is the key, which may be including rituals, meditation and ways of living. Thereby Eastern religions offer various ways to improve oneself. Some can lead to a higher spiritual state and joining to God or gods. (Hofstede etc. 2010, 248.)

The Sadhus, Hindu holy men, devote their lives to meditation and wander around without permanent home. Their spiritual sophistication, deity experiences and exemplary behavior are the factors they have kept holy and virtuous. (Airaksinen 2011, 141.) Nelson (2010) introduced Prahlad Jani, one of those holy men from India, who claimed to have survived without food for 70 years. He was regarded to live only with spiritual life-force alone.

The Western people are concerned with Truth, which can be seen in logic and favoring the opposites. If option A is true, B must be false. Eastern logic doesn't know this axiom, and sees it differently: If A is true, B might also be true and together they pro-

duce a noble wisdom to either A or B. This refers to the partial nature of human truth. People in East don't see any problem in borrowing elements from the other religions. (Hofstede etc. 2010, 249.)

According to Hofstede etc. (2010), when industrialization and discovering laws in nature occurred in the West, Chinese scholars never discovered those things; they were not looking for laws. Western analytic thinking seeks for elements, as Eastern synthetic thinking concentrates on wholes. Japanese Nobel Prize winner in physics quoted: *“the Japanese mentality is unfit for abstract thinking.”* (Hofstede etc. 2010, 250.)

Tähtinen (2011) analyzed Eastern and Western way of thinking in his book *“Kathmandun unet”*. He addresses interesting viewpoints by comparing two poems from East and West. The most interesting issue is the matter of *“self”* and how both poems consider it in different manner. Western poem, contributed by US writer, sees *“self”* as a separate ego, which tries to arrange reality by the means of mind categories. Alienation from oneself and from the world is unavoidable. How he describes the Eastern poem is interesting: idea of self is not separated from the reality. There's no single, separated subject and no outside reality as an object. (Tähtinen 2011, 107-108.)

Kassila (2011, 464) translated and interpreted *Bhagavad-Gita*, a Hindu's holy book in Finnish. Related to ego, secular and divinity, he interpreted the Tenth Verse as follows (Modified from Kassila 2011):

“A person living material life is interested in only secular objects, which one sees with two eyes: people, animals, nature, prosperity, sense delights, food, drugs, power, status. However there's more profound meaning of human life than live, enjoy, suffer and after all, die. Meaning of a human is to seek and find the spring of existence, perceive the divinity of the soul. By meditation and other spiritual practices this can happen, causing the opening of third eye, the eye of wisdom, referred by Krishna. She or he becomes conscious of all present divine consciousness.”

We will end this chapter with two famous Finnish travelers, Milonoff and Rantala's (2012, 8) experiences in India during the *Mela*, one of the world biggest group gatherings. They were discussing with a Hindu guru around a bonfire. This small conversa-

tion concludes the importance of learning from other cultures and finding meaningful life (Modified from Milonoff and Rantala 2012):

“Where do you Finns pilgrimage?” Guru asked from me. A man, who had stand 12 years incessantly, at day and night, to address the strength of his faith.

I didn’t know what to say. Families go to auto markets every Friday? Old couples to Finlandia –skiing? Men from workplace, they organize a trip to Tallinn for drinking?

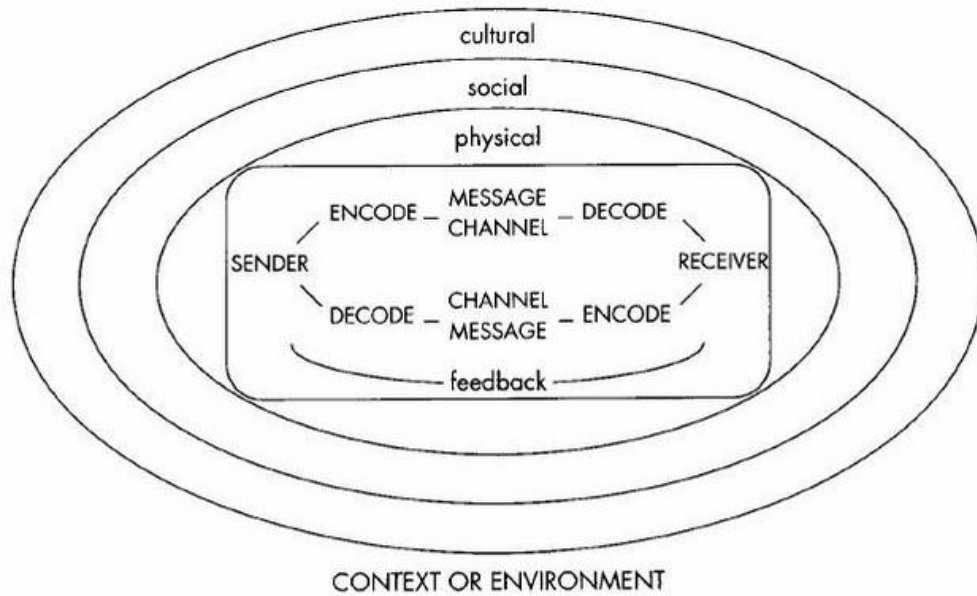
I replied that concept is unknown for us. We don’t believe in anything, and we don’t have time to wander.

Guru said: that is not life for a human.”

5 THE COMPARISON OF FINNISH AND NEPALESE VERBAL COMMUNICATION STYLES

The fifth chapter concerns verbal communication across the two countries which differ from each other according to Hofstede’s cultural values model.

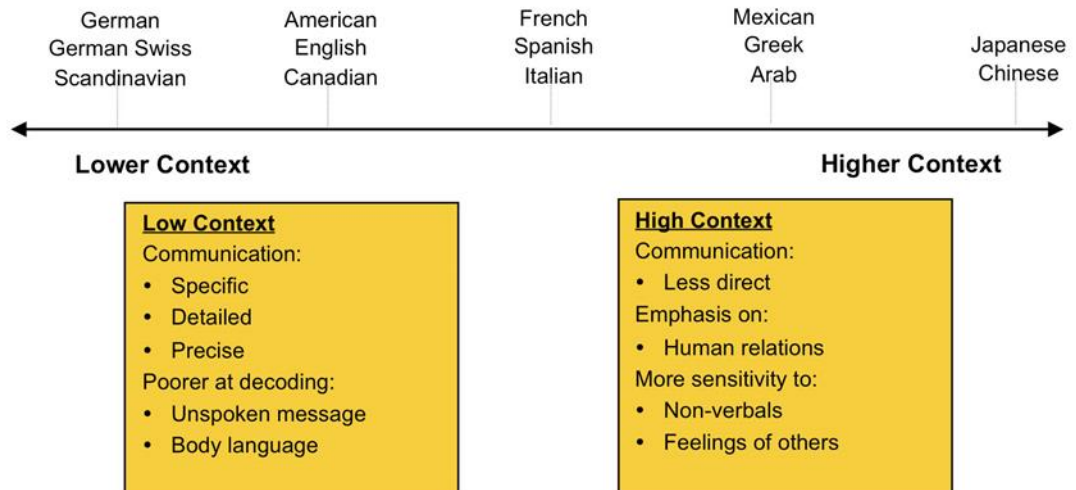
There are several ways and means of communication. According to Martin and Nakayama (2014) communication is a symbolic process and full of meanings, shared and negotiated. Symbols have shared meanings of words and gestures and when communicating people assume they share the same symbolic system. Non-verbal messages, like gestures, postures, facial expressions and eye movements are closely related to verbal communication, but this work will take into account speech as a form of verbal communication. (Martin & Nakayama 2012, 38-39.)



PICTURE 2. Contextualized model (Dimbleby & Burton 1998, 35)

Culture is a contextual matter affecting to one's communication. Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey (1988) identified styles of the verbal communication connected with cultural values like individualism, collectivism and power distance. Styles which affiliate with cultural values are introduced in this chapter: direct vs. indirect, personal vs. contextual and elaborate vs. succinct style. Stress of non-verbal and verbal communication styles associate with high-and low context cultures, which are also taken into account. (Salo-Lee etc. 1998, 36-37.)

Edward Hall (1997), forerunner of intercultural communication, discussed of high and low context cultures, which answers to question: "Where does the meaning lie?". High context cultures hide the meaning behind situation, relationship, roles and background of the speaker. Lower context cultures use words in more explicit purpose and directness is expected. (Baldwin 2013, 76.)



PICTURE 3. High and low context cultures (Hall & Hall 1990)

5.1 Directness vs. Indirectness

Lewis (2005, 62) notifies that once Finns open their mouth, they are usually very direct. This might be upsetting for Asian people, who search for harmony and consensus within a group. Finnish way of directness, by going straight to the topic without seeing the surroundings and the relations, may close many doors in intercultural negotiations. (Lehtipuu 2010, 21-22.) The direct nature of Finnish communication refers to low-context communication style, together with other Scandinavian countries (picture 3).

Nepal, with more high-context and indirect characteristics, has in spite of all few topics which are speaking more straight. In a blog "Say it how it is" (2012) a US writer marked the directness when talking about personal issues, for example weight. She thought it refers to caring or nurturing others. Milonoff and Rantala (2012) noticed that both Nepalese and Indians can start a conversation with personal questions considering the price of person's watch or shoes. They see it as a part of normal conversation, a way of small talk, not as a criminal act as some representatives of other cultures may think. (Milonoff & Rantala 2012, 43.)

Asking yes or no questions can be tricky in Nepal. Milonoff and Rantala (2012, 30) experienced the issue during their South Asian travels. They discovered, that for example, if you are looking for a way to a temple, ask "how I can get to the temple?" instead of "is this right way to the temple?"

I have own example of this indirectness with Nepalese: on my latest visit I had a bad pain in the abdomen, so I was admitted to the emergency clinic. The male doctor asked me a question for further investigation: "Have you been in relationship during your stay in Nepal?" I was a little confused, but I guess I understood the meaning behind the question; if I had had an intercourse, they should have reckoned that. Also this might point out the topics not to discuss in Nepalese culture.

5.2 Personal vs. contextual style

Personal and contextual communication styles also refer to individualism and collectivism of cultural values. Differences in power distance may be seen in those styles. Personal style is informal, individualistic and accentuates balanced power relation. Contextual style is status and role oriented, as unbalanced power distance and formality are emphasized. (Salo-Lee etc. 1998, 39.)

When it comes to the context of the conversation, Finns don't tend to pay so much attention to the context. What is said has most of the attention. More contextual cultures, including Nepal, take along the notions of *who* said it, *how* it is said, what is *behind* what is said and what is *not* said in their reply. (Lewis 2005, 70-75.)

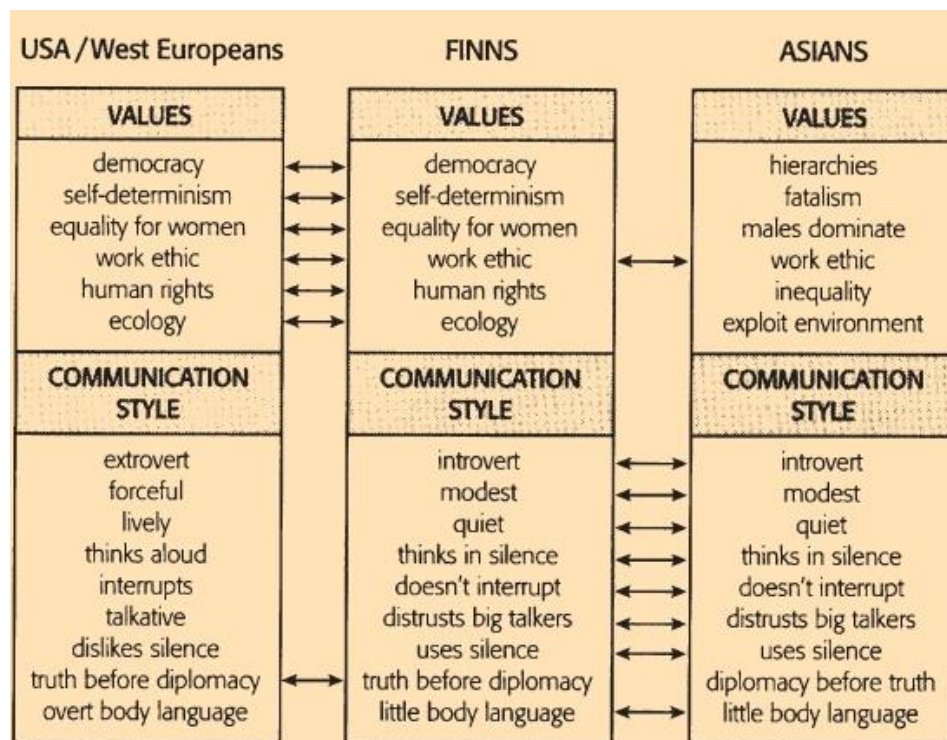
According to Lewis (2005) Finns are data-oriented in the process of gathering information. Producing information by research and then acted upon, it is feature of data-oriented cultures. Other dimension is "dialogue-oriented cultures" which see all events and business in context, because they already have lots of information through their personal information network. For example, Indians, Latins and Arabs are dialogue-oriented cultures. Prying and gossiping is considered pointless in Finnish society, because all of the information have to be possessed through official channels. (Lewis 2005, 75-76.)

After discussing with my Nepalese friend (Mahat, 2015) it appeared that those roles and status affect the communication and their visibility in Nepali language. He said in Nepal, if you talk with a person who has a higher position or is elder than you, saying "Tapai" or "Hajur" is correct. Friends use "Timi" and for younger "Ta". In addi-

tion to Nepali, the most spoken language of the country, there are 122 other languages spoken (Thompson 2015).

5.3 Elaborated vs. succinct style

Elaborated and succinct styles concern the quantity of speech people value and attitudes towards speech and silence. In succinct style simple affirmations and silence are valued. Elaborated style involves rich and expressive language. (Martin & Nakayama 2010, 149.) As for silence, both Finns and Asians share the same feature. Lewis (2005) concluded that Finns are together with many Asians reactive communicators. Characteristics of reactive communication are good listening skills, rarely opening the discussion and using the silence. Using the silence is necessary to Finns; it enables clever and well-designed arguments. (Lewis 2005, 71-73.)



PICTURE 4. Finnish values/communication dilemma (Lewis 2005, 68)

Lewis (2005) points out the historical aspects affecting to the Finnish way of communicating: cold climate and reign of Swedish and Russian didn't stimulate them to open their mouth unless they had to. (Lewis 2005, 67.) There's a Finnish proverb related to that: *'Silence is gold; speech is silver'*. To force one's opinions on others is considered impolite, so a nod in agreement and a quiet smile are the way to go. Listen-

ing is almost virtuous in Finland. Interrupting is rude and valuing each other's opinions is crucial. Although Finns are listening, they might not look like that. Active listening and showing interest and participate in conversation is rare. (Lewis 2005, 69.)

Docent Michael Berry told an example about Finns silence in the article of "Finnish silence can be gold" (2013):

"An American drove a Finnish visitor into the Appalachian Mountains to show her the stunning autumn foliage. The Finn sat quietly in the car, staring at the landscape. Suddenly the American stopped the car, demanding to know what was wrong with the silent guest. Another Finn would, however, have understood that the guest was just admiring the scenery in silence, in the typically Finnish way"

5.4 Language barriers

When both Finns and Nepalese are communicating with language that isn't communicators' native language, in English, it is expected there can be barriers in communication that might lead to misunderstandings and challenges.

When communicating, a message and the meaning are given and received. What makes it complex is that saying something to someone doesn't always reveal the meaning. Same message might include different meanings in different places or times and it can mean different things to different people. (Dimpleby & Burton 1998, 26-27.)

Dimpleby and Burton (1998, 79) talk about "semantic barriers", which refers to the use of words in communication and considering the meanings of the words. They state that "meanings exist in the mind, not in the words themselves". (Dimpleby & Burton 1998, 80.) Finns cannot understand Nepali language so this kind of barrier affects the communication situations. Sapir-Whorf hypothesis states that "language unconsciously determines how we perceive the world", thus our limits in our language mean the limits of our world (Hall 2005, 151).

If taking an example of words and meanings, a word "friend" has different weight in different cultures. From my point of view considering Finnish culture, being someone's friend requires a deep sense of obligation and ongoing communication. Friend-

ship implies time, sharing feelings and thoughts and also trust. Baldwin (2013) argues that in America people consider someone as a friend who's been seen after long absence and friendship continues right where it ended last time. (Baldwin 2013, 139.)

6 DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Among the differences in directness, interacting in a more personal than a contextual way and semantic language barriers may increase a gap when intercultural encounters occur. Misunderstandings, frustrations and other negative feelings rise, making interaction less effective and maybe even a failure. Developing intercultural communication skills personally can decrease the risk and lead to more fertile and understanding encounters.

Hofstede etc. (2005) finds three phases of developing intercultural skills or abilities: awareness, knowledge and skills. The first step of the process is being aware of oneself and others different kind of mental programming, how everyone has been brought up in a different environment. Knowledge follows, which means learning from other cultures. Although we might not share the same values, the least we can do is to understand differences. Skills include awareness and knowledge, but also practice – recognizing, applying and resolving problems. (Hofstede etc. 2005, 419-420.)

Developing cultural intelligence refers also to Hofstede's thoughts. Peterson (2004, 88) defines it as follows: *'Cultural intelligence is the ability to engage in a set of behaviors that uses skills (i.e. language or interpersonal skills) and qualities (i.e. tolerance for ambiguity, flexibility) that are tuned appropriately to the culture-based values and attitudes of the people with whom one interacts.'*

Cultural intelligence is based on self-knowledge. Being aware of the culture and conscious how it affects one self's behavior and thinking are a part of changing behavior. (Lehtipuu 2010, 34-35.) There's a communication style for each person as well. According to Peterson (2004) a body is a part of the non-verbal communication style, voice is for the tones and inflections and personality comes across the way we speak.

Cultural style together with the worldview, beliefs and individual aspects can be seen in communication. (Peterson 2004, 155.)

What makes it complex is the unpredictable nature of communication. Peterson discloses (2004, 156): *“knowing someone from particular culture doesn’t mean we can predict his or her communication style. Every situation is different.”* Gaining knowledge of different cultures and communication styles is helpful.

Graig Storti (2007) describes that intercultural encounters and getting to know locals are the crucial part and the heart of travelling. Sometimes incidents happen when communicating and they affect the effectiveness of work or assignment abroad. (Storti 2007, 67.) His book *“The Art of Crossing Cultures”* is employed in the sections 6.1-6.3.

6.1 Others are like us, aren’t they?

Storti (2007) states the belief of ethnocentrism is the one source of incidents in intercultural encounters. If we believe that others are like us, we expect them to behave like us. These expectations towards others are in the collision point and may lead to incidents and negative feelings and assumptions.

Most of the people are raised up in conditions only surrounded by people from their own culture, which explains why we tend to think in ethnocentric way. Members of a group teach its members and newborn children how to survive in that specific group or culture. Norms or things considered normal in society help people to interact with each other. If there are no norms, it would be chaotic.

In addition if we think others are like us, we only think that our way is the right way. Different is considered wrong. When we experience this kind of behavior in locals and when we cannot approve it, there’s a point where values, strong views and emotions come to picture. Norms are not universal and what a person considers as human nature is only cultural.

Storti (2007) announces that we do have to take into account that others are not like us. Globalization and intercultural trainings teach us there are a great variety of people and cultures. But he mentions that the knowledge doesn't always go hand in hand with our actions. Constant reinforce and time are demanded for the construct of cultural differences taking long-lasting root in people's mind. Thereby what we heard and experience during our travels is more true than readings from the books.

6.2 It's in you

Assumptions towards locals' behavior lead to cultural collisions. Instead of expecting and waiting them to change, looking into our own behavior gives the totally new aspect in this issue. Looking inside and realizing we are expecting others to be like us is not easy. Subconscious behavior and getting hold on actions happening in our minds demands conscious awareness.

Frustration, surprise or anger is where intercultural incidents occur. When locals fail to do what we have expected, the feelings arise. If we are aware of those feelings and responsible of our own behavior we would be able to make a difference. Conscious observation of feelings and dealing with them, not only by having them but taking a note of them is a practice for better cultural encounters.

Storti advises us to schedule a time in a day to recall those moments when we have felt agitated or surprised by something a local said or did. After reconstructing these incidents we can point out that we are expecting others to behave like we do. After time and practice it might be possible to achieve occurring awareness of emotions at the same time when they appear.

6.3 Observe, talk and study

Developing intercultural skills demand collecting knowledge as mentioned before. The first step is being aware of our own behavior and that we are responsible for how we act. The next step is gathering knowledge. Collecting information of a foreign culture can be done by observing the locals and their actions, asking questions or taking classes and studying foreign culture.

The confrontational issue is that we cannot see such behaviors when they occur, because they don't constitute as meaningful in our own culture. Considering Finnish egalitarian culture it's obscure for us to see the aspects of the caste system in Nepal. For example once I was dining with my host and sitting at a table in Nepal, when their guest from the rural village was sitting on the floor. Apparently he was from a lower caste and also, when serving food, he formed his hands into a cup, not taking the food with hands. I didn't realize this right on the time when it happened, but later when I was reading about these minor behavioral issues.

Together with observing, studying and through conversations information gap can be filled. Observing itself is not a reliable source of knowledge, but when used critically and united with two other techniques it is a venerable way of learning about other cultures.

6.4 Building up a dialogue

Talking is one way to fill in the information gap in foreign culture. This section concerns how to prevent frustrations and misunderstandings in verbal communication situations. Applying to William Isaacs (Isaacs 2001) book: "Dialogue and the art of thinking together" intercultural encounters expose four principals of interaction: listening, respect, waiting and directness.

Isaacs defines dialogue as an act of thinking together, where individuals don't hold on their views as the ultimate truth, but take a step towards the solution. By listening the possibilities and liberating from our firm perceptions the value of a single opinion decreases. Dialogue is the lively way of gathering information, occurring in one self's midst and between persons.

6.4.1 Art of listening

Listening is not only hearing what the others say, it's also hearing ourselves and our reactions. Listening is usually taken for granted. When someone is talking we are actually prepared for reply, not deeply listening. When listening carefully, we are connecting the world around us and living in extended reality. What science has taught us

might fight against this view, claiming for past three centuries human is separate from nature. But we are actively a part of the living world, not apart from it.

Learning to listen starts with being conscious of what we are listening at this moment. We can ask from ourselves: ‘*what do I feel right now?*’ While listening to others we tend to react according to our memory and previous experiences. Memory is a storage of our reactions that leads us to listen with those prejudices. When realizing this, we become more aware of how thoughts dictate our experiences.

Isaacs gives a few tips for learning to listen more carefully. Listening without resistance demands being aware of those words that make us feel rebellious. Taking note of them, putting them aside makes us stay in facts. Silence is an appropriate tool for listening and it connects us with the whole universe. Finns and many Asians are considered as good listeners and their silence in a conversation may open doors for successful dialogue.

6.4.2 Respect

Respect as a word comes from Latin. The verb *respicere* means ‘‘look again’’. The oldest roots of the word refer to making a note associating with valuing. Seeing an individual as a whole, not only single aspect, reveals the incredible, living human being.

When we respect others, we indicate that everyone has the right to exist. Accepting and even conserving limitations of the others are a part of respecting; we admit to ourselves that there’s something to learn from the other people. We travel to learn something from the other cultures. With respect gaining knowledge is possible.

Learning to respect demands asking a few questions from ourselves: ‘‘How everything I see and hear is connected in the big picture? Where does this big picture belong? What happens at the moment? Isaacs states that there are ways to find an answer for these questions. First, staying in the midst is crucial. Silence helps too, together with accepting others as they are and realizing that everyone is involved.

Increasing respect towards others and reducing blaming our neighbor could be done with mindset as following: ‘*this is in me too*’. We have to confess that we have the same features as the others. This gives us a completely new approach in conversations, too. If a person irritates us with their words or behavior, forgiving her/him is justifiable because we all have same kind of behavior.

6.4.3 Stillness

While someone is talking, we need to make an important choice; whether to immediately form our opinion after our views or for building up a dialogue with patience. Waiting means presenting ones opinion the way others understand our thoughts. Changing direction, being still or taking a step backwards is a part of waiting in dialogue process.

Discussions tend to occur between people who know what and why they are thinking. This kind an approach doesn't suit a dialogue. Questioning and being aware of that we actually don't know may lead for a better conversation. We adopt certain attitudes and lock ourselves to them, to be freed from those ties we need to take a step back and perceive other possibilities.

In our culture, especially in individualistic cultures, there's a built-in conception of opinions and how we have to stand out to present them. This leads to the division of diverse viewpoints. When arguing a fact is either like that or like that. Seeing the space between such extremities is important in dialogue.

6.4.4 Directness

Direct speech has always awed respect, according to poet David Whyte. Speaking directly doesn't mean expressing emotional reactions and visions others expect us to say. Direct speech answers the question: “*what is necessary to express at the moment?*”

Speaking directly demands self-confidence and becoming conscious of the significance of our words. While learning directness being quiet is necessary, although our

world values eloquence. Expressing everything that comes to our minds is not favorable, but with conscious choosing of words we also build up a better dialogue, but also become the masters of our life.

Stepping into the void and seeing beyond our understanding is a part of learning directness. This emptiness is the experience when we don't know what to do or to say. Sometimes we talk without knowing what we want to state according to our previous experiences, but an option is to talk without knowing where the words lead us.

7 RESEARCH

7.1 Qualitative and quantitative methods

Quantitative research method aims to achieve numerical information. It can be employed in research when describing the topic in general or describing how issues have changed or how an issue affects another. Explaining human behavior in a numerical, causal and technical way is characteristics of quantitative research method. Deviations are not focused on, but they drop off. Discovering general laws are the target of quantitative methods, which are illustrated with distributions, averages and standard deviations. (Vilkka 2015, 66-67.)

Where the numerical information is gained through quantitative research, qualitative approach is interested in deviations. It tries to explain human behavior in intentional way, for instance understanding human objectives of behavior. Exposing meanings given in individuals actions reflect in needs, beliefs, opinions, values and ideals are the aim of qualitative research method. Describing and explaining this understanding horizon is the goal of qualitative research. (Vilkka 2015, 67.)

Subjectivity is the nature of qualitative research, where quantitative research is objective. Interpretations of researcher may be complex and choices made are affected by researcher's own understanding. (Vilkka 2015, 67-68.)

7.2 Research method

This work implies qualitative research that targets the understanding of the comprehensive phenomenon. Understanding people's beliefs, needs, ideals and perceptions are the basis of qualitative research (Vilkka & Airaksinen 2004, 63). This work aims for increasing understanding different cultures, so qualitative method is relevant.

The role of the researcher in qualitative method is significant. Researcher's own perceptions and understanding define themes and questions settled. Questioning "why" during the research is relevant, because problems in interpretations can be reduced and noted. Only one option is never the sole option in qualitative research. (Vilkka 2015, 118-119.)

Typical data collection methods used in qualitative research are interviews and observing. The sample is often smaller and more precisely chosen. Comprehensive nature of this method strives for understanding the phenomenon as a relative matter, in the context and reckoning situations. (Aaltola & Valli 2001, 68.)

Data is collected by primary and secondary sources (Krishnaswami 2010, 86). Here primary sources consist of interviews of individuals, referring to their experiences in Nepal. The selection of the interviewees includes six individuals who all have spent three months internship. Theme or half-structured interviews are implemented in this work, where the main questions of the themes have been picked up from following theoretical framework and research questions.

Theme interviews are the primary data collection method in this work. Theme or half-structured interviews usually start with a few specific questions that are followed by an open dialogue, tangents and probes take turns. This technique demands more creativity and skills to extract more variety and clarity of the data. (Sachdeva 2010, 2010.)

Observation as a data collection method can be conducted with participative observation or observing individuals' actions in certain occasions. Observing what people do and how things are alike instead of what is said is characteristic of observation in research. Participant observation is a method which gives information about the exami-

nee as an individual, as a member of the community and in relation with the researcher. (Vilkka 2005, 119-120.) Researcher's own observations of Nepalese people during the stay in the country are implemented in this work through personal experiences. Participant observing of the interviewees was completed partly while interviewing in person. All interns have a different relation to the researcher, which should be noted in analysis.

Secondary data is collected from existing literature. Both e-books and books were employed in this work along with internet articles, current news and blogs for bringing more depth to the discussion.

7.3 Phenomenological approach of the work

This work explores people's experiences, so phenomenology is applied in analysis. According to phenomenology, reality appears to individuals with multiple meanings and it means different things to different individuals. Place, time, relations and culture, together with personal meanings have an effect on the picture of reality. All individuals are a part of tradition of meanings, which are connected in a cultural way of acting and thinking. (Vilkka 2015, 160-161.)

Aldous Huxley announced: "*Experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you.*" Deepak Chopra points out a good example about experiencing: how would you feel when seeing a snake? He talks about programming; the meaning of the snake for you refers to your action. Depending on our significance given to the snake there are various reactions: panic, hysteria, curiosity, delight. Hindu devotee may recognize a cobra as a form of Shiva god and a snake collector might bend forward with curiosity. (Chopra 2003,34.)

Context is an essential part of meanings. Things as such don't mean anything, but once they are put into perspective with other things and in time, place and culture they become meaningful. (Vilkka 2015, 161.)

This work employs phenomenology, which is not a technical tool for analysis, but can be applied according to the situation. Basic concepts and tools are experiences, mean-

ings and community. Researcher's own perception of humans, experiences and meanings are employed in the research analysis. (Vilkka 2015, 171.)

7.4 Validity and reliability of the work

Generalization can be disclosed in many ways. Arguments, universal ethical precepts or instructions are possible forms of generalization in qualitative research. Generalizations in qualitative research are conducted out of interpretations, not from research material. Interpretation is the union of researcher, research material and theory. (Vilkka 2015, 195.)

According to Alasuutari (1994) the purpose of the qualitative research should enable dissent and question the old views. Validity refers to research methods' ability to measure what is intended to be measured. The ability of the researcher to shift theoretical concepts and integrity of ideas to examinees refers to validity of the research. Research is valid, if its aim and purpose responds with the results. (Vilkka 2015, 195-196.)

Research can be considered reliable when research aims for something and decoded materials are compatible and when irrelevant and coincidental issues haven't impacted to theoretical formation. When researcher's conceptualization and interpretations matches with examinees conceptualization, research is reliable. (Vilkka 2015, 196.)

Reliability can be deteriorated by many things during the research. Occasional mistakes can occur e.g. when interviewee's memory is misguided, he or she understands differently than the researcher or if the researcher makes mistakes during recording. Even though mistakes may not influence with objectives, being aware of such issues is important in reliable research. (Vilkka 2015, 194.)

8 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

Six interviewees were chosen to the interviews. Altogether there have been 13 interns working in the Livelihood and Environmental Awareness development project with

KEMA and Nepalese NGO Codef. Six individuals were reachable by e-mail and willing to attend the research. All individuals have spent three months internship in Nepal between years 2010-2015. They are students from different fields e.g. environment, forestry, youth work and tourism. E-mail addresses were collected through KEMA's database.

Table 5. Interviewees' background information

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Previous working experience abroad	First time in Nepal
Person 1.	M	30	yes	yes
Person 2.	F	30	yes	yes
Person 3.	F	31	yes	yes
Person 4.	M	27	yes	yes
Person 5.	F	21	yes	yes
Person 6.	F	34	no	yes

Theme interviews were followed by theoretical framework of Hofstede's five cultural value dimensions and verbal communication styles formed by Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey. Language barriers and other challenges in verbal communication were also discussed. Interns' own personal development during the internship has been taken into account. According to theoretical framework, considering human as a changeable and adjusting creature follows that viewpoint.

Interviews took approximately 1, 5-2 hours, either in person or by Skype during the summer months from July to August in 2015. Recording wasn't possible because of technical problems, thereby transcriptions as an analyzing method had to be dropped off. Collecting information was written by hand or on the computer in a relaxed atmosphere in order to achieve genuine answers. Two of the interns got the interview questions (appendix 1) in advance because of the uncertain conditions. All of the interviews occurred in Finnish language, because it was interns' native language. Citations as examples were translated into English.

Finding the main themes through interns' speech was sorted out by correlating with Hofstede's value dimensions. Deviations were also taking into account. Citations in

the following chapters are the examples of interns' experiences in certain occasions and generally describing their point of views.

9 RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS

This section includes the main themes describing interns' views.

Hierarchy

All interns experienced a high power distance in Nepal. By observing the locals they discovered different communication and behavior between a person from the higher position and a person from the lower. In communication situations an intern (2) mentioned how discussion of unpleasant topics was avoided and how person from a higher level defined the truth.

Also physical outlook was mentioned by an intern (3); prosperity and power were discovered the way person dressed.

''During my work period hierarchy was visible with those people working with the same issues. It doesn't matter which ideas you bring up, if you don't have the status, no one believes. There's a lack of discussion, because all coming from the high level of hierarchy is the truth. Even though one knew the fact, but a person doesn't own enough badges, it's not a truth.'' (2)

'You can see if a person has higher incomes – usually that man has longer finger nails.' (3)

'Hierarchy is present in communication situations and all people cannot speak directly. People avoid talking about negative issues. In Finland we tell our opinions and stories from our own point of view but in Nepal the opinion can be someone else's who's on upper level.' (1)

'The chairperson of community forest group didn't even look at me when he talked to me. It may be because of his personality but also a hierarchical issue.' (2)

Most of the female interns experienced inequalities between genders and felt if they had been men and in higher position, their opinions would have been listened to more carefully. Gender issues rose up in the most feelings in female interviewers.

Formation of a group and relations between members were issues related to power distance. An intern (5) experienced that if all group members were from the same ethnic group, the power distance would not be seen. Also when being with friends, hierarchy was more hidden. (3)

Collectivism

All of the interns experienced Nepal as a collectivistic country. Discussing about this topic made them reflect their thoughts on Finnish culture, which is considered more individualistic. Working and living in bigger groups and families in Nepal were mentioned. Referring to work, the half of the interns experienced that in business individualism is more present. Also the intern (3) states that the abandoned people, who don't belong to nowhere, may be found in Nepal. Another (2) brings up the practice in Nepal, where a mother is looking for a fiancé to her son. Reflecting to Finnish culture, the issue feels weird for her.

“People are collective in Nepal, but the more wealthier the more individualistic person is. If we don't involve money, collectivism is present. If there's money, the opposite happens. Kindness makes it more complicated, because we, as foreigners, get special treatment. People argue as much as we do. Bigger families and poverty increase collectivism. This is the characteristic of poor country: learning to live in harmony. Big population and little land strives for that.” (1)

“Collectivism doesn't appear that much in business life; everyone plays to their own pockets. Work life is not a place for a team player. When there's distress of money, benefits of oneself and the family is driven. Common goals and aspire towards them is the way in Finland. Goals of individuals are priorities in Nepal.” (2)

An intern (1) sees that in spite of collectivism, arguments and fights were discovered in Nepal. Another (4) mentioned that in Nepalese family children speak to their parents in a more respectful way whereas in Finland children are more straightforward. Two interns experienced hospitality, referring to collectivism. Smaller personal space appeared to one (5) intern.

Masculinity

Masculinity was more present in Nepal according to all interns. Most of them associated tough values with low development and poverty of the country. Gender specified jobs were discovered by all interns. Almost everyone experienced how women do all the work in the countryside. The intern (1) mentioned that men's performance of status, prosperity and will to be a leader in firsthand were the signs of masculinity.

“A motorbike is an important status symbol for young men.” (1)

“ Prosperity can be seen in clothing and outfits.”(3)

The intern (2) associated strong religiousness and spirituality with feminine values. Matter of work was discussed with (5), where the attitude towards work in Nepal is different than in Finland; Finns live for their work whereas Nepalese work for a living. Increased cycling in a city was also a sign of feminine values for the intern (3).

Low uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance was found low in Nepal among all the interns. Rules in the society were considered as guidelines. Punctuality in work was flexible, depending on the situation. According to the intern (1) if meeting with an important person, punctuality increases. The Intern (4) stated that punctuality is impossible because of the poor infrastructure of the country. Bureaucracy was noted among three interns and according to their point of view, many offices and officials are the evidences of strong bureaucracy. The intern (2) noticed that even though there's plenty of official work, the practical orientation was missing.

Illogicality

The intern (3) experienced the irrational thinking of Nepalese. She mentioned that the easiest missions were executed in a complicated way. Another intern (6) also wondered the logic of Nepalese; can they understand simple cause and effect- relations? Time orientation was stated to be different than in Finland. The intern (6) mentioned how working for 12 hours with low pace differs from Finnish way, whereas 8 hours are working hardly. Many interns stated they liked the working culture in Nepal; more flexible and relaxed.

‘‘We were in a meeting, still waiting for some people. Everybody was gathered around a long table. There was a seat for everyone. Then, they wanted to turn the table around and divide it to two separate tables. This arrangement was cramped so some of us didn’t fit in. It took at least half an hour to roll tables.’’ (3)

‘‘Nepalese prefer action over know-how. I was wondering whether they can deal with a little bit challenging cause and effect relations. Trust in God is present. For example: a buffalo produces milk and if the weather is hot, she produces less milk because of the heat. Thereby she needs more water to produce milk. I think combining things is hard for them.’’ (6)

Present moment

Almost all of the interns described Nepalese living in the moment more than planning the future. They experienced the practical way is the most useful in Nepal; importance of deeds were discovered. However the intern (4) mentioned that in the countryside people had learned to live together with nature and its laws, future planning is also essential.

Indirectness

Verbal communication was discovered as indirect among all the interns. Talking about unpleasant topics, smiling together while stating something negative and hierarchical matters were experienced in verbal communication situations. The intern (1) mentioned the matter of relations; when familiarizing with someone it affects directness. Asking the right questions and trying different angles were considered helpful when communicating with Nepalese.

‘‘Asking yes or no questions is not easy in Nepal, because you cannot have simple answers but a long reply. If people got the knowledge considering the topic, they might give you an ideal answer even though the reality might be different. Do they want to give a better image of themselves or are they afraid of losing their face?’’ (6)

‘‘I attended a meeting with the forest group members and it came clear that Nepalese communicate very straight when it comes to their personal life and getting on with. They also comment your outlook and weight very directly.’’ (5)

The intern (5) discovered aspects of directness in speech. Talking about personal issues like weight can be straightforward.

Silence

Related to elaborated and succinct communication styles the interns discovered that small talk is employed in Nepal and silence is a part of conversations. The intern (5) found a difference while speaking foreign language in communication situations. Another intern (6) felt she may be considered as rude because of her need of privacy and (5) felt frustration if there was too much prattle and she reacted with ignorance.

Roles and relations

Politeness and status are visible during discussions. Relations appeared in language, which made communication challenging sometimes while valuing others (2). Also in the group discussions roles were present for the intern (3); there are speakers and listeners distinct. The intern (1) discovers relations are articulated with prefix.

Language barriers

Language barriers were experienced as complicated issues for most of the interns. Especially the role of the interpreter was discussed and for everyone "the broken telephone" occurred. The intern (4) experienced hearing lots of talk among the locals but the interpreter translated only partially. Two interns felt that being outsider was convenient, because it gave them a chance to observe and be in silence.

"I was about to organize a milking hygiene workshop with a few households, mainly with women. When the time came there were mostly men involved, who expected to see 'a milking machine'. This was kind of a Chinese telephone." (6)

"It's fun to be an outsider. There's no need to care about when the others talk and concentrate. When it comes to work issues, I have to take a note of gestures." (1)

Challenges

The most challenging issues in verbal communication were described as finding the common understanding with locals and explaining how their views differ from Nepalese (1). For (2) the resistant attitudes of the locals towards unpleasant topics were

challenging. The intern (3) mentioned a feeling frustration when information needed couldn't be discovered and interpretation failed.

‘‘If the topic is unpleasant or hard, they are silent. I felt irritated when hushing with those hard topics and work didn't proceed. On the other hand it's liberating when talking about decent things.’’ (2)

Smoother approach

Most of the interns changed their behavior consciously during the internship in Nepal. Politeness, keeping calm in complicated situations and learning indirect communication style were described as ways to change own behavior and reach better communication with the locals. While interacting with Nepalese a few interns experienced the importance of questioning and trying different angles. Inquiring is essential, because the high power distance affects the locals' speech and different people may give different answers to the same question.

‘‘If a conversation leads to nothing, it's better to be softer.’’(2)

‘‘I learned softer approach and being satisfied with relaxed style in business. I enjoyed a lot when I was just observing the locals.’’(6)

9.1 Recommendations

Recommendations for reducing challenges in intercultural communication are introduced below, formed together with theoretical framework, interns' experiences and researcher's own experience in Nepalese culture.

9.1.1 Mind your perspective

We travel with our cultural background. Considering Finnish cultural values as introduced before, there are characteristics of egalitarianism, individualism and soft values e.g. conserving nature, appreciation of leisure time and nurturing others. Rules are written in laws and law-abiding nature of Finns dominates moral. Our search of Truth is based in Christianity, which differs from the religious views of the East. Finnish history consists of the elements of foreign reign, huge debts after war and implementing *sisu* during tough times. All these aspects affect our behavior and speech. In addi-

tion there are other conceptual things affecting us e.g. the exact situation where we are in, relationships with others and according to my own experience, even the moon or diet.

When interacting with other cultures, which not share the same values, we might feel frustration, agitation or even anger. This is natural considering Storti's views of ethnocentrism. We act according to our own viewpoints and expect others to share those. Interns felt irritation when Finnish straightforward style in verbal communication didn't correspond with Nepalese indirect style. During my stay in Nepal I sometimes felt agitation when I couldn't understand what people were discussing around me. When one reacts with agitation, the other takes it as a peaceful moment and an opportunity to observe the locals.

This work considers human and culture as adaptive and changeable. Thereby continuous improvement and learning from others and their cultures is essential for developing intercultural skills and understanding. This refers to the idea that we cannot change others, we can only change ourselves. Instead of feeling agitation when incidents happen, more fruitful approach could be put into action. For example, enjoying the silence and observing others for gaining knowledge.

Minding one's perspective can open various doors to intercultural communication. Being aware of our reactions is the first step in developing cultural intelligence and changing ourselves. Reflecting Finnish strong strive for egalitarianism, inequality in Nepal may feel wrong and rise up negative feelings as many of the female interns experienced. Applying the ideas of Storti and Isaacs in this situation, seeing the bigger picture and staying in the facts can be helpful. Instead of letting negative emotions affect our behavior and speech, we have to accept that we cannot change their way. We need to change our own perception.

9.1.2 Listen in silence

Lewis discussed verbal communication between Finns and Asians. Similarities can be found which mostly refer to listening and silence. Avoiding interrupting, thinking in

silence and rarely opening a discussion are some of the features of both Finns and Asians. Silence can be worthy tool for increasing understanding among cultures.

Finnish directness refers to strict and straight opinions, contextual matters are ignored. Isaacs discovered postponing opinions is one option of building up a successful dialogue. Instead of speaking straight from one's mind, taking note of the context and choosing words consciously we become more able to try different angles in conversations and gain more knowledge.

After intercultural incidents happen we can think about our feelings in those situations. As interns experienced, taking time for privacy and just observing others may increase understanding towards others. Quiet observing reveals non-verbal communication patterns and new aspects in local's communication style. According to one intern's experience, non-verbal communication doesn't correspond with verbal communication in Nepal.

In silence we can watch others and our own reactions. In this hectic world, when walking alongside the fuzzy streets of Kathmandu, observing and being aware of our own reactions can be challenging. Earlier we discussed religious views in East and West. For example Buddhism offers many ways to increase awareness through meditation and yoga. I attended a meditation class in a one monastery near Kathmandu city and learnt a few simple practices to increase awareness. I will share two of them here:

Sit down and breathe deep. Imagine the sky above you as clouds are passing by; they come and go. The Sky is your awareness and clouds are your thoughts. They come and go. You make a note of your thoughts until they pass away. After this practice and you will finally discover enlightenment when you only see the clear sky.

How to deal with anger or pain? Sit down and breathe deep. Try to feel the location of anger/pain in your body. Don't try to deny it, take it as it is, treat it with kindness and let it go.

Referring to long-term and short-term orientations and conceptions of time, interns experienced that locals were living more in the present moment. According to my own experiences, being present makes we feel more connected to others and world. Instead

of worrying about the past or future, the power of the moment gives us opportunity to see the context, surroundings and make notes of other people we have interacted with.

9.1.3 Stay connected

Isaacs mentions increasing respect towards others mindset *'this is in me too'* may be helpful. Regardless of cultural differences we are all humans and we do share the same globe, seeing others and their behavior as a part of ourselves helps us to stay connected.

Words really have power. Words create wars, peace, start relationships or break them. As Peterson mentioned, as a whole, communication involves many different gestures and tones, our personality and culture reflect in our speech. Words are symbolic and we share same symbolic system with people who speak the same language. Friend and freedom has different meanings in different languages. Maybe there are as many worlds as there are languages?

In spite of we don't share same languages and cultures, but we can learn and apply those various mental models, or as Hofstede said *'mental programming of mind'*. While travelling to a country that is more collectivistic than our own or where spirituality has more importance in daily life than in ours, we can observe them and carry experiences back home and employ them in our daily lives.

After I came back from Nepal I've been thinking a lot how I could do something for others. I consider myself as an independent person so it's been a great challenge. But with small changes in daily life and memorizing those moments of community I have gone towards more collectivistic way of thinking. Practicing spirituality is more common in Nepal than in Finland. Monasteries, temples and holy men are everywhere. Without a doubt, the most spiritual place in Finland is forest. Wandering there makes we feel more close to the earth, more conscious and happy. We are rooted and connected together with trees.

Building up relations is a good way to stay connected and develop intercultural skills. As interns noticed, relations are important in Nepal. If a foreigner is willing to get more profound answers, small talk and familiarizing with a person are the first steps in

building a good discussion. Nepalese appreciate relations over issues whereas Finns tend to think in a pragmatic way.

10 CONCLUSIONS

My plans considering this work changed many times until the final decision of researching interns' experiences of Nepal came. The members of KEMA suggested me to make a guide for future interns considering life in Nepal. But there's already a plenty of online material, blogs and Lonely Planet's books introducing the country and tips for travelers. That's why I chose another path; intercultural communication and cultural values in perspective to Finnish interns. I think this topic gives information which can be applied to life in foreign culture.

Theory and empiric material matched quite well, although the last theoretical parts considering developing intercultural skills and building up a dialogue were not applied in the theme interviews. This was because of constant change of my thoughts; in the beginning, while forming the base of theory and interview questions, I didn't know I would follow Isaacs's ideas of dialogue. When I formed interview questions and later employed those in the work, I chose to drop off some viewpoints because I realized something during the research; changing our own mindset while travelling is the only way to success.

The outcome of the work consists of ideas developing one's way of thinking and communication towards more peaceful, conscious and whole. These recommendations are quite vast and abstract. Instead of forming practical tips for Finnish interns when communicating with Nepalese, I chose the approach that follows the idea of human; changeable nature of individuals and cultures. We don't see culture as a stable, linear process where individuals are born into and are expected to behave according to that culture. We think that constant changes and dynamic cultures make us apply knowledge we gain from other cultures and learn to think ourselves as part of others.

Results of interviews revealed experiences which reflect the interns' viewpoints, deviations are there as well. Because I couldn't transcript the interviews, something can be missing, but still I felt that I got crucial information about the interns' perceptions.

Besides I got essential information about the interns' experiences, knowledge towards Nepalese and my own cultural values increased. I started to think '*if I would have known this thing, I would have behaved or talked differently.*' Next time when traveling abroad I will be wiser.

One of the main objectives of development cooperation is distribute the knowledge to. Sharing the information is implemented through discussions and practical ways. These discussions, or dialogues, and taking a note of all individual's role in them is crucial for developing cooperation. Now, when the government is about to reduce the budget in development cooperation in Finland these issues are even more important to consider.

Problems through this work refer to confining matters. There's lots of literature considering cultural and intercultural studies and my interest towards everything were about to misguide me. On the other hand, I felt that is the purpose of the work and part of the learning process. Forming interview questions with themes wasn't that easy. Theme questions should not guide the interviewee too much, but still keep them in right track.

When KEMA starts a new project and conducts students to project, this work can be shared either as an orientation material or for the mentors when they personally accustom new interns to abroad internship. The information can be shared in workshops, group discussions and other interactive situations. Also group meditations and mindfulness practices could be the appropriate ways to distribute the knowledge, because training awareness was the one main point in developing skills of intercultural communication.

10.1 Suggestions for further research

This work concentrates on interns' experiences with qualitative method. For further research discovering non-verbal communication would be an option, because it's closely related to verbal communication. This work only studied Finns interns' experiences. Nepalese perspective is not measured. Interviewing Nepalese together with Finns could have given totally new aspects to the research.

Putting this work online in a form of a blog was my first idea. Making the blog was the primary thought, but after I discovered the nature of the results and its complexity I found it too big a project. Studying blogging and implementing results and recommendations would have been helpful for people to prepare for abroad internship and find solutions during the travel.

Another interesting aspect is linguistics that got my attention many times during this research. After finding out how languages define our world, I would like to know more about those worlds. Finding out how cultural values in Finnish and Nepalese language reflect in spoken language could be another interesting topic of discuss.

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KULTTUURIARVOT *perustuvat hollantilaisen Geert Hofsteden kulttuuriarvojen väliseen vertailuun.*

1) Taustatiedot (ikä, opinnot, matkustuskokemukset)

- Oletko aiemmin työskennellyt ulkomailla? Jos kyllä, missä?

2) Hierarkia Nepalissa

- Miten se näkyi? Entä työssäsi?
- Näkyikö vuorovaikutustilanteissa?
- Omia kokemuksia liittyen hierarkiaan; hauskoja, haastavia, hämmentäviä. Miten niistä selvisit?

3) Yhteisöllisyys/Individualismi

- Koetko Nepalin olevan enemmän yhteisöllinen kuin yksilökeskeinen maa? Miten se näkyi? Entä työssäsi?
- Millaisia suhteita solmit oleskelusi aikana?
- Omia kokemuksia liittyen yhteisöllisyyteen; hauskoja, haastavia, hämmentäviä. Miten niistä selvisit?

4) Maskuliinisuus/Feminiinisyys

- Oliko mielestäsi naisten ja miesten työt tarkkaan jaoteltu?
- Olivatko Nepalissa mielestäsi a) pehmeät arvot vai b) kovat arvot (pehmeitä arvoja ovat elämänlaadun, ympäristön, luonnon, pieni & hidas, yhteistyön arvostaminen ja kovia arvoja ovat kunnianhimon, menestyksen, rahan, suuri & nopea, työnteon sekä perinteisten sukupuoliroolien arvostaminen (jämmäkyys miehissä, äidillisyyys naisissa))
- Hauskoja, haastavia, hämmentäviä kokemuksia liittyen tähän?

5) Epävarmuuden välttäminen

- Oliko työpaikalla mielestäsi ”säännöt” joita noudatettiin?
- Oliko toiminta virallista vai epävirallista?
- Omia kokemuksia täsmällisyydestä töissä

- Onko Nepal mielestäsi yhteiskunta, jossa monilla laeilla ja säädöksillä pyritään kontrolloimaan elämää?

6) Pitkä/lyhytjännitteisyys

- Keskitytäänkö Nepalissa mielestäsi tulevaisuuteen vai eletään nykyhetkessä?
- Miten tämä ilmeni? Entä työssäsi?

SANALLINEN VIESTINTÄ

- 1) Ilmaistaanko mielestäsi Nepalissa asiat suoraan vai kierrellen? Millaisia omia kokemuksia sinulla on tästä?
- 2) Näitkö tilanteita, jossa joku olisi menettänyt kasvonsa? Mitä tapahtui?
- 3) Onko mielestäsi Nepalissa sanallinen viestintä runsassanaista vai ytimekästä? Miten suhtaudutaan hiljaisuuteen ja taukoihin?
- 4) Ovatko sanallisessa viestinnässä mielestäsi näkyvissä statukset sekä roolit vai epämuodollisuus ja persoonan korostaminen? Mitä kokemuksia tästä?
- 5) Onko jotain puheenaiheita, joita kannattaa välttää? Mistä voi puhua avoimesti oman kokemuksesi mukaan?
- 6) Miten koit kielimuurin?
- 7) Mikä oli mielestäsi haastavinta kommunikoinnissa?
- 8) Miten selvisit niistä haasteista?
- 9) Muutitko tietoisesti käytöstäsi /kommunikointitapaasi Nepalissa oleskelusi aikana?
- 10) Mitä vinkkejä antaisit tuleville suomalaisille, jotka matkaavat Nepaliin työharjoitteluun?
- 11) Muuta mainittavaa liittyen Nepalin työharjoitteluusi?