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Impoliteness and Emotions in a Cross-Cultural Perspective

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This study investigates the emotions one experiences when one participates in impolite discourses. Specifically, it addresses the question of whether different cultures experience different emotions in the light of discourses deemed impolite. We begin by discussing the nature of impoliteness, pointing out that key concepts such as *face* and *sociality rights* seem to be closely connected to particular emotions. We discuss the role of cognition in the mediation of emotion, arguing that it is essential in the explanation of impoliteness, and indeed cultural variation. We analyse 500 reports of impoliteness events generated by undergraduates based in England, Finland, Germany, Turkey and China. We extract emotion labels from our data and classify them into emotion groups. Our results suggest that there is less cultural variation at higher level emotion categories, but more at lower level. For example, our Chinese and Turkish data suggests that our informants contrast with the other datasets in experiencing sadness to a greater degree.

1. Introduction

Navigating the field of impoliteness research is daunting. There is no agreed definition of *politeness* or *impoliteness* (Bargiela-Chiappini; Locher and Bousfield 3). Even the terms that can be used for such notions are controversial (why not use *civility* instead of *politeness*, or *rudeness* instead of *impoliteness*?). In fact, in this paper we use the term impoliteness as a

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cover term. (Im)politeness clearly involves particular behaviours, but it cannot be reduced to a fixed list of linguistic forms or behaviours that are guaranteed to have polite or impolite meanings on all occasions (perhaps something that might be more associated with etiquette manuals). Consider that the expression *thank you* could be said in such a way and in such a context that its meaning could be construed as impolite (e.g. sarcastic). Deciding on whether *thank you* is polite or impolite involves more than simply decoding semantic meanings; it involves inferring interpersonal meanings in context. More specifically, impoliteness refers to behaviours, verbal or non-verbal, which evoke particular (mental) attitudes. The idea that politeness is subjective and evaluative is fairly frequently stated in the politeness literature (e.g. Eelen; Watts; Spencer-Oatey, "(Im)Politeness"; Ruhi). (Im)politeness concerns behaviours which evoke impoliteness attitudes, or, more specifically, judgements that a behaviour is unexpected, unacceptable and/or unwanted. Such attitudes can be evoked in any participant; even a speaker of something impolite may judge their own behaviour to be impolite. However, speakers or producers of impoliteness-evoking-behaviours do not suffer the same emotional consequences as the other participants. A particular characteristic – perhaps the defining characteristic – of impoliteness is that it also causes (usually strong) emotional reactions in those other participants whose impoliteness attitudes have been evoked. This is possibly the major point of difference from politeness. As Blitvich (69) points out, with reference to Kienpointner (41): "we tend to associate impoliteness, but not necessarily politeness, with true emotions." Linguistic impoliteness work is not only geared towards exacerbating negatively valenced emotions, but intimately associated with them. The main objective in this essay is to discover whether there is cultural variation in the emotions that are experienced – or, more accurately, reported – during impoliteness events. This objective extends the work presented in Culpeper (*Impoliteness*) and Culpeper, Marti, Nevala, Mei and Schauer. We need to stress at this early juncture that referring to the "English" or "German" data or labelling a table with the word "Finnish" or "Chinese" should be recognised as a shorthand for the specific set of undergraduate informants born and bred in that particular nation. Each national dataset will not reflect all the cultural diversity within national boundaries, though it may well give hints about wider cultural norms that can be followed up in further research.

In the next section, we will begin by conducting a general survey of impoliteness and emotions. Given the importance of the concepts of *face* and *sociality rights* in relation to impoliteness, in the first part of this

survey we describe how emotions are connected to these concepts. In the second part of this survey, we will elaborate on the workings of impoliteness in context, especially cultural context. Here, we note the importance of the notion of cognitive appraisal in accounting for the role of context, and especially how both sarcasm and banter work. Furthermore, we will point out the role of cognition in explaining cultural variation in emotion. The aim of the following section is to set up some of the background on emotions for our empirical work. More specifically, we introduce Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor's influential study on categories of emotion. We also discuss cross-cultural issues. In the final major section of this paper, we report our empirical work based on impoliteness events recorded by undergraduates in England, Finland, Germany, Turkey and China. We begin by briefly describing our data collection method, and then elaborate on how we classified emotions in our impoliteness data. We note the particular problems we encountered on the basis of cultural variation in the experience of emotion, and also issues to do with the translation of emotion labels. Finally, we present and discuss our results.

2. Impoliteness and Emotions

2.1. Impoliteness Concepts and Functions: The Role of Emotion

Influential politeness and impoliteness frameworks make much of the notion of *face* (e.g. Brown and Levinson; Bousfield; Culpeper "Towards an Anatomy"). In English, the term face is perhaps most commonly used in the idiom *losing face*, meaning that one's public image suffers some damage, often resulting in emotional reactions, such as embarrassment. In academic writings, most scholars draw on Goffman's (5) definition of face: "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes." Note that when you lose face you feel bad about how you are seen in other people's eyes. Face concerns vary in sensitivity. For example, some people might not be particularly bothered by an insult targeting their appearance, but much more so by the insult targeting their partner. As argued in Culpeper (*Impoliteness* 26), "we can hypothesize the self as a schema consisting of layers of components varying in emotional importance with the most highly-charged closest to the cen-

tre, and this is thus where potentially the most face-sensitive components lie."

Goffman notes the emotional consequences of face loss at various points:

> If events establish a face for him [sic] that is better than he might have expected, he is likely to "feel good"; if his ordinary expectations are not filled, one expects that he will "feel bad" or "feel hurt." (6)

> He may become embarrassed and chagrined; he may become shamefaced. (8)

> It is plain that emotions play a part in the cycles of response, as when anguish is expressed because of what one has done to another's face, or anger because of what has been done to one's own. (23)

The key emotions here are: hurt, embarrassment, shame, anguish (possibly related to guilt) and anger. Hurtful communication has been the subject of research (e.g. Feeney; Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell and Evans; Vangelisti "Messages that Hurt," "Making Sense," "Communicating Hurt"; Young). Here, it is generally understood that "[p]eople feel hurt when someone else says or does something that they perceive emotionally injured them or when they perceive someone's failure to say or do something emotionally injures them" (Vangelisti, "Communicating Hurt" 139). People experience "a combination of sadness at having been emotionally wounded and fear of being vulnerable to harm" (Vangelisti, "Communicating Hurt" 123). Some researchers have looked again at face and facework in the context of emotions, particularly shame and embarrassment (e.g. Samra-Fredericks; Gerholm).

Other researchers, notably Spencer-Oatey (*Culturally Speaking*), have argued that the notion of face does not adequately cover all cases of (im)politeness, and that we also need to factor in *sociality rights*, which might be thought of as social "oughts" – authoritative standards of behaviour held by a community, involving positive or negative evaluations of behaviour as being consistent or otherwise with those standards. For example, failing to respond to a greeting might imply that the target cares little for the person who greeted, thus threatening their face, but it also flouts social norms of reciprocity whereby one greeting is met by another. Such flouts are more likely to result in frustration or anger. There is a link here with moral emotions. Haidt (853) defines moral emotions as "those emotions that are linked to the interests or welfare either of society as a whole or at least of persons other than the judge or

agent." Moral emotions can be positive or negative (gratitude would be an example of a positive moral emotion, and an insult would be an example of a negative emotion). The more negative moral emotions are: anger, disgust, contempt, embarrassment, shame and guilt. Haidt (855; see also Rozin, Lowery, Imada and Haidt) divides these into two groups: (1) anger, disgust and contempt which consist of "other-condemning" emotions, and (2) embarrassment, shame and guilt which consist of "self-conscious" emotions. Culpeper (*Impoliteness* 61-65) argues that violations of sociality rights are more likely to be accompanied by other-condemning emotions (e.g. anger, disgust and contempt), whilst violations of face are more likely to be accompanied by self-conscious emotions (e.g. embarrassment and shame).

2.2. Impoliteness, Emotions and Context: The Role of Cognition[1]

Losing face or flouting a sociality right is certainly not hotwired to particular emotions. Emotions are considered by many scholars to be evoked as part of people's cognitive appraisal of situations. This view is contrary to the Darwinian perspective in which displays of emotion are reflexes of physiological states (see, for example, Darwin), and to its extension in evolutionary social psychology where expressions of emotion are seen as genetically predetermined (see, for example, Morris). Consider the fact that people can be angry, yet control that anger and not display signs of aggression. This kind of example is not easily accounted for without factoring in cognition. In the field of aggression studies, Anderson and Bushman (see also Anderson, Deuser and DeNeve) develop a "general aggression model" to explain how emotions are treated. Their model has three internal states: cognitions, emotional affect and (physical or perceived) arousal, all of which feed into the experience of emotion. These states are triggered not just by a stimulus, such as a gun or a swearword, but also by a person with specific characteristics in a particular context. Importantly, these internal states are not hotwired to behaviours. They are appraised, in other words, the person judges what happened, why it happened, how angry he or she feels, what actions to take, and so on. This appraisal can be more thoughtful or more impulsive. A model of this kind better accounts for the complexities of social interaction. Specifically with regard to impoliteness, we need to factor in cognitive appraisal, otherwise banter, for example,

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[1] This section is based on material presented in Culpeper (*Impoliteness*).

would not exist. Banter is mock impoliteness: using the conventional words and behaviours of impoliteness but doing so in a context where they are understood (cognitively appraised) not to be genuinely offensive (e.g. saying *Come here you bastard* to a friend).

Appraisal of this kind can only happen if emotions are represented in our minds. There is indeed ample support for this idea. Since at least the 1980s cognitive models have assumed that emotions can be represented in our minds (e.g. Ortony, Clore and Collins). Indeed, there is empirical evidence that emotions are represented in a mental schema, a complex bundle of generic knowledge (e.g. Conway and Bekerian). An excellent description of what all this might mean is produced by Russell (his term "script" is roughly equivalent to our term "schema"):

> Although we often speak of an emotion as a thing, a more apt description is a sequence of subevents. In other words, the features that constitute emotion concepts describe the subevents that make up the emotion: causes, beliefs, feelings, the physiological changes, desires, and overt actions, and vocal and facial expressions. These subevents, described by the concept features, are ordered in a casual sequence – in much the same way that actions are ordered in a playwright's script. To know the sense of a term like anger, fear or jealousy is to know a script for that emotion. [. . .] Few or no features of the script are necessary; rather, the more features present, the closer the resemblance and the more appropriate the script label. (39)

Emotions interact with information about situations and their norms, and all this information is represented in an emotion schema in memory. Moreover, people are aware of norms about the appropriateness of emotions in particular situations. For example, the emotional state of happiness, with related displays of laughing and smiling, are not appropriate at a funeral. Or, to take an impoliteness example, insults and threats displaying the emotional state of anger, would not be appropriate at a wedding. People cognitively appraise the situation and regulate their emotion displayed accordingly.

A number of studies have attempted to discover both the structure and contents of emotion concepts. A major and influential study is offered by Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor. These researchers compiled a list of 135 emotion names and then asked 100 North American subjects to sort them into groups on the basis of similarity, and then these results were put through a statistical cluster analysis. The resulting clusters emerged as a tree-like hierarchy of groups, with a basic level in the middle and superordinate categories above and subordinate categories below. This structure echoed work on prototypes, which are con-

ceived of as similar to schemata and other generic mental representations. Eleanor Rosch and her colleagues (e.g. Rosch "Natural Categories," "Principles"; Rosch, Mervis, Gray, Johnson and Boyes-Braem) also found three levels in their work: superordinate (e.g. furniture), basic (e.g. chair) and subordinate (e.g. kitchen chair). At the highest superordinate level, the only distinction that emerged was a very generic, though important, one between positive and negative emotions. Obviously, impoliteness is associated with the latter. The basic level was comprised of love, joy anger, sadness, fear and, more weakly, surprise. Table 1 displays the three negative emotions, anger, sadness and fear, and the subordinate groups which comprise them, along with the specific emotion names that comprise those subordinate groups. Note that some labels appear at more than one level. Sadness was an emotion name supplied by the North American subjects. Its statistical centrality to the subordinate group, calculated on the basis of its co-occurrence with other items in the group, led to it being chosen as label for that subordinate group. Basic level labels were chosen on the basis of both their statistical centrality and the labels used in the emotion literature. Sadness is not only statistically central at a basic level but also widely used in the emotion literature. It should be remembered, then, that labels from subordinate level through basic to superordinate are progressively more technical.

The basic emotional concepts of sadness and anger, and to a lesser extent fear, intuitively seem particularly relevant to impoliteness events. At the subordinate level the most relevant categories seem to be neglect and suffering, and disgust, rage, exasperation and irritation. Indeed, the relevance of these categories has been demonstrated in Culpeper (*Impoliteness*), at least as far as British data is concerned.

A further study reported by Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor revealed the wider prototype or schema of which the emotion concepts are a part. In other words, they were investigating the nature of what we described as a script above, with reference to Russell. They did this by listing 120 accounts of emotional experiences, and then using six coders to identify features of these accounts, some of which obviously involved impoliteness, as illustrated here:

> I called him a jerk. I yelled at him. I said (excuse me, please) "fuck you" and called him "shit head." I also try to tell him he was wrong to act the way he was over no big deal. I hit and kicked and cursed him repeatedly.
> (1073)

Table 1: Negative emotion concepts (data drawn from Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor)

Superordinate	*Basic*	*Subordinate*	*Emotion names*
Negative	Fear	Nervousness	anxiety, nervousness, tenseness, uneasiness, apprehension, worry, distress, dread
		Horror	alarm, shock, fear, fright, horror, terror, panic, hysteria, mortification
	Sadness	Sympathy	pity, sympathy
		Neglect	alienation, isolation, neglect, loneliness, rejection, homesickness, defeat, ejection, insecurity, embarrassment, humiliation, insult
		Shame	guilt, shame, regret, remorse
		Disappointment	dismay, disappointment, displeasure
		Sadness	depression, despair, hopelessness, gloom, glumness, sadness, unhappiness, grief, sorrow, woe, misery, melancholy
		Suffering	agony, suffering, hurt, anguish
	Anger	Torment	torment
		Envy	envy, jealousy
		Disgust	disgust, revulsion, contempt
		Rage	anger, rage, outrage, fury, wrath, hostility, ferocity, bitterness, hate, loathing, scorn, spite, vengefulness, dislike, resentment
		Exasperation	exasperation, frustration
		Irritation	aggravation, irritation, agitation, annoyance, grouchiness, grumpiness

The schemata for all five basic emotions contained three features: situational antecedents, behavioural responses and self-control procedures. We briefly elaborate the situational antecedents of the three most important basic level emotional concepts for impoliteness, as in doing so we etch in the kind of contexts surrounding the experience of impoliteness. Fear antecedents relate to the individual's lack of power or control, particularly in certain situations (e.g. "loss of control or competence," "possibility of loss or failure," "being in a novel, unfamiliar situation"). Sadness antecedents relate to the realisation that an undesirable outcome has occurred, which may include, similar to fear, the discovery

that one is relatively powerless (e.g. "an undesirable outcome; getting what was not wanted: a negative surprise," "loss of a valued relationship; separation," "rejection, exclusion, disapproval," "not getting what was wanted, wished for, striven for, etc."). Anger antecedents involve the judgement that something/someone has interfered with one's plans or goals by reducing power, violating expectations, interrupting, etc., and that interference is illegitimate, not what ought to be (e.g. "reversal or sudden loss of power, status, or respect; insult," "violation of an expectation; things not working out as planned," "frustration or interruption of a goal-directed activity," "real or threatened physical or psychological pain," "judgement that the situation is illegitimate, wrong, unfair, contrary to what ought to be").

3. Emotions and Cultural Variation

Approaches to emotion emanating from cognitive psychology have been criticised for a variety of reasons. A key problem concerns the fact that cognitive models are based on language data. It is worth quoting Wierzbicka's articulation of the problem:

> According to Izard and Buechler (1980:168), the fundamental emotions are (1) interest, (2) joy, (3) surprise, (4) sadness, (5) anger, (6) disgust, (7) contempt, (8) fear, (9) shame/shyness, and (10) guilt. I experience a certain unease when reading claims of this kind. If lists such as the one above are supposed to enumerate universal human emotions, how is it that these emotions are all so neatly identified by means of English words? For example, Polish does not have a word corresponding exactly to the English word disgust. What if the psychologists working on the "fundamental human emotions" happened to be native speakers of Polish rather than English? Would it still have occurred to them to include "disgust" on their list? And Australian Aboriginal language Gidjingali does not seem to distinguish lexically "fear" from "shame," subsuming feelings kindred to those identified by the English words fear and shame under one lexical item (Hiatt 1978:185). If the researchers happened to be native speakers of Gidjingali rather than English, would it still have occurred to them to claim that fear and shame are both fundamental human emotions, discrete and clearly separated from each other? English terms of emotion constitute a folk taxonomy, not an objective, culture-free analytical framework, so obviously we cannot assume that English words such as disgust, fear, or shame are clues to universal human concepts, or to basic psychological realities.
>
> ("Human Emotions" 584)

As we saw with Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor, the source for their content model was language, and more specifically English, and even more specifically, North American English as used by their student informants. Researchers have even suggested that the prototype structure with three levels does not hold up in a broader perspective. Majid for example, surveying the role of language in emotion research states that:

> some languages lack superordinate terms for emotion or have a term that embraces other psychological states as well; many cultures use high levels of somatic vocabulary to describe affective feelings; and that even "basic" feeling states such as "anger" and "fear" are frequently conflated under a single term. (381)

The question to what extent our native language influences our view of the world, and thus also our perception and feelings, has been debated for several decades now, largely as a consequence of Sapir and Whorf's ideas about linguistic relativity and linguistic determinism. Edward Sapir, quoted in Whorf (134), argued that "[w]e see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation." Researchers using prototype frameworks for emotion research follow the tradition of the weak version of linguistic relativity and determinism, which means that concepts can be translated into other languages and that different languages may have words for similar concepts that describe very similar experiences. Other researchers, such as Wierzbicka ("Human Emotions," *Emotions Across Languages and Cultures*) and Hurtado De Mendoza, Fernández-Dols, Parrott and Carrera argue that emotional concepts should be researched in considerable detail to examine potential differences in the equivalence of the two terms or in the nuances of the terms.

Whilst the issue of language variation remains a serious methodological issue in trying to understand the nature of emotion concepts, we should not let that mislead us into thinking that cognitive psychologists were unaware of cultural variation. Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor explicitly point out that the contents of emotion concepts are culturally sensitive. Interestingly, they argue that it is at the subordinate level that cross-cultural variation is likely, because it is here that context is reflected, but that it is less likely at higher levels (1083). For subordinate-level distinctions, the context in which the emotion arose is important in explaining differences (1069). In fact, some particular subordinate-level emotions seem to be more culturally sensitive than others. A

case in point is the line between the emotions of embarrassment and shame:

> In Western cultures, shame is elicited by the appraisal that there is something wrong or defective with one's core self. [. . .] Embarrassment, in contrast, is said to be elicited by appraisals that one's social identity or persona within an interaction is damaged or threatened, [. . .] at times because of events beyond one's control. In many non-western societies, however, any appraisal that one has violated cultural standards of behaviour in front of other people or that one is at high risk of such violations (as when one is around one's superiors) triggers a self-conscious emotion that combines shame and embarrassment. (Haidt 860)

The point can perhaps be illustrated by the case of Jacintha Saldanha, the nurse who committed suicide shortly after falling for a prank call in which two radio presenters pretended to be Queen Elizabeth and Prince Charles enquiring after the health of the Duchess of Cambridge. Saldanha had spent the first 35 years of her life in Mangalore, India, and the last ten working in London. Many British people were puzzled that she had taken her own life. Falling for a prank call was embarrassing maybe, but hardly a reason for such drastic action (assuming that mental health issues did not play a part). But this is a very British cultural perspective. As Wierzbicka (*Emotions Across Languages and Cultures* 112) reminds us: "[e]mbarrassment is one of the most important emotion concepts in the modern Anglo world." It is conceivable that Saldanha's emotional landscape was rather different, being based on different experiences, with the consequence that for her this incident was at least in part a matter of shame. (For more on the cultural aspects of shame and guilt, see Wallbott and Scherer).

Note here that the idea that different cultural experiences result in different prototypes or schemata is entirely compatible with the theory. Fredric Bartlett's early pioneering work in schema theory was partly designed to explore cultural differences in interpretation (see also the experiment by Steffensen, Joag-Dev and Andersen), and schema theory is used today in the context of cross-cultural pragmatics (e.g. Scollon and Scollon). Problems have come about because people sometimes assume that the results of a study based on one typically English-speaking cultural group can be applied to other cultural groups.

4. *An Empirical Study of Reports of Impoliteness Events Across Five Cultures*

4.1. *Data Collection*

Naturally-occurring impoliteness is relatively rare in everyday contexts and thus difficult to collect for analysis, and experimentally induced impoliteness is fraught with ethical problems. Consequently, we decided to use the diary or fieldnotes method. Our inspiration here is Spencer-Oatey ("Managing Rapport"). In this study students were asked to record "rapport sensitive" incidents, that is, "incidents involving social interactions that they [the student informants] found to be particularly noticeable in some way, in terms of their relationship with the other person(s)" (533-534). We devised a report form that was more detailed and focused than Spencer-Oatey's, not least with respect to the fact that we are only interested in negative behaviours and emotions. One aspect of our design was to avoid mentioning a label that described the kind of behaviour we are interested in – labels such as "impolite," "rude," "abusive," "aggressive" – because the choice of a particular label may have biased our results. Thus, we asked informants to report conversations that had a particular *effect* on them – conversations "in which someone said something to you which made *you* feel bad." A box extending a little less than half a page was provided for reports. Unlike Spencer-Oatey ("Managing Rapport"), we also asked informants to reflect on their reported conversations in a number of specific ways. In order to gain information about emotions that might have been experienced, we asked two questions: (1) "We know you felt 'bad,' but describe your feelings?" and (2) "Why did this particular behaviour make you feel bad?" Boxes allowing for a few lines of text were supplied for responses.

Spencer-Oatey's ("Managing Rapport") analysis was based on 59 report forms; we will analyse 100 report forms per "national" dataset, Chinese, English, Finnish, German and Turkish (i.e. 500 in total). In the remainder of this paper the labels Chinese, English, and so on indicate the country from which the informants originated. With respect to language varieties, our study involved Mandarin Chinese, British English and German German. Table 2 displays the social profile of our informants.

Table 2: The social profile of our data sets

		English	*Chinese*	*Finish*	*German*	*Turkish*
Age	*18-29*	98	100	99	99	100
	30-59	2	0	1	1	0
Gender	*Female*	79	67	89	73	64
	Male	21	33	11	27	36

As can be seen, the profile of each national dataset is broadly similar. However, a limitation of our work is that our results are dominated by the perceptions not only of young students but also students who are female.

For the non-England-based informants, the questionnaires were translated into the participants' native languages. The students completed the questionnaires in their native language, reporting incidents that had happened to them with fellow native speakers of their language. Finally, all questionnaires were transcribed into electronic files, all non-English data were also translated into English. From these data we extracted the emotion descriptors or labels. Some informants only supplied one emotion label, whereas others sometimes supplied a number of labels representing mixed emotions. To take account of this in our quantitative work, we weighted our scores: if a label is the only emotion reported, it was given "1"; if it is one of several, it was given "0.5."

4.2. Classifying Emotions Across Cultures

As mentioned above, we used Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor's prototype framework to analyse the emotion labels provided by our participants in the five languages investigated. Since our main aim is not to provide a detailed analysis of the universality of emotion labels in different languages, but rather to try and see if impoliteness experiences result in different negative emotions in five different languages and cultures (which means that we are not interested in the wider range of emotions often investigated in prototype emotion research, such as emotions that could be assigned to the basic categories of love and joy), we considered the prototype framework a suitable instrument for our research. However, we are, of course, aware that there could be differences in the meaning of certain emotion labels in the different languages. Hurtado De Mendoza, Fernández-Dols, Parrott and Carrera, for example, discuss differences in the English emotion label

shame and the presumed Spanish equivalent *vergüenza*. Therefore, we decided to follow a multiple step analysis procedure to address potential differences and to ensure that we were comparing similar emotions across the five languages.

First, the translated emotion labels of all languages were assigned to Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor's basic and subordinate emotion categories. In the second step, the native speaker analyst who was responsible for the individual language reviewed the resulting model that represented the classification of the emotion labels for their language to check if the assigned basic and subordinate categories provided a good fit for the emotions described by their participants. For the majority of the cases, Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor's model provided a clear and acceptable fit for the basic categories. This finding thus supports previous research on emotion universals that suggested that at least some emotions labels are similar in a variety of different languages and cultures (e.g. Hupka, Lenton and Hutchinson, but note that this study relied on dictionaries).

In some cases, the emotion labels used by the participants to describe their feelings seemed to entail more than one basic emotion category. For example, the German *lächerlich gemacht* translated as "ridiculed" in English seemed to include aspects of two basic categories, anger and sadness. As the description of the participants using this emotion label in German suggested that the dominant emotion was sadness, we assigned *lächerlich gemacht* to the basic emotion sadness rather than anger. This approach was also followed in all other cases, where a close reading of the context provided by the participants in their reports enabled us to assign emotion labels to one of the basic and subordinate categories.

In other cases, we classified one English emotion label as representing two different subordinate emotions but the same basic emotion. For example, the Finnish expressions *vituttaa* and *ottaa päähän* were both translated as "pissed off" in English, but based on the context provided in the participants' reports assigned to different subordinate categories of anger, namely, rage and irritation.

Following the individual analysis of the emotion labels done by each of us individually, we then, in a third step, discussed the fit of individual emotion labels given by Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor that did not seem to represent the data in our native languages. One emotion, represented in the German and Chinese data, did not fit any of the basic categories of Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor's framework. This is the emotion that is described by the German adjective *unangenehm*, which was translated into English as "unpleasant," "uncom-

fortable" or "awkward" depending on the context of the participants' report. It does not easily fit any of the basic categories anger, sadness or fear. As the Chinese word for "uncomfortable" also did not fit any of the three basic categories, we decided to introduce a new category called *unpleasant* to the framework.

We think that this multiple step approach helps to ensure that differences in the perception of emotion labels are addressed. Also, multilingual projects such as ours can provide useful additions to existing frameworks and thereby help address the potential language bias of frameworks that have been developed based solely on the English language.

4.3. Impoliteness and Emotions in England, Finland, Germany, Turkey and China

In this section, we highlight some of the interesting patterns in that data. Figure 1 displays the basic emotion groups for the five nation data sets.

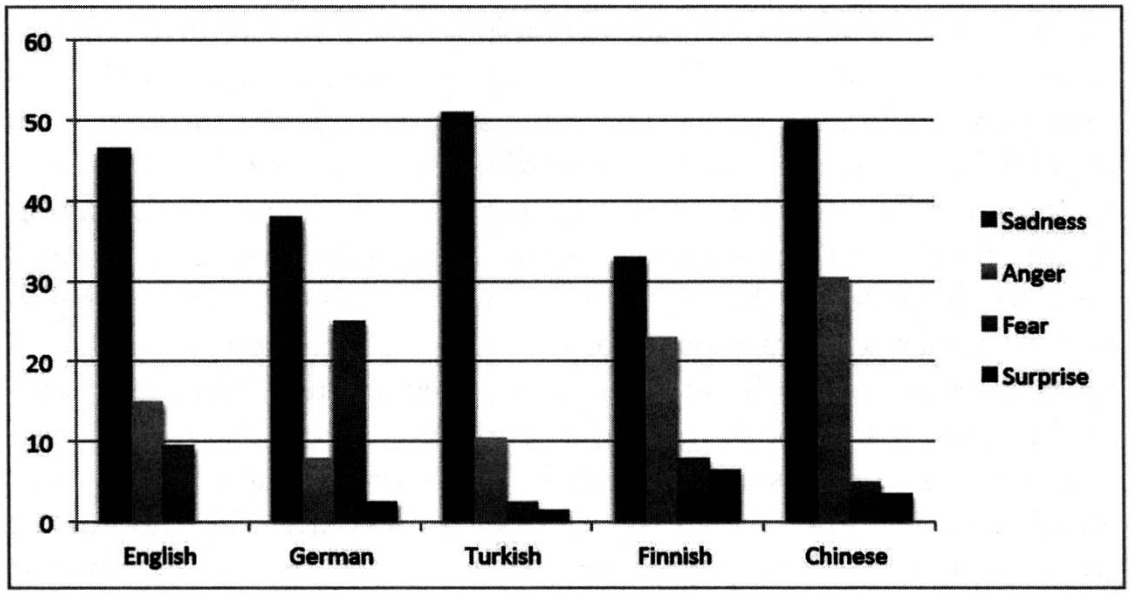

Figure 1: Basic emotion groups for five nation groups (the numbers represent scores; see section 4.1)

Sadness seems to be a particular feature of the Turkish group, far exceeding any other emotion. Anger is strongest for the Chinese group. The German group seems distinctive in having the least anger but the most fear. Nevertheless, a generally striking facet of this Figure is the similarities amongst the five nation data sets, not the differences (statistical testing of those differences is not possible, because of the scoring method used). All groups are dominated by sadness, anger follows some distance behind, and then the other groups fear and surprise are quite minor, except fear in the German data. This similarity supports Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor's claim that basic level emotion categories are less susceptible to cultural variation. The fact that the basic level emotion category of sadness is the most prominent in all datasets is noteworthy, as this particular group encompasses nearly all of the emotions named by Goffman as accompanying the loss of face (including hurt, embarrassment, shame and anguish). The one other emotion that Goffman mentioned was anger, and this, of course, is the second most prevalent group. This emotion is most likely to be triggered by violations of sociality rights.

In order to reveal possible cultural variation we need to look more closely at the detail, and this means looking at the subordinate emotion groups. Table 3 displays the subordinate emotion groups for the five nation groups in rank order. This table also displays the most frequent emotion label within each of the subordinate groups that it displays.

It should be remembered at this point that the names of the subordinate emotion groups – neglect, shame, suffering, rage, and so on – were not invented by Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor to represent the semantic characteristics of the whole subordinate group. This is partly because, unlike basic level labels, they are real labels that were used by informants. Sometimes this works quite well (e.g. the subordinate group surprise is represented by the most dominant label "surprised"). Other times the fit of the label is awkward. The subordinate group neglect, for example, represents quite a diverse set of emotion labels, whilst the subordinate group shame represents emotion labels that include "embarrassed," and, as we saw in section 3, that emotion can be separate from shame.

Nevertheless, Table 3 does reveal some intriguing results. One can detect somewhat more similarity between the English, German and Finnish groups, compared with the Turkish and Chinese. All three have neglect in first or second position and shame in second or third. Anger features in the English and Finnish lists, and we should remember that for the German data the new category "unpleasant and awkward" in-

Table 3: Subordinate emotion groups for five nation groups in rank order (only groups scoring above 5 are included; the item in italics is the most frequent emotion label in that group; after the slash the original language label is supplied)

English	*German*	*Turkish*	*Finnish*	*Chinese*
Neglect (20) (*humiliated*)	Unpleasant and Awkward (21.5) (*unpleasant/ unangenehm*)	Sadness (30) ([feeling] *bad / kötü hissetmek*)	Neglect (14.5) (*not appreciated / aliarvostettu, arvoton*)	Sadness (26.5) (*unhappy / 郁闷*)
Shame (16) (*embarrassed*)	Neglect (11.5) (*ridiculed / lächerlich gemacht*)	Suffering (16.5) (*offended / kirilmak*)	Irritation (14.5) (*annoyed / ärsyyntynyt*)	Rage (19.5) (*angry / 生气*)
Suffering (9.5) (*hurt*)	Shame (10.5) (*embarrassed / peinlich [berührt]*)	Rage (8.5) (*angry / kizmak*)	Shame (11) (*embarrassed / nolostunut*)	Suffering (14) (*hurt / 受伤*)
Rage (8) (angry)		Neglect (8) (*humiliated / küçük düsürülmek*)	Rage (10) (*angry / vihainen*)	Irritation (11.5) (*annoyed / 恼火*)
Irritation (6.5) (*annoyed*)			Surprise (7) (*surprised / yllättynyt*)	Shame (5.5) (*embarrassed / 难堪*)

corporates anger. In contrast, the Turkish and Chinese groups feature the group sadness in strong first position. Geographically, of course, England, Germany and Finland are relatively close together, whereas Turkey is further to the East and China even further. But why sadness? A clue is given in Spencer-Oatey ("Conceptualising 'the Relational' in Pragmatics"). This study investigated Chinese / British workplace communication, deploying similar analyses of emotion labels to the ones being undertaken in this essay. Spencer-Oatey comments that for the Chinese sadness is "even more strongly linked to team issues; for example, lack of consultation, failure to carry out what had been agreed, lack of commitment from a team member, lack of mutual understanding, and a distant attitude of other team members" ("Conceptualising 'the Relational' in Pragmatics" 3572). Such issues involve violations of sociality rights. In another study (Culpeper, Marti, Nevala, Mei and Schauer), which analysed the same data, we demonstrated that violations of sociality rights dominated the Chinese data in particular, probably because of the importance of group relations in Chinese cultures. The intriguing conclusion one might draw then is that when Chinese infor-

mants experience impoliteness events which violate sociality rights, instead of predominantly experiencing anger or irritation, as would be the typical reaction of English informants (Culpeper, *Impoliteness* 62-65), they more often experience sadness. The difference is important: anger aligns with other-condemning emotions, whereas sadness aligns with self-conscious emotions.

It is intriguing to briefly note that the subordinate group of shame, containing "embarrassed" as its most dominant label, appears highest in the rank order for the English data, more specifically, in second position. This accords with points we made earlier about embarrassment seeming to be a particular feature of English culture.

5. Conclusion

At the beginning of this essay we emphasised the more general point that emotions are linked to contexts, including cultures, through cognition. In discourse, emotions can be experienced or displayed – or withheld – by those producing impoliteness, as well as those receiving it, not to mention third parties. The phenomenon of banter is an interesting case in point; the "normal" reaction to impoliteness, and emotional stimulus, is withheld.

Impoliteness and emotions are intimately connected, and more so than politeness. Goffman had argued that such notions as face are strongly linked to the emotions of embarrassment, hurt and anger. Our results suggest that he was right. Sometimes impoliteness involves violations of sociality rights. Culpeper (*Impoliteness*) has suggested on the basis of his English data that such violations are strongly linked to anger. In this essay, we show evidence that may conflict with that. Instead of feeling angry about such violations, if we can extrapolate from our data set, it seems that the Chinese in particular may feel sadness, a sense of being let down by a behaviour that should not be.

Of course, we must remember that we used retrospective reports of emotions, not on-line emotional experiences. There are issues about the role of language in mapping emotion, not to mention problems with translating emotions labels. Finally, we need to acknowledge that our study has been limited by the fact that we only looked at reports from 500 undergraduates in five nations, not a cross-section of people; it does not reflect the cultural diversity in a nation.

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