

THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL SCHEMA ON L2 PRODUCTION: ANALYSIS
OF NATIVE RUSSIAN SPEAKERS' ENGLISH PERSONAL NARRATIVES

A Thesis

by

MARY ELIZABETH CUNNINGHAM

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

August 2011

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

The Influence of Cultural Schema on L2 Production: Analysis of Native Russian
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ABSTRACT

The Influence of Cultural Schema on L2 Production: Analysis of Native Russian Speakers' English Personal Narratives. (August 2011)

Mary Elizabeth Cunningham, B.A., Baylor University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Zohreh Eslami

The present study focuses on 24 personal narratives told by eight highly proficient bilingual L1-Russian, L2-English speakers (NRS) in comparison to 24 personal narratives told by eight native English speakers (NES) in an effort to not only discover any structural differences that may be revealed through statistical analysis, but also to discover evidence of previously documented Russian and American cultural schema in the narratives through qualitative inquiry and narrative analysis. Although much has been written concerning Russian culture, cross-linguistic differences between Russian and English, and Russian English language learners these concepts have never been synthesized and applied to a study of Russian-English bilingual narratives in English in order to discover if the cultural schema and linguistic tendencies from L1 are maintained in the second language.

The statistical structural analysis included in this study did not reveal any differences between the NES and NRS narratives. On the other hand qualitative analysis of cultural schemas revealed significant transfer of Russian cultural schema in the Native Russian Speaker participants' L2 narrative production. The Russian speakers were found

to maintain their distinctly Russian emotional expression. Influence of cultural schema on L2 production was also visible in the thematic differences between the two sets of stories. The NES responses to each prompt were thematically quite similar, and differed noticeably from the themes of the NRS stories. Similarly, Hofstede's dimensions of national culture also revealed some differences between the two groups. However, the Russian cultural schema proposed by Croft, triplicity, was not found to be more prominent in the NRS narratives than in the NES ones. In conclusion, the Native Russian Speakers in this study showed significant transfer of their L1 cultural schema when speaking their L2.

The findings of this study have revealed the high likelihood of influence and transfer of cultural schema, even when bilingual English language speakers have achieved a very high level of English language mastery. However, this cultural influence on L2 production does not impinge on competence of bilingual speakers when speaking English.

DEDICATION

To Micah Cunningham, Mark and Lisa Fulmer, and Dr. Paul Larson: each of you has made an indelible mark on all I manage to produce.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Eslami, and my committee members, Dr. Clark and Dr. Viruru, for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research.

I also want to extend my gratitude to the women who contributed to this study through their stories.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

LITERATURE REVIEW

Linguistic and pedagogical inquiry into communicative competence and cross cultural pragmatics has led, in the last two decades, to a plethora of studies which examine the cultural bounded-ness of story telling and the learnability of this particular genre of language use (Hall, 1983; Mandler, Scribner, Cole, & DeForest, 1980; Minami, 2002; Kintsch & Greene, 1978; Minami & McCabe, 1991; Kang, 2003). Studies have shown a strong correlation between cultural schema and characteristics and the stories that members of a culture produce (Tannen, 1980; Chafe, 1980; Caudill & Schooler, 1973; Harris, Lee, Hensley & Schoen, 1988; Melzi, 2000; Kang, 2003). These correlations are numerous and exist on multiple levels such as structure, theme, collaboration, etc (Blum-Kulka, 1993; Kuntay & Nakamura; 1993, Uccelli, 1997; Ochsensbauer & Hickmann, 2010). With reference to bilingual storytelling, and storytelling by language learners, some studies have concluded that speakers tend to use only their first language schema, (Akinci, Jisa, & Kern, 2001; Kupersmitt & Berman, 2001) while others have attempted to show that learners can acquire the appropriate norms of the target culture (Maeno, 1996). There is no real consensus on this matter, but additional studies continue to document the differences in story telling between language and cultural groups and the phenomena of bilingual story

This thesis follows the style of *TESOL Quarterly*.

telling in order to further understand the complexities of communicative competence and all it entails.

The present study focuses on the stories told by highly proficient bilingual L1-Russian, L2-English speakers (NRS) in comparison to those stories told by native English speakers (NES) in an effort to not only discover any structural differences that may be revealed through statistical analysis, but also to discover evidence of cultural schema through qualitative inquiry and narrative analysis. Although much has been written concerning Russian culture (Gannon, 2001; Aizlewood, 2000), cross-linguistic differences between Russian and English (Wierzbicka, 1992, 1994, 1998, 1999), and Russian English language learners (Pavlenko, 2010), these concepts have never been synthesized and applied to a study of Russian-English bilingual narratives in English in order to discover if the cultural schema and linguistic tendencies from L1 are maintained in the second language.

Cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, and bilingual narrative studies

In his 1962 essay “The Ethnography of Speaking” Hymes called for this kind of socio-cultural linguistic inquiry saying, “speech habits are among the determinants of nonlinguistic behavior, and conversely. The question is that of the modes and amounts of reciprocal influence.” In other words, Hymes believes that evidence supports a connection between language, behavior, and thought, and he merely questions the extent of that connection. In order to discover the extent of the connection between language and thought, he calls for “ethnolinguistic” research, which had not yet been conducted. He argues that language in context must be studied in order to fully understand the

cultural phenomena which language produces and vice versa. According to Hymes, an understanding and command of the contexts of language, not just the grammar of language, is necessary for communicative competence, because thought is so closely related to language. Narrative, or story telling, is an important factor in communicative competence and the development of cultural norms.

A multitude of cross-linguistic (comparing two or more languages), cross-cultural (comparing two or more cultures), and bilingual (comparing the two languages of a single speaker) studies have been conducted to demonstrate the nature and extent of the connection between language, culture, and narrative production. These studies have demonstrated narrative differences along a wide range of variables. Berman and Slobin (1994) show that narrative expression is closely related to the language of the speakers, so that, for instance, description of movement, which may affect a plot, is bound by the verb system of a particular language. Zhang and Sang (1986) show that a linear or outline structure within narrative is not universal across cultures. Many studies also examine structure, using Labov and Waletzky (1967) as a framework, showing that emphasis on evaluative clauses differs substantially across cultures (Kuntay & Nakamura, 1993; Bamberg & Damrad-Frye, 1991; Minami & McCabe, 1991; Mullen & Yi, 1995). Other studies have approached narrative thematically, showing a difference in topics and focus across cultures (Tannen, 1980; Chafe, 1980; Matsuyama, 1983). Similar studies of bilingual narrative production have examined the effect of these cross-cultural and cross-linguistic differences on a single speaker who participates in both languages and cultures (Fiestas & Peña, 2004; Maeno, 1996; Ordóñez, 2000; Akinci, Jisa, & Kern,

2000; Kupersmitt & Berman, 2001; Kang, 2003). In short, these studies prove that the spoken genre of story telling involves not only knowledge of the necessary linguistic forms, but also knowledge of the appropriate cultural schema.

METHODS

Essentially two methods of data collection have been used to elicit stories for studies of cross-cultural narrative. The first involves providing the participant with a series of wordless prompts, whether pictures or video, and asking them to tell the story illustrated in the pictures. This method allows the researcher to collect individual versions of the same events, providing a degree of continuity across the data and facilitating analysis by limiting variables. However, as Berman and Slobin (1994) note, this method does not guarantee that all participants will be performing the same task. Some may simply be describing the pictures, others telling a story. Also the data collected from this method is inherently literary, and therefore may not provide a true representation of personal narrative in non-literary contexts. Those telling the story are likely to narrate in a style as if they were reading a storybook, perhaps even assuming that their audience is a child. While this works well for research on child-directed speech or child-speech, it may be a limiting factor in a study of adult narrative production. This method also limits the topics and themes of the narratives produced, and may be biased toward the cultural schema of the researcher depending on the pictures used and the events depicted (Berman & Slobin, 1994).

The second method of data collection involves collecting personal stories from the lives of the participants. In order to eliminate variation as much as possible, the

researchers use an interview paradigm. Labov and Waletzky (1967) elicits near death experiences from his participants, while Koven (2001) broadens this idea and asks questions related to emotions such as fear and happiness. While this kind of data allows for more variation than data from picture prompts, it does eliminate the problem of genre. It is unlikely that these stories will be literary in nature. However, as research has shown, context and audience are important and formative aspects of narrative (Hymes, 1962; Scollon and Scollon, 1981; Basso, 1992). This type of elicitation is quite free from conversational context and the interviewer offers no collaboration—an unlikely real-world experience. The stories elicited in this manner, therefore, can be viewed as different from those elicited from picture tasks, but ought not be considered “authentic.” In an effort to eliminate variables, the complexity of storytelling in context as a part of socialization is eliminated, so that the present paper cannot speak to contextualized narratives.

Obviously, the ideal story telling study would be ethnographic in nature, just as Hymes (1962) suggests. Researchers would spend large amounts of time observing and recording authentic data (though even then, the presence of a researcher must be considered), and examine all aspects of the story, from its forms and functions, to its participants and observers. Such a study does not lend itself well to comparative studies and is outside the scope of many projects, including the present one, for which I have used the interview technique of eliciting stories about emotions. This choice was influenced by the age of my participants, who are adults, and my desire to examine the

data for thematic differences, which might be more apparent without the use of a Western-model story.

In this study, 48 personal narratives were analyzed, all the narratives were told in English, 24 by monolingual native English speakers (NES), and 24 by bilingual native Russian speakers (NRS). There were eight participants in each group, identified through convenience sampling, all of whom were women. The mean age of the NES's was 26.125 with a range from 24-29 years of age. All of the American women were middle-class White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant women and any references to "American culture" in this work refer to the culture of these women. The Russian women's ages ranged from 21-32, with a mean of 26.25. Seven of the Russian participants had "superior" language skills according to the ACTFL scale, while one was "advanced," the difference between the two being the likely range of topics in their vocabulary, though there was little to no difficulty in completing the tasks required for this study, since personal narratives, not academic language, were studied. The Russian participants origins within the Russian Federation, English language learning, and time in the USA were quite varied, and are therefore represented in Table 1.

The interview paradigm for this study was adapted from Michele Koven's 2001 study of bilingual quoted performance in narrative. This model was chosen because Koven adapted questions about emotional experiences to her interviewees as an adaptation of Labov and Waletzky's 1967 study in which he elicited personal narratives by asking about near death experiences. The interview paradigm for this study was adapted from Michele Koven's 2001 study of bilingual quoted performance in narrative.

Table 1 Russian Participants

Name	Age	Origin	ELL	ACTFL	Years in US
“Oksana”	23	Moscow Region	In school from 8 yrs Personal tutor 2x a week until 17; 5 years at university	Superior	3 months in 2008 5 months in 2010
“Katya”	27	Perm	Specialized English school from 6 years; 5 years in university	Superior	1 year at 15 1 year lived in Minnesota in 2006 6 months for grad school
“Svetlana”	27	Novokuznetsk	In school from 8 yrs 12 yrs, started interacting with missionaries from Canada and Us.	Superior	6 months in 2003 9 months in 2006 3.5 years for master’s degree
“Oliya”	21	Voronezh	In school from 8 yrs Major in English in University. ELL school instructor Interacted with NES	Advanced	3 weeks
“Tanya”	28	Novokuznetsk	In school from 12 yrs At church, interacted with missionaries and babysat for NES	Superior	4 years
“Lena”	29	Novosibirsk	Exchange program at 20 yrs. Extra curricular language classes 2x /wk	Superior	6.5 years
“Nastia”	32	Ufa	Language magnet school from 8 yrs Translating for missionaries at 15 yrs	Superior	12 years

This model was chosen because Koven adapted questions about emotional experiences to her interviewees as an adaptation of Labov and Waletzky’s 1967 study in which he elicited personal narratives by asking about near death experiences. The questions used for the current study, then, are questions of emotional experience intended to be universal and broad in order to allow for cultural variation and interpretation. Five stories were asked from each participant in an audio-recorded interview:

- 1) A story about a time that you were afraid
- 2) A story about a time that you were frustrated
- 3) A story about a time that you enjoyed yourself

- 4) A story about a time that you had conflict with a friend or family member
- 5) A story about a time that someone did something that was meaningful to you

All the narratives, including those told by NRS, were elicited and told in English, and previous research on Russian culture and schema was used to examine L1 cultural influence on the L2 production of the NRS. For this study, a story was considered to be any reference to specific past event(s). No judgments were made based on plot, sequence, or chronicity, but if participants did not reply to the prompt with a specific reference to the past, their reply was not considered a story. This allowed for possible cultural differences in chronicity or organization in stories. Some of the questions did not elicit stories from all participants, so the analysis presented in this paper is based on questions 1, 3, and 4 only.

ANALYSIS

Quantitative analysis of narrative consists of using Labov and Waletzky's structural outline or one of the many revisions thereof. Labov and Waletzky (1967) identifies five types of clauses: Orientation, Complication, and Resolution, Evaluation, and Coda. Variations include Berman and Slobin's (1994) use of only the first three: Orientation, Complication, Resolution, and McCabe and Peterson's (1991) Appendage, Orientation, Events, Duratives, and Evaluation. Researchers therefore, not only identify the length of stories in terms of clauses, but also the number of clauses in a given category across languages. The data is analyzed statistically and findings are correlated with, and discussed in terms of, existing data on the nature of the culture from which the story originated. While statistical analysis of Labovian structure was not the focus of this

study, Chapter II reports the results of an ANOVA test that revealed no statistically significant differences between the narrative variables in the NES and NRS stories. Showing that while a statistical analysis of story structure is often revealing of cultural differences in story telling, in this study such analysis revealed no differences.

A second type of analysis employed is linguistic analysis. Berman and Slobin, for example, conduct a cross-linguistic analysis of stories collected using the wordless picture book *Frog, Where Are You?* (Mayer, 1969). One of their major research interests was how the form of the verbal system in each of the five languages contributed to the expression of temporality in the stories. This particular type of narrative inquiry has its basis more in pure linguistics such as semantics or syntax than in socio-linguistics or pragmatics, and for a bilingual study requires that data be collected in both of the participants' languages. These issues are beyond the purpose and scope of the present study.

Qualitative analysis is less systematic than statistical or linguistic analysis, but equally, if not more, revealing. The researcher examines the data collected through narrative inquiry and identifies themes or trends that might also correlate with the culture of origin. This paper employs qualitative analysis in each of the following four chapters. This analysis is based in the previous work of linguists and sociolinguists, as well as cultural scholars in an effort to determine if the Russian-English bilingual speakers use a Russian cultural schema when speaking English. The research questions that guided the analysis of the data collected for this study are as follows:

- 1) Can the observations from previous studies concerning Russian cultural schema within narratives be seen in the NRS personal narratives produced in English, and does it differ significantly from the NES narratives?
- 2) Are there differences in the thematic patterns between the two sets of stories?

Chapter II reports the results from the statistical analysis of narrative variables that led to these research questions. Chapters III-V will examine the narratives in light of three different aspects of Russian cultural schema, addressing Research Question 1. And Chapter VI compares the two sets of narratives through a thematic analysis, according to Research Question 2. The further procedures for quantitative and qualitative analysis precede the respective chapters on the subject.

CHAPTER II

STATISTICAL STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

One of the main methods of cross-cultural narrative inquiry is to examine the structure of stories collected through statistical analysis (Berman & Slobin, 1994; Kupersmitt & Berman, 2001; McCabe & Peterson, 1991; Kang, 2003). Such results can provide valuable information about the focus of a culture. The most notable cross-cultural differences have been identified in the structural category defined first by Labov and Waletzky (1967) and then by others—evaluative clauses (Berman & Slobin, 1994; McCabe & Peterson, 1991; Kang, 2003). Evaluative clauses are one type of clause whose function is in some way to comment on the story being told. Various cultures differ in the number of evaluative clauses within stories, suggesting cultural differences in the appropriateness of sharing feeling or of moralizing (Kuntay & Nakamura, 1993; Chang, 2009; Minami & McCabe, 1991; Mullen & Yi, 1995).

Kuntay and Nakamura (1993) find substantial cross-cultural difference in the frequency of evaluative comments within a narrative. Their Turkish and Japanese participants both avoided evaluation in their discourse, a distinct difference from American or Hebrew narrative which are each rife with evaluative clauses, and indeed narrative competence depends on one's ability to provide evaluation (Bamberg & Damrad-Frye, 1991). Similarly, Minami and McCabe (1991) and Mullen and Yi (1995) show in their studies that Japanese speakers not only avoid evaluative comment, but also

avoid any other expression of emotion in their stories. Kang (2003) also found that Korean speakers avoid evaluation in stories.

While each of the studies mentioned defines differing clause functions based on the purpose of the study, all of them maintain evaluative clauses as an important category. This Appendix is a report of statistical analysis used to determine the presence and nature of any structural differences between the NRS English stories and those told by NES.

METHODS

For the statistical analysis reported here, each of the 48 stories collected for the study was divided into clauses. Berman & Slobin's (1994) definition of a clause was used: "any unit containing a unified predication, whether in the form of a verb or adjective. The verb might be finite or nonfinite...modal and aspectual verbs were counted together with their main verbs." Each clause was then coded in terms of its function in the story.

Three of the five functions defined by McCabe & Peterson (1991) and Kang (2003) were used for this study. The original five functions (orientation, appendages, events, durative, and evaluations) were found to be too detailed for this study, therefore appendages--"clauses that served to mark the beginning or conclusion or that summarized the story" (Kang, 2003)—were also coded as orientation (place, time, and character introduction). Similarly, durative clauses, which Kang (2003) defines as descriptive information relating to events, were coded together with events for this study. Therefore, the three structural categories analyzed in this chapter are:

Orientation: place, time, and character introduction and clauses that summarize the story

Events: events and actions that advance the plot and descriptive clauses relating to these advancements

Evaluation: Clauses that reveal the narrator's point of view regarding the events in the story and the reason for telling it; References to the mental states of any of the characters including the narrator

RESULTS

Narrative length

Table 2 lists the means and standard deviations of both the number of clauses used and the duration in terms of seconds of the Native English Speakers' and Native Russian Speakers' narratives in English. Length of narratives was compared through an ANOVA test.

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations for Narrative Length Variables Comparing NES and NRS English Narratives

	NES English stories N=24	NRS English stories N=24	P $\hat{c}=0.05$	F
Mean Length in clauses (SD)	28.62 (11.45)	48.5 (36.24)	0.014	6.56
Mean Length in seconds (SD)	64.92 (27.02)	121.29 (96.78)	0.009	7.55

The ANOVA showed statistically significant differences between the length in both time and the number of clauses of NES and NRS English narratives ($p < 0.05$). On average, NRS produced 48.5 clauses while NES only produced 28.62, and NRS told

stories of an average length of 121.29 seconds, while NES told stories 64.92 seconds in length. By each measurement, the English narratives were roughly half the length of the Russian narratives. The ratio of NES length in clauses to NRS length in clauses is 0.59, while the ratio of NES length in seconds to NRS length in seconds is 0.54.

Narrative structure

Table 3 displays the means and standard deviations for the three narrative structure variables (orientation, events, and evaluation) across the two groups.

Frequencies are reported in terms of percent of the total number of clauses in the story to account for the significant difference in the length of the stories.

Table 3 Means and Standard Deviations for Narrative Structure Variables Comparing NES to NRS English Narratives

	NES English stories N=24	NRS English stories N=24	P $\hat{\alpha}=0.05$	F
Orientation Mean (SD)	0.136 (0.075)	0.097 (0.080)	0.085	3.097
Events Mean (SD)	0.473 (0.145)	0.435 (0.138)	0.357	0.866
Evaluation Mean (SD)	0.391 (0.149)	0.468 (0.129)	0.06	3.732

An ANOVA test revealed no statistically significant differences between the percent of story clauses dedicated to any of the three narrative structure variables. NES and NRS dedicated roughly the same percent of clauses to orientation ($p=0.085$), events ($p=0.357$), and evaluation ($p=0.06$) in their narratives. The p value for the evaluation variable, which is so close to $\hat{\alpha}=0.05$ might suggest a trend toward significance, which a greater sample size would give more confidence in confirming, given that a greater

sample size provides smaller spread which reduces the value p . However, for this sample size $N=48$, no significance could be confirmed at $\hat{\alpha}=0.05$ for the percent of story in terms of clauses dedicated to the evaluation variable in NES and NRS English narratives.

DISCUSSION

The statistical analysis in this chapter examined the structural differences between the stories told in English by native English speakers and those told by native Russian speakers in accordance with previous research that has shown major structural differences in narratives across cultures and related to cultural differences (Kuntay & Nakamura, 1993; Chang, 2009; Minami & McCabe, 1991; Mullen & Yi; 1995).

The only statistically significant difference revealed by this inquiry was in the length of the stories. Russian speakers spoke on average twice as long as the American storytellers, though the relative emphasis placed on orientation, events, and evaluation was not significantly different between the two sets of stories. This finding may be related to a more general cross-linguistic and cross-cultural difference in conversational turn length in Russian and English discourse. Although no study has examined differences in Russian and English conversational turns, these findings suggest that there may be substantial differences, and that the NRS in this study maintain this turn length when speaking English.

No difference was shown between the two groups' employment of the three variables of narrative structure. Both groups used relatively equal percentages of orientation, events and evaluation clauses in their stories. While no statistical significance was found, it is possible that Russians might be shown to use a higher

percentage of evaluative clauses with a larger sample size, although this study cannot confidently confirm that trend.

This shows that the differences generally noted between Eastern cultures and Western cultures in number of evaluative clauses (Kuntay & Nakamura, 1993; Chang, 2009; Minami & McCabe, 1991; Mullen & Yi, 1995) are not visible in this sample, suggesting that the Russians in this study match the American paradigm of story structure more closely than the match Asian cultural paradigms in spite of geographical proximity and some cultural similarities with the east (Elinkov, 1997; Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson, 1997; Naumov & Puffer, 2000). This may be the result of cultural accommodation, or it may be evidence of structural similarity between American and Russian stories. Data produced by monolingual Russians would need to be analyzed for more clarity.

This brief analysis of the length and structure of Russian stories and American stories told in English has revealed only a difference in story length, while structure does not differentiate in these two cultures. Therefore, from the statistical data, no real cultural differences that can be related to previous research emerge, but a further cross-linguistic study of turn length might corroborate the significant difference in story length found here.

CHAPTER III

CULTURAL SCHEMA: TRIPLICITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the narrative data with reference to one aspect of Russian cultural schema noted by Croft (2005) in his study of Russian literary texts. Differences in Cultural Schema across cultures.

Background

A cultural schema is an “underlying organizational paradigm” (Minami, 2002) and it refers to the differences in thought pattern that are notable between cultures, which become evident in discourse. For instance, some broad descriptions of cultural schema are Hofstede’s (1980) dimensions of national culture. Hofstede identifies broad tendencies in national cultures such as collectivism (desire to maintain group autonomy) or individualism (desire to maintain personal autonomy). These tendencies, which could be called schema, or underlying paradigms of culture, have been shown to affect discourse. For instance, in collectivist cultures, where the group is all-important, speakers are much less likely to express negative emotions than in individualist cultures which value directness (Matsumoto, 1993). Collectivist cultures, then, have been shown to be more indirect in discourse than individualist cultures, (Holtgraves, 1997; Ambady, Koo, Lee, & Rosenthal, 1996).

Hofstede’s dimensions of national culture are a helpful way of examining broad differences in cultural schema and its affect on discourse, but other aspects of the

organizational paradigms of cultures have been noted as well. For instance, Kaplan (1966) found that his Chinese students were operating on a culture-specific circuitous pattern of thought. Their papers, rather than approaching a point linearly, were more indirect and talked around the point rather than addressing it directly. The schema Kaplan noticed affected written discourse, rather than oral discourse, showing the broad effect that cultural schema can have on cognition and production.

Cultural schema in narrative production

Cultural schema has been shown to be quite powerful in the specific discourse of narrative production. Minami & McCabe (1996) and McCabe (2002) both note that story schema, or cultural schema that is specific to narrative organization, differs substantially across cultures. This schema can affect not only the organization of the story at the structural level, but also affects the actual telling of the story as well as the interpretation of the story (Minami & McCabe, 1996; Minami, 2002; Tannen, 1980; Chafe, 1980; Steffensen, Joag-Dev & Anderson, 1979; Reynolds, Taylor, Steffensen, Shirey & Anderson, 1982; Kintsch & Greene, 1978). Schema in this sense refers more broadly to the culturally specific background knowledge used in the story, not simply organizational structure. For instance, Reynolds, Taylor, Steffensen, Shirey & Anderson (1982) found that two different cultural groups interpreted the meaning of a story differently because of their cultural schema. African Americans interpreted a story as an incident of a form of rhetorical play, while White Americans interpreted the same story as a fight.

Minami & McCabe's 1991 study is particularly relevant to the analysis in this chapter. They examined the narratives produced by Japanese school children and found that their narratives were related closely to the Japanese poetry form *Haiku*. The children's narratives were concise, somewhat disconnected, and consisted of three verses, which they found to correspond with *Haiku* which is a concise poem in three lines that often seem somewhat disjointed. This study showed that a culturally important literary form, *Haiku*, can become a part of cultural schema and be represented in the narrative production of participants in that culture.

Russian cultural schema of triplicity

In describing the cultural psychology of Russia, Croft (2005) highlights the importance of triplicity in Russian narrative. He traces the importance of sets of threes through the oral tradition of Russian stories and fairytales into the written tradition and up to modern times, citing such well known authors as Gogol, Dostoyevsky, and Tolstoy. It is Croft's claim, which he supports with a plethora of textual and cultural evidence, that the triplicate is a particularly powerful force in Russian thought, reflected in areas as mundane as the naming system of name, patronymic, family name, and as systemic as grammatical structures such as singular, dual, and plural tenses. This triplicity reveals itself in narrative in a variety of ways, according to Croft who cites the Russian literary critic Propp, "Three-headed dragons," "three tasks," "three years of service," success on the third attempt, etc. all represent ways in which this powerful cultural paradigm reflects itself in narrative organization and events.

Although Croft only examines triplicity within published, canonical Russian literature, he claims that there is a “special intensity of triplicity in Russian culture” suggesting that this pattern permeates more than just literature by citing naming and grammar conventions. Therefore, it stands to reason to hypothesize that this same tendency for the triplicate would be visible in the personal narratives collected for this study and that it would be markedly more apparent in the narratives produced by Russian nationals than in those produced by the American control group. In this chapter I will therefore examine triplicity in both sets of narratives and contrast the findings in order to determine if Croft’s “special intensity” reveals itself through the stories of these eight speakers.

METHODS

Croft’s description of the importance of threes in Russian culture is more or less all encompassing, inclusive even of the naming system and Russian grammar. He sees threes as pervasive and a significant evidence of cultural schema or “special intensity” in every form and function in which they appear. However, because some of Croft’s identification of threes seemed somewhat subjective at times (for example, this excerpt from a dedication by Jakobson in which he identifies a somewhat dubious set of three in the phrase “1) faithful to 2) the precepts of 3) its founder”), for this examination of personal narratives I have studied only two manifestations of threes that Croft notes, lists and repetition, and structure or outline. Any lists of items, and any repetition of a single item or word were noted. Lists of other than three were called ‘others.’ Similarly, a tertiary structure was considered the story being organized around three ideas or actions.

Outlines with more than three or narratives that had no notable organizational structure were called ‘others.’ By choosing to examine only these elements within the personal narratives, I have attempted to remove the ambiguity and subjectivity inherent in Croft’s study. Therefore, this study will represent the phenomenon numerically and discuss several examples qualitatively in order to draw conclusions about the visibility of this proposed schema in the English narratives produced by Russian speakers.

INSTANCES OF TRIPPLICITY IN THE NARRATIVES

Lists and repetition

The most common expressions of triplicity in the NRS English narratives are lists and repetitions. Of the 24 NRS narratives, 10 contained at least one example of lists and repetition, while in the NES narratives only 5 such examples were present. Within the 10 Russian narratives that contained lists and repetition, there were 16 individual examples, while in the 5 American stories there were 8 individual examples of triplicity in repetition and lists. This difference was found to be statistically significant (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 5.333, $p = 0.021$). The participants, when showing intensity, often repeated a word three times, and in listing, seemed unconsciously to require themselves to name three items in the list.

For example Katya, in describing the complements paid to her by her employers quotes them as saying, “we really enjoyed the conference and stuff and stuff.” Although she only had one item in the list, she shows that this one expression does not reveal the number or intensity of the compliments she received and so must add to it, but having no other direct quotes she adds a generic place holder “stuff.” She reveals her tendency for

triples when she must not simply hold one place, but two, necessitating the repetition “and stuff and stuff,” leaving her with a list of three items “we enjoyed the conference,” “stuff,” and “stuff.”

At the end of the same story, Katya again reveals a tendency for lists of threes as she describes how the compliments made her feel. She explains, “ I really felt that I am capable of doing stuff and that other people appreciate it and I just felt important and I felt that I live for something there is like a big purpose and I can help people.” This gushing of feeling and gratitude for praise is actually quite structured, though it may appear at first to be uncontrolled. In fact, it is organized into two well-ordered lists of three related feelings. 1) I am capable, 2) I am appreciated, 3) I am important; and 1) I live for something, 2) I have purpose, 3) I can help people. The fact that Katya maintains this tendency for triplicate even in spontaneous production of personal feeling can be taken to reveal the subconscious nature of the pattern for her.

Oliya and Tanya, in their stories, also reveal a subconscious triplicity through their listing. Oliya, in describing the “brand new world” of Texas, where she had arrived just three weeks before says “it looks totally different, I mean the architecture, the trees, even the sky you know it’s a bit higher in my region,” and in conclusion “it was incredible, the brand new world which was so welcoming, so outgoing, so happy to see us, what could be more pleasant?” Each of these lists has the same structure in that they both introduce three things or ideas and then Oliya concludes by commenting on the final idea. The fact that Oliya repeats the same structure at two distinct points in her

narrative shows that this structure is part of her repertoire, as it were, pointing to Croft's claim that triplicity is an underlying staple of Russian expression.

Tanya, too, reveals this underlying penchant in a list she provides. She notes, "if you ask any Russian person what do you know about America, I guess a few things they would say New York, Disney, and I don't know...Pizza." The ellipsis in the transcription of this sentence represents a pause in the flow of Tanya's speech at that point in the story. It seems that she must provide a third item in her list in order to complete the observation, and she allows the flow of her narrative to be interrupted in so that she can think of a third item to complete the structure.

Similar to the tendency revealed for lists of threes, the NRS's used triplicate repetition to show intensity. One such example comes from Nastia's story about being afraid. She begins her story with the phrase "Back, back, back in the day." This is an interesting intensification of the common Americanism "back in the day," which she does not intensify with the more conventional, "way back" but rather by repetition in triplicate in order to show distant, almost uncountable past. This expression of threes being uncountable is used later in the story as well as she describes the incessant ringing of the doorbell by saying "that doorbell just rings and rings and rings." The triple in this instance shows an interesting purpose as almost an expression of infinity or at least of extreme duration.

Unlike in the Russian narratives, the instances of the use of lists of three or triplicate repetition in the NES narratives were more limited, and quite a bit less

powerful in both meaning and impact. Consider three examples of listing and repetition of this sort from the narratives collected in English.

Susan, in talking about a time that she enjoyed her family described that time of “family and relaxation and fun.” While this is a list of three things, the fact that this pattern is hardly corroborated in any of the other stories, including Susan’s stories seems to suggest that rather than this list of three being some underlying pattern or expectation, rather it is an incidental description from which no meaningful cultural assumptions or applications can be drawn.

Ruth, on the other hand, in her story about enjoyment, uses threes a twice, suggesting perhaps that this has some power at least for her. First in introducing the method of music teaching which she uses in the classroom, she notes three characteristics of the method 1) play centered 2) sequenced and 3) the use of “Orff instruments.” Later in her story she gives three examples of play pantomime that she and a colleague were engaging in as a way to experience music: 1) basketball, 2) jump rope, and 3) hand clapping. The second list may simply be a reflection of the actual number of actions, meaning that there are only three tasks named because they had only had time for, or the music had only allowed for three tasks, perhaps not reflecting any tendency for organization but merely reporting facts as they were. But the former list can leave little doubt as to Ruth’s consideration of three being an appropriate length for lists. It seems highly unlikely that there would be only three characteristics to a teaching method around which she has built her entire profession, if pressed, Ruth would undoubtedly supply more aspects than the ones she mentions, but she narrows it to three in a concise

and informative description. This is, however, three “points” or propositions rather than being a list of three in the same manner as the Russian lists. It is almost the beginning of an intellectual argument rather than a narrative device, again calling into question the existence of a pattern.

The last example from the NES narratives of lists or repetition comes from a story told by Virginia, in which she expresses her frustration with her college roommate’s snooze alarm. She tells her roommate, “for the alarm to go off at six o’clock and for you to hit the snooze, and then for you to hit snooze again, and for you to hit snooze again, now *I’m* getting up at six o’clock!” Here, Virginia repeats the same phrase three times, similar to the use of repetition in Nastia’s story about how the doorbell “rings and rings and rings.” However, Virginia follows up the repetition of three with a concluding statement that contributes a sense of finality to the list “now *I’m* getting up at six o’clock.” This creates a different effect from that noted in Nastia’s story in which the triplicate “rings and rings and rings” expresses continuation without a definite end point. Virginia, however, supplies the end point. This is merely a difference in the effect, however, and not a difference in the structure.

Therefore, the Russian’s English stories had 16 examples of lists and repetitions that suggested an influence of some underlying schema of threes, while the American stories only revealed 8 such examples. The statistically significant difference as well as the qualitative differences between the two usages suggest that the Russians may be revealing the influence of the schema Croft (2005) notes.

Structure

The NRS data and NES data for a tertiary structure in their stories was quite similar. 4 of the Russians' stories and 7 of the Americans' stories showed this pattern. This difference was not found to be statistically significant (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 1.061, $p = 0.303$).

Although quite a bit less pervasive than the use of triplicate in lists and intensifiers, the tendency reveals itself in the structure by limiting the plot to three actions. Svetlana's story about being afraid, for example, consists of three parts: 1) she and her friend see a cow, 2) she runs from the cow, 3) she and her friend fight over whether she should have run. Although Svetlana adds detail and commentary to this general outline, the structure is quite evident in her story and perhaps reveals the same "special intensity" of threes that Croft attempts to prove in his examination of literary stories. This suggests that the structure may be unintentional, since Svetlana had no time to plan her story, and that Svetlana may be subject either to the power of triplicate in canonical stories of Russian culture, or that both her stories and those of the literary canon are subject to a more pervasive Russian psyche.

Tanya also shows this same type of structure in her story about conflict, but instead of providing detail and commentary the way Svetlana does, she simply repeats the three events twice. 1) There is a misunderstanding between her and her sister, 2) her sister ignores her for five months, 3) everything returns to normal. Tanya repeats this outline twice in her short account of the conflict rather than elaborating very much on the details of any of the events. This pattern is interestingly combined with two

avoidances of detail in the story in which Tanya says “and blah blah blah.” Not only does Tanya repeat a rather bare bones story, stripping it down to the very basic requisite outline of three events, but also she acknowledges and makes up for the lack of detail by twice substituting it with a nonsense repetition.

This same power of threes is revealed in Nastia’s conflict story as well, in which she utilizes the pattern outlined by Propp of decision or success on the third try. In her story, Nastia relates her husband’s search for a book on his bookshelves. She quotes him as he looks at each shelf “its not here, its not here, its not here.” It is never clear how many bookshelves he is searching on, but every time he is searching he looks three times before admitting defeat or frustration. There are several variations to this pattern as the story progresses: “I know its not on this bookshelf, I know its not on this bookshelf, I’m going to go check on this bookshelf, no its not here,” and finally showing the conclusion that he comes to, “It’s not on my desk, its not on this bookshelf, its not on this bookshelf, you must have done something with it.” The use of a structure of threes in this quest-story is undeniable. Nastia describes her husband’s three-part search three times in her story, on the third one revealing his conclusion that she was at fault. Each expression of searching is repeated three times, with a similar effect to the repetition noted in the previous section that expresses extreme duration. Then Nastia repeats these sets of three’s three times in her story, providing another level of tertiary structure, with a perfect example of the tendency noted by Propp (Cited in Croft, 2005) for conclusion on the third and final expression. These threes within threes suggest that Croft’s assumption that the literary penchant extends throughout many aspects of the culture may be well

founded and that threes are quite a powerful structural and expressive force in Russian personal narrative.

On the other hand, the tertiary structure evident in the 7 NES narratives manifested itself differently in a threefold plot structure. The threefold plot structure, similar to that noted in Svetlana's story, simply means that the NES's tended to simplify their stories into three events. For example Ann's conflict story: 1) I told my roommate I was not going to keep rooming with her so I could meet more people, 2) she denied being a part of the problem, 3) the next year I had more friends; or Samantha's conflict story: 1) I forgot to call someone, 2) she was hurt and lashed out, 3) I apologized; or Anneliese's story about fear: 1) I wanted to look over the river bank, 2) I nearly stepped on a snake, 3) everything turned out fine; etc.

In fact, these plot developments are very similar to points of a logical argument and seem related to Ruth's three points about her music teaching method. It seems that this pattern of three pieces of evidence or three points to an argument (a synonym for plot) is actually quite pervasive among the native English speakers, though I would argue that it is a different manifestation of tertiary structure than that which I examined in Nastia's story in which she describes her husband's search three separate times repeating "he looked" three times with each report. This is an organizational, linear, or logical structure rather than the somewhat cyclical or repetitive structure that Nastia employed. This suggests that threes are powerful for the NES but only within one subset of thought: logic or argument, and perhaps not relevant in other aspects of spoken or written culture.

Two examples in the NES data contain three ‘evaluative pauses’ that follow this same structural pattern. Ann tells about going to a Ranger’s game during the World Series and in each section of her story: introduction, explanation, and conclusion she repeats the phrase “the Rangers actually won.” In the same way, Ruth’s story about fear is punctuated at each structural juncture with the phrase “I was terrified.” Both tellers adhere to the same structural pattern noted above in which their stories are divided into three sections, but these examples are distinct in that the sections are visible and set apart from one another by the repetition of the same phrase once within each section. This is not, however, a completely distinct pattern, but rather an interesting variation on the pattern mentioned above, and may be the speakers desire to reiterate their feeling about the story they are relating with each of the three point: for Ann—excitement, and for Ruth—fear.

Others

In spite of the importance of threes in some of the stories from both groups, there were still many stories in which no repetition, lists, or structures of three were evident, and indeed some in which two’s seemed quite prominent instead. The Russian participants produced 10 of these other stories, while the Americans produced 12, a difference which was not found to be statistically significant (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 0.336, $p = 0.562$).

Oksana repeatedly uses sets of two’s in her story about fear. She is relating a run-in with a cockroach. First she explains that insects in Russia are “really, really tiny,” then in describing her reaction to the roach she says “I was desperate; I was crying” and

“I was really, really scared.” The use of the intensifier “really” only twice instead of three times is in marked contrast to the example cited above of Nastia’s “back, back, back in the day.” Similarly, her list of feelings, unlike Katya’s emotional list, only contains two items. Nastia also, in her story about a time that she enjoyed herself, rattles off a long list of two’s “1) there were flags hanging out of the windows and 2) out of cars and 1) people just tooting their horns and 2) people in the streets, and you know just 1) people poured into the square and they were 2) singing God Save the Queen.” This is an interesting pattern, since in her story about conflict Nastia utilized three’s within threes, while in this excited description that tendency is not evident. Perhaps one might argue that while her lists only contain two items, she has provided three sets of two, a possible continuation of the pattern rather than a break from it.

Virginia gushes emotion in two sets of two, “I’m away. I’m myself. I love it. I love it.” In fact, her whole enjoyment story is permeated with this double, rather than triple gushing. Likewise Anneliese describes going “round and round” and Sarah provides a list of only two items “book your florist and book your band.” These examples of the use of lists of other numbers, and of stories without a strong tertiary structure provide evidence against Croft’s claim of a “special intensity” of threes in Russian culture, and against the same phenomenon among the American speakers as well.

DISCUSSION

There is no statistically significant difference in the total number of instances of triplicity between the Russian and the American participants (chi-square with one degree

of freedom = 2.087, $p = 0.149$), nor is there significant difference between the two groups in the use of tertiary structure. However, as the Russian participants used significantly more lists and repetition of threes than the Americans and qualitative differences in the examples were also evident. Croft (2005) refers to a “special intensity” of three’s in Russian culture and applies this paradigm to many different kinds of examples. However, this examination of Russian narratives has not confirmed anything particularly “special” in the Russian use of the triplicate. Overall, they did not use the paradigm significantly more than the Americans, even though significance was evident in the lists. This information may be interpreted in two ways. The lack of a “special intensity” in the NRS data, as evidenced in the fact that there were no statistical differences between their use of threes and the NES use of threes, may suggest that Croft’s claim that threes permeate Russian culture does not apply to Russian personal narrative. Croft’s paradigm may only be relevant in edited and planned production such as literature. However, his paper clearly extends the idea to more areas of Russian culture and production than just literature, as he prefaces his analysis with the quote, “ ‘I knew she wasn’t Russian when she said she told her husband to honk the car horn four times as a signal that he had arrived outside the studio. If she were really a Russian, she would have told her husband to honk three times.’ -- Dr. Roy Hanu Hart.” Therefore this data may suggest that Croft’s conclusions are too broad, and that threes are not as pervasive of a schema as he claims.

A second interpretation, however, suggests that Croft’s schema does exist, and that the NRS, as highly proficient English speakers, have successfully acquired a new

schema and accommodated their production to the local culture. This interpretation implies that second language learners and speakers can acquire and use new cultural schemas, a conclusion confirmed by Maeno (1996) but called into question in the studies of Akinci, Jisa, & Kern (2001) and Kupersmitt & Berman (2001). Further evidence of accommodation in the NRS data will clarify this discussion.

In conclusion, the hypothesis that a “special intensity” of threes would be visible in the NRS data as compared to the NES data was not confirmed, but rather both groups showed similar patterns of use of this paradigm, suggesting either that the NRS speakers have chosen to reject the Russian cultural schema, or that the schema does not, in fact, exist.

CHAPTER IV

CULTURAL SCHEMA: EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the narrative data with reference to the expression of emotion found within the stories, extending from the work of Wierzbicka (1992, 1994, 1998, 1999) and Pavlenko (2002).

Background

This chapter builds on the discussion of schema from Chapter III, in which it was noted those schemas are variable across cultures and affect discourse (Minami, 2002; Hofstede, 1980; Matsumoto, 1993; Holtgraves, 1997; Ambady, Koo, Lee, & Rosenthal, 1996; Kaplan, 1966; Minami & McCabe, 1996; Tannen, 1980; Chafe, 1980; Steffensen, Joag-Dev & Anderson, 1979; Reynolds, Taylor, Steffensen, Shirey & Anderson, 1982; Kintsch & Greene, 1978).

In Chapter III, I examined the schema of threes in Russian culture. This chapter will examine another schema which Wierzbicka (1992, 1994, 1998, 1999) and Pavlenko (2002) have shown to be a cross-linguistic difference in the Russian and English languages, affecting the schemas of the two cultures. The schema they discuss is that of emotional expression.

Emotional expression has been addressed in several cross-cultural studies that examine the differences between Asian cultures (Korea, Japan, China) and the American culture. Each of the studies shows that Americans express their emotions more freely

and more frequently than the Asian cultures (Caudill & Schooler, 1973; Minami & McCabe, 1991; Mullen & Yi, 1995; Leichtman & Wang, 1998). These studies show that frequency and type of emotional expression can affect narrative.

Emotional expression in Russian and English

Wierzbicka has written a series of studies in which she examines the linguistic expressions of emotion in Russian. She states that “the tremendous stress on emotions and their free expression, the high emotional temperature of Russian discourse, the wealth of linguistic devices for signaling emotions and shades of emotions” contribute to a “fundamental semantic theme” in Russian (Wierzbicka 1992, 1998). She supports this assertion with a semantic analysis in which she compares the collocations of Russian emotion words to those of English emotion words. Her conclusions in this study are a series of dichotomies, or at least continua, which distinguish American emotional expression from Russian emotional expression. These are inner vs. bodily, control vs. expressive, and momentary vs. durative. Russians, she claims, experience and express emotion bodily, over time, and quite openly and intensely, whereas American emotional expression is more inward, controlled, and momentary.

Aneta Pavlenko, in her 2002 study, extends the semantic study conducted by Wierzbicka to a narrative study. She uses the same visual stimulus in order to collect narratives in Russian and in English from monolinguals and conducts quantitative and qualitative analysis concerning the words of emotion which the speakers use in retelling the story which they have seen on video. Pavlenko examines her data set in terms of the lexical items used to express emotion in each language, the semantic and

morphosyntactic structures in emotional expressions in the narratives, emotion expressed through bodily description, and the rationales provided by the narrators for the emotions described. Her study therefore examines Wierzbicka's analysis from several angles. She confirms Wierzbicka's claim that Americans tend to use adjectives, the verb 'to be,' and "perception copulas" such as 'to feel,' 'to seem' etc. to express emotion while Russians use imperfective verbs with no real equivalent in English (Pavlenko, 2002). This tendency contributes to the durative nature of emotion as expressed in Russian as opposed to the expression of emotion as a perfective or momentary state, which tends to be the English expression. Pavlenko also notes that Russians express emotion in terms of their external behavior while "American participants present emotions as internal states, not necessarily externalized," (Pavlenko, 2002). Both authors conclude that there is a "higher degree of emotionality and richer links made between the emotions and the body in Russian discourse as compared to English," (Pavlenko, 2002). No study has examined these differences cross-culturally rather than cross-linguistically. In other words, no study has yet examined if the linguistic parameters that cause these differences in monolingual Russian data (i.e. grammar and lexicon) have created a culture of emotional expression such that NRS's emotional expression in English is still marked by these paradigms (durative, high temperature, and bodily) in spite of the lack of linguistic support.

Therefore the analysis in this chapter will examine the personal narratives collected in order 1) to determine if the patterns noted by Pavlenko and Wierzbicka for the Russian monolingual speakers, i.e. "high emotional temperature," bodily expression,

and durative descriptions, are visible in the English narratives of native Russian speakers and 2) to determine if the NES hold to the pattern of emotional expression through expressions of inner states rather than bodily states, descriptions of controlled emotion, and treatment of emotion as a momentary experience, providing a contrast to the Russian data.

METHODS

Data

For this analysis, a selection of the 48 stories is used, because not all of the personal narratives told by the participants included description or expression of emotion. The data for this chapter consists, then, of 11 NRS English stories and 11 NES stories. Table 4 below shows the origin of these stories from within the entire data set of three stories per participant.

Table 4 Distribution of Stories Among Participants

NRS Participants	Emotion stories	NES Participants	Emotion stories
Katya	2	Ann	1
Lena	1	Anneliese	1
Mila	2	Lauren	1
Nastia	1	Ruth	2
Oksana	3	Samantha	1
Oliya	0	Sarah	1
Svetlana	1	Susan	2
Tanya	1	Virginia	2
Total	11/24	Total	11/24

The table expresses the variability within the data, in spite of a similar number of stories for each group. The topic of the narratives in which the participants expressed emotion varied, so that the data contains stories from each of the three prompts. This limits the analysis more than that conducted by Pavlenko (2002), whose subjects all

responded to the same prompt. This is why the analysis in this chapter is more general than that conducted by Pavlenko, focusing on aspect, emotional temperature, and bodily expression of emotion rather than on lexical, semantic, or morphosyntactic analysis. This also excludes the possibility of comparing rationale for emotion across the narratives, since each person was narrating a different event.

Data analysis

The previous studies directly informing this analysis, Wierzbicka (1998) and Pavlenko (2002), used methods of data analysis that are not repeatable for this study. Wierzbicka studied lexemes only, comparing Russian emotion words with their collocations in English, and drawing conclusions based on the connotations of each. Pavlenko expanded this lexical study to the context of narratives. She collected narratives using a video prompt so that all the participants related the same events, and she collected only monolingual data in each language. She then counted the specific lexemes used to express and frame emotional states, and compared the rationales that the participants offered for the emotion they saw on the video (i.e. she left because she wanted to be alone, vs. she left because she was upset). Pavlenko's analysis was possible because each of the participants told the same story, and because she collected monolingual data in Russian and in English.

The data for this analysis consists of NRS L2 stories, and NES L1 stories. The narratives are personal, and therefore do not all express the same events. Therefore a comparative study such as Wierzbicka's (1998), is not possible because the data does not allow a comparison of lexemes in two languages, and a study such as Pavlenko's (2002)

which would require frequency data for specific emotion words is also not feasible given that the narratives are all widely variable in topic and length, and all in English.

However, these two researchers have, through their studies, confirmed an emotional schema, or an underlying understanding of how emotion is experienced, for both Russian and English speakers. It is this schema that this chapter will examine. Wierzbicka (1998) identifies three distinct characteristics of Russian emotional expression as compared to American emotional expression: Aspect, Temperature, and Bodily expression, and Pavlenko's (2002) study confirms these three things. In Russian, emotion is durative, high temperature, and connected to the body. This is achieved through lexical and grammatical features of the language. In English, emotion is perfective, cool, and expressed as an inner state, again by nature of the linguistic features of English. However, if Russian emotional expression is truly an underlying concept of emotional experience—a schema, then the Russian bilingual speakers might achieve durative, high temperature, bodily expression of emotion in their L2 even without the linguistic support of their L1 that specifically codes emotion as durative, high temperature, and bodily.

Therefore, the analysis employed in this chapter will attempt to discover whether the NRS show transfer or influence of Russian emotional schema in their English narratives. The linguistic analysis that Pavlenko (2002) and Wierzbicka (1998) employed is not used here. There are no reports of the frequency of specific lexical items or phrases. Instead, thematic analysis is employed to examine whether the NRS are able to communicate their emotional experience as durative, high temperature, and bodily in

spite of the fact that they are using English, which codes emotion as the opposite of these things; and to examine whether their expression contrasts with the NES narratives.

RESULTS

Aspect

According Wierzbicka (1998), Russian emotional expression suggests that the Russian cultural perception of emotion is durative, because the Russian language codes emotion in verbs. On the other hand, because American emotional description is adjectival, the American emotional schema is one that perceives perfective or momentary emotion. Pavlenko (2002) confirms this difference. This section will examine whether the Russian participants communicate emotion as a durative sensation in spite of the lack of a verb system that supports such expression, and whether the NES narratives communicate perfective emotion.

The NRS produced 11 narratives that expressed emotion in a durative aspect, while the NES produced only 2 such narratives, and 9 narratives that expressed emotion as perfective. This difference was found to be statistically significant (Chi-square with one degree of freedom = 15.231, $p = 0.000$). Therefore, the NRS and NES were confirmed in their respective patterns of emotional expression.

NRS NARRATIVES. Eleven of the 11 Russian stories (100%) express emotion as a durative through the way they narrate their experience and through their use of past progressive verbs.

In Svetlana's conflict story, she narrates the conflict using a long list of verbs.

“He got upset at her and then I got upset at myself and at them and I felt bad I was like ‘oh they are fighting because I am pushing them” and so I just was crying.’ This list of verbs in simple past, past progressive and present progressive tenses leaves the sense that the conflict was not momentary, but rather lasted for some time. The verb use, for instance “I was crying” rather than a perfective form “I cried” communicates the imperfective nature of the emotion.

Lena also describes her enjoyment as durative. In her story about traveling to Paris, she shouts, “I REALLY ENJOYED MYSELF for the full nine days,” and finishes the story by saying “I was having fun. I was really enjoying it.” By both referring to the nine days, and by using the past progressive tense, Lena expresses the imperfective aspect of her feelings, showing them to be enduring rather than momentary.

In Mila’s story about fear, she achieves durative aspect by repeating the verb in multiple tenses throughout the story. She says, “I’m afraid of flying, that’s my biggest fear...every time I fly I’m afraid...the older I get the more afraid I am...I was so afraid of that flight...” Mila shows that her fear of flying is not limited to the one event that she is describing, rather in that particular event, her fear caused her to act. Much like Svetlana’s description, Mila has achieved durative or imperfective expression by mingling past and present tenses.

Each of the eleven Russian stories uses creative expression similar to these three examples from Lena, Svetlana, and Mila, by referring to a long period of time like Lena, or by using verbs in several tenses to show an imperfective aspect.

NES NARRATIVES. Nine of the 11 (81.8%) stories in the NES data referred to emotion as perfective, while two stories showed exceptions (18.2%). They accomplish this through expressing emotion as being confined to a “moment.”

In her story about fear, Susan describes waking up from a nightmare as a child. In her story, the only event she describes is the event of waking. She says, “ I woke up in this huddled up position and was just really scared.” In this sense, then, Susan’s fear is quite perfective. It is limited to the moment of waking. On the other hand, she ends her story by saying “I just remember knowing that there’s nothing to be afraid of but not being able to get rid of that fear.” This could be interpreted as imperfective, since Susan uses a progressive tense, and may cast some doubt on the analysis of the emotion as perfective. But, I would argue that the event is still quite limited in time, as the story centers around the moment of waking rather than around the conclusion of irrational fear.

Similarly, Ruth also describes the enjoyment as “being there in that moment,” or as a perfective, finite, limited time, perhaps limited to the song or to that class period which she is describing, but certainly not an ongoing state of enjoyment.

Anneliese’s story about a time that she enjoyed herself also provides a good example of the American sense of emotions as being perfective. She closes her story with the observation “its left a real picturesque image in my mind.” By describing the event as a “picturesque image,” Anneliese makes the event perfective and the enjoyment momentary rather than durative. Even though her story is about staying up all night long, she describes it as an image, a snapshot.

Two (18.2%) of the stories in the NES data set portrayed emotion as imperfective rather than as perfective. Virginia tends toward a more imperfective experience in her story about enjoyment. She returns so often to the activity of sitting: “just sit[ting] there for hours, hours on end...I could just sit and sit and sit,” that the activity is made imperfective simply by her repeating it as an ongoing state throughout the story. It is the sitting that gives her enjoyment, and since she sits “for hours on end” we must assume that she enjoys herself for hours on end, making her emotion more durative. Still, by way of introduction to the story, she calls the experience “that moment of bliss” so that even though it is clear from her telling that the emotion was ongoing, she thinks of it and describes it more perfectly.

Ruth also uses the imperfective aspect in her story about fear. She punctuates the story with the expression “I was terrified” and also says “I just kept thinking, ‘I don’t know what to do, I don’t know what to do.’” This repetition culminating in the statement “I kept thinking” communicates a durative, rather than momentary terror. Ruth does not describe her fear as a “moment” but rather as a string of thoughts over time.

By looking at the rhetorical devices used, such as words like “moment” and “image” and mixing of past and present tenses, it is possible to see the same pattern that Wierzbicka and Pavlenko noted through a lexical study. 100% of the Russian stories about emotion expressed emotion as durative, while 82.8% of Americans expressed it as perfective. The two American exceptions tended more toward the Russian expression. However, in spite of the exceptions, the paradigm identified as a linguistic paradigm by

Wierzbicka and Pavlenko, seems to also be a cultural schema, or an underlying understanding of the experience of emotion, which affects its treatment in discourse.

Temperature

According Wierzbicka (1998), Russian emotional expression is often “high temperature” or intense. Wierzbicka asserts that loud and strong emotional expression of this kind is acceptable in Russian culture. On the other hand, Americans tend to describe their emotion in more calm tones and treat emotion as something that ought to be controlled. This section will examine whether the Russian participants and the American participants show these concepts of emotion in their personal narratives.

Of the NRS narratives 7 show emotionally high temperature, while 4 are cool; the NES produced only 1 high temperature story, and 10 cool ones. This difference was found to be statistically significant (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 7.071, $p = 0.008$). Therefore, the NRS produced significantly more high temperature stories than the NES, confirming a difference in their emotional expression.

NRS NARRATIVES. Seven (63.6%) of the 11 narratives provided by the Russian participants show intense “high temperature” emotion, while 4 (36.4%) stories do not adhere to the schema proposed by Wierzbicka.

In her telling of her story of conflict, Svetlana does not approach the emotional event with a “cool” temperature, and the heat is experienced through the list of emotional verbs at the end of the story “He got upset... then I got upset...and I felt bad...and I was crying...and I felt bad.” All of the reiteration and repetition of emotion serves to build and express the intensity of the emotion during the conflict.

To express a high emotional temperature, Lena raises her voice. She is telling about a trip she took to Paris last summer, and she says, “so I got me a ticket and a college friend of mine lives there now so I stayed with her and I REALLY ENJOYED MYSELF for the full nine days.” Although she does not express the intensity linguistically, Lena makes use of volume to express her extreme delight in the situation.

In both her story about fear and her story about conflict, Mila expresses high emotional temperature. This temperature is portrayed most explicitly in her hyperbolic description of herself as “out of my mind” as she describes fear of flying, and in her conflict story she uses high tension verbs like “It shocked me, I’ve never experienced such a thing” and “I was speechless” to portray the intensity of emotion that she felt in the situation. In both stories, these expressions are paired with durative expressions and bodily descriptions to complete the expression of heightened emotion.

Oksana’s story about fear also shows a tendency toward strong and intense emotion. She tells a story about happening upon a cockroach in her bedroom downstairs. She begins the emotional exaggeration by describing the bug as “this most disgusting and monstrous thing.” Obviously an insect is not a monster, but Oksana uses this hyperbole to express the high emotional charge of the event.

She continues the hyperbole and high charge through her bodily reaction to the cockroach: “it scared everything out of me...I was desperate, I was crying, and my roommates were thinking that something really bad is going on.” First, Oksana uses a very active and physical variation of the idea ‘I was scared’ in her expression “it scared everything out of me.” This carries the assumption that she is somehow ‘spilling her

guts' or 'gushing emotion' in some way, an assumption, which is confirmed in the sentences that follow: "I was desperate, I was crying." Here, Oksana is undoubtedly expressing her fear through physicality, showing high emotional temperature.

Interestingly, Oksana recognizes that this kind of emotional expression is not acceptable to her American roommates. She has a normal reaction according to her own paradigm, but she notes, "my roommates were thinking that something really bad is going on." This supports Wierzbicka's and Pavlenko's assertion of cultural difference, as this story describes a brief moment of a clash of two paradigmatic emotional expressions.

Four (36.4%) of the stories told by the Russian participants did not describe emotional experience as "high temperature." Instead, these stories downplay the emotional events. For instance, Tanya, in describing the time leading up to her father's death from cancer, says, "that was a pretty scary time...it was kinda looking at him every day and knowing that it might be his last day." Tanya's story is quite short, only 12 clauses compared to the mean 48.5 clauses for Russian stories. She limits her expression and telling of her fear at her father's death, making the story quite matter of fact in an instance where one might expect much higher emotional temperature. Similarly, Oksana downplays her emotion in her story about conflict. Much like Tanya, Oksana expresses her emotion without intensity by telling a very short, 11 clause story in which she provides no elaboration of her emotional state.

Therefore, the majority of the Russian stories use high emotional intensity in their description of their emotional states, but several of the stories do not adhere to this pattern.

NES NARRATIVES. Ten of the 11 (90.9%) stories in the NES data expressed very controlled, cool emotion, while 1 story showed exceptions (9.1%). In several stories the NES participants show that they have an expectation that emotion should be controlled. Many times, the same strategy noted above in the Russian exceptions of the use of adverbs such as “kinda” shows the low temperature of the event.

Susan’s conclusion to her story about fear shows an effort to control emotion. When Susan describes her fear, she does not describe abandoning herself to that fear, or finding some equilibrium within the emotional experience, but rather, part of what makes the event memorable to her is her struggle for control: “knowing that there’s nothing to be afraid of but not being able to get rid of that fear.” In this reaction to emotion by controlling it, Susan displays the same trait that Wierzbicka notes.

Susan shows the same need for control in emotional expression again in her story about conflict. In this story, she and her husband realize that they have different expectations about how they are going to spend their time. Susan describes the conflict in a controlled, cool way as a momentary and rational conversation about their feelings. She says, “that just got me really frustrated and we kinda just had to sit down and be like ‘ok this isn’t a big deal but at the same time we need to plan our things better.’” Susan describes the necessary reaction to emotion as sitting down, essentially not getting caught up but controlling the frustration. She also expresses a very cool attitude toward

the feelings she experienced through the use of the words “just,” and “kinda,” showing that the inward strife was somewhat minor.

Ruth’s emotional control is extremely evident in her story about fear as well. Ruth tells a truly terrifying story about her husband’s sudden death in the middle of the night, but all through the story, she never recounts any bodily expression of emotion. There are no tears, no pacing, no shaking or chills, Ruth simply describes her emotion by saying “I was terrified, barely able to think...I just kept thinking, ‘I don’t know what to do, I don’t know what to do.’” Here, Ruth describes possibly one of the most emotionally stringent situations possible in terms of her interrupted inward sense of control. Ruth tells this story about fear in a way that is not highly “charged” or emotionally expressive, providing a very powerful example of the American pattern of emotional control.

Sarah, in an argument with her mother, expresses the sentiment, “I’m slightly over it,” meaning I am not interested anymore. Her choice of words: the informal “I’m over it,” punctuated with the word “slightly” which makes the expression have even less punch, is a rather controlled and “cool” way to deliver the emotional message she is sending.

Samantha, also, shows that cool, collected emotional expression is expected, but she shows this by describing her reaction to a heated email. She says, “when I got that email I was just kinda like, “what?...oh...sorry!” Samantha’s evident surprise at the email and her reaction of confusion, reveals the sense that the sender of the email has acted unconventionally outside of the known paradigm for emotional expression.

The majority of the NES stories describe emotion in this manner, showing an expectation that emotion will be controlled and cool, never heated or intense. The narrators express this both in describing their own emotions and in describing the emotions of others. However 9.1 % (1) of the stories do not exactly follow this schema.

Virginia's enjoyment story is more effectively described as a "gushing" rather than a "telling" and for this reason, I have described it as having a bit more "heat." Consider, for example, this small excerpt: "Oh my gosh, gorgeous! Stunning! Stunning! I mean I just loved it, I loved myself!" Virginia is telling about getting to visit a small Greek island with her husband. There is no sense of control as she tells this story; in fact the whole two minutes of her telling are much like this one short quote. Through her rhetorical repetition then, she expresses intensity of feeling.

Therefore, while ten of eleven of the American stories about emotion showed the American emotional schema to be one that expects control and calm in emotional expression, the data from the Russian participants on this aspect is somewhat less polarized. While the majority of Russians described their emotions with intensity and strong language, there were four examples of downplayed emotion that weakened the paradigm. Still, the schema suggested by Wierzbicka that Russians find heightened emotional expression more appropriate than Americans is confirmed in this small sample.

Emotion and the body

The final aspect of emotionality that I am examining in the narratives from this study is that of expressing emotion outwardly or inwardly. Wierzbicka (1998) and

Pavlenko (2002) both note that Russian verbs of emotion emphasize bodily reaction or action of emotion such as crying, while American emotional expression tends to focus on the thoughts and feelings associated with emotion. Therefore, this section identifies the stories that describe embodied emotional experience and those that describe inward emotion.

Of the NRS narratives, 6 stories connect emotion to bodily behavior, while 5 internalize the experience. The NES told only 1 story that expressed emotion bodily, and 10 stories about internal emotion. This difference was found to be statistically significant (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 5.238, $p = 0.022$). Therefore the NRS told narratives in English that continued in the Russian paradigm of connecting emotion to the body, while the NES used significantly fewer such expressions.

NRS NARRATIVES. Six (54.5%) of the 11 Russian stories use a bodily characteristic to describe the emotion within the story, while the remaining 5 stories (45.5%) use inward expressions.

In her story about conflict, Svetlana describes the emotion, “he got upset at her and then I got upset at myself and at them and I felt bad I was like ‘oh they are fighting because I am pushing them’ and so I just was crying.” Svetlana describes her emotion in outward expressions. At first glance “got upset” may appear to be a description of an inward state, but it is really a more active verb than “to be upset.” Svetlana describes, “getting upset” as crying—a bodily expression of the emotion that she felt. She even uses other active verbs like “fighting” and “pushing” and she shares the exclamation that they are fighting through an active quote rather than a more inward reporting of her own

thoughts. Therefore, Svetlana's emotional expression is expressed through outward, active, bodily descriptions rather than through report of inner states.

Lena also expresses her delight by using an analogy using a physical description, "it was like something is lacking you know, I was carrying a heavy bag and I just left it." Lena is telling about her trip to Paris and the fact that she was able to leave her children behind and go on her own. She explains her emotion about that circumstance through physical description of having been relieved of a heavy burden. Rather than reflecting directly on her inner state, she creates a physical analogy to her inner feelings.

The physicality of Mila's emotion in each story is also quite visible. Mila acts out her fear of flying by sharing her bed with her grandmother. Rather than describing her inner state, she describes the physical reaction that she had to her fear: the need for bodily closeness. Conversely, in her story about conflict, Mila has a physical reaction to the conflict: the need for bodily distance. In the conflict story, however, Mila dwells on physicality even longer. She expresses her shock at her roommate's behavior by repeating her own physical positions, "she came into my room and picked up the chair from underneath me. I was skyping with a person and eating and she took the chair away! And I was speechless!" Here, Mila uses repetition of her bodily placement in the story to reiterate her shock, ending the expression by describing herself as incapable of speech, essentially paralyzed. Mila shows her emotion through her physical reactions and descriptions.

These expressions of emotion through crying, physical analogy, and focus on bodily involvement in the episode all describe emotion as something embodied.

However 45.5% of the Russian stories do not show this tendency, instead the narrators described their emotions as inward states of thinking and feeling throughout their stories. For instance Katya says “I felt really bad” and “ I thought it was so lame...it made me even more scared,” and Tanya describes her fear over her father’s disease as “knowing that it might be his last day.” There is then, no example of embodied expression in these five stories.

NES NARRATIVES. Ten (90.9%) of the 11 narratives of emotion produced by the NES participants expressed emotion as an inward state while 1 (9.1%) narrative mentions the body in the story.

The ten stories that express emotion as an inner state are all very similar to those five of the NRS stories mentioned above. Ruth says, “I just had so much fun being there in that moment enjoying and being able to be silly and spontaneous and in a musical way. It’s beautiful. It’s fun.” She is describing her thought process through the activity, the fact that she found it beautiful and enjoyable, rather than describing her emotion as rising from the activity or being connected to it or expressed through it in some way. Similarly, Virginia describes inward states when she is explaining her feeling of enjoyment, “nobody is gonna tell me what I should be thinking or feeling...I’m myself. I love it. I love it.”

Lauren tells about being out late at night in Barcelona and describes the street saying “they had just had an election that night and people were kindof feeling volatile.” Here, Lauren describes the emotions of others by describing an inward state of people whose thoughts she could not possibly have known with any certainty. This is quite a

powerful example of description of inward states rather than of physical states in emotional discourse. It may also be, however that though Susan does tell that she “woke up in this huddled up position” this is not actually bodily expression of emotion, in the sense that Wierzbicka and Pavlenko discuss rather, she expresses her emotion through the string of assertions following this physical description “I was just really scared...like completely scared...I just felt really terrified.” Here, Susan describes her feelings, rather than her bodily behavior, and this carries and expresses the emotions she felt, whereas the “huddled up position” may just be detail about her waking. This case is therefore somewhat ambiguous, but because it contains a bodily description in relation to an emotion, it has been considered an exception to the American pattern.

DISCUSSION

Through this examination of the personal narratives of NRS and NES delivered in English, the differences in emotional expression and emotional schema of Russians and Americans have been confirmed. The American speakers, expressed emotion as internal states (90.9%), perfective (81.8%), and in a “toned-down” manner (90.9%). The Russians, on the other hand, used bodily description (54.5%), imperfective aspect (100%), and heightened emotional expression (63.6%). Each of these differences was found to be statistically significant, showing that the two groups expressed emotion in distinctly different manners.

The NRS were found to express emotion in a significantly different manner than the NES, and their expression matched the schema that Wierzbicka (1998) and Pavlenko (2002) draw attention to. However, the percentages of American speakers who adhered

to the American paradigm are higher than those of the NRS who adhered to the Russian schema. Only 54.5% of the Russians used bodily descriptions, while 90.9% of the NES expressed emotion as internal. Likewise, the NES used low temperature in 90.0% of the narratives, while the NRS used high temperature in 63.6%. This suggests that while there is a clear statistical difference between the two groups, the NES were more strongly affiliated with the acknowledged American schema than the NRS were with the acknowledged Russian schema. This difference in percentages may imply that some of the Russian speakers have accommodated to the American paradigm, using their agency as L2 speakers to choose to assimilate to the cultural schema of their current environment.

However, though some Russian participants seem to have accommodated to the American paradigm, this accommodation seems to be unrelated to proficiency or to time spent in the United States but rather more related to personality or other unquantifiable factors. Tanya and Oksana both show accommodation in that Tanya's story and two of Oksana's stories do not reveal evidence of high temperature or of bodily description. At the time of the interview, Tanya had been in the United States for 5 years while Oksana had been here less than one year. Though Tanya had been in the USA 5 years and showed high accommodation, those participants who showed strong affiliation with the Russian paradigm: Mila and Svetlana, had been in the United States for 5 years as well. Therefore, accommodation does not seem to be a result of time in the United States within this group of participants. Similarly, proficiency seemed unrelated because all of the participants had the same level of proficiency but showed varying levels of

accommodation. It seems then, that accommodation is related more to personality than to proficiency or to language exposure.

Therefore, this chapter has confirmed that a Russian emotional schema exists and that it contrasts with the American understanding of emotional experience. The NRS, when speaking English, showed influence of this cultural schema, creating a contrast between their narratives and those of the NES.

CHAPTER V

CULTURAL SCHEMA: NATIONAL CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the narrative data with reference to Hofstede's (1980) dimensions of national culture to identify correlations within the narratives to broader differences in cultural schema (Elinkov, 1997; Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson, 1997; Naumov & Puffer, 2000).

Background

This chapter builds on the discussion of schema from Chapters III and IV, in which it was noted those schemas are variable across cultures and affect discourse (Minami, 2002; Hofstede, 1980; Matsumoto, 1993; Holtgraves, 1997; Ambady, Koo, Lee, & Rosenthal, 1996; Kaplan, 1966; Minami & McCabe, 1996; Tannen, 1980; Chafe, 1980; Steffensen, Joag-Dev & Anderson, 1979; Reynolds, Taylor, Steffensen, Shirey & Anderson, 1982; Kintsch & Greene, 1978).

In Chapter III, I examined the schema of threes in Russian culture. Chapter IV discussed the differences in emotional expression in Russian and American cultural schema. This chapter will examine more general differences in cultural schema using Hofstede's dimensions of national culture (1980).

In a groundbreaking study in 1980, Hofstede identifies four dimensions, or continua, which define national culture. These are individualism—collectivism, low uncertainty avoidance—high uncertainty avoidance, low power distance—high power

distance, and femininity—masculinity. Each of these four continua carries with it certain observable traits, and helps to define the culture of a nation. However, because of the political situation at the time of his study, Hofstede did not include Russia in the survey. Since then, several new studies have revised and expanded Hofstede's findings (Elinkov, 1997; Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson, 1997; Naumov & Puffer, 2000).

Hofstede defines individualism as the degree to which a society celebrates individual success and values the individual above the group. Individual societies tend to be marked by proximal isolation and weaker family ties. Collectivist societies, on the other hand, value a person as a member of a group, such that group welfare and harmony are a constant concern. In a collectivist society, people often live in close quarters.

Hofstede defines uncertainty avoidance as the degree to which a society reacts negatively to the unknown. Those societies that avoid uncertainty fear risk and value rules. Conversely, a society that has low uncertainty avoidance has no particular emotional need for rules and is more willing to accept risk and the unknown.

Power distance, according to Hofstede, is the measure of the perception of or belief in the need for authoritarian leaders. A society with high power distance is one in which the members of that society expect their leaders to be inaccessible and powerful, and themselves to be powerless. Low power distance has a more egalitarian leadership ideal. This is not necessarily the belief of the people about how rulers ought to behave, but only the perception of their reality.

Finally, a masculine society is one in which gender roles are clearly defined, and males cannot approximate female behavior or vice versa without stigma. In a masculine

society, competition and achievement are highly valued. A feminine society is one where gender roles are more lax, and males and females are both free to display a range of attitudes and emotions. These societies tend to be more nurturing and affectionate on the whole, as well as given to less stress.

For the purpose of this analysis, I will only examine the narratives in light of the first two dimensions—individualism and uncertainty avoidance. None of the participants ever referred to power or power distance in any way in their stories, and because all the participants were female, it would not be a particularly useful exercise to examine gender within their personal narratives.

In general, the scores for the USA on individualism and uncertainty have been high and low respectively (see Table 5). Americans are highly individualistic, in fact, they are the most individualistic nation (Andersen, 1999). Hofstede found Americans to have low uncertainty avoidance in 1980, meaning that they are willing to take risks and do not have an emotional reliance on structure. However, Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson (1997), in a more recent study, concluded that the United States actually had high uncertainty avoidance. Russia, though, according to both Elinkov (1997) and Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson (1997) shows signs of even higher uncertainty avoidance than the United States, while remaining quite collectivist.

Table 5 Dimensions of National Culture of Russia and the United States

	Hofstede UNITED STATES	Fernandez et al. UNITED STATES	Elinkov RUSSIA
Individual	High	High	Low
Uncertainty avoidance	Low	High	High

METHODS

In this chapter, I will examine the various evidence in support of individualism/collectivism and uncertainty avoidance that appears in the themes and references in the personal narratives of the study participants in order to determine whether characteristics of broad national culture are present in these stories, reflecting a difference in the cultural schema of the story tellers.

RESULTS

Individual vs. collective

The NRS and NES narratives revealed significant differences on the dimension of individualism/collectivism. 5 of the 24 American stories contained mentions of individualism, while 10 of the Russian stories contained mentions of collectivism. In the 5 American stories, individualism was referred to 17 times, while in the 10 Russian stories, collectivism was referred to 25 times. One Russian story also referred to individualism twice. A chi-square test showed this to be a significant difference (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 36.452, $p = .000$), meaning that Americans used significantly more references to individualism while Russians used significantly more references to collectivism. These results confirm the dichotomy observed by Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson (1997) and Elinkov (1997).

NES STORIES. The NES responses showed a slight tendency toward the individual. They were not highly individual, however, possibly because of the story prompts. Four of the stories about enjoyment told by the NES participants focused on time with family and loved ones. I postulate that this is possibly an example of

collectivism, and is therefore enjoyable to the participants because it is a break from the norm. This idea is corroborated by Sarah's evaluation that closes her enjoyment story, "to see all of your friends and family in one place is a really cool thing." Hofstede (1980) notes that in individualist societies, people tend to be more physically isolated. Families may not live together, and every person operates on an individual schedule. Sarah, in her story, highlights this characteristic of individualism by noting how rare an occurrence it is for her to see all her loved ones together in the same room. This may suggest, then, that though the American participants expressed enjoyment at togetherness, this is in fact a result of their individualist lifestyle that makes togetherness rare.

Virginia also expresses individualism in her enjoyment story, exclaiming at the end, "I'm away. I'm myself. I love it. I love it." Here, Virginia is expressing a sense of bliss at personal autonomy. She feels that balance is restored because, "finally I can do whatever I want." Here, she is showing high tendency toward individualism and value of a sense of self as separate from others and a need to have personal worth and value.

Therefore 5 (20.8%) of the 24 NES stories showed some affiliation with individualist tendencies. No collectivist themes were present in any of the stories except for the references to family togetherness that I have interpreted as evidence for individualism in cultural schema of the participants. The NES in this study, therefore, showed a tendency toward individualism, when the dimension was mentioned at all. However, only 5 of the 24 stories have any mention of individualism, so that the influence of this schema was quite limited. This may be either because the three story

prompts did not inspire a need to talk about oneself and one's accomplishments, or because this particular sampling of women were not so highly individual. However, there is still a visible contrast between these two examples and the NRS examples, because the Russians showed many instances of collectivism.

NRS STORIES. The Russian participants showed 25 examples of collectivist ideals in 10 stories. The most explicit example is Katya's story about conflict. Katya borrows a bike without asking, which causes conflict with the owner of the bike. She says about the incident, "I guess its because of my mentality, like the Russian mentality...everything used to be communal...you would be able to borrow stuff from each other without asking." In this example Katya recognizes her own "Russian mentality" or affiliation with the Russian culture and its conflict with American individualism, in which property is always private. She specifically refers to herself as collective in nature.

Several other stories, however, serve as examples of the Russian mentality without explicit reference to it as such. Lena, in her story about conflict, refers to "pajama parties" that she and the other Russian women in her circle often have, "we get together on a Saturday night when the kids are asleep and we just talk and drink tea or whatever, and it's the four of us Marina, myself, Anya, and Lorica." This is evidence of a collectivist mentality because of the need for closeness and the high group affiliation represented (Hofstede, 1980). Lena essentially refers to the four friends as one unit.

Mila shows a collectivist characteristic in her story about fear. In this story she is so afraid of flying that she sleeps in the bed with her grandmother. Both the presence of

her grandmother in the home, and the close physical proximity of the two women in sharing a bed point to a collectivist mentality rather than an individualist one, in which a person would be more likely to grapple with fear alone rather than to find comfort in physical closeness (Hofstede, 1980).

Svetlana's story about conflict also reveals a collectivist mentality among the Russian group. Her conflict story is one in which she perceives herself as having disrupted the harmony of her family. Svetlana then grieves and forgiveness must be asked and given before the group welfare is restored. Her intense sense of guilt at having hurt the group shows the collectivist mentality under which she operates. In fact, every Russian conflict story was a variation of this theme of personal blame (see Chapter VI). All of the other participants rejected and resented the blame laid on them, but this resentment may be because they feel that they have been accused of disrupting the group welfare when they have not done so.

One possible outlier to this pattern of collectivism in the Russian narratives is Katya's story in which she describes receiving compliments to her work. The compliments she receives are about her usefulness to the group as an interpreter—a collectivist compliment, but she also comments that she felt “important”—a more individualist concern. In the end, this example is somewhat mixed, showing strong affiliations in neither direction, but Katya is also the participant who explicitly described herself as having a “Russian mentality” toward communal property, so it seems safe to conclude that she has more affiliation with collectivism than individualism.

The NRS participants, then, produced 10 (41.6%) stories that showed thematic affiliation with a collectivist mentality, while only one story had some connection with individualistic ideas. In those 10 stories there were a total of 25 mentions of collectivism. Therefore, for the dimension of individualism—collectivism, the pattern observed by Hofstede (1980), Elinkov (1997), and Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson (1997) is confirmed in the stories told by the NRS and the NES, the Russian speakers displaying their own national cultural identity through the values expressed in their personal narratives. However, the number of stories in which this dimension of national culture was evident at all was quite small. The American participants only referred to individualism, but even those references were very rare, just 17 references in 5 stories, just as the Russians almost exclusively showed collectivist tendencies but this dimension was visible in less than half of their narratives (25 references in 10 narratives). Therefore, though the data confirmed that the two groups differ significantly on the dimension of individualism and collectivism, these manifestations of cultural schema were not particularly prominent within the data set.

Uncertainty avoidance

While Russia is said to have high uncertainty avoidance, the United States has mixed evidence, Hofstede's study (1980) shows high tolerance for risk while a more recent study (Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson 1997) suggests that the United States national culture is moving toward more need for certainty. The consensus is, however, that Russia scores higher in this category than the US no matter what (Elinkov, 1997; Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson, 1997). This pattern was not represented

in the personal narratives of the participants in this study. Both groups showed instances of willingness for risk and fear of the unknown, and two Russian participants referred to need for rules that they observed in an American acquaintance, suggesting that the Americans may have had higher uncertainty avoidance than the Russians in those instances.

Unlike individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance was observed not in specific instances but topically or holistically. Therefore, the topics of 8 American stories reveal low avoidance, while the topics of 7 NRS stories reveal low avoidance. Similarly, the 3 topical examples of high American uncertainty avoidance and 2 such examples in the NRS data were evident. There was, then, no statistically significant difference between the two groups (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 0.067, $p = 0.0795$). This shows that though Elinkov (1997) and Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson (1997) both agree that Russians have higher uncertainty avoidance than Americans, the NRS and NES in this study were not significantly different from one another on this dimension.

EVIDENCE FOR LOW AVOIDANCE IN BOTH GROUPS. Both the NRS and NES sets of stories had some evidence for tolerance for uncertainty. Nastia tells a story about enjoyment in which she is delighted to miss her flight out of London and is stranded there for a day. Even as a self-described Anglophile, this kind of situation might appear threatening to a person who has high uncertainty avoidance. Such a person would feel lost without the original plan (Hofstede, 1980), but Nastia over and over again expresses her delight at this “fabulous” circumstance and reveals her flexibility in

the face of risk. Indeed, all but one of the Russian participants described traveling as a great joy to them, but traveling could be seen as a risky activity that carries with it some level of uncertainty at all times because of the continual presence of the unknown and the unfamiliar in travel. In this way, the Russians seem to portray themselves as having low uncertainty avoidance.

In the same way, the group of Americans all portray themselves as having low uncertainty avoidance through their conflict narratives. Every conflict narrative is one in which the narrator reports both sides of the story and expresses their ability to see the grey areas and the need for compromise. Whereas people who tend to have high uncertainty avoidance tend to see things as “black and white” and to rely heavily on rules (Hofstede, 1980), these conflict stories reveal an opposite tendency in the Americans, who show comfort with negotiation.

Therefore, both groups display at times low uncertainty avoidance through their narratives, the Russians through their acceptance of the risks of traveling, and the Americans through their ability and willingness to negotiate conflict.

EVIDENCE FOR HIGH AVOIDANCE IN BOTH GROUPS. Both groups also show evidence of high uncertainty avoidance. In the Russian data, Lena and Katya’s stories about being afraid are both stories about fear of the unknown. Lena is left in an uncertain position when her husband abandons her and her children. The fact that she expresses fear in this situation, rather than anger or sorrow, equally appropriate under the circumstances, suggests that Lena has a need for stability. Katya also shows a fear of unknown threats when she describes herself as always being afraid because of the

violent crime she witnessed in Russia. Even though there are no specific threats to her safety, she experiences fear over the possibility of danger. In this way, she shows a need for certainty, and a low tolerance for the unknown. These two examples told by Russians show higher uncertainty avoidance.

Interestingly, Russians also relate two of the three examples of American high uncertainty avoidance. In both examples, the Russian narrator is remarking on the extreme need for rules that they observe in their American acquaintance. Mila tells about how her roommate cannot allow a dining chair to be anywhere other than the dining room, even though it is not needed at that moment. Katya relates her friend's reaction to her having borrowed a bike without asking. She reports him as saying, "It's not like I would mind, but you're supposed to ask." In both cases, the American characters are reacting to a perceived rule. The roommate is not flexible enough to allow a dining chair to be in a bedroom, and the bike owner's disapprobation of the Katya's neglect to ask permission overshadows his willingness to allow her to borrow the bike. Neither of these examples is a first hand account of uncertainty avoidance, but rather both are Russian observations of American actions, suggesting that these two Russians may have lower uncertainty avoidance than the Americans in their stories, in contradiction of the acknowledged pattern.

There is one example of uncertainty avoidance as a first hand account from an American participant. Ruth acknowledges that her fear at her husband's death arose from her lack of control in the situation. She explains that careful planning is what gives her a sense of security in her daily life and that not knowing what to do threw her into turmoil.

Therefore, Ruth expresses a need for certainty and low-risk, belying high uncertainty avoidance.

Although the studies on the matter have expressed that Russians have higher uncertainty avoidance than Americans, this pattern was not played out in the narratives examined in this study. This may be because the Russians in this study might have an unusually high tolerance for uncertainty, evidenced in their willingness either to immigrate to a foreign country or at least to live and study there. Also, bilingualism may contribute to this higher tolerance. Therefore, the Russian sample may not be representative of the entire national culture. On the dimension of uncertainty avoidance, then, there was no identifiable difference between the two groups.

DISCUSSION

In terms of broader national culture, the two groups only differed on one of the two dimensions examined. The Russian participants displayed higher affiliation with collectivist ideals, while the Americans were more neutral, erring on the side of individualism. This difference shows a difference in the cultural schema of the two groups, affecting the themes of the stories. However, this cultural schema affected few of the stories in either group. This may be because Hofstede's cultural dimensions are so general in nature that they cannot account for idiosyncrasies or for the dynamic nature of national cultures.

In terms of uncertainty avoidance, both groups showed some examples on both sides of the continuum, making it impossible to confirm a difference in cultural schema according to this dimension of national culture. The discrepancy between this evidence

and the patterns acknowledged by Elinkov (1997) and Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina, & Nicholson (1997), which show Russians to have higher uncertainty avoidance than Americans, may be a sampling error of Russian participants because the Russians in this study have already displayed some low uncertainty avoidance by way of living and functioning in a foreign environment.

In conclusion, while the NRS showed the influence of the Russian cultural schema of collectivism in their Narratives and the NES showed connection with individualism, the two groups did not differ substantially on the dimension of uncertainty avoidance. This may suggest that the American and Russian cultural schemas are similar with regards to uncertainty avoidance, or it may suggest that the Russian participants have accommodated to their L2 culture in this instance, while still transferring their L1 collectivism to their L2 production.

CHAPTER VI
THEMATIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE NRS AND NES ENGLISH
NARRATIVES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the narrative data in order to determine if thematic differences exist between the NRS and NES narratives.

Background

Similar to the examination of cultural schema in narrative in Chapters III-V, this chapter's examination of themes in the stories attempts to reveal broad cultural differences in terms of the topics discussed. Each participant was prompted to tell three stories, one about a time she was afraid, one about a time she enjoyed herself, and one about a time she had conflict with a friend or a family member. The answers each participant gave were almost without exception highly similar to those within the same language group. The native Russian speakers told similar fear, enjoyment, and conflict stories, and those stories were different from those told by the NES Americans, whose stories, in turn resembled one another. This is related to cultural schema because schema is the background knowledge that helps people to assign meaning to experience. The experience a speaker has in their culture helps them to build a schema of knowledge or a lens through which to view and interpret the world and the events around them. (Chafe, 1977). By telling a specific type of 'fear story' or 'enjoyment story' the participants are displaying the meaning that they assign to the experiences they relate, and showing

which events are relevant examples of enjoyment, fear, and conflict in their culture.

Tannen has used this method of examining narratives for broader themes and tendencies in order to show cross cultural differences through her analysis as part of Chafe's 1980 study in which he elicited data using a wordless video. Tannen (1980), showed that Greeks discussed morality in their brief stories, a characteristic which Tannen relates to the oral tradition of Greek narrative.

METHODS

This chapter will employ thematic analysis examine the similarities and differences evident in the themes of the stories. The topics and themes of the NRS fear, enjoyment, and conflict stories are compared to those of the NES fear, enjoyment, and conflict stories respectively. The discussion includes an attempt to provide justification for the differences where justification can be found.

RESULTS

Can you tell me a story about a time you were afraid?

NES RESPONSES. Eight out of eight stories about fear told by the American participants in this study were related to the theme of exposure or defenselessness in the face of danger or death. There was a clear range of severity of the danger involved, as evidenced by Anneliese's, Samantha's and Ruth's stories, but every story in the set adhered to this same theme.

Anneliese's story is one of the mildest examples of exposure to danger or death because she provides very few details and seems to negate the danger in the end of the story.

I guess the first thing that comes to mind is being on a walk at a park in St. Louis where I grew up and just its along the river bank and it's a much...it's a very wooded area and so walking along and wanting to go over and look into the river and just see what was there and look over the bank, and almost stepping on a rock that had a snake on it. And So, and I was by myself and all sorts of different things and so it ended up being not a dangerous snake and I didn't end up step on it but just I have a kindof a lifelong fear of snakes and so that was a big um it was a decided moment in my memory I can still see it vividly but that was probably ten years ago.

In this story, Anneliese expresses fear of stepping on a snake. Though she provides hardly any detail in the encounter in order to make the hearer afraid, and in fact downplays the fear that she felt at the time, her assertion that "it was a decided moment in [her] memory" proves that the emotion at the time was actually quite strong. She mentions the two causes of the emotion explicitly in the story, even though she does not refer to them as the cause. First, she says "I was by myself and all sorts of different things." Although its not clear what those "different things" are, she specifically mentions her isolation right after having told about the snake, implying that this isolation heightened the sense of fear. She was defenseless, with no one to help her if she had a need.

The second cause of fear she actually refers to in a negative way because of hindsight: "It ended up being not a dangerous snake." Anneliese is aware that she is telling about fear that to the hearer may seem invalid because the danger that she perceived was not real danger, but she wants it to be clear that in that moment, she felt threatened. Anneliese's story, then, is a story about helplessness in the face of danger, even though the danger was only perceived and not real danger.

Samantha's story about fear is told laughingly, with a bit of humoristic flare, but she actually adheres to the theme a bit more strongly than Anneliese because she specifically mentions her fear of death.

Oh yea well um, so I used to be really afraid of tornadoes and one time like the sky was turning green and yellow and I was like sure a tornado was coming and I was like "mom I cant believe you're going to make me take a shower, the tornado's coming!" and like, but she was like "you have to take a shower its time for bed " and I was like "oh my gosh I'm gonna die in the shower and its gonna and I'm gonna be naked and the tornados gonna come" and um so I went in the shower and then I, it was just really funny to me I like came out and there was soap still all in my hair and I was like "I'm done" because I so badly didn't want to get caught naked in a tornado.

This story very clearly highlights the two important factors in the theme: exposure or defenselessness and danger or death. Samantha embodies her sense of exposure through her preoccupation with nakedness. Tornados are bad enough without the added loss of the protection and comfort of clothing. She in fact ends the story with the evaluative comment "because I so badly didn't wan to get caught naked in a tornado." She attributes her whole sense of fear not merely to the tornado, but to the heightened amount of exposure.

Secondly, Samantha refers directly to her fear of death: "oh my gosh, I'm gonna die in the shower!" This is a clear extension of the theme in the NES fear stories. Similar to Anneliese's story, Samantha notes in hindsight the likely ridiculousness of her emotion, laughingly admitting that the story now seems funny to her. Just like the snake, the tornado turned out to be perceived danger, rather than real danger, but at the time, the fear of exposure to death was extremely valid.

Perhaps the most strong affiliation to the theme of defenselessness against death that is apparent in all the NES stories about fear is Ruth's story. It is too long to include in its entirety but Ruth tells about her husband's sudden death, her desperate attempts to revive him, and her trip to the hospital in the middle of the night. She ends her story with these evaluative comments:

And I just remember being so terrified when I got there like, barely able to think as far as what to do and I just kept thinking, "I don't know what to do I don't know what to do." That's so scary for me because being a teacher I have got control over my classroom and when I know what's coming cause I've done all the planning and so in this situation I had zero control over what was going on. That's probably the scariest I've ever been.

Ruth's story is really quite terrifying because it is a story in which the defenselessness was real, and the death was real. Unlike in the two previous examples where danger is only in perception, Ruth's story is about real death, and her fear arises from being helpless in the face of it. This is an interesting twist on the theme because the danger of death is not to herself, but has claimed a loved one. However, the theme is still quite vivid in her complete lack of control in the face of mortality.

This pattern of NES fear stories being solely about defenselessness in the face of death or danger is quite interesting when considered in conjunction with Labov and Waletzky's 1967 narrative analysis study in which he elicited stories by asking his participants to recount a close encounter with death. It is somewhat telling that a much broader prompt "tell me a story about a time you were afraid" produces the exact same stories. Labov and Waletzky do not provide justification for his use of this particular prompt, but he seems to have had some intuition about meaningful experiences in American culture.

NRS RESPONSES. Unlike the stories about fear told by the NES in this study, the NRS showed absolutely no thematic affiliation. Their stories were quite divergent, and their fear was based on a wide variety of experiences. Since almost every story was completely different in the validation of fear, I have selected the three shortest to examine here so that a greater portion of the text can be included.

Tanya's story about fear fit quite well with the NES theme of helplessness in the face of death. Her story is also quite short, another characteristic that was identified in the previous chapter as being more American than Russian.

I was afraid when my dad got cancer. I mean that was a pretty scary time and then by the time we actually knew that he got cancer it was the last stage and then we lost him like within a month. So that was a terrifying experience. So it was kinda looking at him every day knowing that it might be his last day. So I would say that one.

Tanya's defensiveness in the face of her father's swiftly approaching death, and the realization that his death had been imminent long before he was diagnosed seems to be the source of her fear. She does not provide much detail or evaluative comment on the matter. Given Tanya's extremely short story and her adherence to the American theme, it is possible that she has assimilated somewhat to the psyche represented by the NES participants, but that is an uncertain analysis, especially because the wide range of fears expressed by the Russian participants seems to validate many different fears, allowing for this fear of death, in contrast to the NES's who seem to find only one particular fear worth reporting.

Lena tells a story about being afraid in the face of uncertainty and loneliness. She tells about how her American husband left her and her two children and the fear that caused her.

Well a recent story, um me and my husband are separated now, so you know when stuff started happening when I was seeing that we were going that way, um that's when I was I think that's when it was like hardest for me because, I'm here in a different country, I don't have any family here nobody really, ... so I'm like here with two kids and he's left, so yea... Because you know I feel like I'm somewhat assimilated here in America now, but you know, having no family and scared you know what's gonna happen, how am I gonna get out of this whole situation?

Lena's story is one that Americans might describe as 'heartbreaking' or 'tragic,' but she describes her emotion as fear. Her fear arises from having no family near her and being in a difficult situation. She is not afraid because she is in America, in fact she mentions that she feels assimilated, but her fear is only because she is isolated from her loved ones. In the middle of the story, which is not printed above, she refers to her comfort during that time as being the reassurance of a ticket home for the summer, which she had already purchased. Lena's story about being afraid is in quite noticeable contrast to those stories told by all of the American speakers in this study. She is in no danger, she is not helpless, she is simply alone in a difficult situation.

The third NRS story, with yet another cause of fear, is told by Oksana. This is perhaps my personal favorite since the story is quite eccentric from an American point of view, but is substantiated by the Russian patterns of emotion observed in Chapter III. Oksana tells a story about a cockroach; she begins the story by explaining that in Russia all the bugs are quite small, and then tells:

...so the thing that happened was the that this most I don't know disgusting and monstrous things came into my room, that long, maybe I don't know two inches long. I am talking about roaches of course. Scared everything out of me and I mean like almost, I don't know, I was desperate, I was crying and my roommates were thinking that something's really bad going on and there was just like this little one, well he's not little to tell the truth, um so yea I guess that was one of the, it was almost a mental breakdown, that was one of the moments I was really, really scared.

Oksana is apparently afraid of cockroaches because she is unfamiliar with bugs of this size. Her highly emotional and physical reactions are actually quite acceptable under the Russian paradigm of emotional expression, as discussed in the previous section, and her fear of the roach at all seems to be substantiated by this same evaluation. Just as Wierzbicka (1998) notes that Russian emotionality is more visible, she also notes that this level of emotion and emotional expression is appropriate in a wider range of situations. This could explain the wide range of situations in which the NRS described themselves as being afraid, while the NES could only recall fear in one specific instance. Therefore, the singularity of the American story-tellers' theme in stories about being afraid, when contrasted with the extreme variety of the Russian collection of stories seems to be explained by Wierzbicka's analysis of Russian emotional expression as having wider range than American expression, and substantiated by Labov and Waletzky's intuition about the power of Americans' fear of death.

Can you tell me a story about a time that you enjoyed yourself?

NES RESPONSES. The NES reports of a time that they enjoyed themselves is also quite in keeping with Wierzbicka's analysis of emotional norms in America vs. in Russia (Wierzbicka, 1998). Two separate themes emerged from the eight stories the participants told. Four were about enjoyment of a specific time with loved ones, and four

were about a non-normal emotion that the speakers remembered as enjoyment. I will examine one story of each type.

Lauren tells a very short and non-specific story about her family's togetherness at Thanksgiving:

Always being with my family I really enjoy spending time with them and so one of my favorite times was after my husband and I got married last November and so we went it was kinda over Thanksgiving and so we went and had kinda a short honeymoon and then came back and both of our families together celebrated Thanksgiving which was really fun and so we just kinda had that time together you know just being newly married and then with both of our families so that was really fun.

This story that Lauren tells closely resembles three other stories in the group, all of them are about togetherness at a specific, meaningful moment. The momentary nature of the togetherness makes the story quite in keeping with Wierzbicka's analysis of American emotion as more perfective, or short-termed in nature. Lauren tells about celebrating Thanksgiving, a short period of time. Although the perfective aspect of these four stories matches the American paradigm examined by Wierzbicka, this appreciation for and delight in togetherness does not seem to fit within the bounds of another distinctly American trait: individualism. This trait will be discussed in more detail in the next section, but here I will simply note that individualism is partially marked by a lessened need for familial ties and a high value for personal autonomy over community, and the United States has been identified as the most individualistic culture in the world (Hofstede, 1980). It seems somewhat in contrast to this individualism, then, that family plays such a prominent role thematically in the enjoyment stories.

One possible explanation for this is the gender of the participants. Hofstede did not only rate cultures on the basis of individualism, but also by gender-identification.

Societies adhere to a certain gender based on the amount of discrimination and gender-role expectations the society expresses. A feminine society is marked by “attributes such as affection, compassion, nurturance, and emotionality,” (Hofstede, 1980). Although the United States scores as a rather masculine society, valuing assertiveness and competition and recognizing clear gender roles, this conclusion is reached through a mixed survey of both males and females (Hofstede, 1980). It may be valid, then, to consider that the women who express strong familial ties are doing so out of the affection and nurturance that is characteristic of female communication. This hypothesis, however, could not be confirmed without much more data on the subject, specifically stories from male speakers about enjoyment.

Virginia’s story about enjoyment fits into the second type observed in these eight stories. Her story is about non-normal emotion which she remembers as enjoyment. In other words, she enjoyed herself because she was stimulated in some way that was specifically different from her daily emotions. She experiences an escape.

Consider her evaluative comments:

I think it’s the combination of it being foreign and beautiful and but also just the ease of life and getting away. Oh my gosh, gorgeous, stunning, stunning. But that’s, I mean I just loved it, I loved myself, I felt like, it was actually during the same time as like the frustrating time and so I was away and it was such an escape for me too. You know and it was like “finally I can do whatever I want and nobody is going to disagree with me and nobody is gonna tell me what I should be thinking or feeling or doing right now and I’m away. I’m myself. I love it. I love it”

Virginia makes specific reference in her story to her normal feelings: frustration. One of the story prompts that was not used for this study was a story about frustration, so Virginia had already told about a period of extreme frustration in her life. She refers

back to that time in this story to show that her enjoyment arose from the escape—from the change of emotion to something non-normal. She expresses the “ease of life” and the freedom that she experiences as well as her sense of personal autonomy, “I’m myself” but her memory of all of these feelings is summarized as enjoyment specifically because of the dichotomy that these feelings created to her normative emotions.

This is also much in keeping with Wierzbicka (1998), because Wierzbicka notes that Americans, as opposed to Russians, do not tend to feel durative emotion, so that a feeling such as fear or excitement is limited to one moment. These four American stories about enjoyment are each about a break from the mundane into the emotional. The enjoyment is felt because it is feeling, as opposed to the more normative, ‘even-keel,’ or ‘cool’ emotional state in which Americans tend to live.

The American NES in this study, then, showed two distinct patterns in their stories about enjoyment: one in which they enjoyed family, and the other in which the moment was salient because of the break from normal emotion. Each of these themes can be at least hypothetically connected to already acknowledged traits of the American culture.

NRS RESPONSES. The NRS enjoyment stories are more difficult to link to any specific acknowledged trait of Russian culture, but still show some aspect of Wierzbicka’s analysis. Seven out of eight of the enjoyment stories told by the Russian participants were stories about travel—travel to New Orleans, travel to Amsterdam, travel to Moscow, travel to the United States, travel to Disney, travel to Paris, travel to London. In each story, no matter how long or short, the participants noted a love of new

and different things. Olya calls the United States, where she had only recently arrived at the time, “this brand new world.” They often mention the history of the place where they have traveled, but also the newness of it to themselves.

This is really an interesting finding, and seems to be not insignificant since seven out of eight of the Russian speakers referred to travel as their source of enjoyment. There is, however, very little literature on this subject, especially on its importance in Russian culture. One personal hypothesis might be that travel within Russia is quite restricted. One cannot travel from city to city even within the country without registering, even now, ten years after Perestroika. Perhaps, then, this wanderlust expressed by the NRS is the result of feeling caged or restricted.

The need for travel, however, does not seem to fit with the evaluation of Russian culture as quite collectivist (Naumov & Puffer, 2000; Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina & Nicholson, 1997). A collectivist culture values group affiliation, togetherness, and the members of an in-group (Hofstede, 1980). Traveling, however, can often isolate the traveler and emphasize their non-conformity to the norms of the foreign culture. A wanderlust also removes the traveler from home and family, important aspects of collectivist societies. Therefore, this propensity to travel within the eight speakers for this study seems somewhat contradictory to acknowledged Russian norms. Only by examining a larger population could any real conclusion be drawn about the pattern of travel enjoyment, its correlation with other Russian cultural norms and its interaction with collectivism/ individualism.

Another possible interpretation of the theme of travel in the enjoyment stories told by the NRS is that because the Russian participants are not in their home country, travelling is a more salient topic for them than for the American participants, who are at home.

Even though travel may not fit the paradigm of collectivist cultural expression, the stories that the participants tell about travel do fit Wierzbicka's prediction that Russian emotional expression will be durative. Because these stories each encompass an entire voyage, rather than merely one day on the voyage, and because these stories are told in response to a prompt about "a time that you enjoyed yourself" it seems clear that the Russian participants consider their enjoyment to have lasted a long time. In that way, they have interpreted 'a time' in a very imperfective way, rather than the American interpretation of it as a moment, instance, or specific event. This durative enjoyment, then, places the Russian stories about travel squarely within the Russian paradigm of emotional expression.

Considering the suspicion that travel may be related more to individualist tendencies than to collectivist ones, it is interesting to note Katya's story about enjoyment, the one outlier in the pattern. Katya concludes her story about serving as an interpreter in this way:

I really felt that I am capable of doing stuff and that other people appreciate it and I just felt important and I felt that I live for something. There is like big purpose and I can help people. So it was like super cool. It's pretty much one of the nicest memories of the last year that I have.

Katya expresses two aspects of her enjoyment; first that she felt important, and second that she felt that she could help others. The first is quite an individualist way of

viewing the world—to derive personal enjoyment from personal achievement (Hofstede, 1980). The second is more collectivist—to derive value because of one’s usefulness to the group (Hofstede, 1980). It is not clear which is stronger in Katya, perhaps she feels important only because she is useful to others, thereby having stronger collectivist affiliations. Her story is interesting in light of the ambiguity of the travel stories, which also seem to express some level of individualism in spite of the acknowledged collectivism of Russian culture.

Interestingly, the two American themes, time with family, and a break from the normal, may actually be in conjunction with the break from collectivism apparently visible in the Russian enjoyment stories. The Americans who expressed joy because of togetherness were breaking from individualism, just as the Russians expressing joy at traveling, or Katya’s delight in being singled out as valuable, represent a break from collectivism. The four other American stories confirm the value for emotional enjoyment that may be derived from a break from the normal, thereby confirming the normally individual nature of Americans and the normally collectivist nature of Russians, because they find the moments when they enjoy the opposite to be salient and meaningful.

Therefore, similar to the stories about fear, in the stories about enjoyment some specific and differentiated themes emerged. The American stories revealed two themes, family and non-normative emotion, while the Russian stories centered around travel. Some postulations as to the reasons for these patterns have been expressed, but no specific research can substantiate the analysis. It is enough to recognize that Russians

seem to find different occasions “story-worthy” in answer to the given prompt than Americans do.

Can you tell me a story about a time that you had conflict?

NES RESPONSES. All of the responses of the American participants to the question asking for a story about conflict returned stories which revealed America as a low context culture. In each story, a misunderstanding or disagreement occurs, and the main part of the story consists of the speaker explaining both sides of the issue and then reporting the process that was required for resolution. Sarah’s story about wedding planning with her mother illustrates this pattern that is visible in all the NES conflict stories:

...I was like “I just don’t want to talk about it can we just have a dinner without talking about wedding?” And she was like, “Oh my gosh, you just don’t care at all! I feel like I’m not getting anything accomplished.” so I was like, “ok fine, we can talk about it.” but we kinda had to move past that and move, I mean I had to be more sensitive to her and she, I guess, tried to be more sensitive to how I was feeling. So that was a little conflict that we experienced in the last week.

In her story, Sarah explains her feelings, then she explains her mother’s feelings, and then she describes the conversation that took place in order to reach a compromise. Even though in this story it appears that Sarah’s mom was not really willing to compromise on her feelings, Sarah paints a picture of mutual respect and careful communication in order to solve the conflict.

Each American story follows this same pattern that makes it clear that conflict is resolved in each instance through deliberate and direct communication. This is evidence of a low context culture (Anderson, 1999). In a low context culture, no cues other than verbal cues are effective for getting a message across. This means that accurate and

direct speech are valued. High-context cultures, in contrast, often avoid directly addressing a problem because other non-verbal cues and avoidance strategies can serve to move beyond the issue. The United States is a low-context culture (Anderson, 1999), and this trait is quite effectively revealed in the pattern of dialogue and reporting that each American participant used in her story about conflict.

NRS RESPONSES. The NRS responses to the question about conflict were quite different than the American ones, although on a different continuum. The NES responses were marked as low context, but the NRS responses did not place as much importance on context at all. Instead the theme that emerges in the Russian conflict stories is the theme of misplaced blame. Except for one story, in which Svetlana blames herself, every conflict story told by the NRS's is a story about having been blamed for something that they feel is not their fault.

Nastia tells a story about her husband searching for a missing book. She says that every time it happens that he cannot find something, he blames her for having misplaced it.

“Nastia, I can't find my book, darn it.” So I came over and I started looking for him too and I said, “I can't find it.” “I know its not on this bookshelf, I know its not on this bookshelf, I'm going to go check on this bookshelf, no its not here and its not on my desk. Nastia, what did you do with it?” Like, “are you serious? Why would I want to? Why? Why would I want to move this book?” “Well I didn't move it, its not on my desk its not on this bookshelf its not on this bookshelf, you must have done something with it.” And then I said “ok,” and I look at his desk and there it is. So that's kinda a difficult story about a disagreement, and usually you know, I am the one that finds it.

The conflict that Nastia mentions is not really a fight, but just a moment of tension that arises from an unjust accusation of her abusing her husband's things. Nastia

is struck somewhat speechless by the accusation, “are you serious? Why would I want to? Why?” This story, and three others like in it in the collection of eight stories, is about a perceived misuse of material goods. The conflict associated with the event seems to be the inner conflict experienced by the accused at having been misjudged and singled out.

This same avoidance of blame, and conflict arising from a sense of unjust blame is apparent in Oksana’s story about conflict as well. Oksana tells a story that is still not resolved, so her account is quite short, but the theme of misplaced blame is still quite visible.

Well, my friend, like one of my friends, I have two best friends and one of my friends she is actually jealous that I hang out with the other friend and she like, she told me like her complaint about that just lately and I didn’t know what to say because I don’t really feel that I am to blame, so I am kinda in a state of conflict right now. I’m gonna figure out what’s gonna happen just in a few hours probably.

In this story, Oksana’s relationship with her best friends is in jeopardy, but not by any fault of her own. Whether she has had any participation in making her friend jealous is not even a consideration. This is in sharp contrast to the NES stories in which the teller carefully expresses both sides of the issue. Oksana feels that her friendship has been unjustly ruptured and that she has been an innocent victim in the occasion. Two other stories of the eight share this theme, not only of misplaced blame, but of misplaced blame in a relational issue. Both the stories about unfair accusation of abuse of positions, and unjust blame in interpersonal problems comprise seven of the eight NRS stories about conflict.

The last conflict story is told by Svetlana. In this story, Svetlana blames herself for a conflict that she perceives herself to have caused among her family members. She

cries, “they are fighting because I am pushing them!” In this story, Svetlana takes the blame, but blame is still an important theme within the conflict. She does not experience tension because she has been unjustly accused, but because she is, in fact, accused quite justly.

This would seem to highlight an important difference between the stories about conflict told by NRS and those told by NES. While the NES focus on presenting the issue equitably, the Russians focus more on the aspect of blame, because it seems that blame is the source of conflict. The equitable presentation salient in the NES stories seems to point to low-context cultural patterns (marked by the need to verbalize thoughts clearly and directly) acknowledged in American culture (Andersen, 1999).

The dislike of blame may, on the other hand, be more related to collectivism than to low/high context in Russian culture. People in collectivist cultures tend to avoid being singled out in the group, especially for reasons that might be perceived as hurting the group (Hofstede, 1980). This may be why blame is so unpleasant to the Russian participants and therefore creates turmoil and conflict, even though there may never be a fight, as in Nastia’s story. Svetlana’s casting the blame on herself, and reacting to this with grief and remorse, would seem to support the theory that being the one at fault is particularly negative within the Russian paradigm, perhaps because of the collectivist cultural tendencies.

CONCLUSIONS

Each story type--the story about fear, about enjoyment, and about conflict—revealed substantial differences between the NES and the NRS responses. Thematically,

the two groups varied in every instance. While some of the themes are clearly related to other acknowledged aspects of the speakers' culture of origin, others, such as traveling, seem to have not yet been explored. These findings suggest that cultural schema extends even to the topics and themes of personal narratives, so that L1 cultural transfer to L2 production is quite pervasive.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

DISCUSSION

While most cross-cultural narrative studies or studies of L2 and bilingual narrative production focus on structural differences between narratives, this study did not find such analysis revealing (see Chapter II). On the other hand qualitative analysis of cultural schemas revealed significant transfer of Russian cultural schema in the Native Russian Speaker participants' L2 narrative production.

The Russian speakers were found to adhere to Wierzbicka's (1998) and Pavlenko's (2002) observations about emotional expression in Russian and in English. Even though the NRS's were speaking in English, they maintained their distinctly Russian emotional expression, by showing that emotion is embodied, durative, and effusive. These expressions, though in English, were quite different from the descriptions of emotion supplied by the NES narrators, whose emotional expression was quite a bit more controlled and cool.

Influence of cultural schema on L2 production was also visible in the thematic differences between the two sets of stories. The NES responses to each prompt were thematically quite similar, and differed noticeably from the themes of the NRS stories. It was clear that each group responded within an acceptable cultural schema, and that the NRS had not accommodated to the schema of their L2. Similarly, Hofstede's dimensions

of national culture also revealed some differences between the two groups, again suggesting that cultural schema influenced the NRS's narrative production.

However, the Russian cultural schema proposed by Croft (2005), triplicity, was not found to be more prominent in the NRS narratives than in the NES ones.

This might reflect an instance of cultural accommodation, so that the NRS have matched the cultural schema of their environment in this instance. However, this seems unlikely since all other measures showed significant influence of Russian cultural schema. A more likely interpretation of these results seems to be that Croft's expectation that a "special intensity" of threes exists in Russian culture is overstated, and triplicity, while prevalent in Russian literature, does not amount to a cultural schema that affects discourse. Narrative data in Russian would be necessary to draw further conclusions.

In conclusion, though there was no marked structural difference (see Chapter II) between the NRS and NES narratives, the differences in expression and theme were quite prominent and showed clear evidence for the fact that the Russian participants in this study speak English well, while still maintaining their own expectations and assumptions about certain discourses. The Native Russian Speakers in this study showed significant transfer of their L1 cultural schema when speaking their L2.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS OF ESL

The findings of this study have revealed the high likelihood of influence and transfer of cultural schema, even when bilingual English language speakers have achieved a very high level of English language mastery. However, this cultural influence on L2 production does not impinge on competence of bilingual speakers when speaking

English. Even though the Russian participants told stories that were thematically quite different from their American counterparts and adhered to a Russian emotional paradigm, these aspects of Russian cultural schema did not affect their communicative competence. The themes and emotions were not American, rather the NRS's expertly and creatively expressed their Russianness even in English.

Therefore, while the English language classroom ought to include discussions of cultural schema and identify potential misunderstandings that may arise, such as in this case, misunderstanding of emotional situations because of strong differences in emotional expression, teachers ought not to require mastery or use of the L2 schema. Second language learners should be made aware of schema differences, but should be given agency to allow their L1 culture to influence their L2 production. The importance that this study bears for ESL is the need for cultural instruction and discussion of cultural schemas for the purpose of making students aware of differences and of their agency in the matter, rather than of requiring or suggesting that they acquire an American cultural schema.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A significant limitation in this study is the lack of L1 data from the NRS participants. Without this data, schema transfer could only be implied by taking for granted the conclusions about Russian cultural schema from previous research. Russian data would have solidified the implications by showing whether transfer was really occurring. However my knowledge of the Russian language is not sufficient for such

inquiry. Therefore, research that included data collected in both L1 and L2 would be valuable in further explorations of the affects of L1 cultural schema on L2 production.

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APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPTS

Ann: Afraid

Well, we were hiking in the canyon of Verdon in France and the rock had been worn down by the people of all the shoes that had walked over it so it was like walking on your kitchen counter only the kitchen counter was at a forty-five degree angle and the only thing you had to hold onto was a cable and it was very slippery and I just kept imagining myself slipping and falling and not being able to continue holding on to the cable and plunging to the bottom of the canyon.

Ann: Enjoyed

I guess I really enjoyed myself when we went to the World Series game that the Rangers, it was the only home World Series game that the Rangers actually won. And they were doing really well and I remember the people sitting behind us were so loud and they were so excited that the rangers were doing well and they were also so drunk. But that made it very enjoyable because their conversation was very funny to listen to and um it was just really fun to be there and see the Rangers win a World Series game and you grow up hearing about the World Series and it's a big deal for people who are into baseball and a lot more important to those people than the Super Bowl is for the people who are into football. And to see the Rangers win a World Series game at home was just really, really fun. It also happened to be the day before Halloween so there were all kinds of funny costumes. I stood in line to buy a hat behind a lion and I think it was a Harry Potter character but I can't remember for sure so that also made it very interesting because you cross paths with all kinds of people and non-people as the case may be. So yes that was a particularly fun day.

Ann: Conflict

There was a time, well the time that I told Tiffany I wasn't gonna room with her anymore. I said "I'm gonna, I think I'm gonna find a different roommate for next year so that I can meet more people. I'm gonna change halls and." Cause you were really, really kindof tied to the hall you were on and that, those were your friends. So I said "I'm gonna change halls and find a different roommate so I can meet more people at the school" she was like "its not because of me you don't know anybody" implying that it was because of Parker and that he and I were always hanging out. But my freshman year, she and Parker were the only people I ever hung out with consistently, and then my sophomore year, I had so many more friends once I quit rooming with her.

Anneliese: Afraid

I guess the first thing that comes to mind is being on a walk at a park in St. Louis where I grew up and just its along the river bank and it's a much, it's a very wooded area and so walking along and wanting to go over and look into the river and just see what was there and look over the bank, and almost stepping on a rock that had a snake on it. And So, and I was by myself and all sorts of different things and so it ended up being not a dangerous snake and I didn't end up step on it, but just I have a kindof a lifelong fear of snakes and so that was a big um it was a decided moment in my memory. I can still see it vividly but that was probably ten years ago.

Anneliese: Enjoyed

I guess one of my favorite memories is um, just, I guess more recently my boyfriend and I really like the moon and so we kind of track when it rises and when it sets and when it'll be full and when not and so a couple summers ago we picked a night that it was gonna be full and we went out and by White Rock Lake and took a blanket and we just sat and quotes which is another thing that we really like and we just spent the whole night talking and sitting and watching the moon and talking about the quotes and then went and watched the sunrise in the morning and so pulled an all nighter for a fun reason as opposed to another one so but I think because it was such an intentional experience it's left like a real picturesque image in my mind. I think about I can remember our conversations and we took music out there it was just fun.

Anneliese: Conflict

Um well my parents and I had a lot of conflict over the last person I dated cause they didn't like him so we kind of we just had, it was a lot of endless conversation. We went round and round, arguments and debates about whether they should even have an opinion on it or that my parents live in St. Louis so they're far away and don't see very much just kind of a lot of questions that I didn't know how to answer and that they didn't know how to answer and went round and round in circles until I finally realized I didn't want to be dating him anyways so I ended the relationship and saw through a bunch of things.

Lauren: Afraid

There was a time when I, I lived in Spain for a year after I graduated from college and so I loved Spain and um I was really excited because my mom and my grandma and my sister came over to visit me and so they were there for a couple of weeks and then we were gonna do some traveling and so we had traveled in Spain a little bit and then we were gonna go to Italy the next morning and so I realized the night before that I had left my passport in Zaragoza which is the city where I had been living so I didn't have my passport so I just wouldn't be able to go to Italy the next day and so I just realized it in the middle of the night so I was just kind of panicky and had called my roommate to see if she could send my passport on a bus. Anyways so the scary part ended up being is that I had to like go basically in the middle of the night to this train station in Barcelona and I ended up going by myself in a taxi and got there and had to ask like the bus driver if he had my passport and he gave me like a very stern talking to in Spanish but it was just really scary cause there were all these men there and it was night and dark and they had just had an election that night and people were kind of feeling volatile about that, and so that was one story which was kinda scary but it ended up being one of those things just like "I would never need to do that again by myself like that was really not wise."

Lauren: Enjoyed

Always being with my family I really enjoy spending time with them and so one of my favorite times was after my husband and I got married last November and so we went it was kinda over Thanksgiving and so we went and had kinda a short honeymoon and then came back and both of our families together celebrated Thanksgiving which was really fun and so we just kinda had that time together you know just being newly married and then with both of our families so that was really fun.

Lauren: Conflict

I remember one time when, actually this was when I was living in Spain also and part of the whole campus crusade thing they do this whole conflict resolution part about how when you get overseas things are gonna feel intensified and you know handling conflict and I can remember feeling like "oh I don't really have a lot of conflict so probably this will not be that big of a deal for me" and then getting there and really like right out, just maybe like a month in or something just had some conflict with our team director just kinda a misunderstanding and there was some stuff going on with my family at home and I felt like he

wasn't very sensitive to it and um so just really kindof feeling frustrated and not we both just weren't communicating very well and I think his feelings were probably hurt too and so um just not a lot of clear communication just a lot of emotions probably.

Ruth: Afraid

Two and a half years ago my husband suddenly passed away and I was so terrified when I um, when I first realized that he wasn't breathing. I tried everything I could do to wake him up, I even like splashed water on his face. Like something, anything to wake him up and I ended up calling 911 and saying "I know how to do CPR I just can't remember how many chest compressions or breaths or anything so she walked me through it and the paramedics eventually got there. I was terrified. I was still in my pajamas it was one in the morning and I called my boss, cause he was the closest person to where we lived and he called. He got up out of bed. He came and got me. We sped through town following the ambulance. And I just remember being so terrified when I got there like, barely able to like think as far as what to do and I just kept thinking, "I don't know what to do I don't know what to do" that's so scary for me because being a teacher I have got control over my classroom and I know what's coming cause I've done all the planning and so in this situation I had zero control over what was going on um. That's probably the scared-est I've ever been.

Ruth: Enjoyed

I've taken some summer classes at SMU for the way I teach music its called Orschal Method and um its based on a German composer Carl Orf and his associate Gunal Cateman and they together created this music for children and all of its based on a very play centered, just very well thought out sequence as well as like the Orf instruments over there, they're kids sized xylophones with removable bars, and that's genius because I can take off all the wrong notes. So that ups their level of confidence and like it sounding good which is wonderful and so we use those all the time and so I've taken, lets see I took my three levels and then I took a masters class. And I think my favorite memory of that was, we were in movement class working on a song called street song. And its really cool the way this piece all fits together and we were working on these little dances like in little groups and I was in a group with my friend Carlos who's from Puerto Rico and we were, our job was to make up moves that you do on the playground in a certain form that goes along with the chord changes and some of it was basketball and some of it was like jump rope and some of it was like doing hand clapping and we got to the point where the music just kindof goes, kindof chaotic, and we were supposed to um, pretend that we had all gotten in a fight and Carlos, like, huffs and sits on the floor and crosses his arms and that is probably the funniest thing I can remember. I just had so much fun being there in that moment enjoying and being able to be silly and spontaneous and in a musical way. It's beautiful its fun.

Ruth: Conflict

After matt died, I moved in with my parents and went to grad school for a year. Lived with my mom and dad. They had just built a house, so it wasn't like I was completely returning home but I lived in the, they had built two rooms with a little bathroom in between as a guest part of the house. So that's where I lived and um I can really remember my mom getting on my nerves so badly and I just wanted to escape so I called my friend Rosemary in Oklahoma city and I was like " what are you doing this weekend? I need to leave for the weekend" and she was like "oh well we actually are gonna drive down to Dallas" I was like "great I'm going with you." I just had to get away from the situation. That's kindof when I figured out I was ready to move on and be on my own again, so that's when I found this job and moved here.

Samantha: Afraid

Oh yea well um, so I used to be really afraid of tornadoes and one time like the sky was turning green and yellow and I was like sure a tornado was coming and I was like "mom I can't believe you're going to make me take a shower, the tornado's coming!" and like, but she was like, "you have to take a shower its

time for bed” and I was like “oh my gosh I’m gonna die in the shower and its gonna and I’m gonna be naked and the tornado’s gonna come” and um so I went in the shower and then I, it was just really funny to me I like came out and there was soap still all in my hair and I was like “I’m done” because I so badly didn’t want to get caught naked in a tornado.

Samantha: Enjoyed

For some reason this one random day came to mind and it was just a day when I just happened, like I didn’t have anything going on and sometimes when I don’t have anything going on I’ll just kindof squander the time, you know, but that day I felt like I did, like I gardened I remember, I went to farmer’s market, I think I did some art or something, I know I spent time with the Lord um and, but I think maybe I spent time with the Lord first, so it was like I felt like it was sort of, you know, that was running through my whole day and it was just a very peaceful and I felt like I had done things like spent the time well and at the end of the day I was like “ that was just such an enjoyable day, like what a great day!”

Samantha: Conflict

I’m in this prayer group with, there’s seven of us, and I was supposed to call one girl to let her know where it was and I forgot, it was like, she was the only person I was supposed to call, but I forgot to call her and tell her where it was, and she didn’t call until about an hour before to find out and she felt really excluded. Yea I don’t know if that’s really a conflict but she like, yea she sent us this email like in the middle of the night that night and was like “that’s fine if you don’t want me to come to your prayer group anymore I won’t come anymore, clearly I’m not welcome” and we were just like “ oh...but” and so the next day we all called her and were like you know “you have to trust us and we’re not trying to exclude you and we want you there but” so I went over to her house that night we had tea and talked and so it was good but it was a little bit “ woah,” when I got that email I was just kinda like “what?...oh... sorry! I forget things all the time! Maybe I need to...not...”

Sarah: Afraid

The first month I moved into my apartment, I have a roommate, and the first month, she’s from Dallas and so she was kinda going back and forth between our apartment and still being at her house some of the time and so our upstairs neighbors are so loud, and so one day I was in the shower and I was just hearing all of this banging; I felt like doors were opening and so I got really nervous that someone had entered my apartment, and that someone was in my apartment while I was in the shower and so then I kindof got out and looked around and I realized cause I could hear the noise when I was out of the shower that they were it was the people above me, but I was so scared. I was like “oh my gosh someone has entered my apartment while I am in the shower, I’ve just moved here you know, my roommates not here” so I think that’s was my biggest, and that’s like one of my biggest fears, that I am like gonna be not like able... yea that I’m stuck in the shower and like someone could just corner me in there.

Sarah: Enjoyed

I think it actually happened, I guess this is three weeks ago now, I just got engaged three weeks ago. And so it was just very exciting because, that night I just wasn’t expecting it at all and we went to dinner and then afterwards my now fiancé, he wanted to go out and kinda look at, we were at the Belmonte hotel so they have the real cool you know skyline of Dallas so he wanted to go out there and look and then he proposed and then like as he was kinda telling me how he had gone and asked my dad and just the story, like kindof his story line, it was just so exciting cause at the end of it he goes “ and your family, my family , and most of our friends are waiting at the hotel to be there with us” and so that was just really fun, and I just I mean, I kinda didn’t know where to begin talking to people and it was just so fun and I was just it was overwhelmed but it was just very special that everyone could be there and I really enjoyed every minute of it and just to see all your friends and family in one place is just a really cool thing.

Sarah: Conflict

This last week my mom came into town and we had a week extravaganza of wedding planning. And she is kind of a scared-y cat and so she did not want to stay in a hotel by herself, which I understand here in Dallas in a big city. So she stayed with me all week. I live in a very small apartment. And so, she would just, you know I think she felt like everything, you know like we had to get ten things done a day which, when you're searching for just a venue, like you're not gonna get that much done. Like you can't book your florist, book your band and all that until you have your venue that you're working with and so I think we just got really frustrated with each other because she thought I didn't care and I thought that she was just being way too pushy in the whole situation and so one night I was like "mom, I just do not want to talk about wedding stuff tonight, like I'm slightly over it." It was the middle of the week. I was tired. I was like "I just don't want to talk about it can we just have a dinner without talking about wedding" and she was like "oh my gosh you just don't care at all, I feel like I'm not getting anything accomplished" so I was like "ok fine, we can talk about it" but we kinda had to move past that and move, I mean I had to be more sensitive to her and she I guess tried to be more sensitive to how I was feeling so that was a little conflict that we experienced in the last week.

Susan: Afraid

The first thing that comes to mind is when I was little and had a nightmare. And um just I don't know I just remember I woke up and I could, in my dream I had been trying to run away from something and then I'd like I don't know climbed up a tree or something where I was like huddled up and I woke up in this huddled up position and was just really scared and like completely scared of the dark at that point and um just felt really terrified and I just remember um knowing that there's nothing to be afraid of but not being able to get rid of that fear.

Susan: Enjoyed

Um I think any time I'm with my family. So I think of like this past Christmas um just going we went back to Houston and um we were, I was staying with my mom and dad. And um it was the first, usually we have all our Christmases in England, that's where my family's from, and so we just went back to Houston and um it was our first time just to have kind of just my immediate family and my husband and so we went back and we were just in the kitchen cooking dinner and just kind of preparing the Christmas meal and just enjoying that time together of just family and relaxation and fun.

Susan: Conflict

I had a semi- not disagreement with my husband this weekend, but um it was just little like we just hadn't, we went down to Tyler this weekend. So we um, but it was kinda a last minute trip we were going down to see some friends so we went down there and we hadn't really thought out like "k what time do we need to leave, are we gonna be going to church here or there or both um so it was Sunday and we'd gone to church and we were in the car, um, on the way back from church with our friends and then he and then the idea came up of going to see a movie and so we were like, "ok" but neither of us had talked about what we were doing so he just assumed that we weren't gonna go to church here and I assumed that we would do it all and get back in time for the seven o'clock service here. And so just like that just miscommunication um like got me, I mean I guess back with the frustration thing just got me really frustrated and we kinda just had to sit down and be like, ok this isn't like a big deal but at the same time we need to either plan our things out better or you know like or we're gonna have just, I was like "right now I just really don't want to be by you right now" so I don't know.

Virginia: Afraid

Well I lived in china for a couple years and um I think what instantly comes to mind is I mean there's in the middle of where I lived in china in the neighborhood is this huge like roundabout and I had to get from one side to the other of this roundabout just to catch a bus and I was running late and there's, it's a four lane roundabout and there's busses and its in the middle of town so and there's five different entry and exits you know in and out of this roundabout and um and so I ended up you know I saw my opening and I went for it I got about two lanes in and you know realized that I hadn't counted for one of those entry ways and so there was a big bus coming and I was really scared, I mean I was scared that I was I mean I didn't know where to go you know I mean do you run and really try to make it or do you stop and you know it was, and there's always people in the streets but I was really scared cause I didn't know what to do and I was all alone and thinking, that was probably a lot of it was, "if I get hurt, what am I gonna do? And I'm just this you know white girl that's gonna be in the street hurt or you know or something its not gonna, this isn't gonna end well , or you know people are gonna be mad at me and so and then I don't know what to say, I can't talk back to them or understand very much of it" you know I remember being pretty afraid yea! It was just like this moment of terror.

Virginia: Enjoyed

You know my hard days or other times when I just think, where is that moment of bliss that I can just go to in my mind and um that would have to be um I got to travel around some of the islands in Greece and so um I lived in Greece for a little while too and I got to know like the way around and could speak the language and but going to, there's three islands that are like if I had a long weekend or a week or so and a lot of money, a lot of expendable income I would definitely go there, but I remember like, I think what I loved about it was just being able to sit out on the balcony or little veranda type area and just look over the water and you know at a restaurant and always be at the water and just the cool breeze coming off the water and it was so warm and just gorgeous and the food and the people and the people just they're just talking and its expected that you're gonna just sit there for hours, hours on end and I just loved it cause I could just sit, and sit with my husband and talk and talk and talk you know and the conversation would just go from, you know from all kinds of things and I just, I think I miss that too, its not just the beauty but the time and the people just expected us to spend hours sitting in the same chair and they weren't gonna expect anything else of us that's it, and so I um, I miss that, you know I think it's the combination of it being foreign and beautiful and but also just the ease of life and getting away, oh my gosh gorgeous stunning, stunning. But that's, I mean I just loved it, I loved myself, I felt like, it was actually during the same time as like the frustrating time and so I was away and it was such an escape for me too. You know and it was like "finally I can do whatever I want and nobody is going to disagree with me and nobody is gonna tell me what I should be thinking or feeling or doing right now and I'm away I'm myself I love it. I love it"

Virginia: Conflict

I mean actually had that conversation with a roommate once and then a few weeks later she came back to me and was like "oh Virginia! That was awesome we had our first conflict" and I was like "what was it, I didn't even realize we had it" and she was like "about the alarm" and I was like "I didn't, I just thought that you know that would be better for us if we talked about it if that was ok" you know and then she was like "yea I can't imagine having that conversation but the way you did it was just I don't know like I didn't even realize it was conflict till it was later but it was and then I realized and we're gonna be fine!" and I was like "ok, alright yea whatever"

Katya: Afraid

The other night I was walking back home with my boyfriend and it was kindof late at night, it was maybe around one o'clock in the morning and we were walking on this street which is not like a busy street or anything it's like one of those neighborhood streets. We were coming back from a bar and like its not like we were drunk or anything we just had a couple of beers and then I realized that there were three guys following us like and it was uh and they were like not really walking close behind us but like maybe, oh gosh, well it was like ten meters and I cannot think in feet like thirty feet and um and I started like looking behind like I kept on looking back at them I get I was like getting this really bad vibe from them for some reason and like I was telling my boyfriend "Chris you know those guys look weird" and he was like "no they're not gonna do anything you know they're short and they look drunk, they're kids and stuff" and I think those guys also realized that I was like kindof afraid of them and they started making those freaky like scary sounds so I thought it was so lame because it kindof made me even more scared although I did like realize you know like on the one hand I kindof realized that there was nothing to be afraid of but on the other hand I couldn't help thinking that they might do something. It made me think of all those times back in Russia when like I had like for example a woman killed in my elevator like in the apartment complex where I lived and there was like blood all over the place and it was crazy and then like in my apartment building back in Russia we had this nightclub and all the crazy things were happening there all the time like once I think there was like a huge fight you know there was a woman screaming you know pleading for life and stuff so after that you know even though I know that probably nothing is gonna happen to me I still can't help you know feeling really afraid. That's like it like happened a couple of days ago so its pretty recent memories

Katya: Enjoyed

Yes, last summer I, well back in Russia I worked as like a freelance interpreter apart from all the other things that I was doing, but anyways I got invited to interpret during this one week conference slash like training workshop or whatever you would call it, and it was like simultaneous translation so you pretty much speak at the same time with the speaker so you have to listen to the speaker and translate at the same time and you know still kindof know what he's talking about so you can you know do the further translation and it was an a pretty big audience, not that big actually but it was like thirty five forty people, but they were either government employees or non for profit organization like top managers and stuff from a couple of cities in Russia and from my home city as well and many representatives of the regional government, like of perm region so it was a pretty important event, and it was training it was a training on how to be a mediator and I pretty much worked there from nine to seven and then after hours translation as well from Monday through Saturday but what I, at the end when they like ,the last day and everybody was saying thanks you know stuff like that like "ha we really enjoyed the conference" and stuff and stuff so I heard so many good things about like how I worked and the way like I was talking to people and communicating the message and everybody was saying that "its only thanks to you that the training was so successful because if you hadn't done such a good job with translation we wouldn't have been you know so, we wouldn't have got so much from the seminar and stuff" and they got me a box of chocolates and they got me a cake I don't know it was like so super sweet and I really felt that I am capable of doing stuff and that other people appreciate it and I just felt important and I felt that I live for something there is like big purpose and I can help people. So it was like super cool its pretty much one of the nicest memories of the last year that I have.

Katya: Conflict

Again a story with my current boyfriend. I decided to make this sweet surprise for him and so we were supposed to bike down to this coffee trailer and they had a pet zoo there like with all the cute ponies and like rabbits and stuff like that and that's when we just started dating so I thought it would be something really sweet for us to do together you know and going there on the bicycle. And actually on the day of that event I realized that I don't have a second bike and he didn't have a second bicycle either so I borrowed a

bicycle from my roommate without asking him about it and I actually didn't even think that that was such a big deal. I guess its because of my mentality like the Russian mentality you know like everything used to be communal, like you would live in this communal apartment and you would be able to borrow stuff from each other without kindof asking them about it you know. Its not like I was going to break his bike or anything you know I would have brought it back without damage, and so I and I even didn't know that he was home and actually I thought that that bike belonged to somebody else and I knew that that person wouldn't mind at all me borrowing his bike especially since he was away on vacation anyways, but anyways we got that bike and biked all the way down to the coffee trailer and that guy whom the bike belonged to turned out to be at the coffee trailer as well. [laughs] And he sees Chris riding his bike and he totally like he looses it like, and even at first I wasn't even sure what was going on. So he comes up to me and he was like "have you ever seen me borrow your car?" I don't drive, like I don't have a car I don't drive, he was like "I would never borrow your car without asking you" I was like "Aaron, what happened" he's like "you never asked me about the bike to borrow it" and then I realized that its his bike and I was like 'oh my god I'm so sorry" and he was like "well its not a nice thing to do" and I 'm like "I'm sorry I had no idea its your bike" and he was like "well you're supposed to ask people you know if you want to get their stuff, its not like I would mind doing that but you're supposed to ask people " so I don't know I kindof felt really bad about it cause it even didn't occur to me that I was supposed to you know ask people but then when I thought about it later I saw that I should have done it anyways so I don't know like, it wasn't like really a conflict or anything but kindof like well I guess a minor conflict I guess so I said I was sorry and then I asked him "how can I make it up for you" so I ended up getting him a cake so he doesn't, so he is not mad at me anymore, I mean we are like great friends now so it was like a minor thing but still I thought it was kindof funny that even to think about asking him about the bike so I don't know.

Lena Afraid

Well a recent story, um me and my husband are separated now, so you know when stuff started happening when I was seeing that we were going that way, um that's when I was I think that's when it was like hardest for me because, I'm here in a different country, I don't have any family here nobody really, you know his family I was pretty close with them and um they're all in Houston so I'm like here with two kids, and he's left so yea, that was kinda scary, took me a little bit to get over it. The good thing that was happening, it was happening like April of last year and I already had tickets to go back to Russia for summer so that helped me a lot because I you know went home with my family and kinda got over the whole story and came back and now I'm fine so that's a story about being afraid. Because you know I feel like I'm somewhat assimilated here in America now, but you know, having no family and scared you know what's gonna happen, how am I gonna get out of this whole situation, and you know.

Lena: Enjoyed

I went to Paris last summer. My mom decided she said she was like "you just need to get away from everything just go by yourself" I'm like "no I can't do that I don't remember last time I have been by my self with no kids or you know" and then I was like, and I was thinking about it and thinking "hm that does sound good" so I got me a ticket, and you know being an American citizen is good cause you don't need a visa to go anywhere. So I got me a ticket and a college friend of mine lives there now so I stayed with her and I REALLY ENJOYED MYSELF for the full nine days you know. At first it felt kinda strange because you know being used to having children all the time with me it was like something is lacking you know I was carrying a heavy bag and I just left it and it was like "what happened something's not right it doesn't feel right " you know. But then I got over it and I was having fun. I was really enjoying it. So that's a good story.

Lena: Conflict

Margerita had a conflict with another friend of ours. It was funny actually because you know, you know like she thinks she's right the other one thinks that she's right but um that friend actually I met at the mall,

she, they went on a road trip, and they borrowed a DVD player, no it was a GPS, Margeritas, Margerita's husband's actually. And uh, when they brought it back it wasn't working, so and then she didn't say anything when she brought it back she just returned it and didn't mention anything. So Margerita proceeds to turn it on or her husband does or whatever, and it doesn't work. And um they figure out that you know the little power adapter that they gave along with the GPS that they probably switched it with another one and plugged the wrong one in and it burned it. So you know she called her back and she told her, hey this is what happened, and she's like "no why are you accusing me of this, this is not what happened, I never did that" so it was bad because you know, then Margerita felt like she didn't do anything wrong and Oksana started accusing her of accusing her because she didn't think she did anything. So then she ended up paying her money so now we are all good. So I mean that's a conflict story. Then we were all kinda feeling weird, felt weird about this because you know a lot of times we get together, we call it a pajama party, we get together on a Saturday night when the kids are asleep and we just talk and drink tea or whatever. And it's the four of us, Lena, ya-me-myself, Margerita, and Oksana. And we were like, how are we gonna do that now with all this awkwardness you know I mean that's not good. But they got over it so.

Mila: Afraid

I'm afraid of flying, that's my biggest fear in the whole wide world. And every time I fly I'm afraid but the older I get the more afraid of flying I am. And the worst fear, or the worse experience I had with that was every time I fly back from Russia, it's always the hardest you know leaving home. And that on top of fear just its crazy and I remember I was so afraid of flying one night. I usually take Lufthansa flights because St. Petersburg doesn't have a big airport and so you have to catch a flight to, usually to some city in Europe and from then you fly to the states so I usually fly Lufthansa and this one flight that I always take it leaves at five in the morning. I have to be at the airport by three thirty so I pretty much don't go to bed, and I remember I was so afraid of that flight and I was so nervous of leaving home I asked my grandmother who snores like a train to sleep with me so I wouldn't be afraid. I had about, like I went I tried to go to bed early so I had a couple of hours of sleep and my grandmother slept with me for those couple of hours. Out of my mind. So that kindof helped me be a little bit less afraid.

Mila: Enjoyed

I studied abroad in Europe in the Netherlands. And traveling is my passion even though I'm afraid of flying which is a bad combination. But thankfully in Europe you don't have to fly you can take a train. I studying abroad I just had a blast. We were in Maastricht, you probably know that program, and we studied, I studied, one of the classes I studied was history of art, of Dutch art. So we got to visit you know we went to Amsterdam and got to visit all the museums and then from there I traveled all throughout Europe and just traveling and meeting new people I randomly meet people and I enjoy that it just makes me happy.

Mila: Conflict

Ok well here's a good story, this is, it shocked me I've never experienced such a thing. So we had a table in the living room. And she brought it from home you know it was for dinners and for food. And there're four chairs, it was like a table set. And I didn't have any chairs in my room, which I didn't really need. But I took a chair so I could Skype. Like I was sitting on a chair and I put my computer on the bed. Oh and I was eating I was eating oatmeal and Skyping and I heard her come in the door and then she came and knocked on my door and she was like "Mila" and I'm like "what" she's like "have you seen my chair" and I was like "yea I'm sitting on it" she goes "well can I have it back" and I was like "there are three other chairs in the dining room in the living room" and she was like, "yea but that is my chair and it belongs in the living room" so she came into my room and picked up the chair from underneath me. I was Skyping with a person and eating and she took the chair away. And I was speechless. And after that it just started going down hill until I moved out. I had to find another house on craigslist in the middle of the semester and move out of there as fast as I could.

Nastia: Afraid

Back, back, back in the day, I was about eight I would say or seven. So you know my parents, both of them work so they would leave me at home by myself for, like since early age cause you know its not a big deal there in Russia. But they would always you know admonish, do the regular warning thing, that you know don't open the door to strangers. If somebody knocks or rings and wants to come in you ask them who it is and if you don't recognize the answer you tell them to go away my parents will be back soon, my mom just went to the store so she will be back soon. Stuff like that. So I've heard this quite often, this story. So I was at home by myself after school and there was a knock on the door. Or you know the doorbell rang. And you know we have the little peephole in the door, so I looked and I didn't see anybody so I ignored it. And then there was another ring on the door and I looked again, nobody is there I couldn't see anybody. So I said "who's there" nobody was answering so I said again "who is there" nobody was answering, so I started feeling kindof strange but said ok maybe they just, you know, kids doing prank, um pranks so went back and that just started the doorbell would ring and I would go and ask who is there and nobody would answer and I don't know how many times that happened but I was seriously freaking out at a point but I thought like ok this is that story that you know my mom told me about somebody is trying to break into the house and I'm here all by myself and I don't know what to do. Um so I went and like pretend, you know tried to ignore what was happening, went and sat on the balcony, cause we lived on the second floor of the apartment, so I thought "maybe at least people will see me that I'm here on the balcony so if somebody is breaking in maybe that will, you know somehow be safe by being outside with people." but I was too afraid to leave the apartment because I thought ok what if they, you know whoever it is they're probably waiting for me out there in the hallway. But then I keep hearing that doorbell just rings and rings and rings and finally I was so afraid at that point but I went there and I thought ok I'll tell them that my mom will come back soon maybe this will be it so I said "go away my mom will come back soon" and clearly I am crying by the sound of my voice and at that moment I hear "Nastia! Nastia! Its me open the door" so turns out it was my grandma, who came for a surprise visit and somehow I guess she didn't hear me. Like you know she like stood in a place where I couldn't see her and I guess I was asking too quietly "who is it" so she didn't hear me. So she is on the other side of the door freaking out knowing that I should be in the house but I'm not opening the door and I am on the outside of the door freaking out that somebody is trying to break in. so she like went and talked to the neighbors and the neighbors are no she should be here so she is like ready to call the police and the fire department to break into the door and I am ready to call the police saying someone is trying to break into the door and I guess the final bleat out of me "my mom will be home soon" was, carried through the door so she heard it, so it ended up being a happy ending story, but I was definitely terrified at that point.

Nastia: Enjoyed

So I am somewhat of an anglophile, I love like great Brittan for some reason has this great fascination to me, and usually when I fly home I fly through London, you know my layover is in London. And they were you know they were several of those times when I flew through and every time I would think I'm in London and I'm not getting out to see the city. So one time, it was like my third travel maybe to Russia or from Russia yea I was coming from Russia. And the ticket that I booked you know required that you stay through the night. So I had a layover that required to stay a night at the airport and that was pretty miserable, but I thought ok I have time to go see London. And I didn't want to go out at night of course but I thought in the morning I have enough time to, like I was I don't remember which airport, it was either going from Heathrow to Gatwick and then transfer from Gatwick to Heathrow but I spent a night in one airport and my flight was coming out of the other airport. And I had enough time to actually take a train to London and come back and I still would have time to do that and get to the other airport and take a flight. So I did that. Took a train, walked outside for like half an hour and it was fabulous I was in Piccadilly square and I walked a little bit around and it was great and I got back and then I realized that I didn't calculate in my time estimation the time it would take to get from one airport to another and it was really bad traffic jam time. So they have like bus system, like transfer bus system that takes you from one

airport to another and somewhere on that bus I realize that I am missing my flight. So I was very fearful I guess, another one of those times, so I got to the airport and of course I dash to the British airways representative and they said “well you know we’ll see what we can do” and they took me to the ticket counter. And I was just preparing for the worst for them to say “I’m sorry your flight is gone and nothing you can do about it you need to buy another ticket” but they were like “ahhh you know, it seems to have been happening a lot today I guess there is bad traffic jam, how about like would it be ok if you fly out tomorrow” and that was just fabulous I said “yes that would be ok with me” so they issued me a ticket for the next day, I checked my luggage into one of those you know storage things. And then I turned around and I went back right to London. And that was just one of the most enjoyable days I think of my life where I knew that I had all day to spend in London doing whatever I wanted to and I didn’t have to worry about anything and I just, you know I took my time I walked around and I saw the things I wanted to see. I took one of those double deck bus tours. I don’t know if you ever done that but you know you hop on and you hop off at anytime if you want to and you know there is a guide and he tells you all these things but there are all the stops and you can get off and walk around and get another bus. And it was just so great. That day England played I don’t remember who they played but it was during the world cup and England was playing somebody and I went into the pub and I watched a game with a pub full of British people and they all yelled and cheered and England won, which just made the whole town explode, I never seen so much patriotism directed at a sport. So I was just caught up in this great sense of glee and joy and there were flags hanging out of the windows and flags hanging out of cars and people just tooting their horns and people on the streets you know just people poured out in the square and they’re singing God Save the Queen and it was just fabulous you know, it was a beautiful sunny day, I walked around and these football fans everywhere and that’s I actually caught the football fever that day and I actually started following you know football and soccer and uh yea, and uh went to the tower, took my picture with the tower guard, walked across the millennium bridge. And there was a group of renaissance kindof clad people and they were walking around and I guess they have kindof traditional march or something that something I don’t even know but it was just really fun to see them. Got myself crepe from the crepe stand and saw the parliament building. Yea it was just everything that I wanted to do always and didn’t think that I would get to and it happened and then I went back to the airport and slept there and they have showers that you can take there. Yea so they have showers but they don’t have towels, which I discovered after I got out of the shower, which was um, interesting I think I like pulled a piece a of clothing out of my luggage and dried out that way. Oh and somehow I had to explain to my parents why I am arriving in the States a day later because I know that they would be calling and checking on me to make sure that I arrived so I don’t know I don’t remember I told them some kindof story. I definitely didn’t tell them that it was my fault that I missed the flight. I’m not sure they still know. I told my husband that it was my fault, but my parents don’t know.

Nastia: Conflict

Well I mean there are all the little ones you know, little conflicts where I think guys are universally guilty of this trend where they um well I don’t know about single guys but I don’t know does your husband do this? My husband does this. He puts something of his into a place and then he starts looking for it and then he can’t find it and then he starts thinking “well I didn’t move it and its not here so Nastia must have moved it.” So um yea just the other day he was looking for a book of his. Like ok he is in the new testament department and I am philosophy and he is looking for some kind of new testament book that I have no desire at all to look at to read you know I don’t care for that but he is looking on his bookshelves and he is looking and he is looking and was looking for about five minutes you know he scanned all the bookshelves like its not here its not here its not here Nastia I can’t find my book darn it. So I came over and I started looking for him too and I said, “I can’t find it” “I know its not on this bookshelf, I know its not on this bookshelf, I’m going to go check on this bookshelf, no its not here and its not on my desk Nastia what did you do with it?” Like “are you serious? Why would I want to? Why? Why would I want to move this book?” “Well I didn’t move it, its not on my desk its not on this bookshelf its not on this bookshelf, you must have done something with it.” And then I said ok, and I look at his desk and there it is. So that’s kinda a difficult story about a disagreement, and usually you know, I am the one that finds it.

Oksana Afraid

I guess last time and the worst, not the worst but probably one of the worst things is a couple of months ago when I moved in here and actually since as you know I'm originally from Russia and all the creatures and little insects that we have there are really, really tiny they are like this [holds up hands] and so I came in here and my room was kinda like in the basement in the house and before that I usually lived in apartments so the thing that happened was the that this most I don't know disgusting and monstrous things came into my room, that long, maybe I don't know two inches long. I am talking about roaches of course. Scared everything out of me and I mean like almost, I don't know, I was desperate, I was crying and my roommates were thinking that something's really bad going on and there was just like this little one, well he's not little to tell the truth, um so yea I guess that was one of the, it was almost a mental breakdown, that was one of the moments I was really, really scared.

Oksana: Enjoyed

I don't know well, I guess that was the last time it was really like bright and great it was my trip to new Orleans for the thanksgiving. Yea it was a lot of people, I didn't know most of them they were mostly Spanish and Italian and Costa Rican you know Spanish speaking different culture for me really the one I like, really appealing. And so we went to this beautiful city, the weather was great, we had a really nice road trip and everything was fun and I don't know romantic and the city itself was really beautiful so I really enjoyed like just walking around and seeing what's happening in the streets and like I don't know looking at the people and seeing some new people, new places. Yea that was great.

Oksana: Conflict

Well, my friend, like one of my friends, I have two best friends and one of my friends she is actually jealous that I hang out with the other friend and she like, she told me like her complaint about that just lately and I didn't know what to say because I don't really feel that I am to blame, so I am kinda in a state of conflict right now I'm gonna figure out what's gonna happen just in a few hours probably.

Oliya: Afraid

Ok let it be something like that. Um. Well it no it wasn't really frightened then. That's probably one of the weirdest things about me, I love adventures and they don't really frighten me. I mean, later on when I understand what was going on I might think well gosh that was dangerous, but just at the moment I perfectly enjoy it. Like I remember it was the beginning of last week one day on Martin Luther's day there was a basketball game. I went there and, well I was late for the meeting with my friends so I came there myself. Then we got lost during the game so by the end of it I was coming home alone. I usually have no problems with that and I didn't really feel like taking the bus or something. I mean there was a crowd going from the Ferrell center to campus so some of them were taking other turn to those apartments or something and I guess I walk quite fast cause at a certain point I realized that well I'm ahead of the crowd and the crowd is somewhere back there really. So practically all my way through campus I walked alone and that was fine. I mean eleven pm is not that late for me. Um anyway the fright was the next day when I looked through my emails and one of them was from Baylor telling them there was emergency the previous day that shop robbery or something with two armed men who well the police had been searching for them. It was just on Monday and well Baylor asked students try not to leave, actually try not to leave buildings that day. And just when I realized hmmm I was going late, alone hmmm nice. I wasn't really scared. So.

Oliya: Enjoyed

Uh just the day I, well I came here with Lis another girl or Alesya. So um we, well the day we arrived in the US we stayed in a Hotel near Dallas and on the very next day we came here. So first of all waking up

in the morning realizing “hey we made it!” that was awesome. We really loved the room; it was so nice. The beds were just like what you see in the movies. The first thing you think of is you want to jump on them. Just those type of. And then we had a really nice drive to Baylor we had a really nice taxi driver who kept us amused with the conversation. He showed us several places on our way there. Then he, well it took us several minutes to find Poage library because we needed to see an advisor but even with all that we had fun. Katy she was so welcoming when seeing us it was just, we felt that we were expected, it was great. We left our suitcases there and well I guess he is sort of a helper at Katy’s place, brad, he took us to the tower to get our ID’s to living and learning to know where we are supposed to reside this semester. There were so many impressions I mean well a brand new world it looks totally different I mean the architecture, the trees, even the sky you know it’s a bit higher in my region probably because this is more to south than my hometown. Anyway we went to Wal-Mart then, you know a typical American place. Well it was interesting, I mean we have those supermarkets at home but it felt different. And then all those rush across the supermarket because we had only a half an hour and getting settled into our apartment. And then there was a basketball game, so we went to one and it was awesome. We all participated. We all felt like a team, a cheering on team. I remember, you know when cheerleaders sometimes bring pizza, well we got one. My first day in Baylor and I get a free pizza. Well I guess that day was tiring in a way, but it was incredible the brand new world which was so welcoming, so outgoing, so happy to see us, what could be more pleasant?

Oliya: Conflict

For the last several years my parents were really, well they really trust me. So when I say um look, say I’m invited to the party, it may even be during the work day but if I say that I can make it, that I will be in time for my classes, that I will be prepared my parents just say ok if you think you can do it go ahead, and I usually make it and its something that I really appreciate about my parents.

Um well I know they miss me a lot. Recently I got an email from my mom saying how she misses me how much she wants to talk to me. I mean we Skype each other, we Skype each other nearly every day but she keeps missing me and she um well sometimes when I’m out during the evening or something like that well I don’t get to Skype and well we miss some days because of that so she just told me that she misses me that she just wants to have someone to talk to um well she’s on her vacation now for a couple of another weeks. That’s why she especially needs someone to talk to and well I guess that was enough for me that day I got online, I talked to her explained that I do understand her I do see her point and she just at that very time she said that she understand that we have a lot to do here. So she appreciates my effort towards talking to her and I appreciate her willingness probably or just being agreed to let me go for such a long time so far away and being quite all right with that. That’s just sort of our compromise I guess.

Svetlana: Afraid

One time I was very afraid, I was about 14 years old I would say and my friend and I went to visit my grandmother in another city. Well it was actually like a village type of city, so it was a town. And um we were walking down the road there trying to get to church I think. And I have vague memories about all of that, but there was a cow standing right in the middle of the road that we needed to walk on and we both got so scared and um, because the cow was big you know and staring at us and we had no idea what to do because we are city girls, we are not used to you know animals and stuff like that so we were pretty scared but it was kindof a funny scared well in the moment I guess it wasn’t funny its funny now as I think back to it and funny for us when we talk about that story but um so I got scared. And so I ran and I kinda like passed the cow and I ran but my friend got upset at me cause she was still standing you know in the spot that we were in so anyway we had a little bit of a fight afterwards cause she said “you left me by myself” well I didn’t run away run away I just ran away from the cow and I stopped there and waited for her, but it was a, it was a little scary not used to big animals, but I guess that’s a time that I was, that I can think of that I was scared.

Svetlana: Enjoyed

Particularly I love to travel so whenever I get new places and I get to experience different, you know, atmospheres and different climate, well not so much the climate I like warm climates so a particular time when I enjoyed myself was in Moscow, and I always try and spend three days in Moscow when I go to that city and um, I was able to see friends and we went to the red square and we took pictures and it was just a wonderful you know experience to be there and to be there with friends that I knew from Siberia, you know and its such a great city with so much history and you know just the red square itself its so huge and with its open air and all this architecture and it just made me feel good I don't know and I have memories like I, every time I look at the pictures from that day I remember how I really did enjoy myself and my friends as well. So um I guess that was a time when I really enjoyed myself.

Svetlana: Conflict

Um, well just a very recent one just last week I was talking with my family on Skype and I really would like them to come and visit me before I go back to Russia and I am trying to talk them into coming but they really are not very excited about the idea because they have so many responsibilities back home but, I think it's a great opportunity because my parents have the same time off next year so their vacation is at the same month on the same month so I think wow what a great opportunity and they both have their visas so and because I'll be moving back to Russia I feel that "ok this is maybe our last chance to be together here "and you know maybe they can have some good time and rest and you know see a new place so that's my understanding and then their understanding is you know well we can't really leave its expensive and they have a lot of a lot on their plate a lot going on back in Russia so I kindof you know, there was a disagreement about that and so I was trying to push them for it and then my mom went and asked my brother if he would um take care of some of the things that they take care of normally and my dad heard that and then he thought she had already made a decision without him and so he got upset at her and then I got upset at myself and at them and I felt bad I was like "oh they are fighting because I am pushing them" and so I just was crying and I felt bad I was like "forgive me I just wanted to have my way" and they were like "no no" and then they felt bad they were like "no you did it, you want the best for us " and um so we had a little bit of a conflict there and disagreement as well, so but we ended up all feeling good about it in the end so, we all asked for forgiveness and said we loved each other so you know we're fine again.

Tanya: Afraid

I was afraid when my dad got cancer. I mean that was a pretty scary time and then by the time we actually knew that he got cancer it was the last stage and then we lost him like within a month. So that was a terrifying experience. So it was kinda looking at him every day knowing that it might be his last day. So I would say that one.

Tanya: Enjoyed

I went with Sherry, well originally it was a business trip but we just had a few days off and we just went to Disney. And I mean of course you know in Russia we don't have Disney, but like if you ask any Russian person what do you know about America, I guess a few things they would say you know New York, Disney, and I don't know Pizza or something like that but Disney would definitely be there and I got a chance actually to visit it. Even though I was an adult you know I was like 25 or whatever but you know I was like a little child taking pictures with every character you know it was just so cool and Sherry and I went and ate at this one place where you can eat and the little characters just walk around and you can take pictures with them and you know, I don't remember the name of the place, I don't know if it was the castle or the other one. But it was pretty cool. I was so excited. I don't know how many pictures I took but it was cool I really enjoyed it.

Tanya: Conflict

I guess when I was here, and um me and my sister, it wasn't really a fight it was like misunderstanding and she wasn't speaking to me for like I don't know five months so that was pretty frustrating and pretty hard even though I've tried but then one day all the sudden we got you know, it was her birthday and I called her and I was like you know I wanna be done with it and bla bla bla so now we're back to normal, yep, but it was hard because you know I'm here and she's on the other side of the world so I can't see her and it was like she's not gonna pick up the phone she's not gonna answer emails or whatever so whenever you call she gives the phone to mom and bla bla bla so and it had been going on for like as I said five months but then we were back to normal.

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