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AN EXPLORATORY INTERPRETIVE STUDY OF
CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION CURRICULUM

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Carol Sue Widney Dechow, A.B., A.M.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1983

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James K. Duncan Policy and Leadership
To my parents

Loretta Cain Widney
and
Ralph James Widney

who stressed the value of education
and fostered an independent spirit
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The Phenomenological Approach

Communication and understanding, within cultures and between people, rest on intersubjectivity: common ways of interpreting the world; common traditions, a common language which carries with it a whole cultural history. People who share a common language participate in the meaning and significance of that cultural history. Our language is an inherited style of seeing. Our directedness toward the world, our cultural biases or ways of interpreting phenomena are given to us prereflectively through the language in which we live.

People who share a common language naturally share in the meaning of what is said, but equally important, they also share in the meaning of what is not said. There is always more to language than what is spoken. Meaning also permeates the unspoken.

Intersubjectivity is usually implicit and unexamined between people immersed in a common lifeworld. There is seldom a need to reflect upon or explain our cultural biases to people whose traditions and language we share. The process by which we interpret the world most often goes
unnoticed until we are suddenly confronted with the new, the strange, the different, the alien in someone whose lifeworld we have never been a part of.

If understanding becomes our aim when encountering people from other cultures, a search for cultural meaning is required. Cultural meaning is rooted in intersubjectivity. To search for it is to search for the tacit background, awareness, and understanding among the members of the culture we encounter; it is a search for their interpretation of their lived-world. Encountering an alien cultural lifeworld and attempting to understand it requires confronting one's own--also in search of cultural meaning.

Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. (Geertz, 1973, p. 5)

It is on the basis of common cultural meaning or common ways of experiencing that understanding between the members of different cultures is developed. If understanding is an aim of cultures and of people, empirical phenomena which flesh out essential structures of human experience must be examined in light of how they are interpreted and related within the structures of meaning specific to individuals from diverse cultures. Understanding human phenomena has to be attempted at the level of meaning which people produce.

Rationality is precisely measured by the experiences in which it is disclosed. To say that there exists rationality is to say that perspectives blend, perceptions confirm each other, a meaning emerges. But it should not be set in a realm apart, transposed into absolute Spirit, or into a world in the realist sense. The
phenomenological world is not pure being, but the sense which is revealed where the paths of my various experiences intersect and also where my own and other people's intersect and engage each other like gears. It is thus inseparable from subjectivity and intersubjectivity, which find their unity when I either take up my past experiences in those of the present, or other people's in my own. We witness every minute the miracle of related experiences, and yet nobody knows better than we do how this miracle is worked, for we are ourselves this network of relationships. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, pp. xix-xx)

The networks of relationships, the webs of meaning within the lived-worlds of people's experience are the concerns of existential phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty and cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Most certainly neither were writing about curriculum but their thoughts flow with an emerging wave of curriculum reconceived in an era of examined ethnocentrism. The experiences of people from diverse cultures increasingly intersect, intertwining different historical pasts. Our own cultural pluralism surfaces as a latent reality as the melting-pot myth is dispelled. Meaning emerges as the major concern of recent curricularists viewing curriculum as subjective and intersubjective educational experiences.

The Western positivist tradition, with its search for universal laws and its objective stance of methodologies which strip away the contextual meanings that cradle our everyday consciousness, cannot by its basic assumptions be ethically responsive to the multiple realities of an interdependent but diverse world and a pluralistic culture in which the technological orientation does not predominate among all people. Nor can that tradition address the study of the structures of meaning produced by different people, whether
the people be of the same culture or of different cultures, in the world of the street or the world the classroom. In the social sciences and education, alternative research orientations are being called for to supplement the traditional mode of inquiry.

The interpretive research orientation, based primarily on phenomenology, hermeneutics and ethnomethodology, attends to meanings and is concerned with understanding. It seeks to extend intersubjective understanding of the structures of meaning which emerge in the communicative social-cultural lifeworld of participants who share a given spatial/temporal context. It is this research orientation which frames this exploratory study in cross-cultural communication curriculum. Statement of the Problem

As our educational system has come in recent years to confront itself in terms of the need for multicultural education to address our own cultural pluralism, it has recruited, accepted and educated increasing numbers of non-immigrant students in institutions of higher learning. Today that educational system is responsible for educating not only the people of our own multicultural/multilingual society but also those non-immigrant students who choose to be educated here and in turn contribute to the advancement of the world community of sciences and humanities. Both multicultural education and international education profess understanding between the people of different cultural traditions as goals, and rightfully so. The impact of our educational system
within our own culture and throughout the world is and will continue to be such that we can ill afford not to have cross-cultural understanding as one of the aims of the system. It must be an aim that is directed toward our own people as well as those people of other cultures who are educated here if the system is to be ethically responsive to our own pluralistic culture and our culture's participation in an interdependent world.

Understanding between the members of different cultures or members of the same culture who have different ethnic roots is created in interpersonal communication and interaction. Understanding presupposes more than knowledge about the cultural traditions from which diverse people come; it rests on the very real human contact of face-to-face communication between subjects.

The intercultural/cross-cultural communicative process has not been studied in an effort to determine what constitutes understanding between the members of different cultures. Neither has the intercultural/cross-cultural communicative experience been analyzed in an attempt to determine its meaning and significance to those who experience it. Research has not focused on how the people of different cultural traditions come to understand each other. Yet scholars in the field discuss the pressing need for the development of theories and research methodologies (Gudykunst and Wright, 1978; Gudykunst and Nishida, 1979; Asante, Newmark & Blake, 1979; Howell, 1979; Kim, 1980; Gudykunst, 1983; and Blackman, 1983). Specifically they call for theories and
and methodologies that possess the power to explain the intercultural communicative process.

The field of intercultural/cross-cultural communication is a young field, born of a shrinking world. It is a paradigmatic (Gudykunst, 1983, p. 14). There is some ambivalence among those in the field as to whether it is desirable (or possible) to develop theory (or theories) in intercultural communication. Some are of the opinion description of the intercultural communicative process is needed before theorizing. Asante, Newmark and Blake (1979) in a state-of-the-art review of theoretical and methodological findings in the field of intercultural communication state,

Intercultural communication attempts to shed the trappings of ethnocentrism and explain the communicative act in its own terms. What is needed at this juncture is more description of the intercultural communication process, i.e., our scientists need to observe before they theorize. (p. 12)

Howell (1979), Saral (1979), and others state the field is at the descriptive and interpretive level of development and in need of holistic investigative approaches.

Our commitment to analytical procedures has been, to phrase it conservatively, premature. In learning about intercultural communication we have been and are most productive when we process experiences holistically. When we develop insights from either aware or out-of-awareness responses that integrate emotions, volitions, and cognitions, we produce informative descriptions and interpretations of events....For now, subjecting many informed and sensitive minds to varied experiences and rewarding them for subjectivitely observing, describing, and freely interpreting will yield foundation materials on which future structures of substance may be erected. Let us not anticipate the structures. We can better adjust to the requirements of building when the time comes and we discover what needs to be known....If the question to be answered is, "where are we?" that is where we are. (Howell, 1979, pp. 25-26)
Gudykunst (1983) and Blackman (1983), most recently, argue that theorizing is necessary in intercultural communication. Gudykunst maintains that theorizing is necessary if we are to understand the process of communication between people from different cultures and have guidelines for future research efforts. Blackman states that holistic models which can both describe and explain intercultural communication are needed. He argues for grounded theory rooted in the intercultural experience itself which has rarely been studied directly. His position is that theorizing and description can occur simultaneously and that theory connected to description of intercultural communication is capable of explaining how ordinary people function.

Those in the field of intercultural communication in general describe its lack of agreed-upon definitions and conceptual directions. They describe the need for but the lack of research which studies the intercultural communicative process and experience. A consensus is present among many that empiricist-positivist models are reductionistic and inadequate for dealing with the complex nature of the process of intercultural communication and the study of intercultural communication variables; hence, holistic research is needed which will permit multiple explanations of intercultural communication phenomena. In reviewing intercultural communication literature, one is most struck by a complete lack of direction and suggestions for collecting and analyzing data in intercultural communication research. While scholars in
the field call for research which examines the intercultural communication process and experience, they do not discuss how to do it.

At the same time those in the field of intercultural communication discuss the need for research which will explain how the people of different cultures come to understand each other, educators in international education and curricularists addressing cultural pluralism cite positive interaction and understanding between the people of different cultural traditions as their aims. Some foreign language educators, cognizant of the fact research has not demonstrated the validity of their claims that understanding the people of another culture results from the study of their language, call for research which studies the processes underlying communication and the development of understanding.

The field of international education is growing at an unprecedented rate. The Institute of International Education reported 326,299 non-immigrant foreign students in institutions of higher education during the 1981-82 academic year, the latest year for which published statistics are available. Projections indicate that number could increase as to as high as one million, or ten percent of all students on U.S. campuses, in the early 1990's. The report of a two-year research project commissioned by the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) under a contract with the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) on the needs of foreign students from developing nations at U.S. colleges and universities states in its recommendations,
We cannot over-emphasize the strong need for improving human relations between U.S. nationals, faculty included, and foreign students in academic institutions, especially when we recognize that today's foreign students are likely to become tomorrow's leaders in those nations. (Lee, Abd-Ella, Burks, 1981, p. 32)

The report of the American Council on Education's Committee on Foreign Students and International Policy in 1981 discussed the traditional reasons colleges and universities still give for admitting foreign students. Among them were (1) the conviction that the international flow of knowledge is both good in itself and a vital ingredient in advancing scientific scholarly knowledge, (2) pride in the quality of American education and an honest desire to share it with students of other nations, and (3) a belief that American students profit from mingling with students of other cultures. According to The Chronicle of Higher Education (Scully, October 21, 1981, p. 14), the report of the committee listed six considerations that institutions should apply in the development of programs for foreign students. One addressed the "mingling" or interaction issue.

Policy makers should consider ways in which to promote greater integration of foreign students into the entire student body in order to enhance not only their education experiences but those of domestic students as well.

The overview of an issue devoted to cultural pluralism in the educational journal, Theory Into Practice, cited developing understanding and positive interaction between the students of different cultural traditions as part of the core of pluralistic education.
The positions taken are in general accord that the educational system should be responsive to the fact that the United States is culturally diverse. This fact is taken by some of the authors as the ground or warrant for asserting that pluralism should be reflected in school curricula, and by other authors that fact implies that pluralism should be valued by those who work in education, especially teachers. Underpinning both views, however, is the significant value that there has been and probably always will be a multiplicity of American cultures, and the core of pluralistic education embraces recognizing and prizing diversity, developing greater understanding of other cultural patterns, developing greater understanding of all cultures, and developing positive and productive interaction among students. (Pratte, 1981, p. 1)

Foreign language educators around the world have long claimed that studying a foreign language gives students the key to understanding people from another culture. Yet, little research has studied the effect of acquisition of a second language on attitude change and no research has shown attitude change to be an automatic outcome of any type of foreign language instruction. (Robinson, 1978, p. 138)

Before the validity of the claim can be evaluated, courses must be designed and taught which are specifically directed at developing positive attitudes. "And before we can design courses to encourage positive attitudes toward other people, we need to investigate the factors which inhibit indentification or provide areas of conflict" (p. 141).

Needless to say, a commitment to a 'social' outcome, such as cross-cultural understanding, and a 'personal' outcome, such as positive attitude formation, involves a commitment to different standards of success: a different role of evaluation and a different view of 'comparability.' It involves a commitment to accepting and encouraging diversity and a release from the 'numbers game.' ....First, the assumption that any type of language instruction will automatically lead to cross-cultural understanding will need to be replaced by an analysis of the processes underlying the development of culture, understanding, and communication....
Finally, students and teachers will need to express themselves and identify with each other as a prerequisite to understanding people from other cultures. Such affective goals require affective means of learning, which implies replacing the concentration on 'impersonal learning' with personal involvement...from a conceptual and an emotional point of view. Personal relevance in turn indicates the admission of 'subjectivity' into the teaching/learning situation. (pp. 144, 146)

Robinson states that in trying to meet the needs of a multicultural/multilingual society, educational efforts of the seventies emphasized the needs of the nondominant cultural groups within the dominant society. Instructional programs tended to concentrate on the maintenance and development of the home language and the development of the minority student's self-concept through pride in his/her cultural heritage.

Less emphasized in terms of specific programs is the need for the development of cross-cultural understanding on the part of members of the dominant society as well as members of all other ethnic groups. Discrete bilingual and bicultural educational programs involving members of the given ethnic group are not enough to ensure acceptance--or even tolerance--by members of the dominant society. (p. 135)

Basic research which yields insight into the ways people of different cultural traditions come to understand each other is of value in and of its own right. It is of extreme importance if our educational system is to espouse "cross-cultural understanding" as an aim and design curriculum which will prevent it from becoming an unfulfilled scholarly claim. Interpretive studies which analyze the intercultural/cross-cultural communicative process and experience are needed to determine how understanding between the members of different cultures is developed in academic institutions. Without insight into the ways the process and experience are
subjectively interpreted by people of different cultures, we have only our own culturally biased subjective interpretations on which to base curriculum aimed at fostering "cross-cultural" understanding.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory interpretive study of cross-cultural communication curriculum was threefold: (1) to examine the process of communication for indicators of understanding between curriculum participants; (2) to describe the conditions and the nature of the participants' reflections in describing and interpreting their experiences related to the curriculum; and (3) to provide suggestions for curriculum development based on the properties of cross-cultural understanding determined through the analysis of the process of communication and the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants (1 and 2 above).

The study rested on several assumptions. The primary assumption was that analyzing the process of communication for indicators of understanding and analyzing the meaning and significance of the experience for those who participated in it would yield insight into how the participants developed intersubjective understanding. The field of intercultural/cross-cultural communication, at the descriptive and interpretive stage of development, is concerned with explanation and understanding of the process of communication. The purpose of communication is understanding. At the base of the study was the assumption that if research is to help
people understand the intercultural/cross-cultural communicative process, it is necessary to examine intercultural/cross-cultural "understanding" in an attempt to explain its theoretical properties.

The purpose of the cross-cultural communication curriculum was to develop intersubjective understanding between the members of the diverse cultures participating in it who were involved in the process of communicating with each other. Curriculum viewed within the interpretive framework is concerned with first-order descriptions and interpretations of participants experiencing the curriculum in given educational situations in an attempt to uncover the meaning and quality of their experiences. The purpose of interpretive methodologies is to extend intersubjective understanding between participants. Both the curriculum and the research had intersubjective understanding as their aims. It was assumed that if the process of communication was examined in an attempt to analyze it for indicators of understanding and the first-order descriptions and interpretations of the participants who experienced the process were analyzed for common threads of meaning, insight into the theoretical properties of understanding would result.

Understanding within the phenomenological/hermeneutic framework rests on common meaning structures or common ways of experiencing. Thus the curriculum and the research, both aimed at understanding, required participants to bring to a level of explicit expression the ways they interpreted
phenomena in order for their common and diverse ways of interpreting to be seen. The curriculum and the research rested on the participants' ability to articulate the implicit meaning structures shared by the people of their respective and diverse cultures and those they experienced in the common lifeworld of the curriculum they shared with each other. In the phenomenological/hermeneutic tradition, explicit expression rests on reflection. "Reflection on a given preunderstanding brings before me something that otherwise happens behind my back" (Gadamer, 1976, p. 38).

Reflection was thus assumed to be the necessary pre-condition for the development of understanding between the members of the different cultures in the curriculum. It was assumed they would have to explicate their common and diverse ways of interpreting phenomena, rooted in their cultures, in order to come to an understanding of each other. The reflective stance was assumed to be the distancing process which would force them to step back from their experiences and begin to examine the ways in which they interpreted phenomena. By becoming aware of their own cultural ways of interpreting, they could hopefully then put them aside, thereby increasing their possibilities of being able to accept the interpretations of people from different cultures on their cultural terms.

It was also assumed that the intercultural/cross-cultural curricular experiences would be subjectively interpreted in a diversity of ways by the curriculum participants since they were from different historical pasts and cultural traditions.
In that diversity, however, as in all diversity, commonality would exist. Curriculum participants would have to reflect upon, describe and interpret what they experienced in the process of communicating with each other in order for the common threads of the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants to be seen by them and to be analyzed by the teacher/participant observer researcher. Those common structures of meaning and significance across participants who experienced the curriculum could then be cross-validated against the process indicators of understanding determined by a team of researchers to provide insight into the development of understanding. Future cross-cultural communication curriculum directed toward understanding could then be based on the common elements or properties of "understanding" determined through the analysis of the cross-cultural communicative process and experience.

Both the cross-cultural communication curriculum and the study were therefore based on the assumption that the reflexive turn could be accomplished by students and the teacher/participant observer researcher in this educational context. Participants would need to explicate and objectify the communicative lifeworld they shared. Since intersubjective understanding was the aim of the curriculum and the aim of the interpretive mode of inquiry which framed the view of curriculum as the analysis of educational experience focusing on the nature and quality of the participants' experience, evaluation necessitated articulating the conditions under
which the reflective posture was achieved. A research endeavor which focused on articulating how participants came to assume the reflective stance and what the nature of that stance was would presumably provide insight into the ways they developed intersubjective understanding.

Checked against the process indicators of understanding, the participants' reflections would provide insight into how the members of different cultures experienced the process of communicating with each other and came to develop intersubjective understanding in this context. That insight would be useful at Ohio Dominican College, the context of the study, in future cross-cultural curriculum development and cross-cultural programming. Specifically, analysis of the curriculum data collected during the study would be used for further development of the cross-cultural communication curriculum. The innovative and interpretive nature of the study would make it of interest to other colleges similarly committed to international education and involved in cross-cultural curriculum and program development.

The study would contribute to the body of descriptive and interpretive research that is needed in order to develop theories of intercultural/cross-cultural communication. Hopefully, it would encourage others personally committed to cross-cultural understanding to design interpretive studies of the processes underlying the development of understanding between the people of different cultures.
Context of the Study

This formative evaluation study of cross-cultural communication curriculum was conducted at Ohio Dominican College in the fall of 1981. A new course in cross-cultural communication was taught then as part of a curriculum development effort designed to address the multicultural nature of the institution and the college's commitment to international education. During the three years prior to the development of the cross-cultural communication curriculum, international student enrollment ranged between 12.3 and 14.6% of the total student enrollment. International students represented from 26 to 33 different countries each semester of the same time period.

The decision to develop a course in cross-cultural communication was based on many factors. Primary among those was the fact that no formal learning context existed for exploring the daily life communicative experiences of teachers and students immersed in the multicultural milieu of the college in relation to theoretical perspectives of intercultural/cross-cultural communication. Secondly, such a course was imperative for majors in the teaching of English-as-a-second language. A cross-cultural communication course would also be a viable elective for majors in communication, criminal justice, education, international business, political science, psychology, social welfare and sociology.

The cross-cultural communication course was designed and taught by the teacher/participant observer researcher, a member of the Department of Languages, who had taught
English-as-a-second language at ODC for six years prior to the study. A formative evaluation study of the curriculum from an exploratory, interpretive perspective grew out of the researcher's Ph.D. program focusing on curriculum and instruction, cross-cultural communication, interpretative research methodologies, and cultural anthropology.

**Limitations of the Study**

The study was exploratory, both in terms of the subject of the research and the methodologies employed in data collection and analysis. Any exploratory study is inherently limited because the groundwork laid by previous similar types of research is not there.

The chief limitation of the study was that the demands of conducting rigorous participant observation research during the data collection phase while the curriculum was being developed in progress were too great for a single participant observer researcher occupying the dual teacher/researcher role. The patterns existing in the secondary (subjective) data sources of the study (journals, interviews, field notes, and course evaluations) were therefore analyzed ex post facto instead of as they emerged during the data collection phase. This prevented some of the major patterns in the secondary data sources from being checked out with the participants in the rigorous fashion they should have been. While this was a limitation of the study, it was somewhat mitigated by the fact the participant observer researcher as a result entered the analysis of the videotapes of the process of communication
with the outside research team relatively free of the bias of the meaning of the subjective data patterns. Thus, the theory of how cross-cultural understanding developed in this context emerged from the research team's analysis of the process of communication. This theory was then cross-validated against the participants' experiencing of the curriculum which undoubtedly served to strengthen the reliability of the study.

Determining the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants rested on the nature of the reflection vehicles, namely, student journals, interviews, course evaluations, and the researcher's field notes. These comprised the secondary data sources, videotapes of the process of communication being the primary data source. The secondary data sources ended up skewed toward the American student population in the curriculum since written reflections in journal form revealed a North American bias in the study. Expressing written thoughts and feelings about their curricular experiences was a foreign mode of communication for the participants from Latin America, the Middle East and East Asia. It was a requirement of the course which they did not meet with any consistency.

Participant observation research is always context dependent. Findings are not immediately generalizable to other contexts, even similar ones; they may not even be generalizable to the same situational contexts occupied by different participants. Different participants modify and shape situational contexts in different ways. Exploratory
research is never conducted with the intention of being definitive. Exploratory participant observation research by nature is therefore limited. It does provide explanations of phenomena which are true to the data and grounded in the context in which they are meaningful. It provides perspectives from which the phenomena present in other contexts can be viewed and analyzed in the future in attempts to determine the degree of fit or generalizability of previous findings.

**Organization of the Dissertation**

The remainder of this dissertation is divided into six chapters. Chapter II reviews literature dealing with the phenomenological/hermeneutic approach to curriculum research and intercultural communication. Chapter III describes the research design, data collection and analysis. Chapter IV is the research team's analysis of the process of communication for indicators of understanding between curriculum participants. Chapter V draws conclusions and offers suggestions for curriculum development based on the research team's analysis of the process of communication. Chapter VI analyzes the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants and includes curriculum suggestions based on that analysis. Chapter VII draws together the analyses of the process indicators of understanding and the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants; i.e., it summarizes the properties of cross-cultural understanding determined through the research. It discusses their implications for curriculum development and recommends future directions for cross-cultural communication curriculum research.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews literature which discusses the phenomenological/hermeneutic approach to curriculum research and intercultural communication. The research design and the cross-cultural communication curriculum which was the subject of this study were both based on the phenomenological/hermeneutic or interpretive framework.

The Interpretive Research Orientation: An Expanded View of Curriculum

Concomitant with the call for alternative research orientations in the social sciences and education has come as expanded view of curriculum. The dominant empirical-analytic, ends-means paradigm has served to focus curricular research as well as development and evaluation on what is observable, measurable and quantifiable. It has shaped curricularists' view of the world to predetermined behavioral objectives, manipulated learning activities, and anticipated consequences measured against actual outcomes. Not addressed by empirical-analytic inquiry is the meaning and the quality of students and teachers' experiencing of the curriculum or the context in which that meaning is grounded. Methodologies based on the traditional paradigm reflect a "relatively
narrow philosophical/ideological/epistemological view of the world" (Patton, 1975, p. 10) and have severely limited the kinds of questions asked and the types of problems studied.

The paradigmatic framework of the interpretive research orientation, based primarily on phenomenology, hermeneutics and ethnomethodology, expands the view of curriculum by the questions which grow out of its underlying assumptions. It seeks by its questions to extend intersubjective understanding of the meaning structures that emerge in the communicative social-cultural lifeworld of participants sharing a given spatial/temporal context; in the educational case, teachers and students in given classrooms or programs. Its questions attend to meanings, to the interpretations of those participants experiencing the teaching-learning interactions. What classroom experiences mean to students and teachers determine their attitudes and their notions of worthwhileness and ultimately "affect the 'what', 'how', and 'why' of learning and instruction" (Rothe, 1978, p. 25).

Rothe, in discussing existential phenomenology's relevance to evaluation, says that man establishes meaning in each human situation in which he is involved. In the social setting of a classroom, the meanings individuals give to the class change as circumstances in the classroom change. "Such meanings affect a person's understanding of the everyday world of a school classroom and influence the
teaching, learning, knowing and doing that occurs" (p. 25). Descriptive accounts of individual meanings, intentions and potentialities, i.e., descriptions of subjects experiencing their situations, are needed to present a more thorough contextual description of the "horizon" in which education occurs. Rothe states the philosophical grounding of this evaluation approach.

The metaphysical question, "What is it to be a person?" underlies the existential-phenomenological evaluation approach. Existential-phenomenologists attempt to answer the ontological question by searching for universal conceptual features that characterize being. (p. 28)

From Husserl who saw the task of transcendental phenomenology as describing the "lived-world" from the viewpoint of a detached observer to existential phenomenologists who insist that the observer cannot separate himself from the world, the content of consciousness, whatever that content may be, is valid data for investigation. Consciousness is intentional; it is always consciousness of something—natural objects, values, affective states, volitions, thoughts, melodies, fantasies, moods, desires. It is always directed toward an object. It is concretely and inextricably tied to the world of experience. "The modalities of conscious experience are the ways one is in the world" (Stewart and Mickunas, 1974, p. 64).

Phenomenology is concerned with meaning. The reality of the world is not phenomenology's question; rather the meaning of the world as phenomena appearing to consciousness is the focus of attention. Phenomenology's thrust is to
articulate how phenomena which come to experience make sense; it is to analyze the conditions of a particular experience of meaning. The attempts to answer how something is experienced or to describe the conditions which allow the experience to arise. Stewart and Mickunas state that phenomenology's task is that of "describing the essence of phenomena, the explication of various levels of meaning of phenomena, and their interrelationships" (p. 8).

According to Stewart and Mickunas, existential phenomenologists insist that man and the world exist in reciprocal relationship to each other. The context in which man situates himself is defined by the total range of human actions, including thoughts, moods, efforts, emotions, etc. In turn, human action is defined and limited by the world-context. Secondly, being-in-the-world is not a concept that arises only in reflection. Even prior to reflection upon one's awareness of being-in-the-world there is already a prereflective grasp of the basic modalities which are his ways of being-in-the-world. In prereflective experience, the subject and the world are not distinct; they are rather the givens of concrete experience which can only be separated by a process of abstraction. Any reflection--whether theoretical or practical--already assumes man's prereflective experience of the world and his activity in the world. (p. 65)

In addition to these essential notions, three points of agreement between existential phenomenologists are important to understand if one is to grasp the philosophical grounding on which the interpretive mode of evaluation is based. They are the importance of the body, freedom and choice, and intersubjectivity.
The body is man's basic mode of being in the world. The body is as important for an understanding of human reality as is any other dimension of existence. However, the body must be understood in terms of intentionality just as consciousness is. Moreover, the body provides the situational context for conscious experience and is the source of perspectives one has of the world. It is both the source of origin and organ of action in the world.

The interpretation of freedom is one of freedom not only as choice but also as openness to possibilities. Freedom here does not mean arbitrariness but situated freedom, freedom in a context involving not only the present but also the past and the future. Man is aware of his freedom in the choices he makes and the actions he performs, for which he is totally responsible. It is not freedom in a negative sense as "freedom from..." but a positive freedom towards a multiplicity of possibilities. In choosing among possibilities for existence, one chooses himself.

To be bodily is to exist in a world inhabited by other persons. To be with other persons is at the same time to become aware of one's freedom as well as its limitation, in that one must constantly take the other individual into account. For one discovers his own authentic humanity only by recognizing the humanity of others. Authentically existing individuals who recognize each other's humanity constitute a community. (pp. 65-67)

The questions asked, the problems studied, and the methodologies used in the interpretive research orientation grow out of its philosophical grounding. Methodological investigation and analysis within the interpretive mode in which the observer is not detached from but rather immersed in the context being studied rest heavily on bodily or sensory reasoning. Every attempt at describing phenomena that a participant observer makes is an attempt to validate his or her own sensory experiences and how they lead to understanding. "Seeing" in the Greek tradition meant seeing with all the senses. The milieu helps the researcher
come to understand the ways in which all of the senses bring him or her to interpreting and understanding phenomena.

Interpretation of data requires bringing the implicit meaning structures experienced by those present in the social-cultural community of participants to a level of explicit expression and increased reflection. Participant observation, open-ended dialogical in-depth interviewing, and descriptive field work are the data-collecting methodologies employed.

Included in the interpretive framework are the contextualized decisionistic processes which participants, including evaluator(s), engage in. Man's freedom permits choices from among possibilities in particular times and situations and the meaning of behavior must be assessed relative to the time and context of which it is a part. Pilotta and Murphy (1981) state,

All decisionistic thinking takes place in a context, which presuppose a communicative community according to which the decision that is to be made makes a difference.... The contextual thinking in which an individual engages while deliberating a range of possible solutions to a problem actually or simultaneously outlines the reason of any situation, and therefore all behavior must be understood to embody the rationale of the now contextualized decisionistic process, instead of merely being the extension of an a priori logic. Accordingly, human activity gives expression to the human possibility of "use" in a situation, or the basic rationale for existence itself. In short, human action is Reason outlining the implicative structure of any course of action. (p. 17)
Interpretation, therefore, is grasping participants' "definition of the situation" and uncovering the logical categories on which decisions are based. It is "the link between expression and any mode of existence, between human action and decisionistic commitments, behavior and its implications" within the social communicative world in which it takes place.

Within the educational context, "meanings in a classroom can be investigated through practical reasoning underlying education choices" (Rothe, 1978, p. 31). Reasoning is a way of justifying choices and action; it need only be practical, personal and situationally relevant. When participants in educational contexts engage in stating reasons for what they do, they clarify in each other's minds the contextual decisionistic rationale that defines their mutual situation. Participants establish meaning in each human situation in which they are involved through a dialectical shaping/being-shaped relationship with the world and with each other.

Van Manen (1975, 1977) addresses the conception of curriculum within the hermeneutic framework. He defines hermeneutics as the science of interpretation, or as the phenomenology of social understanding. Curriculum is seen as the study of educational experience and as the communicative analysis of curriculum perspectives, orientations, and frameworks. The interpretive approach is concerned with making educational experiences, actions, and the changing
perceptions and preconceptions of teacher, learners, and other participants of the curriculum process visible and understandable in an existential sense.

The interpretive approach to curriculum seeks to analyze and clarify meanings, perceptions, assumptions, prej udgements, and presuppositions. This approach attempts to make experientially meaningful the curriculum as a subjective and interpersonal process. (1977, p. 214)

The task of hermeneutics is to make available interpretive procedures in a phenomenological sense for the purpose of gaining practical access to the variety of curriculum data emanating from the planning, teaching, and evaluative stages of curriculum practices. Van Manen says that at the classroom level, this orientation seeks to enhance communication and existential understanding among teacher and students (1977) and that teaching and learning can be viewed as a dialogical series of sense-making activities on the part of teacher and students (1975). This approach at the more general level of curriculum planning, policy and development seeks to enrich communication and intersubjective understanding among all those involved in the curriculum development process.

Curriculum orientations which tend toward the hermeneutic approach define curriculum as: (1) the analysis of educational experience; (2) curriculum as deliberation, choice making, and consensus seeking; and (3) curriculum as qualitative and aesthetic approaches to development and evaluation. (1977, p. 216)

When curriculum and teaching-learning are described using the communication metaphor, the focus is on an interpretive understanding of both the nature and quality of
educational experience, and the decisionistic rationale which undergirds practical choices and orients actions.

For some subject-matter areas, the communication metaphor (rather than the technological, input-output metaphor) might be more appropriate to describe the events of teaching and learning. In a communicative sense, the very act of achieving a genuine understanding constitutes a teaching-learning act. Coming to an understanding is a sense-making and interpretive enterprise... Practical knowledge, in a communicative sense, is provided by those phenomenological and interpretive bodies of knowledge and literature that help the teacher gain access to the Verstehende reality of human lifeworlds. (1977, p. 220)

Van Manen has developed the concept of teaching-learning as a dialogical series of sense-making activities in the following way:

Teaching as sense making finds its focus (a) in the learner, i.e., in the way the teacher interprets the concrete nature of the transactional learning processes which are themselves sense making activities; (b) in the teaching-learning interactions, i.e., in the way the teacher interprets the meanings embodied in the experiential encounters of the teacher himself and his students; and (c) in the curriculum decision making practices which take place before, during, and after the instructional episodes in the context of centralized or decentralized planning sessions.

Learning as sense making by the learner is situated in the interpretive moments in which the learner transacts with (a) the subject matter or the object of teaching in the form of some text, or some social phenomenon or event; (b) the teacher and the way in which the learner interprets the intentions of the teacher or the aim of the learning process; and (c) the self or ego of the learner, that is, the manner in which the learner sees himself meaningfully transacting with the content, the teacher, and his self. (1975, pp. 78)

Van Manen's notion of teaching-learning as a dialogical series of sense-making activities on the part of teacher and students has important implications for curriculum development and evaluation. Given that the interpretive mode of inquiry
is one of sense-making, it becomes the object of study as well as the research vehicle. If teacher and students together assume a deliberately reflective posture toward the sense-making activities in which they engage before, during and after the teaching-learning interactions, they in essence develop, modify, and evaluate the curriculum at the classroom level as it is in progress. In attempting together to reach an interpretive understanding of the nature, meaning and quality of the educational experience for them, they are instrumental in shaping the experience. In attempting to reach an interpretive understanding of the definitional world of which their choices and actions are a part, they justify and legitimize their choosing and acting. In reaching for intersubjective understanding of the meaning structures they subjectively experience, they create an environment of freedom toward multiple possible ways of viewing reality within their common situation.

While this is certainly not the traditional view of development and evaluation that grows out of the empirical-analytic paradigm, it is a valid view within the interpretive one. It of course rests on several presuppositions. One, if it is to be considered research, it presupposes the teacher in the role of participant observer familiar with interpretive methodologies and committed to the time-consuming task of phenomenological analysis. Two, since that task is in addition to regular teaching duties, it presupposes more than a passing interest in the nature and quality of educational
experiences and the curriculum development/evaluation process. Three, this view of development and evaluation assumes that the reflexive turn can be accomplished in educational contexts where teachers and students do not typically explicate and objectify the lifeworld they experience together.

Though much can likely be gained by increasing the number of participant observers in our schools, the growth in our understanding of what goes on in these environments need not be limited to the information contained in the field notes of professional teacher-watchers. In addition to participant observers it might be wise to foster the growth of observant participators in our schools—teachers, administrators, and perhaps even students, who have the capacity to step back from their own experiences, view them analytically, and talk about them articulately. It is probable that only a few participants will ever be equipped, by either temperament or training, to do this job while continuing to perform their regular duties, but considering the size of our teaching population even one out of every ten thousand or so teachers would be sufficient to comprise a salient group of 'internal critics' of the teaching process. (Jackson, 1968, pp. 175-176)

The interpretive mode of inquiry and the corresponding view of the curriculum development/evaluation process are appropriate in subject matter areas which have as their orientation extending intersubjective understanding in the sense of gaining insight into "the ways man subjectively experiences (perceives, interprets, plans, acts, feels, values, construes) the social world" (Van Manen, 1975, p. 6).

Interpretive science has a research-guiding concept which aims to clarify, authenticate, uncover, or to bring the meaning structures expressed by the forces of the cultural process into full human awareness. A research problem for interpretive science is identified when the need arises for an experientially meaningful, historically original or authentically human understanding of some aspect of an interactive or communicative human cultural system. The inherent
aim is understanding (Verstehen) aspects of the human life world, in the sense of gaining insights into the processes and results (objectivations) of human cultural activity. (p. 7)

The interpretive mode of inquiry and view of curriculum are also appropriate in innovative programs where the role of evaluation is part of the process of curriculum development (Scriven, 1977, p. 127) and where it is imperative to study the innovation through the medium of its performance as it is translated and enacted by teachers and students. (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972, p. 21)

Werner (1978, p. 13), in discussing evaluation as sense-making of school programs, cautions against letting the aims of evaluation be shaped by the methods or means the evaluator has. When technique is applied uncritically, an evaluator's focus in evaluation may be shifted to the technique rather than the purpose to which it may be applied. Consequently, the problem is made to fit the research design rather than the design being tailored to the problem. Guba (1978) states that the naturalistic inquiry paradigm, also referred to as the phenomenological, anthropological and ethnomethodological, is the paradigm of choice when the human phenomena being investigated are necessarily idio-

graphic and "differences are at least as important as similarities to an understanding of what is happening" (p. 5). The interpretive mode of inquiry fit well the purpose of this exploratory formative evaluation study in cross-cultural communication curriculum because it was
the only one able to disclose the meaning structures embedded in the diverse cultural lifeworlds of participants who experienced the common lifeworld of the curriculum.  

The Phenomenological Approach to Intercultural Communication

The application of phenomenology to intercultural communication is discussed by Pilotta (1983). It is this approach to intercultural/cross-cultural communication which provided the theoretical framework for the curriculum which was the subject of this research.

In phenomenology, the world is experienced qualitatively and meaningfully. Human behavior is a meaningful process of living a situation; it is primarily the experience of meaning. "Hence, it is the meaning and the experience that provide the integrative element for the study of humans" (p. 271).

Pilotta discusses the relationship between phenomenology and hermeneutics.

Phenomenology has set out to be a science of phenomena in so far as they are given as meaningful experiences. Hermeneutics has demonstrated that there is an assumed cultural interpretation of the world; phenomenology reveals what that interpretation is. Interpretation is an experience of meaning and phenomenology clarifies how that interpretation is constituted in experience. (p. 272)

Phenomenology is not a system, an arbitrary analysis, a sort of introspection, nor a plain and simple description. "Rather than mere description, phenomenology points to the 'logic' of the phenomena experienced, which are illuminated by the descriptive orientation" (p. 272). It accounts for
subjectivity—"my own experience of the world"—and attempts to show how the assumed experience of subjectivity present in phenomenology involves a set of complex, encompassing conditions such as "myself and other," "subject and other," "subject and object," "here and there," etc.

Since phenomenology does not assume a set of theoretical conditions and selected empirical features but rather seeks to discern them, the guiding question of phenomenological analysis is "how" a particular meaning is experienced and the preconditions for that experience. Only on the basis of such analysis can theoretical principles be generated. Since phenomena are meaningful and those meanings are integrated in terms of an entire matrix, experience is always situated in a particular matrix in which these experienced meanings function. The implications of this hypothesis for a theory of culture are patent (p. 272).

Husserl’s notion of the lifeworld (Lebenswelt), or the recognition that significations are not given in isolation, encourages the combination of phenomenological procedures with the hermeneutical. Together they share the intention of a rigorous and verifiable articulation and elucidation of this matrix of significations. "Hermeneutics provides certain salient insights, and phenomenology supplies the method and the requisite theoretical framework" (p. 273).

Pilotta discusses the phenomenological/hermeneutical analysis of culture.

The principle discovery is that the world is mediated in terms of experienced meanings and that these meanings are constituted lawfully and function within an entire matrix of meanings through which various domains of human interaction with nature, self, and one another are established points indicating the focus of a phenomenological-hermeneutical analysis of culture (p. 273).
In an analysis of culture, cultural phenomena, from natural to supernatural, must be investigated in their own rights in light of the particular culture in which they are meaningful. It is within the cultural matrix in which these phenomena are centered, given import and stress, and have interconnected significations, that they are comprehensible.

The fundamental dimension of cultural life is that of signification and not structure or function. Structures must be examined as to their meaning and meaning implications. Cultural structures may be constant but their significance in different cultures may vary; the structures may vary, yet their significance across various cultures may be the same. Structure thus provides a context for meaning; meaning is comprehensible when the context is understood. Cross-cultural studies must examine the contextual differences.

Differences are understood as differences of the same meaning within different hermeneutics and provide a point of transition between different contexts without the loss of comprehension. This is the point of conjunction between phenomenological analysis of signification aiming to discover the identity and its hermeneutical deployment across various times and cultures. This is called the principle of identity and difference in cross-cultural investigations (p. 277).

Pilotta argues that the investigation of cultural phenomena requires a multileveled analysis of signification so that implications can be drawn concerning the various significative interconnections. The locus of
material phenomena, the psychological, sociological, valuative, aesthetic, religious and even the theoretical, must be investigated with respect to the rest. At the same time the manner of interpretation of the significations by the various peoples or cultural groups under investigation is required.

What value, for example, things may possess for one group and what meaning such values hold for that group may or may not be compatible with the meaning of the same things and values for another group. Hence the question is not what things, values, and so on are, but what do they mean for the particular group and the individuals within the group. The question of adjustments need not be resolved at one level of meaning but must be investigated "vertically": A particular thing may have different value meanings for different groups; or while divergent in terms of religious meaning of events, the meaning of religion for one group may be similar to the meaning of human person for another, whereby convergence of meaning for differing contexts is made possible. (p. 279)

In the application of phenomenology to intercultural communication, Pilotta states that phenomenologically we are interested in delineating the criterion necessary for intercultural communication. Consciousness, in phenomenology, is always consciousness of something. Communication is communication of something. Human experience is prepositional. Phenomenologically, culture is a network of symbolic human relationships to the world. Using the principle of sameness and difference, we can understand how the same meaning can be expressed in different ways by the use of different empirical media such as languages, pictorial representations, writing, or institutions. Each of these media can carry a distinct meaning as a symbolized
perspective of things. Symbols are symbols of something; they symbolize something that is other than itself. Our knowledge of meaning is basically derived from our interaction about something. Culture thus provides the symbolic media through which individuals can be shown a multitude of perspectives of things.

Symbols created by past generations point to the particular relationship that the past generations had to their world. While it is impossible for us to be transported to ancient Greece, we can understand their view because the meaning of their world was preserved symbolically.

Cultural symbols indicate the possibility of the subjects' self-interpretation. Our understanding of the meaning of symbols depends upon our understanding of our own possibility of assuming the same perspective to the world and interpreting ourselves in terms of that perspective. The symbolized meaning can become our own mode of relationship to the world as our own possibility of being human. Therefore, a temple is not an expression of some subjects' relationship to and knowledge about each other, but is symbolic of the particular group's relationship to a Deity. We understand this relationship as expressed through the given cultural symbol because it points to our possibility of taking the same relationship to the Deity and interpret ourselves as Catholic, Protestants, or Buddhists (pp. 280-281).

Culture is a preserver of meanings and cultural products are symbolic expressions of the acquired meaning. Symbols preserve and transmit meaning to future generations. Particular cultures communicate symbolically the perceptual meaning of a particular system of cultural relationships.

Intercultural communication presupposes differentiation between cultures and the possibility of communication presupposes an interactional process, an interacting about something, of which the people who interact must be aware.
This means that intercultural communication is possible in terms of the subject's capacity to take up the same position and perspective to the state of affairs in order to understand the other's self-interpretation in terms of this perspective. Intercultural communication is based on establishing a commonness. We must guard against the subjective interpretation of culture. Culture cannot be a literal imprint of the thoughts or wishes of the subject. The culturally symbolized meaning contains more than the interaction of the subject as a group of subjects. Meaning implies more than the particular intention of the subject. The subject correlates him or herself to it and expresses it in the communicative process. The possibility of viewing the other's world from his or her perspective widens our own horizons and is the evaluative criterion for successful intercultural communication (p. 281).

The possibility of intercultural communication given the many and diverse cultures or "world views" lies in the principle that the multitude of world views are nevertheless views of the same world. This "given world common to all" is the principle which underlies intercultural communication. Phenomenologically, such communication demands that humans living in different cultures can have a common world. Intercultural communication specifically addresses the common or invariant meaning which is the beginning of all communication; it attends to that something in all cultures which is shared before all differences. Intercultural communication rests on establishing a commonness.
CHAPTER III
DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES

This exploratory interpretive study of cross-cultural communication curriculum was conducted for three purposes: (1) to examine the process of communication for indicators of understanding between curriculum participants; (2) to describe the conditions and the nature of the participants' reflections in describing and interpreting their experiences related to the curriculum; and (3) to provide suggestions for curriculum development based on the properties of cross-cultural understanding determined through the analysis of the process of communication and the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants (1 and 2 above).

Population

The curriculum participants in this study consisted of American and international cross-cultural communication (CCC) students, students from an advanced level English-as-a-second-language (ESL) conversation class who met once a week in practicum sessions with the cross-cultural communication students, and the teacher of both. The cross-cultural communication course had seventeen students, nine Americans and eight international students. The eight international students were from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Libya,
the Virgin Islands, Panama, Venezuela, and Japan. The English-as-a-second-language conversation class which met once a week in practicum sessions with the cross-cultural communication students had sixteen students. They were from the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Brazil, the United Arab Emirates, India, and Thailand. The teacher was American.

Research Design

The research was a participant observation study, overtly conducted by the teacher of the curriculum. The design provided for triangulation of multiple researchers and multiple qualitative data sources in an effort to reduce systematic bias (Patton, 1980, p. 332). The following discussion will outline the relationships between the multiple data sources, the multiple researchers, and the curriculum participants.

In addition to the participant observer, the research design included the use of two outside researchers who served on a research team with the primary investigator. The team analyzed the process of communication for indicators of understanding between CCC and ESL curriculum participants through videotapes of classroom interaction. The videotapes were the primary data source in the study.

The secondary data sources in the study consisted of cross-cultural communication student journals, interviews with the CCC students, CCC course evaluations, and the researcher's field notes. They were analyzed by the primary
researcher for common patterns in the ways CCC participants described and interpreted their curricular experiences.

The patterns of the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants were then cross-validated against the properties of understanding determined through the research team's analysis of the process of communication to explain the development of cross-cultural understanding in this educational context. Curriculum suggestions were made which were based on the properties of understanding determined through both the analysis of the process of communication and the meaning and significance of the experience to the participants.

The primary and secondary data sources and the triangulation of multiple researchers and data sources are explained in greater detail in the next three sections of this chapter.

Primary Data Source

The primary data source consisted of videotapes of nine practicum sessions in which the CCC and ESL students met to discuss various cultural aspects. Although more than nine practicum sessions were held, the others were not held in the video studio in order to allow the participants to meet in different and more informal atmospheres. Those sessions were not taped but were described in the researcher's field notes. Of the nine videotapes, the first five were each one-half hour in length. The last four were each one hour long, making a total of six and one-half hours of videotaped interaction which was analyzed. Each of the
nine videotapes represented a different week in the curriculum since the practicum sessions were held once a week. The videotapes were made to allow detailed ex post facto analysis of the process of communication.

The practicum sessions were planned as a part of the curriculum for four major reasons. The first three reasons are directly related to the CCC curriculum and the last one pertains to the ESL curriculum. First, by combining the CCC and ESL classes, a greater variety of cultural perspectives could be brought to some of the discussions in which the CCC students engaged. Second, combining the classes would provide the CCC students with a greater variety of communicative experiences outside of those they had with each other on which they could reflect. Third, lower levels of English proficiency in the ESL students than in the international CCC students would introduce other variables into the communicative process. Since the CCC students were reflecting on their communicative experiences, combining them with the ESL students would involve the CCC students in situations in which communication would be more difficult. Fourth, combining the two classes would provide the ESL conversation class students with an opportunity for meeting and having conversation with American students as well as other international students whose length of time in the U.S. and/or fluency in English was greater than their own.

The videotapes which were the primary data source in the study were independently analyzed by the primary
researcher and two Ph.D. students in the Department of Communication at Ohio State University. This analysis was done after the data collection phase of the study was completed. The process of communication captured on videotape was thus analyzed for indicators of understanding between the American and international CCC students and the international students enrolled in the ESL advanced conversation course.

Secondary Data Sources

The secondary data sources in the study consisted of cross-cultural communication student journals, interviews with the CCC students, the participant observer's field notes, and CCC course evaluations. It was through these sources that the conditions and nature of the CCC participants' reflections on their curricular experiences were analyzed by the primary investigator. This analysis was done after the research team's analysis of the process of communication had been completed.

The daily journal kept by the CCC students was intended to serve as the primary vehicle for encouraging reflection on the curriculum. The journals would also provide the participant observer with insight into the condition and nature of the participants' reflections in describing and interpreting their experiences related to the curriculum. The journals were designed to be the students' record of any aspects of intercultural/cross-cultural communicative experiences they wished to describe, either as observers
or participants, within or outside the college environment. Additionally, students were encouraged to record anything they wished pertaining to the curriculum or their experiencing of it. They were asked to reflect on the assigned readings of the course in relation to their communicative experiences, either past, present, or future by way of conjecture, in their own cultural lifeworlds or the lifeworld they shared with the other participants experiencing the curriculum. "Communicative experiences" were not defined solely by linguistic expression. Settings, nonverbal expressivity, movement, dance, music, art, dress, time, space, groupings of people, mass media, etc. which also had intercultural/cross-cultural dimensions were aspects students were encouraged to attend to and reflect upon. In short, the purpose of the journal was to encourage observation, description, interpretation and reflection on any communicative aspects or experiences between the people of different cultural traditions and the students' own.

The other secondary data sources (open-ended interviews, field notes, and the course evaluation) are discussed in detail in the data collection sections of this chapter.

**Triangulation of Data Sources and Researchers**

The journal data, data from both scheduled and informal open-ended interviews, the researcher's field notes, and the course evaluation were the multiple subjective data sources which were compared and cross-checked against each other by the primary researcher for consistency of
information derived at different times and by different means. These secondary data sources were then cross-validated against the analysis of the videotapes (the primary data source) which were independently analyzed by the two researchers outside the curriculum as well as by the participant researcher to provide triangulation of data sources and investigators.

Methods triangulation, triangulation of data sources, and investigator triangulation are all strategies for reducing systematic bias in the data. In each case the strategy involves checking findings against other sources. Triangulation is a process by which the evaluator can guard against the accusation that a study's findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single data source, or a single investigator's bias. (Patton, 1980, p. 332).

Data Collection

This study was exploratory, not only in terms of examining the intercultural/cross-cultural communicative process and experience, but also in terms of exploring ways to go about doing that. As stated in Chapter I, the researcher found that those in the field of intercultural communication have not previously described methodologies for collecting and analyzing data which might serve to explain the intercultural communicative process and experience. Therefore, the researcher will describe the salient methodological features that were a part of this study. Each of the data sources will be discussed separately below in terms of the collection procedures which were used.

The cross-cultural communication course took place during the fall semester of 1981. All of the data was
collected during that time with the exception of one interview with the CCC students which was conducted at the end of the following semester in the spring of 1982.

Data Collection: Journals

The CCC students' daily journal entries were collected weekly, read, and responded to in writing by the teacher/researcher (t/r). Responding in writing, sometimes very extensively, accomplished two major things. One, it served as a very personalized method of teaching and mode of communication between the t/r and the students. Two, it was extremely important in developing the trust and rapport necessary in participant observation research. Students were of course assured of confidentiality during the curriculum in regard to the content of their individual journal reflections. Assurances of confidentiality, however, are merely words spoken. Trust was developed, particularly in the case of American students who were much more consistent with the journal requirement, through responding on a personal level to the descriptions, interpretations, thoughts, opinions, feelings, and intimacies revealed by the students. Responding to the students' journals was extraordinarily time-consuming.

After the t/r had responded in writing, the journals were xeroxed in entirety. Thus, the students' reflections and the responses by the t/r both became a part of the data. The journals were then returned to the students and the xeroxed copies were filed chronologically by curriculum week.
Data Collection: Interviews

Three scheduled open-ended interviews were conducted with all of the CCC students. Informal (unscheduled) interviewing took place on a regular basis, whenever opportunities presented themselves or when the data or the events taking place in the curriculum called for the necessity to cause such an opportunity to occur. The three scheduled interviews were tape recorded. The tapes were transcribed in entirety. The researcher spent thirty-five hours in conducting the three scheduled interviews. The informal or unscheduled interviewing of course was not taped; important aspects of the conversations which occurred during those interviews were recorded in the researcher's field notes.

The first two of the scheduled open-ended interviews were what Patton (1980) refers to as informal conversational interviews. The third interview utilized the interview guide format. Each of these types are described below and particulars are given pertaining to each interview that was conducted in the study.

The informal conversational interview is the phenomenological approach to interviewing according to Patton. The interviewer wants to maintain maximum flexibility to be able to pursue information in whatever direction appears to be appropriate, depending on the information that is emerging from observing and participating in a specific setting. Interviews are conducted to understand other participants'
reactions to what is happening. Therefore, no predetermined set of interview questions is possible. The data gathered from informal conversational interviews is different for each person interviewed. In addition, each interview builds upon those that occurred before.

Interview questions will change over time, and each interview builds upon the other, expanding information that was picked up previously, moving in new directions and seeking elucidations and elaborations from various participants in their own terms. The phenomenological interviewer must "go with the flow." (p. 199)

Patton sees a major strength of the phenomenological approach to interviewing to be the fact it allows the interviewer/evaluator to be highly responsive to individual differences and situational changes. Questions can be individualized in order to establish in-depth communication with the interviewee and to make use of the situation to increase the concreteness and immediacy of the interview questions and responses.

One of the primary weaknesses of the informal conversational interview is that it requires a greater amount of time to collect systematic information because it may take several conversations with different people before a similar set of questions has been posed to each participant in the program. Another problem comes in analysis. Because different questions generate different responses, the researcher has to spend a great deal of time sifting through responses to find patterns that have emerged at different points in time in different interviews with different people.
The two scheduled informal conversational interviews that were conducted in this research occurred in the sixth and seventh weeks of the curriculum and in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and beginning of the fifteenth weeks of the curriculum. The semester in which the curriculum occurred had fifteen weeks of instruction; final exams took place in the sixteenth week. Each interview in the first set of interviews lasted approximately one-half hour. In the second set, each interview lasted approximately one hour.

The two interviews were conducted to elicit and probe the reactions of the participants to all aspects of the curriculum. Sometimes the researcher asked the participants to clarify or expand upon certain of their own journal reflections. In the case of the students not keeping the journal regularly, she asked what they had been thinking in regard to the curriculum. Patterns of common participant experiencing which were emerging across the various data sources were checked out with the participants during the interviews. Further, as patterns emerged in the interviews themselves, i.e., as participants expressed similar thoughts, reactions, or responses to questions, the researcher attempted to explore these patterns with subsequent interviewees. For example, in the last interview during the curriculum, a few students mentioned their initial expectations for the course; they then elaborated on what they found the course to be instead. The researcher
thus asked the students in subsequent interviews what their expectations for the course had been.

The decision to conduct an interview with the CCC students when they were one semester removed from the cross-cultural communication course was made in the thirteenth week of the curriculum. The researcher had recorded in her field notes three weeks prior to that decision that she felt the study needed to be continued over a longer period of time to see what effects the curriculum might have had on the students, i.e., to see how it might have influenced them in subsequent intercultural/cross-cultural encounters. The researcher's thoughts at that time were related to an informal interview with an American student whom the t/r had perceived to be one of the most honest and open in sharing her thoughts and feelings about the curriculum. The student told the t/r that she was attempting as best she could in her journals to be honest about her feelings, but always with a certain reservation because the teacher, after all, would be reading them. The student said she knew both the teacher and she herself had tried to get beyond the teacher-student relationship but she found it difficult to do.

In the interim between the discussion of honesty with this student and the decision to definitely conduct another interview in the following semester, two other events occurred which clinched the decision. A Japanese student ended a journal entry by stating, "Probably the real learning
from this course will be realized later, after it is over."
An American made a similar comment in a journal entry; he
said that he didn't think the full impact of the course
would be felt until later. Thus, the decision to conduct
an interview a semester later was made. The direction that
interview took is explained below.

The primary purpose of conducting another interview
with the CCC students was twofold: (1) to see what infor­
mation the students might reveal about the curriculum when
they were removed from the active student-teacher relation­
ship; (2) to see what their perceptions were of the effects
the curriculum had had on them when they were removed in
time and distance from it. Since the researcher wished to
obtain this information from each of the interviewees, she
used the interview guide format. Patton (1980) defines the
interview guide format as a list of questions or issues
that are to be explored in the course of the interview. The
guide is to assure that basically the same information is
obtained from the people interviewed.

The interview guide provides topics or subject areas
within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe,
and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate
that particular subject. Thus, the interviewer remains
free to build a conversation within a particular subject
area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish
a conversational style--but with the focus on a particular
subject that has been predetermined...A guide keeps the
interaction focused, but allows individual perspectives
and experiences to emerge. (p. 200-201)
The interview guide format thus is more structured than the informal conversational format which was used in the two scheduled interviews conducted during the curriculum. Like the phenomenological approach to interviewing, however, it is flexible enough to allow the researcher to ask questions which follow-up on the individual responses given by the interviewees.

The researcher began each interview in this third set by asking the students if they could tell her anything about the curriculum now that they were removed from it that they either couldn't or didn't tell her while it was in progress. She sometimes followed up this question by asking them what people (in general) thought about the course. To pursue the second topic area, she asked them to discuss what effects they thought the curriculum had had on them. Depending on the response or hesitation on the students' parts as to how to respond, she asked them if anything had occurred in the semester since the curriculum which had caused them to think about it or reflect back on it. She further sometimes asked them if they felt the curriculum had in any way changed them. If they responded yes, she asked them to elaborate on how and then probed those responses.

Fourteen of the seventeen CCC students were still present on campus when this interview was conducted. All fourteen were interviewed. Each interview lasted approximately one-half hour.
Simultaneous with the decision to interview students in the semester following the curriculum, the researcher decided to have students respond in journal form to specific aspects of the curriculum as an end-of-the-curriculum evaluation (Appendix C). Since the purpose of the study was in part to develop the curriculum with the students while it was in progress by examining their reactions to it, it seemed necessary to end the course with an evaluation that focused on the value of specific aspects of the curriculum which had occurred. Some of these aspects had been planned prior to the curriculum; some had been modified; others grew out of the curriculum participants' reactions to what was taking place during the curriculum.

Since the purpose of the curriculum was to bring about understanding between the members of the different cultures participating in it, it also seemed necessary to ask students to address that purpose through reflections on the practicum sessions and classroom discussions. The last item on the evaluation asked students to reflect on what they thought the purpose of the course had been. This item resulted from the revelation by two students in the last interview of the curriculum that they had been somewhat uncertain as to the course's purpose until near its end. Since both students were able to articulate in the interview what they thought the purpose was, the researcher decided to add the item regarding the purpose of the course
to the evaluation in an effort to determine if other participants were not clear about the purpose of the curriculum. This item would also serve to force students to articulate the purpose of the curriculum in their own words based on their experiencing of it.

Because international students in this study did not consistently fulfill the journal requirement, the t/r felt it was necessary to obtain in journal form the perceptions of all of the curriculum participants in regard to these specific aspects. Since the course had no examinations and therefore, no final exam, students were required to submit the final journal entry during the scheduled final exam time.

**Data Collection: The Researcher's Field Notes**

The researcher's field notes contain observations, descriptions, and interpretations pertaining to all aspects of the curriculum. They contain research methodology decisions and curriculum decisions. They note broad patterns emerging in the secondary data sources. They reveal the researcher's own pedagogical predispositions and her thoughts and feelings about the curriculum as a participant in it. The methods used in keeping the field notes evolved from the logistical demands of occupying the dual role of teacher/researcher.

The researcher began the study intending to organize the field notes according to the method outlined by Schatzman and Strauss (1973, pp. 99-106). Briefly, their
method entails categorizing notes into observational notes (ON), theoretical notes (TN), and methodological notes (MN) on a daily basis. Following this procedure helps the researcher separate description from interpretation which is the basis of rigor but at the same time reveals the interdependence of the two as the researcher works back-and-forth between them to generate insight that provides new direction for future observations. The TN's provide a constructive overlay of the meaning of the notes as he or she examines how the observations confirm or modify the theoretical perspectives.

While the researcher does not doubt that Schatzman and Strauss' method probably works, it was impossible to use because of the demands of time of being both the teacher and the researcher and attempting to deal with substantial data overload. The researcher began by typing her field notes using their method. If she had continued to use their method, she would not have had time to read and respond to the students' journals, to develop and modify the curriculum in progress, or to interview the students. She took recourse to a hand-held tape recorder and recorded her field notes on the way home from the college each afternoon and on the way to the college each morning, a half-hour trip each way. Her notes on the way home were primarily recounts of the important things related to the curriculum which had happened during the day. They were still very fresh in her memory, particularly those which
pertained to the classroom discussions and practicum sessions since both occurred in the afternoon just prior to time the t/r went home. Her notes on the way to work were usually further reflections or ideas that had come to her since her last trip home and methodological considerations and decisions for the curriculum and the research.

Her student worker transcribed her field notes each day. This would have allowed her to indicate the ON's, TN's and MN's if she had had time to work back and forth between them. She did not. Consequently, at the close of data collection, the field notes remained an unorganized pouring forth of observations and thoughts chronologically organized in a three ring notebook. This participant observer was less than the model one described by Schatzman and Strauss. In any exploratory study, the limitations of the study do not become a reality until the researcher begins, or perhaps ends, the research.

It should be mentioned here that all of the CCC classroom discussions were audiotaped. The decision to tape them was made prior to the study. The researcher thought the tapes could serve as a record of the CCC participants' interaction with each other and could provide clues as to how the t/r directed and influenced participants. Listening to them and comparing them to the researcher's field notes recounting the important features of the interaction could serve as a validational check.
These tapes, while a part of the data that was preserved, were not analyzed. In the analysis of the secondary data, some were used as validational checks on the researcher's field notes and to supplement the content of important discussions between the CCC participants which were recounted in the field notes. It will be obvious to the reader in Chapter VI when and how a few of these tapes were utilized.

In any participant observation study, the design, the methods and procedures used in collecting and interpreting data, and the theoretical perspectives of the researcher are in a simultaneous state of development throughout the course of the research. In describing the naturalistic inquiry paradigm, Guba states,

Believing in unfolding multiple realities, in interactions with respondents that will change both them and himself over time, and in grounded theory, [the researcher] will insist on an emergent (unfolding, rolling, cascading) design, which is never complete until the inquiry is arbitrarily terminated as time, resources, or other logistical considerations may dictate. (1978, p. 8)

The design and methods for data collection in this study drifted in accordance with the patterns emerging from the data. While attempting to identify and articulate the processes underlying the development of understanding between diverse cultural participants, the researcher was simultaneously exploring methods for conducting research aimed at surfacing those processes.
Data Collection: Videotapes

The video studio was the classroom setting for the nine practicum sessions which were videotaped. Since the research was exploratory in terms of methodologies for collecting and analyzing intercultural/cross-cultural communication data, the following discussion will highlight methodological considerations for teachers and future researchers. These considerations are based on the manner in which the videotaping was done in this study and the related findings and problems of the research team in analyzing the process of communication for indicators of understanding through videotape.

First of all, time is required for participants to become accustomed to being videotaped. It is therefore important for interaction to occur repeatedly in the same situational context so that the reactive effects to being videotaped do not distort the naturalness of the communication. Participants did clearly become accustomed to the setting and to the videotaping as evidenced by decreasing levels of looking at the camera as the sessions progressed.

In the first practicum session students were arranged in dyads. The tape had only background noise; individual conversations could not be heard. The only way to have captured individual conversations would have been to have passed a hand-held mike from one pair to another. Since it was the first time the CCC and ESL participants had met with
each other and their first time in the studio, the researcher did not want to call attention to the videotaping by doing that.

In analyzing the first tape the research team turned off the sound completely to code for nonverbal indicators of understanding between participants. The most significant finding in regard to the nonverbal aspects of the videotaped communication in Session 1 was that as partners' gestures, shifts in postures, and shifts in proxemic distances became increasingly synchronized, they were seen to interrupt each other more frequently. Interruption in every session thereafter was described as a positive indicator of understanding and/or attempt to bring it about. How nonverbal attunement is achieved between the members of different cultures and what the relationships are between nonverbal attunement and interruption in the development of understanding could be fruitful areas for future research endeavors.

Researchers interested in examining the relationships between nonverbal attunement and interruption in the development of understanding might consider a three part analysis. First, the interaction should be descriptively coded without the sound to establish nonverbal indicators of attunement, interruption, and understanding. The interaction would then need to be coded with the verbal portion audible to see how the categories of nonverbal indicators were refined by the analysis of the verbal and nonverbal functioning together. In this first videotape in which the research team focused
on the nonverbal indicators of understanding, cross-checking verbal indicators against the nonverbal was not possible because a verbal data source did not exist. Therefore, assessing understanding was a lot less than complete. Researchers trying to examine the relationships between nonverbal attunement and interruption in the development of understanding would need to cross-check the verbal indicators against the nonverbal in order to see what relationships existed.

Lastly, without the participants' assessment themselves as to how they knew when it was appropriate, desirable and/or necessary to interrupt, another potentially powerful descriptive data source and validational check would be missing. The third part of the analysis would therefore seek this information from the interactants themselves as they viewed the videotapes. Analyzing the nonverbal, checking against the verbal, and finally checking against the participants' own analysis would allow researchers to develop theoretical perspectives which would help to explain the relationships between nonverbal attunement and interruption in the development of intercultural/cross-cultural understanding.

Another videotaping problem existed in this study which resulted in a "performance" factor in some of the initial small group conversations. The teacher moved from one group to another with a hand-held microphone and a chair on wheels. The camera was situated in the middle of the room and the
small groups were situated in a large circle around the studio; the camera thus rotated and followed the teacher. While the teacher was moving, the camera either remained focused on the group she had left or proceeded her to the next group. This allowed the researchers to see that some of the groups engaged in performing while she was present. Further, her entry into a group often disrupted the flow of the conversation in progress. Both of these problems could have been alleviated if each group had had a boom mike overhead which could have been shut on and off by the cameraperson. Thus, the teacher would not have needed to join the groups for them to be heard; they could have been filmed with the teacher and/or without her. While the people in the group would have been able to tell they were being filmed by the direction of the camera, they probably would not have been as conscious of the fact. In later sessions, as the participants became accustomed to the teacher joining their groups, they sometimes didn't even acknowledge her arrival or presence, especially when they were actively engaged in discussion. The performance problem and the disruption problem, like the participants' initial awareness of the camera, were overcome with time.

Researchers were somewhat hampered in the last two panel discussion sessions by the cameraperson's lack of panning of the audience. The quality of videotaping is always dependent on the skill of the person doing the filming. It is also dependent on the teacher or the
researcher's ability to make clear to the cameraperson what needs to be done in filming in order to later facilitate the analysis of the tapes. Between the first two panel discussions and the last two, problems entered the filming process which made the research team's assessment of understanding on the part of the audience more difficult. The problem rested in the cameraperson not shifting the camera to the audience members as frequently as in the first two panel discussions. Thus, as answers were given to the questions the audience had asked, the researchers were often denied any visual indication as to whether the response had been understood. This placed the burden for assessing understanding on whether or not the person responded with another question. While researchers had found that repeated questions asked in similar veins or by the same person indicated lack of understanding, they would have liked more visual confirmation that understanding had indeed occurred. This problem could have of course been eliminated with split screen videotaping. That, however, doubles the cost. It is an expense that researchers might want to include in project budgeting.

It should be remembered that videotapes are not all encompassing. It is important to convey to and to remind the camerapeople that it is necessary for them to pay close attention to the interaction (i.e., not fall asleep on the job or be preoccupied in thinking about other things).
Paying close attention to the interaction means capturing the dynamics—letting the viewer see the responses of the participants to the discussion, the questions and answers, and to each other.

Data Analysis: Introduction

In participant observation research, the procedures for analyzing data are dependent upon both the nature of the data and the style of the researcher. In addition, the point at which data collection ends and analysis begins cannot be precisely determined. Both Schatzman and Strauss (1973) and Patton (1980) discuss the characteristics of qualitative analysis.

Qualitative analysts do not often enjoy the operational advantages of their quantitative cousins in being able to predict their own analytic processes; consequently, they cannot refine and order their raw data by operations built initially into the design of the research. Qualitative data are exceedingly complex, and not readily convertible into standard measurable units of objects seen and heard; they vary in level of abstraction, in frequency of occurrence, in relevance to central questions in the research....Little wonder, then, that field researchers cannot predesign their analytic operations with exactness; probably most do not even try. (Schatzman and Strauss, p. 108)

Schatzman and Strauss further state that just as the data are variable and complex, so are the analysts and their analytic styles. They state that theoretically or arbitrarily, analysis can begin when the first data are collected, or after much or all of the data are obtained. When analysis begins represents a work strategy, a matter of convenience in pacing or sequencing the researcher's
total work. Of course, Schtzman and Strauss' model researcher referred to earlier in this chapter, starts analyzing very early in the research process. Having done this he "will have saved himself from an otherwise crushing task of sorting out a mountain of data without benefit of 'preliminary' analysis" (p. 110).

Qualitative evaluation researcher Michael Quinn Patton also discusses the overlapping nature of qualitative data collection and data analysis.

There is typically not a precise point at which data collection ends and analysis begins. In the course of gathering data ideas about the analysis will occur to the people collecting the data. Those ideas constitute the beginning of analysis; they are part of the record of field notes. Whether one is doing in-depth interviewing or observations it is important to keep track of these analytical insights that occur during data collection. This overlapping of data collection and analysis improves both the quality of the data collected and the quality of the analysis so long as the evaluator is careful not to allow these initial interpretations to bias additional data collection. (p. 297)

Patton, like Schatzman and Strauss, also addresses what the qualitative researcher is faced with when it is time for the final analysis of data to begin.

The data generated by qualitative methods are voluminous. I have found no way of preparing students for the sheer massive volume of information with which they will find themselves confronted when data collection has ended. Sitting down to make sense out of pages of interviews and whole files of field notes can be overwhelming. Dealing with all those pieces of paper seems like an impossible task. (p. 297)

Having completed the analysis of data in this study, the researcher would like to comment briefly on these authors' statements as a prelude to the discussion of the analysis of data procedures which were used. Until analysis actually
began in this research, the researcher did not know how she was going to analyze the data. Written materials on qualitative research methodologies did not tell the researcher what to do with her data. What do do with it had to come from the data itself just as the categories which the analysis produced came from the data itself. How to analyze the data only came to the researcher through complete immersion in it and swimming about it. It was not until the researcher was completely immersed in all of the data that what to ultimately do with it became apparent.

Analysis began as the data accumulated. Undoubtedly different researchers analyze their data in different degrees of depth during data collection. While this researcher did not analyze in depth during data collection, she did engage in preliminary analysis; how is described in the analysis of the secondary data sources section. The fact she engaged in preliminary analysis was noted in her field notes as Patton says is necessary; it was also noted in her interviews with participants which were then transcribed, and in her responses to the students' journals. If Patton had been on this researcher's committee, he most certainly would not have needed to be concerned that preliminary interpretations of the data biased additional data collection. This researcher had such data overload that her preliminary analysis consisted only of noting broad patterns emerging in the data and attempting to elicit the participants' reactions to those. She did not have time to play with the patterns, examine the
relationships between them, or develop preliminary interpretations of their possible meanings and significance.

Finally to the authors' comments about the sheer massive volume of data, a veritable mountain of data, the researcher would respond in total agreement with Patton that it is not possible to ever adequately prepare anyone to deal with all of that. Nor is it possible for anyone who has not done similar qualitative research to ever appreciate what dealing with that involves.

The remainder of this chapter will describe how the primary and secondary data in this study were analyzed after the completion of data collection. In the section outlining the analysis of the secondary data, references will also be made to the preliminary analysis engaged in by the researcher.

Data Analysis: An Overview

The analysis of the videotapes (the primary data source) and the development of curriculum suggestions based on that analysis were carried out in four phases. In the first analysis phase the primary investigator descriptively coded the videotapes to establish preliminary categories of understanding. In the second analysis phase the two outside researchers independently analyzed the videotapes by establishing their own categories of indicators of understanding. In the third phase of analysis the primary researcher combined the independent analyses of the three members of the research team (Chapter IV). In the fourth
phase, that of curriculum development, the primary investigator drew conclusions based on the combined analysis and offered curriculum suggestions based on it (Chapter V).

The analysis of the secondary data was conducted solely by the primary researcher. That analysis and the curriculum suggestions which evolved from it were carried out in three stages. The first analysis phase consisted of analyzing all of the secondary data sources (journals, interviews, course evaluations and field notes) for common subjective patterns which were significant to formative evaluation of the curriculum. Curriculum suggestions were offered which were based on those patterns. The second phase consisted of analyzing the secondary data sources pertaining to the last four videotaped practicum sessions on religion. In this phase of the analysis the participants' interpretations of the sessions were cross-validated against the research team's assessment of the same sessions in order to articulate the processes underlying the development of cross-cultural understanding. Both of these analysis phases are reported in Chapter VI. The third phase, one of curriculum development, drew together the analyses of the primary and secondary data sources to delineate the properties of cross-cultural understanding determined through the research and to discuss their implications for curriculum development (Chapter VII). The sections which complete this chapter will focus on the analysis phases and described how the data was analyzed.
Analysis of Primary Data

The analysis of the videotapes began six months after the curriculum and major data collection phase of the study had ended. The last phase of data collection (the interview which was conducted when the curriculum participants were one semester removed from the curriculum) occurred six weeks prior to the beginning of the analysis of the primary data. The videotapes of the practicum sessions were analyzed first in an attempt to insure reliability and validity in the study since they were the only source which was to be analyzed by researchers who had not participated in the curriculum.

The purpose of using outside researchers was to provide triangulation of investigators in order to reduce systematic bias in the study. The analysis of the videotapes provided the means to see if patterns existed between the ways curriculum participants perceived understanding had developed and the indicators researchers outside the situation used to determine the same. A time lapse of six months had occurred between the primary researcher's immersion in the data as a participant and the beginning of the final analysis. Analyzing the videotapes before reexamining any of the secondary data sources would tend to reduce the possibility of the primary researcher's coding being skewed toward the participants' subjective descriptions of the practicum sessions which were contained in the secondary data sources.
Since the primary researcher had been both the participant observer and the teacher, carefully thought out instructions to the outside researchers that would least bias the study had to be developed. That could only adequately be done after the researcher had worked through the coding process herself. The researcher's preliminary coding and analysis of the tapes, followed by the independent establishment of categories and descriptive coding by the outside researchers, would lead to refinement of the categories describing the development of understanding. Those descriptions would then provide the basis for crossvalidating the patterns emerging from the secondary data sources in the study.

Phase One: The Preliminary Establishment of Videotape Coding Categories by the Primary Researcher

In the preliminary establishment of descriptive coding categories, each videotape was first viewed in its entirety by the primary researcher who made notes as to specific significant behaviors and incidents observed in the interaction taking place. "Significant" could be defined as those phenomena which seemed to predominate or commonly occur and those which stood out as unique in each session. While nonverbal, linguistic, paralinguistic, semantic and contextual indicators pointing to the perceived development of understanding or lack of understanding between participants were kept in mind as the general framework for viewing each session, they were not the sole basis for the
development of categories. The task of each session as well as the mode of discourse used were also considered. General descriptive terms relating to the overall atmosphere of the sessions or the tone of groups within sessions were also noted when they seemed significantly different from or similar to previously viewed sessions or groups. Descriptive terms were also recorded for significant changes in atmosphere within sessions from one mode of discourse to another (eg., from panel discussion to whole group or paired discussion).

From the researcher's recall and notes of the first viewing, preliminary coding categories for each videotape were established. In some instances, these preliminary categories were subdivided so as to produce a more complete description of specific phenomena thought to be occurring within the general framework of the category. For example, "problems in communication" was one of the categories established for a videotape in which many examples of different types of problems were noted. The category was divided into three parts: nature of the problem; how it was solved (if it was); and how the researcher determined if it had been solved.

After the establishment of preliminary categories for each specific tape, the researcher immediately viewed that tape again coding it accordingly. In two of nine cases (Tapes 1 and 3) these preliminary categories did not change during the actual coding process. In the other cases the
researcher either added, deleted, combined or changed categories based on phenomena which became more apparent in the actual coding. When significant changes were made in the categories during the coding process, the researcher then coded the tapes again based on the changes. Thus, refinement of the primary researcher's categories occurred in the play between attempting to describe phenomena using the preliminary categories developed and altering those categories on the basis of greater awareness of the phenomena which resulted during the actual attempts to describe them.

In an effort to insure validity and reliability in the videotape coding process, the categories established by the researcher were not intended to be definitive categories to then be coded by the outside observers. Outside coders had to develop their own categories for each tape based on their determination of significant interaction (Appendix D, Instructions to Videotape Coders). Having the outside researchers independently determine their own categories was built into the study to reduce researcher bias and to allow the refinement of the categories to come from the outside researchers so that the process of communication could be thickly as well as reliably described.

Phase Two: The Establishment of Videotape Coding Categories by the Research Team

The two outside researchers were mailed instructions prior to their first meeting with the primary researcher
(Appendix D). As stated in the last paragraph of their instructions, the session began with clarification questions from the two outside researchers. The primary researcher made notes of their questions and her responses immediately following the clarification period.

The outside researchers asked the researcher if she was attempting to look at behavioral indicators of understanding as they saw them on videotape which she would then check against the subjective descriptions of the participants. She responded affirmatively and told them about the other data sources in the study. She said that those sources provided the participants' subjective descriptions. They wanted to know about the level of English fluency of the ESL students they would be viewing; would the process of communication not be more difficult to understand because of the different levels of fluency of the curriculum participants. The researcher responded, yes, that the videotapes revealed problems in communication which were related to lack of fluency and how participants attempted to work out those problems. One researcher wanted to know if they were supposed to code indicators of not understanding in addition to understanding or were understanding categories more important. The other outside researcher and the primary researcher responded, "Both." The primary researcher added that what participants did with nonunderstanding was important. Finally, they asked how they were to develop their own categories. The primary researcher responded
that they had to figure it out themselves--no one could tell them. She told them to look for phenomena that struck them as important.

With that, the descriptive coding by the outside researchers began. In all of the coding sessions, all three researchers were present. Each tape was viewed twice with a break in between for the researchers. The purpose of the first viewing was to provide a holistic view of what was present in the interaction and to note its significant features. During the second viewing, the researchers did their actual coding. Each researcher had a separate monitor and table at which to work. Each had the ability to stop, back up, and play a certain segment again as the tape progressed. The other researchers waited and obviously also viewed these segments again. After the outside researchers had done their coding, they immediately organized their categories of indicators, sometimes in lists and often in narrative form. These were then xeroxed so the outside researchers could retain a copy of their own analysis. The originals were given to the primary researcher. In the first videotapes which were each one-half hour in length, the researchers organized their analyses immediately following the second viewing. As the research team got into coding the practicum sessions on religion which were each one hour long, they sometimes had to organize their analyses at home the same night because the four or five hours spent in
coding the tape was all their minds could take without a significant rest.

During the time the outside researchers were involved in viewing and coding the tapes, the primary researcher was doing the same. She, of course, had already viewed each tape at least twice and sometimes three times, before the outside researchers entered the study. She also, of course, had already coded the tapes. She used the additional two times of viewing them with the outside researchers to fill out her original categories with more details, to fill in transcription of significant content, and to sometimes develop new categories based on phenomena that appeared to have significance which she had not described before. Further, since she was receiving the analyses of the outside researchers every day, she began to code some of the categories of phenomena they had described in previous tapes which were present in the current tape they were viewing. In other words, she began to pick up on the outside researchers' categorization schemes and coded some of their categories herself. This allowed her to later check for consistency of description across specific categories which she and an outside researcher had both coded. This, of course, would not have been good if she had not previously coded the tapes before the outside researchers became involved, because then she would have not have had her own completely independent analysis against which to cross-validate the categories of the outside researchers.
During the actual viewing of the tapes, the researchers tried to keep discussion of them to a minimum in order not to influence each other's coding. The discussion they did engage in was most often of the information seeking or clarification variety. For example, questions like, "What did he/she say?" or questions about the cultural or personal background of the participants were fairly common.

After the analysis of the fourth tape had been completed, the primary researcher began to share with the outside researchers some of the differences in the ways she had coded phenomena in the first tapes and the ways they had coded them. From that point on, the researchers began to briefly discuss their interpretations of the interaction after they had each independently coded the tapes and given their analyses to the primary researcher. These mini-debriefing sessions were helpful in that they allowed the researchers to articulate to each other the ways they had interpreted phenomena. The sessions were mini-usually conducted over coffee before beginning the day and they were always in retrospect to the sessions that had already been completed. In discussing these sessions after all of the videotapes had been analyzed, the researchers did not feel that these sessions caused them to influence each other. To the contrary, the outside researchers both stated that they felt they were well-developed in their own coding procedures and schemes by that point in time. They further stated that the discussions revealed to them that the
researchers were sufficiently independent-minded to defend their interpretations and that bringing them into verbal contact with each other was good in the development of alternative explanations of the theoretical properties of understanding.

Just prior to beginning the analysis of the last and ninth videotape, over coffee, they discussed the eighth videotape. Out of that discussion evolved a theory of cross-cultural understanding which was based on their analyses of the eight previous tapes. That theory is related at the end of Chapter IV, Session 8. It is that theory which the analysis of the secondary data sources was cross-validated against to yield a theory of the development of understanding between the participants in this cross-cultural communication curriculum.

This was an exploratory study in all respects. The researcher would, therefore, be remiss in not conveying to persons who contemplate analyzing videotapes for the development of cross-cultural understanding the time requirements involved in doing so. The two outside researchers spent and were paid for a total of seventy-five hours each analyzing the six and one-half hours of videotaped interaction. The primary researcher had spent approximately one hundred hours in her own preliminary analysis of the videotapes prior to the time the outside researchers became involved. She was also engaged in the analysis during all the hours the outside researchers spent
viewing and coding the tapes. Between each coding session that the outside researchers were involved in, the primary researcher was examining and recording linkages between the indicators and categories in their analyses and her own. The independent analyses of the three researchers filled two and one-half three ring standard size notebooks. Analyzing videotapes is an excruciatingly difficult and time-consuming task of which intercultural/cross-cultural communication researchers should be aware.

Phase Three: Combining the Analyses of the Research Team Members

The analysis of primary data chapter in this dissertation (Chapter IV) is a combination of the independent analyses of the members of the research team. The following discussion will relate how the primary investigator combined their independent analyses.

The researchers' analyses of each videotape were examined for linkages between both indicators and categories of understanding and nonunderstanding. This was necessary in order to see whether the researchers had categorized the same or similar indicators in similar or different categories. It was also necessary to determine the relationships between the indicators and the category labels which the researchers assigned to them. For example, some of the same indicators categorized by one researcher as "indicators or understanding" were categorized by another as "attempts to bring about understanding." The events one researcher described as "breakdowns in communication,"
another labelled as "attempts to facilitate understanding," because the researchers were focusing differently on the same events. Some indicators of understanding, such as laughter in Tape 1, for example, were also categorized as indicators of not understanding and discomfort. Thus, the researcher had to devise a scheme for organizing the indicators of understanding and nonunderstanding. She did this by developing categories of common indicators the researchers had described, i.e., she put together into one category all of the same or similar indicators described by the researchers.

In the early tapes before the analysis became very lengthy, she accomplished this through a numbering scheme. In the case of laughter indicators in tape 1, for example, those indicating understanding were assigned the number 5 in each researcher's analysis; those indicating not understanding or discomfort were given the number 15. She then listed all of the researchers' descriptions of laughter (using their own words) under the understanding and nonunderstanding categories. She also noted by initial which researcher had described which indicator. This was done for all of the indicators. In other words, the researcher placed a common number next to all of the same or similar indicators in the three analyses. A 3, for example, in tape 1, was used every time reciprocal gesturing was mentioned as an indicator of understanding by one of the researchers. The researcher then made a list of all the 3's which composed a category she called reciprocal gesturing listed under the
rubric of understanding. Describing reciprocal gesturing in Chapter IV, Session 1, was therefore easy because she had all of the descriptive words of the three researchers in one place with which to describe how the researchers' viewed reciprocal gesturing as an indicator of understanding involvement. The double category label understanding/involvement was used because two of the researchers had labelled reciprocal gesturing as "indicators of understanding" and the other had labelled it as "involvement/comprehension."

This procedure was used for all of the common indicators. Those indicators which were described by only one researcher therefore ended up with no numbers beside them. The researcher included them in the writing of the analysis of that videotape only if they seemed important. In the case of a whole category of indicators developed by only one researcher, the primary researcher in almost all cases left that category, or in the later tapes, narrative description, in tact as it was and included it in the analysis.

In the latter tapes when the three researchers independent analyses ran as much as sixty pages of combined description per tape, often of narrative nature rather than lists or short descriptive passages, a numbering scheme was impossible. The researcher had to write notes in the margins of their analyses indicating the linkages of the descriptions to each other. In writing Chapter IV
and describing their common ways of viewing the interaction, she would pull the pages containing the linked descriptions and work from those to combine the three researchers' perspectives. As each researcher's perspectives had been included in regard to the aspects of the interaction being written about she would draw a line through their descriptions to indicate that material had been included in the combined analysis. In this way she assured herself that all of their descriptions in regard to those aspects had been included.

In combining the researchers' analyses of the last videotapes, the primary researcher often quoted the outside researchers. She did this in an effort to show how their actual descriptive passages and interpretations of phenomena meshed with each other. All throughout the entire combined analysis, however, she used the descriptive terminology used by the three researchers in their independent analyses. In other words, even when she was not quoting the outside researchers, the descriptive analysis contained a combination of their thoughts and words and her own. This, in the opinion of the researcher, added richness and depth to the combined analysis which would never have been possible if only one researcher's ideas, vocabulary, and descriptive phraseology had been available.

The analyses of each videotape were analyzed for common linkages between indicators and categories of
understanding and nonunderstanding across the three researchers. As indicators of understanding and nonunderstanding which had been discussed in earlier tapes reappeared, linkages to those were made in the analysis by the primary researcher. Thus Chapter IV links the three researchers' analyses to each other and links the categories of understanding and nonunderstanding which appear in later tapes to those which were discussed in earlier tapes. The analysis of each session builds upon those which preceded it. The researcher offered many speculations on the relationships of the indicators and categories of understanding and nonunderstanding in an effort to produce as many alternative explanations as possible.

Before concluding this discussion of the analysis of the videotapes, a few comments are needed on the selection of the outside researchers and their different analytic styles. As Ph.D. students, both researchers had specific interest in cross-cultural communication. Neither had ever done descriptive coding. The use of naive coders was important in order to approximate the typical cues students and teachers in multicultural classrooms might use to determine understanding in taking place. The female researcher was specific incident oriented; she described incidents and what they indicated about understanding. In her own words, all of her categories were developed in terms of understanding as comprehension; what showed it, what didn't, what presented problems, what helped. The male researcher, whose educational background included
phenomenology, was holistic in analytic style. He stated that with each new tape he attempted to describe the uniqueness of the interaction and to see which of his previously developed categories would hold up. His descriptions provided umbrella explanations with references to specific issues or incidents as examples. These references were often in the form of parenthetical phrases containing the student's name and the topic of his/her discussion with which the primary researcher of course was familiar (e.g., X on freedom, X on homosexuality). In many cases the incidents which this outside researcher made reference to, (X on homosexuality), for example, were described in detail by the other outside researcher. Thus the global explanation of the incident in relation to other similar incidents was provided by the one outside researcher and the incidents themselves were explained in detail by the other. No primary investigator could have wished for more.

The primary researcher fell in between the two outside researchers in terms of analytic style. She wrote no narrative description until the writing of Chapter IV. That is why she does not quote herself as she does the two outside researchers. All of her coding consisted of lists of indicators, short descriptive passages, notes, and a few theoretical speculations on linkages between some of the categories. In other words, her coding remained in the state the outside researchers' was in before they organized it and wrote narratives to give to the primary researcher. She
ended up almost completely transcribing the content of the last four sessions on religion because of the necessity of having the content in order to grasp the development/lack of development of understanding between the participants. The outside researchers also discussed the necessity in the last sessions of recording more of the content and of having a record of the sequence of the content in order to do adequate analysis. Thus, in writing Chapter IV, the primary researcher's categories of indicators of understanding and nonunderstanding and her content notes served as the validational check on the outside researchers' analyses. The primary researcher can say in all honesty that the categories of understanding described in Chapter IV came primarily from the outside researchers with her own serving to fill out theirs and provide the teacher and the inside researcher's perspectives on the development of understanding.

Analysis of Secondary Data

The analysis of the secondary data began after the analysis of the primary data was completed and Chapter IV (Analysis of Primary Data) and Chapter V (Conclusions and Suggestions for Curriculum Development) had been written.

Phase One: Analysis of Common Subjective Patterns

Phase one of the analysis of the secondary data consisted of determining the major common patterns in the ways curriculum participants experienced the curriculum. The researcher began the secondary data analysis by reading
through and preliminarily coding the content of all of the secondary data sources in the following order: her own field notes; student journals; transcriptions of interviews one and two; course evaluations; and transcriptions of interview three.

Preliminary coding of the data consisted of reading the data and simultaneously developing a notational system through which the patterns in the data could be organized. The mechanics of the notational system will be discussed in the next paragraph. While the researcher was reading through the data, she noted anything that was of significance in terms of the participants' experiencing of the curriculum. She made notations in the data of specific instances of patterns that she knew were present before beginning the analysis. She made notations of other patterns as she found them emerging. She noted the participants' reactions to and reflections upon aspects of the curriculum which had been described in the analysis of the primary data or were in some way related to that analysis.

The researcher used small yellow stick-on note pad paper as margin tabs so that her notational system would allow her to find specific information readily by reading her brief content notes on the margin tabs. The tabs located the information both by page and location on the page. The use of the stick-on margin tab notational system was an expedient way to handle patterns that were
spread throughout hundreds of pages of data. The margin tabs became the means for color-categorizing her notes into the different patterns which emerged. As the researcher read through the data examining it for common threads in what participants' thought and said, she noted them on the margin tabs and kept a list of patterns that were emerging. As more and more instances of those patterns appeared, she assigned them different colored magic marker stars on her list. She then marked all future instances of each pattern by placing that pattern's colored star on the margin tab. When she had gone through all the data, she worked back through the margin tabs to identify other instances of those patterns which had appeared prior to color coding them. This she did by rereading the content notes on the tabs and rereading the content if the tabs signalled the content might fit the patterns. If the content fit any of the patterns, she then added the appropriate colored stars to the tabs.

This system made examining the major patterns present in the data very easy. For example, when she went to examine the related patterns of student expectations for the course (purple) and student perceptions of what the course actually was, including its purpose (brown), she pulled all of the data marked with the purple and brown stars on the margin tabs. This allowed her to compare and contrast the specific cases within each pattern for
similarities and differences in themes, i.e., to see what the characteristics of each pattern were.

It became obvious in reading her own field notes and the student journals that the practicum sessions on religion produced the most intense specific reflections on the curriculum by the participants. Having completed the analysis of the primary data, she knew that those sessions were the most crucial in the development of cross-cultural understanding in the research team's opinion. She therefore decided the thoughts and feelings of the participants which were related to the last four practicum sessions on religion would have to be analyzed separately. She noted reflections on them with margin tabs marked Session 6, Session 7, 8, or 9 and sometimes with specific content notes such as "value of religion discussions," "admits preconceptions about Islam," "describes own defensiveness," etc. How all of this data was finally analyzed will be discussed in the section which follows this one and describes the second phase of the analysis of the secondary data.

Before reading the student journals she arranged them chronologically by student. She read each student's journal from the beginning of the semester to the end. This allowed her to examine how the nature of the students' reflections changed over the course of the curriculum. After reading each student's journal, she made notes to herself which briefly described significant
features of each student's reflections as a whole. Although her primary task in analyzing all of the secondary data sources was to look for common patterns across participants and across the different data sources, she did also want to have a feel for each student's progression through the curriculum. Reading the journals in this way, instead of by curriculum week, allowed her to do that.

Finding patterns in the data that she knew were there prior to beginning the final analysis was easy because of the way she had noted them to herself during the preliminary analysis she engaged in while collecting the data. As stated before, the preliminary analysis was very rough and consisted of noting patterns as they emerged during data collection. She talked about these patterns in her field notes. She mentioned them in interviews. Sometimes the pattern was mentioned as a response to something the person being interviewed said (e.g., "Other people have also said that"). Probing questions then followed that response. Sometimes the pattern was mentioned as a question seeking other people's thoughts on it (e.g., "Several people have mentioned ___X___; what are your thoughts on that?"). In the student journals she had indicated patterns to herself during the data collection phase in two ways. Sometimes she underlined common passages or drew boxes around common words used by students before she xeroxed and returned the journals.
Sometimes she wrote a note to the student in the margin (which was also a note to herself) that other people had also described or interpreted the same phenomena in similar ways.

While finding these patterns which she had noted to herself in the various data sources was easy, she was not aware of how many related thoughts participants had expressed. These she found sprinkled throughout the data, not just at the points in time at which she had noted the patterns. She entered the secondary data analysis aware that some of the patterns which had clearly emerged during the curriculum were ones that it was necessary to analyze. She knew that the different perceptions of American and international students in regard to journals as a reflection vehicle was extremely important for curriculum development. She knew that the course had not been what some students expected; since some had expected a techniques course, she was aware this pattern was important because of its link to the analysis of the primary data which explicated techniques. She knew that the curriculum was overwhelmingly designated "a beginning" by the participants at its end and that "open" was a word that she had drawn boxes around many times. What she did not know was that patterns of which she had not been aware during the curriculum existed within these patterns or were related to them. Since she had merely noted patterns during data collection and tried to elicit information about them but had not spent much time trying to analyze them, she would have found it difficult then to explain what they meant.
Trying to determine their shape and meaning required her to link them to other related patterns which she surfaced in analyzing all of the secondary data sources for common threads of meaning across participants.

With the awareness of the research team's findings in the analysis of the primary data, she entered the final analysis of the secondary data with questions about possible connections between the team's findings and the broad patterns she already knew to exist in the secondary data. In particular, she was curious as to what possible relationships might exist between the research team's assessment that openness to diversity had emerged as the last significant feature of the interaction and the participant-constructed metaphor of the course as "a beginning" at its end. Perhaps more than anything she had an intuitive feeling that they were connected.

The analysis of the primary data indicated that it was at the end of the curriculum that the real possibility for understanding was achieved; was this something that the participants themselves felt and thus described the curriculum as "a beginning?" How was the curriculum a beginning? She didn't know; she couldn't answer the question. How might "a beginning" be related to "openness to diversity/lack of defensiveness," "acceptance of the validity of the other's perspectives," and "an intense concern for understanding," the last significant features described by the research team? How might the word "open,"
one she knew she had often drawn boxes around in the students' journals, be related to "openness to diversity?" What did "open" mean to the participants who used it? She realized she couldn't answer that question. It was a word used often by the students whose meaning she must have implicitly understood at the time she was a participant, but she could not say that it meant openness to diversity, nor if it did, that it meant only that.

Once immersed in all of the secondary data, the meanings of "open" and "openness" became apparent and it was through the participant-constructed metaphor of the course as a beginning and the participant definitions of openness that the analysis was organized. The subjective patterns related to openness were used to explain the metaphor of the course as a beginning.

The development of openness to communication with culturally different others could be explained easily through the related patterns of lack of openness and prejudice. The development of openness in communication and openness to diversity, particularly as they were revealed in the final two sets of data collected (the course evaluation and the interview conducted one semester after the curriculum had ended) could not be understood without showing what happened to the students during the time of the practicum sessions on religion. Therefore, a descriptive analysis of the practicum sessions on religion as they were experienced by the curriculum participants
became the means to demonstrate how openness in communication and openness to diversity developed. It was in those sessions in which the research team's assessment of the development of cross-cultural understanding and the participants' experiencing of the development of understanding converged.

Phase Two: Analysis of the Practicum Sessions on Religion and the Development of Understanding as Experienced by Curriculum Participants

Phase two of the analysis of the secondary data constantly compared the participants' common and diverse subjective interpretations of the practicum sessions on religion against each other and against the research team's analysis of those sessions in an attempt to show how cross-cultural understanding developed. The purpose of this phase of the analysis was to cross-validate the participants' subjective experiencing of the development of understanding against the categories of understanding determined by the research team. This cross-validation of the study's multiple data sources and multiple researchers yielded a theory of the development of cross-cultural understanding between curriculum participants.

Specifically, this second phase was conducted in order to demonstrate how the subjective patterns of openness in communicating and openness to diversity, properties of cross-cultural understanding, developed. This phase relied heavily on the participants' actual words, written and spoken, in an attempt to articulate
the development of understanding through the descriptive phraseology of the participants. This analysis phase is concluded in Chapter VI with a discussion of the interconnected relationships between openness in communication and openness to diversity as revealed in the course evaluation and the post-curriculum interview.

The analyses of the primary and secondary data are drawn together in summary in Chapter VII and their implications for curriculum development are discussed there.

Data Analysis and Theory Development

The constant comparative method (Glaser, 1969) of joint coding and analysis of data was used in this study to generate or suggest theory. Glaser states that if the analyst wishes to generate theoretical ideas—new concepts and their properties, hypotheses and interrelated hypotheses—the analysis cannot be confined to coding first and then analyzing the data since the analyst is constantly redesigning and reintegrating theoretical notions as the data are reviewed. The constant comparative method is concerned with many hypotheses synthesized at different levels of generality. It is concerned with generating and plausibly suggesting (not provisionally testing) many properties and hypotheses about a general phenomenon; in this case, cross-cultural understanding. Glaser contrasts the constant comparative method with analytic induction. Analytic induction is concerned with generating and proving an integrated, limited, precise, universally applicable theory of causes accounting
for a specific phenomenon. In contrast, in the constant comparative method,

some of these properties may be causes; but unlike analytic induction others are conditions, consequences, dimensions, types, processes, etc., and like analytic induction, they should result in an integrated theory. Further, no attempt is made to ascertain either the universality or the proof of suggested causes or other properties. (pp. 219-220)

The constant comparative method tends to result in the analyst's creating a complex developmental theory which corresponds closely to the data. Each incident is compared to other incidents or to properties of a category by as many of its similar and diverse aspects as possible. In comparing, the analyst learns to see the categories as having both an internal development and changing relations to other categories. Thus, this method "especially facilitates the generation of theories of process, sequence, and change which pertain to organizations, positions, and social interaction" (p. 226).

This is an inductive method of theory development. In making theoretical sense of much diversity in his data, the analyst is forced to develop ideas on a level of generality which is higher than the qualitative material being analyzed. He is forced to bring out underlying uniformities and diversitites and to account for differences with single, higher level concepts. He is forced to engage in reduction of terminology...to achieve mastery of his data. If the analyst starts with raw data, he will at first end up with a substantive theory: a theory for the substantive area on which he has done research. (p. 227)

Carini (1975) states that the function of descriptive research is not to provide a final resolution or explanation of a phenomenon but to verify the extent and limits of the currently available meanings of a phenomenon and to
share those meanings in thinkable form with other inquirers. Others in turn will further illuminate the extent and limits of the phenomenal meaning through their observations.

The phenomenon as it is participated in by the observer in the constitution of a shared meaning is assumed to be thinkable but inexhaustible, and therefore, fundamentally ambiguous. Its multiple meanings emerge from its continuing transformation through the changing point of view, the thought, of the observer.... Phenomenological inquiry increasingly thickens the meaning of the phenomenon as it reveals the multiplicity of internal reciprocities that constitute the phenomenon's integrity. (pp. 10-11)

Carini contrasts the function of observation in logical inquiry with that of phenomenological inquiry. In logical inquiry, the function of observing is "to predicate the properties of a phenomenon, while the function of recording is to objectify (numeralize) the properties." In phenomenological inquiry, the function of observing is to constitute the multiple meanings of the phenomenon and the function of recording the phenomenon is to reflect those meanings for the contemplation of the observer. The emergent patterns of reciprocity that constitute the coherence and durability of the phenomenon are then employed systematically in delimited observing to verify the limits of the available meanings of the phenomenon and to reconstitute the phenomenon as a unit of inquiry.

Carini states that phenomenological inquiry requires that the inquirer abide with the object of inquiry, that he immerse himself in it, that it compel his thought, that he accept its ambiguous and complex nature, and therewith, the limitations of his own point of view in approaching the phenomenon in its integrity, however faithfully he unconceals its
meanings. To the degree that he accepts these demands, to that extent will he be rewarded not by 'useful' knowledge nor answers nor solutions but by increased meaning--his own and that of the phenomenon in which he has placed his thought. (p. 40-41).

Increased meaning will yield imaginative insight that creates new totalities for inquiry. Phenomenal observations and descriptions can be used as the basis for formulating in thought a theory, which within a stated frame of reference, will provide for a systematization of knowledge. Knowledge is sharable and generalizable, according to Carini, through the inherent order of phenomenal meaning, that is, through the recurrent patterns of polar reciprocities that taken together over time reveal the integrity of the phenomenon.

A substantive theory of cross-cultural understanding was the result of this phenomenological curriculum inquiry. The purpose of the inquiry was to provide insight into the development of understanding between participants from diverse cultures.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY DATA

The analysis of data is divided into two chapters in this study. This chapter presents findings from the videotaped practicum sessions in which the cross-cultural communication students met with the advanced level English-as-a-second-language conversation students to discuss various topics.

The videotapes are the primary data source in the study. They were analyzed by the primary investigator and two outside researchers as described in Chapter III. Their findings in regard to the development of cross-cultural understanding between curriculum participants in the practicum sessions are presented in this chapter.

The chapter is divided into nine sections which correspond to the nine videotaped practicum sessions. The topic of discussion in each of the sessions is given below:

- Practicum Session 1: Getting Acquainted Session
- Practicum Session 2: Nonverbal Signs and Gestures
- Practicum Session 3: Dating and Marriage
- Practicum Session 4: Dating, Marriage and Divorce
- Practicum Session 5: Planning Session for Panel Discussions on Religion
Practicum Session 6 Catholic Panel Discussion
Practicum Session 7 Fallen-Away Catholic Panel Discussion
Practicum Session 8 Muslim Panel Discussion
Practicum Session 9 Buddhist, Shintoist, and Hindu Panel Discussion

Practicum Session 1 Videotape

The descriptive analysis of Session 1 focused on non-verbal aspects of communication because the tape had only general background noise and did not capture the verbal portion of individual conversations. In order to heighten their awareness of nonverbal phenomena, researchers turned off the sound completely to view the tape. In the first session, cross-cultural communication (CCC) students met with English-as-a-second-language (ESL) students to get acquainted. They were paired one-on-one, with the exception of one group of three, so that those students talking to each other had only English as their common language.

The primary indicator of understanding/involvement noted by all researchers was reciprocal gesturing which occurred between speakers and listeners. Reciprocity consisted of synchronized gestures or gestures made in tandem fashion (one person in the dyad making the gesture followed by the other imitating or repeating it). Examples of these reciprocal gestures included smiling, laughing, self- and other-referenced pointing, affirmative nodding, negative head-shaking, and descriptive gestures used for explanatory
purposes by one partner which were then mimicked by the other.

Fluid as opposed to rigid proxemic patterns were also noted by all researchers as indicators of understanding/involvement between partners. Researchers characterized these fluid patterns as frequent reciprocal changes in postures and, as the session progressed, reduction of the initial distances established between partners. Rigid postures and the maintenance of initial physical distances throughout the session did not convey as high a degree of understanding/involvement as mutually shifting postures and the reduction of initial distances. Those partners who drew closer to each other when speaking and/or listening were also described as actively involved in attempting to understand and make themselves understood.

All three researchers categorized the indicators mentioned above with the words "understanding" or "involvement/comprehension." Opposing categories were labeled "not understanding" by the primary researcher and "breakdowns in communication" by an outside researcher. The other outside researcher and the primary investigator respectively developed categories labeled "discomfort/uncertainty about the situation" and "uneasiness." Some of the same indicators of not understanding described by one researcher were categorized as uneasiness by another. This phenomenon suggests that uneasiness is related to understanding or to the researchers' assessment of it.
Plausible conjectures in regard to the relationship between uneasiness and understanding can be offered. Nonverbally expressed uneasiness may indeed indicate low degrees of involvement and/or comprehension. Perhaps uneasiness slows or impedes the development of understanding by creating unfavorable conditions for its occurrence. Of course, the counter conjecture to that is that uneasiness occurs because the degree of comprehension is low. Another possible explanation may be that nonverbal indicators of uneasiness without knowledge of the content of speakers' verbal responses hinder viewers' assessment of the development of understanding (i.e., make the development difficult to see even though it may in fact be occurring between the participants).

Uneasiness is in all probability related to participants' concentration upon or awareness of the situation and/or the process while understanding and nonunderstanding most probably have to do with the subject matter. In this particular videotaped session it is plausible to assume that uneasiness predominated the interaction since participants were strangers to each other and were not accustomed to the video studio in which they were being filmed. The latter assumption would suggest that as uneasiness was overcome, indications of greater levels of involvement/understanding would surface. Conclusions in regard to the relationship between uneasiness and the researchers' assessment of understanding in this session will be drawn after a discussion of other findings.
Two indicators of understanding mentioned previously, reciprocal smiling and laughing, were also noted as signs of not understanding and discomfort. Researchers descriptively distinguished the negative indicators as seeming covers for feelings of inadequacy, embarrassment or awkwardness. In the uneasiness/discomfort categories they were characterized as a forced smile with little eye contact, a blank smile out of verbal context (when no conversation was occurring), and smiling or laughing on cue (the listener appearing to smile or laugh as though cued by the speaker that this behavior was expected). This latter phenomenon could perhaps best be described as the listener appearing to react to rather than flow with the nonverbal cues provided by the speaker. In short, the listener appeared to be responding to the communication event rather than being an integral part of it.

Eye gaze behaviors which indicated a lack of understanding/breakdown in communication were described as looking away from the partner inquisitively (sometimes with raised eyebrows) and failing to maintain eye contact with the partner. Looking intently at the speaker was described by one researcher as the listener's way of expressing interest in the speaker and giving the appearance of trying to understand. However, another researcher described wide-eyed listener attentiveness coupled with mechanical head-nodding but limited reciprocity of other nonverbal cues as an indicator of low comprehension or lack of interest.
Verbal pauses coordinated with the maintenance of eye or other forms of nonverbal contact were seen as positive signs of involvement/comprehension. Raised eyebrows or a change in facial expression, accompanied by sudden hand or head movement and sometimes a posture shift and/or verbal interruption by the listening partner were also seen as positive indicators.

The atmosphere of the session in general was described as one of congeniality. In cordial interviewing of each other, partners appeared sincerely trying to communicate with one another. Apparent receptiveness and cordiality toward each other were evidenced by eye contact, smiling, laughing, nodding and either passive or active participation as speakers and/or listeners. Although some people could be described as hesitant, shy or uncomfortable, the dyadic situation served by and large to "bring them out" in the conversation as the session progressed. A high degree of awareness on the part of participants that they ought to be talking must have existed since nonverbally manifested feelings of inadequacy or uneasiness were apparent when they ran out of things to say. This underscores participants' apparent alertness to the situation and/or the process of communication mentioned earlier. Partners were seen making an effort to keep conversations going and appeared to be trying to create favorable conditions under which communication could take place.
In the early stages of the session, responses to questions, usually uninterrupted and thus taking the form of monologues, dominated the interaction. The auditors in many cases appeared to be passively listening (evidenced by smiling or nodding to communicate interest, attentiveness or comprehension). Verbal performances appeared cued to answering questions and limited verbal initiatives were noted. The session in its early stages resembled the legal proceedings in a courtroom where information is not volunteered but provided only when requested. Gestures were limited in number and use and could be described as nonexpressive, brief, closed, small, rigid, defensive, or cautious with seemingly little relationship to the verbal content of conversations in that they were not descriptive in nature. Body comportment in many pairs was rigid and unanimated. Many participants were viewed uncomfortably rubbing or scratching parts of their bodies, playing with their hair, coordinating their glances away from each other in silence, and shifting postures when they had nothing to say.

As the session progressed, responses became more expansive. Gestures became descriptive and took on an explanatory function. They became more emphatic and synchronized with facial expressions and they appeared to have a greater relationship to what was being said. Head-nodding by the speakers occurred in sync with the listeners, creating a symphonic effect. It appeared that many speakers began to pay more attention to what they were saying rather...
than to the situation or how their partners were responding to them. A seemingly greater coordination between verbal and nonverbal aspects of the speakers' behavior combined with more animated reciprocal gesturing, posture shifting, and shifts in proxemic distances on the part of the listeners gave the impression that partners had become attuned to each other nonverbally. This synchronized, more expansive, descriptively expressive gesticulation created the effect of partners sharing a single, unified, fluid space which they shifted in concert and which functioned as a complementing medium to the shared words of their communication. Hence, as previously suggested, they appeared to be flowing with the nonverbal cues provided rather than reacting to them.

More frequent interruptions by auditors were also noted in the later part of the session suggesting that as partners become attuned nonverbally, verbal interruptions may be more likely to occur as part of the process of attempting to develop understanding. A crucial question regarding the process of communication between the members of diverse cultures is how nonverbal attunement is achieved. If interruptions, viz., verbal initiatives, function in the development of understanding and are an outgrowth of nonverbal attunement, how do participants know when it becomes desirable and/or necessary to interrupt?

The data from this session most substantially support the earlier conjectures that uneasiness predominated the
interaction (particularly the early part) and thus made it difficult to assess understanding. This pattern never changed in some pairs of students. Rigid, nonreciprocating gestures and physical distances were noted in these pairs. Partners appeared to maintain their own private or individual space which was not immediately responsive to the space of the other. When nonverbal indicators project a lack of active involvement between partners and an aura of uneasiness with each other, the degree to which any understanding is being developed is difficult to assess without knowledge of the verbal content of partners' communication or their own descriptions of such.

Uneasiness involving the video studio setting as well as the process of communicating with a foreign stranger whose fluency in English was in the majority of cases of a very different level were conditions under which everyone operated. Some pairs seemed to overcome the situation (as evidenced by their active nonverbal participation with each other); others never did. Based on an analysis of nonverbal phenomena, however, it is impossible to say that those who did not look actively, animatedly involved with each other were not understanding one another. Indeed, their level of understanding and their involvement in the subject matter may have been as great or greater although their degree of reciprocal and easily observed nonverbal attunement with each other was not.
Practicum Session 2 Videotape

In this session CCC and ESL students were combined in culturally mixed small groups so that English was the only language shared in common among the students. The topic of discussion was nonverbal signs and gestures. The teacher moved from group to group with a hand-held microphone in order to record conversations taking place in the groups.

A high degree of consensus existed between researchers as to what constituted successful communication attempts. They were characterized by respondents volunteering context appropriate remarks in regard to the subject being discussed and providing the speaker with spontaneous nonverbal responses indicating understanding. Statements that were understood nearly always produced paired counterparts on the part of auditors that were related and thus responsive to speakers' initiating remarks. These paired counterparts appeared to function in three ways: (1) to confirm to the listener himself/herself that he/she had understood correctly; (2) to communicate this understanding to the rest of the group; and (3) to volunteer some new information to the group as the cultural spokesperson for his/her country. A number of different forms of these paired responses were evident:

1. repeating the nonverbal sign or gesture being discussed without adding any verbal comments
2. repeating the gesture and the speaker's verbal explanation
3. repeating the gesture and paraphrasing the speaker's verbal explanation (Both this
response and the one above seemed to be attempts on the listener's part to verify the meaning that had been given. Both responses usually resulted in the initiating speaker confirming that the listener had understood correctly or in the speaker elaborating on the gesture or its usage.\)

(4) repeating the gesture and offering a different meaning than the speaker's (giving the meaning of the gesture in the listener's country)

(5) providing a different gesture with the same or similar meaning

(6) providing a similar gesture with similar meaning

(7) making a normative statement judging the gesture in light of appropriate social conduct in the listener's native country (e.g., "If someone does that in my country, it is very bad...")

(8) asking a question about the gesture (e.g., asking for further information about it, such as more specific details regarding its situational usage)

(9) expanding on the topic, either the gesture or its meaning, by introducing additional material

(10) reacting to the gesture or its meaning with spontaneous nonverbal or para-linguistic responses (e.g., laughter, altered facial expressions, posture shifts, head-nodding, "Ohhhh")

The most successful groups appeared to develop their transitions, whether from topic to topic or one speaker to the next, from the responses of the listeners. In conversation that appeared to be understood by participants, topics were switched on the basis of evident similarity or contrast. Abrupt topic switches, where content was neither similar to the preceding topic with respect to either the
configuration of the gesture itself or its meaning nor apparently contrasting with it in some specific way, were described as an indication of misunderstood or nonunderstood communication attempts. Topic switches lacking some principle of analogy governing transitions resulted in unconnected talk often punctuated with awkward silences, downward glances, looking at the camera, or manipulating some item at the desk.

Researchers categorized communication problem indicators using the labels "uneasiness," "disruptions and breakdowns in communication," and "disinterest/noncomprehension/disapproval." Since this was the first session in which the instructor moved from group to group with a microphone, some of the uneasiness and disruptions in the communicative situation were undoubtedly attributable to participants' awareness of being filmed. Researchers described the problems associated with the instructor, microphone and camera primarily in terms of participant self-consciousness and lack of spontaneity. The appearance of the instructor sometimes resulted in student "performance" and other times disrupted the flow of communication taking place prior to her arrival. The performance descriptor was attributed to some groups because the level of student involvement seemed to increase when the instructor arrived. In other groups, participants stopped discussing and turned their attention to the instructor as though waiting for a directive from her from which conversation would then proceed.
In her initial coding of this session, the primary investigator developed categories of both student and teacher behaviors used to bring about the transition of the teacher joining the groups. These consisted mostly of students summarizing what the group had been discussing prior to her arrival and the teacher informing or asking the group about a gesture that another group had discussed. Although the specific transition methods used are probably not significant, the fact that both the students and the teacher engaged in employing them is. It serves to point out that uneasiness due to being videotaped is disruptive to the normal flow of communication and is not overcome immediately. The performance problem might have been somewhat alleviated if each group had had a boom mike overhead which could have been switched on and off by the cameraperson, thus making it unnecessary for the teacher to join the groups with a mike. Even so, the groups would have been able to tell by the direction of the camera when they were being filmed.

As evidenced by later tapes, the filming problem so obvious in this session seems to be overcome during the semester. In later sessions the instructor appears in many groups which don't acknowledge her arrival or presence. As the sessions progress, it also becomes increasingly rare in the tapes to see students looking at the camera.
All three researchers cited a lack of both verbal and nonverbal spontaneous responses as indications of disinterest or not understanding. In many cases it was impossible to separate lack of interest from lack of understanding. Nonverbal indicators of attentiveness (primarily posture indicating listening) unsupported by appropriate verbal or nonverbal contextual responses indicating more than politeness or amusement did not unambiguously indicate understanding; instead, they seemed to indicate conformity to expected classroom norms of behavior. In addition to the spontaneous nonverbal responses mentioned previously as indicators of understanding, the contextually appropriate verbal responses following them were of a voluntary nature and often took the form of interruption of the speaker. Listeners' nonverbal responses mimicking the reactions of other listeners, in contrast to those of a spontaneous nature cued by the speaker, seemed to indicate group conformity dynamics and told observers nothing about either the thoughts of the listeners, their understanding or lack thereof.

Researchers described specific nonverbal behaviors indicating either lack of interest or understanding as:

1. reserved smiles followed by breaking of eye contact;
2. blank smiles accompanied by mechanical head-nodding of the type evidenced in Session 1;
3. blank smiles in which students seemed to want to appear pleasant;
4. nervous laughter in the absence of having anything to say;
(5) frequent downward glances; (6) blank facial expressions (absolutely no indication of understanding anything).

Verbal indicators of either disinterest or not understanding were specifically characterized in the following ways: (1) neither initiating conversation nor volunteering information; (2) apparent listening but unsupported by verbal indications of understanding; (3) responding only when directly addressed and then only with minimal information; (4) responding only to instructor cues (usually answering a direct question with little elaboration); (5) looking at others in silence waiting for them to speak; and (6) shifting the topic abruptly to content neither similar nor contrasting to that which preceded.

One outside researcher described dominant or more highly involved speakers in this session. They volunteered more information (participated in greater cultural self-disclosure). They asked more questions. They actively pursued the topic by introducing variations in the gestures or their meanings through comparisons and examples. Based on this session, the researcher hypothesized that speakers with these characteristics more actively seek to encourage intersubjective understanding. This hypothesis is substantiated throughout the sessions as those students who emerge as dominant forces in the facilitation of understanding across the diverse cultural participants continue to bear these characteristics.
An interesting phenomenon occurred in the development of categories pertaining to this session. The primary researcher developed separate categories for student and teacher behaviors which denoted attempts to facilitate understanding while the outside researcher lumped students and teacher together as "participants" in describing attempts at and/or indicators of understanding. The primary investigator carried these two separate categories forward into her descriptions of the next session also.

Why did the primary researcher develop separate student and teacher categories? The reason is undoubtedly a function of the fact she had also been the teacher. Viewing this second videotape in which she first became a participant in the interaction forced her to begin to assume a more critical self-reflective posture toward her own methods aimed at facilitating understanding. The teacher/researcher of cross-cultural communication was now removed from the active role of teacher; she was engaged in analyzing the videotapes for the purpose of assessing the development of understanding between the members of different cultures.

During her prior efforts toward promoting cross-cultural understanding as an ESL teacher, there had been times in which varying levels of awareness of the facilitating methods she employed had come to consciousness. Every teacher experiences these times, either during teaching when one becomes acutely and simultaneously aware of what
is happening and how one is shaping it, or in reflecting upon what happened after leaving the classroom. However, even in reflection that occurs after leaving the classroom or in verbalization to colleagues of the methods one used therein, the teacher is nonetheless still intimately involved. Still being involved with students means still justifying to oneself those crucial directional decisions that one made in the midst of their communicative encounters with each other.

Assuming the dual role of a teacher/researcher of cross-cultural communication in no way negated involvement; if anything, it heightened it. Being both the teacher and the researcher increased verbalized reflection upon involvement with the students, in field notes, to colleagues, and to the students themselves both in and outside the classroom. However, once the teacher was removed from the active role of teacher, the researcher was forced to critically examine her part as the teacher in attempting to foster cross-cultural understanding. Her involvement was a part of the data that had to be accounted for because she was doing research.

Trying to account for her participation in the interaction captured on videotape resulted in her comparing teacher and student behaviors aimed at the promotion of understanding. Her separation of student and teacher behaviors and the outside researchers' combining of them produced interesting differences in their descriptions of
breakdowns in communication and attempts to facilitate understanding. Those differences will be discussed in the analysis of the next session where they became even more evident than in this one.

**Practicum Session 3 Videotape**

Session 3 involved students in small group discussions of dating and marriage customs cross-culturally. Again CCC and ESL students were combined in culturally mixed groups. The groups were not the same as in Session 2; they had been rearranged by the instructor in order to allow students to have contact with different class members and their representative cultures.

The strongest indicator of understanding noted by all three researchers was comparison. This indicator took the form of listeners becoming actively involved in such a way that the conversations became comparative in nature. Listeners' involvement consisted mostly of questions, anecdotes, or interpretation attempts offered in response to an initiating speaker's discussion of a particular custom. These responses were based on the listeners' comparisons of the custom with those of their native cultures. Relevant comparative contributions to the conversation made by auditors were the most frequently common technique used by the groups for developing the topic and/or making transitions in topics. They were often preceded by head-nodding, smiling, laughing and "Uh-huh."
Researchers described these comparative responses as indicators of and/or attempts at understanding. Specifically, they had the following forms:

(1) Participants sought culture-specific information from other participants pertaining to the custom being discussed.

(2) Participants used other participants as cultural resources by asking them for information about dating and marriage customs different than theirs which they had heard about but which had not been mentioned in the discussion.

(3) Participants voluntarily served as cultural spokespersons by adding to the topic being discussed from their own cultural perspectives. (This practice sometimes served to prompt the initiating spokesperson to continue the discussion by further elaborating on the topic.)

(4) Listeners asked questions which were based on their own comparative frameworks. (In these cases, the listener appeared to be thinking about what the speaker had said in relation to the listener's own culture which prompted a question based on his/her comparison of the two. The question was often followed by the listener offering related information pertaining to his/her culture.)

(5) Listeners attempted to point out similarities in regard to the custom between the speaker's culture and their own or commonalities in the custom across cultures.

(6) Foreign participants asked questions, gave anecdotes, or offered their own interpretations pertaining to American customs they had observed or experienced in comparison to those in their native cultures. (This resulted in the American students responding to the questions or qualifying the attempted interpretations with additional information. The Americans also occasionally asked the foreign students to confirm their own interpretations of the different customs mentioned by the foreign students in their comparisons.)
Other strong indicators of and/or attempts at understanding noted by all researchers were auditor questioning, repeating, paraphrasing and summarizing which functioned as techniques for verifying and clarifying as well as requesting additional information. These indicators took several forms:

1. Listeners asked questions triggered by the discussion in an attempt to confirm their own interpretation of what had been said. (Questions of this sort forced the speaker to verify or correct the listener's interpretation of the meaning intended by the speaker.)

2. Listeners asked questions that inquired about some detail of the discussion which indicated to the speaker that he/she was being understood. (Questions like this encouraged the speaker to expand upon the topic.)

3. Listeners repeated what the speaker had said and then asked if that was indeed what he/she had said. (This forced the speaker to confirm and usually to expand upon the topic.)

4. Listeners added information to what the speaker had said to see if it fit. (This resulted in the speaker confirming, denying or qualifying the fit and usually further elaborating on the topic.)

5. Listeners summarized or paraphrased what the speaker had said when they were uncertain about it. (This forced the speaker to clarify and had the function of a "You mean...?" question. Sometimes the recapitulation was preceded by an expression like, "So you're saying...?")

6. Listeners summarized instead of volunteering information. (This cued the initiating speaker to continue his/her description and thus functionally had the consequence of a request for additional information.)

As in Session 2, interruption that involved questioning, clarifying or explaining was seen as a strong
spontaneous indication that participants understood each other. Interruption, even though it sometimes made sorting out the meaning of the conversation more difficult for the researchers, indicated a higher level of involvement and mutuality on the part of the participants. Questions which interrupted the speaker more clearly indicated understanding than questions which seemed to fill pauses or punctuate the exchange. When participants became involved in the conversation and all began to talk at the same time, they indicated through the act of participating that they had something to contribute to the discussion. This, in turn, revealed that they felt they understood what was being discussed.

Many interesting differences in the descriptions of the outside researchers and the primary investigator surfaced in this session. To begin with, outside researchers developed categories of phenomena labeled "breakdowns in communication" and "avoidance behaviors." The primary researcher developed no negative categories but rather focused on student and teacher behaviors which denoted "attempts at the facilitation of understanding." The net result, of course, was that the primary researcher saw the interaction taking place in a much more positive light. This phenomenon alone certainly underscores the extreme importance of providing for triangulation of multiple researchers in qualitative studies.
Other ways that outside researchers described the same empirical phenomena differently than the primary investigator also demonstrate the importance of triangulation. Beginning with Session 2 and continuing into this session, one outside researcher described several incidents in which inadequacy in the students' levels of English proficiency caused breakdowns in communication. Descriptions of these breakdowns consisted primarily of incidents in which students did not know English words necessary for their explanations or gave unresponsive answers to questions asked by other participants. The primary researcher, focusing on student and teacher attempts to facilitate understanding, saw through these same problems and described instead the ways they were at least partially resolved by the participants. For example, one student said, "I don't know how I can say it in English," but then attempted the explanation in different ways and finally asked for a word which was supplied by another student. This indicated that the explanation was at least partially understood by the participants. In another case, a student said, "I don't know the word in English," but worked around the insufficiency by giving an explanation of the behavior which the lacking word labeled. A student listener then supplied the desired word which the speaker repeated and a few sentences later used in further elaboration on the topic.
In the two incidents in which students gave unresponsive answers to questions, the teacher intervened. In the first case, she asked the student who gave the unresponsive answer another very similar question which served to get him back on the topic of the initial question. In the second case, the teacher supplied the group with the question which the unresponsive reply answered. She used this same technique in later sessions also. Although this practice may or may not do anything to bring about understanding on the part of the student who does not understand the question, it does not overtly embarrass him/her and indicates to the other participants that the answer was unresponsive. The burden of responsibility is thus shifted back to them to rephrase and ask the question again.

The reason the primary researcher concentrated on the ways she and the students worked around the problems rather than on the problems themselves was probably a result of continuing to examine her own methods and compare them to those utilized by the students. The fact that she had had considerable experience in teaching students with limited proficiency in English also undoubtedly focused her viewing on commonly used methods that both students and teacher employ to deal with the students' inadequacies in the language. Someone without that experience would naturally be more likely to focus on the inadequacies. For whatever reasons the outside
researcher viewed the incidents as breakdowns in communication and the primary investigator saw them as attempts to facilitate understanding, their combined perspectives enrich the descriptive analysis. When breakdowns occur that participants are aware of, they work around the problems in attempts to bring about immediate understanding and/or to avoid future related nonunderstanding or misunderstanding. In so doing, they are generating methods through which cross-cultural understanding develops.

In the primary researcher's original coding of the session following this one, her focus shifted to include descriptions of the communication problems themselves. In addition, she described how the problems were solved and by whom, and how she determined if they had been solved. She was not present in the video studio during the taping of Session 4 which left the responsibility for dealing with communication difficulties entirely to the participants. This may well have been the reason she examined the problems which created interparticipant searching for ways to resolve them.

An interesting difference in the descriptions of the other outside researcher and the primary investigator also occurred in this session. The outside researcher described speakers' references to modern development or recent changes as a method introduced by them to blunt the import of their statements and diffuse possible questions. A speaker stating that "times are changing"
allowed the discussion to become focused on a description of changing practices rather than an evaluation of those practices. The researcher labeled this phenomenon an "avoidance behavior."

The primary researcher also noted this common occurrence of the subject shifting to a discussion of customs in the past in contrast to now. Participants often asked each other, "This is still true in your country?" or "Even now?" as though the custom seemed so different (or perhaps so antiquated or out of sync with modern times from their own cultural world views) that they wanted to confirm that the custom did indeed still exist. Speakers sometimes offered comparative historical perspectives of the custom they were discussing. The primary researcher categorized the various forms of this past/present phenomenon as indicators of participants' attempts to bring about understanding of the customs. She also speculated that socio-cultural change is a strong commonality that binds diverse cultural members.

The outside and primary researchers' different interpretations again add richness and depth to the analysis of the data. Evidence in this session as well as in latter sessions suggests that both interpretations have validity. Related to this session it is reasonable to speculate that the discussion of cultural change permitted participants to begin to explore cultural differences while still developing rapport and establishing commonality with each
other. Based on evidence yet to be discussed pertaining to this session, the discussions of cultural change probably also served to suppress verbalized disapproval or evaluation of very different customs. While such suppression was not viewed positively by researchers, perhaps it allowed participants to broaden their base of understanding of their commonalities and differences before beginning to probe the differences.

In a later session, change surfaces again. During deep probing and negative evaluation initiated by fallen-away Catholics (joined by Muslims) in regard to the practice of kneeling before statues, Catholics switch the topic to changes in the practice which have occurred in the Catholic Church since Vatican II. The topic switch functions in diffusing the volatile and, at that point, nonproductive discussion. Questions stop, participants calm down and attempt to reestablish some degree of harmony with each other.

There is not enough specific evidence in the descriptions generated by the three researchers to make statements any more definitive than those already made regarding the significance and functions of discussions of changing times in the development of cross-cultural understanding. That is not to say evidence is not present in the sessions; it is the opinion of the primary researcher that there is probably ample evidence in the videotapes if researchers were specifically describing
that one aspect. This opinion is based on her recollection of other discussions in the sessions in which participants referred to the fact "things are changing." It is also her opinion that the role the discussion of socio-cultural change plays in the development of understanding across the members of different cultures may be of far more significance than the researchers' brief descriptions of it in this study would indicate.

Outside researchers' descriptions of phenomena labeled breakdowns in communication and avoidance behaviors in many cases fell together. They described the session as one in which participants seemed to be "treading softly." Their communication took largely the form of a tentative exchange of factual-descriptive, ethnographic information. Verbalized skepticism, disapproval, disagreement or evaluation were absent. Probing questions were not asked. No instances were recorded in which a speaker was asked to evaluate a custom or explain why it was practiced. Verbal evaluation statements that did occur were always volunteered by the speaker. It appeared that these statements probably expressed the personal view of the speaker pertaining to the custom or were attempts to anticipate reservations the speaker took to be in the minds of the auditors. Participants appeared to be still "feeling their way" in the session. Although cultural differences in behavior norms began to be explored, they were never directly addressed nor confronted.
Even though verbalized personal responses to customs which were quite different than those in the listeners' cultures were kept to the self, nonverbal reactions sometimes revealed skepticism or disapproval. Both outside researchers specifically mentioned one group discussion which illustrates this phenomenon most clearly. Facial expressions on the part of female auditors in that group revealed skepticism or disapproval regarding the satisfactory nature of the relationship between an Arab man and woman who marry neither knowing each other nor having spent time alone together. The Arab spokesman's discussion of arranged marriages evoked brief exchanges of glances, quiet laughter, smiles of detached amusement, and reduction of listeners' eye movements. In addition to the reduction in eye movements, other nonverbal changes (such as posture shifts and hand movements) were nonexistent.

The session on the whole was marked by an absence of strong nonverbal cues, especially assertive ones such as pointing, leaning forward, open postures, or frequent changes in postures. This absence paralleled the absence of verbalized disagreement or evaluation and underscored the tentative, factual-descriptive, detached attitude adopted by the discussants.

As in Session 2, the level of participation of students in the conversation was important in determining the extent to which they did, in fact, understand the discussions taking place in their respective groups. Some
of them simply failed to participate in the discussions unless specifically asked a question. Lack of participation in the discussion by an individual appears not to provide evidence in itself that he/she does not understand but can support other findings regarding a particular person which make this claim (such as giving an unresponsive answer to a question when directly addressed).

In the opinion of the outside researchers, the instructor served as an impediment to the intragroup development of understanding in the discussion of Arab Muslim marriages mentioned previously. An American woman asked the spokesman from the United Arab Emirates when he began loving his wife. He appeared to not understand the question (at least from the American perspective) since he answered with the date on which he married her. The instructor responded to his answer by asking him if there was not a saying in Arabic that love comes after marriage. He responded that that was correct and elaborated further. The discussion then became dyadic between the instructor and the spokesman. The instructor offered her own comparative interpretation of love, marriage, and commitment in their two cultures and introduced the subject of divorce comparatively. The other three members of the group remained observers for the rest of the time the instructor was present.

One researcher felt the instructor cued the Arab as to an appropriate way of responding instead of letting him
work out responses to questions which probably would have followed from the other female participants had the instructor remained silent. The other researcher described the situation by saying,

Because the instructor, by virtue of her role, is granted a certain degree of authority, any remarks which can be interpreted as reflective of her opinion may in fact inhibit other group members from expressing views which would question or repudiate the position which the students may believe the instructor holds. This is true in any student-teacher situation and impossible to avoid. However, the degree to which the instructor's comments tended to structure the direction of the discussion on marriage and also hinder the students' responses to the Arab's view would limit the extent to which cross-cultural understanding could be reached since, with the exception of nonverbal responses, the three women's reactions were never expressed. Thus, a mutual understanding was never achieved because he did not find out what perceptions they had on the subject. In a sense this could be called a communication breakdown. However, I consider it to be more an instance which reveals an obstacle in the process of achieving cross-cultural understanding since there was no breakdown in communication between the two parties in the conversation. Rather, other possible participants in the conversation were not utilized.

The primary researcher viewed her own comparative interpretative contribution as a method employed to try to facilitate understanding between the participants. By stating that marriage of this type seems to involve making a decision to love and perhaps carries a deeper commitment than marriage in the U.S. which is based on being in love, she was attempting to point out possible advantages to a marriage custom typically adversely reacted to by students from cultures in which the practice
is unfathomable. Again, the importance of multiple investigators was demonstrated.

Since the instructor was viewed as an impediment to the development of understanding in this group discussion by hindering student responses and since the absence of verbalized evaluation was seen as a negative factor throughout the session, the primary researcher began to wonder in writing this analysis to what extent she might have hindered other groups. In reexamining all the written data pertaining to this session (including her notes on it prior to coding), she could find no evidence that indicated that she had been a negative force. This was the only group in which she offered an opinion or even participated more than very briefly. Perhaps she was a part of the same "treading softly" phenomenon that characterized other participants. The description of those speakers who offered verbal evaluation statements as an attempt to anticipate reservations they took to be in the minds of listeners undoubtedly also fits the teacher in this instance.

In summary, significant aspects of communication to the development of cross-cultural understanding seem to have emerged in this session. Active participant involvement of a comparative nature was seen as a strong indication of understanding. Amid participants attempting to point out commonalities in customs between and across cultures, cultural differences began to be explored but
were never probed. Lack of probing and verbalized evaluation were not viewed as contributing to understanding.

Although it may be premature to speculate on the significance of these aspects or to attempt to draw relationships between them, a few conjectures seem in order in the spirit of exploration which this study inscribes. It can probably be assumed with a fair degree of certainty that a major reason for the lack of probing questions and verbalized evaluations was the result of the two classes having only been combined with each other in two previous sessions (for two hours) prior to this one. While CCC and ESL classmates respectively had spent approximately fifteen hours with each other at the time of the session, this was only their third hour of time combined.

The data of this session would also tend to support the speculation that before cultural differences are probed, attempts to establish commonality take place. Although lack of probing and verbalized evaluation of differences were viewed as not contributing to cross-cultural understanding, perhaps they did, in fact, contribute at this point by allowing participants time to first develop a common space of understanding.

Practicum Session 4 Videotape

This session was a continuation of the discussions begun in Session 3 with divorce added to the topic of
dating and marriage. The instructor was presenting a paper at a conference and thus was not present at the session. One of the CCC students volunteered to serve as facilitator in her absence so that that week's session could take place. Again CCC and ESL students were combined in small groups. The groups were supposed to remain the same as the previous week but ended up slightly differently as those students who entered the session late joined groups already in progress.

This particular videotape is rich in communication problems related to speakers of English-as-a-second language. It is also a fascinating portrait of participants' intersubjective search for understanding because and in spite of those problems. The presence of an inexperienced facilitator may well have been fortuitous in surfacing problems which diverse cultural discussants have to cope with when different levels of language proficiency exist among them.

In order to describe participants' attempts to reach understanding in the midst of problems, it is necessary to first mention some of the types of problems which existed. Briefly, those which most commonly occurred were: (1) mispronounced significant words; (2) syntactical and/or lexical errors alone or in combination with pronunciation errors; (3) lack of vocabulary necessary for explanation; and (4) noncomprehension of direct questions.
These problems resulted in interruption of the communication process. They also produced an active participant search to discover the speaker's intended meaning. Interruption of the process itself was quickly recognized by all group members; even those who were not otherwise highly involved in the conversation were concerned with keeping the process moving. Hence, individuals spontaneously suggested the information they thought was needed by the speaker to make him/herself understood. Techniques for overcoming the lapses when someone did not immediately provide the needed word, expression or concept to the speaker included: guessing, description, analogy, reformulation of the subject matter, simple repetition, and rephrasing in order to clarify. These techniques were used by both speakers and listeners in role-switching employed in attempts to reach understanding.

One outside researcher noted that the foreign students seemed more skillful at these techniques than the American students, probably because they share a common predicament and are expending more effort in the process of communicating. Therefore, the researcher speculated, they are more completely attentive to the problem of finding the right words and more conscious of the difficulties posed by the language. In short, they are more practiced at overcoming language difficulties. The primary investigator also noticed this and would support the
outside researcher's speculation. Having American students combined with ESL students was a new teaching experience and, therefore, is not the basis of her support. Rather, the basis is her own constant amazement at ESL students' ability to understand classmates from cultures other than their own and interpret for her when she cannot understand them herself.

As in the two previous sessions, the extent of participation in the discussion substantiated that those participating had an understanding of its nature. The level of participation/extent of involvement seemed also at least to a degree to indicate interest in the conversation since lack of interest and lack of understanding were again undifferentiated. Nonverbal attentiveness was also again found to be indistinguishable from lack of understanding or politeness.

Agreement and comprehension appeared almost always to be expressed in some fashion, either verbal or nonverbal. Group members seemed to feel obligated to publicly acknowledge their understanding of the speaker's meaning. Accordingly, the amount of information disclosed in each conversation was limited by the speaker's frequent attention to cues that he/she was being understood. Thus, conversation did not move from one topic to the next without either nonverbal cues of comprehension or verbal repetition or summarization by the listeners to verify their understanding.
An extremely important insight in regard to interruption emerged in this session. The function of interruption in these discussions, as in the two previous sessions, in all cases appeared positive from the standpoint of understanding. Those participants who interrupted the speaker, whether with questions, commentary, additional information or whatever, were those who most clearly comprehended what was being discussed. In the case of problems, those who interrupted were the participants working hardest to bring about understanding. Even sequences of interruptions, which from the standpoint of the researchers produced unclear or limited clarification, from the standpoint of the participants seemed to indicate satisfaction that understanding had been achieved. In other words, even though the communication was still in error as objectively viewed by the researchers, it appeared that participants felt it had been successful. Thus, they proceeded with their conversation.

A beautiful example of participants "working away nonunderstanding" (Seebohm, 1982), at least to their satisfaction, occurred and serves to illustrate this insight of researchers. An Iraqi student was discussing what his widowed great-uncle had done to try to resolve the marital problems he was having with his second wife. The student stated that the brother of his grandfather finally went to see "a pop" to discuss the problems with him. An American female student interrupted him to
signal nonunderstanding by saying, "Who talks with him?"
The Iraqi responded, "A pop." The American, looking
at the Iraqi, followed with, "A pop? What's a pop? A
pop?" The Iraqi replied, "Like father." The American
offered the word "priest" which didn't satisfy the spokes­
man as to his intended meaning. The discussion that
ensued consisted of the Iraqi's attempts to explain pop's
high status in the church which was interrupted by an
Indian student who offered the word "padre." The Iraqi
didn't appear certain of understanding the word "padre"
and gave the Indian a "no" response with a look that
indicated it didn't sound like the word he wanted.

During this sequence all of the participants mentioned,
and a Venezuelan woman who had said nothing, were leaning
toward the Iraqi. The American was mimicking the Iraqi's
expressive gestures of highness which accompanied his
various attempts to explain. Finally after trying, "Like
father, big," he said the pop was like "papa Roma." The
Venezuelan quickly acknowledged understanding with, "Ohhh,
the Pope in Rome." The others all joined in with, "Ohhh." The
Iraqi confirmed with, "Ya, the Pope, he's in Rome." The
American then verified that she understood by saying,
"OK, so this is the highest person..." which was inter­
rupted and confirmed by the Iraqi who continued from
where the sequence of interruptions had begun.

A few sentences later, the Venezuelan woman inter­
jected that that was her religion also, apparently
presuming from the reference to the Pope that the Iraqi
was discussing a person within the Catholic church, which
indeed he was. However, there must have still been
uncertainty on the part of the American Catholic that he
was discussing Catholicism because she responded to the
Venezuelan with, "That's your religion, too?", but did
not state that she also was Catholic. In addition, the
American CCC student facilitator for the day, who was a
Catholic, said nothing during the whole discussion,
perhaps because the group was so actively involved when
he arrived that his presence was never acknowledged.

In all probability, no one but the Iraqi really
knew just exactly who the pop was because no one could
come up with a word for him that all understood. However,
agreement was reached in that all seemed to grasp that he
was the highest person in Iraq in the student's religion.
The Indian student, a Hindu who had attended Catholic
schools in India, tried to find another word for pop by
interjecting a few comments on "brothers, fathers, nuns,
and the Pope" (in that order) in an attempt to determine
the hierarchy in the Catholic Church. These comments
were in essence ignored by the other participants. They
were obviously not concerned about the accuracy of the
Indian's statement but rather determined to continue the
discussion of the great-uncle's resolution of his marital
problems since they made no attempt to clarify that nuns
were not one step under the Pope in the ladder of ascendancy.
This incident and others related to problems in understanding that occurred provide nice examples of Seebohm's ideas on oral discourse referred to above. Before those are discussed, however, another important aspect of the communication characteristic of this session needs to be stated because it is illustrated clearly by this incident and the others related to language problems. Researchers' descriptions of the interaction all pointed to the conclusion that the session as a whole was marked by a process orientation in which participants seemed to focus more on comprehending and clarifying descriptively than conceptually. This conclusion is supported not only by researchers' examples of problem-plagued communication but also by their descriptions of interaction in which things went smoothly.

Exploring theoretical notions in regard to this conclusion produces different hypotheses all of which are supported in some degree by the data. Before the outside researchers became involved in the study, the primary researcher theorized while describing the later sessions pertaining to religion that different levels of understanding develop between diverse cultural participants. The level of comprehension represented by the majority of the communication in this session and earlier sessions seemed to be one of a surface nature which was strived for by participants for the sake of continuing discussion.
In later sessions, participants appeared to be working to develop a deeper level of understanding regarding cultural concepts.

Combining outside researchers' descriptions of this session with her own preliminary theoretical speculations produces more refined hypotheses in regard to the development of understanding. The process orientation so obvious in the interaction was undoubtedly in part the result of the language problems which interrupted the flow of ideas and caused participants to have to concentrate on means to work away the problems so that the process could resume. Concentration on achieving the language clarity necessary to resume the process would appear then to hinder the development of conceptual understanding in the immediate term. An equally valid and perhaps correlative conjecture is that the process orientation may represent a stage in the development of cross-cultural understanding in which describing and clarifying similarities and differences in cultures descriptively precedes attempts at clarifying them conceptually as to their meaning and/or significance. Other descriptions of researchers which follow support this conjecture.

Questions for the most part requested additional information of a factual-descriptive and usually comparative nature as in Session 3 or rephrasing in a questioning manner in order to clarify. More explanations and
evaluations volunteered by speakers were noted than in previous sessions; because-constructions had their greatest frequency thus far but were usually offered rather than requested. Disagreement or evaluative statements by auditors were again nonexistent with the exception of one. A Thai student said he thought the Thai custom of long engagements was preferable to engagements based on shipboard romances mentioned by an American participant. He followed his statement by explaining the value of the Thai custom.

Some of Thomas Seebohm's ideas regarding understanding, misunderstanding and nonunderstanding in oral discourse (pp. 147-151) are relevant to an analysis of certain communication problems that existed in this session. As a matter of fact, the problems provide nice illustrations of his ideas. One, that of working away nonunderstanding, was demonstrated by the "pop" problem. Seebohm says that nonunderstanding of the listener can only be discovered by himself. It is communicated to the speaker by asking him what he means. The responsibility for working away the nonunderstanding then falls upon the speaker who is forced to keep trying until he finds some explanation which does not trigger the reaction "I do not understand" or "What do you mean by...?" If this point is reached, the agreement/disagreement level is reached. According to Seebohm,
Oral discourse is directed toward future agreement or disagreement. Both have to be understood in the broadest sense. A proposition is uttered waiting for agreement or disagreement in the narrower sense. Agreement in the case of a command is the performance of an action, and, in the case of a question, an answer. Disagreement is by no means the end of communication in oral discourse. Communication stops only if one partner does not respond at all. (pp. 147-148)

Thus, in the case of "pop," the Iraqi finally worked away nonunderstanding to the point that agreement was reached between participants as to the pop's high clerical status similar to that of the Pope. At the point at which this agreement was reached, the discourse proceeded in the direction of future agreement or disagreement.

Misunderstanding is also discussed by Seebohm. Working away misunderstanding is in the final analysis a case of working away nonunderstanding. Misunderstanding can only be discovered by the speaker, not the listener. An utterance by the speaker to the effect, "I did not mean..." signals that he has discovered a misunderstanding. That discovery implies that the listener in some past phase of the dialogue did not understand the speaker but thought he did; i.e., the listener did not discover his own nonunderstanding. The listener, determined by his own system of significations, substituted his understanding of what the speaker said for what the speaker actually meant. Therefore, in working away misunderstanding/nonunderstanding, the speaker who was not understood must
go beyond what he said and seek elements in the signification system of the listener which can serve as building blocks to help him explain what he meant.

Although Seebohm does not say so, all of this, of course, is based on the presupposition that the listener who did not understand later makes reference to what he/ she thought was the meaning intended by the speaker. Without that reference to "his/her understanding," undiscovered cases of both misunderstanding and nonunderstanding exist. This type of problem is probably the most serious impediment to the development of understanding between people, regardless of their culture, because it stands a good chance of never being resolved. A case in point serves to illustrate.

A student from the United Arab Emirates asked an American participant what she thought the reasons for the high U.S. divorce rate were; the question followed his own statement that he thought the major reason was because Americans were more concerned about themselves than their families. He ended his question stating that since she was a citizen, she should know. She responded that there were many reasons, one of which he had just mentioned. At this point, a Lebanese-Brazilian interjected that perhaps the high rate had something to do with people here having "a big freedom," on which she then elaborated. To this, the Arab responded while looking at the American, "But she is a citizen," indicating to the Brazilian
that she had not been addressed and did not fit his perception of who was qualified to answer his question. The Brazilian responded that perhaps she would give some of the same answers. The use of the word "answers" produced nonunderstanding on the part of the American which resulted in the Brazilian attempting to clarify with "questions." That made matters worse. She repeated again that maybe she would give the same answers which the American then understood and offered the word "reasons." Hence, the lexical problem was cleared up but the semantic intent of the Brazilian's remarks about divorce were not.

The American did not really understand her because she said softly, as if confirming to herself, that the Brazilian was giving similar reasons for the divorce rate in Brazil. In actuality, however, the Brazilian had been discussing reasons she thought the divorce rate was high in the U.S. The American then said, "Now I understand." Thus, undiscovered cases of nonunderstanding and misunderstanding ended the exchange.

Seebohm states that in dialogue speakers and listeners can, of course, change roles for the purpose of continuing the dialogue. Although the responsibility for working away nonunderstanding rests with the speaker, the listener's role in various phases of the dialogue is by no means passive (particularly in cases of disagreement). The listener, by becoming the speaker, can force the
initiating speaker to develop the listener's signification system and try to find explanations based on it. In a functioning dialogue in which partners switch roles several times, the goal will always be to reach phases of agreement or disagreement. Along the way, partners are attempting to develop a signification system which is intersubjective for each phase of the dialogue.

Analysis of data thus far in the study illuminates how participants accomplish the development of intersubjective signification systems for the varying phases of their communication. The techniques enumerated in Session 3 which listeners use to verify and clarify their understanding (viz., repeating, paraphrasing, summarizing, adding additional information and asking questions), as well as the responses from speakers which these techniques prompt, begin to answer the how question. All of these methods and the additional ones noted in this session (guessing, description, analogy, and reformulation of the subject matter) provide comprehension checks throughout the phases of dialogue, thus reducing the possibility of cases of nonunderstanding and misunderstanding going undiscovered.

Needless to say, these techniques are not solely related to the development of cross-cultural understanding. Analyzing communication between the members of different cultures may be an excellent context in which to study them, however, since the need for comprehension checks
is undoubtedly higher and most certainly a significant aspect of the development of cross-cultural understanding. When these methods are examined in combination with the comparative indicators of and/or attempts at bringing about understanding noted by researchers in Session 3, the realm of how intercultural/cross-cultural understanding develops has been entered. The comparative orientation developed by participants in that session and used again in this session is probably the crucial first step in participants beginning to develop intercultural intersubjective signification systems. The development of intercultural intersubjective systems of meaning between two (or more) speakers who compare cultural content (aspects) and engage in comprehension checks throughout the process would appear to foster the development of understanding across the diverse participants.

Practicum Session 5 Videotape

In Practicum Session 5, CCC and ESL students divided themselves into groups according to religious faith for the purpose of planning panel discussions which were to follow in Sessions 6-9. This topic had been chosen by the students as the one they most wanted to pursue with each other in the practicum sessions. Five groups were formed. Catholics divided themselves into two groups due to the large number. The third group consisted primarily of fallen-away Catholics. There were two former Catholics in this group who identified themselves as Protestants; one was a member of a specific
denomination and the other was not affiliated with any established church. The fourth group was composed of Muslims; the fifth consisted of two Thai Buddhists and a Japanese student who claimed no religion.

Two aspects of this session which distinguish it from the previous ones are important to mention before describing salient features of the communication which occurred. First, this session had a specific task orientation--to plan panel discussions on the religious/spiritual beliefs of the students which would take place over the next four weeks. The previous sessions had had paired or small group discussions focusing on various topics but had not had a specific future event which was to grow out of them. Second, due to the division of the students on the basis of religious faith, the groups were not as culturally diverse as they had been previously. There were people present in each group who shared a common language, nationality, and/or geographic area of the world.

The greater commonality between participants and the task orientation made this session unlike any of the other eight sessions. In comparison, the researchers' descriptions of Session 5 contribute little to the analysis of how cross-cultural understanding developed between participants. The descriptions do, however, provide important background information that sets the context for the next four sessions which are the most significant in the analysis. The dynamics, the approach to the task, and the content of the discussion
within each group provide insight into the actual panel presentations and the interaction between diverse participants in the panel-audience exchanges.

The descriptions of the three researchers focused primarily on the task orientation and the group dynamics at play in participants' attempts to accomplish the task. Their descriptions fell largely into three major categories of participant activity: (1) determining the nature of the task; (2) establishing the extent of commonality between the members of the group; (3) identifying, explaining and clarifying the major tenets to be discussed in the panel presentations. Each group will be discussed separately in regard to these aspects and other salient features of the communication described by researchers will be included.

The Muslim group was filmed first. Of the five groups, they had the least difficulty addressing the task. They spent no time discussing the nature of the task while filming was taking place. They began their discussion by identifying what needed to be said in regard to the Muslim beliefs concerning Jesus in comparison to Christian beliefs. They were the only group which planned their presentation setting their religion into comparative perspective to another.

The composition of the group made for interesting cross-cultural group dynamics. Present in the group of Arab male Muslims was an American female convert to Islam who was a former Catholic. Two of the three researchers respectively described her comments in the beginning of the discussion
as "cautious" and "in deference to the male Muslims" in the group. The primary researcher cited several references the American made to Islamic beliefs she had been taught by the imam as indicative of proceeding cautiously in an attempt to establish commonalities and possible differences between Islam in the U.S. and the Arab world. The other researcher cited the same references as indicative of deferring to the Arab Muslims and not seeming to want to assert her own understanding of Islam.

The participants in this group addressed the task by identifying, explaining and clarifying the beliefs that should be discussed. After Jesus was identified as the important starting place for their presentation, they began to discuss Islamic beliefs about Him in an apparent attempt to reach group consensus as to what "specific information" they should present. They discussed that Jesus was a prophet, not the son of God but of Mary, and that he was not crucified. A Saudi student offered reasons to the instructor as to why it would be inappropriate for an all-powerful God to let His son be crucified, that is provided He had a son. He created an analogy that no father would permit his son to be killed if he had the ability to stop it. The analogy caused confusion in the mind of a student from the United Arab Emirates who responded with, "Nobody killed him." The two discussants took recourse to their native language to try to clear up the confusion. This set in motion an interesting interplay in cross-cultural group dynamics.
The American (now shut out of the conversation), another student from the UAE, and a Libyan student who was functioning as the group leader became aware with the instructor that the continuity of the communication had been disrupted. Smiles, glances among themselves, and negative head-shaking on the UAE student's part were visible. All three students glanced at the camera which was the group's first acknowledgment of its presence. The group leader did not become involved in the conversation in Arabic. His non-verbal behavior indicated that he was aware the rules of social etiquette had been violated in light of the American group member and teacher present. However, he appeared to not want to interrupt so that the confusion could be clarified and he could proceed with listing the topics in front of him at which he periodically looked.

The instructor interrupted the Arabic conversation twice, first asking if they had the problem worked out yet and later saying "OK..." in an attempt to bring the discussion back to English. She was ignored. After the discussants had apparently worked away the misunderstanding and/or non-understanding and reached agreement, they stopped talking and nonverbally acknowledged the others in the group. The Libyan facilitator then summarized in English what the end result of the conversation must have been—that because Jesus never died, He will return at the end of the world, a belief shared in common with Christians.
From the Muslim group the instructor moved to the fallen-away Catholics, all of whom were Central or South Americans. Their discussion was of a personal nature, focused on their past experiences with Catholicism and reasons for becoming disenchanted with it. Almost all of the conversation was carried by two CCC students (a female from the Virgin Islands and a male from Venezuela). The other three members of the group (ESL students) took little or no initiative in contributing to the discussion. During this first visit of the instructor to the group, the participants did not appear to be task-oriented or even concerned they had a presentation to prepare in that no references whatsoever were made to the task. Instead they spent their time exploring what common perceptions they held about the Catholic religion.

The initial part of their conversation revolved around the practice of kneeling before statues, confessing sins to a priest, and being discouraged from reading and interpreting the Bible for oneself. The two actively involved discussants made no distinction between explanation and evaluation in their comments. They seemed mostly concerned in displaying their disdain for institutionalized religion. They did this by pointing out incongruities between the doctrines and practices of the established church and their perceptions of the real meaning of religious faith and the Bible. Kneeling before statues was equated with worshiping idols by the woman from the Virgin Islands and was supported by the Venezuelan as contrary to what God said in the Bible.
Most of the Venezuelan's contributions to the discussion were references to the Bible which he claimed to have read and studied extensively, a practice both participants said Latin Catholics were discouraged from engaging in. He took the position within the group of being the authority on the Bible. The soft, monotone counselor voice he used to relate his "personal experience" with it was a fascinating apparent attempt to draw others into the experience of his enlightenment. His experience with the Holy Book was used throughout to substantiate the validity of his falling away from Catholicism.

Direct communication with God as opposed to confession through a priest who is another human being was discussed by the two participants. In addition, the wealth of the Church and hypocrisy were discussed with occasional nods of apparent understanding and/or agreement by the other participants.

The Venezuelan initiated comments about a conversation he had listened to between the instructor and an American student on their return trip from the two-day practicum session the students had had at Deercreek State Park. The topic of that conversation was the instructor's lack of ability to relate to her church's minister or his sermons. The Venezuelan did not directly question the instructor about why relating to the minister was important to her but rather described what he had heard in her conversation. Both outside researchers felt that criticism of the instructor's values was implicit in the student's remarks. He had
interpreted her comments to mean she was more concerned about the minister of the church than the substance of Christianity, viz., the teachings of Christ and the Bible.

The instructor did not respond to his comments but nodded and said nothing. One researcher described this as an ideological difference which caused a breakdown in communication. Since the instructor made no attempt to explain the reasons for her comments nor to support the validity for not attending church regularly based on this criteria, the outside researcher interpreted the instructor's behavior as a concentrated effort to deny her natural reaction to the student's criticism. Thus, in the researcher's opinion, the student's understanding of the instructor's position suffered. The same researcher saw this as typical of the sessions thus far in which people have shied away from confronting differences and, therefore, not achieved any deep level of understanding. The researcher speculated that possibly at this point in time no one was comfortable enough to take issue on points personal to the self for fear of provoking hostile encounters.

The instructor in actuality did not want to enter the conversation because she had already spent several minutes with this group. More importantly, she had become aware of the fact that the East Asian group was struggling since no conversation was occurring between the members who were looking at her obviously waiting for help. Thus, she excused herself and joined them.
The outside researcher's interpretation is a valid one in terms of understanding not being achieved when differences are not confronted and discussed. It is probably not an interpretation that would have been arrived at had the tapes only been analyzed by the instructor/researcher. Undoubtedly her awareness of the pedagogical reasons why she had not entered into the conversation would have interfered with making such an interpretation. The importance of having the classroom communication described by researchers who were not participants in the communication as well as by one who was involved in it was again demonstrated. The different interpretations given to communication phenomena thus far in this study suggest important considerations for research on classroom communication. It appears that research done solely by observers not participating in the communication event would not carry as high a degree of reliability and internal validity as research which provided for some measure of the teacher's analysis of the same data. The pedagogical decisions made by the teacher cannot be ignored in interpreting the communication events in a classroom.

When the teacher returned to the fallen-away Catholic group at the end of the hour, she asked if they had decided what they were going to do in their presentation. The Venezuelan mentioned previously was functioning as the group leader. He responded that they were going to explain what had made each of them fall away from the Catholic Church.
Since their fallen-away state had been established as their commonality and they apparently had explained and clarified that for each other, they were now addressing the task by determining who was going to say what.

The ESL students in the group were now participating in the discussion with the CCC students. One female Venezuelan ESL student whose speaking and listening abilities were poor was seen animatedly talking when the teacher had moved out of the range of the microphone's ability to capture the conversation. This would suggest that she was probably speaking in Spanish. Her lack of participation and blank expressions in the earlier part of the hour indicated she did not understand much of what was being discussed except an occasional word (e.g., confession) which sparked a nod of recognition. Since all of the participants were Spanish-speaking, it is probably safe to assume that their discussion was conducted in Spanish when the instructor and camera were not present.

In contrast to the first two groups who spent no time identifying the nature of the task, the East Asian group spent all of their time attempting to grasp its scope. Group members seemed to perceive themselves as lacking the ability to articulate with any degree of confidence the religious/spiritual aspects embodied in Buddhism and Shintoism. Researchers described the group with the following descriptive expressions: at a loss as to how to begin; confused; timid; unconfident; uncomfortable; self-conscious
of their foreignness; and expressing nonverbally that the task before them was next to impossible. The group members' nonverbal expressions were supported by statements made repeatedly to the instructor that explaining their religious notions was very difficult, especially in English.

The instructor attempted to help them understand the direction the presentation might take by encouraging them to discuss different aspects of Buddhism and Shintoism with which she was familiar. She accomplished this by stating her own limited knowledge and/or by asking questions about such aspects as temples and shrines, Buddha, reincarnation, religion/philosophy, and the many Shinto gods. She suggested they think about how the religious/spiritual beliefs are manifest in what people do in daily life and about the meaning of the religions to the people. In the researchers' opinions, the group seemed to gain a somewhat less ambiguous understanding of the nature of the task through the discussion with the teacher.

Both outside researchers attempted speculations as to why this group had so much difficulty and appeared so unconfident. They cited language problems and cultural differences as probable causes. Although the instructor helped the group identify possible topics to discuss in their panel presentation, explanation and clarification of what they believed were simply not present to any extent in their discussion. In some cases, explanation seemed impossible for them because of lack of words in English.
to express their ideas. The two Thais were ESL students and not as proficient in the language as the Japanese CCC student. On one occasion, even she said things were different in Japan but she did not know how to express the Japanese notion in English.

One researcher speculated that some of the words used in the discussion such as "pray," "worship," "God," and "religion" were labels for Western concepts which made sense in terms of the students' experiences of or knowledge about the Western context but were not terms they think in with respect to their own cultural milieus. For example, the Japanese student attempted to explain how Japanese "appreciate things" and "give thanks with a meal." She was careful to say it was not praying but giving thanks. A Christian would not make the distinction. The teacher's use of the word "worship" drew blank stares from all participants although the Thai woman talked about visiting the temple. Perhaps for her worship means attending church service in terms of the Western context, while in the East going to temple serves either the purpose of celebration or making requests. They all seemed to equate "religion" with some public practice and not with doctrine until the teacher introduced the notion that Buddhism is also a philosophy, a way of life.

The teacher's introduction of the notion that Buddhism is more than a religion--that it is also a philosophy--produced a clear case of nonunderstanding on the part of
the male Thai student. He thought the teacher had said that it was a philosophy and corrected her by saying, "No, I think it is a philosophy and a religion." She did not point out that he had not understood her but agreed with him and asked the group to think about how Buddhism is shown or "manifest" in what people do. The word "beliefs" seemed to be comprehended by all but no one pursued beliefs in any depth.

Outside researchers summed up their speculations as to the "unique dynamic" (one of their expressions) apparently at work in the group's difficulty in the following ways. One said their difficulty was probably attributable to the fact their religions are difficult to define in a standardized manner. The other said that perhaps the reason was because Asian religions, unlike Islam and Christianity, are not built on a specific set of doctrines, proselytization and a book, but rather on personal experience, interpersonal relationships with a teacher, and shared silent introspection.

The East Asian group was only minimally involved in attempting to set their religions into comparative perspective to others. One example, mentioned before, was the Japanese student's explanation of appreciating things and giving thanks. Another example was a comment made by the female Thai that Buddhism was not strict like other religions but depended on the person. She also made a reference to Buddhism being based on the moon, like Islam. Questions
or comments about Christian religious practices or beliefs and how they might be different than or similar to their own were not initiated by the group. The teacher did, however, attempt to point out differences in regard to Buddhism (e.g., reincarnation) and tell the students that they should try to explain in their presentation how Buddhism and Shintoism were similar to and different than other religions.

In the first Catholic group to be filmed, the level of interest and involvement among participants was high. Frequent interruptions and pointed questions occurred throughout the discussion which was marked by the greatest level of passion expressed thus far in the videotaped sessions. An intracultural struggle between two Venezuelan Catholics provided an interesting contrast in group dynamics to the high level of unanimity which had been displayed by the Muslims.

One of the Venezuelans (the only male in the group) had seated himself physically above the others by sitting on the desk portion of the chair. He spent most of his conversational efforts trying to bring his level of power to the same position. The other Venezuelan discussant was female. Both were CCC students. A Lebanese-Brazilian woman (an ESL student) was also involved in the discussion. An American CCC female who obviously understood the heated discussion tried repeatedly to contribute but was cut off by the male student.
Argumentation and explanation were well-developed between the two Venezuelans and the Lebanese-Brazilian. The Venezuelan male kept insisting upon the importance of individual thought and feeling while the two females argued the value of tradition and hierarchy in the Catholic religion. The argument hinged upon who should be the judge of the spiritual/philosophical meaning of the Bible. The two females argued that the interpretation of learned authorities took precedence over individual personal interpretation. The Venezuelan female presented an interesting argument from analogy, viz., a physician would better understand a medical book than a patient. This argument was rejected by the Venezuelan male on the grounds that the Bible is an exceptional case among books of knowledge and is not like a medical book. He argued that it is possible to interpret the Bible oneself even if one doesn't have a teacher to help.

When one of the participants mentioned the word "confession," the teacher interrupted to interject that confession was an aspect that needed to be discussed. The female Venezuelan who obviously understood the teacher's concern that the discussion was not on target as to the task made her own attempt to turn the discussion to its purpose. She asked the teacher if their conversation was supposed to be about the Catholic religion or their own personal beliefs in regard to it. She went on to state that her fellow Venezuelan was discussing the latter. The teacher responded
that they needed to discuss specific aspects of Catholicism. The male student ignored both the teacher and the female Venezuelan and continued with the argument about interpreting the Bible for oneself.

As the instructor moved away from the group, he was seen leaning toward the others and using a pencil as an extension of his hand to make his points. The three women all started to talk at the same time and were cut off with, "Don't compare the Bible to a medical book."

In the opinion of the researchers the male discussant was not at all interested in interaction that consisted of sharing ideas. He prevented some members from voicing their opinions by his perpetual interruptions and the domineering, aggressive approach he took in order to monopolize the conversation. Interruption, as viewed thus far in these videotapes, took on new meaning. On the one hand, it is a strong indicator of understanding when it is used to question, ask for clarification, or contribute new information pertinent to the topic under discussion. On the other hand, it serves as an impediment to understanding when it is engaged in for the purpose of monopolizing a conversation. In this group, it was both.

When the instructor returned to this group after checking on the progress of the other Catholic group, the disagreement had not been resolved. The teacher interrupted the male who was gesturing profusely and still trying to force his personal interpretation of the religion on the
others. She asked the students what they were going to discuss in their presentation. The male responded, "We made a mistake." The use of the plural pronoun was seen by the primary researcher as the student's unwillingness to accept sole responsibility for the direction the discussion had taken. The female Venezuelan directly addressed him to state what she had implied earlier—that they needed to talk about Catholicism, not their personal opinions. He again stated, "We made a mistake," obviously aware that the previous discussion was not appropriate for their presentation. The instructor informed the group of some of the topics the other Catholic group had been discussing and suggested they get together with them to plan who would present which topics. As the videotape ended, other participants who had been actively paying attention to the discussion but who had remained silent throughout it began to discuss possible topics for presentation. Both outside researchers stated that without the instructor's attempts to get the discussion task-oriented, the group might never have addressed the purpose of the meeting.

The instructor spent little time in the second Catholic group. When she arrived, they were task-focused in discussing which of the topics they had listed should be presented. Most of their questions to the instructor were procedural.
How much time was to be alloted to each group and were they to combine with the other group?) They asked one question pertaining to content. (Were they supposed to discuss things central to the Christian faith or specific aspects of Catholicism?) The teacher replied the latter. She then told them to get together with the other Catholic group to decide on topics and spokespersons for their one-hour joint presentation.

One significant communication phenomenon occurred during the filming of this group which was described by both the primary researcher and one of the outside researchers. An American female who had taken a course in comparative religions mentioned to the others that some of the Muslims in her religion course had not understood about Jesus as God's son and about the Virgin Mary. She went on to say that she thought if the group simply explained these two aspects, the Muslims would understand.

The primary researcher described the comment as naive but sincere, and reflecting a framework from which the uninitiated typically operate in intercultural or cross-cultural encounters. That framework is based on the assumption that one's own beliefs encompass truth and that explaining them is all that is necessary in order for those with contrasting beliefs to understand. Not included in that framework is any acute awareness of the relative nature of cultural or religious truth. Such a framework, while
providing for optimistic entry into cross-cultural encounters, often sets participants on a collision course with each other. The difficulty the other may have in understanding truth which is not his/her own is usually always underestimated.

The other researcher saw the American's comment as an ideological difference which embodied the potential for communication impasse, withdrawal or hostility. Describing the comment, the researcher stated,

The means of categorizing differing beliefs as "misconceptions" could lead to a failure to understand the other and result in an impasse in communication between the two groups. Perception of what is truth then can lead to a breakdown in communication. What is even more amazing is the American's comment that she believes if her group explains the truth to the Muslims, they will understand. She does not realize that their beliefs are as real and true to them as hers are to her. It is almost as though she feels they can be brought to "light" and that there is no question as to what the truth is. Failure to really recognize the difference in beliefs as such could eventually lead her to withdraw from the interchange or develop hostility toward the Muslims.

Foreshadows of the future thus were cast; withdrawal and hostility were characteristics of the next session.

**Practicum Session 6 Videotape**

If the evaluative criterion for successful intercultural communication is the possibility of viewing the other's world from his or her perspective and widening one's own horizons (Pilotta, 1983), the communication in this session was undoubtedly a dismal failure. If students gained an
understanding of just how exceedingly difficult it is to take up the same position and perspective as the other in order to understand the other's self-interpretation in terms of that perspective, the session may have been minimally successful.

What was supposed to be a Catholic panel presentation turned into a heated Christian-Muslim debate which clearly polarized panelists and Muslims and precluded most other students in the audience from any active verbal participation. In page after page, researchers described the problem-riddled communication and attempted to analyze what went wrong. Very little attention was paid to indicators of understanding or methods used to attempt to bring it about.

Outside researchers respectively summarized the session thus:

By the end of the period, it appeared as though no one had gained any real understanding of where the other was coming from. There were no indications that either group, the Christians or the Muslims, had gained insight into the other's beliefs.

In short, understanding, when it surfaced at all, occurred only in abbreviated form usually of isolated concepts, because the systematic character of doctrine providing the coherence of the Christian religion as a world view never emerged.

The primary researcher traced the interaction through its many phases of conflict, describing occasional participant attempts to reestablish harmony. She focused mostly on impediments to understanding and summarized her list of attempts to facilitate understanding by stating that "attempts" in this session were not closely aligned with "indicators" because very few indicators existed.
The voluminous mass of descriptive material generated by researchers seemed to fall into two broad categories: (1) the panel format and general atmosphere; and (2) conceptual difficulties related to language fluency, semantic problems, and differences in religious and cultural assumptions and logic. These categories and the relationships between them which were described by the three researchers will be discussed.

Three major conclusions in regard to the panel format were drawn. One, the format changed the dynamics of the interaction between participants and created a we-they situation. Two, the format broke down because the panel was not prepared. Three, as an apparent result of the breakdown in the format, the audience and panel's behavioral expectations of each other became vague, creating confusion and conflict.

The introduction of the panel format changed the dynamics of the interaction. Previously small groups of people had sat together with little spatial distance separating them while they exchanged ideas and information. Dominance within the groups had been established through the verbal and reasoning ability of individuals and the participatory initiative taken by them. The panel format introduced a rigid, formally recognized and proxemically manifest we-they situation. The panel sat behind a table to the left of the camera and the audience sat to the right in rows. There were more people on the panel than could
sit at the table; thus, the other panel members sat behind them. This set up an audience assumption that those who sat at the table were the "presenters" or dominant panel members, i.e., the experts on Catholicism and those in charge of the communication flow. The perceived reality of the we-they situation was demonstrated when one male Catholic who had not been in attendance at the planning session the previous week wanted to contribute to the discussion. He got up from the audience side and moved to the panel side, filling a chair left vacant at the end of the table.

The panel format collapsed because the panel was not prepared. The session began with a brief discussion on saints and the Trinity by three female panelists (American, Venezuelan, and Lebanese-Brazilian) seated at the table. Two American panelists seated behind added some remarks intended to clarify what the table panelists had said. This brief discussion was followed by general fumbling on the panel's part as to what to do next. The panel members never at this time nor at any time gave any indication they had a prearranged agenda or functioning leader. Their "presentation" lacked momentum; it was marked by long silent periods and nonverbally expressed uneasiness on their parts. The American female panelist seated at the table tried a bit of comic relief to fill a lull penetrated only by her squeaking chair. She turned and asked other panel members if they were going to speak stating she
couldn't move because her chair squeaked. The Venezuelan woman at the table attempted further explication of the Trinity after which more dead silence fell. The American woman then opened the discussion to questions in an apparent attempt to cover the panel's lack of preparation and ability to establish a direction for the presentation.

At that point, the presentation ended. Its end can be attributed to the instructor. She asked the first question in order to fill the silent void left by the panel's call for questions and an audience which did not come forth with any. By introducing the question often asked by Muslim students, namely, how could God let Jesus be killed, she initiated a series of questions from the audience which put the panel members on the defensive. It is probable they were already headed in that direction because of their inability to get their presentation off the ground. However, once the questions began, they remained on the defensive. One outside researcher described the instructor's input in the following way:

The instructor introduced a question that the panel could not handle, and one which one segment of the audience was particularly adept at pressing. Hence, she set them up. While I surmise that the instructor was attempting to get the panel into gear, in effect she cut short the "presentation" part of the panel arrangement and thereby dramatically abbreviated the information exchange portion. This inaugurated a prolonged period of partisan debate.

The introduction of the question thematically centered the discussion on Jesus issues. Question after question related to Christianity rather than to Catholicism.
specifically poured forth in the ensuing intense and often out-of-control discussion. With the panel's early call for questions and the instructor's response, the panel's mechanism for introducing new topics broke down. Therefore, the panelists never developed or realized their roles as experts on Catholic doctrine and practices. They did not articulate a context of doctrine and concepts to which they could refer their audience or show the coherency of doctrines on various issues. New topics and concepts emerged only as counterarguments or randomly as questions were asked in the atmosphere of adversarial representation that pervaded the session.

With the breakdown of the panel format, both the panel and the audience's expectations of each other in terms of behavioral norms became ambiguous. The discovery that the situation was not evolving as anticipated and people were not responding as expected created confusion and conflict. Both the panel and the audience undoubtedly began with the expectations that the panel members would first discuss their religion and the audience would listen. Then the audience would ask questions and listen while the panel answered since they were the "experts." Neither side fulfilled the expectations of the other.

Once the panel relinquished control of the designation of topics and the questions started, they lost control of the flow of communication. They found themselves instead occupying the position of attempting to answer questions which were often asked in rapid-fire succession by the Muslims.
The panelists were undoubtedly perplexed that the audience did not passively listen but often interrupted their answers to tell them they were not clearly answering their questions or, in some cases, even addressing the specific question asked. While the panel members were supposed to be the experts, the Muslims were obviously not satisfied with their answers since they kept asking the same questions again and again in altered form. The panel probably did not expect to be asked to give reasons for the content of their Christian beliefs because their reactions indicated they were perplexed by the questions. Researchers surmised they did not expect the questions, had never been asked such questions before, and/or could not understand the intent of the questions.

Concerning the panel's confusion as to the intent of the questions, the primary researcher theorized that the panel may not have anticipated the Muslim's knowledge about Christianity since the reverse case did not exist. In her opinion, the panel members' lack of knowledge of Islam presented a problem in their understanding of the questions because the Muslims had the ability to ask about Christianity from a framework that allowed them to compare it to Islam in their own minds. However, the panelists had little or no reference to the set of Islamic beliefs underlying the questions and, therefore, no comparative framework from which to see their intent. This aspect of the communication will be discussed in greater detail at the end of this analysis.
The Muslims undoubtedly did not expect the reactions the panel gave to some of their questions. These reactions surfaced most often when the panel did not appear to understand the intent of the questions. They ranged from: (1) posture-shifting and stammering; (2) laughing and making comments under their breath to each other to indicate they couldn't believe the question; and (3) dismissing the question as ridiculous. In the latter case, a panel member told the Muslim asking for clarification of what distinguished Jesus from the other prophets that he should read the history of Jesus. In another instance, a UAE student became very upset with the panel when they all laughed at his question, "Why is God still alive?" He replied, "This is not a joke," and continued to explain quite seriously why he had asked the question.

The panel, as well as the researchers, interpreted the Muslims' questions as requests for some kind of concrete verification that Jesus was the son of God, the incarnation. One Muslim asked how they could prove Jesus was the real son of God. Another said they wanted to know the facts concerning the shroud thought to be that of Jesus. They wanted a reason why God would choose such a means as Jesus to convey his message. The logical arguments the panel attempted as to why God would choose to be embodied in Jesus, a son on Earth, were counter to Islamic logic and will be explained later when logical differences between the students are discussed.
The panel repeatedly used the concepts of mystery, faith, belief, and beyond human explanation as answers to the Muslims' questions. They could provide little explanation and certainly no proof except their faith which they evaluated on several occasions as so strong, it made them believe. The panel never attempted to explain the concepts of mystery, faith, etc., but only used them as reasons for the inadequacy of the explanation of doctrine being offered. A fallen-away Catholic in the audience summed it up best by saying, "We are never going to explain to you--our faith made us believe." In the words of one outside researcher, "In other words, it only makes good sense that you don't understand us, because we ourselves do not understand." In the words of the other outside researcher,

Substantiation of the Christian beliefs contributed to a breakdown in the communication. Christians had to resort to defending their beliefs by saying they didn't know, it was a mystery, they had to accept things on faith, etc. This wasn't verifiable to the Muslims as they were looking for proof or facts to verify belief whereas in the final analysis Christians have to depend on faith.

The one American male who had moved early in the session from the audience to the panel side assumed the role of the authority on Catholic theology. When he kept repeatedly being told he was not answering the questions, he resorted to making statements that it had taken him several years of study to try to find the answers and he couldn't explain them in a few minutes. He dropped out
of the conversation for a long period of time, still listening but contributing nothing. His withdrawal was significant because he had become one of the dominant spokespersons.

The defensive posture assumed by panelists was most clearly demonstrated, however, by the American woman who had opened the discussion to questions. She clearly interpreted the questions being asked as a threat. Like the other dominant American spokesperson, she also withdrew from the interaction for a long period of time. In the words of one researcher, "She withdrew because she interpreted that her beliefs were being attacked and she couldn't counter with reasons for them that satisfied the Muslims." During her withdrawal, which began several minutes prior to the discussion's most volatile point, she leafed through a book in front of her and appeared to be ignoring the discussion. She would occasionally look away from the book and the audience in exasperation. She turned at one point and asked the American male sitting next to her what time it was. After the most explosive outbreak had quieted, she made a long speech in an apparent attempt to get the discussion back to its original intent which had been violated in her estimation.

Her speech indicated defensiveness to researchers and also that even the notion of "presentation" had become an argumentative position. She stated she thought the purpose of the presentation had been to share their beliefs.
In regard to the panel, she said,

There will be a diversity of opinion because we're all different, but there is a commonality that joins us--our belief in God. Your purpose is to explain why you believe the way you do, but the purpose wasn't to say or infer that because I believe this, you may be wrong. I think the purpose was enlightenment--accepting our differences and the things which hold us together. We've gotten off the track.

Although the tone of the discussion became more subdued and the pace slower after her speech, the questions returned to Jesus. A student from the UAE calmly turned back to the question he had asked before her admonishment; viz., what was God's reason to have a son. The American woman implied in her response to him that she did not wish to be questioned about her faith. After stating twice she knew of no other means He could have used and further stating that there had to be some identifiable source that linked God and man together on Earth for us to understand God, she said,

I can't explain it--it's a mystery but I believe it. I accept it because it is my faith and my faith is a gift.

At the point in time at which her speech came, it was no longer possible to reinstate or reestablish the intended purpose and context merely by reminding everyone what it was. As the whole situation had evolved, participants had a difficult time knowing when explanation of a concept ended and debate began. The situation encouraged the conclusion on respondents' parts that every question was potentially a challenge. Thus it became virtually impossible
to ask neutral fact-requesting questions and to provide information-sharing answers because participants were uncertain of each other's intentions and had difficulty reading the motivation underlying the questions. For example, late in the discussion the Libyan Muslim asked about the reasons for celibacy. In spite of the fact he stated he didn't want to argue—he just wanted to know—the discussion following turned into an argument between the other participants over the merits of celibacy. In the description of one outside researcher, "The coordination of subjective responses became a treacherous adventure because the expected cueing had broken down." Interpretation of the other had become extremely cloudy.

The majority of taped interaction prior to this session was devoted to description and factual information exchange pertaining to customs. The previous interaction reflected a practiced process orientation by participants who attempted to achieve language clarity in order to keep the process moving. The process orientation also consisted of comprehension checks by participants who verified and clarified to each other throughout the discussion their understanding of the topics.

This session, in contrast, was marked by a thematic or content orientation in which participants tried to articulate their personal religious beliefs within an environment dominated by mutual disagreement and thus the probability of counterargumentation. The concern for language clarity,
comprehension checks, and verifying and clarifying understanding to each other, i.e., the process concern, seemed in large part to disappear. Much greater attention was paid by participants to the significance, accuracy, and implications of what was being said. Communication attempts reflected less concern for the obligation to communicate than the need to make points and have points made clearly and cogently. Participants were intent upon what they understood rather than indicating to others that they did understand through repetition, paraphrasing, and other methods previously used. Whatever the success or failure of participants in examining and comprehending each other's views, communication had become spontaneous, self-disclosive, natural and pointed. Differences were indeed finally confronted.

In terms of assessing understanding, differences in the religious and cultural assumptions and logic of the two groups involved received a great deal of descriptive attention by researchers. In addition to the differences in religious world views, language fluency and semantic problems were related to participants' difficulties in understanding the concepts under discussion. Researchers' findings in regard to these three categories will be discussed but no attempt will be made to separate them because they are intertwined.

Students were required to display a higher level of semantic sophistication and awareness of language nuance
than previously. In addition, of course, they had to be able to articulate their subjective beliefs in a debate atmosphere. This contest of ideas reversed the relation between context and word as regards language comprehension. Previously, because speakers were simply describing customs, experiences, etc., auditors did not need to understand the meaning of specific words, indeed even grammatically key words, to grasp generally at least what was being said. It was possible to use the context of the entire statement or set of statements to interpret the implied intended meaning of individual words. However, in this battle of differing religious viewpoints, grasping accurately the precise semantic intentions of particular words was the sine qua non for understanding entire statements (e.g., host, son, fusion, mystical union, trinity, and revelation, to mention a few). Hence, the auditors could not use context to interpret words but had to know the meaning of particular words to grasp entire segments of the conversation.

In addition, many times a level of language fluency was needed that went beyond lexical or dictionary understanding and grasped symbolic and metaphorical usage of the English language. This phenomenon, coupled with differences in the religious and cultural assumptions and logic underlying some of the key words upon which whole arguments hinged, made understanding a very tenuous affair. Exchange propositions, rather than descriptions, required in addition to semantic discrimination also a grasp of the
logic of the different positions taken by participants. In other words, speakers and listeners not only had to see what things meant but how they were connected with other elements in the system of religious and cultural logic of participants. Conceptual unclarity in part resulted from an incomplete grasp of the interrelationships between various aspects of doctrines. The following discussion of content will attempt to illustrate these ideas.

The majority of the content focused on Jesus as the son of God. Comprehending the concept of "son" as used by both Christians and Muslims was crucial to the development of understanding between participants. It was essential to know that son was a metaphor based upon a relationship as employed by Christians and that it was a direct kinship term used in its literal, biological sense by Muslims. Problems throughout the discussion occurred over the symbolic use of words and interpretation of religious events by Christians and the literal designations given to the same words and events by Muslims. Undoubtedly this problem is related to the one described earlier by researchers in which Christians relied on faith, mystery, belief, and beyond human explanation as answers to questions for which Muslims wanted facts. Indeed, the differences in assumptions and logic which grow out of Christians' symbolic interpretations and Muslims' literal interpretations may be the major impediment to Christians and Muslims being able to take up the same position and
perspective as the other in order to understand the other's self-interpretation in terms of that perspective.

The Libyan Muslim CCC student who tried on various occasions to facilitate understanding between the two groups specifically asked the Catholics what they meant by the word "son." When the question was asked, the Catholics all shifted positions in their seats, looked at each other and stammered. They were unable previous to this question or after it to clarify what they meant by son and how they distinguished the biological meaning of the word from the usage of it given to Jesus.

The best explanation to the question was provided by a Venezuelan fallen-away Catholic in the audience. (He was one of only two people from the audience besides the Muslims who contributed anything to the discussion.) He explained that God put a part of his nature into the man Jesus. He pointed out the notion of son as a metaphorical way of explaining the relationship between God and Jesus; namely, they shared the same nature or essence. He quoted the Bible, saying that the word was made flesh and lived among us. He then said the body died, not the word. He described the son Jesus as something that came from God but stated that did not mean biologically. He went on to say that Christ didn't have to be called son; He could be called whatever anyone wanted to call Him. This confused the Muslims because the whole Christian emphasis upon the role of Jesus as the son of God then made no sense.
To Christians, belief in Christ as God's son and in the incarnation is central. Muslims do not believe that Christ was the son of God. He was a prophet, as were Abraham, Moses, others, and finally, Mohammad, through which God's final, complete message came. Christ's virgin birth from Mary is accepted but His death is rejected. He was not crucified but taken directly to heaven; people only thought He died on the cross. Jesus will come again at the end of the world to establish the Muslim religion everywhere. For Muslims, Islam is "the ultimate form of religion because it is in fact the simplest and clearest. It is just the essence of religion, plain and perfect submission to the absolute God in all areas of life" (Ellwood, 1976, pp. 318-319).

The explanations of the Catholics were often not explicit and did not make sense to the Muslims in terms of the religious truths they knew. The Catholics many times could not understand the intent of the questions because they were based on Islamic religious logic growing out of beliefs with which the Catholics were not familiar. The one student in the audience who could possibly have best facilitated understanding (the American former Catholic convert to Islam) played the devil's advocate until near the end of the discussion when it was too late. She tried at that point to explain that the problem the Muslims had in understanding Jesus was that He stood between man and God which is counter to the Islamic belief about the direct relationship that should and does exist between man and God.
Much like a debate, the audience in particular kept looking for flaws in the arguments and attempted to identify fallacies throughout. Differences in the religious and cultural assumptions and logic were revealed in the questions asked and comments made by the Muslims.

If Christ was God Himself, how could God experience death? God is perfect and death is a flaw (not a perfect act). If Jesus was God's son and died, why is God, the father, still alive? This was the question asked by a UAE Muslim who felt compelled to explain the reason for his question because the panel laughed at it. He did so by stating a cyclical logic of life. (God created Adam and Eve who had children and died. Their children had children and died, and so on until now.) If Jesus was God's son, wasn't Adam also his son? Did God have two sons? Neither Adam nor Jesus had a biological father. Jesus was both part God and part man, but aren't we all? Isn't God in all of us? If God created Jesus because there had to be someone with whom we could identify, what distinguished Him from the other prophets? They were all special people who came with miracles and messages from God; they were all people with whom we could identify. Were they all sons of God? Why only Jesus? If God is all powerful, why would he need a son to make people believe in him anyway? If Jesus was chosen as the way for us to identify with God (because he was God's son who lived like us), why aren't Catholic priests and nuns allowed to marry and have sex? And if experience
is not knowledge as regards priests' ability to help people solve their problems, why do Catholics say the only way people could come to know God was to experience Him on Earth?

Researchers agreed that the conceptual difficulties and unclarity in the discussion stemmed in good part from the two groups' different assumptions and logic which were based on different notions of religious truth and reality. One outside researcher stated that the beliefs the Muslims had on the crucial issues of Jesus as the son of God and as part of God precluded any understanding of the Catholic position. The other stated that Christians presumed the qualitative difference between man and God and were intent upon explaining how God could become man and still retain all the properties of divinity. Islamic questioning generally emphasized that Jesus was God only to the extent that all men partake of divinity; hence, they concluded that Christians either diminished deity by claiming that He had a son or were raising a particular man to the statue of near blasphemy.

Although there did not appear to be much Muslim understanding of the Christian beliefs concerning Jesus, a point of agreement was reached by participants, specifically, to give up the discussion of the Jesus issues. This occurred after the American's speech about the purpose of the presentation and the comments made by the fallen-away Panamanian Catholic in the audience who said they were never going to
be able to explain—that their faith made them believe. When one of the three UAE Muslims continued to ask questions about Jesus, the Libyan Muslim said, "I think [name of Panamanian] has already answered the question; it is a matter of faith." His comment indicated to researchers that he was trying to get discussants to reestablish some semblance of harmony and give up the nonproductive debate. Perhaps it also indicated that he at least understood Christians' apparent self-interpretation in terms of their belief in Jesus. Faith is all that is necessary; explanations why are not possible and not needed.

Since the researcher has stated previously that her involvement in the interaction is a part of the data that has to be accounted for, a few brief comments are in order. After she asked the question that precipitated the heated discussion, she purposely did not intervene. (At the point the discussion was completely out-of-control, she was filmed biting her fingernails.) Playing the dual role of the teacher/researcher in a cross-cultural communication study often placed her in a position of forced choice. The choice was between intervening pedagogically to try to aid understanding and letting the communication occur naturally without intervention to see what would happen. In this case, had she not been doing research, she most probably would have intervened at some point to try to slow the pace, change the atmosphere, or attempt facilitation by paraphrasing or asking participants to clarify their comments.
Letting conflict arise between diverse participants in a multicultural classroom is always a pedagogical dilemma when one has cross-cultural understanding as an aim. This is true regardless of whether one is doing research or not. Without conflict, relationships are unnatural. With too much, hostility and often withdrawal from communication (at least temporarily) occur. Without conflict, attempts to reestablish harmony for its own sake and, more importantly, attempts to understand the differences which caused the conflict have no reason to occur. The teacher in this study is predisposed to conflict as a necessary result of students openly confronting their differences and learning about each other and themselves through the experience. Unaware that the teacher/researcher had this bias, both outside researchers lent support to it in their descriptions of the sessions prior to this one where they saw participants not confronting their differences as not contributing to understanding.

After the hour of combined ESL and CCC class time, the teacher had another hour of class with the ESL students only. About the last ten minutes of this videotape spilled over into that period. The ESL students and two CCC students who stayed were filmed attempting to analyze what had caused the conflict. The two CCC students were the Libyan Muslim and the Venezuelan Catholic panelist who had been a dominant spokeswoman. One outside researcher categorized this interaction as an "attempt to maintain the communicative
relationship." It was described thus:

After the discussion the people who met tried to gain a perspective on what had happened. The group seemed to want to be reconciled. Everyone acted like they were trying to reaffirm their relationship--to put the pieces back together again in order to go on as a group.

The value of having discussions about religion was seriously questioned during this time by a Thai ESL student who was upset that the discussion had turned into a debate. The teacher stated that she believed participants could learn from and about each other by discussing their religious/spiritual world views because they were an important aspect of culture. She also suggested that perhaps some of the questions had been asked in good faith even though they were perceived as challenges. This idea was the result of a comment made to her as the hour of combined time had ended. One of the Muslim UAE students who had asked the panel several questions turned to the instructor and asked, "Why was that American woman on the panel so upset?"

The Venezuelan CCC panelist restated what the American spokeswoman had said--that the purpose of the discussions was to share what they believed. She said they were not trying to convince anyone or to get doubts off their minds; they just wanted to share their religion and know about others. She stated she personally was curious about Islam. The Thai persisted saying it was a debate rather than an explanation. To this the Libyan responded with what he believed to be the problem. The panel was supposed to
have had a presentation, but they only talked for five minutes and opened the discussion to questions. Then question after question occurred and it got out of hand. He went on to say to the Venezuelan panelist,

If you invite people to ask questions, it means you want them to question you so you can tell them what you know. Just because people ask questions doesn't mean they want to make doubts in your faith; they just want to know the answers.

The discrepancy between the Muslims' so-called requests for information and the panel's interpretation of the questions as threats is an interesting cross-cultural communication problem. The primary researcher speculated at the time that part of the problem may have been related to the ESL Muslims' intonational patterns of questioning. Their questions were asked in a snappy, already-concluded tone of voice which gave the impression they weren’t really interested in listening to the answers. In addition to their questioning tone, these students tended to gang up when asking questions. One person's question was often followed or interrupted by another's question or comments in the same vein of thought before the panel members had had a chance to absorb the first question. One has to wonder to what extent both the questioning strategies and intonation used by these Arabic speakers who were new to the country contributed to the discrepancy in the ways participants perceived the intent of the questions.

The communication of Session 6 is very significant in analyzing the development of understanding between
participants in the practicum sessions because it does not follow some of the previous patterns which emerged from the data. Whereas previous interaction was marked by a process orientation, this was marked by a content orientation.

In earlier sessions, researchers saw the lack of confrontation of differences by participants as not contributing to understanding. Yet in this session where differences were finally probed, researchers' agreed that understanding of the other's perspectives did not appear to be achieved.

In previous sessions researchers described many indicators of understanding; in this one they recorded few and described instead impediments to its occurrence. For these reasons, the categories of understanding indicators which previously emerged from the data will be compared to findings in this session. It is necessary at this point to explore the linkages between the categories in an effort to determine those which appear to be significant to the development of understanding.

Researchers' descriptions of this session contained far more of the content of what was discussed than previous sessions. This lends support to their statements that the session was characterized by a content orientation; it also suggests that assessing understanding was more dependent upon the content of the discussion. The process orientation was given the greatest attention by researchers in Session 4. There they stated listeners seemed to feel obligated to acknowledge their understanding of the speaker.
Either nonverbal cues of comprehension or verbal repetition or summarization by the listeners to verify their understanding occurred. In this session, listeners who were verbally involved in the discussion seemed only intent on getting on with the discussion by asking related questions, offering further comments or providing counterpositions to those just expressed. They did not engage in head-nodding, uh-huhs, repetition or summarization to verify their understanding to the speaker but occasionally repeated what had been said as the vehicle for continuing with a related question, point, or counterargument. In other words, the listeners (Muslims in particular) sometimes repeated what the speaker had said as a stated or implied conditional clause and followed with a result clause containing either their own interpretation or a why or how question. Participants thus demonstrated a content concern.

Researchers described the nonverbal activity of discussants in terms of interruption, description, disagreement, and subjective states of uneasiness on the part of panel members. Nonverbal indications that participants wanted to intervene in the ongoing discussion were commonplace. They included shifting postures, waving or raising a hand to cut off a speaker or request him/her to stop talking, making eye contact, and raising up in the seat as if to speak. They were often accompanied by "Excuse me" or "Can I say something..." Descriptive and visualizing gestures used to accentuate points were also commonly used
by those speaking. Disagreement with what was being said was displayed by both panel and audience members who shook their heads negatively when they took issue with the statements being made.

Expressions of embarrassment over the poor quality of the presentation occurred in the beginning of the discussion. These were displayed chiefly by panel members seated behind the table panelists. They included putting the hand to the forehead, laughing, and making comments to another panelist seated nearby. They also included looks of agreement between those panelists seated next to each other that what was being said was not adequate.

Expressions of discomfort, defeat, resignation and nonparticipation were evident among panel members. These included shifting postures in concert with each other, throwing up the hands as if to say explanation was impossible, sitting with slumped shoulders, and withdrawing from the conversation.

Those who did not participate verbally in the discussion did not actively participate nonverbally either. There was little head-nodding or spontaneous nonverbal response on the part of those not verbally involved to indicate comprehension. This applied mostly to audience members not verbally participating but also describes at least one panelist. This parallels researchers' findings in Session 2 in which lack of nonverbal spontaneous cues and lack of verbal involvement were described as indicators of either
lack of understanding or interest. Those who were not involved in verbal participation or nonverbal indications of comprehension, however, were following the increasingly intense tone of the discussion. This was evidenced by their looking back and forth at those speaking and the general rumble which broke out between all the students when the discussion reached its crescendo. While they may not have understood the content of what was being said, they did understand that conflict and volatility were a part of the interaction.

In Session 4 researchers concluded that a process orientation existed in which participants focused more on comprehending and clarifying descriptively than conceptually. Several speculations were advanced in regard to the development of understanding. They are repeated here for the readers' ease in understanding the shift to the content orientation characteristic of this sixth session.

(1) Before the outside researchers became involved, it was hypothesized that the first sessions were marked by the development of a surface level of understanding necessary for the sake of continuing discussion. This level preceded participants' attempts to develop a deeper level of understanding of cultural concepts which began with the religious panel presentations.

(2) When the descriptions of all three researchers were combined, it was speculated that concentration on achieving the language clarity necessary to keep the process of communication moving (since it was often interrupted by language difficulties) would appear to hinder the development of conceptual understanding in the immediate term.
(3) It was also theorized that the process orientation may represent a stage in the development of cross-cultural understanding in which describing and clarifying similarities and differences in cultures descriptively precedes attempts at clarifying them conceptually as to their meaning and/or significance.

These hypotheses grew out of researchers' descriptions of both Sessions 3 and 4. In both, participants were described as engaged in comparative factual-descriptive discussions of customs. Verbalized skepticism, disapproval and disagreement were absent. In Session 4 more explanations and evaluations were offered by speakers than in Session 3 but at no time in either was a speaker asked to evaluate a custom or explain why it was practiced. No probing questions were asked. These "avoidance behaviors" and "breakdowns in communication" as they were labelled by outside researchers fell together as indications of understanding not developing to any deep level.

In contrast, all of the absent aspects of communication just mentioned were present and rampant in Session 6. Only three questions asked by the Libyan Muslim could be considered requests for language clarification and they had semantic and conceptual bases to them. (What do you mean by "son" of God? In what sense was He "of the same nature" as God? What do you mean by "revelation"?) Almost all of the Muslims' questions were requests for conceptual clarification of the Christians' beliefs. The Christians spent all of their time attempting to explain them. The Muslims' questions reflected interest in the meaning and significance
of aspects of Christianity. The most commonly asked questions were concerned with why Christians believe as they do and how it is possible to believe this way. Verbalized skepticism, disapproval, disagreement and evaluation all were present in abundance in probing questions and comments focused on religious content. Yet, researchers concluded understanding of the other's perspective did not occur.

The question, of course, that the researcher is compelled to search for possible answers to is why. Feasible explanations can only be found in the data. This necessitates the comparison of two more major categories of understanding indicators which appeared in previous data with the researchers' findings in this session. Interruption and comparison are significant.

Interruption has been seen as a positive indicator of understanding since Session 1. There researchers speculated it was perhaps more likely to occur after a level of nonverbal attunement had been achieved. In Session 2, spontaneous verbal responses to what was being said, often taking the form of interruptions, were viewed positively. Interruption that involved questioning, clarifying or explaining was again seen as a strong spontaneous indicator of understanding in Session 3. Session 4 participants who interrupted the speaker with questions, commentary, or additional information were those who most clearly comprehended. In the case of problems,
those who interrupted were also those working hardest at bringing about understanding. Even sequences of interruptions which from the researchers' viewpoints produced unclear or limited clarification seemed to satisfy the students. In Session 5 interruption was viewed positively as before but negatively as it was used by one participant to monopolize the conversation and prevent others from contributing. One outside researcher in Session 6 devoted a page of description to interruption. It happened in the following situations:

1. The auditor anticipated what the speaker was about to say and evaluated it as inadequate or irrelevant to his/her own concern. (E.g., "I know what you're going to say but that's not what I'm asking. My question is...") This kind of interruption was performed by Muslims.

2. The auditor either wanted to emphasize a previously made point or discovered another way to express more clearly or cogently what he/she had in mind. Both Catholics and Muslims did this.

3. The auditor was dissatisfied with the response of a cohort to a question and jumped in attempting to explain or argue more effectively. This kind of interruption occurred by Catholics on the defensive.

4. The auditor was dissatisfied with a response being provided by the speaker to another auditor and so came to the other auditor's aid by restating or refining the question or stating an argument more relevant regarding the answer being provided. The Muslims and the two fallen-away Catholics in the audience who spoke provided these.

5. Auditors not actively participating in the discussion interrupted in occasional attempts
to intervene in the discussion taking place between dominant spokespersons. This was done mostly by Catholic panelists.

(6) Auditors interrupted to express confusion or amazement about what was being said. This type was fairly evenly distributed between participants.

Although the researcher who listed these types of interruptions did not say so, they seem to fall into the category of spontaneous indicators of understanding of what was being said. Number six is the exception. They definitely indicate that participants were attempting to bring about understanding, aware that comprehension difficulties and a need for further explanations were present.

The primary researcher and the other outside researcher both cited interruptions that occurred for the purpose of negation and clarification of what was being discussed. Interruption for these purposes also indicates comprehension of what was said or attempts to facilitate understanding. However, both of these researchers were in agreement that cascading interruptions served as an impediment to understanding by making it impossible for anyone to follow the multitude of ideas pouring forth. While sequences of interruptions seemed to satisfy participants (but not researchers) that clarification had taken place in Session 4, the same could not be said in this session.

The process concern for seeking descriptive language clarity and verifying understanding through repetition and
summary paraphrasing shifted to a content concern for seeking conceptual clarity. This would appear to represent an advance in the development of understanding if previous theorizing based on the analysis of data is valid. Perhaps the heavy attention paid to conceptual clarification and the little attention given to achieving language clarity and acknowledging comprehension clouded researchers' assessment of understanding's occurrence. Alternately, perhaps the lack of attention paid to the process of communication itself contributed to participants not developing understanding of the other's perspective.

The process orientation and the factual-descriptive nature of interaction that dominated Sessions 3 and 4 were accompanied by many comparative indicators of understanding. Those indicators enumerated in the analysis of Session 3 and the theoretical speculations offered in regard to them at the end of the analysis of Session 4 will be discussed in relation to the interaction in Session 6.

The strongest indicator of understanding in Session 3 was comparison. It consisted of listeners becoming actively involved in the discussions so that they became comparative in nature. The comparative responses were based on the auditors' comparisons of the custom under discussion with those in their native cultures. Six specific forms of comparison were described by researchers. The four which are significant in comparison to the interaction in this session are restated and discussed below.
(1) Participants sought culture-specific information from other participants pertaining to the custom being discussed. Due to the panel discussion format of this session, Muslims sought religious-specific information from the Catholics but the reverse case did not exist. The Catholics did not ask the Muslims what they believed in regard to the religious aspects they were being asked to explain.

(2) Participants voluntarily served as culture spokespersons by adding to the topic being discussed from their own cultural perspectives. (This practice sometimes served to prompt the initiating spokesperson to continue the discussion by further elaborating on the topic.)

The panelists of course occupied the role of religious spokespersons. However, the Muslims in becoming speakers only questioned or offered comments about the panel’s religious perspectives (with their own Islamic framework as the unspoken backdrop). With one exception, they never served as religious spokespersons themselves by contributing explicitly to the topic from the Islamic viewpoint. The one exception was the American convert who said Muslims rejected Jesus as the son of God because He stood between man and God.

(3) Listeners asked questions which were based on their own comparative frameworks. (In these cases, the listener appeared to be thinking about what the speaker had said in relation to the listener’s own culture which prompted a question based on his/her comparison of the two. The question was often followed by the listener offering related information pertaining to his/her culture.)
Almost all of the Muslims' questions could be described as emanating from their comparison of Islam to either their knowledge of Christianity or the Catholics' comments about it. The Muslims, however, did not follow by offering related information pertaining to their religion as those listeners in Session 3 had done. They rather came back with another question, comment or counterargument in response to the panel's response. The primary researcher's insight that part of the panel's difficulty in interpreting the intent of the Muslims' questions was that they did not have a comparative framework from which to operate. The Muslims did not help them develop such a framework because they did not contribute information about their religion in comparison. Further, the panelists did not ask for clarification of the questions even though their reactions indicated they often did not understand their intent. Exceptions occurred twice. Two panelists who were not dominant spokespersons interjected with, "What are you asking?" and then paraphrased the question seeking clarification of it from the Muslims.

(4) Listeners attempted to point out similarities in regard to the custom between the speaker's culture and their own or commonalities in the custom across culture.

While a few comments were made by Muslims in regard to similarities in religions, they did not point out similarities between their beliefs and the Christians. Rather, they probed the differences between the two religions but did not explicitly state what the differences were. Thus, no
basis of commonality was established.

The absence of the development of an explicit comparative framework from which all participants could begin to see similarities and differences in the two religions is underscored by an absence of researcher descriptions of comparisons in this session. Only the primary researcher devoted any attention to comparison whereas in the previous three sessions all three researchers had described it in varying degrees of detail.

The fact a comparative framework was not developed for the discussion is related to the panel discussion format and to theory hypotheses advanced at the end of Section 4. There Seebohm's ideas on partners switching roles in order to develop an intersubjective signification system for each phase of a dialogue were discussed. Techniques used by participants to verify and clarify their understanding were seen as providing comprehension checks throughout the dialogue; i.e., they illuminated how participants developed intersubjective signification systems for the varying phases of the dialogue. It was further hypothesized that when comprehension checks were examined in combination with comparative indicators of understanding and/or attempts at developing it, the realm of how cross-cultural understanding developed had been entered. The comparative orientation was speculated to be the crucial first step in participants beginning to develop intercultural intersubjective signification systems which would foster the development
of understanding across the diverse cultural participants.

The lack of the development of an explicit comparative orientation in this session probably accounts for researcher's assessment that understanding of the other's perspective was not achieved. Indeed, if previous theoretical hypothesis based on the categories of understanding which have emerged from the data are plausible, comparison would be the critical missing element in participants not coming to understand each other in this session.

The panel format did not set the Catholics' religion into comparative perspective to the religions of the other participants. Comparison of the Catholics' beliefs to the beliefs of the audience members was thus incumbent upon the audience members themselves. While comparison was obviously being engaged in by the Muslims, the Catholics' lack of knowledge of Islam made it impossible for them to grasp the comparative framework in which the Muslims' questions were couched.

Furthermore, neither the Catholics nor the Muslims did anything significant to develop intercultural (in this case, interreligious) intersubjective signification systems for the different phases of the interaction. The panel was on the defensive. They did not ask for clarification of the questions nor did they ask the Muslims about the intent of their questions. Had they done so, the Muslims might well have stated the Islamic perspective which
framed the questions. When the Muslims offered their interpretations of the panelists' explanations, the panelists were only too quick to tell them their interpretations were wrong. They did not try to discover what made the Muslims interpret their explanations that way or ask them to clarify their interpretations. Thus, the panel did nothing to seek elements in the Muslims' religious signification systems upon which to build their explanations.

While it was the panel's responsibility to work away nonunderstanding, the Muslim's role (according to Seebohm's ideas) would have been to force the panel to develop their signification systems and try to find explanations based on them. While the Muslims did force the Catholics to attempt many different explanations, the explanations were all based on the Catholics' own meaning systems. Had the Muslims contributed to the discussion comparatively by offering their own beliefs, they would have forced the panelists to begin to develop Islamic systems of meaning on which to try to base their explanations. The Muslims after all had the ability to see similarities and differences between Christianity and Islam; indeed, in the session the week before, they were viewed planning their presentation based upon them.

In conclusion, the interaction in this session lacked the development of intercultural intersubjective signification systems because discussants did not establish an explicit comparative framework which would allow them to
mutually see similarities and differences in their religions. With the lack of comparison of cultural content (aspects of religions), intercultural systems of religious meaning were not developed between discussants throughout the various phases of the interaction. Additionally, participants paid relatively little attention to the process of communication as evidenced by the vastly fewer number of comprehension checks in which they engaged. This would appear to have also negatively influenced the development of intercultural intersubjective signification systems throughout the phases of the interaction. With the lack of comparison of religious content and the lack of comprehension checks throughout the process of communication, the discussion moved from one phase to another without discussants first creating systems of meaning that were intersubjective, and contentwise, intercultural (inter-religious). An intercultural intersubjective foundation was not laid upon which further building blocks of explanation could be placed throughout the phases of the discussion; the discussion moved from one phase to another without understanding first being reached.

The lack of a comparative orientation combined with the problems related to the breakdown of the panel format, the debate atmosphere, language fluency, semantic difficulties, and differences in religious notions of truth impeded understanding throughout the session. The importance of the content concern and the confrontation of
differences to the development of cross-cultural understand­
ing remains to be seen.

Practicum Session 7 Videotape

The analysis of Session 7 will highlight similarities and differences between Session 7 and Session 6 since researchers compared and contrasted the two in their descriptions. From the standpoint of understanding, indicators in this session were in almost all cases positive. These indicators will be compared with those of previous sessions and with previously advanced theoretical hypotheses.

The Venezuelan male who had functioned as the fallen-away Catholic group leader during the planning session (Session 5) served in the capacity of leader for their presentation in this session. He tacitly acknowledged he was fulfilling the role by describing the composition of the group. He collectively identified the panelists as people who were no longer practicing Catholicism, Catholics with questions or doubts, or people with no religion. The group was not Protestant, he stated, as only two members were Protestants. The panel leader considered himself Protestant because of his enlightenment through reading the Bible.

Researchers agreed that his ability to maintain control throughout the session aided understanding. He successfully maintained the presentation portion of the panel discussion format by stating an agenda, providing
a concise expression of the group's main views, and controlling the sequence of individual speakers. The presentation portion lasted about twenty-five minutes and established a structured context for discussion in contrast to the extremely abbreviated and disorganized presentation of the Catholics who had not had a functioning leader.

The fallen-away Catholic leader was careful to point out that he was going to speak for the group by summarizing the major reservations the panelists held in regard to Catholicism. The following nine reasons for their "leaving the Church or no longer feeling Catholic" were given:

(1) The Catholic Church interferes too much in political matters in different governments, especially in South America. The Church supports or doesn't support governments when it is convenient to the Church.

(2) The panelists do not like hypocrisy in the Church. Specifically, they find discrepancies between the laws of God or what God says and what Catholics do.

(3) The panelists do not feel they were taught about the Bible the way they should have been, by studying it deeply.

(4) Some of the panelists are not clear about idolatry in the Church. They do not see the distinction between images and idols.

(5) They dislike priests and nuns being a part of the Church in the ways they are.

(6) They question why they have to confess their sins to a priest if they can talk directly to God.

(7) The Church has discriminated at the social level against the poor. In the past, in particular, people with money could buy a
ticket to heaven while the poor were called sinners and had to do different things than the rich to be assured of Paradise.

(8) One member of the panel feels that the Church has interfered with the scientific and technological advancement of South American countries. In countries where Catholicism is strongly in force, such as Columbia and Peru, the people tend not to be educated in technological, scientific ways.

(9) The last point shared by the panel members concerns conformity. They feel the Catholic religion makes few demands on its members except conformity. It does not provide the panelists with a strong inspiration for being Catholic.

After the leader had outlined the group's position, he called on the two American and five other Latin American panel members to express their personal versions of the group's reservations. When they had done so, he opened the discussion to questions.

Two events described by outside researchers demonstrate this leader's ability to also maintain control during the panel-audience exchange. In one instance, he successfully cut short confusing intense interaction in which many speakers were simultaneously talking in reaction to comments concerning statues as "symbols" or "representations" to focus on in prayer. He abbreviated the exchange by recognizing a Saudi Muslim in the audience who asked if it was possible to pray anytime. In acknowledging the Saudi's question, the Venezuelan leader ignored a request for clarification of "a symbol of" and "a representation of" what which was asked above the roar by the Libyan Muslim.
Whether ignoring the Libyan's request was intentional or not, doing so diffused the intensity and brought the discussion under control. However, the Libyan's question, which was an attempt to facilitate understanding by requesting clarification, was never answered because the subject was changed. It can be surmised that all three of the people involved in this interchange were probably attempting to promote understanding: the Venezuelan by bringing control back to the discussion; the Libyan by asking for clarification since a great deal of previous discussion had focused on worshipping idols vs. focusing on statues in prayer; and the Saudi by asking a question designed to change the subject and thereby encourage participants to forego a discussion which was approaching a debate.

Another case also demonstrates the control maintained by the leader. He stood firm as to the panelists' purpose in being there; namely, they were trying to explain the common points they felt were "getting them away from the Catholic Church." He restated this intent in response to an American Catholic's request to hear about the beliefs of those on the panel who were practicing a religion so she would be "more informed about another religion." The leader again stated only two panelists were Protestants; the rest called themselves Catholics. One outside researcher viewed his firm stance as a factor which aided understanding by avoiding "a possible pitfall." By refusing to let the
American's question shift the discussion to a more conceptually abstract one focusing on doctrines, he kept it centered on the panelists' objections to the Catholic practices under discussion. In other words, he kept the content of the discussion within the confines of the autobiographical context which had already been established.

An American male panelist supported the leader as to the panel's intent by reminding the audience of the unique nature of the group. He stated everyone was an individual case and had personal reasons as to why they no longer embraced Catholicism. Since they were not presenting a unified view, he did not think the audience could expect the same things from their group.

Both the personal self-disclosive nature of the panel's remarks and the controlled atmosphere which existed influenced understanding. Each will be discussed separately as they were described by researchers.

Control was evident throughout the session; it was not only maintained by the panel leader but also exhibited by the other discussants. Perhaps control seemed so evident in this session because it was absent in the last. Nonetheless, researchers described many indicators of participant attentiveness to understanding which pervaded and reflected the atmosphere of control.

Greater sensitivity to the potential for hostility and the diversity of viewpoints existed among participants according to researchers. Outside researchers described
participants' efforts to control hostility and give the appearance at least of remaining open to perspectives different than their own.

Generally speaking, all participants appeared sensitive to the confusion and potential for hostility that can result from failure to demonstrate an openness to the other's meaning and from unclarity in articulating one's own. Even [the panel member] who by far both verbally and nonverbally adopted the most adversarial posture of any speaker stated once, "I don't know if I answered your question." She was also careful to appear ecumenical, as she said, "Everybody adores the same man, the same God."

It appeared as though everyone was making an effort not to appear hostile, to subdue their emotions, and to avoid taking offense on a personal level with what was said. The use of diplomacy was very evident in this session. People seemed to make an overt effort to mediate any arguments they had about statements made by the other by prefacing their own remarks with a comment that would weaken hostile reactions. This tactic also had the effect of making the speaker appear as though he/she was open-minded and that he/she did indeed understand what the other was saying. Many statements indicated a conciliatory effort on the part of speakers and a concern for maintaining a communicative relationship.

The researcher agreed with the outside researchers' assessment that discussants were alert to the potential for conflict, showed greater awareness of the diversity of opinions, and were trying hard to avoid defensiveness. The prefacing remarks employed by discussants were abundant and had the following different functions:

(1) The majority of the prefacing remarks were used to establish some commonality with different others before proceeding to present one's own differing perspectives.

An American male panelist, for example, aligned himself with the moral values of the Catholic Church and related those
things which "still drew him in" before stating his reservations.

Two female panelists (American and Panamanian) identified themselves with basic Christian beliefs before giving personal examples to substantiate their disenchantment with Catholicism.

The American female convert to Islam in the audience identified with the panel by stating that her break from Christianity was like theirs from Catholicism. She then asked if her understanding that Catholics could pray to saints to carry their messages to God was correct.

An American female audience participant drew a commonality between herself and the panel by stating she was a convert to Catholicism because she had found some of the same faults with Protestant religions that the panelists found with Catholicism. She then took issue with the American male panelist who had stated he did not like the Church dictating politics. She asked if Christians were not able to address the world's problems, who was supposed to handle them.

(2) Some prefacing remarks were used to cover defensiveness so as to appear open to different others' viewpoints; these remarks were followed with "but" and one's own perspectives or counterarguments.

An American Catholic in the audience employed such remarks twice. She stated on one occasion, "I respect everyone's opinion, but I want to make something clear to those who aren't Catholic." She went on to state that the priests who would not baptize the Panamanian's nephew because her brother could not contribute money to the church were "bad priests." She countered the Panamanian's personal example with one of her own--the priests in her parish had contributed to poor families so their children could attend Catholic schools.

On another occasion she stated she was interested in hearing why the panelists didn't believe in the Catholic Church but what was important that she wasn't hearing was what those who were practicing a religion believed;
i.e., she was requesting a subject change under the guise of enlightenment.

(The primary researcher saw her request to "be more informed about another religion" as similar to the defensive posture exhibited in Session 6 by the American Catholic panelist who tried to reestablish the intended purpose of the discussion by reminding everyone that it was "enlightenment." The interpretation of the remarks made by the American in this session as defensive was based on the tonal qualities of the comments as well as supporting remarks that followed which were made by a Venezuelan Catholic. The Venezuelan told the panelists they were supposed to discuss their new religion, not what they didn't like about Catholicism.)

(3) Some prefacing remarks functioned as qualified concessions or "Yes, but..." statements.

An American male Catholic conceded to the panel that he thought the Church's influence on politics and technology in South America was wrong too, but he didn't think the panel should judge the Church worldwide on the basis of S. America. By and large, he answered the panel's charges by conceding that the Church was attempting to remedy its ills. Doing so avoided having to challenge the speakers while at the same time enabled him to reject their arguments as good reasons to leave the Church.

The Venezuelan Catholic also engaged in qualified concession. She acknowledged to the panel that priests have to remind the elderly in South America of their mistaken notions and practices in regard to praying to images. This served to admit to the panelists the validity of their objections but allowed her to suggest that the cause of the problem was human fraility rather than the institution; i.e., the panelists had a mistaken understanding of how statues were employed by the Church.
All of the above examples reflect sensitivity to the potential for conflict and an awareness of the diversity of perspectives. They also indicate participants' comprehension of what was said and their acknowledgement of the same to each other. Researchers' descriptions were filled with indications that participants were again paying attention to the process of communication. Not only were they intent on "maintaining a communicative relationship" in the words of one outside researcher, but they were also intent on "maintaining the communicative process" in the words of the other.

In regard to maintaining the communicative process, the outside researcher compared this session to the previous one.

A gradual development or new sophistication of communication skills is evident in this session. Earlier tapes preceding the Catholic presentation [Session 6] showed students alert to language processing and comprehension problems. Various methods of cueing the speaker that he/she was being understood (nodding, smiling, repeating, paraphrasing, etc.) were used. The Catholic presentation indicated inattention to process variables and concentration upon content. This session suggested that students were more sensitive to the diversity of religious belief and the problems associated with communicating and explaining beliefs and concepts. Hence, while the thematic orientation of participants was to the ideas under discussion, there appeared also an interest in determining, before one responded, if one had understood accurately. In addition, there was a willingness by speakers to acknowledge that things were not always clear in their minds and that it can be difficult to express precisely what one believes. The major difference between this session and the last was that concepts were not nearly so abstract and played a less important role in the discussion.
In this session, participants were more alert to the problems of explaining concepts and so were more open to requests for additional clarification and more attentive to ensuring that they understood each other.

Both the primary researcher and other outside researcher's descriptions of "effective communication" and "methods used to aid understanding" confirm and illustrate the quoted statements above. Participants engaged in frequent comprehension checks by using verification and clarification techniques.

Verification had two primary forms. The most common was auditor repetition or paraphrasing of a speaker's comments before asking related questions or making comments relevant to the speaker's. Verification also took the form of auditor questions which were used to substantiate whether a Catholic practice or belief indeed existed or still existed. The most illustrative example of auditor paraphrasing was performed by an American Catholic audience participant who for the most part was not actively involved in the discussion. She restated what she heard "each side" saying in regard to praying while facing statues, occasionally asking for confirmation from certain participants on each side that she had understood them correctly. She then offered her own comments and concluded that she thought the two sides were "both saying the same things." Her attempts were described as "mediation by pointing out commonalities" and "the most blatant effort to bridge differences" by two of the researchers. This example
better than any other illustrates the concern for both the communicative relationship and the communicative process which was exhibited by participants.

Clarification had several forms. Questions were very common and served as clarification requests. They were used for the purposes of achieving both language and conceptual clarity. For example, an American Catholic audience participant asked a panelist what he meant by saying the Church shouldn't "dictate politics." Did he mean priests shouldn't talk about politics from the pulpit? The Libyan Muslim requested conceptual clarification after a discussion of people's mistaken notions about the purpose of statues and God's insistence in the Old Testament that people worship invisibly. If statues were not in Catholic churches to pray to, why were they there?

Clarification also took the form of differentiation. The panel leader, for example, differentiated between the panel and himself when giving reasons for leaving the Church. A Catholic audience participant attempted to differentiate between "idols" and "statues" by stating statues were not gods in themselves but symbols to focus on in prayer.

Clarification chiefly took the form of explanation through the use of personal example. Personal experience or testimony was also used to validate a person's belief or position on certain issues. Personal experience was not only used for explanatory purposes by the panelists but also by audience participants. It was the common basis
for discussion which was set by the discussants. All three researchers discussed the personal nature of the interaction and gave many examples of the use of personal experience for explanation and clarification.

One outside researcher devoted several paragraphs to developing ideas on how articulating personal experience and subjective interpretations influenced understanding. In the opinion of the outside researcher, the fact the panelists were presenting their personal views had two rhetorical advantages. One, the panelists were expressing ideas they had already thought through and learned to articulate to themselves; they were not called upon to represent and defend institutionalized beliefs. Two, because the panelists stated their personal reservations, they had recourse to "I believe" or "this is what I think" locutions and no one could legitimately question their publically acknowledged subjective interpretations much further. In other words, the panelists had to defend no one but themselves and had no obligation to defend external dogma, practice or orthodoxy. In the words of the researcher, "It is always easier to state and defend oneself than someone or something one happens to embrace but is independent of one's control, most especially when a chief principle of one's beliefs maintains that all relevant topics and concerns are ultimately reducible to one's private subjective interpretation."
As regards understanding, the emphasis upon the viewpoint being strictly one's own was important in the opinion of the outside researcher. Expressing one's personal viewpoint does not need to threaten potential opponents by either rejecting their beliefs as groundless or obligating them to do anything more than acknowledge the presenter's beliefs. It is impossible to question an account of a personal experience by another person without implying that he/she was mistaken or is lying. One cannot demonstrate the first and would not suggest the latter; i.e., it is difficult to question or argue with an attitude based on personal experience without attacking the other as a person. Hence, auditors have no choice but to give speakers the benefit of the doubt. When this occurs, limits are put upon what can be said and a common basis for discussion is set. The only thing which can be argued about then is how to interpret the facts (in this case, what priests actually do and say; how the Church in fact operates; what changes have and have not been made; what the function of statues is and is not). If one is intent upon changing the attitude expressed, one therefore engages in qualified concession ("Yes, but..."), interpersonal empathy (I need to understand how this person felt in this experience in order to understand his/her attitude), or one acknowledges the other's beliefs and questions only to obtain more information.

Understanding then, in the opinion of the outside researcher, is affected by limitations on how probing questions can be, especially when everyone does not have access to the same body
of facts. Arguments based upon facts or documents (as used by the panel leader in reference to the Bible and by the male Catholic audience participant in reference to Vatican II) allow assertions that cannot be checked immediately by the auditors. They also allow speakers to legitimately refer auditors to sources of information not present in the conversation. Auditors must therefore either accept the speaker's presentation of the facts or postpone the discussion until the auditor has had time to verify them himself/herself. The potential for external verification restricts the challenge by auditors for the purpose of the present conversation. Once the auditors acknowledge the facts given, if only provisionally for the purpose of the present discussion, they become reference points. It is to these common reference points that have been established for all parties that both parties have to speak.

"Both parties" in this session consisted primarily of the fallen-away Catholics on the panel and the practicing Catholics in the audience. The Libyan was the only Muslim who contributed significantly to the discussion by asking for clarification several times. Two other Muslims (the American and the Saudi) each asked one question. The reasons why the other Muslims who had been so actively involved the previous week were silent in this discussion is not known. Researchers' descriptions of the interaction indicate three different possible explanations. One outside researcher speculated that the Muslims may have decided to let the non-practicing and practicing Catholics battle things out between themselves.
or that the Muslims may have been confused as to the exact positions the fallen-away Catholics held. The other outside researcher did not explicitly say so but implied the reason was because the panelists made appeals to not understanding elements of Catholicism. These appeals accomplished two things: (1) they were open-ended requests for clarification, suggesting that the panelists were willing to listen to reason; and (2) they placed the burden of explanation upon the auditors whose beliefs were challenged (the Catholics). In other words, understanding itself became thematic as the possible means to changing someone's mind. The panelists' appeals to not understanding encouraged the auditors to infer that it was because the speakers did not understand that they held the beliefs they did.

The primary researcher speculated that the lack of Muslim participation was due to the fact most of the panel-audience exchange focused on the role of statues in prayer. The position of the panelists regarding statues and prayer was similar to Islamic belief; viz., God must be thought of abstractly in prayer. The Muslims, therefore, did not have major differences between the panelists' beliefs and their own which they had to try to clarify. Since the panelists, albeit unknowingly, aligned themselves with the Islamic belief and practice of direct communication with an abstract God, the Muslims had less with which to take issue than in the previous week. The researcher also speculated that the self-disclosive autobiographical nature of the panelists' comments about their religious beliefs
as well as their personal and family histories were aspects of self which the Muslims would not see fit as appropriate to challenge.

In contrast to the previous session, researchers were in agreement that understanding did occur between those actively involved in the discussion. Participants were able to respond to questions and new questions grew out of answers given to previous questions. Although the discussion was limited primarily to panel members and audience Catholics (and mostly to CCC students as only two ESL panelists participated), students not speaking appeared highly interested and involved in the discussion taking place. There were no indications that those not speaking had "dropped out" as in the previous session. One can surmise that those closely monitoring the discussion nonverbally (evidenced by stretching around someone or sitting up to see over someone blocking the view of the speaker) were probably also understanding the substantive content of the discussion. If they were not understanding the content, they were at least paying attention to the nature of the interaction and undoubtedly aware of its qualitative difference in tone.

The content was easier to understand that that of Session 6. It was less abstract conceptually since it focused on personal experiences, beliefs, and objections to Roman Catholicism rather than on complex institutionalized doctrines. Explanations, while not in all cases clear, were easier to make and understand because they did not require participants to have as high a degree of semantic sophistication as in the
son of God discussion.

Discussants again confronted their differences fairly candidly. They did not shy away from verbalized skepticism, disagreement, disapproval or probing questions, but their confrontation occurred within a controlled atmosphere that reflected their awareness of the potential for hostility. Why was still asked frequently by audience members and panelists, reflecting their concern with the meaning and significance of the aspects under discussion. The return of the process concern in this session as revealed by the many comprehension checks which were utilized provided more solid ground upon which all participants could begin to understand the different viewpoints. The content concern and the process concern seemed to merge in participant attempts to establish and maintain intersubjective clarity. In addition, a concern for maintaining the communicative relationship emerged from interactants as a condition necessary for the development of understanding. When discussants demonstrate concern for the content, the process, and the communicative relationship, it is reasonable to assume that cross-cultural understanding is beginning to emerge.

Interruption did not appear to function differently than before. Usually it indicated understanding or an impatience to get on to the issue of real interest to the auditor. When the discussion became heated, speakers cut one another off in confusing fashion as previously. What was
different in this session was that the discussion was less heated, a functioning leader existed, and participants took more care in indicating to each other they were not going to reject uncompromisingly or at least without a fair hearing what the other had to say on the subject. These statements of interpersonal involvement combined with those indicating awareness of the possibility that one's meaning or motivations can be misunderstood by culturally different others further indicate the emergence of understanding.

Comparison was not an aspect of the interaction that was discussed by researchers. If a comparative framework was established by participants, it fell within the realm of relating the personal. An explicit comparative framework was probably not as necessary to the development of understanding between discussants in this session as it would have been in the last, had it existed. Catholicism was held in common by all of this session's discussants with the exception of the Libyan Muslim who was the only dominant spokesperson that was not a Catholic or a former Catholic. Further, understanding for those not actively involved in the discussion was undoubtedly aided by the previous discussion about Christianity which provided at least a minimal background understanding of the related doctrines and concepts composing the beliefs of these panelists. Understanding the diversity of perceptions held by those who share or have shared common religion would appear not to be as difficult nor dependent upon overt comparison as understanding the diversity of perspectives
which exist between those who embrace different religions.

In this discussion, diversity could be understood on the basis of commonality. Catholicism existed as a common factor between discussants. Reservations held in common by the panelists were explicitly stated before personal renditions were revealed. Commonalities in personal experience were drawn by participants themselves before they stated their own different experiential-based perspectives. In the Catholic-Muslim discussion, a basis of commonality was never established through which religious differences could be explored and upon which understanding could be based.

Three other aspects of communication exhibited by participants deserve brief mention before concluding. They are alienating the other, comic relief, and the initiation of interpersonal religious conversations by participants following the time allotted for the panel discussion.

"Alienating the other" and "ineffective communication" were descriptors used respectively by one outside researcher and the primary researcher in describing a panelist from the Virgin Islands. The outside researcher described alienating the other as a factor which may inhibit cross-cultural understanding. The primary researcher described the majority of the panelist's mode of communication as one which provided a contrast (or the negative case) to the positive behaviors employed by those participants who attempted to facilitate understanding. The primary researcher described the following as ineffective:
(1) making light of the process of confession by insinuating that one had to find something to confess for confession's sake even though in one's mind that which was confessed was not important or not wrong

(2) equating statues with idols unequivocally

(3) not identifying oneself with the Catholics in the audience by frequent references to "you all who are Catholics"

(4) bringing her criticism of Catholicism too close to home by:
   a. stating even nuns in the chapel at Ohio Dominican were "bowing down and praying to the Virgin Mary"
   b. insinuating that those Catholics at ODC who received good grades did so because the nuns saw them attending Mass regularly

(5) questioning priests' ability as "supposed men of God" to hear confession by casting doubts upon their adherence to celibacy in stating, "You don't know what these priests are doing these days."

The outside researcher stated that such comments as the latter two may have been offensive to those devoted to the religion and could have resulted in hostility toward the panelist. "Remarks of this nature could seriously affect the extent to which others feel receptive toward her views and the degree of credibility which they attach to them."

Comic relief surfaced strongly as an indicator of attempting to maintain the communicative relationship. It helped to relieve tension and also offered a way for people to identify with the position of the speaker. When the panel leader was describing the composition of the panel, he said a couple of the panelists were not sure "where they should be--on this side or the other side." The comment was an
obvious reference to the divisiveness which had occurred the week before. One of the American panelists said as a student at a Catholic college he was somewhat fearful of criticizing the Church for fear the clouds might part and a thunderbolt come down from the sky to strike him.

The best example of comic relief was offered at an extremely intense moment by the Libyan Muslim. A discussion between the panelist from the Virgin Islands and the male American Catholic audience member was taking place over heaven and hell. The Virgin Islander flippantly challenged the Catholic to tell her where heaven and hell were because she really didn't know. The American responded that heaven was being united with God and hell was the absence of God. The panelist then said, "Oh, so what you call here now?" The American responded with, "I don't think we're absent of God on this earth." The Libyan interjected, "Hell is in Cleveland--and heaven is in Libya." His comment brought uproarious laughter, diffused the intensity, and reestablished a sense of community. He had also used comic relief in the previous session when the discussion was very volatile. Comic relief is another technique used by those dominant spokespersons attempting to facilitate understanding.

When the hour of combined CCC and ESL time had ended, many pairs of students were seen discussing religious issues. It was a spontaneous reaction that occurred between both CCC and ESL students and between those who had been verbally involved and those who had remained silent during the hour.
One pair of students (a UAE Muslim and an American male Catholic) had even picked up the conversation from the previous week as the Catholic was filmed trying to explain to the Muslim that only the man part of Jesus died. These conversations were viewed positively by researchers as they indicated interest and involvement on an interpersonal level in continuing the religious discussions outside the framework of the panel presentations.

In conclusion, understanding in this session was aided by a panel leader who maintained control and a structured presentation by panelists who revealed their personal religious perspectives. The panel thus established a context for the panel-audience discussion which followed. Understanding was helped forward by the previous session since the panelists in this session also represented Christian perspectives. Because this discussion focused on the panelists' personal reservations about Catholic practices, concepts were not as abstract and semantic sophistication was not as necessary as in the discussion of Jesus as the son of God.

More significantly, the communication in this session demonstrates that the content concern and the confrontation of differences which emerged simultaneously in the previous Catholic session are important to the development of cross-cultural understanding. Both were viewed as contributing factors in this session. Based on the analysis of the previous data, it was speculated that their emergence in
the Catholic-Muslim discussion represented an advance toward the development of understanding. However, their significance was not demonstrated because understanding in that session by and large did not appear to occur.

It can be concluded from researchers' descriptions of the communication in this session that the emergence of the content concern and the Catholic-Muslim confrontation of differences in the last session lead participants in this session to: (1) greater awareness of diversity and the potential for conflict; (2) greater sensitivity to the possibility of misunderstanding or nonunderstanding; and (3) awareness of the need to maintain the communicative relationship as a condition for understanding's occurrence. Maintaining the communicative relationship was fleshed out in participants' attempts to conceptually clarify the content, meaning and significance of their commonalities and differences and verify their understanding to each other throughout the process. It can also be concluded that the absence of the process concern in the last session contributed to the lack of understanding between Catholics and Muslims since its merger with the content concern in this session was viewed as promoting understanding.

Possible relationships between the content concern and the confrontation of differences which appeared simultaneously in the last session cannot be determined on the basis of a single study. Undoubtedly several future research endeavors would be needed to clarify the relationships
between them. Perhaps it is only when differences are really confronted that conceptual clarification becomes extremely important and surfaces as such as an aspect of communication. Perhaps conceptual clarification became an important aspect of communication in the religious discussions because the topic created the awareness of greater cultural diversity and, therefore, the need to probe differences conceptually. Perhaps conceptual clarification of cultural content and the probing of differences naturally occur later in the process of developing cross-cultural understanding; they certainly followed factual-descriptive clarification and lack of probing in this study.

In both this session and the last, the probing of differences and attempts to conceptually clarify the content, meaning and significance of the cultural aspects under discussion existed together. Without their existence, cross-cultural understanding appears restricted to a factual-descriptive level.

Practicum Session 8 Videotape

Session 8 was the Muslim presentation. Like the previous session, this one benefitted from having explicit structure and direction. The Libyan functioned as the leader, an agenda was stated, and sufficient time was taken to articulate the main items of Muslim orthodoxy. Structure and direction promote understanding because they establish
a framework within which questions can be posed and ideas clarified.

The leader, in addition to stating the agenda, maintained control by monitoring the session. He intervened when things became confusing. He was conscious of turn-taking as he fielded questions or comments in the order of the appearance of hands or requests to speak. He also stated which question should be answered first when more than one was posed by the same person. He sometimes called upon others on the panel to further clarify his own comments, particularly a UAE panelist who functioned as the authority on the Koran. He attempted to facilitate understanding between the panel and the audience by repeating or asking for clarification of the questions. He often elaborated on the panelists' comments or responses to questions.

The major problem with the presentation portion of the discussion was the dominant UAE spokesperson's garbled attempts to relate some of the fundamentals of Islam. He had obviously prepared since he read from notecards. His reading, however, created the problem since he could not pronounce some of the words. The pronunciation problems disrupted the flow of his statements and obviously affected others' ability to understand him. Researchers agreed many of his comments were probably not understood since none of the items he mentioned ever came up in the ensuing discussion.

The most significant feature which distinguished the Muslim panel from both of the previous ones was the
development of an explicit comparative framework. Islam was set in comparison to Christianity by the panelists.

Islamic doctrine was frequently explained by showing how it was similar and dissimilar to Christian doctrine. The panel sometimes pointed out similarities and differences in the two religions by referring to aspects of Christianity which had been discussed by the two Christian panels. Other times they stated commonalities and differences in aspects which had not been mentioned by the Christians.

All three researchers described the panel's efforts at developing a comparative framework through which their religion could begin to be understood. The identification by the panel of commonalities in the beliefs of the two religions offered an opportunity for understanding in the opinion of one outside researcher. "Identification of commonalities" was a category subsumed under "methods used to aid understanding" in that researcher's terminology. The other outside researcher devoted several paragraphs of description to comparison in a category labeled "shared basis for understanding." The following speculations were a part of that researcher's comments:

The Islamics seemed most aware that the burden was on them to make themselves clear to the Christians. I wonder whether here we have speakers who are interculturally more sophisticated and so have an interest, practice, and enough knowledge to explain to Christians their Islamic faith by comparing it to the Christian faith. Perhaps it is cultural chauvinism or perhaps it is ignorance that kept the two Christian groups from attempting to communicate with the non-Christian audience members by drawing out points
of contrast and similarity. Perhaps most especially because of the attempts to make comparisons, I got the impression that more people had a better sense of what was being said.

The primary researcher described the many comparisons made by the panelists in a category entitled "how the panel attempted to take the audience into their perspective."

The comparative orientation established by the panel was accomplished through the use of both explicitly stated and implied comparison. Comparisons were made by the panelists in both their presentation and in response to the audience's questions. The two panelists most adept at utilizing comparisons were the American former Catholic convert to Islam and the Libyan Muslim; both were CCC students who had spent four years at Ohio Dominican. The other panel members (a Saudi CCC student and two UAE ESL students) either did not use any or used very little explicit comparison. They had not been in the U.S. for as long nor were they as proficient in the language as the Libyan. It can be hypothesized that either or both of these factors may have contributed to their not employing explicit comparison to any substantial degree.

Two types of explicit comparisons were employed. In the first type, the panelists actually stated their Islamic beliefs were similar to or different than Christian beliefs while explaining their own. Examples are as follows:

Muslims worship the same God as the Jews and the Christians. The Koran is similar to the Bible of the Christians and the Torah of the Jews. Friday
is the same for Muslims as Sunday is for Christians. An imam is similar to a priest or minister.

Muslims believe in angels and the Day of Judgment like Christians. The angel Gabriel is very important in Islam as in Christianity. He was the messenger who brought God's words to Mohammed.

The Bible has been changed many times while the Koran has remained unchanged for 1400 years. The Koran is the last word of God given to Mohammed who was illiterate. It has remained unchanged because it was God's last word. The Hadith in Islam, which are Mohammed's sayings, are like the Catholic encyclicals.

Islam does not force people to convert. When the Moors went to Spain, the people were not forced to convert to Islam even though they were a conquered people, unlike the Christian Crusades which swept the continent forcing people to convert or die.

When the Spaniards invaded South America, they didn't kill in the name of religion anymore than Khomeni has killed in the name of religion. Both are examples of political causes conducted in "the name of religion" by corrupt people who abused the religion. The religions didn't say to kill people.

In the second type of explicit comparisons, the panelists reminded their listeners of specific beliefs discussed by the two Christian panels and then offered the ways their own beliefs were similar to or different than the ones mentioned. The following are examples:

The Libyan panel leader made reference to the Muslims having asked the Christians about Jesus. He said Jesus was also of special concern to Muslims. He was a prophet like all the others, but not the son of God. His whole body rose; he was not crucified in Islamic belief. Jesus will return at the end of the world to convert people to Islam. The panel leader followed his explanation of Jesus with the story of Mohammed and an explanation of his importance in Islamic belief.
The Libyan reminded listeners that the Catholics had emphasized taking things on faith. He said faith is an important aspect of Islam also. For example, God can't be seen so He has to be accepted on faith. The panel leader then attempted to distinguish faith in Islam from the positions on faith that had been taken by the Catholics. He stated that in Islam, there is also a lot of reasoning. In the Koran Muslims are ordered to question themselves, to look back at themselves and reason, but there should be faith beside or next to reason. In Islam faith is expressed in what you do. Saying you believe in God is not enough; faith has to be expressed in the form of doing good for others and praying.

The American Islamic convert later elaborated on these points. The beginning of the Koran, she said, states that Muslims must read, acquire knowledge and search in themselves to find answers. Muslims believe the world is a place where they must work and strive for good and justice; they don't just sit back and wait for heaven, but must work in this world in order to achieve heaven in the next.

Sometimes the panelists used implied comparisons. They explained their own beliefs by offering what they interpreted or knew to be differences between Islam and Christianity or Catholicism but left the interpretation of "different" up to the listeners. The following are examples:

Those who call Islam "Mohammedanism" are incorrect. Muslims do not worship Mohammed; they worship only God.

Muslims believe all the prophets are Muslims.

There is nothing comparable to God; there is no way to describe Him. The Kaaba, in the holy city of Mecca, was originally a Christian place but when Mohammed came with God's final word, he threw out all of the statues.

Muslims do not believe in original sin; we are born without sin. Good and evil will be measured
on the Judgement Day when we will answer for what we have done in our lives.

There are many scientific facts in the Koran and the Koran does not contradict these facts.

Two comparisons made by the Muslims seem significant in light of the previous analysis of the Catholic presentation (Session 6). One is the implied comparison (made by the Libyan) that the Koran contains and does not contradict scientific facts. The other is the explicit comparison made by the Libyan and elaborated on by the American that faith must be combined with "doing" and seeking answers through reason. In the Catholic presentation, researchers had said the Muslims were looking for proof or facts to verify belief; they sought facts as answers to their questions to which the Catholics responded with faith, belief, mystery and beyond human explanation. Researchers had also pointed out problems which seemed to impede understanding that were related to the Catholics' symbolic interpretations in contrast to the Muslims' literal interpretations of words and religious events. Further, the self-interpretation given by the Catholics of their religious perspectives concerning Jesus seemed to be that faith was all that was necessary; reasons why they believed Jesus was the son of God and the incarnation were impossible and not needed. One could speculate that the Libyan and American Muslims at least saw fundamental differences in these aspects between their own religious perspectives and the Catholics' and offered their own for the sake of
comparison. Whether or not the listeners (including the other Muslims) grasped the distinctions the Libyan and American seemed to be trying to make is anyone's guess.

One could also surmise that the Catholics would agree with the Muslims' statements that reason should be a part of faith. Indeed, one of the Catholic panelists had said in Session 6 that beliefs concerning Jesus were taken mostly on faith but somewhat by reason through theology. One would presume that the Catholics would also say that doing good, praying, and working hard in this life to achieve heaven in the next were their beliefs. One has to wonder, however, based on comparing the data in these two sessions, if in the Muslim mind there is not a substantial qualitative difference in these concepts between Catholicism and Islam. Religious understanding between Catholics and Muslims may well depend upon being able to understand the qualitative differences between (1) interpreting symbolically or metaphorically vs. interpreting factually, literally, or scientifically; (2) believing as a primary tenet vs. believing and doing as complementary; and (3) relying on faith, belief, mystery and beyond human explanation as the basis of one's religion vs. relying on faith and belief in combination with seeking and knowing answers through reason.

The qualitative differences mentioned above seem related to the perceptions of one outside researcher concerning the Muslims' "confidence and eagerness to communicate." Their lack of timidity in stating their
beliefs made them appear competent spokespersons to their audience and undoubtedly gave them credibility. The outside researcher stated that what distinguished both the Muslim and the fallen-away Catholic panelists from the Catholics was that they appeared to know what they thought, gave evidence of having reflected upon their ideas, and showed a willingness to share them publicly. The later panels had the advantage of observing the mistakes of the first presentation. Nonetheless, there was a marked difference in forthrightness, quick and relevant responses which added more information to previous remarks. The sense of knowing precisely how different concepts, practices, and doctrines related to one another seemed to clearly distinguish the performance of the Muslims and fallen-away Catholics from the Catholics in a way that could not be attributed simply to the benefit of more time and observing the mistakes of others. The outside researcher stated,

Observing the Muslim presentation supported and helped clarify an inference that had begun to emerge while watching the fallen-away Catholic panel. It had appeared to me watching the first presentation (the Catholics) that the panelists had been put on the defensive by questions from the audience. In short, that they had become defensive during the conversation. But now, I wonder that they might have been defensive about expressing their beliefs publicly from the start, and so adopted and maintained this posture at the first provocation. The Catholics continue to appear more defensive and less confident in themselves in the later panel discussions than do either of the other groups presenting. They do not appear comfortable in stating their beliefs and so tend to invite attack and criticism.
Drawing inferences from the researcher's statements that the Catholics may have been more defensive from the start and the other data in the study is at best speculative. However, since their defensiveness was a contributing factor to the apparent lack of understanding in Session 6, it seems necessary to do so. Based on the data in the study, it would appear that Catholics had a harder position to work from in order to appear comfortable and confident, and perhaps to indeed be that way, in stating their beliefs. It is undoubtedly easier to appear certain and be at ease from the position of explaining what one believes as "facts" and known "answers" than from the position of explaining one's beliefs admittedly as containing symbolic meaning, "mystery," and things "beyond human explanation."

Comments made by the other outside researcher in Session 5 (the planning session) seem also related. In summarizing the ways the different groups tackled the task of planning the panel presentations the researcher had said the following:

The Muslims began by listing the differences between Islam and Christianity since their religion clearly defines its precepts. The fallen-away Catholics attempted to address the problem by looking at their own personal experience. The Catholics were caught between relating their personal experiences and the fundamental doctrine of their religion. The East Asian group was at a loss as to how to begin since their religion is difficult to define in a standardized manner. Had it not been for the instructor who could guide and direct these groups, some of them most likely would have become bogged down in the confusion of personal belief and experience on the one hand and the discussion of the basic tenets of the religion on the other.
The Muslims who have least to interpret in terms of understanding the beliefs of the religion seemed to have the least difficulty in doing the assignment. Since everything appears to be written out in black-and-white terms (the beliefs of the religion), they had only to recall these points and plan to relate them to the class.

The Muslims had displayed a high degree of unanimity during the planning session. They were not different in the actual presentation except that they occasionally corrected each other in attempts to provide correct and complete responses. In many cases, they interrupted one another or took the initiative to add further related comments or expand upon the responses to questions already provided by other panelists. The dominant spokespersons (Libyan, American, UAE) all gave the sense of competence with the ideas under discussion and interest in making the points clearly and effectively. The panelists seemed to complement, understand and support one another which encouraged the audience to accept as consensus the responses they received.

In regard to the Muslims' lack of defensiveness, perhaps it is easier to share publically that which is interpreted literally and therefore more nearly the same by believers than it is to share that which is interpreted symbolically and invites the attribution of different personal meaning. If personal interpretation is qualitatively different in Catholicism than Islam, perhaps questions about the content of one's beliefs are interpreted as more personally threatening to Catholics than Muslims. Further,
the possibility of cultural or religious differences as to the appropriateness of the subject of religion as a topic for discussion is an important variable not addressed by the videotape data. Perhaps discussing religion is "too personal" a topic, at least for North Americans, since we say we should avoid discussing politics and religion if we want to avoid conflict. Perhaps discussing their religion is threatening for Catholics.

The basis of the last statement is not only the data in the videotapes but also the past teaching experience of the primary investigator. On one occasion five Latin Catholics got up and walked out of her class en masse because Sunnite and Shiite Muslims were having a religious disagreement with each other. The Catholics claimed their reason for walking out was that they did not wish to listen to the Muslims argue over religion since they themselves never did it.

Both religious confrontation and probing questions caused Catholics to be defensive and withdraw from communication in their own presentation. In the fallen-away Catholic presentation, the Catholics who participated in the panel-audience exchange appeared to be trying hard not to be defensive or to cover defensiveness. The dominant Catholic spokeswoman who had withdrawn in the Catholic-Muslim confrontation and then tried to reinstate the purpose of the discussion was completely withdrawn as an audience member during the fallen-away Catholic and Muslim
presentations. She did not enter the conversation at all and rarely even acknowledged (by looking up) that the panelists were expressing their religious views.

Regardless of whether defensiveness arises on the part of Catholics during religious discussions or is inherently present as a communicative approach to the topic is not the important point. What is important is that it is a factor which influences cross-cultural understanding and has to be reckoned with in any curriculum which has such understanding as its aim. The instructor attempted to deal with defensiveness in the cross-cultural communication class after the Catholic presentation. What she did and what possible influence she might have had on the subsequent panel presentations will be discussed in the analysis of the secondary data (Chapter VI).

A high degree of consensus existed among researchers as to participants' attentiveness to understanding and methods they employed in attempts to develop it. As in the previous session, discussants appeared alert to the care that must be taken to promote intersubjective clarity. Verification and clarification techniques were again used abundantly.

Verification had two primary forms and functions. One was auditor repetition or paraphrasing (sometimes in the form of a question) used to confirm understanding before continuing with related questions or comments. In this session, this technique was used by the panelists in
addition to the audience members. The other form of verification was used to ask the panel to substantiate (or refute) the listener's preconceived notions about aspects of Islam or Muslim cultures.

This latter form is best illustrated by a request from an American female Catholic. She first made reference to the panel's brief attempt during their presentation to dispel the stereotype that Islamic women are considered inferior. (They had stated that women are equal and complimenting to men in Islam.) She then asked the panel to explain how men and women worshipped, stating she always thought they were separated. The Libyan, picking up her perspective, stated that separation did not mean inequality. The American replied, "Oh, separate but equal." The Libyan confirmed by stating that was correct and then explained women and men do not stand next to each other; the men are in one section and the women are in another.

The American female Muslim further attempted to clarify and expand the topic through explanation and example. Realizing the American connotation of "separate but equal," she stated that that was more of a derogatory term than she would like to see used. She then explained that the posture assumed by women in prayer and the rule that no one is allowed to walk in front of someone who is praying sets an order; viz., the imam enters first, the men next and the women last (so that the women with "rear-ends in the air" will not be the view held by the men). She offered
the example that even here men and women often separate themselves naturally at parties. She stated that the separation in prayer in Islam is partly related to culture and partly to the Koran.

The American Catholic, still pressing, asked, "So what role does a woman have in the religion, in the hierarchial structure?" The American Muslim responded that there is no hierarchial structure. The Libyan asked for clarification of the question, "What do you mean by hierarchial structure?" The American Catholic clarified her question with, "I want to know if a woman can lead the prayer." The UAE Muslim looked at the American Muslim and said, "You explained that before, about bowing." The American Muslim nodded and repeated that if a woman led the prayer, she would be in front with her rear-end up; she added that that would violate decorum. The Libyan further added if five women pray together, one can lead the prayers which the American expanded by saying women often lead prayers in the home.

The example described above also clearly demonstrates several attempts at clarification which were an earmark of the session. Explanation and clarification by the panel were achieved through comparison, analogy, example, topic expansion, differentiation and qualification. In addition, the panelists often requested clarification of the questions, a strategy not previously used by panelists and a contributing factor to lack of understanding in the Catholic-Muslim
confrontation. The panel requested clarification of the questions by asking the questioner to restate, rephrase, or explain the question. They also requested clarification of important terms that arose if there was confusion or lack of clarity in their minds regarding the questioner's intended meaning (e.g., hierarchial, killing in the name of religion, homosexual, sects).

The panel's attempts to be responsive to the questions and comments of the audience, and their requests for clarification and substantiation from the audience as to the intent of their questions is interestingly demonstrated by a confusing discussion about homosexuality. An ESL student from the Dominican Republic asked about homosexuality. She said she had heard that Khomeni killed homosexuals and she wanted to know what the Koran said about homosexuality. The Libyan responded that he didn't know but stated that if Khomeni killed homosexuals, he didn't think it was right. He said it was his understanding that homosexuality may be a biological problem with which people are born. Therefore, he thought homosexuals could be cured instead of killed. One outside researcher interpreted his response thus:

When panelists either had doubts about or rejected the orthodox position (or what he/she took to be such), they provided a reason that removed the issue from the religious domain entirely. The Libyan, on homosexuality, suggests that this is a problem for medical science, not religion.
When the Libyan had finished, the dominant UAE panelist asked him the meaning of "homosexual." His lack of understanding of the topic of discussion produced an active participant search for intersubjective clarity. The Libyan told him in Arabic but the UAE did not understand and launched into a discussion of what the religion "ordered" for adultery. The Libyan told him that he was not discussing homosexuals and then again attempted in Arabic to explain the topic of discussion. This resulted in all of the Arabs resorting to Arabic. The UAE panelist, however, continued on the subject of adultery.

The Libyan interrupted to attempt to clarify for the audience by telling them the transgression which the punishment the UAE was describing fit. (This technique is similar to the one described and employed in Session 3 by the teacher who supplied participants with the question which an unresponsive reply answered.) The audience rumbled and said, "No," indicating to the UAE that he did not understand their question. He then asked them for clarification, "Excuse me, you are asking about boys, or men and women?" The audience responded, "Both," which confirmed to the UAE, who was still working under the assumption homosexuality was adultery, that he understood their question. He thus continued by stating that if they were married and did this action, the religion ordered them to be whipped 100 times and stoned. This produced "Ooohs" and "Ughs" and laughter in unison from the
audience members as though they were shocked or disapproved and thought the punishment severe. The Saudi panelist told the UAE, "No." The Libyan then said, "Homosexual," to the UAE and the teacher intervened to ask the Libyan to again explain to him in Arabic.

Rumble and laughter on the part of the audience either as to the confusion and/or the severity of the punishment caused the UAE to firmly state, "This is not for you, but for us, yes; we accept this." The Libyan then told him, "No, no, you didn't understand." He then reverted to Arabic but was dismissed by the UAE who turned to the audience again for clarification, "Excuse me, your question is about men and women?" Both an American audience participant and the other UAE panelist told him, "No, men and men." All of the Arabic panelists again spoke in Arabic and the American in the audience inserted, "I thought he was saying if the homosexuals were married and they find out about it, they kill them." The Libyan said, "No, no, no," to the American but the UAE panelist started to talk again about married men. The American then told the UAE that the audience wanted to know about men who have sexual relations with men. The Saudi said something in Arabic to the UAE who finally understood and said, "It is not mentioned in the Koran."

In regard to the obvious confusion, one outside researcher stated,
Whatever the confusion, the speaker attempted to respond to his audience. He indicated an interest in knowing what the questioners wanted to know, and it was their substantiation he desired above the interpretation of the Libyan. As was usually the case, the speaker responded to the question he thought he heard, regardless of whether the right one.

The other outside researcher felt the UAE student's "failure to listen" was a factor which inhibited understanding.

The Libyan kept trying to explain what the term meant, but the UAE ignored him and tried to dismiss what he was saying since he thought he knew what the word meant. Nonverbally, he shrugged off what the Libyan was saying.

The primary researcher would agree with both interpretations. She speculated in her own descriptions of "interaction between panel members" that a delicate balance of power existed between the two Arabs. Her speculation was based not only on what was seen and heard on the videotape, but also, of course, on her knowing them as individuals. The UAE represented the orthodox position (revealed in the discussion by his fulfilling the role of the authority on the Koran). The Libyan, fulfilling the role of the panel leader, represented the more liberal position. Thus, it appeared to the researcher that he diplomatically attempted to walk the fine line between honestly stating his own perspective and not overstepping the boundaries of the orthodox position too far. This appeared to be the case particularly in discussions in which the audience specifically asked what the Koran said about women covering their hair and bodies and homosexuality.
On the subject of proper attire for women, the Libyan explained the reason a woman covered her hair and body to the wrists and ankles was because she was supposed to show them only to her husband. He deferred to the UAE as to whether or not it was mentioned in the Koran, stating he didn’t know. The UAE said it was, but the Libyan failed to provide any real affirmation of his statement by responding with a barely audible, "OK."

On the subject of homosexuality, the primary researcher felt that the confusion over the meaning of the word prevented conceptual clarification as to how homosexuality was viewed by the representatives of the Arab Muslim world present on the panel. The question asked as to whether it was discussed in the Koran was finally answered, but the panelists' perspectives on homosexuality which were probably the real intent of the question, or a subject the question might have opened, were never addressed. The exception was the Libyan who initially responded to the question by offering his own personal opinion which was contrary to that usually expressed by Arab Muslims that homosexuality is a sin.

This example demonstrates (as was also demonstrated in Session 4) that interruption of the process of communication due to language problems produces an active participant search to establish language clarity. It was speculated in Session 4 that concentration on achieving the language clarity necessary to resume the process hindered the
development of conceptual understanding in the immediate term. In this case, it precluded conceptual understanding. The intensity and duration of the confusion over the meaning of the word "homosexual" caused participants to give up the discussion entirely after the initial question was answered.

The majority of the questions asked by the audience were requests for information about aspects of Islam or Muslim cultures they knew about or had heard about previous to the panel's presentation. The audience asked very few questions about the subjects the panel discussed during the presentation portion of the session. It could be hypothesized that the reason was because the comparative framework established by the panelists lent clarity and made further clarification seem not necessary (the remarks read by the UAE excluded).

The questions asked by the audience focused on the relationships between Islam and the following (in order): women's clothing; Khomeni killing in the name of religion; the role of women in the religious hierarchical structure; differences in sects; Khomeni killing homosexuals; differential treatment of men and women in marriage to non-Muslims; segregation of and discrimination against women; differences between Islam in the U.S. and the Arab world, Arab feelings toward Israel, and men being allowed to have four wives. Although the topics of discussion which the audience's questions initiated do not appear to
flow directly from one to the next, they indicate the audience's understanding because each new question that emerged was connected to the panelists' responses to other questions or things already discussed.

This panel more than any other engaged in topic expansion by adding comments in attempts to clarify or present another perspective on the responses previously given by another panelist. In the majority of cases, in both the presentation and the panel-audience exchange, a whole chain of remarks by the panelists occurred before they let a topic rest. While questions for clarification by the audience occurred within each topical discussion, the multiple responses given by the panel undoubtedly lent clarity and made the need for question upon question in the same vein unnecessary (in contrast to the Catholic presentation.)

The deepest and most extensive probing of differences done by the audience was in relation to women. The subject of women kept reappearing in the questions of the audience but each time different aspects of womanhood were questioned. The reemergence of women as a topic of discussion indicates interest in and difficulty in understanding the Islamic perspective. In some cases the questioner seemed to be just seeking information and in others the questioner appeared to be seeking information to substantiate his/her own perspective that Muslim women are discriminated against.
The primary researcher described "problems in understanding" and an outside researcher described "factors which inhibited understanding" and "indicators of communication breakdown." The following were described by the two researchers as contributing to the difficulty in understanding the perspective on women: basic differences in cultural perceptions; attempts to confirm preconceptions; differences in assumptions based on culture related to the personal interpretation of Islam; lack of clarification of questions; and failure to differentiate between or clarify women as "equal" and "complimenting."

The primary researcher described the problems in understanding as related to basic differences in cultural perceptions and the audience's attempts to substantiate their own preconceived notions that Muslim women are discriminated against. The absence of Arab Muslim women in both classes did not help advance understanding.

The researcher's interpretation of the causes of the difficulty in understanding are based primarily on her years of teaching in multicultural classrooms and watching students struggle to understand and be understood on the issue of women. It was not without difficulty that she herself came to realize that interpreting the status of women in Arab Muslim cultures using her own culture as the basis for interpretation was indeed not responsible, and that doing so, she would forever see Muslim women as discriminated against. In her opinion, of the subjects
that arise in discussions in multicultural classrooms, womanhood is one which gives students the most difficulty in coming to understand each other's perspectives.

Asking questions to substantiate one's predetermined interpretation of a cultural aspect different than one's own when one has used his/her own culture as the basis for interpretation of the other is another way of seeking validity in support of one's own directedness toward the world. Though such questioning is a commonly used (and undoubtedly necessary) method in cross-cultural interaction, it does not produce understanding of the other's perspective very rapidly. If this approach to communication is not eventually broken down, understanding of the other's perspective will not occur. It can be gradually broken down if people continue to interact (in the words of this analysis) with a concern for maintaining the communicative relationship while probing their differences.

In regard to women, the outside researcher felt that a factor which inhibited understanding of the Muslim perspective was that two of the panelists (UAE and American) were working from different assumptions based on culture. The UAE had stated what was "ordered" by Islam as the punishment for adultery. He had further firmly stated that while this punishment was not for the audience, Muslims accepted it. Later, when he was talking about Muslims marrying non-Muslims, he explained the different rights of men and women in this situation. When the
audience asked him why women were not allowed to marry non-Muslims, he said, "This is not telling why; this is an order." The outside researcher stated,

From this we see that [the UAE] is talking about rules that are to be followed. To him, his religion is not subject to interpretation which is in contrast to the feelings of other participants as evidenced in earlier presentations. The American Muslim applies interpretation to the fact that Islam allows a man to have four wives stating that the Koran says a man can have four if he loves them equally. She concludes that that is impossible because no one can love equally. She then qualifies with, "Maybe some people do." Upon comparison of the responses between the American and the UAE, it appears as though they are working from different assumptions which are based on cultural differences.

All three researchers noted the American Muslim's frequent attempts to distinguish between religion and culture. They were viewed as contributing to understanding by all investigators. The American attempted to distinguish between religion and culture in the discussion on women and in response to the question regarding differences between Islam in the U.S. and the Arab countries.

Her specific efforts to remove issues from the religious domain were described by both outside researchers. One said she used argument by circumstance when she resorted to explaining cultural differences as the reasons for her perspectives. In explaining the seating arrangement in Arab mosques, she pointed out that the Arab seating arrangement presented a problem for Americans and that men and women sit together in the mosque she attends.
Thus she pointed to differences outside the dictates of religion which fell within the territory of culture to explain her position. The other outside researcher said,

The American on the question of women distinguished between religion and culture to explain her reservations about Islamic treatment of women. Implicitly at any rate, the customs she disapproved of were cultural and not religious, and so could be rejected without damaging her position with respect to Islam.

The outside researcher who concurred with the primary investigator that understanding on the issue of women presented problems cited two other incidents which illustrate. In the discussion of Muslim women marrying non-Muslim men, the audience seemed to want to know what penalty a woman who married a non-Muslim would be given. They kept asking in one way or another what would happen to her. The Muslims kept responding that it was OK for her to "disobey" her religion but that she would be making her children not Muslims by doing this. The researcher said,

The question about sanctions which seemed to be the real issue to the audience was never addressed either due to intent or lack of understanding of the question. Responsibility for the breakdown must also be placed on those asking the question since they did not clearly state what they wanted to know.

The same outside researcher felt little understanding on the subject of women occurred. The researcher stated,

The panel did not clearly point out what they meant by equal but complimentary status to men. They did not explain why their treatment of women was not discrimination to the satisfaction
of the audience since the question emerged again later in the session. There was no indication from the audience that they did understand the Muslim conception of women. The Libyan said men and women were different but he did not go on to elaborate on this point to clarify what he meant. The American tried to do so but again we received no feedback which would tell us if the audience understood the position of women. I got the feeling from the response of the panel (speaking in Arabic and shifting in their seats) that the panel was at a loss as to how to explain it and that the audience continued to believe that their assessment of woman's position in Islam was the correct one.

The Libyan, American, and UAE responded to the final probing of differences in regard to women by a male student from the Dominican Republic. He directly confronted them by saying he thought men and women were separated in many things—in prayer, in whom they were allowed to marry. His question was, "Why?" He wanted the reason they "separated men as primary and women as secondary." He said segregation for women was discrimination.

The Arab panel members shifted positions and mumbled among themselves in Arabic. The Libyan responded,

There is no discrimination. When you say discrimination, discrimination means inequality. But men and women are different. If you don't want to believe it, don't, but it's the truth—they are different. You have to treat them differently. That does not mean you are giving a man priority or discriminating against women.

The American tried to clarify from her own perspective by stating that a woman is different in that she is a woman and that she demands respect as such. She stated that just because she can earn equal pay and do equal jobs
does not mean that men should stop opening doors and pulling out chairs for her. She said that a woman is equal in all things related to being a person in so far as what knowledge she can attain, the jobs she can do and the money she can make. She indicated to the audience members that some of the things they might have noticed about women in the Arab world may be cultural differences (not necessarily religious differences) or may reflect confusion on their parts about how Arab women are treated. She reiterated that pulling out a chair or opening a door is just showing that a woman is different, not less of a human being. (Implicit, of course, was the analogy that the treatment of women by Islam and by Muslim men also shows that women are different.)

The UAE further added that there is no discrimination against women in Islam. He gave the historical explanation that Islam brought equality to women. Women received their education from Mohammed's wife because he gave her the opportunity to teach them just as he taught the men.

The other outside researcher cited this same incident as a strong indicator of the panel's "attentiveness to understanding."

When the panelists sensed a strong negative response from the audience, the speaker expressed clearly to the audience (1) that this did not obligate the audience to do anything but merely acknowledge this position and (2) that the speaker was not about to apologize for this practice. The UAE states about the penalty for adultery, "This is not for you, but for us, yes; we accept this." The speaker is stating that he desires
the audience's understanding, not their approval. Similarly, what I took to be the final response of the panel to quizzing about the treatment of religion coupled candor with refusal to apologize. The Libyan responds to the Dominican Republican that women and men are different whether or not he prefers to believe it, and accordingly men and women are treated differently by Islam. Compare also, the Libyan's expression of his attitude toward Israel. Like it or not, the panel represented the Islamic position clearly and sought to provide reasons for it; they did not appear to be eager to compromise for the sake of audience approval.

In conclusion, researchers' descriptions focused on the many methods used by the panelists in their attempts to bring about understanding. The researchers were somewhat hampered in this session in assessing understanding on the part of the audience due to lack of frequent panning of the audience by the cameraperson. Verification by the audience in the form of repetition of paraphrasing and comments or questions growing out of responses to previous questions or things already discussed were the primary indicators. Of course the lack of participation by the East Asians and Indian in all of the panel-audience exchanges makes it next to impossible to determine if any understanding has been achieved on their parts.

Although this session was not without problems which interfered with understanding, all of the previous strong indicators of and/or attempts at the development of cross-cultural understanding which have emerged in this study were present. The process and content concerns were demonstrated clearly by comprehension checks, conceptual
clarification, and probing of differences. Both panel and audience engaged in verification. The panel demonstrated a superior level of attentiveness to clarification, both seeking it from the audience and seeking to provide it for them. They sought semantic and conceptual clarification of the intent of the questions, and they sought to provide complete and responsive answers to the questions. They showed a level of cross-cultural sophistication not previously seen in explaining Islam by comparing its similar and dissimilar points with Christianity, the religion of all but four members (Asians) in their audience.

Differences were openly confronted and probed by an audience which sought religious and related culture-specific information and asked why in regard to the cultural content under discussion. The Muslims showed little defensiveness and appeared determined to provide rational reasons for the perspectives they presented.

While interruption occurred less frequently in this session, it again indicated understanding. It was used to assist the speaker with a language problem, introduce additional information, interpret what another had said, or verbalize support for the opinion being stated by another speaker.

Any assessment of the development of understanding between people of different cultures which rests on videotapes will always be an assessment based on limited data and educated guesses. However, a few more educated guesses
(or speculations on causes, consequences and relationships which provide perspective as described by evaluation researcher, Michael Quinn Patton, 1980, p. 327) are in order to conclude this discussion. It appears that a gradual development of conditions necessary for cross-cultural understanding to occur has taken place in the religious discussions thus far. In the three sessions (Catholic, fallen-away Catholic, and Muslim), the atmosphere has changed from one of defensiveness and hostility to one of concern for maintaining the communicative relationship to one of seeking the understanding of those who are culturally different through explanations based on their systems of meaning.

After the researchers had completed their independent analyses of the Muslim presentation, they discussed the three religious sessions they had thus far analyzed. For the first time in their many hours together, they played with developing a theory of how cross-cultural understanding evolves based on their analyses of the videotapes. The results of their theory-play are discussed below.

They hypothesized that the beginning phase in the development of cross-cultural understanding is awareness of the possibility that other cultural perspectives than one's own exist. Awareness of the possibility probably was developed for the most part in Sessions 1-4. The researchers speculated that awareness of the possibility precedes awareness that other cultural perspectives
do indeed exist. If participants had had doubts about the actual existence of other cultural perspectives, the Catholic-Muslim confrontation undoubtedly removed them.

With an emerging awareness of the existence of other cultural perspectives, the research team hypothesized, awareness (or perhaps fear) of the likely possibility of being misunderstood or not understood occurs. Attempts to compare and relate one's own perspectives to those of the other thus follow for the sake of communication. In the fallen-away Catholic presentation, participants were sensitive to the potential for misunderstanding and non-understanding and took care to indicate they would not uncompromisingly reject the other's perspectives without first listening. In this presentation, the Muslims sought the understanding of the Christians by attempting to compare and relate Islamic perspectives to Christian perspectives.

The researchers further hypothesized that later phases which occur in the development of cross-cultural understanding are awareness that other cultural perspectives than one's own are (1) indeed valid for the people who hold them and (2) might have validity even for oneself.

Relating the analysis of data thus far to the theory-play engaged in by the researchers after the coding of this session allows other speculations. In this session, researchers stated the probing of differences by the Christians occurred for two purposes: (1) seeking to
understand the Muslims' perspectives; and (2) seeking to confirm the Christians' own perspectives. This suggests there is a middle ground (or phase) between seeking to understand the other's perspectives and seeking support for one's own ways of viewing the world. The Muslims in this session sought to be understood—by basing explanations of their own perspectives on the Christians' systems of meaning. The Muslims' ability to do that presupposes a level of understanding of the Christians. That level of understanding rests on the Muslims having previously sought to understand Christian perspectives.

Perhaps defensiveness occurs as a prelude or accompaniment to an emergent awareness that other cultural perspectives do indeed exist. Perhaps it subsides as a phase is reached in which people seek to be understood by relating their own perspectives to those of the people whose understanding they seek. Maybe the Catholics' defensiveness at the time of their presentation was not so much related to discussing their religion but occurred because awareness of the existence of other cultural perspectives was beginning to develop between participants.

**Practicum Session 9 Videotape**

The most salient feature of the communication in this session which inhibited understanding and distinguished it from the previous religious sessions was language difficulty experienced by the panelists. The panel consisted of three ESL students and one CCC student. The two Thai Buddhists
and Indian Hindu on the panel were ESL students. The Japanese panelist was a CCC student who claimed no religion but discussed the religious character of the Japanese people related to the combination of Buddhist and Shinto traditions. The language difficulty experienced by the panelists was due to lower levels of proficiency, particularly on the part of the ESL students. They made up three-fourths of the panel and fielded almost all of the questions when the presentation portion ended. The panelists' language difficulties were like those discussed in Session 4. Pronunciation, lexical, and syntactical errors were problems. Lack of words necessary for explanation also inhibited understanding and sometimes resulted in strange phraseology.

What was more significant in the descriptions of the researchers than the panel's language difficulties, however, was clear and intense concern, displayed by both the panel and the audience, for achieving understanding. Also of significant importance was a total absence of defensiveness on the part of all participants. Each of these features of the interaction will be discussed and related to previous sessions.

The most striking process variable was a common effort by all participants in helping the panelists over the language barrier. As in previous sessions when the process of communication was interrupted by language difficulties, participants actively searched for ways to overcome them.
In this session the audience and the other panel members alike assisted the panelist experiencing difficulty. When a panelist mispronounced or could not find a word, had syntactical or lexical errors, or became confused while trying to explain, the audience, other panelists and teacher assisted by: (1) repeating the phrase containing the mispronounced word but with the correct pronunciation; (2) volunteering the needed word; (3) restating what had been said in different words, clarifying the syntax or lexical choice; and (4) interpreting the idea the speaker was attempting to get across to the audience. The use of these techniques indicated understanding of what was being said by those who employed them and an awareness of the potential for nonunderstanding or misunderstanding due to the difficulties. They clearly demonstrated a concern for facilitating understanding.

The panelists appeared very receptive to this kind of assistance; in fact, one even requested it. The female Thai often stated when she didn't know a word and openly invited someone from the audience to assist her. Sometimes when she had used a word or expression about whose meaning she was uncertain, or when she was not certain she had been understood, she would pause and wait for some response from the audience that confirmed they had understood her. She thus not only sought the audience's understanding but also sought verification from them that understanding had taken place. The panelists indicated their receptiveness
to the assistance provided to them by acknowledging it with "yeah," "uh-huh," a nod, a smile, or comments to indicate that yes, that was what they meant.

The concern for achieving understanding on the part of both the panel and the audience was most clearly demonstrated again by verification and clarification. Verification in the form of repetition or paraphrasing the speaker's comments before asking a question indicated understanding. Restatement also served as a request to the speaker to confirm the listener's understanding. Verification thus doubly functioned as an indicator of understanding and as an attempt to confirm understanding. Researchers recorded no instances of the type of verification requests used by the Christian audience members in the last session (the Muslim presentation) to confirm their own preconceptions.

Clarification techniques used in this session were not predominantly panel-utilized as in the Muslim presentation but were distributed more evenly between the panel and audience. This panel, unlike the Muslim panel, seldom requested clarification of the audience's questions. However, like the Muslims, they were intent upon making themselves clear and were receptive to the relevant contributions and support offered by the audience. Explanation and clarification techniques used were comparison, example, differentiation, gesture, argument of polarities, and questions.
Comparison played a very important role in participants' cooperative quest for understanding. The panel frequently compared their religions to Christianity and Islam, (confirming to researchers that understanding had occurred on their parts in the previous religious sessions even though these students had failed to verbally participate). The panel sought the understanding of the audience by drawing commonalities and differences between Christian and Islamic systems of meaning and their own. The audience sought to understand the Asian religions by asking information and clarification questions. Sometimes their questions revealed they were attempting to understand the religions by comparing them to their own.

Comparisons were made throughout the session by the panelists. The fact they employed them even with limited language proficiency weakens the speculation advanced in the last session that those foreign students new to the U.S. who have limited facility with the language are not as likely to use comparison. However, implicit comparison was used more by this panel than explicit, the reverse of the previous case with the Muslims. It could be hypothesized that this is a cultural difference since the East/Southeast Asian communicative posture tends to be one that does not advocate directness. Perhaps explicitly stating that the Asian religions were similar to or different than Islam and Christianity was not as necessary because a common base of information about the two religions had
already been established in the previous three sessions.

The last hypothesis is supported by the fact many of the Asians' implied comparisons were references to aspects discussed in the previous religious sessions. As the Muslim panel had done in their implied comparisons between Islam and Christianity, the Asian speakers explained their own beliefs by offering what they interpreted or knew to be differences between their religions and the other two but left the interpretation of "different" up to the audience. The following are examples used by the male and female Thais in their presentation:

Buddhism is not a strict religion; it is a free religion. It points out the good way to live and be a person but it doesn't say you have to do this; you make the decision by yourself. (Comparison to what Islam "orders.")

A monk is a representative of Buddha who reads the Book and teaches the people. Not everyone reads the Book but it is OK for people who want to to read and study it. (Comparison to fallen-away Catholics' reference to the Church not encouraging study of the Bible and to the Muslims' reference to studying the Koran and Hadith to seek and know answers.)

Buddhists go to temples. They are not called churches. (Explicit comparison to Christianity.)

In the temples, there are Buddha pictures, the Book of Buddha's teachings, and monks. (Comparison to all of the previous sessions regarding the subject of clergy. Comparison to fallen-away Catholic and Muslim perspectives on the presence of images in places of worship.)

When a boy is 21, he becomes a monk for a period of time to study about Buddhism and learn the good life. Many years ago, man had to lead the family and teach the wife and children. (Comparison to Muslim discussion of the necessity of having the children the same religion as the father so they
could learn by example.) Society thinks if he becomes a monk, everything good will be received by his parents, because the Oriental custom is respecting parents and monks. We bow to Buddha, monks, mother, father, grandparents, everyone we respect. (Comparison to fallen-away Catholic discussion on bowing to images with differentiation between the Oriental custom and religion.)

The main idea of Buddhism is to do a good thing. The religion is open-minded. Can go or not go to temple. Any person can go to temple, not only religious people. Can marry with another religion, not necessary to have one religion only. (Comparison to fallen-away Catholic discussion about Catholics attending any Catholic church and Muslim discussion of marrying outside the religion.)

Maybe someone wants to know about liberty of men and women. Men only become monks; women interested in religion called nuns. We used to believe men were stronger and had to do many things for the family. We believed in men more than women. (Comparison of their perspective to the concern expressed in the previous Muslim discussion about the status of women in the religious hierarchy and Muslim cultures.)

In Buddhism, people think Buddha was not a god because he had a father and mother. He was a man who did good things only and gave good ideas to live by. (Comparison to Christian and Muslim discussions of Jesus, Mohammed and God.)

The Thais began their presentation with the story of Buddha and outlined the major points related The Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path to end suffering just as the Muslims had told the story of Mohammed and related the Five Pillars of Islam. They also attempted to explain the major differences between Theravada and Mahayana (specifically, Zen) Buddhism as the Muslims had discussed differences between Sunni and Shiite sects.

They pointed out that Buddhists believe the world was created by nature, not God. All of the Asian panelists
mentioned or discussed reincarnation, obviously attempting to explain differences between their religions and Christianity and Islam.

The Japanese panelist's use of comparison was intriguing in that she attempted to draw distinctions between Japanese, who claim no religion, and those who do, namely, Christians and Muslims with whom she had had contact. She started with implicit comparison and gradually moved toward explicitness. She began her presentation with the following:

We Japanese don't have religion, so please remember that. It means we don't believe anything, but it doesn't mean we are not religious. We Japanese are very religious but not baptized.

She then attempted to show how Japanese are religious. She stated that Shinto (with many gods) and Buddhism are combined in Japan. Japanese homes have Shinto shrines and Buddhist altars. She pointed out that Japanese pray before meals in front of a shrine to give thanks for food and everything. She stated Japanese use things very carefully. Japanese say if they do bad things, they are punished by the heavens, so they can't do bad things. If they do, they might go to hell and be reincarnated as an animal. She then related Japanese behavior to the golden rule set forth by Jesus.

Always we think about others first, not myself. If we don't want to be done, don't do to the others the same things.

Continuing with Japanese religious behavior, she explained that they go to different shrines and pray to
different gods depending upon the occasions for prayer, such as birth, illness, trouble with studying, or marriage. Japanese funerals are Buddhist. She said Japanese, of course, believe in the immortality of the soul. Struggling to explicitly state what she perceived to be the major difference between Japanese and those who claim a religion, she said,

In Japan, mother always says if they are baptized, we feel relieved. About 95% or more Japanese do not practice religion but if they are baptized, we easily believe them—that they don't do bad things. But I sometimes doubt since I came here because all of you are Christians or some other religion, but I can't believe—they do their things first; they don't think of others first.

She illustrated with an example of people "throwing" food in the cafeteria at Ohio Dominican. She said if Japanese did that, mother would say not to or they might be blind. Japanese always finish the food and almost wash (the plate) very clean.

Her presentation ended when the male Thai interrupted to expand upon her last comments. He added that Buddha was a man, not a god, with a mother and father, who "gave a good idea to the people." By this point in the presentation, the audience was very anxious to ask questions and had begun to insert them between the panelists' comments since no one was functioning as a leader. The Indian's presentation was thus brief and interrupted throughout by questions. His disorganization (evidenced by flipping pages back and forth in a small notebook containing his thoughts)
permitted the insertion of questions and compounded his language problems.

The chief implicit contrast he attempted to provide to Christianity and Islam was the Hindu use of images. He said that Hindus worship Krishna, a god who was born in Mathura and created Hinduism. The main holy book is the Gita, written in Sanskrit. Hindus bathe in the morning, go to temple and worship God there--whichever god they like since there are many. He said that many types of gods developed from the main god Krishna but that he had Krishna's picture and worshipped him. He attempted to point out the existence of a relationship between different castes and different images of gods by stating that people believed in one God but worshipped different pictures. Krishna said we must not tell lies or fight with people. All people must behave like brothers.

In addition to comparison, examples were often used for explanation and clarification by the panel. The instructor asked the Thais for semantic and conceptual clarification of what they meant by "practice our mind." The Thai woman rephrased with "control your mind." She later made reference to someone being able to sit on air to demonstrate the ability to control the mind. The male Thai asked the audience if they had ever seen a Kung Fu movie in hopes of making them understand what control your mind meant. He said to control your mind was to be silent and peaceful. The Lebanese-Brazilian in the audience offered the word
"meditation." The Thai woman then gave another example by stating if you have a problem, you think, think, think and you can't solve the problem. The instructor attempted clarification by interpreting that you try to clear your mind, to remove thoughts from it...which was interrupted by the female Thai who said, "Yes, when you do, you can solve your problem easily."

Differentiation was used for clarification by both the panel and the audience. Two examples illustrate. The Thais said that bowing is a custom showing respect, not only a religious practice. A Dominican Republican in the audience attempted to clarify confusion in an UAE Muslim's mind regarding the Buddhists' use of the word "pray" by stating, "They don't pray to anything--they meditate--they don't pray to God or Jesus."

An explicit comparison between the Buddhist view of sin and that of Christianity and Islam demonstrates both the panelists' attempts to differentiate Buddhism from the other two religions and explain their own through the argument of polarities. The Libyan Muslim had asked the Thais several questions attempting to clarify in what possible forms and under what conditions a person was reincarnated after death. He was having difficulty understanding and further queried that if they did good things in this life, could they be reincarnated in someone else, as another person. The female Thai responded by using a technique she used on different occasions. She attempted to explain
the Buddhist perspective through the use of initial questions to the questioner. She then followed the questions with an explanation based on polarities. She asked the Libyan,

What kind of good things that you do? You stole money from someone to pay for a shirt to give to someone--is that a good thing or not?

A UAE Muslim responded with, "Not good." The Thai continued,

When you did like that...(audience inserted "Robin Hood")...kill someone to protect someone, you make their family suffer and make someone happy. You did two things at the same time--a bad thing and a good thing. You have to pay up your life for the bad things you do.

The male Thai expanded to further clarify with,

In Buddhism, when you do a bad thing, cannot use a good thing to subtract the bad thing.

The teacher offered "offset" and the Thai continued, "This is different than in the Christian religion," to which the Thai woman added, "Islam, too." The male continued by stating if a Christian or a Muslim killed someone and then went to his family to try to help, the killer in his own mind would think he had done something good and God would forgive him. The Thai concluded,

But in my religion, if do bad thing, can't use the good thing to offset the bad. When you die, you will use the bad thing in the next life.

Both outside researchers mentioned the Thai woman's flowing and expressive gestures as aiding her greatly in expressing herself and in helping others understand her.
In addition, one mentioned her unabashed persistence in finding some locution that would suffice to convey her intended meaning; she had evident success in describing verbally even when she couldn't find the right word. She used gestures to describe the different hand positions of the Buddha and explained that the positions demonstrated what he was teaching. Whenever she spoke of right mindfulness, practicing the mind, or moral conduct, she gestured toward her heart. This gesture and the explanation that good cannot be separated from bad are indicative of mythical consciousness in which knowing is predominantly experienced in the heart and the world is perceived in polarities, not dualities. (Mickunas and Pilotta, 1981)

Questions asking for information and clarification were an important indicator of the audience's understanding and attempts to achieve it in the descriptions of all three researchers. One outside researcher gave examples of information and clarification questions as "methods used to aid understanding." The same researcher viewed questions as "indicators of understanding" and as attempts by the audience to identify similarities and differences in their religions and the Asians.

There was a lot of exchange between the panel and the audience in which a person would continue to follow-up on an answer with another question. The fact that the audience asked questions indicated some understanding. It seemed that by asking questions they were attempting to identify similarities and differences between their religions and the religions of the panel in order to understand the religion under discussion better. They seemed to realize that there were differences and were attempting to find out what those differences were.
The other outside researcher described questions as indicators of understanding and as attempts to facilitate it.

Given particularly the language unclarity, though the foreignness of the concepts under discussion is also relevant here, one important indicator of understanding were the questions coming from the audience. Although no one grasped the subtleties of Asian religion, still the questions for the most part were to the point and suggested that the questioners understood fairly well what the panelists had said. Several asked relevant questions or added comments at once suggesting that they themselves understood and facilitating the understanding of other members. Especially the Libyan's query to the effect that given reincarnation who could possibly constitute the populace of heaven and hell clearly indicated a grasp of the main principle at any rate.

The primary researcher developed a category of descriptions focusing on the "nature of the audience's questions." Her descriptions included three aspects: (1) the purpose of the questions (information or clarification); (2) questions as attempts by the Muslims and Christians to clarify understanding of the Asian religions through comparison to their own; and (3) the tonal qualities of the questions where such qualities seemed significant in relation to the questioner and/or the lack of defensiveness exhibited by all participants.

The primary investigator’s descriptions of the nature of the questions confirm the outside researchers’ assessment of their relevance. Information and clarification questions asked by the audience indicated understanding or attempts to achieve it. More significantly, the primary
researcher's descriptions of the nature of the questions cross over and substantiate the outside researcher's descriptions of the lack of defensiveness which characterized this session and set it completely apart from the previous religious discussions. The lack of defensiveness and the nature of the questions are intertwined phenomena mentioned by all three researchers. One outside researcher described the lack of defensiveness in the following way:

This session was interesting because it was similar to the first session presented by the practicing Catholics in terms of there being problems in communicating concepts which were focal to understanding the religions of the panel members. Yet, unlike the first presentation, I did not sense any feelings of threat or defensiveness on the part of the panel or the audience. In reference to the audience, I felt there was a real attempt being made to understand in contrast to questioning the grounds on which the panel's beliefs were based. It seemed to me that by and large the audience was not trying to question the validity of the panel's beliefs but was trying to figure out what these beliefs were.

The other outside researcher discussed "openness and absence of defensiveness."

An absence of verbal challenges and evaluative statements existed. For example, the Virgin Islander's exchange with the Indian over praying to images, and the Libyan's with the male Thai over the creation of the universe had all the necessary potential for the conflict and argumentation which to one degree or the other was evident in all of the previous panel sessions. But it did not occur. The Libyan simply accepted the Thai's statement that he believed that the earth occurred "naturally" just as did the Virgin Islander with the Indian saying he prayed to a picture. My explanation for this interpersonal generosity is that this session represented more clearly to the audience an
The primary investigator cited the two incidents mentioned by the researcher quoted above in her descriptions of the nature of the audience's questions. Both incidents in her opinion clearly demonstrated "openness to diversity." The Libyan asked the Thai to clarify his personal beliefs in regard to his statement that Buddhists believe the world occurred naturally--did he also believe that? The Thai's statement that he did was simply accepted by the Libyan and no further questions were asked by anyone, a rare occurrence in the opinion of the teacher/researcher, based on previous occasions when the same topic has arisen in her classrooms. Usually Muslims and Catholics respond with extreme surprise that anyone could believe that no superior being created the earth and a multitude of questions as to just who these people do believe in follows. The lack of shock would tend to support a conclusion that by this time in the semester, participants were aware that other cultural perspectives than their own existed.

The exchange between the Indian and the Virgin Islander reveals what would have to be assessed as increased openness to diversity on the part of the latter. She had repeatedly
expressed her disdain for Catholics "bowing down and praying" to images in Session 7 and had said she didn't need any image to make her feel closer to God. The adversarial position and tone she had assumed in regard to images was completely nonexistent in this session. In a soft tone of intense curiosity, she asked the Indian for further information and clarification as to what kinds of gods (images) Hindus prayed to, which one he himself worshipped, and did the god he prayed to look like a man? She replied simply with, "Oh," as though acutely aware that a different perspective than her own existed.

Later she asked the Buddhist for clarification of their comments about the presence of Buddha pictures in the temple. She repeated what they had said and asked what Buddha looked like. The Thai woman responded that it depended upon which country you were in because "his way to wear clothes was different." She explained the different clothes and said that in Japan he was fat. The seriousness of the Virgin Islander in listening to the Thai's response (or contemplating the different perspectives regarding the use of images) was demonstrated when the Thai said Buddha was fat in Japan. The rest of the audience laughed but the Virgin Islander remained completely serious.

These two incidents serve to illustrate the lack of defensiveness and openness to diversity characteristic of the session. The reasons lack of defensiveness and openness to diversity occurred were speculated upon by all
three researchers who offered somewhat different but overlapping explanations. One outside researcher attributed the lack of defensiveness not only to the audience seeking to understand the panel's beliefs rather than questioning their validity, but also to "nonverbals in the sessions."

Regarding nonverbals, the researcher said,

The Thai female dominated the panel response to many questions. Her vocal intonation had a non-threatening quality. She did not hesitate to negate one of the audience's interpretations of what she or one of the other panel members had said. Even so, when she would say something like no, that isn't right, her voice did not sound defensive nor did it arouse antagonism in the others. She had a rather sing-song quality in her speech that made her appear gentle, not hostile, nor defensive. I think the audience felt this and tended to react to this in the same manner. Although the laughter between the two Thais probably conveyed embarrassment or nervousness, I think it also tended to reduce interpretations by the audience of hostility on the part of the panel.

The other outside researcher primarily attributed openness and lack of defensiveness to awareness on the part of the audience as to how little they knew. Therefore, knowing little and having no strong preconceptions they sought to have answered, their thrust was one of seeking to verify what they did know. The same researcher also speculated that the audience was sensitized to the challenge of playing the experts and fielding questions since they had all been panelists. The audience may also have felt empathy for the panelists because of their language difficulties.
The primary researcher's descriptions of the nature of the questions support most of the outside researchers' speculations. The audience was aware of how little they knew; many of their questions were simply requests for information. They attempted to verify what they did know through restatement and clarification questions. They did not have strong (or any apparent) preconceptions since not one question indicated such. The audience's lack of stereotypes or preconceptions about the Asians' religions contributed significantly to the aura of openness in the primary investigator's opinion. Further, their lack of knowledge of Asian religions cast them into the position of seeking information and seeking clarification of what the panelists told them. The lack of any reference in the previous religious discussions to the beliefs of the Asian students supports the speculation the Muslims and Christians knew little about them. Not related to the data, but to previous teaching experience with East and Southeast Asians, the primary researcher also speculated that non-defensiveness in regard to religion or spirituality may simply be a characteristic of the people.

While the outside researcher focused on the non-defensive tone of the Asians' responses to the Muslims and Christians, the primary investigator concentrated on the tone of the Muslims and Christians' questions to the panel. She also described the tone of the comments the Muslims and Christians made in response to the Asian's answers to their
questions. The tone of the questions was one of curiosity and seeking to understand; absent was any tone of challenge (like that most prevalent in the Catholic-Muslim confrontation). The tone of the audience's comments to answers they received from the Asian panel was one of acceptance or frustration accompanied with, "I don't understand," and further questions requesting clarification.

In regard to the tonal qualities of the interaction, it is safe to conclude that they are indicative of the communicative postures assumed by the participants. They also indicate the nature of the environment mutually created by the interactants.

Lack of defensiveness translated to openness to diversity in this session. The Muslims and Christians did not question to challenge the validity of the Asians' beliefs or to seek to confirm the validity of their own. Lack of defensiveness/openness to diversity were descriptors used by researchers to indicate participants' acceptance of each other's perspectives. That is not to say that participants necessarily or in fact understood each other's perspectives, but that they appeared to accept them as possessing validity. The Muslims and Christians throughout parts of the session were obviously engaged in seeking to understand the Asian religions through their own systems of religious meaning.

While using one's own systems of meaning to try to understand the other's has the outward appearance of hindering
understanding, it appears necessary in order for interactants to clarify the points of commonality and difference. It is in attempting to understand the other's perspectives through one's own systems of meaning that interpretation attempts are made in regard to the other's systems of meaning. The other must then verify or clarify the interpretation attempts. This phenomenon is illustrated later in the discussion of difficulties in understanding which were present in the session.

The Muslims and Christians thus questioned the Asians seeking to understand their perspectives, sometimes comparing their own systems of meaning to what they believed to be those of the Asians. They waited for verification from the panelists as to whether they were interpreting correctly. The Asians engaged either in confirming that they were interpreting correctly (were understanding) or were not. The Asians then further explained, seeking the understanding of the Muslims and Christians by trying to base their explanations of their own perspectives on what they interpreted to be the Muslims and Christians' systems of meaning.

The panel's lack of defensiveness in discussing their religions may be attributable to inherent characteristics of Thai, Japanese and Indian people or may be related to their religions. Openness to their religions may have existed for the Muslims and Christians because of their lack of knowledge and/or preconceived notions about the Asian religions.
An equally valid hypothesis is that the lack of defensiveness/openness to diversity phenomenon in this session indicates an advance in the development of cross-cultural understanding or an advance in participants' attempts to develop it. Defensive tones and those that challenged the validity of the beliefs of the other existed in reciprocity in varying degrees in each of the previous religious sessions. They gradually subsided to tones which signified nondefensiveness and acceptance of the beliefs of the other. In the previous session, the Muslims exhibited little defensiveness in discussing their beliefs; the Christians fluctuated between seeking to understand the Muslims' perspectives and seeking to confirm their own by questioning the validity of the Muslims' perspectives. In this session, neither the Muslims nor the Christians questioned the validity of the Asians' perspectives; they sought only to understand them. The lack of defensiveness/openness to diversity tone of this session certainly can be interpreted as indicative of mutually created conditions and reciprocally assumed postures wherein the possibility for cross-cultural understanding is advanced.

While nondefensiveness/openness to the other represent an advance toward the development of cross-cultural understanding, problems in understanding were certainly present. Just as nondefensiveness, openness to the other, information and clarification questions, and the use of comparison were intertwined phenomena, so were language and conceptual
difficulties, misinterpretation resulting from different assumptions, and failure to clarify meaning.

Although reincarnation gave the audience difficulty in understanding (particularly the way it fell into the scheme of things with heaven and hell), the function of Buddha and how Buddhists relate to him were also problematic. The Buddha issues most clearly illustrate the intermeshing of the problems in understanding. The Thai's lexical choice of the word "pray" presented problems which they were never able to resolve. The word "meditation" was offered by an audience member very early in the session in the discussion of controlling the mind; however, the Thais continued to use the word "pray." As the discussion progressed, it became apparent that "pray" meant something different to the Thais than it did to the Muslims and Christians. The lexical problem thus lead to conceptual difficulties related to different religious assumptions and failure to clarify meaning.

The word "pray" was understood by the Muslims and Christians in terms of their own religions. A UAE Muslim assumed that if the Buddhists prayed in the temple as they had stated, they prayed to someone. He asked them to whom they prayed when they went there. The male Thai responded, "To Buddha," and went on to say that like Christians, Buddhists could pray for other people too, if they wanted. The Muslim at first said he didn't understand. Then, working from his own assumptions in attempting to
interpret the Buddhist perspective, he asked if that meant they thought Buddha was a god. The Indian and the male Thai respectively answered yes and no at the same time. Both Thais and the Indian then attempted to clarify that Buddha was a man who "gave the best way of life" and "a good example to the people," an aspect that had been previously stated by the Thais in their presentation. The Muslim, still puzzled and trying to understand by comparing what they had said to his own systems of meaning stated, as if to everyone,

I asked them to whom are they praying. They say they have some temples; they say they pray to Buddha. That means he is the god for them.

The female Thai responded "no" to his interpretation and the Indian said he was a man but he is like a god to the people. Both Thais attempted to clarify that Buddha is not a god because people know that he was a man, but he knew about everything so people believe he was like a god.

The Muslim repeated what they had said and asked for further clarification—did that mean Buddha could help them in the life? The Muslim seemed to be reasoning if they prayed to Buddha and he was like a god to them, their prayers must be requests for help and Buddha must be able to respond to them. To this interpretation attempt the female Thai replied,

No, no, no. The main idea of Buddha is if you need or want help, you have to help yourself first. If you pray, clean your mind,
you will know the answer to solve your problem to help yourself.

A Venezuelan then entered the conversation attempting to interpret from the Christian perspective. He stated, So Buddha can help you. When you pray to Buddha, it means you think of him as an example of what he did.

The female Thai responded, "No, who said that? When we pray, we clean our mind." The Venezuelan said, "But you think of Buddha." A Dominican Republican attempted to clarify with, "He didn't pray to Buddha." The Thai then said, "When your mind is clean, you can see something you have never seen."

Confusion then broke out with the audience asking in cascading fashion: did they actually pray to Buddha; did they pray to themselves; did they think of the problem; what did they try to do? The panelists meanwhile were not listening but talking among themselves. The Dominican Republican tried to contrast what Buddhists did with Islam and Christianity by stating they didn't pray to anything; they meditated; they didn't pray to God or Jesus. He concluded that they stayed in the temple and meditated to clean their minds and then they could find the solution to their problems.

The female Thai then attempted with another example to explain the difference between the Christian and Muslim perspectives and the Buddhist. She explained that Christians say when a friend is sick, they will pray for him/her.
Prayer cannot help—knowing how you can help the friend is the best way. When someone has cancer, we can’t pray to stop the cancer, but we can give advice that will help the person.

The Libyan Muslim interjected that people don’t pray to make the cancer go away but pray to express how they feel. The Thai explained some Buddhists do that too, but Buddha didn’t say to do that. "It’s not good," she said, "Buddha said you have to help yourself."

Confusing exchanges took place between the Libyan and the Indian regarding these ideas. The Libyan said he prayed to God to help the person and the Indian asked him, "What is the meaning of God?" The Libyan asked, "What do you mean, what is the meaning of God?" The female Thai interrupted their discussion and concluded the session with,

But sometimes when you believe in God and pray to help someone, no one can help her. For example, if your lover dies, you feel upset with God—why did God not help her? That is not good.

The extent to which the Muslims and Christians may have understood the Buddhists’ perspectives of prayer and their relationship to Buddha is impossible to gauge. The researchers agreed that understanding did not appear to occur for the reasons stated. However, one outside researcher stated the following in regard to ambiguous situations such as this one,

It is important to distinguish between successful/unsuccessful understanding as evident to nonparticipating observers (ourselves) and that occurring between participants themselves. We
must, in other words, be alert to the fact that there might be occasions where we think error or noncomprehension has taken place, but in the eyes of the actual discussants they think and even appear to have understood one another.

Interruption was again described as positive as concerns understanding. Both outside researchers described it as such. One said it was used for clarification purposes, namely, to assist a speaker with pronunciation, offer a word, ask for semantic clarification of a phrase, verify through restatement, and correct what had been said. The other outside researcher said interruptions from the panelists (1) contributed more information, (2) offered help with language, and (3) attempted to indicate religious diversity among Asians (usually the Indian distinguishing Hinduism from Buddhism). The same outside researcher stated,

Interruptions in this session all appeared intended by their authors as facilitative whether their result was such or not. Most either attempted to help the speaker by interpreting his/her remarks for them or suggesting the English term that speakers were groping for. As regards the audience, interruptions functioned to indicate an interest in achieving understanding; none took the form of verbal challenges or indicated impatience with the speaker. My own impression is that granted that sometimes interruptions hurt more than they helped, especially when we ended up with the Thai and Indian speaking simultaneously, interruption has to be considered a positive indicator from a process standpoint upon the communication in this session.

In conclusion, a clear and intense concern for achieving understanding and a total absence of defensiveness
were the significant features of the communication in this session. The concern for achieving understanding was exhibited by all participants. Audience members assisted the panelists with their language difficulties. Both the panel and the audience demonstrated process and content concerns through verification and clarification. The audience verified their understanding to the panel through restatement before asking questions. Though language difficulties and the foreignness of the concepts to the audience hindered conceptual clarification, it was not for lack of attempts to achieve it. The Asian panel sought the understanding of the Muslim and Christian audience by drawing commonalities and differences between their own religions and Islam and Christianity. The Muslims and Christians sought to understand differences between the Asian religions and their own by asking information and clarification questions. While the probing of differences occurred, it did so within an atmosphere of nondefensiveness and openness to diversity in which the validity of the other's beliefs was not challenged but accepted.

"Why" was not a frequently asked question in this session, perhaps because the audience was seeking information in attempts to establish a base of knowledge regarding the content of the Asian religions. Perhaps why questions are more likely to occur after participants establish what some of their commonalities and differences are. The data would support this hypothesis since participants in these
sessions, after all, did not begin to ask why until Session 6. Since the Asian students had not verbally participated in the previous religious sessions, no base of knowledge regarding their religions had been established nor had anyone gained any insight into their perspectives regarding religion.

Perhaps the lack of why questions contributed to the nondefensive open atmosphere or perhaps the researchers read the atmosphere as nondefensive and open in part because of the lack of why questions. On the other hand, perhaps participants had reached a stage in their development of understanding of each other that even if why questions had occurred, their nondefensive accepting postures would have existed.

Conclusions drawing the analyses of these nine videotaped sessions together and curriculum development suggestions based on them follow in the next chapter.
Conclusions and suggestions for curriculum development based on the analysis of the primary data (presented in Chapter IV) are given in this chapter. Videotapes were the primary data source in the study. They allowed multiple researchers to examine participants from different cultures involved in the process of communication. The conclusions and suggestions for curriculum development given in this chapter are based on the development of understanding as assessed by the multiple researchers. The analysis of the secondary data sources examines the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants and is presented in the next chapter. Chapter VII draws the analyses of the primary and secondary data together with implications for curriculum development and recommendations for future research in cross-cultural communication.

The purpose of the cross-cultural communication curriculum experienced by the participants of the diverse cultures in this study was to foster the development of intersubjective understanding. All of the curriculum suggestions offered are thus to that aim. The suggestions
given in this chapter are based on key phenomena ascertained by multiple researchers to be significant in the development of understanding between the cross-cultural communication students and the English-as-a-second-language students who met together in practicum sessions. Since this is an exploratory interpretive study, the curriculum suggestions are based on the researchers' descriptions of indicators of understanding/lack of understanding and the theoretical hypotheses they drew in regard to the major categories of indicators which emerged.

Throughout the research team's descriptions of all of the videotaped sessions was a pattern significant to assessing the development of understanding through an examination of the communication process. What researchers labelled indicators of understanding, participant attempts at developing understanding, and methods used to aid understanding were not definitively distinguished. Beginning with Session 6, one outside researcher tried in coding to distinguish indicators of understanding from methods used to aid understanding. Even in that coding scheme, however, the descriptions of indicators and methods sometimes overlapped. In addition, what on many occasions were described as methods used to aid understanding or participant attempts at developing understanding by one or two researchers were described as indicators of understanding by the other(s).

The researchers' inability to distinguish indicators, attempts, and methods is significant because it demonstrates
that it is impossible to say definitively that understanding has occurred. It is, however, possible to describe what people do or don't do in the process of communicating that appears to advance or impede understanding. It is also possible to describe factors which appear to promote or hinder understanding. Therefore, curriculum development suggestions are based on those methods and factors which researchers assessed as contributing to the development of understanding with the view that if they are present in the curriculum, understanding in some measure will occur.

The practicum session participants in this study who met once a week with each other spent an entire semester developing openness to diversity, the significant variable which emerged in the last videotaped session. Openness to diversity was synonymous with lack of defensiveness and was characterized by acceptance of the validity of the culturally different other's perspectives. Acceptance of the other's perspectives was demonstrated by a lack of questions which challenged the validity of the other's beliefs. A lack of questions in which participants sought to confirm their own preconceptions about the other's perspectives also contributed to openness. Rather than questioning in search of support for the validity of their own perspectives by challenging the validity of the other's, participants questioned seeking only to understand the other's. Further, those seeking the understanding of the other in regard to their own perspectives did so by basing
their explanations of them on the systems of meaning of those whose understanding they sought. Thus, a clear and intense concern for achieving understanding accompanied the atmosphere of openness. Openness to diversity/lack of defensiveness and acceptance of the validity of the other's perspectives are not to be equated with understanding of the other's perspectives; instead they suggest the achievement of conditions in which the concern for and possibility of cross-cultural understanding rests on solid ground.

In light of the purpose and nature of the cross-cultural communication curriculum, the above findings are extremely significant. As previously stated, the purpose of the curriculum was to develop intersubjective understanding among the diverse cultural participants. Participants in the practicum sessions as well as in their respective cross-cultural communication and ESL conversation classes were involved in discussions of various cultural aspects for a whole semester. The CCC students, in addition, discussed the assigned readings in intercultural/cross-cultural communication with each other as well as their experiences in the practicum sessions. They also kept a daily journal of reflections upon their experiences pertaining to the curriculum. Both courses and the practicum sessions by nature forced participants to bring to explicitness their commonalities and diversities. In a semester of forced comparison and reflection, openness to diversity/lack of defensiveness and acceptance of the validity of the other's
perspectives were created. The point at which the semester ended was in other words the point at which understanding of the other's perspectives would seemingly have become a definite possibility, provided the interaction had continued. Suggestions for curriculum development based on the analysis of the primary data are thus intended to facilitate openness, nondefensiveness, and acceptance since their achievement represents a critical and not quickly achieved phase in the development of cross-cultural understanding.

In any curriculum that has cross-cultural understanding as its aim, explicit comparison of cultural aspects is the primary requisite. The point at which the least understanding occurred in researchers' assessment was in the first panel discussion on religion. Because the panel discussion format did not explicitly set the Catholic religion into comparison with Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism and Hinduism, understanding was hampered. The Catholics themselves could not explain their religion by comparing it to the others because they did not have a base of knowledge of the other religions to allow them to do so.

As the panel discussions progressed, a base of knowledge regarding religious commonalities and differences was established because participants engaged in comparing their own beliefs with those being discussed by each of the panels. Thus, in the last two sessions the panelists attempted to explain their religions by comparing them to aspects of those which had been discussed by previous panels. The Muslims
explained Islam by comparing it to Christianity. The last panelists, representing Buddhism, Shintoism and Hinduism, attempted to explain their religions by comparing and contrasting them with both Christianity and Islam.

The panel discussion format as carried out in this curriculum thus greatly slowed the development of cross-cultural understanding. The problem does not rest inherently in the panel discussion format, however. Panel discussions would have been fine if members of each religion had served as spokesperson on the panels and had discussed specific aspects of their religions and beliefs comparatively. An explicit comparative base of knowledge of commonalities and differences would have then been established for all participants throughout all of the panel discussions.

The religious content areas or aspects which participants in these sessions were most concerned with discussing were the following:

1. the history and significance of Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and Krishna
2. what faith consists of and how it is expressed
3. purposes, places, occasions, and forms of worship, meditation, and/or making requests
4. uses of images and beliefs in regard to them
5. the relationship of believers to Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, Krishna, God and/or gods
6. beliefs concerning the immortality of the soul, heaven, hell, and reincarnation
7. roles and status of women in the religions
8. functions of clergy or those with special roles within the religions
(9) the holy books

If religion is to be an aspect of culture discussed by diverse interactants in cross-cultural communication classes or other classroom environments where cross-cultural understanding is the aim, the following suggestions are offered. Reasons for each are given which are based on the analysis of data.

(1) The discussions should focus on the general content areas above (modified to fit the religious traditions of the people in the class). Numbers 1-6 are crucial to cross-cultural understanding because commonalities as well as fundamental and difficult to understand differences are embodied in them. Numbers 7 and 9 are important for understanding between Christian and Muslims and will undoubtedly surface whether they are designated as topics of discussion or not.

(2) Each content area should be discussed comparatively by spokespersons representing each major religious tradition or viewpoint. (In this class, fallen-away Catholics represented a major religious viewpoint along with the religious traditions of Catholicism, Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism and Hinduism.) Comparative discussions of each content area will ensure that commonalities and differences will be brought to light simultaneously for all participants rather than in the sequential (by religion) fashion in this study. If each aspect is discussed comparatively by representatives of the different traditions, the interaction should assume the atmosphere of a cross-cultural exchange rather than a we-they situation.

(3) The panel presentation/panel-audience exchange format is recommended for large classes. (This one had 35 students.) In the case of small classes, whole-group discussions with designated spokespersons for each aspect are recommended. Both of these formats are preferable to small group discussions. Conceptual clarity is essential to understanding the abstract concepts embedded in religion. The panel discussion format is good for establishing a context from which discussion by the whole class can then flow. Questions can be asked and ideas clarified within the established context. This format ensures that
a common base in regard to each of the aspects will be established between participants and that the perspectives of each group will definitely be presented. It will also allow the teacher to intervene to attempt to facilitate conceptual clarification if the students themselves are not able to achieve clarity.

(4) Students should divide themselves into groups on the basis of religious tradition or viewpoints for planning. Adequate time for planning is essential. The groups should discuss each of the aspects in terms of their religious/spiritual beliefs to arrive at a consensus of what they are going to present to the others. They should choose spokespersons for each of the aspects and each member of the group should serve as a spokesperson at some time during the presentations. Since language fluency is related to the ability to achieve conceptual clarity, those students with greater facility in the language should serve as spokespersons for the most conceptually abstract aspects.

(5) During the panel-audience exchanges following the presentations, questions should be directed to the spokespersons representing the different religions. However, audience members of the same religion should be encouraged to add to or further clarify the answers given or provide answers if the spokesperson cannot. Expansion of the topic and attempts at further clarification are positive in terms of understanding. Also, a looser structure is needed at this time to allow different interpretations of the same aspects by different members of the same religion to surface. The panel leader should acknowledge and allow clarification questions to be asked of audience participants who have further expanded on the topic or attempted to clarify what the spokesperson said.

(6) The panel of spokespersons for each aspect should meet prior to the presentations to exchange with each other what they are going to present. At this time they should designate a leader and determine the order in which they will present their religion's perspectives in regard to the content areas. The leader should be made aware that it will be his/her responsibility to present an agenda and acknowledge the order or questions after all of the spokespersons have presented. A prepared agenda and a leader who maintains control aid understanding.
(7) It is recommended that the audience sit in a semicircle facing the panel and that the panel not sit behind a table. In this way the designated spokesperson will still be set off from the audience but the semicircular arrangement will allow participants to see each other in the panel-audience exchanges. This will be important since other members of the same religion not designated as spokespersons will be helping to clarify. The circular arrangement and lack of a table should help to create the atmosphere of a cross-cultural exchange.

The topic of religion is a good one for discussion if cross-cultural understanding is the aim of the curriculum. It is not possible to understand what it is to be a member of a culture without insight into the religious or spiritual posture of the culture's people. Religion as a discussion topic embodies most definitely the potential for conflict, hostility, and withdrawal from communication. It also very quickly illuminates diversity. Discussion of the aspect of images alone (their use, function, beliefs in regard to them and/or the relationship of the believer to the images) cannot fail to contribute to an awareness of the existence of cultural diversity. Awareness of the existence of diversity is crucial to the development of cross-cultural understanding and precedes the development of openness, nondefensiveness and acceptance of the validity of the other's perspectives.

Any teacher embarking upon a comparative discussion of religions with a class of students from different cultures should do so fully aware that conflict, hostility, withdrawal from communication, and probing of differences are likely. The confrontation or probing of differences,
regardless of the subject matter, is absolutely essential if cross-cultural understanding is to occur. It is therefore not something to be avoided or stifled but encouraged. Conflict, hostility and withdrawal as potentialities seem to initially accompany deep probing. They are not all bad, as the uninitiated to cross-cultural communicative encounters might believe. Out of them arises awareness of the existence of other cultural perspectives, awareness of the likelihood of being misunderstood or not understood, and hopefully a concern for maintaining the communicative relationship. In other words, conflict, hostility and withdrawal serve to sensitize interactants to the care that must be taken if understanding is to take place.

Participants in these sessions took care in paying attention to the process of communication throughout the first part of the semester. It was not until the probing of differences occurred that they began to take care or pay attention to clarifying conceptually the cultural content of the discussions. Reasons why are at best speculative and are discussed at the end of Session 7. The important dimension of this phenomenon is that both a process concern and a content concern must be present and visibly demonstrated if understanding is to move beyond only the most superficial levels.

The process and content concerns were manifest in what participants did. The techniques they used in attempts to understand each other demonstrated not only process and
content concerns but pointed toward the development of different levels of awareness and understanding. In examining the process of communication for the development of understanding, the methods employed by the participants are what researchers see and they allow the researchers to make speculations about the types of awareness and levels of understanding that are developing.

The process concern of verifying understanding and seeking descriptive language clarity allowed participants initially to develop a comparative factual-descriptive base of understanding of commonalities and differences in regard to the cultural aspects which were discussed. The process concern without the content concern, however, did not allow participants to achieve conceptual understanding of the content, meaning and significance of the cultural aspects under discussion. The content concern for seeking conceptual clarity of cultural aspects without the process concern of verifying understanding through repetition and summary paraphrasing produced the worst case of nonunderstanding viewed in all the sessions. However, that session (the Catholic panel discussion, Session 6) lacked an explicit comparative framework so the lack of understanding cannot solely be attributed to participants not paying attention to the process of communication. Finally, the merger of the process and content concerns in the last three sessions (7-9) produced the conditions wherein understanding of the other's perspectives gradually
became a possibility. With the merger, new levels of awareness and understanding appeared to be achieved in the evolving process toward taking up the perspectives of the other.

What participants did then in these sessions that demonstrated the process and content concerns become the techniques upon which understanding between the members of different cultures begins and rests. The techniques used by participants to verify their understanding and clarify descriptively, semantically, and conceptually are described in detail throughout the analysis of the videotape data (particularly in Sessions 2-4, 6-9). The conclusions in regard to these techniques will draw them together and attempt to show how they lead to a gradual taking-up-the-perspectives-of-the-other.

Underlying all of the techniques used by interactants is the principle of involvement. One of the strongest indicators of understanding to emerge in every session in the analysis of the communication process was interruption. Interruption signifies involvement in the interaction. Without both active verbal and nonverbal involvement in the communicative process, an assessment of understanding on the part of individual participants cannot be made. Furthermore, understanding is not advanced cross-culturally if the representatives of all the cultures do not engage in cultural self-disclosure (i.e., serve as cultural spokespersons by contributing to the discussion from their own
cultural perspectives or systems of meaning embedded therein). While it certainly seems unnecessary to have written a lengthy descriptive analysis of the process (or even engaged in research) to make the above statements, the heart of cross-cultural understanding rests in active involvement in the interaction in the form of cultural self-disclosure.

While every teacher involved in discussions in multicultural classrooms is aware of the involvement/lack of involvement principle, it is often very difficult to bring to reality every cultural group's active participation. Some students, either because of individual and/or cultural characteristics, are not highly involved while others, for the same reasons, are. Thus, those who engage in cultural self-disclosure and actively pursue the topic of conversation through verification and clarification techniques are working toward developing understanding and help facilitate it for others. Their facilitative capabilities must be therefore turned in the direction of drawing out those who are not highly involved. Otherwise, those who are will dominate the interaction and inhibit those who are reticent from participation.

Those students who are minimally involved or not involved at all may come to understand in part the commonalities and differences in perspectives between themselves and those who are highly involved with each other through listening and comparing their own perspectives to those being expressed by the others. However, understanding of
the others is hampered even for those who sit and listen carefully but do not verbally participate. By not engaging in cultural self-disclosure themselves, they naturally do not allow the others to see into their perspectives. If they do not voluntarily articulate them, are not specifically asked to do so by the others, or do not reveal them through requesting verification and clarification of their interpretations of the others' perspectives, the others do not gain insight into theirs. Furthermore, not seeking verification and clarification of their own understanding of the others' perspectives does not allow them to know if they have understood or not. Unfortunately, that is only part of the problem.

If individuals (or cultural groups) of low involvement do not articulate or reveal their own perspectives, they are not asked to verify or clarify their own for the other. Neither are they asked to verify or clarify the other's interpretations of their perspectives which are usually based on the other's systems of meaning. Not articulating and clarifying their own perspectives for the other does not help them achieve clarification of their own systems or meaning for themselves. Furthermore, the insight into the other's systems of meaning which is gained through clarifying the other's interpretations of one's own perspectives does not accrue.

Unless reciprocal active involvement (cultural self-disclosure and verification and clarification) occurs on
the part of representatives of all cultures throughout the duration of the curriculum, intercultural intersubjectivity will not exist and cross-cultural understanding will be impeded. Cross-cultural understanding rests on intercultural intersubjectivity. Intercultural intersubjectivity is reciprocal involvement with and consciousness of the other as the cultural other in the lived-experience of face-to-face interaction. It exists between two subjects from different cultures or two groups of subjects from diverse world views (e.g., Muslims and Catholics or Buddhists). Reciprocal consciousness or recognition of the other as the cultural other is fleshed out in mutual cultural self-disclosure and attempts at grasping the systems of meaning embedded in the perspectives of the other through verification and clarification. Intercultural intersubjectivity leads to subjects gradually taking up the perspectives of the cultural other until they begin to seek the other's understanding of their own perspectives through the other's systems of meaning. When this begins to happen, the tight grasp on their own systems of meaning as the basis for interpretation of the other's perspectives is relaxed and openness to the culturally different other's ways of interpreting himself/herself in relation to the world develops.

If subjects begin to seek each other's understanding of their own perspectives by attempting to base explanations of their own on what they interpret to be the other's systems of meaning, a comparative interpretation orientation develops
between them. Reciprocal attempts to explain their own perspectives through what they interpret to be the systems of meaning of each other lead them to further taking up the perspectives of each other. These attempts also allow them to verify and clarify each other's interpretations of their respective perspectives or systems of meaning. As the perspectives of each other are gradually taken up and clarified, seeking to understand the other (in addition to seeking the understanding of the other) through his/her systems of meaning instead of one's own becomes possible. It is then and only then that the evaluative criterion for successful intercultural/cross-cultural communication can be discussed. For it is then that it becomes possible to view the world shared in common with the other from the other's perspectives and understand how the other interprets himself/herself in terms of those perspectives.

Cross-cultural communication curriculum aimed at the development of understanding between the members of diverse cultures should first and foremost bring to explicitness commonalities and diversities in the ways cultural aspects are viewed by the interactants. Any cultural phenomenon from bathing practices to beliefs about immortality will suffice as a topic of discussion as long as it is treated comparatively by the interactants.

Comparative treatment of cultural aspects requires active involvement in discussions in the form of reciprocal self-disclosure and attempts to verify and clarify. All
the representatives of each culture present in the class must be sought out and/or designated as cultural spokes-
persons if they do not of their own initiative participate. Engaging in cultural self-disclosure is defined as contrib-
uting specific information about one's own culture or reacting to the perspectives being offered by the other from one's own systems of meaning.

Verification indicates the listener's understanding or is a request for the speaker to confirm that the listener has understood correctly. The most common forms consist of the listener repeating or paraphrasing in summary fashion the speaker's comments. Repetition and paraphrasing are usually followed by the speaker confirming the listener's understanding or further clarifying by expanding the topic. Verification functions as a comprehension check before the discussion is continued. It not only serves as a comprehension check but also prompts clarification. It often precedes the listener's own comparative contributions, interpretations of the speaker's perspectives, or questions requesting further information or clarification.

Verification is the primary indicator that participants are paying attention to the process of communication. It facilitates understanding across the diverse participants because repetition and paraphrasing allow them to hear again as well as to benefit from the confirmation of understanding and/or further clarification attempts that follow. Verification should be modeled by the teacher and used for
facilitative purposes, but it must also be developed in the students. As long as the teacher perpetually engages in it as the facilitator, the students will not need to develop it as a technique. It is very important for understanding, particularly when low levels of language fluency and pronunciation are problems. Verification in the form of repetition and paraphrasing is undoubtedly very instrumental in participants taking up each other's perspectives by the mere articulation of them.

For understanding to occur, verification and clarification must exist together. While verification indicates attention to the process of communication, clarification indicates attention to the content of communication. Clarification has many different forms also described in detail in Sessions 2-4, 6-9. The most common are questioning, explanation, description, anecdotes, examples, personal experiences, analogy, differentiation, and qualification. Significant to the development of understanding is the relationship between verification and descriptive, semantic, and conceptual clarification.

Verification and clarification function together to promote understanding at both a factual-descriptive level and at a deeper conceptual level that addresses the content, meaning and significance of cultural aspects. At the factual-descriptive level, verification and clarification are used for achieving descriptive language clarity when problems interrupt the flow of communication. At this level they are
also used for establishing a base of understanding of commonalities and differences primarily in regard to customs or what people in the interactants' cultures do. Interactants from different cultures who have different levels of language fluency need time to develop this factual-descriptive base and become accustomed to coping with their different accents and language difficulties. In short, they need time to learn to attend to the process of communicating with a culturally different other and all that implies. The process concern of verifying understanding to each other and clarifying at the factual-descriptive level thus operates as their predominant concern during this time.

In cross-cultural interaction where not all speakers are proficient in the language, language difficulties interrupt the process of communication and force concentration upon achieving descriptive language clarity so the process may be resumed. It is thus critical in cross-cultural communication to clear the language difficulties which interrupt the process as quickly as possible. They not only impede the flow of the communication but also hinder or preclude conceptual clarification if interactants must devote considerable time and effort to clarifying the language difficulties. In other words, discussants can expend so much effort in resolving the language problems that with their resolution, the conversation simply moves on with a sigh of relief and questioning to clarify conceptually the content, meaning and significance doesn't occur.
Interactants in any cross-cultural communication curriculum must be made aware that attempts to clear language difficulties and achieve descriptive clarity interfere with conceptual clarification unless they turn or re-turn conceptually to the content, meaning and/or significance of what is said. The teacher in any multicultural classroom discussion must facilitate this process by intervening to help clear the language difficulties quickly and turn the discussion toward achieving conceptual clarity.

Verification and clarification within the predominant process orientation that existed between participants for the first four practicum sessions in this study functioned in two ways: (1) to allow discussants to learn to cope communicatively with culturally different others who had different levels of language fluency and associated problems; and (2) to allow discussants to develop a comparative factual-descriptive base of understanding regarding some of their commonalities and differences.

In Session 6, the predominant process orientation shifted to a content orientation in which participants focused on the content, meaning and significance of the cultural aspects under discussion to the exclusion of participating in verifying their understanding through repetition and summary paraphrasing. Thus, while a content orientation emerged in the confrontation/probing of differences that occurred for the first time, conceptual clarity in regard to the content was not established.
Verification and clarification must go hand-in-hand whether discussants detachedly inform each other of their different customs and perspectives and establish a comparative factual-descriptive base of understanding or whether they confront each other as to the meaning and significance of those customs and perspectives. Verification and clarification at the latter level address what it is to be a member of a culture. At this level they are used by discussants to establish a comparative interpretive-conceptual base of understanding regarding the different systems of meaning embedded in their perspectives. Verification at this level works to accomplish conceptual clarity rather than descriptive clarity.

For cross-cultural understanding to occur, it is thus toward interpretive-conceptual clarification that communication within the curriculum must move. That is not to say that factual-descriptive clarification will not then be present or needed. (In fact it will, as evidenced best in Session 9 in which language difficulties were present and in which no factual-descriptive base of commonalities and differences between the Asians' religions and Islam and Christianity had been established for the Muslims and Catholics.) Factual-descriptive clarification is simply not enough to produce cross-cultural understanding by itself because interactants do not have to try to interpret the other's perspectives or systems of meaning to acquire a factual-descriptive level of understanding. All they need do is catalogue the commonalities and differences.
It is in interpretation attempts in regard to the other's perspectives or systems of meaning that stereotypes and preconceptions about the other's culture surface. If they never surface, the other has no chance to try to clarify or refute them. Furthermore, it is in attempting to interpret the other's perspectives through one's own systems of meaning that one learns that his/her own are insufficient for understanding the other; the other keeps saying so with, "No, that's not right," and then attempts to explain further. As the other picks up the systems of meaning through which interpretation of his/her perspectives has been attempted, he/she begins to base his/her further explanations on what he/she interprets to be the systems of meaning of the other. It is in this back and forth verification and clarification play of participants who disclose their own systems of meaning in attempting to interpret the perspectives of the other that the participants take up each other's perspectives and develop systems of meaning that are intercultural and intersubjective. As intercultural intersubjectivity is developed across the participants, cross-cultural understanding becomes possible.

All of this is not likely to happen, however, without attempts at semantic clarification in addition to descriptive and conceptual. Attempts at achieving semantic clarification exist in conjunction with verification and cut across both the comparative factual-descriptive and interpretive-conceptual levels of understanding. At the
factual-descriptive level, semantic clarification attempts are generally used to discover the intended meaning of the speaker in regard to a mispronounced word or incorrect lexical choice. (Session 4 and 8 best illustrate.) Semantic clarification attempts at the conceptual-interpretive level are attempts to discover the cultural meaning embedded in key words or phrases upon which understanding rests. (Sessions 6 and 9 illustrate clearly.)

Semantic clarification is crucial to the development of understanding between the members of different cultures. It is even more critical when some of the interactants are not yet proficient in the language of discussion or are interacting with each other in their second (or third) language. Native speakers not accustomed to communicating with non-native speakers will assume the non-native speakers know the meaning of the words they are using. Non-native speakers who are not yet proficient will sometimes choose lexical items that do not convey their intended meaning and assume that they do.

Neither native nor non-native speakers (unless they have had a lot of experience in communicating with culturally different others) will have the slightest idea that conceptual understanding may rest completely upon surfacing and clarifying the different cultural systems of meaning embedded in a single word or phrase. They thus must be alerted to the necessity for semantic clarification. Words embody the history of a culture and the current
assumptions about the world that the people of that culture hold. Though thoughts can be translated from one language to another, the words used to express the thoughts may well contain very different cultural histories and assumptions. Therefore, they may not convey precisely the meaning intended by the speaker. Even if they do, they may not be understood in the way intended by the speaker because the listener is working from a different set of assumptions. Cross-cultural understanding may at times rest upon being asked and being able to clarify the cultural meaning embodied in a word's usage in one's own language.

Curriculum development suggestions are not complete without addressing the role of the teacher which has only been hinted at thus far. The primary role of the teacher in experiential-based cross-cultural communication curriculum is one of facilitator, model, and critic. As a participant in the interaction, the teacher must both model and explain the importance of active verbal and nonverbal involvement in the form of cultural self-disclosure and verification and clarification techniques. He/she must intervene in the ongoing communication to facilitate understanding when the students do not appear to be achieving it themselves. Sometimes the teacher needs to offer critical commentary or analyze for the students why their understanding attempts were apparent successes or filled with problems.
Teacher intervention can take the form of participation as a discussant, facilitator and model. ("I don't understand. What are you saying? What do you mean? What do you mean by 'X'? Are you saying...? Do you mean...? Why is X important? What is the meaning of X to the people? How can you X? Do you believe X? We do X because we believe Y. To me or to us, that seems X.") The easiest and most natural form of teacher intervention is simply repeating or paraphrasing, asking questions for further information or clarification, and contributing his/her own culture's perspectives. It facilitates understanding of the topic under discussion for everyone, but it may not bring to the students' conscious awareness the techniques they must develop themselves to reach understanding.

The responsibility for understanding has to ultimately rest with the self, not the other (and certainly not with the teacher who will not always be present to facilitate understanding in the participants' encounters with each other or with others). While a teacher who is a good model is a good facilitator, he/she must guard against spending time developing his/her own skills to the exclusion of bringing to awareness and developing the necessary techniques in those for whom the curriculum is intended. Therefore, teacher intervention must also take other forms.

Direct requests to students from the role of facilitator and periodic comments made from the role of critic are needed to raise students' awareness of what is involved in and necessary for developing understanding.
Direct requests to the students are requests to participate in ways which will advance understanding. In other words, the teacher does not participate in the interaction as the model but facilitates by asking the students themselves to do what the teacher would do in direct participation. ("Would you please restate what you understood him/her to say. Could you clarify for us what you mean by 'X.' Could you give us an example that illustrates what you are trying to say. Would you explain the difference between X and Y. Would you tell him/her how a typical American would interpret or react to X. Would you explain what your reaction as a Saudi is to X. Could you give us the Hindu perspective of X.")

Occasional commentary on the interaction taking place will also raise to a level of awareness the techniques and factors which must be attended to if understanding is to occur. This practice is recommended when communication has reached a lull due to difficulties. Commentary can also be used in retrospect in regard to previous difficulties or previously established clarity.

When conversation reaches a standstill due to comprehension difficulties or conceptual-interpretive understanding does not appear to be developing, pedagogical commentary can rekindle the discussion as well as demonstrate what needs to be done. For example, a teacher who doubts that the students listening to a speaker have understood will ask, "Did you understand what she said?"
Typically some of the students will not respond, some will indicate so-so and some no. By asking a student who partially understood to paraphrase or explain what he/she understood, the speaker will verify the student's understanding and further expand or clarify. The teacher can then comment on the significance of the verification and clarification techniques used. If no one understood the speaker but no one followed with comments or questions to indicate nonunderstanding, the teacher can simply ask, "So what are you going to do now--you didn't understand what she said."

If semantic clarification, for example, seems to be the problem in participants reaching understanding, the teacher can offer commentary on it as the possible cause. ("You're telling her that as a wife she must obey her husband, and she is telling you that as an adult she doesn't obey anyone. Perhaps the problem in your understanding each other is in the phrase 'must obey.' You need to clarify for her what you mean by 'must obey' from your culture's perspectives. What do you mean a wife must obey her husband? What does she have to do? Must a husband also obey his wife? What happens if she tells him she doesn't want him to do something; must he then obey her?... As an American, you need to clarify for him what 'must obey' means in our culture and who must obey whom. You need to explain why we don't typically use the phrase 'must obey' in husband/wife relationships.")
In order to move the communication among diverse cultural participants toward the probing of differences and interpretive-conceptual understanding, the teacher must initiate the risk-taking steps involved in doing so himself/herself and encourage others to take those same steps. Encouraging others often consists of seizing the moments in which a flicker of desire to react or to question or a look of stifled response is read in their faces. ("What did you want to say? What were you thinking? Go ahead and say it--if you don't, we won't know what you think and we won't learn about what it is to be a member of your culture....Doesn't anyone want to ask why or how? Doesn't anyone want to question further? Isn't anyone going to REACT?") The teacher must draw out those who hesitate and those who not typically involved by showing them how to be involved. He/she must also turn those students who usually do participate to the same purpose. As the chief participant facilitator, the teacher must always keep visible the necessity for all of the participants to conceptually address and attempt to interpret and clarify for each other what it means to be a member of their respective cultures.
CHAPTER VI
ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY DATA
AND SUGGESTIONS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

This chapter presents findings from the analysis of the secondary data sources. The secondary data sources consist of: cross-cultural communication student journals; interviews with the CCC students; course evaluations in the form of final journal entries in which the CCC students were required to reflect upon specific aspects of the curriculum (Appendix C); and the researcher's field notes.

Chapter IV presented the multiple researchers' findings in regard to the development of understanding between the CCC and ESL students as assessed through videotapes. This chapter presents the primary researcher's findings as to the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants in the cross-cultural communication course. Major patterns which emerged in the participants' experiencing of the curriculum and their perceptions regarding the development of understanding are presented. Suggestions for future curriculum development based on the analysis of the secondary data follow the discussion of each major pattern or set of patterns. Chapter VII draws together the analyses of the primary and secondary data sources with overall implications.
for curriculum development and recommendations for future research in cross-cultural communication.

Keeping a Journal

A daily journal was required as the semester project of the course. Its chief purpose was to encourage participants to reflect upon their experiences and record their thoughts related to the curriculum. The various secondary data sources which reveal international and American students' different perceptions of the journal as a reflection vehicle combine in a major significant pattern which directly addresses cross-cultural communication. The next several pages will unfold that pattern.

Keeping a journal was a new and very foreign experience for all of the international students in the cross-cultural communication course. With the exception of the Japanese student in the class, the general consensus among the international students in the course evaluation at the end of the semester was that keeping a journal had been only minimally valuable. Of the internationals, the Japanese student was the only one who fulfilled the requirement consistently throughout the semester. The international students did express that the journals made them observe more and that the instructor's written comments in response to their entries provided new insights. The following reflections made by international students in the course evaluation on the value (if any) of keeping a journal indicate their perceptions at the end of the course:
Saudi
I think the journals are important since they are written under the effect of the students' culture, religion, etc. When you read them as a critic, and write your opinions, you tell new points and open something not thought about before. (M)

Virgin Islander
Keeping a daily journal help me to observe people more and then share my observation with you as the teacher. If my perceptions of things written in my journal were unclear to me, your comments help me to see other ways of perceiving things. (F)

Iraqi
I observed more by keeping a journal. (M)

Panamanian
The value of keeping a journal was important but also was boring...writing everyday what we saw or feel about. But in the other hand was important because made me aware of what was happen outside of me and my world. (F)

Libyan
To me, there was no value of keeping a journal because I said in class discussions more than what I would have written in a journal. (M)

Venezuelan
Keeping the journal was a hard task for me. I didn't do it as well as you wanted it...I was learning from your comments about other students' journals and in my mind there was the experience of a dairy open to be read by anyone but difficult to be written down on a piece of paper. (F)

Venezuelan
There were so many things I did not say and I wanted you to know. I just keep that inside for my reflection in all the days I remember all this experience. (M)

Japanese
It took me much time to write journals every day. I sometimes did not want to do so. However, it was very good for me. To write them I had to make sure the thing that I wrote about was right even though I wrote about Japan. I learned not only about foreign customs and cultures but also about Japanese customs by being asked about them in the class and by writing in the journals. I had always wanted to write diary entries like my journals, but I never did it since it takes me
much time to write. The entries when bound, are now one of my treasures. Thank you for giving me a chance to write. It was very good for me to practice English. Every day I learned some English about many kinds of subjects. (F)

American students in the class discussed the value of keeping a journal primarily in terms of a concrete record of their feelings and personal growth in cross-cultural communication. Their responses in the course evaluation were generally much more positive than those of the international students.

Keeping a record of my discoveries and insights into course material in the form of a journal was a valuable project in helping me realize my progress through the course. At times writing in the journal itself revealed just what I discovered about myself with regard to personal interaction with others throughout the various activities in the course. It added a needed concrete source of revelation and insight. Consequently, it will be an valuable source of information to myself and anyone else concerned with the subject. (M)

A very good way to confront oneself. Expressing thoughts and then re-reading them after they have been written, or at a later date, is very helpful in learning about oneself...My journals have helped me confront, assess and define my own feelings. (F)

As I look back over some of my earlier journals I can now see the value of writing down our feelings. We can see how much we have changed over the past few months due to our experiences. One of my first journals mentioned that at least 85% of my friends were international and when I looked at that, I feel as if I made it sound like I knew almost all there was to know about communicating with others from another culture. I realize now that one can never know everything. There is always something new to learn even among close friends. (F)

The value of keeping a journal is priceless. There is no better way for me to see how I have grown or to concretely put into words my thoughts and feelings. (F)
The writing of the journal was very valuable to me for two reasons. Primarily, I would not have noticed the cultural events around me if I had not been requested to keep a log of my cultural interactions. When someone has to take the time to record events, they are more apt to reflect upon what occurs in their daily life. By writing the journal and knowing I had to record something daily or as often as possible, my awareness became much more keen. Secondly, yesterday I re-read my journals. I am pleased to say that I see much growth and reflection in them as the semester went on. I might never have recognized this growth if I had not had concrete data (like a journal, or videotape) to observe. (F)

I felt the journal was a good idea. The one time I did devote time to it (my exposé) I feel was very beneficial for me. I had not verbalized many of the things I wrote. It made me think, it was therapeutic, it is something I will save as it was an important expression of my feelings. Also, I loved your reaction to my journal and our talk. (M)

The journal was OK... But, when you feel pressured into writing it tends to take the joy of writing out. I think it would be a good idea to keep a journal on a totally different and new person. In that way the real growth of the interchange could be realized and measured. (F)

I hated the effort of keeping a journal but I feel the need for keeping one. I felt that I could express my feelings about the course more in it. Eventually I found myself wishing that I could keep a journal for other classes as well. (F)

I needed to keep a journal because I was able to reflect my feelings in writing which is easier for me. I like to sit back and listen/observe and then write my reactions. (F)

Although only the last two Americans quoted above explicitly stated in their course evaluations that expressing their feelings about their curricular experiences was easier for them to do in a journal, others in their journals and in interviews expressed the same idea. International students, on the other hand, articulated in interviews the difficulty they had in putting their thoughts and feelings
regarding their experiences into writing. They addressed the foreignness of keeping a journal and eventually offered cultural reasons why face-to-face interaction was the appropriate mode for expressing themselves in regard to their experiences. Some American students came to realize this difference at the end of the course and reflected upon the international students' greater ease in stating publicly how they felt. Each of these aspects will be discussed since they are extremely significant to the development of communication curriculum aimed at cross-cultural understanding.

Comments from other American students further illustrate that expressing their thoughts and feelings about their curricular experiences was easier for them to do in journals than in interviews or class discussions. During an interview near the end of the course a student discussed the journal reflections she had written which pertained to her feelings of extreme defensiveness during the Catholic panel presentation. She told the teacher/researcher,

Well, I wrote that I didn't think that it was that great of a learning experience...but then after I wrote that, I was thinking, well, if it wasn't a learning experience, I wouldn't be writing three pages in my journal. I don't know. It, sometimes it's easier to write things down in a journal than to sit here and discuss them.

In response to an interview question at the end of the semester about what other students in the course had said about it, another student responded,

Some of the Americans weren't, they have their own feelings about different cross-cultural things but they can't express their feelings. Or some people might have been afraid to say something for fear of offending somebody else.
She elaborated that the Americans in the course had learned how badly foreign students on campus felt about American students in general not wanting to make friends with them. She said that the American students in the class knew what the conflicts were in making friends with internationals but that it was hard for them to openly discuss those conflicts with the international students in the class for fear they would think they were making excuses for the Americans' actions.

The same student in response to being told that other American students had said they could tell the teacher/researcher things in their journals that they would have found difficult to say face-to-face in a private conversation added, "Or at least in a group discussion." Two other American students in the class also made reference to the Americans' inability to express their feelings in group situations on the last day that the CCC and ESL students met together for an informal uptaped practicum session. Near the end of that session the instructor asked the students to express some of their thoughts about the time they had spent together. Many international students, both CCC and ESL, expressed their feelings about the practicums. One American student and the teacher spoke. The end of that session as described in the researcher's field notes is recounted below because it illustrates what both international and American students came to see as a major communication difference between them.
The Lebanese-Brazilian (ESL) said that she felt the time the two classes had spent together had been good, that she had learned many things about other cultures. After three or four others had spoken, a Venezuelan (ESL) said only, "Thank you." A Venezuelan (CCC) said she had learned to become a better listener. A Dominican Republican (ESL) said that the time the classes had spent together had been fascinating; he had learned things about other parts of the world--the U.S., the Arabic countries, Japan, India, Thailand--things he never knew, things that he had never even imagined existed before. He said that in twenty years he had not had a course that had taught him as much as this one had and that he had learned from other people which was the fun way to learn. A Thai (ESL) said that through the practicum sessions she had made friends that she saw in class and in the dormitory. "When I am in my room, I usually feel lonely, but through this class I have made friends."

The Libyan (CCC) spoke about breaking down the walls that separate people (a reference to the previous untaped practicum session which occurred one week after videotaped Session 9). He said he had come to think a lot about people from different cultures and that he remembered a question the male Thai (ESL) had asked in the Muslim practicum session; specifically, why, if everyone believed in one God, were there wars. He said that he had come to realize that wars were the result of people being in their own culture
looking at things from their own place, from their own perspective, and that it was not God who created wars but people, because they couldn't see things from other than their own locale, their own view of the world. The Japanese (CCC) said that she had learned many of the customs of other countries but more importantly, she had come to know Japan, and that, for her, was very, very important.

The one American (CCC) who spoke said he thought the time the classes had spent together had been even more important for the American students. The international students had come to the U.S. already having other perspectives of the world but through the class, the Americans had been able to learn about the rest of the world. Since the hour of class time was over, the instructor said simply through tears that had been begun with the Dominican Republicans' comments that she wanted them to know it had been a very special experience for her and that she hoped they would carry the thoughts that had just been expressed into the world with them.

When the students had gone, the Lebanese-Brazilian ELS student who had stayed behind said to the instructor, "You showed us something very special about you today." The instructor replied, "What's that?" She responded, "You showed us today that you understand foreign people." Puzzled, the instructor asked her, "What do you mean?" She replied, "Today you were not afraid to express your emotions."
Two American students stopped by the instructor's office later in the day. One stopped to say she thought the practicum session had been very good. She said that during it she had become aware that the international students were able to sit and say what their feelings were so much easier than the American students. She said,

I knew _____ was feeling things. I knew I was feeling things. And the only one who spoke was _____.

The other student who came later that day for an interview told the instructor that she thought the last part of the practicum had been very positive and that the instructor should feel proud of all the things the international students had said. She said she also had been very emotional and had had tears in her eyes but had said nothing.

While the American students viewed the journals as an easy and significant expression of their feelings, virtually all of the international students discussed throughout the semester that keeping a journal was difficult, a first-time experience, and not the way to express what they thought or felt. The Venezuelan woman best articulated in two separate interviews her difficulty in putting her thoughts and feelings regarding the curriculum into written form. In an early interview, she said,

You know it is hard for me to write of my experience. It's very, very hard. I have tried to put it on paper. This is like I have never done in my life, you know. This is more like an American custom, writing experience on paper like a diary. I just can't get it down, I hate it, you know, to look back. Like I did it one week, then I start reading it and gosh, it's so silly for me to go back to, you know... I
prefer to keep it in my mind and if I have to talk, I always say, "This is what I think about it and that's how I felt at that moment".

In an interview at the end of the semester she stated, 

I want to write. I have so many things in my mind that I want to write and I start writing and then I just--it's like I have a fear of writing my own emotional feeling or experience. It's inside me... My mother told me, "If someone wants to learn about what you say, he will keep you in his mind or in his heart where he doesn't have to have a paper to remember." And I've just always felt like this... In the class when everybody says something, I try to keep it, what is interesting to me. I keep it and I need to share it with others. Most of the time what is good to me, what I think is good, I share with my families.

She summarized her need for verbally articulating her thoughts as she left the conference room when the interview was over. She said, "I am thinking all the time about what I am learning but I can't value my thoughts until they are spoken."

Of the Arab students in the class who discussed the foreignness of keeping a journal, the Libyan expressed it best and discussed the need among Arabs for face-to-face communication.

It's a Western idea, the journal keeping... We don't write journals. You find people here, it's because of the fact that we are not very individualistic. There's always somebody there who you're going to talk to and bring things out. You've heard of ______. His mother died. His family didn't call him personally; they called ______, him roommate and friend, and he was someone who could deliver the message. All the guys got together and they went and talked to ______ and they stayed around him.

This is the kind of thing that people, they are always there when you need them. So you don't have to sit down and talk to yourself. Because keeping a journal, a diary, is kind of bringing out your feelings to yourself because you think nobody else is going to understand them. But if you've got
somebody who you're going to keep updated with on what you do and what you feel, then you can sit and talk to them...and like you keep your secrets differently, with different people, so there will always be somebody.

He reiterated in class one day that writing a journal was like talking to yourself, and further explained that Arabs need people around them, in front of them or beside them when they talk. They want to see their eyes and their faces and to watch their reactions to what is being said so that they know what their response is.

While the Latin American and Arab students found writing their thoughts and feelings in a journal foreign, the Japanese student wrote in her journal that verbally expressing her feelings and what she thought in regard to anything to anyone was something she was only learning to do in English.

Today I told my friend about a loud party on my floor last night. I wanted to sleep, but I could not until late so I was too tired to study. He asked me, "How do you feel about that?" His question made me think that Americans often ask, "How do you feel?" or "What do you think?" I discussed it with my friend who knows much about Japan. We decided that the question is so strange for Japanese that we do not have vocabulary or conversation patterns to respond to such questions. Since last year I have been learning how to respond in English. I am not very good at understanding the questions, but in Japanese, I could not respond at all.

Curriculum Suggestions

Growing in expressing oneself in a new language, as the Japanese student said, is growing in a new cultural mode of expression. If cross-cultural understanding is the aim of the communication curriculum, the means for
growth in different cultural ways of expressing oneself must be incorporated into the curriculum for all students, American as well as international. For those students from group-oriented cultures in which the oral tradition is stronger than in our own (in this case, Latin Americans and Arabs), journals offer an opportunity for growth in written reflection upon their own culture and ours or others in comparison. Journals also provide an opportunity for them to develop the written expression of their thoughts and feelings in regard to their experiences while participating in the curriculum. Teacher conferences and small group and whole-class discussions which encourage American students to sit and verbally share their own culture and their perceptions of the international students' cultures in relation to their own are crucial for their growth. These three oral modes must also be used to encourage Americans to express their thoughts and feelings about their experiencing of the curriculum so as to provide an opportunity for them to grow in the oral tradition.

Experiential-based cross-cultural communication curriculum should therefore incorporate both written and oral forms of expression for all students which will encourage the reflective process and the sharing of that which has occurred in reflection. Students will come to better understand themselves and their own cultures' predominant modes of expression by simultaneously being forced to participate in and develop modes of expression
that are the predominant ones in other cultures. A basis of comparison in communicating their thoughts and feelings related to their curricular experiences will thus be established for all of the students. Without comparison, students remain culturally encapsulated.

**Expectations, Purpose, and the Curriculum as a Beginning**

Three related patterns significant to future curriculum development in cross-cultural communication surfaced near the end of the course. One, a few students mentioned in the last interview before the end of the semester what their expectations for the course had been and how the course had in fact differed from what they had expected. The teacher/researcher therefore asked subsequent interviewees about their initial expectations for the course. Two, the Venezuelan woman revealed in the same set of interviews that the Japanese woman on two different occasions during the semester had asked her what the purpose of the course was. She stated that she also had been somewhat uncertain. The researcher thus decided to ask all of the students to reflect in their course evaluations on what they thought the purpose of the curriculum had been. Three, in the last three weeks of the course, in journal entries, the last interview, and in casual remarks made outside the classroom, many students summarized the course as "a beginning." Each of these patterns is discussed below.

In regard to the first pattern, student expectations, some participants stated they had expected a techniques
course that would teach them how to communicate with the people of this culture and that. They had expected textbooks, tests and lectures. They had thought the teacher would teach and they would learn. Most expressed surprise at what they found instead. The following are examples of expectations the participants held at the beginning of the course as described to the researcher near its end:

Venezuelan
I thought it was going to be a lot of talk from you. I never expected so much talk from us. And a kind of book that would tell us what the Arabics do and the Japanese--that's what I had in mind. (F)

Panamanian
I thought that we are going to have a text to read and more formal like the others...I never knew that we are going to film some videotapes, those kinds of things. I was surprised. I thought that we are going to have tests and everything but never this way. (F)

American
I thought that it was going to be more like a business kind of thing--how in this situation would you react to this? I thought it was going to be more like a linguistics kind of course when I signed up for it. And then, the first day of class, I think, I knew my opinions had changed, but I thought it was going to be more of a, have a textbook and you had to learn terms and stuff like that. I didn't expect anything like it. (F)

American
I've never had class like this, ever. From the first day I walked in and you were giving the introduction to the course, and as soon as you were saying you were going to develop it with us and the whole thing, when you said it was going to be a sharing kind of feeling thing, I was just amazed. I couldn't believe there would be a class that would be like that, especially cross-culturally. Maybe there would be someone from a totally different country and you were going to try to do that. It was almost like, I can't believe she's trying to do something like that. Of course, we were looking at it too as an academic course which never, ever, have we had something that discussed feeling, or where it's so much of the course like this one, and I thought that could be really hard. (F)
I was expecting a lot of discussion. I was expecting no surprises, but I had some surprises, like the trip to Deercreek and the video lab sessions. And well, I didn't, well I guess I wasn't expecting to make a lot of friends, so many, so many friends, or to get to know the people deeper. (M)

I was told it was required. Just I would think--required--so I should take it. (F)

Students expressed throughout the semester in journals, interviews and in the course evaluations what they actually found the curriculum to be. Their perceptions quoted below illustrate several different themes: experiential learning through discussion and interaction; sharing and warmth; reflection; informality and the feeling of indefinite direction; exposure to multiple perspectives; and the complexity of cross-cultural communication.

I didn't know we were going to be books for each other. (F)

This course is different. I know the reason why is different, because it makes one reflect and share, experience, experiment, talk, and it's an attempt to make us understand another method of conducting a class...It's an experience of learning, not only about problems of cultures, but problems of students when they engage in arguments and feel uncomfortable, and then seek solutions. (M)

I was educated in cross-cultural information I could never have acquired from a book. (F)

This is a discussion and interaction course. (M)

This class is all discussion and not much lecture. I strongly feel that people learn more from their personal experiences and sharing of ideas. I don't think we would have learned as much if we would have had to learn strictly from a book. (F)
American
The class was a time to exchange/share ideas from all the cultures. It was a time to try to understand the differences and similarities. (F)

American
I liked the openness of the class, when expressing thoughts and feelings...The main significance for me was the interaction with other class members and a kind of warmth I felt during these interactions. (M)

American
Classroom discussions brought out aspects of cultures I never thought about before. It revealed a whole new world of different people. I especially liked the informality. (F)

American
A class like this almost sets its own pattern. You really don't know what you're going to do. I mean you might have an idea what you're going to cover, but you don't know which way the, it's going to, what road it's going to take. If it seems to be good, that's the way it is. (F)

Saudi
I know how the students from the different countries look at the same subject from many ways. (M)

American
Everything in the course showed me that there was more to cross-cultural communication than just two people from different cultures sitting around and attempting to successfully talk to each other. (M)

The second pattern significant to curriculum development concerns the purpose of the curriculum. Since uncertainty regarding the purpose had arisen as a topic of discussion during the semester between the Japanese and Venezuelan women, the researcher asked the Venezuelan what the content of their discussion had been. The Venezuelan said that she had responded to the Japanese student's question by saying,

To me, the purpose is to find somehow my identity, how I judge others or how I think of the outside world from what my culture's perspectives are. And then to try to bring our worlds to the same class.
The Venezuelan said that the Japanese had responded with,

It's true, it's very true. I have class for an hour, I thought about my country much more than ever before when I was here in the United States. It's true. And "why?" I question why I do this and why people do this way and where. And explain---I'm thinking a lot about Buddha and other things. Even there are so many things that I don't know and I have to find out.

When told by the Venezuelan that the Japanese student had questioned the purpose of the course, the researcher remembered an earlier journal entry in which the Japanese woman had reflected on what she had learned thus far in the course. The entry stood out as striking at the time it was submitted (about a month before the end of the curriculum) for three different reasons. One, it contained a metaphor of the course as a mirror. Two, it was not the student's usual comparative treatment of some aspect of Japanese and American cultures. The researcher saw it as a large step taken by the Japanese woman toward developing the ability to verbalize what the curriculum meant personally to her. Three, it confirmed what the researcher had been feeling since midway through the research—that to more fully ascertain the significance of the course to the participants, another interview needed to be conducted at the end of the academic year when students were one semester removed in time and distance from the curriculum and the teacher/researcher. The Japanese student's entry is repeated below:

What have I learned through the Cross Cultural Course? To tell the truth, I am not sure yet. I have learned many interesting and many different things about other cultures such as marriage customs, religious practices
and feelings, and about death. Some things surprised me because they were so different from Japan. Through this class and writing journals, I have learned more about Japanese culture because I have thought about things I never questioned before. So this course has been a mirror for me.

What do I think and how do I feel? Frankly, as I have said, these are questions that make Japanese uncomfortable. Me, too. I am learning to cope with such questions but I wonder if other foreigners are also uncomfortable with such questions. Probably the real learning from this course will be realized later, after it is over.

The researcher asked the Japanese student about the purpose of the course in an interview subsequent to the Venezuelan's. She said,

Communication. I'm not sure but we talk and talk about cultures or customs and I have to think about that more, but I learned about my own culture customs more and I learned others' too. We could communicate more with each other. We communicated just surface, "Oh, hi, hello, how are you?" Now we talk about religion. "Oh, you don't have any religion, why?" They wanted to know why I didn't have a religion and like deeply and communicate more, not just surface.

Other students in the course evaluations discussed the purpose of the curriculum in terms of communication, understanding, commonalities and differences, and openmindedness toward other cultures. The following examples illustrate:

American
The purpose of the course was to enhance communication. (M)

American
To become more observant, more reflective and more communicative with other people--of all cultures--our own as well as foreign. (F)

Virgin Islander
This course purpose was to help us understand people from other cultures how they perceive many aspects of life and at the same time help us to understand our own culture. (F)
Panamanian
The purpose of this course was to help us in some way to understand the others culture that exist. To give the opportunity to use our own culture to research and found more about it and see also that our own culture is very important. (F)

American
I think it was to give us the occasion to learn about ourselves through others and about other people through theirs and our culture. Each complimenting the other. (F)

American
When the course was offered, I thought the purpose was to learn techniques of how to communicate cross-culturally. But now I think it was because the importance of universal understanding was something you felt students should be subjected to. (F)

Iraqi
The purpose of the course was to learn more about communication, our own culture and other people's culture. So be more broad minded and to see the similarities and differences in cultures and accept it. (M)

American
The purpose of this course was to enable us to have an increased awareness of others' cultures, customs and ideas. To me this course accomplished that goal. It showed us that although another's ideas may be different, it does not mean it is wrong. (F)

American
The purpose of the course was to make us more aware of other cultures and how we communicate with them. To make us aware of all that goes into communication and to see we must step back from our own culture to understand the deep meaning of another's. (F)

Two students, American and Venezuelan men, in philosophical statements regarding the purpose of the course, described a beginning. They are quoted below because the metaphor of the course as "a beginning" was the most common thread running throughout all of the subjective data collected in the last weeks of the curriculum.
American
This course has opened a new realm of discovery. The purpose has to be seen in this light. Cross-cultural communication has shown me and other students that we are all held together in this world by a basic, intrinsic, intangible foundation of commonality that transcends any differences we might encounter in our cultural realms of this experience. The purpose of this course has been to show us a few vital elements of this commonality. It is up to us as individuals to utilize our experiences and insights to aid in defining to the fullest possible way what this foundation is. Our initiation into this world has ended with the finishing of this course. It is now up to us to go beyond this experience to improve our interaction with others in all future pursuits.

Venezuelan
The purpose of the course was from your past to share with other Americans your experiences (rich) with foreigners, and to teach them that United States is only one country in a small world. And to us the purpose was to leave a seed that we can pour water on and watch it grow with each day and give us the precious experience of knowing not our human vanity, but our human nature. And your famous phrase: one must never judge other cultures based on our own.

The metaphor of the curriculum as a beginning is important and it is around that metaphor that the majority of the analysis of the secondary data is organized and presented in the remainder of this chapter. Below are some of the statements made by participants near the end of the course which reflect their perceptions of the curriculum as a beginning:

Venezuelan
I wish to carry a will of knowing more and more, this course is only my first step in the adventure. (M)

American
(In reflections upon coming to feel natural and relaxed in communication with international students) I guess I've made some progress but now I don't see the end of a long cross-cultural journey. I've just
climbed the first big hill in a never-ending trail... It seems that this semester's work and enjoyment has laid a basic foundation for future cross-cultural interaction. (M)

Panamanian
At the end I feel like the time was not enough to know more about each other and I wonder what is going to happen if all the things we know, everyone of us is going to practice. (F)

Saudi
I think that this course does not end at the end of the semester. I will continue to think about and discuss more objectively. I will keep the relationship with you and if I have a chance, I will write or talk with you to continue this class with you. (M)

American
In most courses you seem to feel some sort of completeness as you finish your work in it, but with this course it's different. I feel as though I have just begun to scratch the surface of this subject. What the course did for me is to just give me a "taste" of what interaction with man as a whole is. (M)

Libyan
Many people are still kind of putting this wall up. It's hard to bring down what has been built up in, you know, a whole life. Because people are programmed in their own society, conditioned, and it's not easy to take all that out. But as a beginning, it's good I think. It was good for many of us but on different levels. You know what I mean?...The problem that we have is that we think in terms of "I" and "you" and "we" and "they". So people like haven't come out to start to think more of "us". I wouldn't expect to be that way, or many of the other students who are still new to the school or new to meeting other people and new to trying to see the different viewpoints but has been here for a long time...Like for some people it can be a starting point to start broadening up a little bit. That's why I said that the course shouldn't end. We're mad it's ending because there's no end to such a course. (M)

American
I wish the course was going on next semester. I wish it lasted for a whole year. I just have this horrible feeling of, we're just, we're just beginning to get there and now we have to end. (F)
It takes, it took so long like to just even know what the course is supposed to do and then, once you get to that point, I mean, the whole semester is over already and I can't believe that. (F)

Towards the end people began to realize that they wished it could go on because I think it took that long for everyone to kind of get a feel of the other person and to be comfortable. I think also in time you could tell who was serious about really wanting to understand and express and you were grateful for the opportunity to have the experience. I think all that came to be at a time when it was over. What it is is that you find out many little personal intimacies about one another that you would like to explore and you wish that there would be time. After you've developed that understanding and the contact and the rapport of the group, then you feel like you can really start talking about things and it's over. That's why I don't think there is enough time in this type of class. (F)

Curriculum Suggestions

A lack of fit existed between the student's curricular expectations of learning communication techniques and the perceived reality and purpose of the curriculum they experienced. The analysis of the primary data in this study (Chapter IV and V) is firm testimony that techniques for achieving cross-cultural understanding were present in the curriculum at an experiential level. What was largely absent was the development of a cognitive awareness on the part of the majority of the participants of the very techniques they themselves had employed daily in attempting to understand one another.

The students entered the course with the expectation of learning techniques of how to communicate with the members of different cultures. They left having practiced
and learned many but few participants verbalized techniques in their reflections yet to be discussed which reveal their insights into the process of communicating interculturally. Most students probably left the course thinking their expectations of learning techniques had not been met. None voiced any regret that techniques had not been taught, and from the myriad of curriculum suggestions they made, no one suggested including techniques in the curriculum in the future.

Experiential learning in cross-cultural communication and reflection upon that was strongly endorsed by the participants in this study. That learning would have been more complete, however, if more students had developed a cognitive understanding of the techniques they utilized experientially in attempting to understand each other.

To the researcher's knowledge, no studies have been conducted which have examined the process of intercultural or cross-cultural communication in an attempt to determine what participants involved in the process actually do and think about in reflection upon their involvement in the process. The research is therefore significant to the future development of the cross-cultural communication course because the techniques and factors described by the research team (Chapters IV and V) and those reflected upon by individual participants (described in the remainder of this chapter) provide specific knowledge about "techniques" which was not available at the beginning of this curriculum.
Through analyzing the process of communication with her fellow researchers and analyzing the participants' reflections upon it, the teacher/researcher developed a cognitive understanding herself of the techniques in which the participants and she engaged. Thus, it will be possible to meet the expectations of a techniques course for future students by seeking to develop their cognitive understanding of the techniques and factors determined instrumental to cross-cultural understanding in this study. Together these techniques and factors constitute the properties of cross-cultural understanding as ascertained through this research. If cross-cultural understanding is the raison d'être for the communication curriculum, developing the participants' cognitive understanding of these properties should round out their experience of learning through actual communication with the members of different cultures.

In regard to the participants' perceptions of the purpose of the curriculum, it is sufficient to say at this point that they well understood its purpose, if not at the beginning of the curriculum, certainly by the end. Further suggestions related to their understanding of the purpose of the curriculum and their perceptions of it as a beginning will not be offered until the major patterns which constitute "a beginning" are described.
"Beginnings" and "Openness"

Since the course was overwhelmingly experienced as a beginning, the researcher examined the data for threads of commonality across participants that indicated beginnings. Participant perceptions of the curriculum as a beginning when it was drawing to a close seemed in sync with the multiple researchers' assessment that openness to diversity was the last significant feature of the interaction between practicum participants in the videotaped sessions. Openness to diversity (and an intense concern for understanding which accompanied it) signified to the research team the achievement of conditions under which the possibility of participants coming to understand each other's perspectives rested solidly. In analyzing the secondary data, it therefore appeared to the researcher that the question to be answered was a how question. How was openness to diversity/lack of defensiveness or acceptance of the validity of the other's perspectives (terms used by the research team) related to the participants' perceptions of the curriculum as a beginning?

Working from the end of the curriculum as "a beginning" according to participants and an end state of "openness to diversity" according to the research team, the researcher examined the participants' frequent use throughout the secondary data of the word "open." After writing about openness to diversity in Chapter IV and V, she was somewhat taken aback to find a very large percentage of the
participants' usage of the word "open" to be at a much more basal level. "Open" was most frequently used by the participants to refer to willingness to communicate or interact with those of different cultures. The participants also used "open" to describe self-disclosure, sharing, and depth or intimacy in communicating. "Open" was also used as a synonym for openmindedness or openness to cultural diversity. Openness thus became the organizing principle around which the curriculum as a beginning was analyzed.

The remainder of this chapter will describe the "beginnings" for participants in openness to communicating, openness in communicating, and openness to diversity.

**Openness to Communicating: A Beginning**

The curriculum forced communication and interaction in the classroom between the members of the different cultures. It also forced the participants to focus their communication on cultural content. In so doing, it provided subject matter for participants to continue to communicate about outside the classroom. The curriculum opened a door to further communication and interaction between the participants.

The continuation of discussions which had begun in the classroom after the participants left it was described by them as a common occurrence. They often described the classroom communication about a topic as "just beginning" or "really getting going" when the class time ended. They said they frequently continued the discussions into the hall, the
student center or the dormitory. Some described picking them up again over dinner the same evening or lunch the next day. Students described most of their communication outside the classroom in terms of asking further questions, clarifying what had been said in class, and generally pursuing the topic with each other. Talk about the course itself was not as frequent a subject of conversation. The topic of religion was the one discussed most extensively outside the classroom, both by participants of the same culture and by participants of different cultures with each other.

Probably because the curriculum forced communication and interaction in the classroom with others who were "different," participants began to privately verbalize to the teacher/researcher their own cultural group's prejudices and lack of openness to communication with various other cultural groups. In so doing, some of the participants began to see their own personal prejudices. It is this beginning that will be discussed next.

It should be kept in mind when reading the following analysis that the participants entered the curriculum with vastly different levels of previous interaction and personal involvement with people culturally different than themselves. The amount of time (from one to three years) that students had spent in the small multicultural campus environment had nothing to do with their level of personal involvement. For example, of the eight Americans in the
class, five had had from minimal to extensive personal interaction with international students and four (seniors) had had virtually none. The first practicum session for them was the first time in their four years at Ohio Dominican that they had ever even sat and talked to a foreign student in a one-on-one or small group situation. The international CCC students were likewise varied in the extent of their personal involvement with the members of other cultures. They of course had had more extensive multicultural classroom interaction than the Americans because of ESL courses they had taken when they first entered Ohio Dominican from one to three years previously.

Openness to communicating and interacting with culturally different others was a subject discussed extensively between individual participants and the teacher/researcher. Students devoted a lot of journal time to discussing their perceptions of blatant prejudice and a serious lack of interaction and willingness to communicate existing between the various cultural groups on campus. Since so many journal entries dealt with the subject, the researcher pursued it in interviews. The subject eventually was brought into the open by the Libyan CCC student and was discussed by participants of both the CCC and ESL classes in the next to the last informal (untaped) practicum session of the semester.

Early in the semester, some participants began in indirect ways to articulate their own personal and/or their particular group's prejudices and unwillingness to interact
with others. Some did not admit or were not yet able to see that their groups' prejudices belonged to them personally. Others were more direct and aligned themselves with their own cultural group's biases against others. Americans who had had little or no interaction with international students made statements about finding themselves increasingly "open" to communicating with others who were different and "initiating interaction" with them in the bathroom, the library, on the oval, etc. By increasingly open and initiating interaction, they meant simply speaking to them outside the classroom or engaging them in brief conversations. Implicit in their statements about now interacting and being "open" to communication was the unspoken admission that something had prevented that before. One American talked about man's prejudice (instead of Americans') and another was optimistic in thinking the friendly greetings she was now engaging in were the key to understanding. The following journal entries illustrate these various forms of early and largely indirect articulation of cultural prejudices toward others:

Japanese (First week)
My room is an international room. An American, a Puerto Rican and a Japanese all live together. Whenever I have a Japanese visitor, I always ask my friend to speak in English so that other friends can join our talking. The Puerto Rican doesn't care whether other people can understand Spanish or not, she keeps speaking Spanish. On the other hand my American roommate is always considered of whoever may be in the room. Why don't Spanish speaking people consider the others in the same room? A friend suggested that students from Latin American cultures are very self-centered. (F)
Panamanian (Second week)
I have friends and cousins who are studying in several states of U.S.A., and all my friends have talked about the bad body smell that the people from the Middle East have. There are few that doesn't smell bad but most of them smell bad. Smell that is difficult to support. I am of the kind of person I can't handle this, I reject these person. I know is their cultural. I always when there is a body smell I reject that person, I don't like even if know is their culture. In my country we have a proverb, "Clean body, clean mind." (F)

American (Second week, after completing a reading which commented briefly on the teachings of Tao)
I hope I will have a chance to meet someone in a one-on-one session who could teach me more about Tao. It is easy to condemn another's way of thought before you know about it--I am glad I might have the chance to understand it more fully by speaking to someone who agrees with it and lives by it. I see man's prejudice more each day since I began this class. I hope I will be able to be open enough to the others I meet through this class to remedy some of that injustice. (F)

American (Second week)
Oh! Today as I was walking to Erskine I did have the opportunity of sharing an umbrella with a 19 year old Lebanese student. I think he said his name was . We didn't really say much--just chit-chatted a bit. I thought this was worth writing down because I saw myself becoming more open to foreign students now and also looking for opportunities to engage in some sort of conversation with them. I've never really been that motivated before and I like (so far) the stimulation this course has given me. (F)

American (Third week)
Usually try to go out of my way to engage one or more of the international students in conversation in the hall or elsewhere--or at least try to get in a friendly 'Hi' or another pleasant greeting. Have been quite pleased at the rapport I am developing--diminishing the distances between our cultures--bridging the language barriers--and establishing understanding between different age groups. (F)

Those Americans who had not had previous interaction with international students spoke from the middle to the end of the course about coming to feel comfortable, relaxed
and natural in communicating with them. The curriculum was a beginning of openness to communication and comfort in communication with different others for those Americans. Some of them simultaneously began to openly state to the researcher the prejudices Americans have toward foreigners or prejudices they themselves had when they entered the course. The following quotes illustrate these Americans' perceptions of their growth and comfort in openness to communication and interaction and a beginning awareness of their own cultural prejudices toward others.

A male student reflected in his journal on the informal practicum session which occurred the week following the religious discussions,

Yesterday's practicum session was a refreshing change of pace from the previous panel discussions. It took place in the semi-intimate atmosphere of the faculty lounge and the main focus of discussion was just casual conversation...The room seemed to "come alive" with the spontaneous questions and answers that became the mainstay in this conversation. Laughter created an overall atmosphere of fun in interaction. The practicum seemed more like a group rap session than just another classroom function.

Although we all seemed to have our ups and down throughout the semester, yesterday's session showed me that we have made great strides in achieving cross-cultural interaction. For this number of students with all the various cultural backgrounds present to sit and openly talk, laugh, and relax with each other is a notable accomplishment.

In the course evaluation, this student spoke of his growth in interaction when discussing the value of the practicum sessions.
Through their use in the course I learned to relax and enjoy conversation with others who didn't exactly share my culturally influenced points of view. The panel discussions on religion were especially enlightening. Through them I've realized just how "multicultural" and how deeply influenced by my own heritage I really am. They have shown me how much I have grown in interacting with others and also how much more I have to go.

This same student had reflected earlier in his journal on Americans' stereotypes about and prejudices toward Muslims following the Muslim students' presentation on Islam (Session 8).

I must say that before the panel discussions I was a little confused with what the actual foundations of Islam were. It seems that the only information American culture ever receives about Islam comes to us through news reports of Khomeini's Islamic Revolution and reports on skirmishes among Arab states. Also, information on Khadafy and the assination of Sadat by Muslim fundamentalists do not give favorable views of Islam in this country.

Through my conversations with friends here at school and especially at work at the bar, I've seen many persons who view Muslims as a "war mongering bunch of bloodthirsty, primitive tribesmen." An Arab to many of them is a person who drives a camel and has an oil well in his back yard.

Our news media suffers from obtaining "misinformation" about the integral workings of other cultures by not searching for those basic commonalities that meaningful interaction can be based upon...Through the practicum group's questions [to the Muslims] about the "political" aims of Islam, I can see how news media can color a person's conceptions of other cultures.

A female student in the course evaluation reflected on the personal significance of the course to her. She stated she had come to a better understanding of herself because in examining commonalities and differences in people, she had been forced to examine herself. She said she came to realize during the sessions on religion that she often judged other
cultures using her own as the basis. She also addressed the importance of being open to interaction with others.

I feel privileged to have come to know my colleagues in the class. Often times American students never have an opportunity to interact with the students from other countries. I would have been one of those American students if I had not taken this course. I now realize that it is essential to be open to all people because I opened myself up to my classmates and made some lasting memories of our interactions.

This same student was described in Session 8 as one who sought verification from the Muslims of her own preconceived notions of Islam. A few days after the Muslims' presentation, she reflected on her own prejudices in describing what she had learned through the religious sessions as a whole.

Though I hate to admit it (I really hate to admit it), I always had a preconceived notion of Islam. But, after seeing the group (though I didn't agree with them) I saw their faith and I realized that I was being a bigot. I learned that they were not a group of radicals who were murderers and fanatics. The media always portrays Muslims in that way.

I have learned to be more discreet about what I see and hear. If the only lesson I learned, it was not to make preconceived statements without evidence or total knowledge (or as close as one can come to that) about other cultures. I only hope that when I meet people who are "different," I will remember what I learned from these sessions, and that it will not be so easy to criticize.

Another female student who had had no previous personal involvement with international students reflected on finally feeling comfortable in interaction with others who were different. The following quote is taken from her course evaluation in reflections upon the value of the Deercreek trip which occurred mid-semester and upon which both the CCC and ESL classes went. The international dinner she refers to was
a campus-wide event sponsored by the International Student Club near the end of the semester.

One good thing I can honestly say is that I don't feel so out of place anymore in the presence of all these people who are different than I am. I especially noticed that at the International Dinner. When my friend [one of two Americans she took with her] told me she felt so uncomfortable she had to leave, I really didn't. I was having a good time. Had I gone to something like that at the beginning of the year, or like around the time of the Deercreek trip, I wouldn't have felt so comfortable or at ease. I had a rough time that weekend. That's not to say that the trip wasn't valuable. It helped me to pick out those stereotypical feelings [about international students] within me and to be aware that I, too, have those feelings like my American buddies do. It helped me to see the fallacy behind such feelings.

This same student had earlier had what the researcher described as a critical incident in which she became acutely aware of her own prejudices and began to reveal them to the teacher/researcher. The incident occurred just prior to the Deercreek trip and served as the catalyst for her further coming to an awareness on the trip of how prejudices toward others of different cultures block interaction.

This particular student will be quoted extensively throughout the remainder of this chapter for several reasons. She entered the curriculum with no previous involvement with international students. She had kept a personal daily journal from some time and thus had developed the ability to pour her thoughts and feelings onto paper. Thoughts and types of reflections similar to hers from journals and interviews of other students fit in time with hers in the students' progression through the curriculum. Lastly, her words
describe better than the researcher could ever describe the ultimate aim of the curriculum.

The critical incident took place in the elevator of the dormitory midway through the curriculum. She had waited and waited for it to come to the floor she was on. When it arrived, it was filled with six or seven Arab men.

My initial gut reaction and feelings were "Oh God, I should have known--all those foreigners." I was annoyed and felt a bit angry too. I don't know why I felt angry. I think it was because I didn't have any control over the situation. I was annoyed because the elevator took so long and because it was filled with foreigners when it got to me. It was a feeling as if I were better than them and I felt invaded that there were so many of them and only one of me. I know this sounds terrible. It was my initial reaction and I even got angry at myself for feeling like that.

I thought it important to note this because though I have changed my thinking lots since I've taken this course, I too have these stereotypical feelings inside me sometimes. After I thought about it, there was no reason for me to think that I'm "better" than anyone, including foreigners.

I suppose it comes down to changing the way people think about one another and this is probably going to take lots of time...The reason Americans can't understand the way foreigners are is because we see things only from our own perspective. To change that in an American and to get him/her to "see" from another's perspective would take a long time due to all the stereotypes that have already been instilled in so many American people about those of a different culture.

Despite the course I'm taking, or the knowledge I do have about different customs and lifestyles now, feelings of prejudice (I guess they are) still creep up inside me even before I can stop them, like what I felt on the elevator. I hope that I have changed my thoughts enough not to act on such feelings...I'd like to say that I'm completely changed. I'd like to be able to accept all the mannerisms and customs of another culture very openly and without hesitation, but I can't.
It still takes me forever to adjust to the smell of body odor on the elevator even though now I do understand why. I still have to get used to trying to feel comfortable at foreign get-togethers. I've changed, but it's a progressively slow change I think.

Three days after the above entry, the student reflected on the Deercreek trip which had just ended. She talked about her struggle with herself before the trip as to whether or not she really wanted to go. She reflected on her initial uneasiness and feelings of being the foreigner since as always with the two classes combined, Americans were in the minority. She talked about gradually relaxing as food, music and dance from the different countries were shared. She described her fascination with the tea ceremony performed by the Japanese student and new own inability to capture its essence in words. About the Japanese student she said, "I felt close yet different from ____." She reflected upon finding herself wanting to come up with some kind of "logical, rational explanation" for stories about telepathic communication, communication with the dead, foreseeing the future, voodoo and black magic which were told by the Japanese and Latin American students and the teacher who shared stories told to her by previous students.

One day later she again addressed her prejudices about foreign students in further reflections on the second day of the trip.

This is going to sound really bad but one of the things I was hesitant about on Saturday [the day before the trip] was what it was going to be like swimming with guys from other countries. I felt that stereotypical feeling again of foreigners being "dirty" and I didn't
want to get into a pool with them. However, I think the most relaxed kind of fun I had was when we did go swimming. I enjoyed the chicken fights we had in the water and I didn't feel at all that they were dirty or unclean or anything. By the end I was having such a good time, and I even enjoyed the sauna, that I didn't want to leave.

The middle to the end of the curriculum for international students and for Americans who were already personally involved with international students when they entered the course was a time spent in revealing their perceptions of prejudice and who was open to communication with whom on campus. The Libyan CCC student forced the issue into the open in an informal practicum session two weeks before the end of the course. He did so by directly asking the Latin Americans in both the CCC and ESL classes why Latins always stuck together as a large group and rarely became involved with the people of other countries.

His question forced the beginning of discussion between participants as to why the different cultural groups construct walls between themselves and others. The discussion can only be viewed as a beginning-to-communicate-about-lack-of-openness-to-communication because the reasons discussed by participants were for the most part not the same reasons participants told the teacher/researcher privately both before and after the discussion. In other words, participants were not able to be open in communicating with one another the most significant reasons blocking interaction.

Nonetheless, the session was viewed positively by participants as a necessary first step to "breaking down
the walls that separate us." Bringing the subject into the open created a community of awareness in regard to lack of openness to communication and interaction. Participants not stating their major reasons for not interacting with other cultural groups made it difficult for them to any longer deny to themselves or to the researcher their own cultural group's unspoken reasons (if they had been able to deny them before).

The primary reasons not discussed openly by participants were their prejudices and, more importantly, the fear of rejection by their own cultural groups if they became involved with others who were different. Fear of rejection had been discussed privately by Americans with the teacher/researcher prior to the Libyan's question. It was not until after the session that Latins discussed the same fear privately with her. Peer pressure by the members of their own group not to interact with different others is strong in the cases of Latin Americans and Americans according to each describing their own respective group.

The Arabs and the Japanese in the class spoke not about fear of rejection by their own cultural group or peer pressure to remain within it, but rather both privately and openly discussed the necessity of branching out in order to practice English and learn about the culture in which they are now living. That is not to suggest in any way that fear of rejection by their own group or peer pressure to remain within it may not be present among Arabs and Japanese
students on campus. The three Arabs and Japanese students in this class simply did not discuss these things but talked instead about the value of and their own efforts at not remaining tightly bound to their own cultural groups.

According to Latins themselves and Americans in the class who were highly involved with international students in general (rather than one specific cultural group), the primary thrust of Latins' prejudice is leveled against Arabs. Consequently, peer pressure not to interact with Arabs is intense. A Cuban professor at Ohio Dominican, in the U.S. since 1961, who gave two guest lectures in the course on his perceptions of differences between American and Latin American cultures discussed Latins' greater tolerance of different races and their extreme intolerance of the people of different religions. He also addressed the closeness of Latins, a perception very much shared by non-Latins in the class far prior to his lectures.

Latins in the class never openly described to the researcher their own prejudices against Arabs in terms of religion. A Venezuelan woman, however, reflected on her own closed-mindedness regarding other religions prior to coming to the U.S. five years earlier.

I grown believing that the only right religion was the Catholic faith. We all were taught that salvation was just in our God and out of this doctrine our souls were lost for ever... I was close-minded about the subject until I came to live with this wonderful North American family. Through our understanding and sometimes conflict I felt they were also under the mercy of "my God" even they were not Catholic or Protestant.
By the end of the semester students had begun to understand what openness to diversity was all about. This was evidenced by several revealing to the researcher their surprise at so-and-so, whom they thought was "open," making statements which revealed their prejudices toward others. At this point an American expressed surprise at the Venezuelan male CCC student. She said that immediately following the Muslim presentation, as they walked out of the AV studio, he told her he didn't think the Muslims' religion was true or that they had any facts to back up their religion.

Latins themselves described their prejudices against Arabs not in terms of religion but in terms of their body odor and their "wanting to be a powerful group on campus and demonstrate they could stick together." Latin women said Latin men had intense dislike for Arab men and that pressure was placed upon Latin women by both Latin men and to a lesser degree, women, not to interact with Arab men.

The Panamanian woman revealed to the researcher after the practicum in which the Latins' unwillingness to interact with others was discussed that Latins also put pressure on Latin men not to date American women. This fits the perceptions of American women who said they didn't like to date Latin men because of the attitude of Latins (particularly Latin women) toward them.

An American in the class who was highly involved with both Arabs and Latin Americans most objectively summed up
the perceptions of non-Latins in regard to Latins in a
journal entry a month and a half into the curriculum.

Of all the cultural groups on campus, I feel that the
closest knit group is the Latins. In some ways this
may be good since they all share the same culture, but
on the other hand, many of them are not as good in the
English language as they should be and they also do
not always allow themselves to learn all they can about
the culture that they are now living in or about the
other cultures on campus.

This brings to mind another topic. I see a fear in
many of the international students about learning
more of the American culture because they think that
they will become "Americanized." Somehow they are
made to feel that the more they learn about American
culture, the more they lose of their own. This is a
very serious misconception.

In the Latins' responses to the Libyan's question, the
loss of culture discussed by the American above was mentioned
by the Venezuelan CCC male student. His statement was as
close as the Latins came to discussing with the group the
peer pressure they exert upon other Latins not to interact
with different others, in this case, Americans. In response
to remarks offered by the Japanese student that they came
here to learn English and they should therefore speak English
and make friends with others, the Venezuelan said that he
knew of one Latin man in particular who also had that philos­
ophy. He said this person had made many American friends and
now was no longer a part of the Latin group. The Venezuelan
further stated that it seemed to him his fellow Latin American
had given up his own culture.

The Latins first responded to the Libyan's question
that it was safest and most comfortable to be with people
with whom they could speak their own language and with whom
they shared things in common. They then said they feared rejection by Americans. They talked about the feelings of rejection they experience when interacting with Americans. They said even though Americans may talk nicely for a short period of time about superficial things, they give the impression to the other that they really don't want to spend a lot of time talking or getting to know the person.

This same idea was expressed in interviews by the Japanese, the Libyan, and the Iraqi. The Japanese has already been quoted in regard to the purpose of the course being to communicate "deeper" instead of the usual "surface." The Libyan (a senior) said he talked superficially with many Americans but could not say he was close to any of them, particularly American men. The Iraqi (who had been at Ohio Dominican for a year) described Americans at the school as two types, the "typical" or "complete" American and the "real" American.

The typical or complete American, they don't touch any information about the internationals. They don't use eye contact at all. The real American, they say, "Hi, how are you doing, _____," and they pass me by.

The practicum group openly discussed what had been started privately by international students in regard to American women—that they are more open to communication and interaction with foreigners than American men. An American man in the class commented in his journal after watching Videotape 1, which had no sound, that the presence of women (American as well as others) in the communication dyads created the appearance of greater comfort and ease
in interaction than in his own and the other male-male
dyads. One American woman not previously involved with
international students told the researcher privately that
many American women who were superficially friendly to
international students to their faces were very catty in
talking about them behind their backs.

While the superficial communicative style of Americans
was discussed by international students, Americans in the
class who had not previously been involved with international
students commented on liking the relationships they had
developed with some of the international students in either
the CCC or ESL class. There was a twinge of regret at the
end of the course at having kept their relationships purely
at the classmate level.

(Fourth week of the course)
I feel that I'm starting to develop a closeness with
some of the other students. I like that. I haven't
really made an extra effort one way or another to
establish a relationship/friendship with any one of
the foreign students. I've made attempts to learn
more about their cultures, but never really thought
I'd like to get to know some of them in particular
as real friends.

(Same student, end of the course)
I have wanted to go deeper in class with what people
feel, but I have been scared to initiate conversation
involving real depth with people in our class outside
of class. (F)

(Different student, end of course)
There are people in class that I would never have had
relationships with. _____, she stops by my room and
we have a mutual friend and occasionally we'll meet
in the halls or the bathroom. And _____, because
he's in another class with me. I just really like
him. I was regretting that I didn't get to know
them better, maybe ask them to my parent's house for
dinner or stuff like that. (F)
Around the time of the first two religious practicum sessions conducted by Catholics and fallen-away Catholics, Americans on the defensive talked about the fear of losing their culture or giving it up if they did not defend what they believed in. At the same time they talked about the necessity of defending what they believed in, they talked about the necessity of being "open" to others in order to understand their beliefs. The teacher responded back to these journal entries that if they felt they had to defend their own beliefs, they would find it difficult to be open to understanding others' beliefs. This phenomenon will be discussed later in relation to openness to diversity but its importance here is that the fear of loss of one's own culture was present in Americans new to interaction with different others just as it was a fear or uncertainty in the international students and mentioned in one form or another by all of them during the semester.

Americans, in addition to Latins, privately discussed peer pressure put upon them not to interact with international students. One student described its form in a journal entry. Her description is similar to the way other Americans described it in interviews. An American who had two black friends described the same phenomenon.

I'm picking up a little bit of slack from my "buddies." They're wondering why I "hang around" with some foreigners now. That bugs me. I explained to them about my course and that these students have much to offer us, but I don't really think I was heard.
The same student later revealed that before the course, she used to make the same kinds of comments to others who interacted with international students.

I would question other kids, Americans who would hang around with them. I wondered what they had in common, what fun they would have, or why they would even want to do things together. I'm kind of like on the other side now.

Those American students in the class who were involved with international students on campus largely avoided peer pressure by associating with other American students who were also involved with internationals. Americans in the class said that white Americans feel it is good for international and black students to associate with each other because they are both "different." International students said that in addition to American women, blacks are open to interaction with them. Both American and international students said interaction between American freshmen and international students is nonexistent.

In response to the Libyan's question, the Latins of course countered that Arabic students also stick together and speak their own language. That is not the way Arab students were perceived, however, by Arabs themselves, Americans and the Japanese student in the class. Arabs were perceived as having differences among themselves and therefore not as cohesive as Latins. The Libyan attributed the openness of Arab's in the Mediterranean area to centuries of trade and interaction with others who were different. Instead of one big happy family always sitting
together at the same long table in the cafeteria, Arabs are clustered in small groups throughout or intermingled with other students. In general, they are perceived as more curious about other cultures and willing to initiate communication and interaction with others different than themselves. Both Americans and Arabs talked about Arabs who purposely do not want Arab roommates in order to learn English and contrasted them with Spanish speakers who invariably room together.

Two days after this practicum discussion took place, the International Dinner previously mentioned by an American student who was quoted earlier occurred. The Latins combined tables set for four people in the ballroom into one long table. Among them were the Venezuelan male and Panamanian female CCC students. Another CCC student (Venezuelan female) who had been dating an Arab for several months was also present but did not sit with the Latins. The teacher/researcher went over and sat down to talk with the Latin CCC students prior to dinner. The Venezuelan said they had just been talking about splitting up and sitting with others when she arrived. After dinner, she stopped by the table and jokingly told the Venezuelan he was going to lose his credibility if he wasn't careful. He replied he was a frustrated leader. In an interview a few days later, he admitted that Latins were worse than Arabs in sticking together. The day of the practicum he had written two pages in his journal angrily defending
Latins against the perceptions of the Libyan and others in the class.

The Panamanian told the teacher/researcher that she and the Venezuelan male had tried to get the Latins to spread out and go and sit with some of the Arabs, Americans and others who were there. Their response was, "Why should we go there? Let them come and sit with us." She said,

I want to practice what I've learned in the class but I can't. If I do that I'm going to have problems, a little problem with the girls and a lot with the boys. How can I do it? I don't want to leave all my friends to go to sit and talk. For me it's hard because I have my best friend, ____, and she doesn't like the Arabics. If I go there she will say something to me. I don't want to fight with her so I decided to stay.

In the interviews that followed the International Dinner, students expressed disappointment in participation in it by Americans. Only a handful attended.

Japanese
I told some American friends about it and do you know what they said? I don't want to spend money. Two dollars. It is not the reason. They spend money for others. I was surprised so I didn't say anything. (F)

Libyan
(The Libyan CCC student was the president of the International Student Club which sponsored the event.)

The only problem is participation. I brought almost every single American friend I have in this school. I talked to them personally about it...We had at least ten signs around the school and I wrote an invitation and ran 150 copies of it and put it in 150 rooms--with an average of two people per room. Most of the people who came were people who were fixing food and participating in it and knew about it from personal contact. (M)

American
Americans just don't associate with international students--like the international dinner. It's the same people all the time, like my roommate and I and
another girl always go. _____ was there and _____ and _____ was there and _____ was there and _____. You know before you go the people who will be there. Very few Americans, very few faculty except the ones who are really involved, and the Spanish speakers all sat at the same table.

Cultural prejudices toward others; fear of rejection by one's own group; peer pressure not to interact with others who are culturally different; lack of desire or perceived lack of ability to develop deep relationships with different others; fear of loss of culture; and a tenacious grip on the native language in the case of Latins--these intertwined phenomena crisscross cultural groups and are the most insidious impediment to cross-cultural understanding in the multicultural campus environment of this study. They block communication and interaction. Without communication and interaction, understanding has no possibility of occurrence.

For the participants of this curriculum, forced communication and interaction focusing on cultural aspects in the classroom served as a beginning to communication and interaction outside the classroom. For some, it was a beginning of openness to communicating with others who were different. It was a time in which to begin to feel comfortable doing that. For others, forced communication and interaction created an awareness of their own group's prejudices and/or their own personal prejudices toward others who were different. It was a time to begin to articulate those prejudices to themselves through the
teacher/researcher. The end of the curriculum was the beginning of discussion between participants themselves about lack of openness to communication and interaction existing on campus. It was thus a time for participants to begin to become aware of how they were perceived by others in regard to their own culture's openness to communicating with those who were culturally different.

Curriculum Suggestions

Ohio Dominican College, the setting of this research, is guided in its educational mission by the Dominican moto: to contemplate truth and to share with others the fruit of this contemplation. According to the mission statement, "Truth can be found in all cultures and traditions."

The research indicates that many factors adversely affect communication and interaction between the members of the different cultures in the institutional setting of this study. It clearly indicates it cannot be assumed that because students of different cultures live and attend classes in the same small multicultural campus environment that cross-cultural understanding will occur. Indeed, it cannot even be assumed that any sort of meaningful communication and interaction will take place at all between them.

The cross-cultural communication curriculum as it was designed forced communication and interaction at the classroom level. In the forced communicating and interacting about the content of their respective cultural lifeworlds, participants came to feel comfortable in discussion with
each other and had something to continue to talk about with each other outside the classroom. Without communication and interaction, the educational mission of contemplating truth and sharing the diverse cultural ways truth is interpreted cannot be fulfilled through the members of this multicultural community.

It is only at the classroom level that communication and interaction between the members of different cultures can be forced. Certainly not all content areas lend themselves as well as others to having participants address in any depth what it is to be members of their respective cultures. All content areas could, however, conceivably provide for forced communication and interaction between the members of the different cultures in the class in regard to the content itself.

During the interview conducted by the researcher when students were one semester removed from the curriculum, an American senior (a general studies major) discussed the dynamics of the cross-cultural communication course in comparison to courses in other disciplines. She first described the interaction in the cross-cultural communication course. Then she addressed classroom cultural diversity and suggested an approach to communication and interaction in other content areas.

You are forced into the position of having to establish communication so you're forced to search for words and ideas and movements and meanings to get your point across and then when that contact is established, it's like sparks flying! That awareness and that discovery is something that's unique to a class like this because
it happens spontaneously. It's such a growing experience and you wish you could deposit some of that experience in other types of classes. In other disciplines, the whole area of concentration is getting that information across. My own view is that years ago we didn't have the mixture of cultures that we do today and it's apparent that it's going to grow and continue to grow. I think something has to be done. If we could start out in the beginning trying to understand each other as different people from different parts of the world but yet still trying to achieve the same goal in content, it would be better.

Underlying her suggestion is the notion that the common goal of students in acquiring the content is in fact the commonality upon which communication and interaction in the classroom between the members of different cultures can be based. It should not be assumed that the members of diverse cultures will of their own accord seek each other out to communicate about the content. If communication and interaction in regard to the content are to become realities, they have to be forced at the classroom level, both in content areas which do not particularly lend themselves to exploring aspects of culture as well as in those which do.

Forced classroom communication and interaction require one-on-one and small group work in class as well as assignments to be accomplished outside of class in the same manner. They require joint projects and papers or peer tutoring. They require occasional combining of classes of American and international students. They necessitate using Americans as well as international students as classroom resources for cultural learning. In short, forced communication and interaction require imagination and creativity on the part of teachers in reorganizing curriculum at the classroom level.
Forced communication and interaction rest on several assumptions. They assume there is merit in students learning not only content through active involvement with each other, but that there is also merit in their developing interpersonal skills through that involvement. They presume teachers can relinquish at least part of the time they hold so preciously of being in control of the class as the conveyor of knowledge. In other words, they require the teacher to become another participant in the interaction and to fulfill the role of the facilitator of communicative learning situations rather than the chief disseminator of content.

The above assumptions hold regardless of whether the content lends itself particularly to addressing cultural aspects or not. Many content areas do lend themselves to cross-cultural interaction or bringing to light the multiple cultural perspectives present in the classroom. Some teachers are simply not aware of how to pay attention to cultural diversity. Paying attention to cultural diversity requires a reorientation of thinking on the part of teachers in regard to their own content areas; it requires developing ways to draw out in regard to the content the different cultural perspectives which are present in the classroom. In essence, it means releasing the content from the grasp of the American or the Western framework so that other perspectives can filter through and illuminate that framework for students and teacher alike by providing a contrast.
In the interview conducted a semester after the course had ended the researcher asked a senior American CCC student (a psychology major) if she thought that in any of the courses she had taken, there would have been opportunities for the content to have been approached cross-culturally. She responded that the only course she had taken which had been approached in a cross-cultural manner other than the cross-cultural communication course was Marriage and the Family. She commented,

I took Marriage and the Family and every topic we discussed the professor would ask the international students, "What about in your country?" A lot of times we were talking about American things. I think that foreign students don't know what to contribute to discussions because America is not their culture. He would always ask them about their cultures and try to bring them in and that made the class a lot more interesting.

I had an English class and none of the foreign students participated in class discussions. There were maybe five or six of them. The few times they did participate, they had a good handle on the text. Sex is a thing that's between cultures and it seemed like sex was a tie-in in every novel we read. Or like we would always go over the characters. If the teacher had just approached the foreign students directly and asked them, "How would this character fit into your culture or how do you feel about this character?", it would have brought different perspectives to the class.

The student's description of what the professor in Marriage and the Family did and her suggestion as to what the literature professor might have done are good beginnings. Drawing out the international students' perspectives will produce knowledge about their cultural backgrounds which is of extreme importance in breaking down stereotypes and prejudices. It is crucial for
teachers to probe the content, meaning and significance of
the cultural perspectives or aspects the international
students discuss (as described in Chapter V). Knowledge
about the students' cultural backgrounds drawn out by the
teacher, however, though a beginning, is only that.
Discussion should ultimately be turned to the students
themselves so that they are forced to act as representatives
of their own cultures in drawing out each other.

"How would this character fit into your culture?" is
an excellent question. It is one which can be modified and
asked in regard to the content of any course for it is the
content which is the classroom commonality upon which inter-
action between the members of the different cultures must be
based. "How does the content of this course fit into your
culture?" In the case of American students the how question
is appropriate because education is after all a socialization
process. The how question in the case of international
students is ethnocentrically presumptuous. The appropriate
question to ask international students is, "Do you think
the content of this course will fit into your culture?" The
next question, if the answer to the first is "yes," is "how?"
If the answer is "no," the next question is "why not?" If
international students are continually asked to address these
questions in regard to the content of their American educa-
tion, their fears of losing their own culture will in large
part dissipate. They will not be likely to go home unaware
that through their U.S. education they were socialized into
a culture not their own. They will come to a fuller realization of the degree of fit between their U.S. education and the lifeworld of their own cultures.

"How does the content of this course fit into your culture" or "how will this content be important to you as a member of your culture--as an American, as a Chinese Malaysian, as a Kuwaiti, or as a Nigerian?" The discussion of these questions, whether the content is computer science, business, psychology, ethics, the American novel, or non-Western history, embodies the potential for students to address with each other what is to be members of their respective cultures. They are questions that teachers in multicultural classrooms in institutions who claim commitment to international education should encourage their students to address. If teachers themselves have not addressed these questions with their students nor asked them to address them with each other, they have either presumed to know or have not been concerned with who their students are culturally.

Curriculum aimed at cross-cultural understanding is concerned with finding and sharing diverse cultural identities. It is concerned with the question, "What is it to be an American, a Saudi, A Thai or a Venezuelan?" The Venezuelan female CCC student perhaps stated it best when she discussed the purpose of the cross-cultural communication curriculum. She said that the purpose was somehow to find her identity and how her view of the world
was shaped by her own culture. To do that, as she said, requires bringing diverse worldviews to the same class. In the Dominican tradition, it requires contemplating and sharing the truth found in those diverse cultural worldviews.

It is in the sharing of their common and diverse ways of viewing the world that students come to find their cultural identities. Without sharing, international students will come to understand their own cultures better as well as reach a partial understanding of American culture through their participation in curriculum that is naturally culturally biased; they will do so precisely because they have a basis for comparison. Americans will remain culturally encapsulated unless the content itself or the discussion of it forces interaction and the exchange of cultural worldviews between the members of the different cultures present in the classroom.

Openness in Communicating and Openness to Diversity: Beginnings

As openness to communicating and interacting with those who are culturally different and comfort in that interaction begins to be achieved, openness in communicating begins. The analysis of the videotapes indicated that practicum session participants did not begin to verbalize skepticism, disagreement or evaluation nor did they begin to ask why or probe their differences until the panel discussions on religion which began over halfway through the curriculum. It was halfway through the curriculum that CCC participants who had not previously had much involvement with people culturally different than themselves first began to talk about feeling comfortable and relaxed in communication with them.
The middle weeks of the curriculum immediately prior to the panel discussions on religion were a period of boredom for participants. Many talked in their journals about needing "a change of pace" or "something new." One said she felt like she was "in some kind of transition phase" in the course.

In response to student boredom, a practicum whole-class discussion session in which students were asked to draw "time" and then verbally describe their drawings was held in a classroom instead of the AV studio. That session initiated a series of lectures conducted in the CCC class on the relevance of Jean Gebser's work to cross-cultural communication. The two day practicum to Deercreek State Park was planned and carried out. The CCC and ESL students in their respective classes discussed topics they wanted to pursue in future practicums and decided on religion.

With the discussions of religion, new curricular enthusiasm and the most intense pouring forth of thoughts specifically related to cross-cultural communication filled student journals. Journal entries contained reflections on the discussions, conflict and hostility, defensiveness, the desire to be understood, the fear of being misunderstood or not understood, the complexities and requirements of cross-cultural communication, and the need for openmindedness. The sessions lead to the beginning of openness to diversity.

The initial two sessions were very upsetting for many participants. Some questioned the wisdom of having them; most did not like the conflict; some said they were not
learning; others described feelings of ambiguity. When all of the sessions were finished, religion was overwhelmingly considered by the participants to be the most important topic discussed during the semester and the one through which the most significant learning about cross-cultural communication occurred.

The practicum sessions on religion and the cross-cultural classroom discussions related to those sessions were the beginning of openness in communicating between participants and the beginning of serious reflections upon the communicative process cross-culturally. The period of boredom in the middle of the curriculum was a transition phase between participants who had developed a comfortable factual-descriptive level of understanding with each other in regard to some of their commonalities and differences and participants who reached a point of beginning to openly probe their differences and no longer suppress evaluation of them. From that point of initial probing and verbalized evaluation, they described themselves as moving to "really trying to understand each other." Openness to diversity had begun.

Openness in communicating will be discussed in relation to openness to diversity as they developed throughout the time the CCC students were involved in the discussions of religion in the practicums. The conclusion of the analysis of openness in communicating and openness to diversity will highlight participant perceptions of these two properties of understanding as discussed in the course evaluations at
the end of the curriculum and in the interview conducted by the researcher one semester after the completion of the curriculum.

Since the practicum sessions on religion were considered the most significant to the development of understanding by the research team and since they were considered the most significant learning experiences by the participants, the following pages will relate the nature of participants' verbalized reflections upon them. Participants themselves analyzed the sessions in ways strikingly similar to the research team. It is in attempt to show how openness in communicating and openness to diversity developed that the nature of their reflections are important.

Following the CCC students' decision that religion was the topic they most wanted to discuss with the ESL students, Americans, and to a lesser extent, Latin Americans, expressed some reservations in their journals about religion as a topic of discussion. While interesting to pursue cross-culturally, they thought it would be a difficult topic to discuss because it was so "personal." They expressed hopes that the discussions would not turn into debates. The Arab students mentioned no reservations about discussing religion. The Japanese student wrote in her journal that religion was not a topic she liked to be asked about. She said to be asked about it was strange because Japanese view the practice of religion very differently than Americans "who are very involved with religion."
After the brief Catholic panel "presentation" and ensuing Christian-Muslim confrontation, the Japanese student reflected on cultural diversity in regard to religion.

One of the weakest subject to talk about is religion for Japanese. Very few people practice religions. Even though I have studied it, I never thought about it seriously.

I was very surprised to attend the panel discussion because everybody was so serious. Also, I was surprised they talked about why they believed God still lives, why they believed Mary was Virgin, why they believed Adam and Eve were God's children and so on. I had never doubted the reasons. It was very strange to me. We Japanese do not have any such religions, but still learn something about Buddha from priests of the temples, parents, old people and so on. We do not doubt the precept and believe in it. That is all.

In Japan we never talk about gods and Buddha among friends. Religion can not be our subject of conversation. It must be very different from other countries.

Aware that the Catholics had been upset by the Muslims' questions, the Saudi in his journal attempted to explain the reasons the Muslim students asked the Catholics why about their beliefs. He discussed why as a natural question to ask when one is confronted with living in a new culture. He concluded by stating that asking why in regard to what one believes religiously is a question that addresses who a person is and that in communication one must look to the person to whom he speaks in an attempt to understand who he is.

I want to explain to you why we have this why questions. First, about the students from the U.A.E...They maybe never met or sit with anyone not from their religion... When anyone of them arrived here he faced alot of things he didn't see it before. For example, different religion and when he speak with any one who is not from his religion he will think and will have alot of
why questions. Why he feels that? Because he is in a culture more different than his culture and also every day he face many things that he didn't face it before or he didn't hear about it before.

If these students who were mad about why questions, I am sure if they live in Saudi Arabia for awhile they will see the different between their culture and the culture there and I am sure they will have alot of why questions in their mind. Because everything different than here.

As you said in one of our classes anybody can't judge any culture before he put himself outside of his culture. Then he can judge by his mind not by his feeling and not by what he believes.

Also anyone has to look to the person who he speaks to, who is he? What is his religion?

The session prompted the Libyan to write after a three week lapse in journal entries. In his entry he analyzed the session. His analysis is in agreement with the research team's assessment that the panel was not prepared and that their answers did not satisfy the audience participants. He viewed the purpose of the session as informative and was not pleased that it had turned into an argument.

The session was going as meant until it was clear that the people on the panel were not prepared for a one-hour presentation. Things began getting worse when no satisfactory answers were given to the questions asked by the audience, who insisted on getting answers. I did not like the way [the major American spokes­woman who defensively tried to reinstate the purpose of the discussion] put it, but I agreed with her that things went off the right track. I think that it should be made more clear to everyone that the purpose of these presentations is informative. Getting in an argument should be prevented and avoided.

Because I don't think that today's presentation served its purpose, which is informing the non-Catholics about some important aspects of Catholicism, I suggest that the Catholics make a new presentation.
The Iraqi (a Catholic) reflected on the class members discovering their stereotypes and misconceptions about other groups of people in an entry on the planning session prior to the Catholic panel presentation.

Nearly every one in my group had stereotyped me as a Muslim. They thought that I had gotten into the Catholic group by mistake. We all are still discovering our misconceptions about other groups of people.

His reflections on the Catholic presentation, to which he contributed almost nothing, agrees with the research team's assessment that the terms used by the Catholics hindered understanding. He said he thought the reasons for the arguing were because "people thought they could change the other person's religion." A Catholic who said nothing during the presentation and one who contributed some were in agreement with the Iraqi. They discussed what they perceived as a desire on the part of the Catholics to make the Muslims believe as they do. The Americans' perceptions will be discussed later. The Iraqi said in regard to the Catholic session,

I felt separate from the rest of the Catholics. I didn't have the ability to understand many of the terms in religion like Eucharist, Trinity, etc. I think that people started arguing because they thought they could change the other person's religion. Also, I don't think the audience understood the panel's answers.

An American non-practicing Catholic was in agreement with the Libyan that the Catholics were not prepared, that the discussion became an argument, and that it did not fulfill its intended purpose.
I don't think that the presentation on Catholicism went well today. I am Catholic but I do not practice it and I do not feel that I learned anything about the particular beliefs or practices of the Catholics. The group leaders were not prepared to talk about anything in detail and the rest of the group did not seem to be cooperative in explaining their practices. It turned into an argument between Christians and non-Christians about the concept of God and Jesus Christ. I don't think that this was the original intention of this activity.

American Catholics and the Venezuelan Catholic spokes­woman who wrote journal entries following Session 6 did not say they were not prepared. They instead said they knew the answers but did not seem able to explain them to the satisfaction of the Muslims. Generally they blamed the outcome of the session on the Muslims. Some finally admitted being defensive and feeling challenged by why questions in regard to their religion, but in their initial reflections after the session, they could not yet see or did not state that they felt compelled to defend because they interpreted the questions as challenges to their beliefs. They talked about the difficulty of separating facts about their religion from their feelings about it. They described feelings of frustration, anger, hostility, and wanting the Muslims to understand. Two Americans reflected upon the process of communicating cross-culturally.

An American Catholic who said nothing during the session reflected on fear prior to the session that the discussion would turn into a debate. She also discussed the impossibility of separating religious facts and feelings, and the necessity of relying on "faith" as answers to questions. The last aspect was discussed extensively by the research
team in Chapter IV. She was in agreement with the Iraqi
that the Catholics at times seemed to be trying to explain
in order to have the Muslims believe as Catholics do.

I did not know that the Catholic religion could create
such controversy. I had a slight feeling it was going
to turn into a debate. I kept telling myself that in
order to stick to the topic, it is necessary to talk
only about facts. However, it is impossible to leave
your belief, interpretations, feelings, out of the
conversation.

Many questions were asked that I knew everybody had
something to say for an answer. Some of the questions
made me think of how I would answer them. So much is
emphasized on belief that an absolute solid answer
does not exist.

Some people were questioning why we believe what we
believe while others were trying to explain to the
point of having them understand and believe the
things we do.

One American Catholic who contributed almost nothing to
the discussion said that the panel was not prepared with
accurate and complete answers. She blamed the audience,
however, for not allowing the panel to present all of its
material first. The research team, on the other hand,
described the panel as opening the floor to questions after
only five minutes of "presentation" due to lack of prepara-
tion, general fumbling, and hesitation on their part as to
what to do next. This student was described by the research
team at the end of the planning session (Session 5) as the
one who described the Muslims who had been in her comparative
religion course as having "misconceptions" about Jesus as
God's son. Her comments in that session that if the Catholics
explained the truth to the Muslims, they would understand,
were seen by the research team to embody the potential for
communication impasse, withdrawal or hostility because of her failure to recognize the relative nature of religious truth. In her reflections upon the Catholic-Muslim confrontation, she addressed the fact that all of the questions about Jesus were "answered in every possible way" but that the Muslims "continued to debate it."

I was very frustrated at the practicum session today. First of all the discussion which ensued I think answered no one's questions because we were not allowed to present all of our material first. Also although the same question was asked again and again and answered in every possible way, they continued to debate it.

Secondly, I think the people chosen from the groups to present material had not discussed it with the group beforehand because much of the material they presented was inaccurate and incomplete. I feel that we were not adequately prepared. Also not everyone was given equal opportunity to speak. A few people dominated the discussion.

The dominant American Catholic spokeswoman who had opened the floor to questions and later defensively tried to reinstate the intended purpose of the session was upset that many of the panel members did not come forth to try assist the dominant spokespersons. She pointed out that in the planning session the group had discussed whether to relate their personal experience with Catholicism or to discuss basic aspects of doctrine. The research team had also seen the Catholics in the planning session as caught between presenting their personal interpretations in regard to their religion and factual information about it. This student was the most upset of all by the session and thought that the tape should be erased because of the "hostility" it reflected.
Last week I made a suggestion to our group that when speaking of our religion we limit it to "what it means" in each of our lives. How "faith" helps us. The group vetoed the idea deciding instead to pick "specific" religious categories and explain them. As soon as I heard some of the explanations, I knew we were in trouble.

The group had decided we would all speak—only today, outside of ____ [the American male] and myself—the speakers numbered three from our group—five all told.

I knew what the outcome would be as soon as we got started. I was of the impression that we were to talk about the Catholic religion not to debate theological issues. The people asking the questions were most negative and very "hostile."

It was most disheartening that so many of the Catholics were unable or did not respond to any of the questions. I am very much disturbed that the segment was taped and highly recommended that it be erased. It certainly does nothing but reflect hostility.

The American male spokesperson whom the research team described as occupant of the role of authority on Catholic theology wrote extensive reflections on the session. He, like the major American female speaker, expressed disappointment at other panel members' lack of cooperation in providing answers to the questions and their lack of knowledge about the foundations of their faith. (The tendency to blame others, either the Muslims or the panel members who contributed little to the discussion, was present in all three dominant spokes­persons.) The research team described this student as resorting to saying that it had taken him several years of study of the religion to understand as much as he did when the Muslims kept repeatedly telling him he was not answering their questions. In his own reflections he expressed frustration at knowing the answers but not being able to communicate them.
Like the research team, he also mentioned confusion, conflicting beliefs, and the rapid-fire succession of questions from the Muslims as impediments to understanding. As a communications major (the only one in the course) he reflected on communicating about religion cross-culturally. He attributed the failure of the communication in the session to participants being embedded in their own cultural backgrounds and refusing to let go of their own cultural perspectives.

Today we opened a veritable can of worms. I feel so frustrated and mad over today's discussion session on Catholic faith that I can't really describe it yet. I believe I have gained insight into how confusion and "conflicting beliefs" can inhibit any form of interaction in discussing ideas with persons with different religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds.

I feel frustrated, confused and disappointed because I actually knew the answers to many of the questions, but I didn't have the time or the cooperation of others in trying to explain them. I guess in discussing aspects of religion, you can't really give simple, quick, and clear-cut answers to persons who expect them at a moments notice.

I wish some Catholics would learn a little more about the foundations of their faith. I believe that if you say "I believe as a Catholic," you should at least know exactly what you believe in. That's why I have taken so many philosophy, theology, and religion courses.

Anyway, I feel terrible--now I know how it feels when you talk and talk and talk and still can't thoroughly communicate with someone who does not hold your cultural views.

With regard to this panel discussion, I believe I have experienced this "wall" or cultural gap that inhibits accurate group interaction with others from background far different from my own. It seems that when all persons involved in the discussion become imbedded in
their own cultural background, no real 100% accurate communication can be achieved. I guess we can rise above our cultural foundations in simple discussion topics, but for something as deeply intwining as religious beliefs, most of us still refuse to let go of our cultural point of view.

Later the same day, this student added a supplement to the entry. In it he stated that deep cultural beliefs should be encountered in cross-cultural communication and reflected upon participants' slow progress in achieving openness to diversity.

At the start of this entry I was somewhat confused and mad over today's practicum discussion and my personal views of its outcome. Now I realize that this session was one of the most "enlightening" of the semester.

Through it I've gained insight into our deep cultural beliefs that all of us have and should encounter in cross-cultural communication. We still have a long way to go--we're not as culturally open as we all think we are.

An American Catholic female panelist who contributed some to the discussion wrote three pages of reflections on the session. Because of her previous lack of involvement with international students and her ability to verbalize, this student was quoted extensively earlier in this chapter in regard to coming to an awareness of her own prejudices on the dormitory elevator and the Deer Creek trip. Along with the communications major in the course, she reflected more throughout the semester on the process of communicating cross-culturally than the other participants did.

In her entry on the Catholic panel discussion, she addressed in detail the necessity of openmindedness and the difficulty in achieving it. Like other Catholics, she
talked about wanting the Muslims to understand, sometimes to the point of trying to talk them into Christian beliefs. She, like others, reflected on knowing the answers to their questions. She described how the questions made her think about her own faith and come to realize its importance to her. Like the male spokesperson quoted above, she discussed the difficulty of discussing religion cross-culturally and the intimacy of the topic. Like the Saudi, she recognized that religion to a great extent determines "who we are."

The research team described how language problems interfere with the conceptual understanding of content; she also was aware of and mentioned this phenomenon. Her thoughts on cross-cultural communication addressed her own doubts as to whether it was ever possible to really enter another culture's "frame of reference." With those doubts, she expressed the fear that if she did, it might be at the sacrifice of her own. In her reflections on this session she began to articulate the fear of losing her own culture if she tried to "step back from it" in order to understand another's.

Before quoting this student, it should be mentioned that the phenomenological approach to cross-cultural communication presented throughout the semester by the instructor came to be reflected upon by the students during the time of the practicum sessions on religion. It was apparently during that time that ideas presented earlier in the semester came to have significance for the students in relation to the
communication they were experiencing with each other. Three students related their interpretations of some of these ideas to the communication that took place between the Catholics and the Muslims in Session 6.

The Saudi quoted earlier talked about a person not judging any culture "before he put himself outside his culture" so that he could judge by "his mind not by his feelings and what he believes." The American male quoted directly above who described the discussants as "culturally embedded" said it was possible to "rise above our cultural foundations in simple discussion topics" but not religion. The American woman about to be quoted discusses putting into practice "the whole bit about stepping back from my own culture to understand what the other is saying to me." She later states she is confused "as to how we really do step back and separate ourselves from our own little worlds and view another's with open minds."

All of these statements are references to things the instructor had emphasized at some time during the semester. She had said that to come to understand the ways other cultures interpret themselves, it was necessary to "bracket" or "put aside" one's own ways of interpreting the world so as to open oneself to viewing the ways others see the same world. She had also used the analogy that it was necessary to "step back" from one's own cultural glasses in order to begin to see how one's own view or interpretation of the world was framed and brought into focus by them. In regard to these ideas and the Catholic-Muslim confrontation, the student wrote,
The practicum today was extremely heated and did turn out to be a debate. In a way I'm surprised as to my own reactions and feelings. I went in there with an open mind (or so I thought). I went in there simply wanting to reveal my beliefs, and as time progressed, I felt more and more the necessity to explain myself, to prove my faith, to answer questions based on doctrine that changes.

I found myself getting more and more tense. I even wanted to make them understand. There was this feeling inside me of trying to "talk them into" what I believe. I didn't think that I would do that. I didn't think I would even want to. I did realize how stirred up I felt inside when certain questions were raised. I wanted to answer. I wanted for "the other side" to understand my belief and what I was saying.

It's so so very difficult to talk about belief and faith even among the same faith and overwhelming in my mind to talk about religion/faith cross-culturally. I have to put into practice the whole bit about stepping back from my own culture (and realm of faith experience) to understand what the other is saying to me. That is hard to do; nearly impossible to do today.

I had answers today. It made me think about my own faith. The questions they asked were helpful to me in that I knew the answer to them not only in knowledge, but that I truly believed in my answer. Not that it is the only answer or right answer, but that it is the answer that makes sense to me in my heart and how I believe. Oh, this is confusing. It's difficult to put such deep, intimate feelings of religion and God into words either verbally or written.

The deeper the topics, the more intimate the discussions become, the more difficult it is for me to relate to other cultures. It is difficult (1) because it makes the mere language problem I have all the more intense cause I am interested in the content of what they are saying and (2) with religion--they may be a totally different religion which involves our entire way of life and makes up who we are to some extent. This is why it seems so difficult to do.

Well, I've noticed that I certainly do have my beliefs and those things that I value. The question I was thinking in class is that I wonder if one can ever really enter another culture's frame of reference. Empathy is not enough. I do understand that. I guess I'm thinking though that entering into another culture would mean giving up my own culture.
That's not necessarily true--or is it? I'm confused as to how we really do step back and separate ourselves from our own little worlds and view another's with open minds.

I'm wondering what the next sessions will be like. I'm going to try to have an open mind. Sometimes I can and sometimes my own belief is too overpowering in me and makes me think that they are wrong. I know I shouldn't do that but sometimes I do...Religion is not like discussing premarital sex or virginity. It's much much deeper and a more integral part of life.

Because of the conflict in the session and the defensiveness of the Catholics, the teacher decided that the session had to be discussed in the cross-cultural communication class. The class did not meet during the next two regular class periods after this practicum due to a conference being held at the college which the teacher had required the students to attend during their normal class time.

The morning that the teacher/researcher was to meet with the CCC students again, she recorded the following field notes about the Catholic practicum session and her plans to discuss it with the students:

Today in CCC, I want to discuss what happened in the practicum Tuesday afternoon. My hope is that the class will freely discuss it and not hold back what they experienced. However, I don't know if I can bring that off in a whole class discussion or not.

___[the major American spokeswoman] became very, very defensive when asked by the Muslims about Christianity. She perhaps more than anyone else in the class is openly vocal when she becomes defensive. I'm hoping that she will be able to admit that today in class as I'm sure she's aware that she was that way. If she can admit it, it will be quite a step forard for her.

My hope is to be able to point out that when you become defensive in communication with people from other cultures, you completely shut off communication. That's true of being defensive in communication with anyone, but it's particularly true interculturally because you
close yourself off to answering questions that are usually asked in good faith.

I'm sure she perceived the questions as being an attack on her faith, and perhaps many of the other Catholics likewise did. But interestingly enough, at least [UAE ESL student] who did a lot of the questioning, did not intend to attack—he sincerely wanted to know the answers to the questions. He told the panel one of his questions was not a joke when they laughed at it and then explained why he asked it. As soon as the session ended, he turned to me and asked, "Why did that woman become so upset?"

's [the American spokesman] comment under his breath as the session ended and he was putting on his coat was, "I think we've opened up the biggest can of worms we've ever opened." Even though that may well be the perception of many, in my mind, opening up a can of worms is a learning experience. They have to learn not to fear confrontation because cultural assumptions and values are bound to clash. To my ways of thinking, there is learning that comes out of that.

It was an active session with many, many people wanting to talk, raising their hands, practically jumping off the edge of their seats wanting to discuss. Whenever you get that kind of active participation and involvement, it's an active learning situation.

My plan is to have them discuss in class what happened in the practicum, view the tape myself today, and watch and discuss it with them tomorrow.

The following field notes relate the content of the CCC students' classroom discussion about the Catholic panel presentation. In analyzing the secondary data sources, the researcher listened to the audio tape of this particular classroom discussion because of the significance of the Catholic practicum session to the development of understanding in the research team's analysis of the primary data. After listening to the tape, the researcher added several paragraphs to the original field notes which relate points made by the students that are pertinent to the research team's analysis.
of the session. The original field notes are present as recorded during the study. The paragraphs added during the analysis of the secondary data are marked by an asterisk and inserted chronologically in the field notes as the flow of the students' discussion progressed throughout the hour. The relationship between the CCC students' discussion of the Catholic practicum session and the research team's analysis of it follows these field notes.

We spent the whole hour discussing the Catholic practicum session. Some people seemed hesitant at first as indicated by their nonverbal expressions and initial silence when I told them I wanted them to discuss what happened and how they felt. Gradually people did begin to talk about it. The general consensus was that the session was a debate which produced tension between Catholics and Muslims. Several Catholics said that they felt the questions were challenges to their beliefs.

____ [the Libyan] told the Catholics they weren't prepared with a presentation and opened it up to questions too soon. He also told me that if I hadn't asked the first question, the Catholics might have been forced to say more. He told them something to the effect: "If you don't present to me what I don't know, I'm going to ask you about what I do know, what I don't understand, or what I would like to understand." He told them if they had made a presentation, people would have asked them about what they presented. I found out later he had already viewed the tape.

*____ and [American females] both mentioned that the panelists sometimes gave their own interpretations instead of basic Catholic teachings. said she felt tension because she could see there were differences among the Catholics and she wondered how they could present Catholicism to non-Catholics when they couldn't agree themselves.

*____ [the American male spokesperson] said he was reluctant to talk about religion even though he had contemplated the priesthood. Said he couldn't answer in forty-five minutes questions he still had or had spent 10-15 years of study finding answers to.
[the American former Catholic female Muslim] said in essence that she played the devil's advocate because she was bored at listening to people give "dogmatic recitals" and wanted to see some action. She said she wanted to see things debated so she could see how people really felt and see the cultural differences between the panelists themselves and the audience. She said, "You have to see real conflict to get to know that there is a difference."

The Catholics talked a lot about why questions. They said almost every question was a why question and that the why questions made them defensive. [American female] said she believed the Catholic religion was the true religion and that when they were asked why in regard to their beliefs, it put them on the defensive and that was the way they answered.

I responded that if you feel defensive, the thing you are defensive about is usually of eminent significance to you and that if nothing else, you learn through being defensive what is really important to you. I tried to emphasize that if you become extremely defensive, you close yourself off from communication because then you can't be open to accepting the other's questions as legitimate. I told them about ____'s [UAE ESL student] question to me as the session ended. I substituted "the panel" for "that woman" in his question about why ____ [major American spokeswoman] was so upset so as not to embarrass her. She didn't look at me once or contribute anything the whole time we were talking about defensiveness--tried to appear like she was doing something in her notebook.

I brought up ____ , the Nigerian student I had last year, and how his manner of questioning, his tone, and his perpetual why questions in the beginning (about the way the conversation class was conducted) sent the hair rising on the back of my neck. I told them about the tension I sensed in the nonverbals between the other students in the class as he unendingly asked them why in regard to things they discussed about their cultures.

I explained that I came to understand his insatiable curiosity was indeed genuine--talked about his background--about his never being out of the village in Nigeria in which he was born until he came to the states. I told them about his question before we went to the Museum when he said he had heard the word "museum" before, but he wanted to know exactly what a museum was. I tried to describe his surprise at
Max and Erma’s that there were actually restaurants where people brought the food and cleared the table since his only other experience was MacDonalds.

I was trying to make them understand that when people from other cultures ask why, it’s usually because they really don’t know, are genuinely seeking information, and want to understand. I explained that with non-native speakers there are often paralinguistic features of their own language which influence the way they sound in English. Also talked about the fact it takes time in a new culture to learn how to ask questions that are considered OK to ask in that culture and to learn how to ask them so the other person doesn’t interpret them as challenges or feel intimidated by them.

* [the Libyan] told the Catholics, "If you open the floor to questions, you should be able to deal with the questions. If you can't answer them, you should be able to say so." He said if someone asked him questions, he had to deal with the person asking the questions. He said, "If you try to explain and the other person doesn't understand, there is no reason to get mad at the other person." He asked rhetorically, "Why should you get defensive about it?"

*Three people responded to his rhetorical question.

___ said that the questions were why, why, why?

___ reiterated why questions about her religion made her defensive. ___ said at that moment she wasn't feeling that the discussion was informative; she felt defensive.

As can be seen from the participants’ discussion of the session, a relatively high degree of correlation existed between their assessment and that of the research team (Chapter IV, Session 6, and Session 8, where the defensiveness of the Catholics was again addressed by the team in relation to the Muslims). The Libyan’s analysis of the Catholics’ lack of preparation, their short presentation, and the instructor’s question as the precipitator of the confrontation were all discussed by the team as impediments to understanding; these factors prevented a context
from being developed out of which a discussion of Catholicism could grow. The Muslim convert's admission that she wanted to see some action and to see things debated confirms the primary researcher's assessment in Chapter IV, Session 6, that she played the devil's advocate until it was too late to facilitate understanding between the groups which she undoubtedly was capable of doing. Her statement that people have to see real conflict to get to know that there are cultural differences is in concert with the team's theorizing at the end of Session 8. There they hypothesized that the conflict in Session 6 undoubtedly brought about the participants' awareness of the actual existence of cultural diversity if awareness of cultural diversity as a possibility was all that had existed before. Several of the participants' journal entries on Session 6 confirm that they were aware that cultural diversity does indeed exist. To that end, the instructor's question and the debate atmosphere instigated by the American Muslim were undoubtedly significant contributions.

The research team devoted a lot of attention to the Catholics' defensiveness, and their interpretation of the questions as challenges in contrast to the Arab Muslims' apparent requests for information. The Libyan addressed this phenomenon in the CCC class discussion in implying that the Muslims asked about what they knew about, couldn't understand, and wanted to understand, in the absence of any new information about which to inquire. He rather candidly
stated he didn't think it was necessary to become defensive and angry because the audience asked questions which the panel could not answer or because the questioners could not understand the responses that the panel gave.

The Catholics journal reflections on their concerns about discussing religion prior to the sessions and their open statements afterwards that why questions in regard to their religion made them defensive tend to support the hypothesis advanced in Session 8 by the research team; viz., the Catholics were not confident about discussing religion to begin with and therefore assumed the defensive posture at the first provocation. This hypothesis seems further supported by the relationship between the journal reflections of the major American spokeswoman whom the research team described as the most defensive and several pages of description written by an outside researcher in Session 7.

The woman stated in her journal that in the planning session she had suggested limiting the discussion to what the Catholic faith meant in their lives and how it helped them instead of presenting specific information about Catholicism. The outside researcher in Session 7, in regard to the non-practicing Catholic panel discussion, discussed the rhetorical advantages to articulating personal experience and subjective interpretations; viz., doing so obligates the listener to do nothing more than acknowledge the presenter's beliefs or inquire in order to obtain more information and thus sets limits on how probing questions can be. Furthermore,
relating personal experience in regard to religion does not obligate the speaker to represent or defend institutionalized external dogma, practice or orthodoxy that he/she embraces but is independent of his/her control.

The Catholics' initial reservations about discussing religion, their caught-in-the-middle position between relating their personal experience with and/or interpretations of Catholicism vs. "basic Catholic teachings" in Sessions 5 and 6, and their defensiveness in regard to why questions all seem related. If lack of confidence, avoidance, or defensiveness is present as a communicative approach to the discussion of religion, revealing what it means personally in one's life or giving one's personal interpretation is the safe route to assume because it limits the depth of probing and, consequently, the depth of understanding otherwise possible.

It is little wonder that the Catholics were described by the research team as surprised by the Muslims' probing questions. Being called upon to represent and explain the content of their beliefs was a position some of them avoided in the planning session, had hoped to avoid in the panel discussion, and indeed did manage to avoid in part during that discussion. The two dominant American spokespersons withdrew from the discussion for long periods of time and were not pleased that the other panelists did not "cooperate" by helping them explain their beliefs. Being asked to explain the content of their beliefs in a debate atmosphere admittedly fed by the American Muslim forced them into the position of feeling they had to defend their beliefs. Every question,
therefore, was interpreted as a challenge. Through participation in the session, the Catholics learned that why questions about their religion made them defensive, but there is no way to determine to what extent the debate atmosphere influenced their degree of defensiveness in regard to the why questions.

The major American Catholic spokeswoman quoted earlier said she knew what the outcome of the practicum session would be as soon as they got started. She stated she thought the purpose of the session was for them to discuss the Catholic religion, not debate theological issues. The teacher responded in the margin next to her remarks on knowing what the outcome would be, "Preconceived notions of how things will go are often a self-fulfilling prophecy." She responded to the teacher's response in a later entry.

In the tension that prevailed during that discussion, I sensed challenge. I saw no chance for a "meaningful dialogue" to occur since the questions ensuing from that meeting demanded that I, and the few of us who spoke, defend our beliefs. Catholicism was challenged, not explored for the sake of learning something about another's beliefs. I think I have been around long enough to know the difference between interest and challenge.

When I am speaking with my Jewish friends, Moslem friends, Chinese friends, Afrikaans--or anyone from different backgrounds or cultures--I do not demand that they defend, rationalize, or justify--for me--the reason they believe, act or think the way they do.

The teacher responded back that her first sentence was important--if someone interprets the questions as challenges, he/she usually feels obligated to defend his/her beliefs.
This student's second paragraph is revealing in terms of a later entry she wrote just prior to the Muslim panel discussion. In the later entry she reflected on a reading written by the instructor who described the events surrounding the death of the baby of two former Muslim students. In commenting on what the teacher had described as total accept­ance of the baby's death by the parents, the student said she presumed because they believed in reincarnation, the death of their baby was perhaps easier for them to accept. It has to be assumed that at least between this student and her Muslim friends, one of whom had lived with her and her family for a year, the content of their different religious beliefs had not been a topic of conversation. Her Muslim friends would undoubtedly have been shocked to find she thought they believed in reincarnation. If discussing what one believes religiously is not something one engages in even with his/her friends of different religions, it seems altogether feasible for him/her to interpret why questions in regard to the content of his/her own beliefs as demands for defense, rationalization and justification as this student did, especially in light of the atmosphere prevailing the session.

A major difference between this student and the Libyan in regard to why questions was discussed by the two students after the fallen-away Catholic presentation. In that session the research team described many of the Catholics as seriously attempting not to be defensive or as trying to
cover their defensiveness. That difference will be discussed with the participants' perceptions of the fallen-away Catholic practicum.

The CCC classroom discussion about the Catholic practicum session caused the American student quoted extensively earlier to again reflect on the session. She is the only student during the curriculum who reflected upon the fact the course was both concerned with the process of communication and the content of cultures. The relationship of her further reflections upon the Catholic practicum session to the research team's analysis of it will be discussed after her journal entry. In it she again discusses the difficulty of stepping out of her own culture and the feeling of giving it up if she doesn't defend it. She writes of defensiveness and the easy way out--withdrawal from communication. She ends the entry with further reflections upon how easy it would be to defend her defensiveness and simply not communicate further. Instead of doing that, she states it is necessary to see what is important to the self, then move beyond the defensiveness which allows one to see that, to "dropping the defenses" and "really listening to the other person." Earlier in the entry, she addresses the necessity for the listener to clarify with the speaker what the listener understood in order to determine if that is what the speaker actually said. The research team devoted vast amounts of descriptive attention to this phenomenon in Chapter IV. It is further discussed
in Chapter V. In reflecting again on the Catholic practicum session after the CCC classroom discussion of it, this student said,

Today in class we continued more about what we felt during our practicum session. Right now I don't feel very comfortable with myself. I don't like the way I communicated in that session. I became so defensive that I even saw the questions asked as a challenge (as we talked about in class).

It never occurred to me that those questions raised by the person were ones he sincerely wanted to know the answer to because of the way he asked them, i.e., the tone of his voice, starting off with why. "Why" questions, dealing with religion, I have found, make me very defensive.

Anyway, I never thought before that all these little ways of communicating were so very necessary in effective communication. It's not only what one asks that is important, but how. Most of the responsibility is on the listener. It is how the listener perceives the question that will determine how he/she will respond. I see now that I was totally wrapped up in me, in my culture, in my own frame of reference, in my beliefs.

It just sticks out in my mind what you said in class that when we become defensive, it blocks communication. This is really so true. I was defensive at the practicum. It was good for me in the sense that I recognize that religion and faith and God are all very important to me, but it was also bad because I wasn't stepping out of what I believed long enough to even see why (1) the questions were asked in the tone of voice that they were asked (2) that such questions were even asked at all.

This is a reoccurring problem that I've had since the beginning of this course. Are we looking for communication techniques or the content of different cultures? Guess the answer to that is both. Seems to me that each of these things separately can be courses in themselves. But then how would one learn of different cultures if it weren't for the verbalizing of words?
Sometimes I feel that in always trying to step out of my own culture or whatever that I am giving it up. That I'm not willing to defend it, that I'm being too "soft" in my belief or cultural practices. Do you know what I mean? Yet, communication is blocked if I don't do that. Sometimes it seems easier to not do that—to not really communicate. Not that that is what I'd like, but it would make things easier. I suppose a learning situation comes from a confrontation type situation. The practicum was certainly one of those situations for me.

The other point raised in class today is that "The problem I have with him is me." Again, that goes back to the point I've just commented on; that the responsibility is on the listener. The problem in communication lies in the fact that I may not be perceiving you in the way you would like me to, right? Then I must clarify how you came across to me to see if that is what you've actually said. This does occur in reflective statements. I have noticed that you are an expert at that!

I guess I spoke at the practicum, but I didn't really communicate. What's funny though is that afterwards I was speaking momentarily with [Saudi CCC student] about Jesus being the son of God. When we were one to one, I was different. Then, I wasn't defensive. I really wanted to know whether or not his religion believed that Jesus is or is not the son of God. I didn't want to question it. I just wanted to know if that were true. Now, why was I able to do that with and not in the practicum. Could it be because of the atmosphere, the setting, the number of persons involved? I think all those things played a part in my communication. I was more relaxed, less tense to begin with when speaking alone with him.

Ya know what, too? I see how I very easily could get stuck at defending my defensiveness by saying, "Well, these are the things that are the most important to me so naturally I will be defensive about them." Instead of seeing that then moving beyond that to dropping my defenses and really listening to the other person. This person doesn't necessarily have to be from another culture either. He/she could be someone from my own background or very related to me. But, do
you know what I mean? I can't use that as an excuse, a cop-out for not furthering my communication (just because religion is such an intimate part of my life).

In stating that she didn't step out of what she believed long enough to see why the questions were even asked, this student addressed what was given a great deal of attention by the research team in Chapter IV, Session 6; viz., the Catholics could not see the intent of the Muslims' questions but did not inquire as to why they asked them which would have forced the Muslims to contribute the Islamic beliefs which framed the questions.

Her comment that she spoke at the practicum but didn't really communicate is similar to the male American Catholic's comment that he now knew what it was to talk, talk, talk but still not communicate with people who didn't hold his cultural views. Both comments address the research team's analysis that the Catholics did nothing to seek elements in the Muslims' systems of meaning on which to try to base their explanations. Because the Catholics were "totally wrapped up" in their own beliefs as she described and "embedded in their own cultural backgrounds" as he described, and because they were on the defensive, they never inquired about what the Muslims believed. In responding to the Muslims' questions totally out their own Catholic systems of meaning, the Catholics experienced the feeling of talk, talk, talking but not communicating because the Muslims did not share the systems of meaning on which the Catholics' explanations were based. However, the female student said that after the practicum, in speaking to the
Saudi Muslim, she inquired about what he believed. She wanted to know if Muslims believed Jesus was the son of God or not. In other words, in having dropped her defenses at that point, she sought the elements in the Islamic belief system which were at the base of the Muslims' questions. She attributed the difference in her communication in the practicum, in contrast to her communication after it, to the atmosphere, the setting or the number of persons involved in the discussion. The debate atmosphere, to a great degree, and the physical arrangement of the room, to a much less degree, were both contributing factors to the lack of understanding in the opinion of the research team.

In light of the analysis of data thus far in this dissertation, this student's question, "Are we looking for communication techniques or the content of different cultures?", and her response to her own question are among the most priceless of those simplistically stated thoughts that capture the essence of the curriculum. As she said, "Guess the answer to that is both." Indeed it is both. Cross-cultural communication as a field of study and an area of future research should incorporate both communication techniques and cultural content. "Seems to me that each of these things separately can be courses in themselves." In terms of never ending quantity to learn, yes, in terms of separate entities, no, as she herself states, "But then how would one learn of different cultures if it weren't for the verbalizing of words?" The techniques upon which understanding between the members of
different cultures rests are found in their verbalizing of words about the content of their respective cultures. A techniques course without cultural content would be akin to a well executed sex act without caring between the partners. The techniques for fulfillment in the execution, like the techniques for achieving understanding, are found in the caring between partners and the sharing of cultural content between discussants. One without the other—techniques without caring or content and caring or content without techniques—is less than the total essence of both sex and cross-cultural communication and less than fully satisfying.

The class period following the CCC classroom discussion of the Catholic practicum session, the CCC students and teacher viewed the videotape of the practicum together. The fallen-away Catholic practicum (Session 7) took place the afternoon of the same day. In that session, the research team described overt attempts on the part of the Catholics not to be defensive and/or not to appear that way. Those attempts are undoubtedly the result of both the CCC classroom discussion in which most of the Catholics admitted defensiveness in regard to the Muslims' why questions and the viewing of themselves just a few hours prior to the fallen-away Catholic session. The dominant American spokeswoman on the Catholic panel who had displayed the highest degree of defensiveness during their session, and who had remained silent during the Catholics' discussion of their own defensiveness, did not come to the videotape viewing of the
Catholic practicum session. The following field notes relate the teacher/researcher's thoughts on the student's absence and both the fallen-away Catholic and Catholic practicums.

This morning we watched the videotape of the Catholic practicum session. ____ did not appear for class. She left a note on my desk saying she would like to see me at noon if possible. She came in and we talked.

She's deeply concerned about misunderstandings about the Catholic religion that may have been given to students from outside the religion. She doesn't think we should have any more sessions on religion without "the proper theological authorities" to conduct them. I tried to explain that this is not a course in religion and that we're not attempting to get to any depth of understanding of theology. I explained it is a communication course and that in discussing religion we bring to the surface many of the things which lie deepest in terms of our belief systems. Through doing that, we can gain insight into what it is to communicate with people who have different systems of belief.

It is obvious that she is extremely distraught—by her statements during the practicum that the discussion had gone awry; by her journal reflections on it in which she said the questioners were hostile; by her not admitting defensiveness during our discussion yesterday in the CCC class; by her absence today; and by her statement that she thought the videotape should be erased. She expressed concern today about who might be viewing it.

This afternoon in the fallen-away Catholic session, she sat silently but was obviously distraught by what ____ [the Virgin Islander] said about falling away from Catholicism partly because she felt Catholics worshipped idols in the forms of saints, statues, particularly that of the Virgin Mary, etc., etc., etc.

I feel disturbed at the fact she is so disturbed. I don't know really what to do about it. Other people, also, were disturbed today. There were Catholics, ____ [American female] for example, today in the practicum session was about ready to jump off her seat at some of the things ____ [the Virgin Islander] and the others were saying.

There is this desire to feel that you have to defend your religion for people who do not understand it. I appreciate that. I don't know what I can do about
it. I think if nothing else, by opening the subject of religion, I have people actively involved, perhaps angry. Maybe I'm naive to believe that I'm doing any good in discussing it. Maybe all I'm doing is creating disharmony, even among the cross-cultural communication students themselves, but I firmly believe that in disharmony is a learning situation. Not all in life in our relationships with other people is peaceful and harmonious—why should it be any different in a course involving the study of communication between the people of different cultures?

I guess maybe ___'s view of the world, at least the one she gives of her own intimate family, is one of peace and harmony and tranquility. She talked today about feeling much older than the other students and very amazed at their lack of knowledge of Catholicism. She's struggling within herself, I know, and what she believes most strongly is coming under fire. It has the possibilities of being a learning experience for her, but I don't think its going to happen because she is narrow in her views and she's not open to anyone challenging those views or what she holds nearest and dearest.

I thought that today's session of people explaining why they've fallen away from Catholicism or why they still consider themselves Catholics but do not practice the religion was very enlightening in pointing out the other side of Catholicism which is not all good, which is true of anything we might discuss. There are good sides, good points, and bad in anything we discuss that is related to our experiences and our perceptions of things.

Although I wish ___[Virgin Islander] hadn't gone on and on so about idolatry, if that is the perception she has, that is valid, and it behooves us to try to understand it within the context of her culture. It behooves Catholics to attempt to understand it. The great gift of bringing different cultures together is to make people begin to examine their relationship to their own values, their own beliefs.

I don't know whether or how these discussions will change the nature of the relationships between the people in the cross-cultural class. I don't know how much the ESL students are enjoying them. For us in the CCC class who are studying communication, the sessions have the seeds of being a very important learning experience, but I'm not certain that they are indeed that or that I can make them that.
There seems to be something about the two practicums so far, perhaps it's the way they are set up, that makes the panelists and audience come out with both barrels loaded. As the hour ends and the situation breaks up and we carry the discussion on among the ESL class and the CCC student who remains behind, things seem to smooth out and there is indeed some form of understanding, I think, that begins to take place.

___ [female Thai ESL student] brought up something in the second hour which I have often thought about as I sit back and listen to people discuss their religions, when I drop out and become an observer. She said she felt religion was created as a way for man to justify his inhumanity to other men. I have often felt religions were created by men as a way of explaining the unexplainable. In many ways I feel I'm fortunate to not have any strong religious convictions. I never feel defensive or that I have to defend my spiritual beliefs. Religion is not an important part of my life as I told the ESL class today after the practicum, and as I intend to tell the cross-cultural class tomorrow. By it not being an important part of my life, it is not something which I have to defend. Therefore, I don't have trouble accepting whatever meaning religion has for other people. I can listen to and accept their interpretation of their religion fairly easily because I don't have to defend my own spirituality. For the type of work I do, maybe I'm lucky in this respect.

The major American Catholic spokeswoman discussed in the field notes above who was so distraught over the Catholic practicum session asked no questions and contributed nothing during the question and answer period following the fallen-away Catholics' presentation. This was also true in the Muslim practicum session which occurred the following week. (She was not present in the last session on Asian religions due to a family matter.) In both the fallen-away Catholic and Muslim sessions, she not only did not participate but also gave the appearance of not listening. As she had done during the Catholic practicum when she withdrew from communication and as she had done during the Catholics' discussion of their own defensiveness, she appeared to be
reading from her notebook; she rarely acknowledged by looking up that either the non-practicing Catholics or the Muslims were sharing their religious beliefs. She did, however, reflect on the fallen-away Catholic session and the CCC classroom discussion about it in her journal. In both of these journal entries, the instructor directly confronted the student with her lack of openness regarding diverse religious views. The confrontation resulted in the student withdrawing from communicating any further in her journal about the practicum sessions on religion; she wrote nothing on the Muslims' presentation. The following entry contains the student's thoughts about the fallen-away Catholic panel discussion. The instructor's confronting responses to this entry are given after it.

Regarding practicum session yesterday with the "dissident Catholic" group, I still feel defensive and somewhat irate. What I heard yesterday reflected not what the group believed in rather, what they did not believe in, an airing of their grievances. I reiterate again, I do not believe Cross-Cultural Communication is the proper vehicle for this type of discussion unless it is chaired by the proper theological authorities.

The grievances aired so far are based on misinformation and ignorance completely devoid of theological content. I feel it is a grave injustice that we Catholics should be subjected to this type of heterodoxy especially on our own "home ground--a Catholic school."

My question to these people who are so dissatisfied with the Catholics or who "challenge" our beliefs, what drew them to ODC, a Catholic college? Were they coerced into coming here?

To the student's comments about feeling the discussions should be chaired by "the proper theological authorities" and that the "grievances aired were based on misinformation
and ignorance completely devoid of theological content," the instructor reiterated what she had told the student in her office. She wrote, "We are not attempting a heavy theological discussion—we are looking at religion through the eyes of the members of different cultures." The instructor drew a line from the student's word "grievances" and wrote in the margin, "They are their perceptions of Catholicism. There is nothing wrong with having questions or doubts about your religion. Without them, your mind is closed." To the student's statement that she felt it was "a grave injustice that Catholics should be subjected to this kind of heterodoxy" especially on their "own home ground—a Catholic school," the instructor paraphrased the mission statement of the college, "Mission: To seek truth which is found in all cultures, etc."

The following day this student reflected upon the CCC classroom discussion of the fallen-away Catholic practicum session. The majority of her entry contained reflections upon the diplomatic role played by the Libyan in that discussion which will be revealed later in the researcher's field notes. She also mentioned a split in friendship she had noticed between two Latins in the class and attributed it to the religious discussions. Unlike the researcher, however, she was not aware that the split occurred before the discussions on religion and was not related to them. She ended the entry with reflections on how the non-practicing Catholic panel discussion made others feel, specifically, the Venezuelan male leader of the panel, the male Catholic spokesperson who
had been a major speaker with this woman in the previous Catholic panel session, and the American female Catholic whom the research team described as trying hard to cover her defensiveness during the fallen-away Catholic discussion. The two Catholics she mentioned, of course, were audience members in this session.

___ feels he was ineffective as spokesman for his group [fallen-away Catholic]. ___ and ___ are very upset because we were all put on the defensive and so many non-truths were hurled at the Catholics.

In response to the student's statement that "so many non-truths were hurled at the Catholics," the teacher wrote, "I object strongly. Another person's perceptions are never non-truths for him/her. They are as valid as yours are for you."

The teacher's confrontation of this student caused her written communication about the discussions of religion to follow the withdrawal route her oral communication had taken when she was confronted with why questions from others who had conflicting beliefs. Some of the CCC students in interviews and one in a journal entry which will be quoted later made reference to the fact the sessions on religion caused this student who was usually quite vocal to withdraw from communication. Undoubtedly the American quoted earlier in regard to the Catholic session who said it would be easy to defend her own defensiveness and use it as an excuse for not communicating any further about religion is the route that this particular student took.
She and the Libyan discussed their different philosophies and communicative styles in regard to why questions in the CCC classroom discussion about the fallen-away Catholic practicum session. The content of that discussion will be revealed in the field notes pertaining to it. In that discussion, however, this student finally directly stated (to the Libyan) what she had implied during her participation in the Catholic session; she did not want to be asked why about her religion. Refusal to deal with the question why translated to withdrawal which took the form of not seeking to understand the others' beliefs through questioning and discussion as well as not wanting to be questioned or to discuss so as to be understood in regard to her own. In the last interview of the semester, she told the researcher she didn't feel she had to defend, that the differences between Christianity and Islam didn't "bother her" and ultimately weren't important. In other words, whatever anyone else wanted to believe or not believe was fine as long as they didn't ask her why about what she believed.

I don't know how to put it exactly. It doesn't really bother me although maybe, from my expressions--it doesn't bother me how other people worship or what they believe because I believe that if you believe in God, we all believe in the same God. I don't, you know, whether you're a Christian or a Moslem or whatever, and we're all eventually going to end up in the same place, you know, how we get there, the means we use, are different. It doesn't bother me, I mean, I respect other people's beliefs or no belief. What bothers me is that, if I'm challenged as to why do you believe that way? When it sounds, you know--I don't feel I have to defend.

Although the student withdrew from further journal reflections pertaining to the discussions of religion and
turned entries mostly to the course readings, she did reflect both in person to the instructor and in her journal upon the instructor forcing her to confront herself. In regard to the instructor's attempts to make her aware of her own closed-mindedness, she wrote,

Read your comments to my comments, Sue. I really felt very good after having talked to you in your office--and after having read your comments. As I told you earlier, I appreciate what you have done. You have helped me to confront myself, to step back and take another look. Once a word has been discharged--written down--one can't take it back or change it. I can't necessarily change or rearrange what I have said or written but I can change and rearrange the way I think--and you have helped me do that. We may not always agree but we do have a better understanding of one another.

In response to her last sentence, the teacher wrote, "Most certainly." In response to her stating that the instructor had helped her to confront herself, to step back and take another look, the instructor responded, "Nothing you could possibly say, ____, would I take as a greater compliment than this. Thank you."

As the Libyan said in talking about the course as a beginning, "It was good for many of us but on different levels...like for some people it can be a starting point to start broadening up a little bit." For this student and for others already mentioned and yet to be described, the curriculum was a time for participants to begin to be confronted by the teacher and/or to confront themselves in regard to their own lack of openness to cultural diversity. It was the beginning of their admitting defensiveness and closed-mindedness to the teacher/researcher, themselves and/
or each other. The implications of this beginning to cross-cultural understanding will be discussed in the conclusions to this section.

The Venezuelan woman in the Catholic panel discussion who had served as a major spokesperson along with the American male and female did not write any reflections on the Catholic session immediately after it. She was not present in class the day the Catholics discussed that the why questions in regard to religion made them defensive. She did come to the videotape viewing of the session and afterward reflected on having told the teacher prior to the discussions that the subject of religion would motivate people to talk but was likely to create anger. She, like the two other dominant spokespersons, attributed the failure of the communication in the session to the Muslims'—to their not being theologically capable of understanding what Catholicism was all about. She did, however, also state that she thought many of the Catholics' were not capable of presenting their own religion clearly. She excused her own defensiveness by stating that her own doubts had been cleared with the help of "masters" and her willingness to accept their talks, her faith, and her ability to reason.

Sue, I told you the religion subject would give kind of beginning or opening to discussion and disagreement. This is a motivating subject to make people talk about but also to make them angry. I think many of us are not capable to talk or present our own religion as clear as possible to make the other groups understand it mainly because they are not capable or theologically prepared to understand what Christian Catholics are or mean.
You must excuse myself for being so defended of my own religion but at the time I started to have doubts about Catholicism, I went to special reunion led by masters on the subject and they cleared my suspicion, not just because I was willing to accept the talks, but because of my faith in what I have been taught since I can use my reason.

The same student wrote the following reflections on the fallen-away Catholic session. She, like other Catholics yet to be discussed, referred to the panelists as Protestant and thought they did not discuss the right subject even though the panelists had stated at the outset that they were not a Protestant group since only two of the seven considered themselves Protestants; the others called themselves Catholics with doubts which were causing them not to practice. The research team described this Venezuelan as engaging in qualified concession to the panel by reminding them that the priests in S. America have to remind the elderly about their mistaken notions and practices of praying to images. The concession, the team concluded, served to admit to the panelists the validity of their objections but allowed her to suggest that the problem was human fraility and that the panelists also had a mistaken notion of how statues were employed by the Church. In her journal entry, she stated that she didn't think the panel should have criticized the "misunderstandings ourselves create about our mistakes."

She again addressed human fraility as the cause. She said that the panel's talk was "out of good bases" and that she found it offensive.
I think their subject was to talk about Protestantism instead of criticizing some misunderstanding ourselves create about our own mistakes. I know we are not perfect and that's why we fail sometimes.

To me their talk were out of good bases, it was very offensive to the Catholic Church, and I am one member of it, I mean I was offended.

The teacher circled "Protestantism" and wrote, "But only two were Protestants--the others were still Catholics." Next to her statement that their talk was out of good bases, and offensive to the Catholic Church, she wrote, "Those are, nevertheless, their perceptions and as such have validity."

An American female Catholic wrote two pages of angry reflections on the fallen-away Catholic session. This student had participated some in the Catholic panel discussion but did not write an entry on it. She did, however, talk about the Catholics responding defensively to the Muslims' questions when the Catholics discussed their own defensiveness after their presentation. This particular entry is significant in light of this student's later entries and her steady progression toward the development of openness to diversity.

She is the student described in the researcher's field notes (already quoted) as so disturbed by what the non-practicing Catholics were saying that she was ready to jump off her chair. The research team described her as the student who attempted to cover her defensiveness by prefacing her remarks with statements like, "I respect everyone's opinions but ..." The primary researcher in Chapter IV described her attempt to change the panel's topic from
disenchantment with Catholicism to what the panelists who were practicing a religion believed, "so she would be more informed," as similar to the major American female Catholic panelist's attempt to reinstate the purpose gone awry in the Catholic session. This student, like other Catholics, refused to see that the group stated they were not a Protestant group, since only one person belonged to a Protestant church, but aligned themselves with and indeed stated their basic Catholic and/or Christian beliefs taught through their Catholic experience.

The student stated she was upset that the panel used "one time examples as generalities;" the research team described her as countering the panel's personal examples with ones of her own. Like the Catholics who had reflected on their own panel presentation, this student saw faith as very "personal." Like the major American Catholic female panelist who spoke of the "non-truths hurled at the Catholics" by the fallen-away Catholic panelists, this student also saw the panelists' statements as "unsubstantiated" and "untrue" rather than seeing their perceptions as possibly possessing validity.

Her statements that she wanted to be informed and that one has the personal responsibility to become informed before speaking are important. Ultimately, her anger in this session, and a coincidental reading assignment in her Peace and Justice class of a pastoral letter written by the bishops of Central America, led her to seeking to understand the perceptions
of the Latin panelists. She did so by doing research on the Church in Latin America in order "to understand the conflicts between the practicing and non-practicing Catholics," according to statements she made later in the CCC class and in her course evaluation. After reading the pastoral letter the week following the fallen-away Catholic session, she wrote that she saw why the panelists from Central America were against all institutionalized organizations (as the panelists had claimed the Church was) because of their elitist associations. She reiterated her journal statement about to be quoted that one should become informed before speaking about other cultures in a later entry several days after the Muslim panel discussion. In that entry (already quoted in the section entitled, "Openness to Communicating: A Beginning"), she admitted her lack of knowledge about Islam and her attempts to confirm her own preconceived notions about it during the Muslims' presentation. The research team described her questions to the Muslims as attempts to confirm her own preconceived ideas.

In regard to the fallen-away Catholic panelists' perceptions, an important aside is needed here before quoting the American Catholic's entry. The Cuban professor mentioned previously who did the two guest lectures in the course was in attendance at the fallen-away Catholic practicum session. The student about to be quoted in regard to the session talked in another entry of being pulled aside by the Cuban professor the day following the session. She said,
The next day he saw me and pulled me aside to tell me how he understood the anger I felt in the session and how he too felt uncomfortable and threatened by the group. But, at the same time he gave me a better understanding as to why the misconceptions existed.

The use of the word "misconceptions" by this student is similar to that of the American student who said the Muslims had "misconceptions" about Jesus. The Cuban professor, however, in his two lectures did not indicate the Latin panelists' perceptions were "misconceptions" but rather addressed their validity within the context of Latin cultures by talking about the Church's involvement in political matters, its association with the elite, and the far greater significance given to the Virgin Mary and her statue by Latin Catholics than American.

Finally, before quoting this student's entry, her suggestion contained therein, viz., that because the religious discussions could lead to people's feelings being hurt, it would be best to give readings about various religions instead of discussing them, is extraordinarily significant. It matches another American student's perceptions yet to be quoted in regard to this session who states she finds it difficult to cope with participating in discussions which involve feelings with so many people; that student tries to articulate the difference between what she thinks about the sessions and how she feels about them. It also seems in sync with the American male Catholic who expressed his feelings of frustration and anger in regard to the Catholic session in which he was a major spokesperson, but who decided "limit" himself to analyzing "the interactive aspects of the communication" in
subsequent entries. In addition, the student about to be quoted in an entry subsequent to this one states the major American female Catholic panelist in their own session was made to feel uncomfortable and consequently is "now remaining silent;" that student's basic withdrawl approach has already been described. All of these phenomena confirm the pattern discussed earlier in the section entitled "Keeping a Journal;" viz., American students find group discussions which involve their feelings difficult to deal with. The thread of keeping the religious sessions "informative" runs throughout the students' reflections on all of the sessions and will be discussed as their thoughts about the sessions are unfolded.

Now, the American Catholic female's angry journal reflections on the fallen-away Catholic panel session:

I just left the practicum session and had to write an entry because no one was in the dorm who I could verbally express my anger to. When it was 1:40 and the students left who had a 1:40 class, I left with them because I could no longer stand to be in the studio.

Why am I angry, I ask myself? I am not angry because the group told why they were no longer Catholics--I respect their ability to make a choice. I am angry because of two reasons. First, is that they only talked about was what was wrong with my faith not what was good about theirs and second because I felt they were being ignorant about many facts and using one time examples as generalities.

I wanted to be informed, and if part of that included condemning Catholicism, that was OK. But, I wasn't informed, I learned nothing about the panel's beliefs. Also, some of their comments were totally unsubstantiated and simply an affront to my faith. I was so angry that I wanted to leave, but felt that that would only make all involved uncomfortable. TODAY'S PANEL WAS NOT AN EXTENSION OF THE CATHOLIC DISCUSSION. It should not have been conducted as one.

Faith is very personal and those who are lucky enough to possess it should cherish it. I do cherish mine and did not like the comments that were made that were untrue.
I myself can see faults in my church and think they need discussed, but, some topics mentioned were totally untrue, i.e., we don't worship statues and if you think we do then you have the personal responsibility to become informed before speaking.

Finally, I only hope that when I listen to the other groups speak I will have enough sense to watch what I say so as not to offend another. I can't attribute this to cultural differences because the Protestant Americans made me as angry as did the foreign students.

One suggestion, when so many people's feelings could be hurt by a topic such as this, it may be best not to do it or instead to give readings about various religions for a clearer understanding. I am dreading the next few practicum sessions.

In response to this entry, the teacher wrote to the student that she was glad the student couldn't find anyone to talk to in the dorm and instead wrote down what she was feeling. She also told her she was glad she didn't leave the practicum session even though she said she was so angry she wanted to. The teacher related having had five Latin Catholics walk out en masse from her conversation class because Arabs and Iranians were heatedly discussing Islam. She further added that she was devastated as a teacher and a person when they did. While the students were involved during these religious discussions with confronting each other in regard to their differences, the teacher was involved in confronting the students with their lack of openness to culturally diverse views. This student was no exception. In response to the student's statement that she "did not like the comments that were untrue," specifically, that Catholics worshipped statues, the teacher wrote, "They are, nonetheless, those people's perceptions." She circled "worship statues" and responded, "This may not be far from
the truth at all as perceived by young Latins. Even older 
Latins will tell you how much more important prayers in 
front of the statues are (indeed how much more important 
the Virgin Mary is) in Latin countries."

The day following the fallen-away Catholic practicum 
session the CCC students discussed the session. After the 
discussion the same student quoted above wrote the entry quoted 
below. In it she stated she was "uncomfortable" because she 
did not feel people understood her anger. "Uncomfortable" is 
one of the words used most frequently during these first two 
practicum sessions on religion. The student stated again she 
did not see the panel's presentation as "informing" her about 
their religion or beliefs. She even saw their discussion 
about the session as a continuation of the "debate" that she 
thought had occurred during it. The research team did not 
characterize this session as a debate. They did talk about 
the fact the non-practicing Catholicis couched their disenchant­
ment with Catholicism in terms of statements that they didn't 
understand why certain things were or were not a part of 
Catholic doctrine or practice; this placed the burden of 
answering these questions on the Catholics. She mentioned 
that the major Catholic female panelist told her she would 
no longer discuss religion; she described the other student's 
choosing to remain silent as working against "open communica­
tion." Along with stating she felt others did not understand 
her anger, she expressed fear that the information retained 
by the non-Christians would be incorrect information.
The desire to be understood surfaced most strongly during these sessions.

Today we discussed yesterday's lab session. I felt very uncomfortable today because I thought people did not understand my anger. I was not, and am never angered by people who question my beliefs. I feel that if my values are strong enough and if I am knowledgeable enough about them, they can stand any public scrutiny. What bothers me is that the debate continued again today. I think my point about people informing me about their religion is more valuable than their ridiculing my religion for my academic growth.

I was not the only student who felt this anger, though I may be the only one who takes time to reflect on it and speak about it in class or write about it in my journal. Today one of the American students told me she was never again going to address a religious question because she was made to feel uncomfortable. I think a problem has arisen—instead of causing open communication, one of our best communicators is remaining silent.

I hope that the sessions begin to be more informative and become less of a debate in the weeks to come. I know that to avoid these discussions would lead to ignorance—but, I am afraid that because of them the information retained, especially by the non-Christian students, will be incorrect.

Finally, I hope you know that anything that we discuss in class and any anger felt is left in the classroom. I hope that all the other students will recognize differences and accept them instead of letting them carry over and causing them to have feelings of prejudice.

The student's last paragraph above is a reference to statements that the Libyan made about people being angry in the first two sessions. Although this student tried to reassure the teacher that the students' anger had been left in the classroom, journal entries did not indicate that to be the case. The journal format, however, provided a vent for some of the anger and the conflict itself apparently led students to an awareness of the necessity to "recognize
differences and accept them," as this student said. The research team in this session described participants as sensitized from the previous Catholic discussion to the diversity of viewpoints and the potential for conflict resulting from failure to demonstrate an openness to the other's meaning. The team also saw participants in this session as showing greater sensitivity to the possibility of misunderstanding and nonunderstanding and the need to maintain the communicative relationship in order for understanding to occur. Their journal reflections certainly indicate their concern for understanding.

The CCC participants' discussion of the fallen-away Catholic presentation indicates how they attempted to maintain the communicative relationship with each other following the session. Part of the content of that discussion is revealed in the researcher's original field notes. The original notes are quoted below in paragraphs not marked with an asterisk. The thoughts expressed by the students which are pertinent to the analysis of either the primary or secondary data sources are contained in the paragraphs added at the time of the analysis of the secondary data when the researcher listened to the audio tape of the CCC discussion. Those thoughts are present in paragraphs marked with an asterisk and inserted chronologically in the flow of the discussion. Following the field notes is the conversation mentioned previously which occurred between the Libyan and major female Catholic panelist. The researcher
transcribed it after listening to the audio tape of the CCC students' discussion of the fallen-away Catholic session.

In the field notes about to be quoted, the comments made by the fallen-away Catholic panelist from the Virgin Islands indicate her awareness of the necessity of listening and accepting the perspectives of the other without judging them as "wrong" because they are different. "Being different is not being wrong" encapsulates a strong thought pattern that emerges among the students by the end of the curriculum; it reflects their beginning in openness to diversity. The researcher states in the field notes that she saw on the participants' parts an effort to reestablish harmony within the group. As a participant, her own efforts at the same undoubtedly made her hopeful that the students were working toward that end. The research team, however, also described participants in Session 7 as alert to the need for maintaining the communicative relationship for understanding to occur.

The Panamanian panelist, who rarely spoke in class, says in an entry yet to be quoted which contains reflections on the students' discussion of the fallen-away Catholic session that she had to speak out in class on that day. In her entry on the practicum session itself which will be quoted later, she articulates that she felt the audience tried to make her feel she was wrong and they were right because she had different perceptions than they did.

The American male Catholic panelist (communications major) told the fallen-away Catholics he thought they did
a good job of presenting the beliefs they held in common with the practicing Catholics which allowed him to understand how their views differed. The research team said that understanding occurred in Session 7 because Catholicism existed as a basis of commonality between discussants and because the panel established a context for discussion by providing the audience information about the commonalities that existed between the panelists themselves. His statement that the conflict arose when the audience didn't have a common base of experience to understand the different perceptions of course agrees with the Panamanian panelist. She felt compelled to tell the American Catholics that if they had lived in Central America, they would be able to understand why the Latins had the perceptions they did. The statements made by the Catholic male communications major are also significant in light of his later analysis of the Muslim session. There he states the Muslims facilitated understanding by showing how Islam was similar to and different from Christianity; i.e., they established a base of commonality through which they attempted to explain the differences.

The American female Catholic who worked so hard to cover her defensiveness during the fallen-away Catholic session had no new thoughts; she still was angry the group had told her what they thought was bad about her religion. She openly told them she thought some of the things they said were "untrue."
The majority of the researcher's field notes are a restatement of what she told the students in an effort to help them see the conflict that had occurred in the two sessions in the positive light of learning. The Libyan, who was the chief student facilitator of cross-cultural understanding, contributed significantly toward that end in this discussion. The field notes contain the researcher's account of what he said and how the major Catholic spokes­woman responded to him. The notes end with the teacher stating her own doubts at the end of the fallen-away Catholic session about the wisdom of ever having begun the discussions of religion and her feelings that with the CCC students' discussion about the fallen-away Catholic session, a turning point had been reached.

I decided before I went to CCC today that I would express some of my feelings about what had happened yesterday in the practicum and some of my philosophy of teaching and the belief that value conflict in the classroom is a good learning experience, or can be provided people accept it as such. I began class by asking the students to please comment on yesterday's practicum session.

[The Virgin Islander] was the first person to speak. She said that she felt people were against what she was saying. She said that people view things or see things differently and that she didn't think other people should feel you are wrong because you see things differently than they do. She said she thought people should be able to listen to the views of others and accept them as the ideas or feelings of the person stating them.

People did begin to talk and I saw their parts an effort to reestablish harmony within the group. I sat and listened and said nothing for a long while.

* [the Panamanian] said she thought the Catholics looked at her as "a sinner." She told them maybe if they had lived in Central America, they would be able
to understand what she had said. She talked primarily about the Church's involvement in El Salvador and Panama and said she thought the Church's responsibility was to guide Catholics spiritually, not be involved in supporting or not supporting governments.

* [the major American Catholic spokeswoman in the Catholic session] told the class what she had told the teacher after the Catholic session--she thought it would be good to ask one of the two priests on the faculty to address the class "to clear up the theological issues that caused the conflict."

* [the American male fallen-away Catholic panelist] said he thought it was impossible for the panel to discuss why they weren't practicing Catholicism without being critical.

* [the American male Catholic panelist in the Catholic session] said he thought the panel found a commonality on which to base their discussion by stating that the audience and panel had common beliefs as practicing and non-practicing Catholics. From that foundation and his own doubts, he said he could understand their views. He thought the conflict arose when people started making generalizations about things with which the audience had no background or common base of experience to allow them to understand the different perceptions.

* [the American female Catholic who tried to cover her defensiveness during the session] said the purpose of the discussion was not to tell her as a Catholic what was bad in her religion. She objected to the fact that what was discussed was not what Catholicism stands for and some of the statements were untrue, like worshipping idols.

After the students had talked, I shared with them some of my own perceptions. I told them I left school feeling very ambivalent and caught between what I firmly believed in terms of my own philosophy of teaching and what had happened in both of the religion practicums. I said I firmly believed that bringing our strongest beliefs and values to the surface where we could explore and look at them together was important for us in order to become aware ourselves of what we value.

I said I was not afraid of value conflict in the classroom and that I did not back away from it as a teacher. Told them I entered the religious discussions knowing full well that conflict was a very good possibility. I said I thought that conflict was good because it
made learning an active process although it was not a very comfortable situation to try to manage as a teacher. Also said I thought conflict was important for our type of class because through it we could see what happens in communication between people who have different strong beliefs and values.

I went on by way of example to tell them about my own religious viewpoints and about my religious background growing up. I told them religion was not an important part of my life, that my source of strength was not in God or in religion, but in people. I explained that we often live oblivious to what we really believe and what is really important to us—that we don't have to step back, to question what we value, or to ask ourselves why until we come across people who are very different. I said that in the last several years of teaching international students and listening to them talk about how important religion was to them or how they didn't have a religion, I had come to a full realization that religion was not an important part of my life.

When I finished, [the Libyan] talked himself for five or ten minutes. He told about coming to the United States and only learning by being here the bad things that exist in his own culture which he had never examined before. He very much substantiated that value conflict could be a very important learning experience and went on to say that he felt it was very important in our particular class.

He compared Arabs to Americans in that they spend much time discussing things with each other, exploring each other's ideas, arguing with each other, and said that even though they do that, they still come out loving each other.

[the major American female Catholic panelist] responded to him. Her response was that she thought exploring things together was one thing, but that tearing down people's beliefs was another and that when that happened, it was impossible to any longer discuss things rationally, to use her words, rationally, logically or intelligently. What, of course, she does not realize is that her defensiveness makes her perceive that people are tearing down her beliefs. She told there were many things in her religion she accepted on faith and that she did not want to be asked why. I said nothing although I could have responded that there is nothing wrong with asking why as [the Libyan] did respond, or maybe he stated it prior to when she spoke, I don't remember which, that there is nothing wrong with asking why if it forces you to
examine something yourself. He said even Socrates said an unexamined life wasn't worth living.

All in all, I guess I could say that I felt good the students themselves attempted to initiate and bring some kind of harmony back into the group. I was extremely depressed yesterday afternoon and last night. Spent a lot of time talking with Phil about it, and questioned whether or not I had done the right thing in ever allowing these discussions to take place. I kept wondering whether the discussions themselves and the hostility and anger they were bringing out were not counterproductive to developing cross-cultural understanding, but I don't believe any longer that that is the case.

The conversation between the Libyan and the major Catholic female panelist described above in the researcher's field notes is quoted below. The Libyan indicates he feels it is important to discuss differences, even if tension results, because the course is in cross-cultural communication. He sees the discussion of differences as important to the purpose of people being in the course; viz., "Everybody is here to see how others see what he sees and what the differences are." The research team, throughout the analysis of the primary data, discussed the crucial importance of participants finally coming to confront and probe their differences beginning in Session 6.

The Libyan goes on to state there are things wrong with his people and his culture which he never would have realized if he hadn't come here and seen different people. He states there is nothing wrong with debating religion, ideas or any subject. The value of being asked questions by others, he thinks, is to make us think about things ourselves; even if the other will never understand our explanations, we ourselves
will come to understand our own perspectives through trying to explain them to the other. He includes the notion that the questioning should be reciprocal and very thoughtfully states what is possible when someone is asked a question which forces him/her to think about something never thought about before. He says, "And you can ask me a question about something that I have never thought about because...because I have always been in this thing--I have never come out of it to see it."

I have never thought about some thing before because I have always been in this thing--I have never come out of it to see it. To bring people out of their own cultural things so that they can see them; to help them get beyond being "culturally embedded" or "wrapped up" in their own cultures, in the words of the other students--what is openness to diversity, after all, but a coming out of one's own cultural things enough to see them. Combining the two statements made by the Libyan about "seeing," one finds him saying that we cannot see how others see what we see until we come out of our own perspectives enough to see them ourselves. According to the Libyan, the way to come out is through the other's questions which force us to confront and explain our own perspectives. The Japanese quoted earlier said she had come to know Japan because she had to explain things Japanese that she had never thought about before in order to answer others' questions.
The crucial element for coming out of one's own cultural things, in order for the purpose of cross-cultural communication to be fulfilled, is reciprocal questioning which forces us and the other to confront and explain our own respective perspectives to each other. In reciprocity, in the words of the Libyan, it is possible to fulfill the purpose of cross-cultural communication—"to see how others see what he/she and what the differences are." Reciprocal cultural self-disclosure and reciprocal verification and clarification were discussed extensively as primary requisites for cross-cultural understanding in the conclusions of the research team's analysis of the primary data (Chapter V).

The Libyan very clearly states what he perceives to be the difference between Americans and Arabs' communicative styles. He describes Americans as not wanting to be involved in discussions which bring their different viewpoints into conflict with each other. They ultimately say, "Let's just forget it." Arabs, on the other hand, he describes as debating, fighting about the subject, and still loving each other. Perhaps the debate atmosphere admittedly fed by the American Muslim convert in the Catholic presentation not only contributed to the Catholics' defensiveness in regard to why questions about their religion, but also set in motion the Arab Muslims' natural communicative style of actively pursuing or debating a topic. The research team in Chapter IV, Session 8 (the Muslims' own panel discussion) described the following as aspects of the Muslims'
communication: lack of defensiveness; greater facility in providing complete and responsive answers to the audience's questions; persual of the topics until they appeared satisfied they had provided such answers; and greater attention to clarifying not only their own statements but requesting clarification of the audience's questions.

The Libyan himself in analyzing Session 6 (Catholic) said that the Muslims in the audience "insisted on getting answers." Just prior to the Muslim presentation, an American CCC student described this phenomenon in talking about the Libyan's communicative style as she had observed him in another of her classes.

I noticed ______ [the Libyan] in my Peace and Justice class today and I feel he is a worthy subject for an entry. I think the word that best describes him is cosmopolitan. When he speaks in class, he is practically the only student that does not seem intimidated by Dr. ______. He will tell him how he feels, i.e., today ______ [the professor] answered a question posed by ____ [the Libyan] and he really avoided the question by using academic jargon. ______ [the Libyan] said something to the effect of "Now, will you answer the question." I was quite in awe of his straightforwardness. I wonder if he is this way because of his culture, because of his socialization/personality, or because he has had the opportunity to travel and this has given him a great deal of confidence. I am anxious to hear him speak when he is on the panel for the Muslims, especially when he has to answer questions.

The research team in Session 6 described the Catholics as surprised by the fact the Muslims repeatedly told them they were not clearly answering their questions or addressing the specific question they asked.

The American Muslim convert who played the devil's advocate in the Catholic session became interested in Islam
because of her extensive involvement with Iranians. Perhaps she herself had developed some of the skills of the oral tradition through her interaction with her Iranian friends and thus fit in quite well with the Arabs' communicative style. She certainly was in agreement with the Libyan that debate, conflict and openly discussing differences were good. She said, after all, in the discussion about the Catholic session that she had asked questions so she could see things debated, learn how people really felt, and see the cultural differences. She said, "You have to see real conflict to get to know there is a difference." The teacher/researcher, of course, as stated in Chapter IV, as well as in this chapter, has a bias toward conflict as a necessary ingredient of coming to the awareness that cultural differences do indeed exist and do matter. Perhaps the conflict paradigm is present in those people who have had extensive involvement with culturally different people and have come to understand in their conflicts that all people everywhere are not basically the same and that the differences must also be understood. The American Muslim had talked about the necessity of understanding the differences in the second week of the curriculum when she explained in a class discussion what she understood "intersubjectivity" to mean.

Say you and I were talking about a particular topic, we would not have to set the confines of our experiences because we share common experiences. We were brought up here; we have almost the same ideas about time and space, almost the same kind of reasoning and things like that, so we don't have to explain to each other because we share that. But if we were from different cultures, we would have to examine what our differences are before we could really communicate without something being left out,
In response to all of the Libyan's comments, the major American Catholic panelist who had shown the highest degree of defensiveness during the Catholic session and who had been obviously distraught but remained silent during the fallen-away Catholic session reiterated the position she had maintained since the Catholic session; viz., she thought it would be a good idea to ask those trained in the field of theology "to explain any conflicts that would leave doubt in your mind about something we have not explained correctly." Earlier in the same hour, she had suggested priests should be asked to speak to the class "to explain the theological issues that caused the conflict." While genuine concern that the non-Catholics understand Catholicism was present in her suggestions, they reflect a basic withdrawal approach to the topic of religion and the conflict created through the discussion of it. Calling in authorities on the subject of Catholic theology would have taken the discussion out of the realm of having to deal on a personal level with people who held different beliefs and placed it into the realm of the intellectual, the rational and the logical which is the plane on which she stated "we can converse very well." It is the plane which would have removed the discussants from having to deal with their feelings and those of others. Below is the conversation which occurred between the Libyan Muslim and the American Catholic:

Libyan
I want to say that value conflict is a very important thing especially in this kind of class. This is cross-cultural communication. There is nothing wrong with discussing differences. We might get a little hot or upset, there might be more tension but there is nothing wrong with talking about differences.
If I sit and talk about my religion, sometimes they don't understand and they ask me a question. No matter what their intent is, even though the question might upset me at the time, I should be able to control myself and listen to them because in a class like this, everybody is here to see how others see what he sees and what the differences are.

There are some things which are wrong with my people, with my country, with my culture, that I never realized until I came here and I saw different people. I would never have realized these things if I hadn't come here and I'm sure everybody from other countries has realized this. So, if we sit down--I'm getting to the point of saying--there is nothing wrong with having a debate about religion, you know. I will still believe in my religion and you will still believe in yours. But there is nothing wrong with us sitting down and talking as long as we don't hurt people. We can discuss ideas but we don't want to say, "Well, these people do this and these people do that."

We should be able to sit down and discuss anything. If I don't understand something, if I've never understood it, even if I'll never understand it, I can ask you questions about it--to make you think about it. And you can ask me a question about something that I have never thought about because...because I have always been in this thing--I have never come out of it to see it.

That's why when we were talking about the question of--well, how was Jesus the son of God because he was not created from a father, well, then why is Adam not the son of God--just think about it. Don't get mad at the question. If you want to take the time and think about it, it is worth thinking about. The students of Aristotle--I'm sorry, Socrates--said an unexamined life is not worth living.

We are here; we are educated people; we should be intelligent enough to sit down and question ourselves, our lives, our religion. The conflict is good, if we are allowed to experience it as you're saying, especially in this kind of class. As you know, I've been in ESL classes--people have arguments, they are almost fighting. Then after class, everything is cool--it's just an argument. I'm not going to hate you for your ideas and you're not going to hate me for my beliefs. And the ESL students in those classes get to know each other and become friends. In normal classes of Americans here, it's possible to go all semester and maybe get to know one or two people.

Back home we--this is something that I haven't seen here--like I was waiting last year for the elections for the
new president. I was looking forward to people sitting down and having debates and talking about it. Nobody said anything about it. I sat in the cafeteria and tried to get people to talk--who are you going to vote for and why? Nobody wants to talk about it. Nobody wants to discuss things here. Why? "Because we have different ideas--We can't talk about it--I think this--This is my point of view--Let's just forget it." People don't want to talk. When we sit down, Arabs, you know, back in Libya, we talk about politics, we go out fighting about the subject, but we still love each other, you know.

What I'm saying, I saw that some people were getting mad or upset because of the fact of what happened last time (not yesterday) but the session before. And yesterday, more people were getting upset. I don't think there is anything wrong with discussing religion and discussing our differences with each other.

American
Well, I think that was beautifully stated. And I think there is a difference between exploring and understanding one another and knocking down and I think some of the things that were said were said to knock down what we believe in. I think there is a distinct difference between the two. If you're talking about knocking something down, then you can't talk intellectually or rationally, or logically. I think on that plane, we can converse very well.

Libyan
But you are always going to face people who will try to knock you down and knock your beliefs down. If you believe strongly enough in your religion, I don't think anyone will be able to knock you down even if they intend to.

American
No, but I do think that in order to--because in the Catholic religion, there are things that I have stated before that we accept on faith. Don't ask me why, please. I could very well have grown up a Protestant, or a pagan or anything--I just happen to be a Catholic. I believe in everything I have been taught. I really believe that and I think I'm old enough to have mulled it over in my mind several times. So I do believe. There are many things I can't explain and in order to have them explained correctly--that's why I think we need someone who's trained in the field of theology--to explain any conflicts that would leave doubt in your mind about something we have not explained correctly.
Before concluding the discussion of the fallen-away Catholic practicum session, excerpts from the journals of four other audience Catholics and the panelists need to be discussed. One audience Catholic (American) stated most of the thoughts that have already been expressed. She also thought the discussion had debate qualities. To her, the panelists were "non-Catholics."

I felt like the non-Catholics were trying to convince the Catholics what beliefs were wrong. I think it turned into a competition. They told us everything they did not believe rather than what they do believe.

The teacher responded,

I did not feel they were trying to convince other Catholics what beliefs were wrong. As I interpreted it (as someone outside any strong religious convictions), they were trying to explain doubts they have, experiences they have had and their perceptions about the religion which make it impossible for them to practice and not feel hypocritical.

The student did state that some of the panelists' questions made her think of how she thought of her own beliefs. She went on to say what others said; some of their remarks were "untrue" and the panelists were either "mislead" or "did not understand what they did not believe in." The teacher responded,

Perceptions are never untrue. Their perceptions about Catholicism have as much truth or validity for them as yours do for you.

Another Catholic said she didn't think she found the discussion of the other Christians' beliefs as offensive as the other Catholics did because of her Protestant background. In regard to the presentation of their beliefs she said,
It is true what [the Venezuelan panel leader] said about their being Catholics who were nonpracticing or who questioned the Catholic faith that the only way they could present their beliefs was the way they did. Also, I tried to keep in mind what you had said about getting defensive about questions or statements which weren’t meant to be attacks and thus creating a wall which makes communication difficult or impossible. The only thing which bothered me was [the Virgin Islander] calling the statues and images in the Church idols. What she should have said was, "I think the statues are idols," not they are.

The research team in Chapter IV described some of the Virgin Islander's remarks as "alienating the other" and her unequivocally equating statues with idols as "ineffective communication."

The American male panelist in the Catholic session (communications major) analyzed the fallen-away Catholic session in his journal after he had viewed the videotape. The following excerpts from his long and detailed entry reflect the correlation between his analysis and that of the research team.

With regard to last week's panel and its outcome, it seems that during the early stages, this session was more structured and everyone involved paid strict attention to the speakers as they conveyed their concepts and messages to the group.

The research team discussed how the early structure of the session provided a context for later discussion and aided understanding in contrast to the previous week's Catholic session.

[the male Venezuelan] was, I would say, the panel's discussion leader. His opening remarks were formal and overall cautious...His intonation and diction used during his opening remarks were quiet, evenly paced at a slow beat, and his voice carried an evenly tempered non-threatening tone...He became a "hub" or ordering force to help keep the discussion on the right track.
Moreover, as his modes of verbal and nonverbal expression were constant throughout the period, he was able to maintain the order needed to keep the discussion flowing.

The research team described the Venezuelan as tacitly acknowledging he was fulfilling the role of the panel leader. They also described the control maintained by the leader and the control evident on the part of participants during the session as reflecting their greater sensitivity to the potential for hostility.

In regard to the Virgin Islander the student said,

Her style and use of both nonverbal and verbal aspects of communication seemed to convey not formality and caution but one of non-caring and daring. (Through her interaction with myself and others throughout the group, I have the impression that she really didn't care if she offended people in the audience with her views—it's almost as if she welcomed confrontation and controversy.)

The research team described her as the person who by far assumed the most adversarial posture of any speaker and devoted a section to a description of the comments she made which those devoted to the religion would probably have found offensive. In further reflections on the Virgin Islander, he said,

I believe that many members of the audience—especially Catholics, felt threatened or shocked by her interaction with the group. [the American the research team described as trying hard to cover her defensiveness] expressed through nonverbal aspects of gestures, inward facial expression, body movements and eye contact with persons next to her her reaction to ____'s viewpoint. Consequently, her [American] authoritative verbal tones, diction, and choice of words in questions expressed the conflicts of her own viewpoint with that of ____.

The American woman mentioned above has already been described extensively in the discussion of this session.
Everyone must be aroused by the indication of controversy. As [Virgin Islander] and [American described above] interacted, and as others with similar points of view came to challenge 's [Virgin Islander], it seems that the group as a whole started to pay even closer attention to the discussion. Consequently, many persons sat up in their chairs and started to look around and interact with others throughout the whole group. In some brief instances, the panel discussion turned into a group discussion.

The research team also described the participants as non-verbally alert and paying attention to the nature of the interaction by stretching around someone or sitting up to see over someone blocking the view of the speaker.

This student, another American Catholic audience member and a fallen-away American Catholic panelist all stated they would prefer to discuss religion on a one-to-one or small group basis. The researcher's analysis of this phenomenon will be discussed after the remaining student reflections on the fallen-away Catholic session are related. This student talked about staying after the practicum for the hour of class in which the ESL students met and continuing the discussion with them.

I found this more intimate form of cross-cultural interaction quite stimulating with regard to the class' somewhat "tense" discussion. I really enjoyed talking to a smaller group and found that I could easily explain and ask questions of others that would seem puzzling or somewhat threatening to individuals if they were asked in a group situation. Suddenly, the tense formality found with the total discussion was lifted. This "intimacy" supplied a closer, casual, less threatening, and more open atmosphere in the smaller group than in the larger one.

It's crazy--but I think people can really say what they feel in a small group, but put that same person in a group panel and almost the total opposite happens. Consequently, if this type of exercise is to be enacted in future versions of this class, I would suggest that
the possibilities of the smaller discussion group should be explored.

The last audience member which will be quoted in regard to Session 7 is the American Catholic female who in addition to the communications major focused a great deal during the semester on the process of communication. She wrote two entries, one pertaining to the practicum session itself and one after the CCC students' discussion of it. Her comments on the practicum session summarize those of the majority of the Catholics in the audience. The panelists to her were once Catholic but because they weren't practicing, they were now "Protestants." She, like others, would prefer to take the withdrawal route. She openly states she does not want to discuss religion anymore; she says she just wants to forget it. The day following this student's entry, the Libyan in class described Americans as ultimately saying, "Let's just forget it," when they are involved in communication with people who have conflicting ideas. She states she doesn't want to discuss religion in such a large group and on videotape. This is the student who had said in regard to the previous Catholic session she could easily get stuck at defending her own defensiveness and using it as an excuse for withdrawing from any further communication. She had also said after the same session that she found she wasn't defensive in communicating on a one-to-one basis with the Saudi Muslim when the practicum was over.

In this entry she attempts to appear open to diverse viewpoints by stating she tried to let down her defenses and
understand what the panelists were saying. After the previous session she had said it was necessary to let down the defenses and really listen to the other person. Although she acknowledged the fallen-away Catholic panel's presentation was in some ways harder to give because they were not united, she was of the opinion, like others, that the panel should have discussed what their religion was, not what they would like it to be or what they agreed or disagreed with. She, like others, in other words, did not see that the panelists' perceptions reflected what the religion in good part was to them.

The practicum today was a little bit better for me. I tried to let down my defenses more. I tried to really understand what the Protestants were saying. I thought it was really even more difficult for that group, because as mentioned, they themselves were not united. They, many of them, were not one religion themselves and in fact were once Catholic. In that respect I thought it made their presentation even more difficult to give.

I tend to feel that I just want to forget it. I don't even want to discuss religion again. I feel it's just been going around and around in circles and although we can learn from such conversations, they're giving me a headache.

Sometimes I feel, too, that we get stuck on one idea or one practice of Catholicism that is not necessarily a point that I personally would spend so much time and energy worrying about. For instance, the idol stuff is all how one perceives it to be. Neither the Protestants nor the Catholics believe that that statue is God. I can't help but to believe we were arguing the same point. I sincerely see 's [the Virgin Islander] point, but I don't think that it was worth discussing in so much depth because that's not what Catholicism teaches about statues. If the purpose was to discuss our own individual beliefs and disbeliefs—then OK. But if we are to learn about religions from these sessions, we have got to give to others what our religion is and not what we would like it to be or not what we agree or disagree with.
I'm just surprised as to how much my feelings have changed. In a way, I feel like I am giving up or copping out. I don't want to discuss religion anymore in such a large group on videotape, etc.

One thing unrelated to our discussion that I noticed myself feeling was that I truly felt very at ease today being in the room of almost all foreign students. I know I have the tendency to feel out of place or like the foreigner myself and I've come to grow out of that feeling more and more as I'm placed in the situation of being among foreign students more and more.

During the CCC classroom discussion of the fallen-away Catholic session, this student contributed nothing. She chose withdrawal, she states at the end of the entry about to be quoted, because she didn't want to admit or give the impression to the class that she was closed-minded. She then goes on to describe feeling closed-minded as "totally inside my religion and absorbed by what I believed." In the Catholic session, she had described herself as "totally wrapped up in me, in my culture, in my own frame of reference, in my beliefs." She states very clearly she felt "uncomfortable" with disharmony, conflicting values, challenges, and the tension in the practicum. The other American Catholics who were most upset with the fallen-away Catholic panelists suggested having readings on different religions instead of discussing them so as to be better informed; they suggested asking "the proper theological authorities" to speak about the issues which created the conflicts; and they talked about keeping the discussions "intellectual, logical and rational." This student had more insight than they did into her inability to deal with her feelings in group situations. She stated she could learn "intellectual
things about someone or someone's religion and not know how they feel." She attributes her discomfort to her own "inexperienced in being in a conflicting situation that involves feelings with so many people." She states she would prefer to discuss religion on a one-to-one basis.

In her entries on the Catholic session she had said she didn't step out of what she believed long enough to see why the Muslims asked the questions they did. She also said she spoke but didn't really communicate. These comments were compared earlier in this chapter to the male Catholic communications major panelist who said he knew what it was to talk, talk, talk, but not communicate with people who didn't share his cultural views. Both their comments were discussed as related to the research team's analysis of the Catholic session in which the panelists worked only out of their own systems of meaning in explaining Catholicism and did not seek elements in the Muslims' systems of meaning on which to try to base their explanations. This student in the entry about to be quoted indicates that she is aware that is what she did. Her reflections on the necessity of not responding to the culturally different other's questions totally out of one's own system of meaning lead her to discussing the need for reciprocity in this aspect of communication.

It is at this point in the curriculum that she and the Libyan both began to discuss the importance of reciprocity; he, the importance of reciprocal questioning which forces
the other to explain aspects of his/her own culture never thought about before; she, the importance of reciprocal responding to the other's questions not totally out of one's own cultural beliefs but taking the other's into consideration in the response. The research team in the Muslim session (8) discussed the fact the Muslims based their explanations of Islam on the Christian's systems of meaning in contrast to the Catholics' in Session 6 who operated totally out of their own.

The primary researcher in Chapter V in drawing conclusions based on the research team's analysis of the primary data discussed the reciprocal requirements for cross-cultural understanding: viz., participating in cultural self-disclosure (serving as cultural spokespersons by contributing to the discussion from one's own cultural perceptsives or systems of meaning embedded therein); asking others to articulate their perspectives; requesting verification and clarification of the other's perspectives; verifying and clarifying the other's interpretations of one's own perceptsives; requesting verification and clarification of one's own interpretation of the other's perspectives; in short, reciprocal active involvement in communication in the form of cultural self-disclosure and verification and clarification which result in the development of intercultural intersubjectivity. Intercultural intersubjectivity was defined in Chapter V as reciprocal involvement with and consciousness of the other as the cultural other in face-to-face interaction. It is the basis
of cross-cultural understanding because it leads to subjects gradually taking up the perspectives of each other until they begin to seek each other's understanding of their own perspectives through the other's systems of meaning. It is then that openness to diversity or openness to the other's ways of interpreting the world begins because the tight grasp on one's own systems of meaning as the basis for interpretation of the other's perspectives is relaxed.

The student about to be quoted (a senior who had had virtually no previous interaction with international students), articulated that responding to the Muslims' questions totally out of her own Catholic systems of meaning led her to become more and more defensive, feel totally inside her religion and absorbed by what she believed, in general, to feel closed-minded. Thus she, the American male Catholic communications major, and the Libyan Muslim described lack of openness to diversity or closed-mindedness as "totally wrapped up in," "totally inside of and absorbed by," "embedded in," and "never coming out of" themselves or their own cultural beliefs and things. Openness to cultural diversity is thus a coming out of one's own culture which allows one to see it. It is marked initially by feelings of ambiguity, the fear of giving up or losing one's own culture, and the need to defend it. It gradually comes to be marked by second thoughts about what one has always believed as true; a wait-a-minute attitude before judging others who are culturally different; a desire to understand more of the background of
those people; an acceptance of differences as OK; an awareness of others and the self; the feeling of maturing; and a desire to share what one knows about other cultures with others in order to create openness to diversity in them. It is these last aspects that will conclude the analysis of the secondary data, but now, the entry of the American Catholic female who reflected on the process of communicating cross-culturally after the CCC discussion of the fallen-away Catholic session:

I don't know what I'm feeling right now. I feel uncomfortable. I wasn't so excited about our practicum session. I felt uncomfortable with the disharmony, with conflicting values, with challenges. See, somehow I'm getting caught up between what I think about this whole religion panel thing and how I feel.

Normally, in my other classes I, as a person, would welcome such conflicting attitudes and turn them into a real learning experience like they could be. But this is different. It's not a good learning experience for me (at least I don't think so) by having the entire group in kind of a debate like set up. I can learn intellectual things about someone or someone's religion and not know how they feel. Maybe it's because of my inexperience in being in a conflicting situation that involves feelings with so many people.

I can debate nuclear warfare; I can debate politics, etc. But somehow I see religion and faith as not apart from a person himself. Therefore, when I discuss religion or faith, I need for a sense of sensitivity and awareness of the other person to be there. What I'm thinking is, perhaps, I would have been able to truly try to step back from my own belief to look at someone else's on a one to one basis or in a more personal, informal atmosphere. Even then I know it still would be difficult for me to do because of how integral faith and God are to my life.

With each thought someone gives me about their own religion I have to not think of it in terms of, "Well, I believe..." I can't even keep in mind what I do believe because then I'm still focusing on me. If I do that, then I can't even try to understand what they are saying. Do you know what I mean? And I did that at the sessions. I was answering their questions from my religion. Once I started to do that, I felt as if there
were some kind of snowballing effect taking place inside me (especially during the first practicum). I kept getting more and more defensive because of the way I was thinking about my personal beliefs and not theirs. Guess that goes back to being able to step outside one's own culture, religion, or whatever. As I wrote before, I've found one area, religion (and I'm sure there's going to be others) where I personally find that very difficult to do.

I tried to be a little more open the second practicum, but even then I noticed that I had to keep in mind where the other person might be coming from. Seems like if we really were to communicate, both persons have to do that. It can't be one-sided. I felt ganged up upon. I felt overwhelmed by trying to step back from my beliefs into those expressed beliefs of everyone else in the class. That's impossible to do. That's why I felt frustrated and recognized that I would much prefer a one to one conversation with a person from a different religion where this kind of communicating and "stepping back" is possible. Does that make sense?

I feel a little naive in not feeling comfortable with the tension that existed in the practicum. Perhaps, I should be used to conflicting ideas and values by now but when I feel something so deeply and it's within me as a person I can't treat that as a debate or a throwing out of new ideas for a learning experience. Course, I've just seen that what I have considered not to be a learning experience has driven me to write nearly three pages of reflective feelings and thoughts. But that's beside the point!

I didn't want to admit in class how I felt today. I didn't want to give the impression of myself that I am closed-minded. But, I felt closed-minded. I felt totally inside my religion and absorbed by what I believed. When I was faced with these differences, I couldn't tell why they had strengthened my belief at that moment. Was it because that is how we really do see what is most important to us? Or was it because I wasn't really trying to see otherwise? I wasn't trying to see otherwise because of how much it is a part of my life. I feel like I'm getting nowhere in these thoughts. I feel lots of ambiguity and I'm trying to put all that into words.

Maybe it's just the topic of religion. In a way I thought it was to your advantage, Sue, to not be so personally convicted to a religion where you can accept all people's ideas without the feelings I seem to be experiencing. I have no conclusion right now. I still feel uncomfortable.
Three fallen-away Catholic panelists wrote entries on the session. They expressed the same idea that the panelist from the Virgin Islands expressed in the CCC discussion about the session the day following it. They did not feel that the audience Catholics had the right to tell them they were wrong because they had different perceptions about Catholicism than the practicing Catholics did. The Venezuelan panel leader devoted most of his entry to the need for the Church to examine "the products of its own imperfection." He began the entry, however, by stating that at least the non-practicing Catholics on the panel were criticizing their own religion (implicit in his underlining the word "their" is the thought that it is better to criticize what you know and are familiar with than that which you know little or nothing about). He said,

Yes, maybe in some way people in the non-practicing Catholic group were criticizing what the Church does. They are, at any rate, Catholics who were protesting what their Church says because to them everything is not clear or literally things are going wrong with their religion.

The Panamanian panelist wrote the entry that follows. She very clearly states in her last paragraph that it is not right to tell a person from another culture that their perceptions are wrong when one does not understand the cultural context which shapes the perceptions.

I woke up this morning thinking that I prefer to do not said nothing about my believes or what bother me about Catholicism, but after I talked to [the panel leader] and [American female panelist] I decided to talked. After I finished saying what I had to, I was feeling terrible, I asked God for his forgiveness but I can not change my mind, that is what I felt and
nobody will change my mind, that is what I see is happening in my country, that is what the priest told my brother, feelings, Sue, that had became to growth and growth through the years. I know there are good priest but those that had to cross my way were not good priest.

After all of us finished what we discussed I thought that we were in the "wolf mouth," we were the bad and they are the goods, I felt all those looks that tell me I was wrong!! When any of them have the courage to be on my place and live for a while all those experiences I had lived before.

Then came to me another negative point about Catholicism, they are Catholic and the same Catholics I knew before that live their life and do not see what is wrong, that is important to go to the Church every Sunday and take the communion and that's all.

I do not know Sue if with this you understand me. Sue I really do not want to go to class tomorrow. I feel bad, I do not feel happy with my classmates, I know they are not the right persons to tell me I am wrong. They need to go to my country, to Central America to see what the Church had been done since the discovery of America, this is not a new problem is old since the Spaniards came. I do not what more to said to you about this only one thing I am hurt.

After the CCC students discussed the fallen-away Catholic session, this same student wrote that for the first time she felt she had to speak in class. The researcher's field notes quoted previously indicate she let the Catholics know she did not appreciate their implying she was wrong, and she discussed the Church's involvement in El Salvador and Panama.

I feel a little bit better, not enough, but better, at least we were more sincere with other. After all this I do not want to talked about religion. Everything that everybody said was right, each of us has his own opinions and view of the world. As a teacher you are doing the best to gather the class.

For the first time I said something in the class, I had to said, I was nervous I don't like to speak in class, I never do even if know the answer, but today I feel I have to say something. I forgot one thing but, after all that was not important. I do not want
to talk any more. One thing no body will take way from me is my faith in God and his teaching in the bible and my principles, I doing every thing he asked, be good with my neighbor, help the ills, I believe in life after death.

An American fallen-away Catholic panelist wrote the following entry. She, like the research team, saw the American Catholic female's attempt to shift the discussion to one focusing on the religions of the two Protestants on the panel, as "missing the point" of what the panel had stated they were about. Like the other Americans, she says she does not like to discuss religion because it is a sensitive and personal topic. She implies that she did not think it was right for the practicing Catholics to criticize the panelists for stating their religious reservations and beliefs; she does this by asking herself what would give her the right to tell someone else they should do things her way because she thought hers was better than theirs. She states that discussing religion on a one-to-one basis would allow people to discuss "intellectually" and enable people "to respect and understand the other's views." In this respect, she of course is in agreement with the American practicing Catholics. In regard to the fallen-away Catholic presentation in which she was a panelist, she said,

Today in the practicum session the group I was in gave their presentation on why we are either Protestant or non-practicing Catholics. I think people were bored but I'm not sure why. Nobody really had any interest until some references were made about the Catholic Church that put it down in a way. It was not intentional to put down their religion, we were just trying to tell our own personal experiences about why we disagree with many of the practices or ideas. Also, someone (I think ____),
[The American described by the research team as trying to cover defensiveness and change the topic to what those who were practicing a religion believed] started to say that we were away from the point—that we should have told more about certain Protestant religions. Well, it was stated in the beginning of our presentation that we weren't doing that but telling why we do not believe in the church as an institution or in Catholicism. I think they missed the point.

As a rule I do not like to talk too much about religion because it is a very touchy subject and many people are sensitive about it. I feel that it is something personal and it should not be forced on anyone else by trying to get them to see the faults of their religion. Every religion has its faults. Every person has a right to believe and follow the practices of a certain religion even if someone else does find fault with it. The very least that we can do as civilized human beings is to try to understand other religions—not to criticize or condemn them or state that your religion is better than his. We should respect each others rights to his own beliefs. Catholicism may be "great" for someone else but it is not great for me. What would give me the right to tell someone else that they should do it my way?

I don't think that the way the discussion is set up is beneficial to this lesson in religion. What I mean is that there is an audience and a panel. (This is hard to explain what I mean.) It is almost like the audience is being lectured about whatever the panel is representing like that is what is true. This is why the second hour the ESL class always goes better because it is informal—there is not an audience being "preached" to. Everyone can discuss the subject on a one-to-one basis and discuss it intellectually if I may. In a one-to-one situation one can respect and understand the others views, but when one group is telling another group what the so-called facts are there is no feeling of respect for these beliefs.

Curriculum Suggestions

In Chapter V the researcher gave extensive curriculum suggestions for conducting panel discussions on religion in cross-cultural communication courses which have students from many cultures enrolled in them. Evidence is present in the analysis of the secondary data pertaining to the first two practicum sessions on religion (Catholic and fallen-away
Catholic, Sessions 6 and 7) that American students would prefer one-on-one or small group discussions of religion. The researcher at the time she was a participant in the curriculum was aware that if the panel discussions on religion had not taken place, Americans who had little previous interaction with students culturally different than themselves might never have come to realize that cross-cultural communication is not always without conflict. However, as the teacher, she had serious doubts as to whether she would ever use the panel format for the discussion of religion in the future. Her thinking was that perhaps small group discussions would be better.

In light of the analysis of the videotapes, the primary data source, she decided that the panel/whole-class discussion format she suggested in Chapter V would provide for greater conceptual clarity in regard to the cultural/religious content than the small group format. The analysis of the secondary data lends support to rather than evidence against that decision. The secondary data indicates that the one-on-one, first, and small group format, second, are the ones Americans prefer for the following reasons: (1) they are the formats in which Americans typically discuss "personal" subjects which the data indicates they very much consider religion to be; (2) they are the formats in which Americans are more comfortable in dealing with and expressing their feelings; and (3) they are the formats which are less likely to result in defensiveness and conflict when cultural
differences are probed probably because one's answers or reactions to the probing are not publicly viewed by as many people.

The secondary data shows that the Americans in this curriculum would have liked to withdraw from communicating about religion during the first two panel discussions. Indeed, a typically vocal student did withdraw. They would have liked to withdraw because: the subject was too personal; it involved their feelings and revealing those in a large group was difficult and a new experience for them; because the discussions involved their feelings, they couldn't keep them "informative, intellectual, rational and logical" which is the level on which they thought the discussions should be kept; and they were extraordinarily upset with "the conflict" that resulted when others with different beliefs than theirs asked them why about their own.

If openness to diversity is created by bringing people out of their own cultural things, Americans need to be brought out of their typical and comfortable ways of communicating. The same, of course, is true for the members of the other cultures present in the curriculum. Cross-cultural communication curriculum must therefore include a variety of subjects which are typically discussed or appropriate to discuss in some cultures and not in others so that all the students experience communicating about subjects they are not used to discussing. It must also include a variety of written and oral modes of communication as suggested in the early part
of this chapter in the section entitled, "Keeping a Journal," and as is again recommended here. Students should also have the opportunity to experience largely silent modes of communication (such as participation in the tea ceremony conducted by the Japanese student) in order for those from highly verbal cultures to experience in part the different cultural essence of communication with a minimum of words.

**Openness in Communicating and Openness to Diversity: The Analysis Continued**

After the CCC students classroom discussion of the fallen-away Catholic session (Session 7), the instructor recorded in her field notes that she thought a turning point had been reached, that the discussions of religion were not counterproductive to the development of cross-cultural understanding. This turning point meshes in time with the students' assessment that from the first two practicums on religion, they moved to "really trying to understand each other." It also coincides with the research team's analysis that in Sessions 8 and 9 participants displayed decreasing defensiveness, increasing openness to cultural diversity, increasing sensitivity to the requirements for understanding, and a gradual development of the skills necessary to achieve it.

The following journal excerpts reflect the students' perceptions that they began to show genuine and increasing concern for understanding with the Muslims' presentation. The entries also show that participants began to be able to recognize those who were open to culturally diverse
viewpoints and those who were not. They indicate the participants' agreement with the research team's analysis of Session 8 that the Muslims were well prepared and did a good job of explaining Islam. The research team attributed the chief difficulty in understanding the Asian religions (Session 9) to the panelists' language problems; the participants did likewise.

The Panamanian student reflected on the Muslims' presentation.

Today's practicum was very interesting, the Muslims explain very well their religion. And the most important thing was we understand and we accept what they explain even if for us was wrong or we did not believe but I think each of us went there with only one point of to try to understand what their believes are, and that is very important. [UAE ESL student who misunderstood the question about homosexuality] was the only one who was in guard with the things we ask.

One thing that I will never understand is the way women behave in that religion, maybe they accept their behave because they never have experiment other things, the same thing happen to us we cannot accept this because we have other custom. I learn things I did not know before, one of them was that they believe in Jesus as a Prophet and that in the end of the Last Judgement he will come and stand with the Muslims because it was the religion he preached.

Her entry primarily indicates her awareness that reciprocal acceptance of the other's beliefs and customs as valid for the other is necessary if understanding is to occur. The research team at the end of their analysis of the Muslim session hypothesized that acceptance of the other's perspectives as valid for him/her is a stage that occurs in the development of cross-cultural understanding. They hypothesized it follows a stage in which awareness develops that other
cultural perspectives do indeed exist and that it is therefore necessary in communication to relate one's own perspectives to those of the other.

The following week this same student reflected on the religious discussions as a whole. She said she had come to realize through them that in order to understand different religious beliefs we have to "focus ourselves in that other religion." Her comment is similar to the American woman quoted earlier who said, "With each thought someone gives me about their own religion I have to not think of it in terms of, 'Well, I believe...'. I can't even keep in mind what I do believe because then I'm still focusing on me. If I do that, then I can't even try to understand what they are saying." This student indicates her awareness that it is important to accept the other's beliefs as important to him/her and realize we cannot change the other person.

One thing I learn in these discussions that we have to listen others believe, that we first have to focus ourselves in that other religion and try to understand that it is important, we cannot change other person believe, we have to accept that Muslim believe in Mohammad as we the Catholic believes in Jesus Christ.

After the Muslims' presentation, an American student reflected on what she described as a more intimate discussion in the CCC class than had ever occurred before. In the same entry she talked about the Muslims' presentation. Her thoughts on the CCC class discussion indicate that she sensed people "were really trying to step back a bit" from their own cultural influences and find out about each other. This agrees with the Libyan who said in an interview that the
Deercreek trip should have been held near the end of the semester when people were ready to try to understand one another. She stated,

Today's class was different for some reason...The tone of our discussion was different in that it felt like a more intimate discussion with those who contributed. I perceived it as if we were all somewhat really trying to step back a bit from our own cultural influences and to find out about another's. I saw this in [American male] question to [the Libyan] asking him about how he personally felt about how the Americans' treatment of the war in Iran affects him. Then, with [American female] too, I know she really wanted to know about the women's movement (if any) in [the Libyan] country because I know her. Everyone's tone of voice seemed to facilitate a more intimate kind of discussion today. Moreso I think than we have reached before in this class.

Anyway, about the practicum on religion...I did notice that the discussion wasn't as heated anymore. People get riled up, but the tension is not as bad as in the first practicum. I personally did not get defensive... That was because I just accepted on an informational level what was being presented to me such as Mohammed being a great big prophet. He's not in my religion, but I tried to see how important he verily is to the Muslims. In looking back over the practicums, I am glad we did them. I did learn from then, content as well as communicative styles, even those times I thought I hadn't learned anything.

This is the same student who had said in her previous entry that she could learn intellectual things about someone's religion and not know how they felt. She had expressed her own discomfort with conflict and her inexperience in being engaged in discussions that involved feelings with so many people.

Her statement that she accepted what was being presented about the Muslims' beliefs on an informational level and was therefore not defensive is important. It was probably easier for her to do that because the Catholic
religion, her own, was not the subject of discussion. Therefore, she did not have to defend her beliefs. Accepting on an information level, however, is something that is discussed by other students also. The last two sessions were viewed as "informative" by the audience participants, primarily because they did not know very much about Islam and knew next to nothing about the Asian religions. The ability to accept others' beliefs even on an informational level, however, undoubtedly represents a movement toward openness to cultural diversity. To not think of others' beliefs as wrong, untrue, unsubstantiated, or inferior but to see them as important to the people who hold them represents a point beyond embeddedness in one's own culture. Both this student and the one quoted previously had come to see that the beliefs of the others were important for them, even though they were not right for themselves. They had also come to see that acceptance of their importance to the others was a requisite for understanding--that the task beyond that acceptance was to find out how they were important.

After the discussion on Buddhism, Shintoism and Hinduism, this same student wrote,

The practicum session has just ended and I'd like to comment on it while I'm still feeling this way. I'm very curious right now. I am extremely interested in what the Hindu religion and Buddhism are all about. I have a trillion questions in my mind about reincarnation, Buddha himself, why Japanese do not have religion, etc. I found the discussion very fascinating and for the most part informative. I had trouble understanding the English at times, but that always happens. It made me want to stop and look up a few things on the Buddhist religion, but it's more fun to talk with someone, a real person, who can tell you about the religion than to read about it from a book.
Sometimes I wonder how they can possibly believe in reincarnation--then I wonder why I don't. I had a shaky feeling in the practicum today. I was trying to decide whose religion is right. I know that sounds silly, but what if reincarnation is true. What if Buddha is the ultimate example of good for the rest of us?

Momentarily, I started to think things like I felt sorry for them in a way. That's kind of terrible. Why should I feel sorry for them--it is their religion that is semi-connected with their culture. Had I been born in India I might be Hindu. I probably would be Hindu. If God gives life and if He gives life to Indians and the religion of Indians is Hindu, then God has got to be a part of Hinduism in some way. At least from the way I'm viewing the whole thing.

I've gone through doubts and periods of weak faith, and I still do consistently, but those doubts are still based on my faith, on my religion. I never stopped to question my religion in terms of another completely totally different belief before. What if reincarnation is possible? I don't know if ever I'll actually believe it in my head, but it gives me something other to think about.

Something other to think about than one's own cultural things causes one to reflect upon one's own. As defensiveness in regard to one's own things gradually subsides, awareness of the relative nature of cultural truth emerges.

Excerpts from two other journal entries of this senior student who had had no previous interaction with international students prior to the course round out the portrait of her gradual development of openness to cultural diversity. She is the student who was able to articulate that responding to the Muslims' questions out of her own religious systems of meaning had caused her to become more and more defensive and feel totally inside and absorbed by what she believed in the Catholic session. After listening to the Cuban professor whose lectures to the cross-cultural communication class came
after the panel discussion on the Asian religions, she again indicated her awareness that one must develop the other's systems of meaning on which to base explanations of one's own culture. She commented on the professor,

I noticed that with everything he said happens to Americans, he always said why do what we do. He commented on how many people got heart attacks in this country [in comparison to Latin cultures], but went on to view that phenomena in light of our (the American) culture. He said Americans are driven for success, to be perfectionists, very devoted to their fields, etc. He did not use his own Latin American culture to explain the reasons behind the heart attacks.

After discussing what she had learned from the professor's lectures, she concluded,

We really are different. Sometimes, I think we are all the same. Sometimes I'd like to think that we're more the same than different. That thought gives me a good feeling. We're not the same in all things. In fact, many ways, the time thing being just one, is an example [of how we are different].

The following week in the next to the last journal entry of the semester, she reflected on the documentary movie, "Refugee Road." She discussed the need to recognize basic cultural differences and interpret things within their own cultural context.

I picked out so many things that were so American...At present, the way our society is, we want all of these people from other cultures to adopt our way of life. It almost seemed as if we treat them like little children.

I feel as if I hardly have any knowledge of what other countries are really like (aside from intellectual stuff). The person makes up a country and I really don't know what it would be like to be a Cambodian refugee...I feel like this course should just be beginning now. I keep changing the way I see things. In the beginning, I
remember sitting in the practicum thinking how really exciting it is for all of us; all together to be in here talking, communicating, etc. Like one big happy family or something. It's not like that. There are differences that really do exist deep down and it's only when we see those; can recognize them; can step back from our own culture and interpret things from within their own context, can we truly understand their meaning. I wish I knew more. I wish I knew what it must be like to be thrown into another culture and told to survive.

It really struck me when I saw that little girl in school learning the Pledge of Allegiance, singing Rudolph, being in the Christmas play. Normally I would have thought, "Oh, how cute," that here these children are just like the rest of the little children. They're not. Maybe they don't want to be. But do refugees even have a choice?...I'm feeling now that it's not really right to force these people into our culture...If we really were "the land of opportunities" wouldn't we need to let refugees and all from other countries have their opportunity to live in their culture here?

I was overwhelmed by the movie today. I felt American, in that I could really see how that lady would want to help, to try to get that family "to fit in" to be able to be a part of America, yet I could see the traumatic change of their entire way of living for that family and what a shock that really would be.

Another student, an American who had had fairly extensive previous involvement with both Latin and Arab students, wrote that she found the practicum session on Islam interesting and informative even though she knew many things about the religion before the practicum. The research team described some audience participants as attempting to confirm their own preconceived notions about Islam. This student was aware of this phenomenon in that she discussed the audience's perceptions that Muslim women were discriminated against. She was not pleased that people in the audience laughed at some of the things the Muslims said. She stated she found one of the CCC student's lack of openness to diversity shocking.
I understood their [the Muslims'] reasoning for men and women marrying out of their faith, but I have the feeling that many people in the audience did not. I can also see that their views on women were true according to my experience but many people still thought that the Muslims had a high degree of discrimination toward women. From my point of view, I think that women are held in high regard and respect by Muslim men either in religion or in social life, more so than women in Western civilization.

I was also angered by what I saw in the audience while the group was presenting their views. Some people were actually laughing at what they heard as if they refused to believe anything about Islam. People from both classes were guilty of this. Exactly what is the purpose of our meeting together? I thought we were all to learn from each other about the various cultures and try to understand why some cultures do certain things; not to take the attitude that someone's beliefs are stupid.

Another shock I got came right after I left the practicum session and was walking out of the library with one of the men in our class whom I had thought was fairly open-minded and intelligent. He made the statement that he thought that their religion is not true and that they have no facts or data to back up their ideas or beliefs. I told him that that is the wrong attitude to take and that we can't say that what someone believes in as a religion is not true.

In an interview subsequent to this entry, the researcher asked the student if the person she was referring to was the Venezuelan male. She confirmed that it was. The student talked briefly in the interview about the value of the religious discussions as a whole. Like the student quoted previously, she thought people learned during the sessions to take what was presented on an information level.

I think they were valuable because there has to be some sort of conflict; the conflict is good. It helps you see what can happen in certain situations and it did help us to learn maybe if not something about religion a little bit about each other...Another valuable thing about the sessions we had is that I think we learned to sit there, and pick out information and listen to it without taking it as an attack.
The Venezuelan male whom the American student found to be lacking in openness to the Muslims' beliefs wrote the following about the Muslims' presentation,

The Arabs session was quite OK. I could not stayed [during the ESL class which followed] to make questions, but I was not so impressed anyway. These guys were explaining things as if they were expected the "audience" to respond in an impolite way, or as if they were expecting an offensive question from us listeners.

The American male communications major also became aware in the Muslim presentation who was open to culturally diverse views and who wasn't. His entry very clearly is in agreement with the research team that the Muslims established a base of commonality with the audience Christians and through that base explained how Islam was different.

It seems as though the Muslims really showed the rest of us just how to run a proper panel discussion... Through presenting similarities as a basic foundation of commonality between cultures, the Muslim group was able to meet "halfway" with the other cultural-religious groups present. Consequently, as this transcendence of basic cultural biases was subliminally eliminated, this panel was able to successfully explain their differences in faith that makes Islam unique. This panel discussion was the most rewarding--it established a base of commonality for cultural interaction, plus it did not attack or criticize the deep-seated beliefs of the other religio-cultural groups present.

Since there was little material to start another theological debate, through verbal and nonverbal aspects of conversation, I could finally see those who might say that they openly accept the beliefs of others--but though their questioning, facial expressions during the panel discussion, and later comments to myself, I could see who truly had cultural biases and also those who didn't.

I was a little surprised about some persons almost hypocritical view of the whole situation. It proves that a person can profess till he/she is blue in the face about their apparent intercultural view, but their use of verbal and nonverbal modes of communication reveal their actual feelings about the whole manner of
interacting with others whose basic religious beliefs conflict with their own.

In regard to the session on the Asian religions, this student wrote,

Yesterday's practicum session concerned the final panel discussion on religion. As with the Muslim group, I found the information rewarding and enlightening. Through the past three years I have learned about the Near East and Islam through friends and students from that part of the world. However, today's material came from students from the Far East and Southeast Asia. It was the first time I have ever been involved in an organized discussion with anyone from these cultures while I've been a student at Ohio Dominican.

After reflecting on his difficulty in understanding the panel due to language problems, the student briefly discussed each of the panel members. In discussing their gradual "opening up" during the semester, he reflected on his own discomfort and lack of confidence early in the semester in communicating with those of different cultures. He concluded by saying,

Although I gained insight into Islam and Buddhism during the past two panel discussions, I guess I've learned something more important. Cross-cultural communication is more than just analyzing verbal and nonverbal cues. It's an experience in sharing commonalities and differences we hold with each other. If I've learned only one thing in this course, it is that a great intangible commonality binds all of us together.

Commonalities and differences were reflected upon in the journals of the students. The Venezuelan male wrote after the session on the Asian religions,

I had a little trouble trying to understand. There were questions to be made, like the idea of the immortality of the soul. The point I wanted to make was that I noticed a relationship between how people from the different religion sessions were coming to see each others' things in common as the sessions progressed.
The building up of a base of understanding regarding their religious commonalities and differences as the sessions progressed was discussed by the research team in Chapter IV, Sessions 6-9 and in Chapter V where curriculum suggestions were offered in regard to discussions of religion.

The Virgin Islander, who rarely wrote journal entries, reflected on the commonality between her own views on the Catholic use of images and the Muslims' beliefs about images. She also said she found the Hindu use of many images (Gods) quite amazing. The research team described her questions to the Hindu and Buddhists about the use of images as reflecting a developing awareness that other cultural perspectives do indeed exist; they noted her questions were asked in a tone reflecting intense curiosity which was in marked contrast to the disdain she had shown and the adversarial posture she had assumed in regard to the Catholic use of images. She said,

The section on the Muslim religion was quite different and interesting. They believe as I do in certain respects. for example God is a spirit and therefore we should not try to picture what he really looks like or use images to believe we are atune with him.

In regard to the discussion of Hinduism and Buddhism, she said,

The section on the Hindu and Buddhist was the section that shocked me the most. I had problems understanding what was being said but got some insight to certain things. It was quite amazing to know that the Hindus have many, many Gods. I didn't quite understand this theory. The Buddhist was much clearly to me. What I really couldn't see clearly was the fact that Mr. Buda has 10 lives and can be reincarnated 10 times, in an animal or a human being.
As the student's entry above reflects a concern for what she didn't understand, clear and intense concern for understanding was a chief characteristic of the interaction during the session on the Asian religions according to the research team. It accompanied a total lack of defensiveness and acceptance of the validity of the other's perspectives. Session 8 (Muslim) was marked by the Muslims' superior attention to clarification. The Saudi Muslim CCC student who rarely wrote journal entries wrote a whole week's worth after the Muslim presentation. He talked of having a lot of the students ask him many questions after the Muslims' presentation. Three of his entries were further explanations and clarifications of things discussed in the practicum which the students asked him about afterward. They were entitled, "What is Equality?," "Adultery in Islam," and "Roles of Women." The fourth entry was untitled. In it he related what he had learned in a private conversation with one of the Catholics about the function of priests in hearing confession. He compared Islam in which "the sins and charities are between the person and God" to his understanding of Catholicism. At the end of his entry he said,

I hope that I could explain to you what I meant and if you don't understand what I meant, it would be better to explain face-to-face.

Although he obviously would have preferred to explain face-to-face, he wanted others (including the teacher) to understand.

Concern for understanding was a commonality across participants during the discussions of religion. The researcher recorded in her field notes following the Asians'
presentation that the two Thais (ESL students) had stopped her to say they were afraid they had misconveyed some information about Buddhism during the time the CCC students were present in that Buddha never said anything about Heaven and Hell. After the Muslim presentation, the Saudi came to the instructor's office to tell her he did not feel some of the questions had been answered properly. The Catholics of course were overwhelmingly concerned that the information they themselves conveyed and that conveyed by the fallen-away Catholics was incomplete and/or incorrect.

An American student discussed the concern for understanding present in the practicum session on the Asian religions.

I thought that language was definitely a problem in understanding the group today. I think that it is a very interesting topic and that we should spend another practicum session on it so that all our questions can be answered. I thought that everyone was trying very hard to avoid a dispute by trying to be clear so as to be understood and that they made a real effort to understand the other point of view.

Another American student wrote of the Asians' presentation that she thought people asked questions for further information due to their lack of knowledge of the Asians religions. This phenomenon was also discussed by the research team in Chapter IV, Session 9. She said,

It was a little hard to understand but you just had to closely listen to the speakers. I do not think people questioned their belief as much as the other religions. I think many people were asking questions for further knowledge of this belief. I know I was not familiar with the Buddhists' belief and everything was new and different. What is really hard for me to understand is offering food to Buddha and for the dead. I am just not used to that custom. It would be interesting to actually be a part of the different beliefs in their ceremonies or rituals.
The American female who attempted to confirm her own preconceived notions of Islam was mentioned by the American male communications major in an interview to be one he had described in his journal as not culturally open to the Muslims' beliefs. In regard to the Muslim presentation, the American female wrote,

First and foremost, I think the group should be praised because they were well prepared...Now to the criticism...I want to talk about how I perceived [the American female convert to Islam] in the session. She, I felt, was making excuses so she did not have to address very well meant questions. I feel I worded my questions as to not offend her, as she did me when she continually tore down my religion "because I was bored" she said. Anyway, I did not want to put her in the same situation that so angered me, so I tried to ask questions in a positive manner. I asked her about bowing and she gave me some "bull shit" (only word appropriate, please excuse me) about seeing women's behinds. Well though it may be seen as rude, I find it impossible to believe that she thought that was the reason.

I feel that now women may very well be in the back as not to show their behinds but I seriously doubt if that is why the tradition started. I mentioned the term "separate but equal" and that is how I see women in the back of the church--kinda like blacks having to be in the back of the bus or using another restroom.

I simply could not understand how someone who could feel no remorse about asking theological questions she knew no one could answer could give an answer like that and avoid an entire issue. I am not saying that discrimination is wrong (in that culture it is acceptable and I don't question it), what I am saying is that it should be admitted to.

To her last comments the teacher responded,

"Separate but equal" is not discrimination to them. It is only discrimination as we see it. They can't admit to it because they don't see it and for [American female convert] to say it exists is to use her own culture as the basis of interpretation for theirs.

In the last week of the course, two weeks after the Asian practicum, this student wrote two entries on the religious
discussions as a whole. In the first, she summarized what she learned and in the second, how she felt.

I think I learned a great deal from the sessions. I realize now why people say "never discuss religion..." At the same time I realize why they are wrong from fleeing from religious discussions. It is important to know your own faith well enough to defend it and to be open enough to others' religions to understand just why they believe what they do. As you know, often times I was angered by the discussions, but I learned more about myself and my limitations from the religious discussions than from any other of the class hours or practicum sessions.

She went on to state what was quoted earlier in this chapter in "Openness to Communicating: a Beginning." She admitted having preconceived notions about Islam and said she realized later she was being a bigot. She said the lesson she learned from the sessions was not to make preconceived statements based on lack of evidence or knowledge about other cultures. She stated she hoped when she met people who were "different" she would remember the sessions and not find it so easy to criticize.

In response to her entry, the instructor told her she was glad she was able to admit she had preconceptions and that the sessions were valuable for her if she had learned that operating out of preconceptions is not responsible. She also responded to the student's statement that it was "important to know your own faith well enough to defend it and be open enough to others' religions to understand why they believe what they do." The instructor wrote,

This may be a hard balance to maintain. I'm not sure if you feel you have to defend that you can be open to
other religions. I think we want to defend when we are not secure. Maybe it would be better to say "well enough to feel secure in it," instead of "defend it."

In summarizing how she felt about the sessions, the student wrote,

I reread my entries about religion and the word "anger" appeared more than any other word. I was especially angry in the early sessions when my religion was discussed. I think if I knew then what I know now, I would not have been so very angry... One other feeling I had frequently was disgust, disgust in myself and my lack of knowledge about important topics like religion that are cross-cultural.

Two entries before the end of the semester, this student reflected on her own faith in relation to a newspaper article given to the students by the teacher. Her reflections contain what the researcher labelled as "second thoughts" when she was coding the secondary data. Second thoughts emerged earlier in the semester in American students' reflections on psychic phenomena described by the international students. At the end of the semester "second thoughts" cut across this student and the other American who said she had never questioned her own religion in terms of thinking about another; she did this when she reflected on reincarnation in Hinduism and Buddhism as "something other to think about." Second thoughts or a wait-a-minute attitude before judging and criticizing others who are different is also a pattern that is present in the course evaluation and the interview conducted one semester after the end of the curriculum. Second thoughts reveal a beginning or an opening to different cultural perspectives than one's own as alternative possibilities for interpreting the world. Although the student says her faith will
ultimately remove any doubts she might have, she momentarily pauses to question her belief in Jesus as "the correct religion" in light of the Islamic belief in Jesus as only a prophet. She further verbalized, for the first time she says, the thought that God may be man's creation.

Today in class, we discussed the article entitled, "World's oldest known shrine unearthed." You made a statement that hit home with me. I have often thought that there has been religion since the beginning of time and what gives me the right to think that mine is the correct religion. More than anything, I thought of what if Jesus was just another prophet and that I was being unfaithful to God by believing in the Trinity. Though I feel I am knowledgeable about my faith, and I have studied other religions before converting, there are still feelings of doubt over the question of religion.

I am not so alarmed that there may not be a God. I will not be hurt by that because I believe I have benefitted by living a good life. What scares me is that what I believe may be incorrect and I will be eternally condemned for it. The thought of damnation is not a pleasant thought for me.

I have noticed through human nature, that people have a need to believe--I have often thought that the founders of religions might just have vivid imaginations.

I am not an atheist, these are just things I have thought about before and never before verbalized them. Though in a way I feel guilty, I realize I have a questioning mind and will probably wonder about my religion and guess that is where my faith will come in to help me.

Openness in Communicating and Openness to Diversity: Conclusions

The students' reflections on and classroom discussions about the practicum sessions on religion show a gradual movement toward openness in communicating and openness to cultural diversity. They moved from being defensive about their own beliefs when they initially began to confront and
probe their differences, to admitting and discussing their own defensiveness with each other, to being able to recognize it in others. They described defensiveness in terms of being culturally embedded, wrapped up in and totally inside their own cultural perspectives, not coming out of their own cultural things, and not culturally open. Defensiveness was synonymous with closed-mindedness or lack of openness to cultural diversity in their descriptions as it was in the research team's descriptive analysis of the videotaped interaction.

During the participants' initial probing of differences, defensiveness or lack of openness rose to the surface where it could be seen not only by the research team viewing the videotapes, but by the participants themselves. During this time, the other's different beliefs and perceptions were often described by the participants as "misconceptions," "untrue," "unsubstantiated," and "wrong." Why questions were largely interpreted as challenges by the other to one's own beliefs rather than as requests for information.

Gradually participants began to demonstrate sensitivity to the requirements for cross-cultural understanding by discussing that it was necessary to: really listen to each other; understand it is not possible to change the other; accept the other's perspectives or beliefs as important to him/her (although not necessarily right for the self); and try to see how the other's perspectives fit or are significant within the context of his/her culture.
A few students who attempted to analyze the process of communication also came to see that in order to explain one's own perspectives and have the other understand them, it is necessary to base explanations of one's own on the other's systems of meaning. The research team described this phenomenon in detail in Chapter V, Sessions 6, 8, and 9. Using the other's systems of meaning to explain one's own perspectives was described by the students as meeting the other halfway, not answering the other's questions about my religion out of my religion but focusing on the other's, and establishing a base of commonality through which the differences could be explained.

To conclude the discussion of the participants' beginnings in openness in communicating and openness to diversity, it is necessary to relate the students' perceptions about the curriculum at its end in the course evaluation and in the interview conducted by the researcher when the students were one semester removed from the course. The student's perceptions at the end of the curriculum which reflect openness in communicating and openness to diversity will be discussed first. Then these two broad properties of understanding will be discussed as they were reflected in students' perceptions one semester later.

At the close of the curriculum, students described openness in communicating in terms of sharing with each other. The following excerpts taken from the course evaluation illustrate participants' beginning in openness in
communicating with culturally different others. Although it is difficult to separate the students' thoughts into themes because of the overlapping nature of the themes, the researcher has attempted to do so for the reader's ease in seeing that patterns do exist. The two-day practicum trip to Deercreek State Park was viewed by several as the most intimate kind of sharing or openness in communicating they participated in during the semester.

Panamanian
[On the trip] we share different things...We have the opportunity to meet the culture more close almost to touch a little bit of each. (F)

American
A valuable experience for any future course in cross-cultural communication taught at Ohio Dominican...The trip supplied a new, intimate atmosphere that cannot be created or experienced in the classroom environment. It can reveal true, uninhibited, spontaneous interaction. (M)

Japanese
Since everyone began to cook, play games and so on, they could talk with each other without thinking. As I stated before I could have a good time at night since I had a chance to do a tea ceremony which is a most typical Japanese tradition. Everyone surprised me a lot because most of them joined and were so serious to learn it. It was amazing...Whenever I talk with them, they make me think they are people who have different cultures and customs from each other; however, I did not feel that way at the tea ceremony. I just felt they were people who were eager to learn it. I am sure many more people began to talk with the people in [the] ESL [class] since we had that trip. (F)

Venezuelan
Deercreek was the best idea you could have had, please do it again next year...We all shared so much that it seemed like we were on a retreat. (M)

American
Deercreek was a relaxing, sharing experience...People were better able to freely express themselves since it was outside of the school setting. I did not care what I looked like and I was comfortable with the people that were there. (F)
American
The Deer Creek trip was the highlight of the class for me. It allowed for a much more intimate and relaxed view of other cultures and made me feel closer to members of the class. (F)

At the end of the curriculum the participants also discussed openness in communicating or sharing in the classroom in terms of being cultural representatives, and learning about themselves and their own cultures while acquiring knowledge about other cultures. Acquiring an awareness of or knowledge about other cultures is a component of openness to cultural diversity, but it is acquired in the reciprocal nature of sharing one's own culture with others in communication with them. Thus, one semester removed from the course, the students' discussed sharing their awareness of other cultures they had acquired during the course with people they encountered who were critical of or did not understand the behavior of culturally different others. Openness in communicating or reciprocal sharing that occurred during the semester produced knowledge about other cultures which led to openness to diversity; after the students had left the course, that knowledge was then shared with others who did not have it in attempts to bring about openness to diversity in them. The following excerpts from the course evaluation reflect student thoughts on openness in communicating or mutual sharing as cultural representatives and learning about themselves and their own cultures while acquiring knowledge about others' cultures.
Venezuelan
I have value my thoughts, I have spoken them out, I have
seen myself as a representative of my own culture, I
have been free to express my thoughts, ideas and beliefs.
I have loved what I have shared and what I have thought
about it...I liked the way people were spontaneous to
express their own knowledge. (F)

Iraqi
I enjoyed sharing my culture with others and learning
about other people's culture. It made me feel closer
to the people in the class. (M)

Japanese
I could learn other customs, cultures, and thinking...
Moreover, I am very proud I am Japanese and have wanted
to teach anything about Japan as a representative of
Japan. I am very glad to have had many chances to talk
about Japan. I sometimes doubted whether or not his
course might be for me. By answering their questions,
I could understand more about my own Japanese things.
Many friends told me they wanted to come to Japan since
they had chance to hear about it with their own ears
from me. (F)

American
I have had limited exposure to other cultures, and I
enjoyed the interaction with other class members...I
liked the openness of the class, when expressing thoughts
and feelings. I learned much more from the classroom
discussions than I did from the readings. I feel that
my approach to other cultures has changed. In the
future, I will examine my feelings more, I will be more
receptive to people different than I. I have considered
myself very liberal, but now I will consider aspects of
culture that I didn't before. (M)

American
I came to an awareness of what is important to me. I
never thought that I would have become as angry as I
did during the religious discussions. This anger made
me realize that my faith was an important part of me.
Also, I realized how if something is important, one
wants others to understand it (have no misconceptions
of it). (F)

Panamanian
The practicums on religion became interesting to all of
us because we went to discuss something about each of
us that was part of our culture of ourselves...I always
will carry with me that I have to be me and be proud
of myself. And also that we have to give the persons
a second change to understand them and they also need
to be able to understand us. (F)
American
There were many topics such as religion, time, funerals that I would not have discussed without this class. Because of the class, I was able to get deeper viewpoints or perceptions of the different topics and ideas. I have a special feeling that I do not feel with my other classes. I felt comfortable and a sense of closeness to everyone. I think the class became close because everyone was sharing their thoughts and experiences. (F)

American
The course helped me to understand others because I look for where they are coming from. (F)

American
I found myself looking more deeply beyond exteriors to try and discover the "person" with whom I came in contact. I really feel I have always done this but perhaps I had more motivation and purpose these past few months. (F)

Libyan
The classroom discussions gave me the opportunity to tell Americans, not only foreigners, about my culture and learn from them how they feel about their own. (M)

American
I've noticed a growth in other American students in the class in ways I have grown too. I like that because we can talk about our experiences and have the other know what we mean. I think we've all developed a sense of awareness of never being able to take the culture from another person despite the fact that they are here in America. (F)

Some students commented at the end of the course in their evaluations on others' or their own lack of openness or lack of reciprocity in communicating.

American
There were a few who did not talk much and it bothers me that I don't know anything about them. In Poly Sci we say if one's potential is not fulfilled, then ours is diminished in return. (F)

American
I was annoyed with myself for feeling as if I couldn't say what I felt at the end to the entire class because the feelings were getting to the deep part of me. I was annoyed because I thought that was somewhat the purpose of the course--to establish a bit of intimacy among us. I felt I hadn't progressed, in fact, I felt I regressed in that area by not being able to share some things with the entire class. (F)
Venezuelan
Some of my classmates were not so open as some others. We all need to have more self-confidence to be opened to discussion...Opening doors is easy to do not only if I am willing to talk and express myself but willing to listen. When I share my thoughts with others, I don't intend they to think as I do, but to reflect about it and get the best my thoughts offer to them...I learned just about in the two last weeks of class to listen with a lot of attention. (F)

At the end of the course, students' statements which reflect either their own beginnings in openness to diversity or their cognitive awareness of what it is illustrate the following themes: people's perceptions are based on their culture and experiences and are not wrong; being different is not bad or wrong; behavior is related to culture; culture determines who a person is; awareness or knowledge about the cultures of different people is a component of openness to diversity; understanding is a prerequisite for an appreciation of different customs; openness to diversity carries with it a desire to share one's experiences with others in order to create openness in them.

Virgin Islander
I will always remember that perceptions of people are never wrong. We all as human beings perceive things differently. Sometimes due to our culture and values. (F)

American
I have finally come to realize that my perceptions are from my experience and they are not incorrect in any way. And, this same idea pertains to everyone else. How other people feel is not wrong and I do not have the right to say that how they feel is wrong. (F)

American
The classroom discussions helped me learn one important fact. [the Cuban professor] said it, you repeated it, and I've dwelled on it since he uttered it. "Being different does not mean being bad, it just means being different." I am not a radical feminist; but, I do
support equality for women and am not fearful to demand my inherit rights. Because the questions that face women are of interest to me, I always enjoyed it when in class we talked about related topics. At first I was angered, even a few weeks ago I felt inequality when the Islams talked about a woman's place in the temple. When I wrote that separate but equal was wrong, I meant that; but, when I read your reply, "But it is not wrong in that culture, it is not discrimination--it is only discrimination as we see it," I came to a much better understanding. (F)

Panamanian
I learned more things than if I have read a specific book about culture...I had never before thought that the persons behave in certain ways because of their values in their culture, but now when they do certain things I gave a second thought before judge that action--then I can understand why...Also I never before look at any news or article about culture and I want to learn more and more. (F)

American
On the news today they were reporting about the Hatian refugees who came to the U.S. and were having difficulty with our government. I just stopped to think of all I have learned and never before would I have "caught" that part of the news or cared about it...I feel I have a broader sense of what other countries and the people are like. I can't believe all the questioning I've done in terms of what I thought I believed. Not just about religion, but about myself in my likes, dislikes, in the way I speak, how I word my questions, how I think I'm perceived by the person talking to me...We are not the same in lots of ways and those differences are OK. I have learned from those differences that culture makes a person who he or she is...I've come to appreciate the customs of other cultures more but only so much as I understand them...I want to be open to new people and places...I'd like to share with at least one person what I've learned and experienced and maybe spark an interest in him/her to opening themselves up to a similar experience. (F)

Venezuelan
I will never forget what I have gotten from this experience...I experienced to accept as well as to understand without judging. It will dwell on me, I want to share it with others...This class has given me the option to acknowledge being open to other peoples. I see myself as a filter where new ideas come to make me more aware of the varieties of humans' beliefs, culture, traditions and even feelings and emotions. As I have told a lot of my friends this class is teaching me more values
through different people and experiences than the whole five years I have been in the United States. (F)

American
I wish to carry into the future more open-mindedness, a further awareness of others and myself and to try to make others understand this type of thinking. I would like to stop as much prejudice as possible and try to make people realize that another's ideas may not be all that absurd if they just try to understand why they believe it. (F)

American
In the future I want to be very open to relationships with international students. I know I have shared many ideas from the class to other people. I want to continue sharing my learning experiences. (F)

One semester after the course, the researcher asked the students in the last interview if the course had changed them in any way or if anything had happened in the time since the course that had caused them to think about it. Several similar types of responses were given to this question. For the purpose of this analysis, they are divided into those statements which reflect the students' beginnings in openness in communicating and openness to diversity. The division is somewhat arbitrary since these two broad properties of understanding are related and the statements made by the students many times reflected both. For example, some students described having developed a wait-a-minute attitude before judging different others. This reflects openness to diversity. Some had begun to tell others who were critical or quick to jump to conclusions about different behavior to "wait a minute" and look for the cultural reasons behind the behavior. In other words, they had developed openness in communicating to others that judging without knowledge of the person's cultural background was not right.
In response to the researcher's question, the students discussed greater openness in communicating with others as a change that had occurred as a result of participating in the curriculum. Some said the course had helped them mature. Others mentioned finding communication with people of their own and/or different cultures easier and deeper. Some mentioned they had lost their fears of stating what they thought and asking questions. As mentioned, some students told others who had not experienced the curriculum to wait a minute; other students said they tried to convey to people who criticized that it was not right to say that others' different customs were wrong.

American
I find it much easier now to talk to somebody I don't know of my own culture and of different cultures, especially. The course helped me grow, mature quite a bit. (M)

Venezuelan
It helped me a lot being in Cross-Cultural. This semester I feel more free to talk in class and to participate, more than any other semester in a class. I feel very confident and like I have many ideas of what is going on in the classes and I feel free to talk. I don't feel embarrassed to talk in class... I pay more attention to what people say and I look a lot at what people do, their gestures and a lot more. I get deeper with people when I talk to them in a conversation... The first think I'm going to write on the blackboard when I'm a teacher in my country will be "communication." It is the first thing. Have the students do more talking and prepare things together in class and outside and see me more as a friend than the way students see teachers in my country. There is not that much inter-relationship. I grew up in Cross-Cultural class. In many ways the students were the teachers and I thought about why this teacher made me act this way today. So many questions I asked them, before I was afraid to ask even though I didn't know the answer. (F)
American
I'm maturing in a positive way...I'm letting people know how I feel about things...My sister, she went to a predominantly black high school and she still has some prejudice and we have a lot of debates about it. She's very bright but sometimes she's so ignorant. I would never have said anything about it but I'm not afraid to say them now because I feel like I know more. I say "______, you are ignorant," because I feel that's what prejudice is. (F)

American
My attitudes definitely have changed in trying to understand why certain things happen the way they do from different cultures. And I never thought that before. I've noticed with my American friends, I'm always saying something or bringing something up about cross-cultural now. Like this one friend of mine is seeing somebody who's from a different culture and she's worried because they're from different cultures. Like she went to this party, he was treating her differently or wasn't talking to her a whole lot, and I was going, "Now, well now wait, when I took this course--it might be some kind of cultural thing, you never know. Talk to him about it." And she goes, "OK." Before I would never say, "Now wait," and its true. (F)

American
I used most of the stuff from the course in tutoring a refugee student at school while student teaching and if I hadn't taken the course, I wouldn't have known where to start...It's easier to understand people with different cultural backgrounds. You know how to talk to them or how to break the ice or how to relate things to them. Consequently, you don't have to worry so much--Once I know that he's on a different thought pattern and from a different cultural background and thinks differently than me and from what I learned in class--you know how to meet halfway and help them adapt. Everything I learned in class I turned around two months later and used.

He has a sister who got sick a few times...She came to school one day and she looked like someone had taken a bull-whip to her. She sat there in the back of the room with her head down and with all these scratch marks all over her. Sr. Elizabeth was very very concerned that she had gotten beat up or something. I said, "Wait a minute, I'll bet it is something cultural, some sort of remedy." I took her to the nurse and she actually showed the nurse. She took a copper penney out of her pocket and started scratching. I thought that's got to be it, something along the line. But they were really, really upset and I said, "Let's just take our time and see if we can't find out about it." (M)
Libyan
I find myself talking to a lot of Americans this semester, more so than before. I haven't thought about it before but it might be related to the course. I talk to a lot of Americans and I don't think of them anymore as Americans or I don't think of them thinking of me as a foreigner...In the student center in the pool room there are mostly Arabs and Latin Americans and the Americans just can't break in there and in the beginning of the semester that part used to be all Americans. I tend to move out and talk to somebody I know, some American, and pull them in. I do that in parties too. I've always done it but not as much or as consciously as I do now. (M)

Panamanian
I am more open, open minded about the differences of other people, especially the Arabics. I think that I am able to understand them more than I did before. Before I was really prejudice about the things they did in the classroom. But after the course I feel more excited to know more about them. Every time that I am with an Arabic or other foreign student I always ask about their customs. I didn't do that before. I was just myself and even the Americans weren't my people and I wasn't interested before. (F)

American (dorm resident assistant)
Everytime somebody asks me something that concerns international students, about their customs and their ways and tries to tell me that they're wrong, I say, "No. We can't tell everyone who's different that they're wrong." I hear a lot of people asking [another American who was in the class] too, people who don't even associate with internationals at all, and we can explain to them now. We can tell them who are we to tell them that they're wrong. I've heard other people who were in the class tell people "That's just their custom, you can't tell them that they're wrong. That's just the way they are."...I don't think the course will ever end for the people who took it. They have a better understanding and want to become aware of other people that are out there that they've never associated with before. So every new person that they meet, they're going to start asking them questions and it will be much more comfortable for them to associate with them. (F)

In the interview one semester removed from the curriculum, participants described themselves as less critical, more accepting, not as quick to judge, having greater awareness
of other people and their cultural backgrounds, being more aware of either international students or American students' attitudes, and realizing that their own ways of viewing phenomena are not the only ways. These descriptions reflect openness to cultural diversity.

American
I think I've become less critical. Not that I was critical but you kind of have the attitude why can't they do it the way I do. Well, they can't do it the way you do because they're different...But I am more accepting of a lot of things, especially when people from the same country get together, then they can be themselves with their peers...I always felt like if you're in Rome do as the Romans do or at least look like you're trying to do it...I wish that people who have not had the opportunity could take the time to try and understand because you do hear criticism of the foreign students here. (F)

American
I don't think I'm as quick to judge before I think about things...You know ______, she wears one of those flowing veils on her head, she's in my seminar class and I think a lot of my peers are, it's like she doesn't participate, but I can understand that now. And a lot of people, they say stuff like, we're all getting graded on these oral presentations and I see myself thinking about what we've learned and how it would be for me to be a strange culture. Not only to be in a strange culture but to be dressed differently. (F)

American
In interpersonal, we were talking about an ideal vacation and one of the international students said his ideal vacation would be somewhere on a Mediterranean beach with his family. And I thought, no, my idea would be somewhere on a Mediterranean beach far away from my family. Little things like that come up and I just keep thinking, I know this is cross-cultural. They're really close-knit and we're more independent. I don't know if anyone else is thinking that's why he would want to spend his vacation with his family. When I hear somebody saying something from a different culture, I understand more of the background of why they're saying it. (F)

Virgin Islander
I have become more aware of Americans' attitude...I feel a part of other cultures. Maybe it's because we
are away from home. I can relate to other cultures because all of us are alike; we are called the international students; it seems like all of us are in a little group with a little label...Before I took the class, I used to just think that they're American and they're just one way and they can't accept me because as far as they're concerned I'm a foreigner. It's not always like that. I don't feel that way anymore...I have really learned to respect how other people think. Sometimes I just want to say what I think and regardless of what you think, this is what I think and there is no way that you can change how I think—but at times, things that people said made me think, too. It changed my attitude from I'm right and you're wrong. (F)

Venezuelan
My attitudes toward Americans have changed a lot. I have been around them many times but you have to get to them, let yourself be open to them and see how they answer back to you. Now I know many, I talk to them, I share with them, especially guys in the college. I would never go there if they invited me. Now we dance to Venezuelan music. I explain many things to them about our culture and they share a lot of themselves with us and you get ideas about the way people act and their feelings toward women and foreigners and I see many things. (F)

American
The course helped me to see the way a foreign student would see an American student. We were always thinking about how we saw them, but we failed to see how they saw us in return...We're different for them, not only them being different for us...It helped me to see the way they think about things. If they have a certain action I might misinterpret it when it really means something else just like they would do with us. You have to try to think about how they would do things in their culture or at least try to keep an open mind about it. (F)

American
Whenever I read anything or look at something now, I realized I come up with my own viewpoint of it, which I never thought about before. The course makes you realize that your viewpoint is particular to yourself and it doesn't necessarily have anything to do with the way other people might see things. It also makes you realize you can't judge what is right for you to be right for others. (F)

Cross-cultural communication curriculum must attempt to create openness to cultural diversity.
CHAPTER VII
SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This exploratory interpretive study of cross-cultural communication curriculum was conducted for the following purposes: (1) to examine the process of communication for indicators of understanding between curriculum participants; (2) to describe the conditions and the nature of the participants' reflections in describing and interpreting their experiences related to the curriculum; and (3) to provide suggestions for curriculum development based on the properties of cross-cultural understanding determined through the analysis of the process of communication and the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants (1 and 2 above).

This chapter (1) summarizes the properties of cross-cultural understanding; (2) discusses their implications for curriculum development; (3) recommends future research directions in cross-cultural communication curriculum development; and (4) discusses the significance of the study.

The Properties of Cross-Cultural Understanding: An Overview

The summaries which follow this overview combine the properties of understanding described in the analyses of
the primary and secondary data sources. The primary data source consisted of nine videotapes of practicum sessions in which American and international cross-cultural communication students met with advanced level English-as-a-second-language conversation class students to discuss various cultural aspects. After the completion of data collection, the videotapes were independently descriptively coded by the primary participant observer researcher and two Ph.D. students in communication. Their independent analyses were combined in Chapter IV. In Chapter V the primary researcher drew conclusions in regard to the categories of understanding determined through the research team's analysis of the process of communication. In the same chapter, she offered curriculum suggestions based on the analysis of the process.

The secondary data sources (CCC student journals, interviews with the CCC students, CCC course evaluations, and the researcher's field notes) were then analyzed by the primary researcher for recurring patterns across participants which reflected their experiencing of the curriculum. Those patterns where cross-validated against the categories of understanding determined by the research team and further curriculum suggestions based on the patterns present in the secondary data sources were offered in Chapter VI. This chapter draws together the analyses of the primary and secondary data to delineate the properties of understanding determined by the research. Since each of these properties of understanding has been described in detail in Chapters IV, V and VI, this chapter
simply brings them together and discusses their implications for curriculum development.

The curriculum was experienced by the participants as a beginning—a beginning of openness to communicating and openness in communicating with culturally different others. It was also the beginning of openness to cultural diversity. Each of these broad properties of or requirements for cross-cultural understanding will be discussed in terms of how they mesh with the categories of understanding determined by the research team.

**Openness to Communicating: Summary**

Openness to communicating and interacting with culturally different others is the most basal of all requirements for understanding since without communication and interaction, understanding is not even a possibility. It was discussed extensively by the students and very little by the research team. The cross-cultural communication curriculum that was the subject of this study forced communication and interaction between the members of the different cultures. It therefore caused them to reflect on their initial uneasiness, their gradual development of comfort and ease, and most importantly, their own personal and/or their cultural group's prejudices toward others which contribute to lack of openness to communication and interaction.

Prejudices and fears which block communication and interaction between the members of different cultures cannot be seen by a research team viewing videotapes of forced communication and interaction; they are found only
in the participants' subjective responses to the curriculum. However, the participants' initial uneasiness in communicating with people from different cultures who were strangers to them and their gradual move away from that was clearly visible on videotape and was discussed by the research team.

Openness to communication and interaction with culturally diverse people resulted from this curriculum because it forced communication at the classroom level and provided cultural content or subject matter for students to continue to communicate about outside the classroom. Because the curriculum produced knowledge about other cultures through forced cross-cultural discussion and interaction, the students articulated the stereotypes, prejudices and fears which impede openness to communication and interaction. In the articulation, their stereotypes, prejudices and fears began to lose their power as controlling factors blocking openness. The participants even came to discuss these factors with each other at the very end of the curriculum. The following were seen by the participants in this study to be the chief factors which impede openness to communicating and interacting with culturally different others:

1. Stereotypes and cultural prejudices toward others
2. Peer pressure by one's own cultural group not to interact with others who are culturally different
3. Fear of rejection by one's own cultural group if one becomes involved with others who are culturally different
4. Lack of desire or perceived lack of ability to develop deep relationships with different others
5. Fear of the loss of one's own culture
(6) Speaking the native language in the presence of others who do not speak it

Openness to Communicating: Curriculum Implications

This research suggests that experiential-based cross-cultural communication curriculum must create openness to communication and interaction with culturally different others. At the classroom level forced communication about various cultural aspects produces knowledge about the cultural backgrounds of the interactants as well as increasing levels of comfort in the interaction. Awareness of cultural background is instrumental in breaking down stereotypes and prejudices and creating openness to cultural diversity, the chief property of understanding toward which all curriculum must be aimed.

Curriculum should purposefully incorporate the discussion of impediments to communication and interaction between culturally diverse people by drawing from the participants themselves their perceptions of impediments. The research demonstrated that those students who came to confront and articulate their own prejudices were able to move beyond them toward openness to cultural diversity. The process of participants' confronting themselves as to their own prejudices or being confronted in regard to them by other curriculum participants would undoubtedly be speeded and facilitated by creating a community of awareness among participants early in the curriculum as to the factors which block communication and interaction.
Openness in Communicating/Reciprocity: Summary

Openness in communicating was discussed by both curriculum participants and the research team. The curriculum participants discussed it primarily in terms of sharing since the curriculum was in essence experienced by them as a time for sharing their customs, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings with each other. The research team discussed openness in communication chiefly in terms of reciprocity. Their entire analysis of the process of communication explicated the reciprocal requirements for understanding. Toward the end of the curriculum participants themselves began to reflect upon the necessity of reciprocity for cross-cultural understanding.

The sharing of cultural lifeworlds and increasing openness in communicating that occurred between participants during the curriculum led them to openness to cultural diversity. Openness to diversity carried with it a desire on participants' parts to in turn share with others less culturally open either their knowledge about other cultures or their awareness of the characteristics of openness to diversity so as to create it in others. The research team described what participants did in the process of communicating or sharing with each other which led them to openness to culturally diverse perspectives. By the end of the curriculum, openness to cultural diversity had begun and participants were aware of many of its characteristics, but they had little awareness of the reciprocal communication
techniques they had used to arrive at it. The research team, on the other hand, articulated the communication techniques used by the participants which led them to openness to diversity; in other words, the team articulated how openness to diversity was achieved.

Chapter V discusses the major categories which constitute the property of reciprocity in the research team's assessment and describes how these categories function with each other in leading to openness to diversity. Thus, they are merely listed below. **Reciprocity (or openness in communicating with culturally different others) is the most essential property of and requirement for cross-cultural understanding.** Through it discussants gradually take up the perspectives of each other. The **categories of reciprocity include:**

1. active verbal and nonverbal involvement in the interaction
2. explicit comparison of the cultural aspects under discussion
3. cultural self-disclosure (contributing specific information about one's own culture or reacting to the perspectives of the other out of one's own cultural systems of meaning)
4. voluntary articulation of one's cultural perspectives in regard to the topic
5. requests to the other to articulate his/her cultural perspectives in regard to the topic
6. pursuit of the topic through verification and descriptive, semantic and conceptual clarification
7. attention to the process of communication demonstrated by verification attempts (usually repetition and paraphrasing) Repetition and paraphrasing
a) function as comprehension checks;
b) indicate understanding or serve to request 
confirmation of it by the other;
c) prompt confirmation of understanding or further 
clarification by the other; 
d) prompt comparative contributions in the form of 
cultural self-disclosure or interpretation 
attempts made in regard to the other's perspectives.

(8) attention to the content of communication demon-
strated by clarification attempts (usually questions 
which request clarification or further information 
and topic expansion through explanation, descrip-
tion, anecdotes, personal experience, analogy, 
differentiation and/or qualification)

(9) confronting and probing of differences

(10) attempts to interpret the other's perspectives from 
one's own cultural systems of meaning (This serves 
to disclose one's own perspectives or systems of 
meaning embedded therein.)

(11) verification and clarification by the other of one's 
own interpretation (understanding) of the other's 
Perspectives

(12) seeking elements in the other's cultural systems of 
meaning on which to base explanations of one's own 
Perspectives

(13) explaining one's own perspectives through what one 
interprets to be the cultural systems of meaning 
of the other

At the end of the curriculum, participants discussed the 
necessity for reciprocity in terms of:

(1) actively participating in the discussion by sharing 
one's culture and expressing oneself

(2) really listening to the other and focusing attention 
on the other's perspectives instead of thinking about 
one's own

(3) asking questions which cause the other to reflect 
upon and explain his/her own cultural things not 
thought about before
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(4) responding to the other's questions about one's own culture or perspectives not totally out of one's own but taking the culture and perspectives of the other into account in the response.

Reciprocal cultural self-disclosure, verification and clarification lead to the development of factual/descriptive and conceptual/interpretive understanding among the members of different cultures. Verification and clarification function together in these two types of understanding. Table 1 (on the next page) shows the characteristics of factual/descriptive and conceptual/interpretive understanding and the functioning of verification and clarification in the establishment of the two types of understanding.

Openness in Communicating/Reciprocity: Curriculum Implications

Factual/descriptive and conceptual/interpretive understanding which are the result of reciprocity are properties of cross-cultural understanding. It is through the establishment of a factual/descriptive base of understanding regarding some of their similarities and differences that discussants are awakened to the possibility that other cultural perspectives or ways of interpreting the world exist. A factual/descriptive base of understanding is established by participants as openness to communication and interaction with each other develops and comfort in that communication is gradually achieved. The factual/descriptive base provides the common ground through which discussants come to confront and probe their differences.
Table 1
VERIFICATION AND CLARIFICATION
function together in

Factual/Descriptive Understanding
V & C are used to establish a comparative factual/descriptive base of understanding of similarities and differences in the cultural aspects under discussion.
Discussants attempt to clarify factually and descriptively; they catalogue commonalities and differences; they do not attempt verbally to interpret the other's cultural systems of meaning.
Discussants do not confront or probe their differences.
Questions and discussion are largely ethnographic.
Verification works with clarification to accomplish descriptive clarity.
V & C are used to achieve descriptive language clarity when language problems interrupt the flow of communication.
Semantic clarification attempts are used to discover the intended meaning of the speaker in regard to a mispronounced word or incorrect lexical choice.

Conceptual/Interpretive Understanding
V & C are used to establish a comparative conceptual/interpretive base of understanding of the content, meaning and significance of the cultural aspects under discussion.
Discussants attempt to interpret, clarify, and understand conceptually the cultural systems of meaning embedded in the other's perspectives.
Discussants constantly confront and probe their differences.
Questions and discussion address what it is to be a member of a culture.
Verification works with clarification to accomplish conceptual clarity.
V & C are used to achieve conceptual clarity when different cultural assumptions impede understanding.
Semantic clarification attempts are used to discover the cultural meaning embedded in key words or phrases upon which understanding rests.
Cross-cultural understanding is at best partial and very thin without the confrontation and probing of differences which is the most essential characteristic of conceptual/interpretive understanding. Commonalities provide the basis for understanding and it is through them that differences must be explained and come to be understood. Differences cannot be understood, however, unless discussants attempt to interpret them; usually they do so in light of their own cultural systems of meaning which they soon learn are insufficient for understanding the other's view of the world which is seen through a different web of cultural meanings.

When participants attempt to interpret their differences through their own systems of meaning and find them lacking, they come to a full awareness that other cultural perspectives do indeed exist and that nonunderstanding and misunderstanding are likely possibilities. It is then that genuine concern for understanding emerges and participants move toward addressing with each other what it means to be members of their respective cultures. Openness to cultural diversity arises out of reciprocal attempts to achieve conceptual/interpretive understanding. In reciprocal disclosing, interpreting, verifying and clarifying, they gradually take up each other's perspectives and begin to base explanations of their own cultures on what they interpret to be the other's systems of meaning. It is at this point that openness to diversity, another crucial property of cross-cultural understanding, begins.

Factual/descriptive understanding is a necessary but not sufficient property of cross-cultural understanding. It may be
the point at which discussants begin and to which they return
momentarily when language problems impede the flow of communi-
cation or new topics not previously discussed arise, but as
reciprocal attempts to interpret, clarify and conceptually
understand who they are culturally take place, it will not be
the type of understanding to which they return for long. Cross-
cultural communication curriculum must move discussants toward
conceptual/interpretive understanding and develop their
cognitive awareness of the reciprocal communication techniques
through which it is achieved.

Openness to Diversity: Summary

For both the research team and the participants openness
to diversity was synonymous with lack of defensiveness and
acceptance of the validity of the other's perspectives. The
research team described the characteristics or manifestations
of openness to cultural diversity in communication. The
participants described openness to diversity (or lack of it)
in terms of its essence as they experienced it or as they
came to cognitively understand it.

The following were the characteristics of openness
to cultural diversity in communication as determined by the
research team:

(1) Lack of defensiveness

(2) Acceptance of the validity of the other's perspectives

(3) Lack of questions which challenge the validity of the other's perspectives

(4) Lack of questions which seek to confirm one's own preconceptions about the other's culture or perspectives
(5) Clear and intense concern for understanding characterized by:

a) reciprocal questions which address the cultural content, meaning and significance of the aspect being discussed

b) reciprocal attempts to base explanations of one's own perspectives on what one interprets to be the cultural systems of meaning embedded in the other's perspectives

c) reciprocal verification and clarification of the other's interpretation attempts made in regard to one's own perspectives or systems of meaning

It was during the time participants initially confronted and probed their differences that the highest degree of defensiveness was visible. In reflecting on it, participants' descriptions of defensiveness included the following:

(1) culturally embedded
(2) not culturally open
(3) closed-minded
(4) totally wrapped up in me, in my culture, in my own frame of reference, in my beliefs
(5) totally inside and absorbed by what I believed
(6) never coming out of one's own cultural things to see them

During the period of defensiveness, the participants often saw each other's perspectives as "misconceptions," "untrue," "unsubstantiated," and "wrong." By the end of the curriculum they had become aware of the essence of openness to cultural diversity. The following thoughts capsulize their cognitive awareness of the characteristics of openness to cultural diversity:

(1) Perceptions are based on culture and experiences and are not wrong
Being different is not bad or wrong

Behavior is related to culture

Culture determines who we are

It is not right to criticize or judge different others' behavior or perspectives without knowledge of the cultural background which shapes them

The other's perspectives and beliefs must be accepted as important to him/her; the task is to see how they are important within the context of his/her culture

It is not possible to change the other or to take his/her culture away from him/her

One's own ways of interpreting the world are not the only ways

Openness to Diversity: Conclusions

Defensiveness or lack of openness to cultural diversity is not something that is given sudden birth as the members of different cultures begin to confront their differences. It is present prior to that as an underlying attitude that one's own culture, customs, beliefs and perspectives are right, true, normal, the best and/or the only. The other side of that attitude is that the other's cultural things are wrong, not true, strange, inferior, and/or not important to know about. It is when people begin to ask probing questions in regard to their differences that defensiveness or lack of openness breaks through the cordial facade of acceptance of the other.

When people begin to ask why and how it is possible in regard to each other's customs, beliefs, and ways of interpreting the world, the questions are interpreted as challenges rather than requests for information because they are questions
that people of the same culture rarely ask each other. They are, therefore, questions for which no ready answer waits to trip off the tongue. In order to provide answers, the questions require one to come out of his/her own cultural things in order to look into them and discover their meaning and significance as a member of a specific culture.

Through probing questions people come to an awareness that other cultural perspectives do in actuality exist because at the root of the other's questions is his/her own web of cultural meanings which serves as the basis for interpretation of the cultural aspect in question. Underlying the questions, in other words, is the other's interpretation which is often insufficient for understanding the aspect; yet the other thinks it is and questions to confirm. The question in its insufficiency possesses the power to jolt the person to whom it is addressed out of his/her unexamined state of familiarity with his/her own cultural thing. It is precisely these questions which challenge the validity of the other's perspectives or which are asked in order to confirm one's own preconceptions or interpretations based on meaning systems which belong to a different cultural context that are needed. They are needed in order for discussants to come to understand they do have differences which matter and must be examined, explained, and explained again, if they are to understand each other.

When that which one holds very dearly is challenged, or not understood or misunderstood by the other, one becomes
concerned with understanding. For the other to understand then becomes important. In explaining out of one's own cultural systems of meaning, one often finds his/her own explanations inadequate; the other is working out of a different set of assumptions and still does not understand even after the explanations. Concern for understanding spawns concern; further questions, explanations, interpretation attempts, and verification and clarification of those result in gradual and mutual taking-up-the-perspectives-of-the-other.

As discussants begin to catch glimpses of the world they share in common through each other's eyes, they begin to base explanations of their own customs, beliefs and perspectives on what they interpret to be the cultural webs of meaning through which the other views the world. It is then that the gelatinous covering of cultural encapsulation begins to soften and a slow coming out of their own cultural things enough to see them takes place. It is then that discussants can move beyond defensiveness, beyond the need to defend their customs, beliefs and ways of interpreting as right, true, normal, the best, or the only ones that are important. Coming outside one's own cultural thing allows one to see it as another instead of the only and come to understand that the other's is likewise right, true, normal, and the best for the other. It is there partially outside one's own and outside the other's cultural things that the relative nature of cultural truth comes to be realized. It is there that it becomes possible to view the world shared in common through the other's as well as one's own webs of meaning. It is then
that intercultural understanding can occur because openness to cultural diversity exists.

The step beyond defensiveness, when the other's perspectives or ways of viewing the world come to be seen as also valid, allows discussants to continue to probe and attempt to conceptually clarify their differences at the level of information. This level is not the same as factual/descriptive understanding which is established in participants' early interaction with each other. At the factual/descriptive level, negative evaluation of the other's beliefs and cultural practices is suppressed in the communicative act; it is not articulated to the other. In other words, differences are not openly confronted and examined. Thus, attempts at conceptual/interpretive understanding are not manifest in communication until the probing of differences occurs. That is not to say such attempts do not take place in the mind previous to their verbal appearance; they simply cannot be seen until discussants begin to check out their interpretations of each other's perspectives with each other. It is then that negative evaluations, stereotypes, preconceptions and interpretation attempts based on systems of meaning inadequate for understanding the other's perspectives become visible. They interrupt the comfortable factual/descriptive verification and clarification that has characterized interaction; they are interpreted as challenges to the cultural validity of one's perspectives.

Challenges by the other to the validity of one's own perspectives are deeply felt; they result in defensiveness. Through defensiveness, one comes to see that there are things
that do matter immensely to the self. Accompanying that awareness is the awareness that it is not right for the other to say that what one believes as right is wrong, as true is untrue, as good is bad, as the best is inferior, as absolutely logical and normal is strange or crazy. In the reciprocal nature of human relationships as one comes to this awareness, he/she comes to realize that it is also not right for him/her to judge the other's beliefs as wrong, untrue, bad, inferior or absurd.

In the probing of differences one finds the other really does not understand or has misconceptions about one's own culture; otherwise he/she would be able to see and repeated explanations would be unnecessary. Likewise, as the other tells one that one does not understand and attempts to clarify one's own interpretation attempts, one comes to realize that he/she himself/herself does not understand the other's culture. Thus discussants mutually come to realize they must seek elements in each other's cultural systems of meaning on which to base explanations of their own cultural things. Further questions, explanations, conceptual interpretation attempts, verification and clarification therefore come to be reciprocally seen as necessary for achieving understanding. Mutual concern for understanding characterizes the relationship as long as one of the parties does not withdraw from communication.

Present at the base of mutual concern for understanding between the members of different cultures is an emerging awareness of the relative nature of cultural truth. As awareness that truth is culturally relative comes to exist,
participants can focus on conceptually interpreting and clarifying the content of their respective truths on an informational level void of the strong feelings of defensiveness which prevent the genuine intercultural exchange of information. At this level, differences can be probed and evaluation offered in the spirit of exploring alternative possibilities for interpreting phenomena. The object of communication thus becomes an attempt to see the other's way of interpreting the world which are rooted in his/her culture as alternative possibilities for viewing it, though not necessarily but possibly valid for the self, valid for the other. It is in the knowledge of one's own ways and the other's ways of interpreting that one becomes existentially free to choose or not choose from among the possibilities.

Openness to Diversity: Curriculum Implications

The curriculum which was the subject of this study had cross-cultural understanding as its purpose. Its participants experienced it as a beginning—a beginning of openness—openness to communicating, openness in communicating, and openness to diversity, all properties of cross-cultural understanding.

Openness was created in the forced communication and interaction about various cultural aspects which produced an explicit comparative base of understanding of commonalities and differences in the ways participants interpreted themselves in terms of those aspects and in relation to the world. Openness to diversity rests on achieving openness to communication with culturally different others and openness in communication,
or reciprocity, as cultural spokespersons. Curriculum aimed at the development of understanding between the members of different cultures must create openness to diversity because without it, understanding will forever remain only the smallest beginning.

Developing an understanding of the cultural background of those with whom one is forced to communicate is instrumental in creating openness to diversity. An understanding of their cultural backgrounds is not a guarantee that openness to their perspectives or an understanding of those will result. However, coming to understand through face-to-face interaction small bits and pieces of the cultural background from which others come serves to develop a cognitive awareness of what openness to diversity is. This awareness develops for at least two reasons. First, it becomes increasingly difficult to act on one's own prejudices toward others as one comes to understand their cultural backgrounds. Second, it becomes increasingly difficult to see one's own stance toward the world as the only one when the communication forces discussants to explicate the common and diverse elements of this respective stances.

Participants in this curriculum entered and left it possessing different degrees of openness to diversity. All left, however, with an apparent cognitive understanding of its characteristics. They left with an understanding that openness to diversity is an essential requirement for cross-cultural understanding. They left aware of what they aspired to be if being open to the perspectives of others culturally different than themselves was their aspiration.
The purpose of the curriculum was in part achieved. It was the beginning of understanding, understanding of the necessity to be open to interaction with culturally different others and the factors which impede that. It was the beginning of understanding of the necessity to be reciprocally open in communication with the other, to reciprocally serve as cultural representatives and sincerely try to understand each other. It was the beginning of awareness that openmindedness or openness to the culturally different other's perspectives is a requisite for understanding. It was the beginning of factual/descriptive and conceptual/interpretive levels of understanding of the cultural aspects discussed. Without cultural content as the topic of discussion, participants would not have begun to see who they were culturally nor would they have come to see that culture in large part determines who a person is.

It was a beginning and a great deal of practice in developing verification and clarification skills, the crucial techniques on which understanding between the members of different cultures depends because the discussant do not share a common native language, cultural history and traditions, or assumptions. It was the beginning of awareness of the difficulty and complexity of achieving understanding with people who hold different cultural views. It was the beginning of awareness of the factors which impede and those which are necessary for the development of understanding, but it was apparently only barely a beginning of awareness on participants' parts of the communication techniques they employed in their
attempts to achieve understanding with each other. If participants' possessed a cognitive awareness of the verification and clarification techniques they utilized, neither the curriculum nor the researcher forced them to reflect upon and explicate those techniques. It is precisely in those verification and clarification techniques, which were articulated by the research team, that openness to diversity is created because they function as comprehension checks in the development of intercultural intersubjective systems of meaning between discussants; they result in participants gradually taking up the perspectives of each other. Verification and clarification assume extraordinary significance in the intercultural and cross-cultural communicative processes because discussants do not share a common cultural foundation.

Cross-cultural communication curriculum must therefore illuminate commonalities and differences in cultural content and focus attention on the process of communication. It must force participants to bring to explicitness the ways the people of their respective cultures interpret the cultural aspects under discussion so that a base of understanding in regard to their commonalities and differences is established. It should encourage both written and oral reflection on those commonalities and differences and how they affect understanding. Cross-cultural communication curriculum must also force participants to bring to explicitness through written and oral reflection that which transpires in the process of communication. The communicative process is essentially anonymous
while one is a participant in it. Thus participants must be preprogrammed to take note of what they themselves and others do in their attempts to achieve understanding with each other.

Curriculum must allow for experience in communicating with culturally different others and bring to a level of cognitive awareness the requirements and methods for achieving understanding. In providing for experience in communication and forcing reflection on both the cultural content being discussed and the process of communication itself, participants will begin to articulate the requirements for and the factors which impede understanding. Their reflections can be checked against the categories and properties of understanding determined through this exploratory research. That will serve to further refine the categories described here. The categories determined through this study can also serve as specific foci for the students' reflections. The phenomenological approach to cross-cultural communication which was the heart of the curriculum and the research, and the theory of understanding which is the result, provide a valid way of viewing, a way of explaining, the development of understanding between the members of different cultures. Extensive future research is needed to illuminate the critical variables in the extraordinarily complex process of achieving intercultural and cross-cultural understanding.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. This study was exploratory, descriptive and interpretive; it yielded a theory of the development of cross-cultural
understanding by directly studying the cross-cultural communication process and the meaning and significance of the experience to those who were involved in it. The theory is thus grounded in the data and intimately connected to the description of both the process variables which indicated understanding and the recurring patterns of meaning across curriculum participants. The research explains how ordinary people, in this case college students from different cultures and a teacher, function in the process of communicating with each other and what they think about their experiences in doing so. The curriculum suggestions which are also the result of the study are likewise grounded in the data out of which the theory of understanding grew. The research, like the curriculum, is only a beginning. There is a dearth of research directly studying the intercultural/cross-cultural communicative process and experience. Further research which studies both is needed because each yields insight into the development of understanding which is not captured in the other.

2. The properties or categories of understanding determined through this research might be framed as research questions in the future in order to further refine the categories in terms of their characteristics, the conditions under which they arise, their interrelationships, their significance to the development of understanding, etc. If the goal of future research endeavors is to theorize in order to explain and understand the process of communication
between the members of different cultures, the research must focus on what constitutes understanding. It should attempt to develop new categories of understanding as well as further refine those determined in previous research. In other words, research in the immediate future should attempt to refine previous explanations of the properties of intercultural/cross-cultural understanding in order for hypotheses to be developed which can then be tested.

3. Case study research seems a fruitful area for intercultural and cross-cultural communication curriculum development. This particular study attempted to demonstrate in part how some of the individual participants reacted to the curriculum and changed through it during its last weeks. The subjective data sources in future studies could be analyzed not only for recurring patterns across participants during and after the curriculum as was done in this study, but they could also be analyzed longitudinally across individual participants in an effort to compare and contrast their development. Doing so would yield insight into the characteristics and development/lack of development of openness to cultural diversity.

Case study research would also be useful in examining the communication techniques used by curriculum participants in an effort to sketch profiles of what constitutes skill/lack of skill in intercultural communication. This study indicated that participants' communication skills gradually developed during the curriculum as did openness to diversity.
Further research efforts need to be done to examine the multitude of possible relationships between openness to cultural diversity and skill in facilitating understanding.

4. It is strongly recommended that future research which analyzes both the process of communication and the meaning and significance of the experience to the participants be done using the team approach. The chief limitation of this study was that the primary researcher alone occupied the role of the participant researcher. During the data collection phase of the study, the demands of teaching and shaping the curriculum with participants while it was in progress made conducting rigorous participant observation research an impossible task for one person. The teacher/researcher responded extensively in writing to the participants' journal reflections. While doing so provided a very personalized method of teaching and was instrumental in developing the rapport necessary in participant observation research, it consumed so much time that the researcher ended the data collection phase of the study with only a very rough idea of the patterns existing in the secondary data sources. The patterns were not checked out in the rigorous fashion they should have been. Had she had a research partner, this problem would have been ameliorated in part. Due to her inability to constantly play with the patterns which surfaced in the enormous quantity of data that amassed very rapidly, things which should have been done and questions which should have been asked were not.
More interviewing of international students, who in this case did not consistently write journal entries, should have been done so the secondary data sources would not have been skewed toward the American students' subjective responses to the curriculum. The researcher should have asked the students what techniques they felt they had learned when some of them mentioned in the last interview that they had expected a techniques course. She should have asked all of the students to reflect on the same in the course evaluation. While the course did not attempt to teach techniques nor encourage specific reflection upon them, the researcher might have noticed the almost total lack of reflection upon them if she had been able to keep abreast of and rigorously check out the patterns as they emerged in the secondary data sources.

The team approach which was used in this study to analyze the process of communication in addition to the triangulation of the multiple data sources were the study's strengths. The more alternative perspectives and explanations that can be generated in regard to the many variables present in the intercultural/cross-cultural communication process and experience, the better, because they will lead to the development and refinement of theories which are true to the data. Granted, cross-validation of the patterns which emerged from the research team (two of whom had not participated in the curriculum) against those which emerged from the curriculum participants (the students and the teacher/participant observer researcher) was done in this study.
Future studies would be strengthened by a participant observation research team which analyzed both the experience and the process and a team of outside researchers who did not participate in the curriculum but who independently analyzed the process of communication via videotape.

5. Videotaping is of course essential if the process of communication is to be examined. Future research efforts in cross-cultural communication curriculum could engage participants themselves in analyzing the videotapes of the process for indicators of understanding and impediments to it. Part of the curriculum could involve participants in analyzing their own communication with each other or videotapes of previous students engaged in communication with each other. This would serve to further illuminate how the process is interpreted by those who engage in it. Once videotapes are made and analyzed, they become a rich source for future curriculum participants to observe, describe and interpret what is transpiring in the communicative process. The previous analyses of them can be used as alternative or similar ways of viewing or explaining the development of understanding to participants who have more recently analyzed them. In this way, the explanations of how understanding is achieved would be in a constant state of refinement. Any teacher, participant observer researcher or not, is capable of coming to a clearer understanding of the process of communication and likewise bringing his/her students to a better understanding of it through this type of curriculum research project.
6. Lastly, to the researcher's knowledge, this study is the only one which has directly examined the intercultural/cross-cultural communication process itself and the meaning and significance of the experience to those who participated in it. From this position, the author would like to respond to the current theory dilemma facing future researchers in the field of intercultural communication.

From the planning stages of this research in the summer of 1981 to the completion of this dissertation in the fall of 1983, those in the field seem to have shifted positions ever so slightly on research and theory development. The state-of-the-art review of the field before the data collection phase of this study began (Asante, Newmark and Blake, 1979) indicated that observation, description and interpretation of the intercultural communicative process and experience were needed before theorizing. The most recent perspectives on intercultural communication theory (Gudykunst, 1983) indicate the position that it may well be necessary to begin theorizing along with describing if we are to understand the process of communication between people from different cultures and have specific foci or directions for future research efforts.

In beginning the analysis of the process of communication in the summer of 1982 with her fellow researchers, developing a theory of how cross-cultural understanding evolved in this context was not the intent of the researcher. The intent was for the primary researcher and the two outside researchers to
independently examine the process of communication for indicators of understanding. Their descriptions and explanations cross-checked against each other would yield categories of understanding. Those categories could then be cross-validated against what constituted "understanding" in the participants' experiencing of the curriculum. With one of the nine videotapes left to analyze, the research team sat one morning over coffee and theorized. In describing and explaining what people do in trying to reach an understanding of each other, they wanted to, indeed, had to theorize. Without theorizing, they would have been left with the empty feeling of what does it all mean.

The phenomenological/hermeneutic approach to intercultural/cross-cultural communication and the same approach to research is concerned with meaning. The communication curriculum in this study attempted to bring to explicitness the tacit and unexamined meaning structures through which the participants from the diverse cultures interpreted their lived-worlds. The research was concerned with uncovering the common threads of the meaning of the curriculum to the participants. To not have theorized about the way understanding developed between the people in this study would have been to deny the very existence of phenomena as meaningful and integrated in an entire network of meanings.

Meaning is always dependent on context. While meaning may not be generalizable to other contexts, even similar ones, the theory which explains what the criss-crossing patterns that
emerged in this study mean is valid within this context. The participants in this study came to understand the phenomenological/hermeneutic approach to intercultural communication—that to understand each other, the cultural aspects or phenomena they discussed had to be investigated and come to be understood in light of their significance in their respective cultures. If we are to understand how the people of different cultures come to understand one another, future research must investigate the intercultural/cross-cultural communication process and experience in their own rights in light of the particular contexts in which they are meaningful. The commonalities and diversities across different contexts and different theories will ultimately lead to a more definitive theory of intercultural/cross-cultural understanding.

**Significance of the Research**

The study was exploratory. It explored the intercultural/cross-cultural communicative process and experience. It explored the development of understanding between the members of different cultures. It explored methodologies for conducting research aimed at surfacing the processes underlying the development of understanding. It yielded theoretical properties of cross-cultural understanding which are grounded in the data and the context of the curriculum. It allowed the development of research-based curriculum suggestions aimed at fostering cross-cultural understanding.
The study was based on the theoretical framework of phenomenology and hermeneutics. It clearly demonstrates the validity of that framework for cross-cultural communication curriculum and research. The phenomenological/hermeneutic approach to cross-cultural communication curriculum is valid if cross-cultural understanding is the aim of curriculum. The phenomenological/hermeneutic research paradigm is valid if the aim of research is the development of theories and methodologies which have the power to explain the cross-cultural communicative process and experience so that we may understand them. The following discussion will highlight the validity of the theoretical framework of phenomenology and hermeneutics by outlining the significant findings of the study in cross-cultural communication and understanding, research methodologies, and curriculum development.

The interest in applying phenomenology to intercultural communication is in delineating the criteria necessary for intercultural communication. Phenomenologically, intercultural communication presupposes differentiation between cultures, an interactional process of communicating about something of which the interactants must be aware, and establishing a commonness (Pilotta, 1983).

The interest in applying phenomenology to intercultural/cross-cultural communication in this study was in delineating the criteria necessary for intercultural/cross-cultural understanding. The research team which analyzed the process of communication for indicators of understanding between
interactants from diverse cultures found openness to diversity to be the most significant criterion for intercultural/cross-cultural understanding. Openness to diversity was synonymous with lack of defensiveness and acceptance of the validity of the other's perspectives in the parlance of both the research team and the curriculum participants themselves.

Openness to diversity arose out of the confrontation and probing of differences by interactants who attempted to conceptually interpret, clarify, and understand their differences through their own cultural systems of meaning. They gradually came to find their own cultural systems of meaning inadequate for understanding their differences and for explaining them to each other. Near the end of the curriculum they began to attempt to explain their differences through what they had established or through what they interpreted to be their common systems of meaning.

The research clearly indicates that it is through establishing a factual/descriptive base of commonness that participants come to confront and probe their differences at the conceptual/interpretive level. Unless or until they confront and probe their differences and attempt to interpret, clarify and understand them at the conceptual level, understanding will at best be partial, superficial and very thin. The understanding of differences rests on establishing a commonness in the interactional process of communicating about the cultural meaning of the aspects
under discussion. This occurs when some factual/descriptive base of commonness has been established. The likelihood of differences being understood increases when the differences are explained by the interactants through what they understand to be each other's cultural systems of meaning; the ability to do that presupposes an understanding of the meaning structures which they hold in common with each other. Cross-cultural understanding rests on establishing a commonness at the factual/descriptive and at the conceptual/interpretive levels of interaction.

The extraordinary importance of verification and clarification to the development of intercultural/cross-cultural understanding is another of this study's most significant findings. Reciprocal verification and descriptive, semantic, and conceptual clarification on the part of interactants constitute the major properties of cross-cultural understanding and lead to openness to diversity. The analysis of the process of communication produced extensive description of verification and clarification techniques and allowed theoretical hypotheses in regard to their relationships to be developed. If the research design had not provided for the analysis of the process of communication for indicators of understanding, the very techniques through which understanding was achieved would not have been one of the study's findings since the participants themselves did not reflect on these techniques.
The factors which impede openness to communication and interaction with culturally different others are the most significant finding of the analysis of the secondary data sources. These factors are significant because they work in opposition to the development of understanding and they can only be discovered in interactants' subjective responses to their intercultural/cross-cultural communicative experiences. If the research design had not provided for the analysis of the participants' subjective responses to and reflections upon their experiences, these factors would not have been one of the study's findings.

Methodologically this study's significance rested in its ability to develop theory which explained the intercultural/cross-cultural communicative process and experience within the context of the curriculum. The study meets the criteria of those scholars in the field of intercultural communication who call for the development of theories and methodologies which possess the power to explain the intercultural process and experience, which have rarely been studied directly. The study both described and explained. It was not just descriptive; it was both descriptive and interpretative. Based on the theoretical framework and methodology of phenomenology, the study took the character of the cross-cultural communicative experience itself and attempted through the descriptive orientation to point to the logic of the phenomena experienced. The research did not begin with selected empirical features,
categories of phenomena, or hypotheses to be described, analyzed, or tested but rather sought to discern those which would describe the process and the experience and explain them through the integration of common threads of meaning across multiple data sources, participants and researchers.

The triangulation of multiple data sources and researchers increased the primary researcher's confidence in the findings of the study. The videotapes captured the process of communication. It is from these that the categories of understanding were developed. The secondary data sources captured the meaning and significance of the intercultural/cross-cultural experience to the participants. Together the analyses of the primary and secondary data sources addressed intersubjectivity in this context and provided a theory of the development of intersubjective understanding between the members of the diverse cultures in the study.

Having the primary researcher and the two outside researchers independently code the videotapes by developing their own categories of indicators of understanding increased the reliability and validity of the study. Had the primary researcher not had the outside researchers' categories of understanding against which to cross-validate her own, and had she not had the analysis of the process of communication against which to cross-validate the common subjective patterns
in the secondary data, she would have forever wondered to what extent the study's findings were the products of her own creation.

Participant observation research implicates the researcher. Precisely because this researcher was intimately involved as the teacher and the researcher, she felt a personal responsibility to be as true to the data as possible and to include in the analysis all that seemed potentially significant. Experts on participant observation research indicate that the cardinal sin of such research is premature closure. The researcher found in the analysis of data phases of the research that whenever she contemplated premature closure, she could not bring herself to close. To do so would be less than conscientious and less than honest. When the research implicates the researcher to the degree that this study did, being honest with the data and honest with oneself become very nearly one and the same.

Using outside researchers increased the credibility of the findings. Even with outside researchers, the responsibility for interpretation of the analyses of data ultimately rested with the primary investigator. Without outside researchers, however, the primary investigator would have been much more concerned about participant bias in the selection of the data to be analyzed and presented. In this study the outside researchers shared with the primary researcher the responsibility for selecting what was to be analyzed in the process of communication that
was important to the development of understanding. It was then the analysis of the process of communication against which the patterns present in the multiple secondary data sources were checked. The determination of what was significant to the development of understanding in the process of communication as assessed by the research team thus functioned heavily in the primary researcher's selection of the subjective data patterns to be analyzed and presented. The triangulation of multiple researchers and multiple data sources as carried out in this study is its chief methodological significance. The research design allowed the phenomenological/hermeneutic principle of identity and difference to function in the analysis of meaning across multiple curriculum participants, researchers and data sources.

Finally, in terms of curriculum development, the study was firm testimony that understanding resides in the process of communicating and interacting about the content and meaning of various cultural phenomena. Cross-cultural communication curriculum aimed at the development of understanding through interaction must, therefore, focus on both the meaning of cultural content and the process of communication. Communication and interaction about the content and meaning of various cultural phenomena are needed so that students are constantly engaged in establishing what their commonalities and differences are through comparison. Both written and shared oral reflection on the cultural content
under discussion and on the process of communication in which the participants are engaged are likewise required if understanding is the curricular aim.

In conclusion, this research identified criteria necessary for the development of understanding between students and a teacher of different cultural traditions by studying them communicating with each other about their cultures. If we as educators, from policy makers to classroom teachers, are going to cite positive interaction and understanding between the people of different cultural traditions as an aim of education to be fulfilled through curriculum, we need to know what constitutes understanding and how it is achieved. This study provided insight into understanding developed through interaction. The results of the study are theoretical properties of intercultural/cross-cultural understanding generated through descriptions and interpretations of indicators of understanding, categories of understanding, techniques used for achieving understanding, factors affecting understanding, problems in understanding, and the ways understanding was experienced by those who were working to develop it.
APPENDIX A

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION STUDENT CONSENT FORM
CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION STUDENT CONSENT FORM

By consenting to be a participant in the research of Sue Dechow, teacher of Language 42, Cross-Cultural Communication, taught at Ohio Dominican College during the fall of 1981, I understand the following:

that the research is a study of how people from different cultures experience, describe and interpret the process of communication with others;

that the purpose of the research is to help in the future development of curriculum in cross-cultural communication and other curriculum aimed at fostering cross-cultural understanding;

that my participation in the research study is sought so that the descriptions, interpretations, thoughts, opinions, feelings and reflections of all of the Language 42 students may be included in the study;

that information given by me as a participant in the course in the form of journal reflections, classroom discussions, practicum sessions and conferences may be included in the writing of Sue Dechow's dissertation at Ohio State University;

that if it becomes necessary to use names in the writing of the dissertation, my real name will not be used nor will my real name be used in subsequent publishing she may do or talks she may give related to her research;

that two observers from outside Ohio Dominican will view the videotapes of practicum sessions so that their interpretations of the communication process as outsiders to the situation may be compared to ours who actually experienced the communication;

that my decision to participate in the research will in no way affect the grade I receive in the course since the requirements of the course are the same whether I participate or not.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information above and have decided to consent to being a participant.

Signature Date

Signature of researcher
APPENDIX B

ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE STUDENT CONSENT FORM
ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE STUDENT CONSENT FORM

By consenting to be a participant in the research of Sue Dechow, teacher of ESL 38, Conversation II, taught at Ohio Dominican College during the fall of 1981, I understand the following:

that the research is a study of how people from different cultures experience, describe and interpret the process of communication with others;

that the purpose of the research is to help in the future development of curriculum in cross-cultural communication and other curriculum aimed at fostering cross-cultural understanding;

that my participation in the research study is sought so that the descriptions, interpretations, thoughts, opinions, feelings and reflections of all of the ESL 38 students may be included in the study;

that information given by me as a participant in the practicum sessions held with Language 42, Cross-Cultural Communication students, may be included in the writing of Sue Dechow's dissertation at Ohio State University;

that if it becomes necessary to use names in the writing of the dissertation, my real name will not be used nor will my real name be used in subsequent publishing she may do or talks she may give related to her research;

that two observers from outside Ohio Dominican will view the videotapes of practicum sessions so that their interpretations of the communication process as outsiders to the situation may be compared to ours who actually experienced the communication;

that my decision to participate in the research will in no way affect the grade I receive in the course since the requirements of the course are the same whether I participate or not.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information above and have decided to consent to being a participant.

Signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Signature of researcher ___________________________
APPENDIX C
CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION COURSE EVALUATION
CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION COURSE EVALUATION

Final Journal Entry

Please reread your journal for this semester and reflect upon the following in your last journal entry. Be as specific as you can in your reflections.

1. the personal significance of the course to you
2. the value (if any) of keeping a journal
3. the value of the Deer Creek trip
4. how the practicum sessions with the ESL students, your reflections on the sessions and our discussions of them in the cross-cultural communication class helped you come to understand yourself and/or others
5. how our CCC classroom discussions which were not related to the practicum sessions helped you come to understand yourself and/or others
6. things you especially liked and did not like about the course and why
7. what (if anything) as a result of experiencing this time together you wish to carry with you into the future
8. what you think the purpose of the course was
APPENDIX D
INSTRUCTIONS TO VIDEOTAPE CODERS
INSTRUCTIONS TO VIDEOTAPE CODERS

The study you are a part of is an exploratory study in cross-cultural communication curriculum development. Specifically, the purpose of the study is: (1) to examine the process of communication for indicators of understanding between curriculum participants; (2) to describe the conditions and the nature of the participants' reflections in describing and interpreting their experiences related to the curriculum; and (3) to provide suggestions for curriculum development based on the properties of cross-cultural understanding determined through the analysis of the process of communication and the meaning and significance of the curriculum to the participants (1 and 2 above).

The outcome of the study will be recommendations for curriculum development aimed at fostering intersubjective understanding among the members of different cultures. Those recommendations will be grounded in the primary researcher's analysis of participants' experiencing of "understanding" cross-checked against outside observers' analysis of the development of understanding between participants as revealed through videotape. Another outcome of the study will be a description of methods for conducting research aimed at surfacing the processes underlying the development of understanding between the members of diverse cultures.
The aim of the cross-cultural communication curriculum was to develop intersubjective understanding among the members of the different cultures participating in it. You will be viewing these "curriculum participants" in nine videotaped practicum sessions you will be descriptive coding. Specifically, curriculum participants were: the cross-cultural communication students who were both American and international; students from an advanced level English-as-a-second-language conversation class who met in practicum sessions once a week with them to discuss various topics; and the researcher who was also the teacher of both classes.

The primary reason for your being a part of this study is to provide triangulation of multiple researchers in an attempt to reduce researcher bias in the study. The purpose of having outside researchers is to see if patterns exist between the ways participants immersed in the situation perceived the development of understanding and the indicators researchers outside the situation used to determine the same. Thus, your viewing and descriptions of the communicative process captured on videotape should be directed toward how you perceive understanding being developed or not being developed among participants.

The indicators you use to describe phenomena you perceive as pertaining to the development of understanding (eg., nonverbal, linguistic, paralinguistic, semantic, contextual, etc.) as well as the phenomena themselves you
choose to describe (e.g., incidents, behaviors, content, atmosphere, task, mode of discourse, problems, etc.) will be of your own choosing. Throughout the coding, you will be focusing on the total communicative process, attempting to describe those salient features which you perceive to indicate the development of understanding or those which indicate that it is not being developed.

To assist the researcher's effort to establish reliability as well as validity in the study, your task will be to independently develop your own categories of phenomena to describe so that refinement of the preliminary categories established by the researcher will come totally from you. For this reason, the following procedures will be used.

You will first view each tape in its entirety after I have given you background information concerning the task, mode of discourse, and composition of groups you will be viewing in the session. During this initial viewing, you may make brief notes if you wish to remind yourself of phenomena which pertain to the development of understanding or lack of it. However, a cautionary note is needed. I urge you to concentrate on the interaction itself so that you don't miss important aspects of the communication in attempting to make notes. By carefully concentrating during the first viewing on the total communicative process occurring you will be able to recall fairly vividly those aspects which struck you as significant which you wish to code in the second viewing.
After the initial viewing, I want you to reflect on the session and write down the category or categories of phenomena you intend to describe. You will be working independently so there should be no discussion with each other or with me unless it is for clarification of instructions.

During the whole coding process, I want to remain flexible and allow it to proceed at your directives since an important part of this study is an inquiry into the methods that were generated and can be employed in attempting to analyze the processes underlying the development of understanding. The direction for clarification of what we are about will have to come from you. You will need to ask questions in an attempt to clarify rather than my spelling out specifics to you. You are expected and encouraged to make suggestions for proceeding throughout our time together. As stated previously, this is an exploratory study. Just as the statements from diverse cultures and I together explored the process of communicating with each other, so you and I are exploring methods for analyzing that process through the medium of videotape.

By allowing you to view each tape first and independently establish and code your own categories, I am trying to guard against directing you to see as I do and your influencing each other. With three of us independently developing categories, phenomena will be coded in different (or perhaps the same or similar) units of analysis which
will serve to more reliably describe significant characteristics of the communicative process. By examining and discussing the descriptions which fall within our different categories of analysis after independently coding the tapes, we will be able to compare and integrate within and across categories those theoretical properties of "understanding" which we have generated.

The point at which it becomes necessary to compare and discuss those theoretical properties with each other is now unknown. In all probability, it will grow out of your directives combined with my examination of your analyses in relation to my own. Our methods of analyzing the data and comparing our analyses must allow for flexibility which will aid the creative generation of theoretical properties and alternative explanations.

When the coding of all of the tapes is completed, I want to hold a debriefing session with you to recount what we have done in terms of perceived strengths and weaknesses and to generate methodological considerations for future research. It is my hope that your independent reading of these instructions prior to our first coding session will allow us to begin the session with your attempts to clarify those aspects of the procedure as it is now planned which are unclear to you.
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