

Small Cultures

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There is a need to distinguish two paradigms of ‘culture’ in applied linguistics. What has become the default notion of ‘culture’ refers to prescribed ethnic, national and international entities. This *large culture* paradigm is by its nature vulnerable to a culturist reduction of ‘foreign’ students, teachers and their educational contexts. In contrast, a *small culture* paradigm attaches ‘culture’ to small social groupings or activities wherever there is cohesive behaviour, and thus avoids culturist ethnic, national or international stereotyping. Ethnography uses small cultures as the location for research, as an interpretive device for understanding emergent behaviour, rather than seeking to explain prescribed ethnic, national or international difference. A small culture view of English language curriculum settings reveals mismatches between professional-academic and organizational cultures at the mezzo level of the institution; and (small) cultural imperialism is revealed as the invasion of the technologizing discourses connected with instrumental ‘ELT’. Within the small culture *mélange*, culture learning will not necessarily relate to ethnic, national or international difference.

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents a notion of ‘small’ culture as an alternative to what has become the default notion of ‘large’ culture in applied linguistics and much social science and popular usage. Precise definitions will be developed through the paper; but in simple terms, ‘large’ signifies ‘ethnic’, ‘national’ or ‘international’; and ‘small’ signifies any cohesive social grouping. A ‘small culture’ approach thus attempts to liberate ‘culture’ from notions of ethnicity and nation and from the perceptual dangers they carry with them. This use of ‘large’ and ‘small’ is entirely my own; and throughout I will impose the distinction on current usages in the literature.

A motivation for differentiating a ‘small’ sense of culture is a concern with the way in which inter-cultural issues in applied linguistics seem dominated by a ‘large’ culture approach. Within this approach, cultural differences in classroom and curriculum scenarios, the transportation of technologies from the English speaking West, the general question of linguistic and cultural imperialism in global and professional spheres (e.g. Pennycook 1994; Holliday 1994a; Phillipson 1992), and the learning of culture in language education (e.g. Byram and Morgan 1994; Kramsch 1993), have been placed around ‘large’ ethnic, national and international cultural differences. Large culture difference is also taken as the basic unit in influential cross-cultural management studies (e.g. Hofstede 1991). In opposition, it can be argued that this large culture approach results in reductionist overgeneralization and

otherization of 'foreign' educators, students and societies (Holliday 1994b, 1997a, 1999). What is happening in applied linguistics is characteristic of a broader tendency within post-colonial and inter-ethnic discourses (e.g. Sarangi 1995: 10–14, Baumann 1996).

Another motivation is that the two notions of 'culture' already seem to exist in both academic and popular usage but are often not recognized as distinct. It is therefore necessary to impose the 'large-small' distinction to clarify some of the confusion which has collected around 'culture'. It is not my intention to argue that 'culture' really means X rather than Y, but to clarify what we mean when we use the word in different ways for different purposes.

An orientation in my discussion is Berger and Luckmann's sociology of knowledge (1967). I will thus consider how 'culture' is socially constructed as a 'reality' in applied linguistics, and the nature of the 'knowledge' which this construction precipitates. 'Culture' shall therefore be 'so-called' throughout. Borrowing Berger and Luckmann's sentiment (*ibid.*: 14), quotation marks should be put around 'culture' whenever the term is used; but this would be 'stylistically awkward' and therefore not done unless the sense necessitates.

I shall first look at how large and small notions of culture relate to each other, then at the limitations of a large culture approach followed by the merits of a small culture approach. In the last part I shall take an English language curriculum scenario as an example, and examine how cultural imperialism and culture learning may operate at the mezzo level of the institution. The nature of small culture formation and the role of ethnography will also be examined. Although this paper is about the use of 'culture' in applied linguistics, reference will be made to the 'parent' discussion within the social sciences. At the same time, what is said about applied linguistics will also be of relevance to social science, and to ethnography in particular.

TWO CULTURES

On asking both academics and non-academics what they mean by 'culture', one will invariably find that they first refer to 'large' entities such as British, Indonesian, Western or European cultures. However, at other times one may also hear people referring to 'small' entities such as hospital, research, family, office or organization cultures. When asked how these two types of culture relate to each other, some people say that the 'large' usage is the correct one and that the 'small' usage is metaphorical. Others say that the small cultures are 'sub-cultures'. Casual observation thus gives the impression that when asked, people will state 'large' culture, but will often use 'small' culture as an unmarked form¹.

Between as well as within

It is important to distinguish between small culture and sub-culture. 'Sub-culture', although implying something small, seems to be essentially a large

culture concept because it implies something within and subservient to a particular large ethnic, national or international culture. Within the Chicago school, sub-cultures have been defined as 'social groups which are perceived to deviate from the normative ideals of adult communities' (Thornton 1997: 2). In the Birmingham school, where social deviance is perhaps less on the agenda, sub-cultures are still considered as elements in ideological tension with 'parent' or 'dominant' large cultures within which they exist (Gelder 1997: 84–5). Such sub-sets of large cultures may indeed exist. Different to this notion of subcultures, small cultures do not necessarily have this Russian doll or onion-skin relationship with parent large cultures. For example, school, classroom, teacher and other education (small) cultures can extend beyond the boundaries of larger cultures (of say nation) where they are related to international education cultures (Holliday 1994a: 29). There are secondary school classrooms all over the world with very similar seating arrangements and teacher-student behaviour, despite national culture difference (Poppleton and Riseborough 1990). That similarities between classrooms may be a result of global colonial or post-colonial European cultural influence does not denigrate their existence as real classrooms. Hence this conclusion to an ethnography of a girls' secondary school in Cairo:

It is Egypt, it is the East, it is also a developing country. But it is also humanity. Beyond my initial fascination with the exotic protocol, drills, sounds and system, it became just an ordinary school. [. . .] I cannot count the times I felt myself transformed over six thousand miles and more than a decade away to the parochial school in downtown San Francisco that I attended as a child. Superficially the two schools are vastly different. [. . .] Yet despite their specific features [one can] [. . .] join them together in the world community of schools. (Herrera 1992: 80–1)

Clark and Ivanic give the similar example of 'similarities in the contexts of culture of two individual hospitals in different countries' to support the notion that national and institutional contexts should not be thought of as being 'in a hierarchical relationship' (1997: 68). Small cultures can thus run between as well as within related large cultures. Other small cultures which are not contained within large cultures are those which can be formed at the interface between older cultures. For example, 'middle cultures' can be formed across national cultural boundaries between tourists and 'local' people, teachers and expatriate curriculum developers, foreign language students and 'native-speaker' teachers, and researchers and their subjects. They are created for long or short duration to provide ground on which the dealing between the two parties takes place (Holliday and Hoose 1996). Another example, which shall be taken up in detail below is where people from different national groups come together to form a work or leisure small culture of their own. Multinational organization cultures would fall into this category.

Kramsch (1993: 235) speaks of something similar to middle cultures in the creation of 'a third culture' where people travel between or experience two cultures. However, she implies that these "'border" experiences' (ibid.) relate to the default entity of national culture, on the edge of which they form as anomalies. The 'third culture' is thus between two large cultures; and its conceptualization is large in orientation. In contrast, small cultures, no matter how temporary, are not anomalous, are not subservient to large cultures, and constitute a seamless *mélange* which stretches across national boundaries.

Two paradigms

The notion of small culture does not therefore relate simply to something smaller in size than large ethnic, national or international cultures, but presents a different paradigm through which to look at social groupings. The small culture paradigm, set against the large culture paradigm is summarized in Table 1. The idea of small cultures (central column) is non-essentialist in that it does not relate to the essences of ethnic², national or international entities. Instead it relates to any cohesive social grouping with no necessary subordination to large cultures. Table 1 also distinguishes a research orientation for each paradigm. 'Research' is used here in the broadest sense, as any academic or non-academic process of learning about culture. Non-academic cultural research is naturally carried out by anyone 'approaching' an unfamiliar social grouping in the sense of Schutz' 'stranger', 'who has to place in question nearly everything that seems unquestionable to the members of the approached group' (1962: 96). In cultural research, small cultures are thus a heuristic means in the process of interpreting group behaviour. The idea of large cultures (right hand column), in contrast, is essentialist in that it relates to the essential differences between ethnic, national and international entities. Because the large culture paradigm begins with a prescriptive desire to seek out and detail differences which are considered the norm, and because it aims to explain behaviour in these terms, it tends to be *culturist*—a notion which I shall take up later.

'Small' is therefore not just a matter of size, but of the degree of imposition on reality. Whereas the large culture notion imposes a picture of the social world which is divided into 'hard', essentially different ethnic, national or international cultures, the small culture notion leaves the picture open, finding 'softer' 'cultures' in all types of social grouping, which may or may not have significant ethnic, national or international qualities. In this sense, the focus of a large culture approach is what makes cultures, which everyone acknowledges as existing, essentially different to each other. In contrast, a small culture approach is more concerned with social processes as they emerge.

Table 1: Two paradigms

	Small cultures	Large cultures
Character	non-essentialist, non-culturist relating to cohesive behaviour in activities within any social grouping	essentialist, culturist 'culture' as essential features of ethnic national or international group
Relations	no necessary subordination to or containment within large cultures, therefore no onion-skin	small (sub)cultures are contained within and subordinate to large cultures through onion-skin relationship
Research orientation	interpretive, process interpreting emergent behaviour within any social grouping heuristic model to aid the process of researching the cohesive process of any social grouping	prescriptive, normative beginning with the idea that specific ethnic, national and international groups have different 'cultures' and then searching for the details (e.g. what is polite in Japanese culture)

Large culture as reified small culture

As different paradigms, a large culture and small culture approach will not only see the social world in different ways; they will also have views about each other. Hence, the large culture paradigm will see *a* small, non-ethnic or non-national culture, in terms of size, as a sub-part or metaphorical derivation of large culture. This vision would be the default academic and popular position referred to above. Alternatively, there is a literature, which I classify as within a small culture paradigm, in which non-essentialist small culture is seen as the original notion, of which large culture is a reification.

The principle of reification is developed by Berger and Luckmann as a basic force in social life. It involves:

the apprehension of the products of human activity *as if* they were something other than human products—such as the facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will. (1967: 107)

This can relate to roles, identities and institutions—as in institutionalization (*ibid.*: 108). In the case of culture, reification takes place where the notion of culture has been constructed for the purpose of explaining human behaviour,

but is then institutionalised into something that exists over and above human behaviour. Thus, the non-essentialists argue that:

Culture is not a real thing, but an abstract and purely analytical notion. It does not cause behaviour, but summarises an abstraction from it, and is thus neither normative nor predictive. [. . .] The anthropologist's abstraction of a perpetually changing process of meaning-making is replaced by a reified entity that has a definite substantive content and assumes the status of a thing that people 'have' or are 'members of'. (Baumann 1996: 11–12, citing Rothschild)

Then, after reification:

Both specialists and nonspecialists are prone to talk about 'a culture' as if it could be a causative agent ('their culture leads them to go on vision quests') or a conscious being ('X culture values individuality'). (Keesing 1981: 72)

As a result of this reification:

How often, still, do I hear my colleagues and students talk as if 'a culture' was an agent that could do things; or as if 'a culture' was a collectivity of people. [. . .] I fear that our common ways of talk channel our thought in these directions. [. . .] It has passed into popular discourse. [. . .]. I recently heard a radio announcer in Australia talk about 'the different cultures living in our area'. (Keesing 1981: 302–3)

There is thus a change in the way in which culture is used to think about human behaviour. After reification, culture appears large and essentialist, and indicates concrete, separate, behaviour-defining ethnic, national and international groups with material permanence and clear boundaries.

Although the non-essentialists may think otherwise, reification is not in any way a 'perversion' or 'a sort of cognitive fall from grace', but a natural social process common in theoretical and non-theoretical thought (Berger and Luckmann 1967: 107). 'Our conception of culture almost irresistibly leads us into reification and essentialism' (Keesing 1994: 302). One could say that reifying large culture from small culture comprises an inescapable occupational hazard in cultural analysis. 'Many scholars now acknowledge that *any* definition of culture is necessarily reductionist' (Sarangi 1995, my emphasis). Furthermore, in a world in which almost all perceptions are socially constructed, the concept of 'large culture' is as real as anything else. My purpose in suggesting that large culture is a reification is not therefore to reveal it as false. It is rather to increase awareness of what its conceptualization involves, and, as will be demonstrated below, some of its ideological implications—in Fairclough's words, 'essentially making visible the inter-connectedness of things' (1995: 36).

THE DIFFICULTY WITH LARGE CULTURES

Having looked at the ways in which the small and large culture paradigms relate to each other, some of the more problematic aspects of the large culture paradigm will now be considered.

Nation, centres and peripheries

The notion of large culture supports various spheres of political interest. One such is the building of the concept of the material nation. European justifications of colonization through simplistic cultural definitions of subject peoples is well catalogued (Morawska and Spohn 1994; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Asad 1973; Nzimiro 1979; Sarangi 1995). 'Conventional anthropology allowed "the power of topography to conceal successfully the topography of power"' (Schudson 1994: 37, citing Gupta and Ferguson). This has continued in a post-colonialist era with 'unequal narratives' creating an 'unreciprocal interpretation of other [. . .] non-Western cultures' (Sarangi 1995 citing Asad and Said). Equating nation with homogeneous ideas of large culture also supported the conceptual development of European nations themselves. It may be true that 'most sociologists and historians do not take culture to be the central integrative mechanism for national societies' (Schudson 1994: 23). Nevertheless, a 'methodological nationalist' sociology can be seen as a product of nineteenth-century nationalism (ibid.: 21). This creation of 'national-level "imagined communities"' and attaching 'culture' to nation can also be considered as part of a process of 'modernity' (Dobbin 1994: 124³) and to have continued and 'flourished during the conservative era of Thatcherism and Reaganism' (Keesing 1994: 307). In particular, Sakamoto notes how 'Chicago school Japanologist scholars [. . .] argue that "Japan" or "the Japanese" are a social imaginary' constructed through discursive activities (1996: 113, citing Haratootian and Sakai).

Essentialist large culture is however no longer a European notion. Indeed, 'others' are often more insistent in talking about 'in our culture' than 'we' are. This may be partly because it:

has passed into the cultural nationalist discourse of Third World élites [. . .] so that the cultural heritage of a people or a postcolonial nation can be represented by its fetishized material forms and performances: 'traditional dress', dances, artifacts. So transformed, 'it'—the cultural heritage, semiotically condensed [. . .] can be deployed in rituals of state, art festivals, tourist performances, and political appearances to reaffirm that 'it' survives despite Westernisation [. . .]. The third World has inherited these European semiotic systems [. . .] The crowning irony that our own conceptual diseases should be deployed against us. (Keesing 1994: 306–7).

This may be the reason why it is sometimes very hard to discourage, e.g. English teachers from all parts of the world from talking over-simplistically about 'the situation in country X culture'. Furthermore:

'Culture', so essentialised and reified, can serve as an ideal symbol to deploy against foreign researchers, who can be pilloried for having stolen 'it', having sold 'it' for profit in the academic marketplace, or simply [. . .] having misunderstood and misrepresented 'it'. Is this 'culture' of cultural studies 'culture' as we anthropologists have conceptualised it? (Keesing 1994: 303)

Culture has therefore become reified and essentialized as a political tool by different parties at different times 'as both dominant and dominated groups often resort to the culture card in managing their power-maintaining and power-acquiring purposes' (Sarangi 1994: 416). Moeran (1996) notes how Japanese business has adopted the images of Japan projected by the West (e.g. of sumo wrestlers and geisha) to help sell its products back to the West.

Understanding the reified nature of large culture is important in evaluating a currently influential essentialist discourse in applied linguistics—the centre-periphery paradigm relating to cultural imperialism. This paradigm suggests that English, representing Western centre (large) culture, is achieving global hegemony over developing world, periphery (large) cultures. Instrumental in this process is the (large) culturally Western methodology of language education, with its 'phonocentric' orientation (Pennycook 1994). This argument has been criticized as over-generalized (Holliday 1997a, 1999), especially as Western education is itself significantly culturally diverse (Bloor and Bloor 1991, Sharpe 1993, 1995). The general centre-periphery argument is also weakened if, through reification, the 'notion of a hegemonic global culture dispensing its products to the world's peripheries' is 'more often assumed than described' (Ahmed and Donnan 1994: 3). In contrast to the large culture approach, a non-essentialist small culture interpretation would support the view that:

Even though the same cultural 'message' may be received in different places, it is domesticated by being interpreted and incorporated according to local values [. . .] Cultural flows do not necessarily map directly on to economic and political relationships, which means that the flow of cultural traffic can often be in many directions simultaneously. (ibid., citing Parkin and Featherstone)

Another criticism of the large culture paradigm is that the world is becoming an increasingly cosmopolitan, multi-cultural place where cultures are less likely to appear as large coherent geographical entities. Late modern societies become 'notable for their lack of cultural coherence or "loose boundedness"' (Crane 1994: 3, citing Merelman).

Whether or not the centre-periphery argument is based on reified large cultures is perhaps immaterial, as such large cultures are perhaps as real in our socially constructed society as any other perception. If this notion of a composite, homogeneous ethnic, national or international large culture is indeed constructed for us by nationalistic governments, then the centre-

periphery discourse, in attempting to reveal one cultural hegemony, is falling foul of another one. It is not therefore succeeding in seeing as critically as it claims. Indeed, the centre-periphery paradigm, because of its essentialism, may be serving to reduce rather than liberate the so-called periphery.

Reduction, the other and culturism

A significant characteristic of reification is that the concept in question becomes relatively fixed in the people's minds. Hence, the apparent 'patterns and order' of these so-called concrete groups are 'exaggerated or unduly emphasized' at the expense of the 'variations and variability' which might blur their boundaries (Vayda 1994: 320). 'A culture' thus becomes the "'tagged and tied luggage of isolated groups'" (Baumann 1996: 189, citing Yabsley). It:

seems to connote a certain coherence, uniformity and timelessness in the meaning systems of a given group, and to operate rather like the earlier concept of 'race' in identifying fundamentally different, essentialised, and homogenous social units (as when we speak about 'a culture'). Because of these associations, [. . .] (it) falsely fixes the boundaries between groups in an absolute way. (ibid.: 10–11, citing Lutz and Abou-Lughod)

The comparison with 'race' implies the possibility of a similarly constructed *culturism*, in which the members of a group to which an ethnic, national or international large cultural label has been attached are perceived as confined and *reduced* to pre-defined characteristics. Indeed, a methodology of culturism is evident in large culture research (Figure 1). A prescribed, normative concern with a certain type of large cultural difference (bubble [a]) leads in stages to an exaggeration of those differences resulting in *otherisation* (bubble [f]). Otherisation can be defined as the process whereby the 'foreign' is reduced to a simplistic, easily digestible, exotic or degrading stereotype. The 'foreign' thus becomes a degraded or exotic 'them' or safely categorized 'other' (Holliday 1994b, 1996b, 1997a). Said (1993) explains how such a process contributes to cultural imperialism across global society:

Labels like 'Indian' or 'woman' or 'Muslim' or 'American' are no more than starting points. [However] imperialism consolidated' the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale; but its worse and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively White, Black or Western or Oriental. It is more rewarding and more difficult to think about others than only about *us*.

Examples of this can be seen in 'excuses' for colonialist and post-colonialist conceptualizations—hence:

The passivity ascribed to Hindu men and egoless subjection ascribed to women under patriarchal dominance are in miniature aspects of the

governability of India—two favourable conditions among others for colonial rule. (Sangari 1994: 54);

and in an arguably emergent Western consensus that Islam has replaced Communism as the ‘Great Satan’:

phrases like ‘The English’ or ‘The Arabs’ or ‘The Americans’ or ‘The Africans’, each of them suggesting not only a whole culture but a specific mind-set. It is very much the case today that in dealing with the Islamic world—all one billion people in it [. . .]—American or British academic intellectuals speak reductively and, in my view, irresponsibly of something called ‘Islam’. (Said 1993)

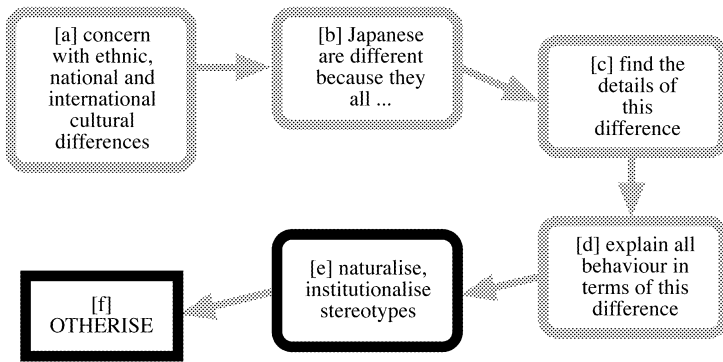


Figure 1: Culturist methodology

There is a parallel process of otherisation and reduction at work *within* modern multi-cultural societies. It feeds ‘the ideology underlying the construction of minority group cultures based on the principle of differences’ (Sarangi 1995: 11). In the case of ethnic minorities in Britain:

Ethnic reductionism seemed to reign supreme [. . .] [and] whatever any ‘Asian’ informant was reported to have said or done was interpreted with stunning regularity as a consequence of their ‘Asianness’, their ‘ethnic identity’, or the ‘culture’ of their ‘community’ (Baumann 1996: 1).

Baumann goes on to argue that there is thus a ‘dominant discourse’ of ‘culture’ in the British government, media and popular parlance which:

relies on equating community, culture, and ethnic identity, and its protagonists can easily reduce anybody’s behaviour to a symptom of

this equation. [. . .] It can even claim to speak ‘for’ them, ‘represent’ them, explain them to others. (ibid.: 6)⁴

The notion of culture is thus hijacked by a new ‘ethnopolitics’ which “stresses, ideologises, reifies, modifies, and sometimes virtually re-creates the putatively distinctive and unique cultural heritages of the ethnic groups that it mobilises” (ibid.: 11–12, citing Rothschild).

It would seem that the centre-periphery argument contributes to this otherising dominant large culture discourse, at an international rather than ethnic level. The notion of ‘Western’ versus, say, ‘Chinese culture’ succeeds not so much in an exposé of an imperialist ‘linguicism’ as in an otherisation or tribalization of the victim ‘cultures’ by reducing them to peripheral, non-thinking automata (Holliday 1994b). Again it needs to be emphasized that this does not mean that the centre-periphery protagonists *intend* to otherise the inhabitants of ‘other cultures’. However, because they are caught within the natural social forces of reification, arbiters of ‘culture’ need to be wary of the power they wield. I shall return to the issue of dominant discourse, as it may be addressed within the small culture approach, later.

SMALL CULTURES

If large cultures are reified small cultures, what can small cultures be if they are not essentialized into descriptions of prescribed ethnic, national and international entities?

‘A process of making and remaking’

Within the small culture paradigm, ‘culture’ refers to the composite of cohesive behaviour within any social grouping, and not to the differentiating features of prescribed ethnic, national and international entities. Distant from the large culture approach, which takes ethnic, national and international groupings as the default (Table 1), small cultures can be any social grouping from a neighbourhood to a work group (Beales *et al.* 1967: 8). The nature of small cultures is particularly well illustrated in Baumann’s ethnography of the cosmopolitan *mélange* of the Southall suburb of London. A major observation in this work is the variety of ways in which ‘culture’ is perceived and dealt with in the suburb. On asking local people what was meant by ‘culture’, one group asserted that “‘It depends what community you mean’” (1996: 3). The Southallians use the terms ‘culture’ to refer to different entities at different times and, dependent on topic, to the extent that a fixed definition of anyone’s notion of ‘my culture’ was very difficult to track down (ibid.: 4–5). Indeed:

The vast majority of all adult Southallians [each] saw themselves as members of several *communities*, each, with its own *culture*. The same person could speak and act as a member of the Muslim *community* in one context, in another take sides against other Muslims as a member

of the Pakistani *community*, and in a third count himself part of the Punjabi *community* that excluded other Muslims but included Hindus, Sikhs, and even Christians. (ibid.: 5, his italics)

Within this complex of social groupings, not only do individuals align themselves to different cultures at different times, there are also considerable:

renegotiations of *culture* and *community* [. . .] [which] all form part of what anthropologists conceive culture to be in the first place: a process of making and remaking collective sense of changing social facts. (1996: 189, his italics)

Small culture is thus a dynamic, ongoing group process which operates in changing circumstances to enable group members to make sense of and operate meaningfully within those circumstances. When a researcher looks at an unfamiliar social grouping, it can be said to have a small culture when there is a discernible set of behaviours and understandings connected with group cohesion. The dynamic aspect of small culture is central to its nature, having the capacity to exist, form and change as required. According to Beales *et al.*, 'the outstanding characteristic of a cultural system is that it is in process; it moves' (1967: 5). Small culture is thus 'the sum total of all the processes, happenings, or activities in which a given set or several, sets of people habitually engage' (ibid.: 9). Thus, small culture constitutes a social 'tool-kit' which emerges to 'solve problems' when required (Crane 1994: 11). Moreover, it involves an underlying competence in which 'people are not passive "cultural dopes"; they are active, often skilled users' (ibid.: 11). A good example of this is the classroom group where a small culture will form from scratch when the group first comes together, each member using her or his culture-making ability to form rules and meanings in collaboration with others.

Figure 2 illustrates the complex factors in the formation of small culture. The bubbles in the figure are numbered for ease of reference. However, one thing does not necessarily happen before another. Bubble [i] represents the basic social and psychological function of culture as a process, which is a well established theme running through most definitions of 'culture' and does not need to be deconstructed here (e.g. Holliday 1994a: 23). Bubble [ii] represents social continuity. It needs to be remembered that although small culture may be formed rapidly

cultures, even in their most individualised practices, result also from validations of a past. Culture-making is not an *ex tempore* improvisation, but a project of social continuity placed within, and contending with, moments of social change. (Baumann 1996: 31)

Thus, in the case of an aeroplane crew, 'the men in the crew form the group or society and the airplane constitutes a sort of combined environment' which provides a wider tradition and history (Beales *et al.* 1967: 10). In the newly forming small culture of the classroom group, each member will bring small

culture *residues* from other educational, classroom, collegial and peer experiences. Indeed, it is this characteristic of small culture which underlines its *non-essentialist, non-culturist* nature (Table 1). In a classroom group made up of a range of nationalities which are common in foreign language or postgraduate English language education groups in Britain, cultural residues will be brought from many 'national' or 'ethnic' experiences; but commonalities of educational, classroom, collegial and peer experience from all these contexts will be the building blocks for the new small culture.

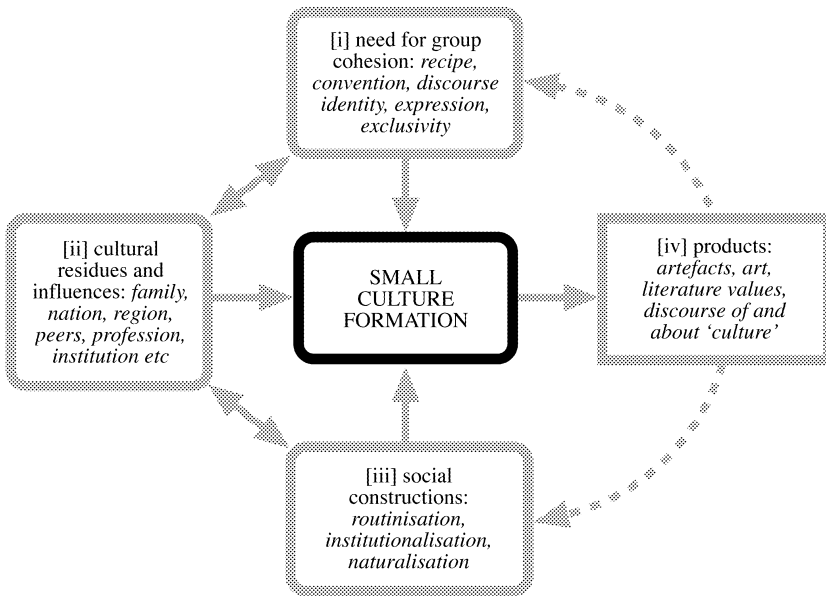


Figure 2: Small culture formation

Implicit in bubble [ii] is an interaction with an existing environment, perhaps in a Darwinian sense, not necessarily of an ongoing improvement, but of dialogue (Coleman 1996b). Especially in international English language education, this environment ceases to be purely national or 'ethnic' as professional-academic institutional and peer influences stretch across international boundaries (Holliday 1994a: 29).

Mezzo activity

It is what the newly forming class group *does* which enables the researcher to discern the process of small culture. In one such case, a multinational group of

masters students in applied linguistics appeared to fulfil its need for cohesion (bubble [i], Figure 2) by creating a convention for holding birthday parties for members. Part of the recipe for doing this, which reduced the need for ongoing negotiation, was always to use the classroom as venue, invite tutors at short notice and provide inexpensive soft drinks and decorative 'party food'. The parties themselves helped to forge a very cohesive identity and enabled group expression and exclusivity by clearly defining who could come to the parties. Evidence of cultural residues and influences (bubble [ii]) was seen in the influence of various 'national' cuisines in the food provided, dominated perhaps by a Japanese orientation to tidy minimalism, a British academic informality in the fairly casual way in which tutors were invited, a definite collegiality which might have derived from notions of both close-knit studentship, evident in several of the societies represented, and a professional bond—for all were language teachers—and influence of the local institution arrangement which enabled almost all classes for this group to be held in the same room.

Small culture is thus more to do with activities taking place within a group than with the nature of the group itself:

I have found it theoretically helpful to think of both culture and language as rooted in human activities (rather than in societies) and as pertaining to groups. [. . .] There is a different culture of the activity for each set of role performers. These differences form a part of the cultural makeup of the overall group of people who perform the activity, but there is no one culture of that activity for the group as a whole, one that all its members share. [. . .] The cultural makeup of a society is thus to be seen not as a monolithic entity determining the behaviour of its members, but a *mélange* of understandings and expectations regarding a variety of activities that serve as guides to their conduct and interpretation. (Goodenough 1994: 266–7)

Seeing small culture as rooted in activities enables us to apply 'culture' not only to the processes that give cohesion to group behaviour, but also to the processes that give cohesion to any behaviour, as long as it involves groups. Thus, academic disciplines can be said to have small cultures (Stonequist 1937; Kuhn 1970; Esland 1971, Bernstein 1971; Tomley 1980; Goodson 1988; Holliday 1994a), as can methodology. This importance of looking at classroom teaching, research and evaluation methodologies in language education as small cultures shall be seen below.

Focusing on activities places small culture research at a mezzo level. The benefits of mezzo analysis, set mid-way between the micro and macro at the level of institution, have been acknowledged in several places—Morawski and Spohn's (1994) account of the study of culture in historical sociology, Hargreaves' attention to 'intermediary processes' such as school ethos and institutional bias (1986: 170) and teacher cultures (1992) in education, and Holliday's (1994a) focus on professional-academic institutional conflict in

international language education. In applied linguistics, Fairclough takes this direction in a substantial way when he focuses critical discourse analysis on 'the institution as a "pivot" between the highest level of social structuring, that of the "social formation" and the most concrete level, that of the particular social event or action' (1995: 37). Roberts, in her investigation of inter-cultural understanding and European immigrants, also focuses on the institution:

Critical and interactional sociolinguistic perspectives come together in the study of institutional discourse. For the great majority of informants [. . .] institutional encounters represent the only occasion of extended contact with the white majority. (1996: 230)

Also, Clark and Ivanic (1997) seem to set much of their analysis of the 'contexts of culture' surrounding writing at a mezzo level.

The process of naturalization, or routinization, in small culture formation (bubble [iii], Figure 2), in which behaviour which is socially constructed for the sake of group cohesion becomes routine, is perceived best at the mezzo level. In the case of the masters group this process can be seen as the birthday parties quickly become an institution in their own right. This process is also central to Fairclough's analysis of how ideological representations become naturalized into taken-for-granted, normal, non-ideological aspects of everyday discourse (1995: 28). Although he speaks primarily about the use of language, within a Marxist construct of political oppression, useful insight into the social construction of small culture is provided. Naturalization works in a similar way to reification. However, whereas reification involves forgetting the 'unreal' nature of heuristic cultural analysis, naturalization involves making a social construction 'normal' and taken-for-granted.

Small culture and discourse

The relationship between small culture and discourse is clearly strong. Fairclough's 'order of discourse' as a 'totality of discursive practices of an institution, and relations between them' (1995: 135) and 'genre' as 'a socially ratified way of using language in connection with a particular type of social activity' (ibid.: 14) are clearly related to small culture dynamics. His reference to professional and organizational (small) cultural change brought about by the invasion of 'technologised discourse' (ibid.: 100) is more obviously so.

Figure 2 has discourse in two of its bubbles connected with small culture formation. In bubble [i] discourse as a regulator goes along with the need for recipe and convention—underlying routine talk about birthday parties in the masters group. In bubble [iv] discourse is one of the products of small culture. Thus, a technologizing discourse of language teaching methodology may not only be instrumental in the strength of the regime of the professional-academic small culture of instrumental 'ELT' (Holliday 1999), but also a major product of this small culture represented in its stated values, literature and

other forms of dissemination. Similarly, the influence of the technologizing discourse of quality control may be seen to have created discernible change in the small culture of the British university sector, or of individual institutions within it. It is also a major output, featuring strongly in its expressed values, promotional literature and educational output. Also, the academic discourse of such new disciplines as applied linguistics is both regulatory and an outward show of academic quality (Holliday 1999). Figure 2 also shows that discourse in bubble [iv] has a return influence on the set of small culture needs in bubble [i] as pride of cultural product encourages cohesion, especially where the discourse is technologized, facing like Janus, as both internal regulator and proselytizer.

The precise relationship between discourse and small culture is connected to that between language and culture, which is an area in which caution must be practised. Sarangi warns against a Whorfian approach in which:

language is contained within and reducible to culture, thus denying language its [own] reality-constructing role. [. . .] [and] 'culture' comes to be treated as the least observable category of non-behaviour [where] 'culture is that residual realm left over after all forms of observable human behaviour have been removed'. (1994: 410, citing Wuthnow *et al.*)

This is culture as the easy, default explanation for all differences. To overcome this, Sarangi, citing Sherzer, suggests a

discourse-centred approach [. . .] [in which] discourse has to be considered as the concrete expression of the language-culture relationship because it is discourse that 'creates, recreates, focuses, modifies, and transmits both culture and language and their interaction'. (1994: 414)

Thus, once again, it is at the mezzo level of discourse that cultural issues can best be untangled. Sarangi recommends Fairclough's critical discourse analysis as the ideal tool in this untangling, in that it 'pays adequate attention to the dialectic relationship between social structures and linguistic practices' at the institutional level (*ibid.*: 414).

A notion which has become popular in applied linguistics, influenced partly by the sub-discipline of English for specific purposes, which incorporates many of the social attributes of discourse, is 'discourse community'. In many ways the discourse community *is* a small culture. The two concepts are not always interchangeable however. In some small cultures, e.g. the more established professional, corporate and academic cultures, that they are also discourse communities will be one of their central features. In these cases, technical, if not technologized discourses will be important regulators of thought, behaviour and expression. Also, in less-established cultures, such as that of the birthday party, discourse may play a major role. However, in other types of small culture, discourse may play a less important role, e.g. the

culture of the escalators in the London Underground, where, although discourse may make occasional regulatory appearances, for much of the time, for most of the participants, standing on the right and moving on the left will be a discourse-free routine initiated and built through observation of others.

The interest of the researcher will often be instrumental in how far discourse becomes a focus for small culture analysis. Applied linguists see 'small culture' as 'discourse community' because they are primarily interested in language. In these cases, the current developing discourse in applied linguistics about discourse communities can both inform and learn from the slightly broader notion of small culture, and vice versa. For example, Roberts and Sarangi (1997), in their work on oral examinations for medical general practitioners, suggest that 'institutional', 'professional' and 'life-world' discourses interact in such a way that they can be said to 'lamine' together to form new, 'hybrid' discourses. In a very similar vein, Rogerson-Revell (1997) talks of a 'lamination of cultures' in the sense of 'groups within groups' within the inter-cultural *mélange* of an international airline in Hong Kong, where 'ethnic differences are only one possible factor'. Both studies are concerned with mezzo institutional settings; and I suspect that 'culture' rather than 'discourse' is used in the latter only because there is a beginning perception of large culture difference, which ironically proves a red-herring. Might it be the case that 'discourse' is used by Roberts and Sarangi rather than 'culture' because there is no perception of large culture difference? A residue of essentialist onion-skin thinking (above) can be discerned in their use of 'hybrid', which implies that entities newly formed *between* established discourses, or cultures, cannot procreate.

An important aspect of bubble [iv] in Figure 2 is that group members' statements *about* 'culture' or 'their culture' should be seen as products or artefacts *of* the culture, expressing how they socially construct their image of their own culture, rather than a direct description of their culture. For example Tong (in preparation) suggests that Chinese teachers' statements about the influence of Confucianism on their students' behaviour represent not so much a Confucianist Chinese (large) culture, but the way in which Confucianism is *used* to explain student behaviour within the teachers' (small) culture. Hence, Baumann's ethnographic interest in what Southallians *say about* and *do with* 'culture' as evidence of how 'culture' is constructed within the culture he is investigating (above). Seeing projected images of 'culture' as artefact and cultural product in this way tells us something about the way in which notions of large culture are reified, and dominant discourses of culture are set up.

A device to help us understand

It is important now to return to the important, yet complex side of the small culture paradigm in which culture is not part of the real substance of social life, but a heuristic model to help understand cohesive behaviour:

As a deliberate abstraction it is there to help anthropologists conceptualise that ever-changing 'complex whole' through which people engage in the continual process of accounting, in a mutually meaningful manner, for what they do, say, and might think. (Baumann 1996: 11, citing Tyler)

This is a difficult concept to digest because while we are told that culture is an 'abstraction', everything else that we hear, both in academic and popular parlance, suggests that cultures, whether small or large, are concrete realities. An answer to this conundrum lies partly in the way in which ethnography deals with small cultures within an interpretive paradigm.

In contrast to the large culture approach (Table 1), interpretive ethnography does not, positivistically, develop knowledge of the details of a prescribed culture. It describes culture (Spradley 1980: 3), but this description of culture is the instrument of an interest in a particular social issue (ibid.: 18). The first step in the ethnographic process is to locate a social situation which enables research into this social issue (ibid.: 39). Thus, the location and boundaries of 'the culture' are instrumental to the research question. 'The culture' must thus be relevant and researchable. For example, Anderson sets out to investigate aspects of group work in language teaching. Because he wishes to look at group work within the social setting of the classroom, he chooses an ethnographic approach; and for this reason, takes the small culture of the classroom as the location (1997). To be able to do this, the classroom needs to have the social features which enable it to be a small culture; and as such, the small culture really does exist as a social fact, according to the sociological definitions of culture (embodied in Figure 2). It is important to note that the ethnography which selects a particular culture for study is *applied*, in that it is tuned towards understanding something specific—e.g. the factors which influence classroom group work.

Figure 3 illustrates this process. Initially, the social world is perceived as a seamless *mélange* of complex behaviours. This is perception central to interpretive ethnography. The researcher does not presume to define, a priori, the social world in one way or another, and is thus scientifically humble to its complexity. The selection of social setting ([x] in Figure 3) involves taking a section of this *mélange* and drawing an operational boundary around it. The social setting has to contain the elements of small culture ([y] in the figure). However, the grouping which makes up this small culture is essentially research-oriented [z]—picked out from many other possible small cultural groupings for the sake of the research project. In the case of Anderson's (1997) study, these might have been the small cultures of individual student groups, the student body of the institution, the teaching methodology, the professional-academic group represented by the teacher, and so on, all of which overlap and interact (cf. Holliday 1994a: 29). The term 'grouping' is important, to remind the researchers that it is *they* who have grouped the individuals involved as a construction of the research. Whether

or not this 'grouping' equates with the perceptions of 'group' held by the individuals within it is to be discovered rather than assumed. Small cultures do therefore exist. It is the *selection* of a specific small culture for study which is heuristic. Also, this small culture is not a 'cause of behaviour' (Baumann 1996: 11 above), but a structuring within which behaviour selected for study may be understood. It is thus a means to investigation rather than an end in itself.

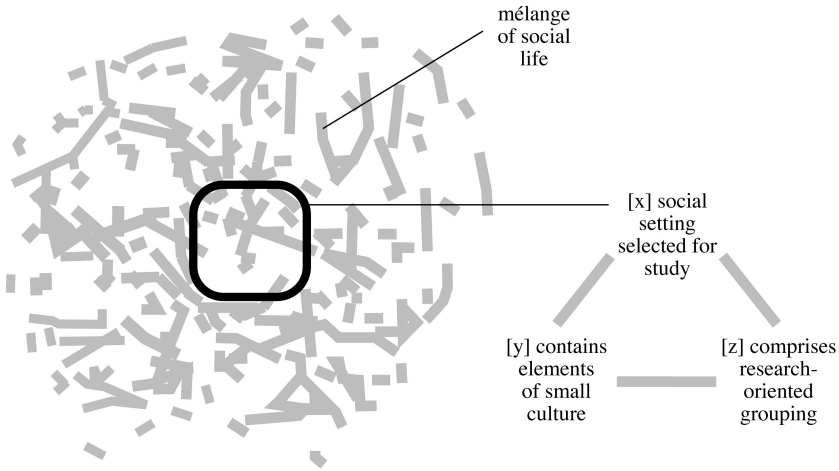


Figure 3: Small culture selected for ethnography

Another answer to the conundrum in which the small culture is both an abstract heuristic device as well as a real social phenomenon can be found in soft systems methodology⁵. A small culture behaves as an 'activity system', which is, on the one hand, an 'unreal world' model from which to look at the 'real world'⁶. This principle comes with a strong warning:

Those who write about 'human activity systems' as if they exist in the world, rather than being holons which can be compared with the world, are failing to grasp [that they are] [. . .] a structured set of 'xs' [. . .] as an *epistemology* which can be used to try and understand and intervene usefully in the rich and surprising flux of everyday situations. (Checkland and Scholes 1990: 24, their emphasis)

On the other hand, activity systems are derived from real world experience:

We perceive the world through the filter of—or using the framework of—the ideas internal to us; but [. . .] the source of many (most?) of those ideas is the perceived world outside. Thus, the world is continually interpreted using ideas whose source is ultimately the perceived world itself. (Checkland and Scholes 1990: 20)⁷

This can be seen in Figure 4. The researcher uses real-world experience of small culture [1] to construct an unreal-world activity system [2]. This activity system is then set against, and its vision of small culture *invented* in, the area of research [3]. Thus:

the anthropologist uses [her or] his own culture to study others, and to study culture in general. [. . .] We might actually say that an anthropologist ‘invents’ the culture [she or] he believes [her or] himself to be studying, that the relation is more ‘real’ for being [her or] his particular acts and experiences than the things it ‘relates’. (Wagner 1981: 2–3)

The ‘real’–‘unreal world’ distinction in soft systems methodology becomes blurred at this stage, unless ‘unreal’ simply means ‘heuristic’.

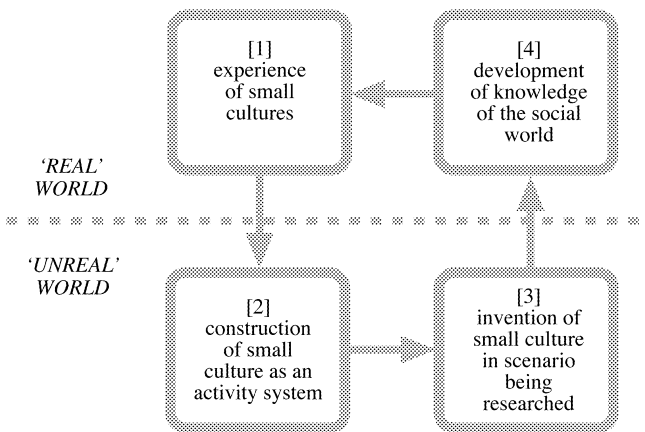


Figure 4: Interpreting the social world

SMALL CULTURE ANALYSIS

One reason for presenting small cultures as an alternative concept to large cultures is that the former is particularly useful in some of the social analysis currently important in international language education. There are two related areas I wish to look at in this regard: the cultural make-up of international curriculum scenarios in language education, and the learning of culture.

International curriculum scenarios

I take as an example a textbook project based at the University of Pune, India in the mid-1990s (Jacob 1996; Holliday 1996a). The curriculum scenario was typical of many British aid projects in that it was funded by British aid and implemented by a British Council managed project involving Indian and British personnel embedded within an existing English Department. Much has been written about such scenarios; and there is now considerable sensitivity expressed regarding a potentially culturally imperialistic imposition of 'foreign' ideas and practices (e.g. Hayes 1997; Abbott and Beaumont 1997; Crooks and Crewes 1995). Within a large culture approach, such scenarios are problematized on the basis that they are *international*, involving ideas, practices and expert personnel who come from other national locations—hence inter-cultural in the sense of, say, a confrontation between British and Indian ways of doing and thinking, against a potential background of Western post-colonialism. In contrast to this, a small culture approach, through an applied ethnographic analysis, demarcates social groupings which facilitate an understanding of the pertinent dynamics of a situation, whether or not it is characterized by ethnic, national or international difference. The small cultures demarked in the Pune project are presented in Figure 5⁸. (The black bubbles and lines represent established, and the grey bubbles and lines unestablished small cultures and relationships.) Consonant with the discussion above, the demarcation of these particular small cultures and what is seen in them is instrumental to the research aim of understanding the curriculum project. There are many more small cultures operating in this scenario which have not been demarked because they do not *appear* relevant at the time of investigation.

The small culture view of the Pune project enables the illumination of inter-cultural conflict, not between (large) British and Indian cultures, but between (small) culturally different Indian elements. This analysis is entirely my own, for which I take full responsibility, and is not meant to be critical of any of the parties concerned, but depicts an unavoidable mismatch between different types of institutional and professional-academic activity. Figure 5 shows the English Department faced by a very different British Council organizational culture which was characterized by a document-based discourse of budget and time lines. This was despite the fact that all the involved British Council personnel were Indian. The British Council brought with it an instrumental 'ELT' culture which seemed in natural opposition to the academic, humanities culture of the English Department. The curriculum project personnel, mainly seconded Indian academics with occasional British consultants, had to form their own new small culture between the established small cultures of the English Department, to which it had natural loyalties, and the, to them, (small) culturally strange British Council. The Indian academics within the project found themselves managed by a, to them, alien British Council line-management hierarchy. The established small culture of evaluation, brought

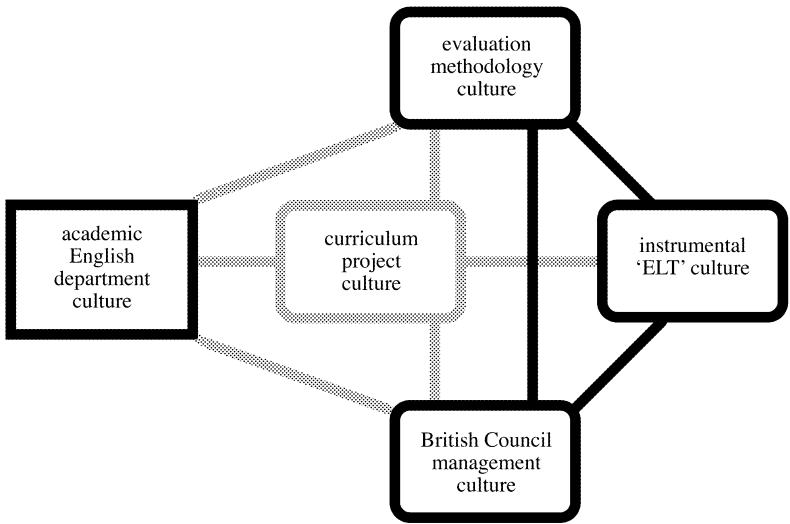


Figure 5: Curriculum scenario as *mélange* of small cultures

by an Indian consultant from an élite Indian English language institution, conflicted with that grown within the project. Overall, there were the conflicting small cultures of academia and instrumental management between which the curriculum project was an uncertain middle culture. As in the studies of airline and medical scenarios (above) ‘laminations’ were very much in evidence as the small cultures within the Pune project mixed, flowed and layered around each other.

An alternative vision of cultural imperialism

This small culture interpretation also illuminates a mezzo institutional level of cultural imperialism. In the large culture version of the centre-periphery paradigm a ‘professionalized’ mode of English language teaching (Phillipson 1992) is seen as part of a wider large Western culture at the centre of a global linguistic and cultural imperialism (Pennycook 1994). However, a small cultural analysis of the Pune project reveals a small culture imperialism, instigated not by Western large culture, but by the professional-academic small culture (of instrumental ‘ELT’) connected with other small cultures of evaluation and the British Council. Discourse plays an important role here, with technologization of discourse (above) as the major imperialist force. The small cultures of ‘ELT’, evaluation and the British Council are characterized by instrumental discourses which by nature have the tacit if not overt agenda of technologizing the discourses of the project culture and the teaching of English within the academic University small

culture. These small technologizing cultures gain strength from an appearance of, and claim to, being non-ideological. As Fairclough puts it:

The projection of such context-free techniques into a variety of institutional contexts contributes to a widespread effect of 'colonisation' of local institutional orders of discourse by a few culturally-salient discourse types. (1995: 104)

That these claims by instrumental 'ELT' to autonomy from ideology are false is now fairly well established (Pennycook 1989; Coleman 1996a); and the ideological nature of all the cultures involved is illuminated by the small culture approach. Significantly, evaluation can also be seen as just another ideocentric small culture among several within the overall small culture *mélange*. Rather than being an autonomous engine for objectively assessing the curriculum scenario, evaluation becomes an ideological player within that scenario (Holliday 1995a).

Returning to the centre-periphery argument, a 'centre' mentality is implicit in the notions of 'training' and 'development' which the British Council and 'ELT' cultures bring with them. The 'training' of English Department lecturers in effect involves the learning of the technical discourse of 'ELT'. It could be observed within the Pune project that in the terms of this 'dominant discourse', the lecturers had much to learn. Similarly, in the terms of the 'dominant discourse' of the evaluation consultant, the project personnel had much to learn about evaluation. In each case, the members of the academic culture appeared peripherized by the technical culture into whose discourse they were not initiated. However, there is another side to this centre-periphery apparition. Within the terms of their own perception, the English Department lecturers see the 'ELT' discourse as periphery to *their* centre discourse of academic literature and linguistics with its strong Indian academic basis in the broader politics of English as a post-colonial phenomenon via critical English studies (Holliday 1996a).

Culture learning

Roberts and Sarangi's (1997) discussion of how the researcher can orientate her or his own discourse to be understood by the researched is relevant here (see also Holliday 1997b). Once curriculum developers, evaluators, aid agencies, or whatever party entering into a *mélange* of new small cultures, appreciate the nature of this small cultural mix, they will also appreciate the need to monitor the ideological orientation of their *own* small culture in order to be able to accommodate and work appropriately with others (Holliday 1995b). In the large culture approach, culture learning tends to be 'other' or 'foreign' directed. To use Schutz' terminology, the stranger focuses learning on one, predefined, 'target' ethnic, national or international culture within which she or he must operate. In contrast, in the small culture approach, culture learning will focus on searching for, demarcating and observing the

interaction between several cultures within a target scenario. In this interpretive process, discovery of the stranger's own small culture, as it is aligned within the specificities of the wider *mélange*, will be high on the agenda. Moreover, this learning of culture will not necessarily have anything to do with ethnic, national or international difference.

At the beginning of this section and throughout the paper I have claimed impartiality to the various values implicit in the constructions and positions I have discussed. Keeping this impartiality in mind it may be observed that in the Pune project the small cultures of 'ELT', evaluation and the British Council had done insufficient culture learning, or 'research into the discursive practices' (Fairclough 1995: 91) of the English Department culture to enable effective technologization in that direction. Efficient imperialism is thus thwarted by the fact that the perpetrators are 'standardly unaware' (*ibid.*: 36) of the discursive forces both surrounding them and at their disposal. In the same way, those who face the onslaught of technologizing discourse need to be aware of what is happening in case they may wish to resist. This is not to say that people everywhere are not aware of the general nature of social and political manipulation in society; but they need to understand the details of how small culture and discourse operate if they are to be truly resilient and able to make choices.

CONCLUSION

The small culture approach represents a different world to that of large cultures. The *mezzo* world of small cultures is one of institutions of work, leisure, interest and discourse which stretches seamlessly across an ongoing, multi-layered complex. It represents the coral gardens of human interaction, of which any demarcation of specific small cultures will only scratch the surface (Breen 1986). Ethnic, national or international difference provides only one possible lamination of subtle change of shade, in some scenarios. Issues of imperialism or colonialism become matters of inter-cultural confrontation and influence at the *mezzo* level, making such processes as the hegemonic technologization of professional and other practice (Fairclough 1995, Usher and Edwards 1994, Clark and Ivanic 1997) a general conflict *within* late modern societies all over the world, rather than between global geographical cultures. On the one hand, the small culture approach is most appropriate for a world which is increasingly multi-cultural at every level. On the other hand, it is the only way to illuminate full inter-cultural complexity in any world.

(Revised version received July 1998)

NOTES

- 1 There seems to be considerable shifting between the small and large usages, even in academic discourse in which 'culture' is the focus. One such observation was in a recent conference paper by an eminent applied linguist. The paper discussed how a particular 'genre' might vary (a) in different national (large) 'cultures', and (b) according to readerships from different (small) academic or middle class 'cultures'. The distinction between (a) and (b) seemed crucial to the analysis, and yet was not addressed.
- 2 'Ethnic' is as troublesome as 'culture'. It can be argued that it is a product of the same essentialist discourse as large culture (e.g. Baumann 1996, Sarangi 1994, 1995).
- 3 'Imagined communities' is a term used by several writers (Gellner and Hobsbawm cited in Sakamoto 1996: 113; Anderson 1996).
- 4 Baumann also maintains that "'Community" is a dishonest word . . . It is invariably party to pious fraud. Ethnic minorities are called "communities" either because it makes them feel better, or because it makes the white majority feel more secure' (1996: 14, citing Ignatieff).
- 5 Soft systems methodology is a procedure developed by Checkland to help structure problematic situations in management. Although based on systems thinking, its 'softness' enables a more appropriate application in human situations. Although not explicitly stated by Checkland, its application can be made use of to structure social problems in institutional settings in tandem

with ethnographic investigation—especially necessary in international language education where such setting may not always be familiar (Holliday 1990).

- 6 The activity system behaves as an 'ideal type' in the tradition of Max Weber. The difference is however that Weberian ideal types tend to refer to abstractions of character—e.g. 'learning festival' and 'teaching spectacle' (Holliday 1994a: 36 citing Coleman) or 'integration' and 'collection' (1994a: 71 citing Bernstein) rather than abstractions of social process.
- 7 Checkland and Scholes place this approach within a Kantian philosophy:

that we *structure* the world by means of already present, innate ideas, rather than the view of Locke that our minds are blank screens upon which the world writes its impressions. But it seems clear that the supposedly "innate" ideas may have two sources. They may indeed be part of the genetic inheritance of mankind, truly innate; or they may be built up as a result of our experience of the world' (1990: 20, their emphasis).

- 8 A fuller version can be found in Holliday (1996a). There were other very important cultures within the University including administrative elements, undergraduate lecturers who were to use the textbook, who were (small) culturally very different to postgraduate lecturers in the host English Department.

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