24 *Multicultural Issues in Technical Communication*

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In this review essay, Thrush makes it clear that technical communicators, particularly those working in the software industry, need to know more about multicultural and intercultural communication. As she says, "there's no escaping the increasing internationalization of business" (p. 415 in this volume). She outlines "what is known about technical and business writing in other cultures" (p. 416) and then, by relying on concepts from various fields (e.g., linguistics, sociology, and economics), she illustrates strategies that technical communicators can use to analyze diverse audiences to create more effective communication. Her overview provides a foundation for and illustration of many of the issues and problems that technical communicators face now and will continue to face. In addition, the series of questions she poses at the end are valuable for teachers to consider. As our classrooms and the workplaces that our students will enter become more diverse, we would do well to consider strategies that can, at a minimum, introduce these issues and problems. We need to do more than just offer prescriptive rules or stereotypic anecdotes.

INTRODUCTION

Does anyone still doubt the need of today's technical communicator to be aware of cultural differences in reading and writing? Most practitioners have probably encountered cultural differences directly on their jobs — in writing computer documentation for products to be sold worldwide, in designing maintenance manuals to be used by technicians of varying cultural backgrounds, or in working with the managers of their foreign-owned companies.

The numbers have often been recited: more than 35,000 Americans are working for foreign-owned companies overseas (Lathan, 1982, p. 16), 300,000 are working for Japanese-owned companies in the United States (Haight, 1991, p. 1), and more than 30,000 American companies are involved in exporting goods (Lathan p. 16), often equaling 25–50 percent of their total sales (Sprung, 1990, p. 71). According to a 1992 *Newsweek* article (Samuelson, 1992), between 1989 and 1991, United States exports to Mexico increased 62 percent to a total of $33.3 billion a year (p. 48) — and that was before the passage of NAFTA.

The implications for the technical communicator are clear, especially if one looks more closely at the software industry, a major employer of technical writers. In the countries making up the new European Union, for example, 19 of the 30 best selling software packages are American, and American software products account for 60 percent of total sales. Britain's *Economist* magazine ("Europe's Software Debacle," 1994) has recently reported that because of the various advantages (in expertise and financing) enjoyed by high-tech firms in the United States, many of Europe's largest software companies are opening management offices in the United States and transferring much of their operations here, where American and European designers, programmers, and managers will work side by side (pp. 77–78). Design and documentation for all these products, whether American or European produced, will need to take into account audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. The *Economist* reports that when Microsoft, purchaser of the Intuit line of software, wanted to market the very successful personal financial management package *Quicken* in France, the interface had to be redesigned to use an image other than that of a check, familiar to United States users, but much less widely used in France (p. 77).

There's no escaping the increasing internationalization of business. Even in my area, Memphis, Tennessee — not known as a center for international business nor as a destination for immigrants to the United States — we feel the effects of the changing world. One local writer, Steve Gillespie, has recently moved from rewriting installation manuals for Korean-made escalators at Dover Elevator Company to working with Japanese managers and writing user instructions for Brother typewriters. Federal Express, a major employer in the area with its home office here, has gone international in a big way (even changing its name to FedEx, partly because it's more pronounceable for non-English speakers) and regularly trains employees for transfer overseas. We even have an International MBA program, one of many springing up around the country, in which American students take intensive language instruction and do internships abroad while international students study English and intern locally.

The signing of NAFTA, the APEC agreement with Asian countries, and the GATT treaty with Europe mean that new opportunities, and challenges, will open up for many industries all across the country. With increasing exports comes increasing need for documentation, manuals, and instructional materials of all kinds, from the simplest to the most complex. (Remember the story of Kellogg's Corn Flakes in England? Nobody bought any until the company put instructions on the box for adding sugar and milk.) Those who sell their skills in communicating for a living need to be prepared to meet the new challenges and take advantage of the opportunities.

Members of the technical and professional writing community generally agree that there is a need to:

- Raise awareness of the differences in communication styles and strategies across national and cultural boundaries.

- Demonstrate sensitivity to those cultures and avoid implications that we are measuring other cultures by our own or that we are trying to manipulate members of the other cultures.

- Avoid the cultural imperialism implicit even in such statements as "people are really all alike underneath," because this statement often means "people are just like me, want the same things I want, and will eventually learn to get them the same way I do, therefore I can just continue to do things the way I always have."

The question, of course, is how to do that? The danger is falling back on "tips" on international communication ("this is how the Japanese write a business letter" or "here's what a French computer manual looks like"), when those may not be the best models and certainly may reflect only the choices made by one writer in one particular context. What is needed is a framework for looking at cultures, a framework that will help technical communicators make reasonable hypotheses about how members of the culture will communicate and how they will receive and interpret attempts at communication.

In the rest of this chapter, I will review briefly what is known about technical and business writing in other cultures, then attempt to set up a preliminary framework—based on concepts from anthropology, sociology, history, political science, and economics—through which communicators can better analyze culturally diverse audiences to make informed communication choices.

Concepts from Linguistics

Contrastive Rhetoric

Much of what we know about international and intercultural communications comes from an area of linguistic study called contrastive rhetoric. People engaged in contrastive rhetoric research look at how members of various cultures accomplish certain communication tasks. They look at such features of a text as its pattern of organization, length, phrasing, and format. They are also interested in how members of different cultures accomplish specific speech acts such as persuasion or requests.

One problem with contrastive rhetoric is that it deals with individual documents, thereby making generalization difficult and risky. Also, to analyze a text and make reasonable assumptions about what is going on in it, the researcher must have not only a great facility with the language, but also a depth of understanding of the culture that is rare even in linguists. Many of the contrastive rhetoric studies in the literature were done using texts written by nonnative speakers of English in their English classes. While these texts reveal differences from the way native speakers of English would write, it's

tricky to separate what features remain from the native language and what is the result of previous learning about English. It's also difficult to make statements about how other members of the culture would handle a similar communication task even in English because individual styles within a culture may vary depending on whether the writer was educated in another country (often Britain, the United States, or France) or whether the country was recently a colony, in which case the writing style typical of the colonizing culture may be found side by side with the native style (Eggington, 1987).

Here's a sampling of what contrastive rhetoric teaches about documents in different cultures:

- In France, business documents such as proposals and reports tend to include more detailed information, statistics, and technical specifications in the body of the text than do American documents. On the other hand, business correspondence may include few details. Business transactions are often based on trust developed through long-term relationships between companies, so correspondence can use the kind of "shorthand" commonly found in communications between individuals who know each other well (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 23).

- German documents tend to include considerable elaboration on the history of the organizations and their business relations (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 35).

- Some cultures, including the Japanese, often prefer a narrative organization in business documents, which can place the main point of the text near the end rather than at the beginning, as is preferred in United States business documents (Haneda & Shima, 1982).

- Japanese writing tends to be writer-oriented (that is, designed to express the thoughts and feelings of the writer) while United States writing is reader-oriented (that is, with emphasis placed on the needs and wants of the reader). Chinese writing may be changing from writer-oriented to reader-oriented (Hinds, 1987). Traditional Chinese texts of all kinds use extensive imagery and discourage the intrusion of the individual (Shen, 1989).

- Many cultures, including the French (Hall & Hall, 1990, pp. 103–104) and some African cultures (Boiarsky, 1995), value sophisticated, complex linguistic structures as reflective of a high level of education and competence in their fields. The short, simple sentences often favored by Americans may be viewed in these cultures as the product of carelessness or ignorance.

- Writing in Middle Eastern cultures traditionally does not focus on cause and effect relationships as much as writing in Western cultures (Liebman-Kleine, 1986).

- What counts as evidence to prove a point or to persuade varies from culture to culture: repetition and citation of authority in the Middle East (Liebman-Kleine, 1986), appeals to the emotion in Latin countries (Hall & Hall, 1990).

- Preference for graphics varies; some research indicates that certain types of graphics (three-tone drawings, line drawings, color photographs, etc.) may be processed better by members of some cultures than others (Sukaviriya & Moran, 1990), colors may carry different connotations (red versus green for warnings, for example) or evoke different feelings (del Galdo, 1990, p. 7), and

ambiguity in images may be better tolerated by some cultures than is typical of Americans (Heba, 1994).

For more information on these findings from contrastive rhetoric, the reader should consult the work of researchers such as Ulla Connor, Robert Kaplan, and Ilona Leki. I have also discussed the issues mentioned above at greater length elsewhere (Thrush, 1993). The point I want to make here is that technical communicators can't and shouldn't wait for contrastive rhetoric researchers to examine documents from even the major cultures before the material on communicating across cultures is incorporated into professional writing classes. The texts subjected to contrastive rhetoric research represent a particular communicator in a particular organization at a particular point in time. There are obviously individual differences within cultures as well due, for instance, to the influence of "corporate cultures." Also, communication styles change with time; many English language programs in Asia are beginning to use American business writing texts, and a recent British text, *International Business English* by Leo Jones and Richard Alexander (1989), espouses principles strikingly closer to current American style than to traditional British business writing.

Masculinity versus Femininity

From linguistics, technical communication also got the concepts of masculinity and femininity in communication styles. According to the ways men and women communicate in mainstream United States culture, masculine style is defined as confrontational and assertive while feminine style is consensus-seeking, more intuitive, and emotional. Cross-cultural research shows that in some countries the "feminine" style of communication is widespread and characteristic of business and political negotiations, while in others the "masculine" style is prevalent (Dorfman, 1994). The Netherlands and France, for example, rank on the feminine side of the scale, while the United States and, perhaps surprisingly, Japan fall on the masculine side (Hofstede, 1993). Surprisingly, because the Japanese are known for seeking consensus, but their communication style is certainly not emotional or intuitive. The implications of this for designers and writers of technical and business communications are clear. The direct, unelaborated style of American business writing with its emphasis on facts and statistics is directly related to the dominance of the masculine style in our business environment.

CONCEPTS FROM ANTHROPOLOGY

High versus Low Context

Anthropologists classify cultures on a continuum from high context to low context. In a high-context culture, the members share a great deal of information because of a common education, religion, ethnic background, and so on. In a high-context culture, writers and speakers do not need to give extensive details or to give much support for their opinions because they can assume that the audience shares their values and attitudes. A low-context culture, on the other hand, is one in which the members have differing religious, ethnic, and educational backgrounds, so the writer must work hard to make sure that analogies are clear, details are inclusive, and sufficient support is included to persuade someone who comes to the text with entirely different assumptions about the world and how it works. The United States is an excellent example of a low-context culture, which explains why good business writing contains all relevant details and is explicit in expressing what the writer wants the reader to do. Take, for example, this letter from an insurance company to an insured individual who has just bought a new car:

> Enclosed is the application on your new Nissan Altima. Please sign this at the bottom where indicated in yellow, and return the form to our office with a check for $60.17. A stamped return envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Not a word is wasted, and the reader is left with no doubt about what to do next.

Most contrastive rhetoric texts that contrast documents from a high-context culture to documents from a low-context culture point out that members of high-context cultures are irritated by instructions such as those in the example above. They feel that their intelligence is in question and that the writer is being condescending. Because most of the researchers are American and their purpose is often to show Americans how to communicate better with other cultures, less has been written about the reverse effects. One exception is a case study in Andrews and Andrews' *Business Communication* (1992) that describes an interaction between an American and a Japanese company. After a face-to-face meeting where they set a schedule for a number of shipments, the representatives of the two firms returned to their countries. As the time for the first shipment approached, the Americans became concerned because they hadn't heard anything from the Japanese. Eventually they sent a fax that said, in essence, "Do you still plan to ship on time? *Please respond.*" The Japanese were puzzled—why should there be any question about whether they were keeping to the schedule? The problem was that the Japanese assumed there was no need for further communication as long as everything proceeded as planned, while the Americans expected to receive updates and confirmations. The lack of a continual flow of communication caused considerable anxiety among the low-context Americans.

I saw the same principle at work recently when I acted as United States contact for a Summer Institute in languages and the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language to be held in the Czech Republic. I sent out information on the program, but people had to write or fax the administrators of the program directly. Most received an initial confirmation that they were registered for the program. Some received an information packet with a housing request form; other didn't because of the vagaries of international mail. When the applicants called me, I was usually able to confirm that the administrators knew

they were coming because I was in e-mail contact with a colleague who was there on a Fulbright fellowship. For many, this was enough. Others, however, became extremely frustrated with the lack of communication and called or wrote me constantly, looking for reassurance. One even mailed a check to the Czech Republic as a deposit, even though the initial information specifically said that they were unable to deal with American checks and preferred people to pay with travelers' checks on arrival. (The check disappeared somewhere—either in the mail or in the hands of a Czech who didn't know what to do with it.)

The degree of frustration and even anger expressed by the (low-context) Americans was surprising and illuminating. These were people who teach students from all over the world—if they were unprepared and unwilling to cope with differences in amount and type of communications, how could others be expected to? I also learned that explaining the basis for the differences satisfied some on the surface, but never really removed the underlying discomfort. My colleague had also tried to explain to the Czechs that the Americans needed more information, but with limited success. The moral of this story seemed to be that advocating change of deep-seated, culturally determined communication patterns is risky and often unproductive, while encouraging understanding may yield only limited results.

Concepts of Time and Space

Two other concepts from anthropology that may be relevant to our study of written documents have to do with time and space. Anthropologists talk about monochronic versus polychrome cultures. In a monochronic culture, such as the mainstream United States, the members are most comfortable doing one task at a time. All of their time and attention are devoted, at least for a short period of time, to that one task. In a polychronic culture, on the other hand, members typically give attention to several activities at once. The classic example of the clash that can result from the meeting of monochronic and polychrome cultures is the business meeting during which the monochronic participants are annoyed and irritated as the polychrome participants take phone calls, talk to visitors, and generally split their attention several different ways.

In written communication, this focus on completion of one task at a time translates into a particular rhetorical style, which influences even academic writing in United States school systems. Composition classes teach that paragraphs, and essays, have one main idea, with supporting details directly related to only that idea. In other words, each essay works to accomplish one, and only one, task. The greater degree of tolerance for discussion of peripherally related ideas in the expository essays of other cultures corresponds to the degree to which members of the culture are willing to divide their time and attention among topics.

Similarly, the advice on writing business letters in American textbooks is to "get to the point quickly" (that is, state the one main idea), then give only

information that is directly relevant to what you want to accomplish (do one task at a time). In other cultures, a business letter may be expected to perform social as well as business functions and thus may be more discursive.

Also, when each period of time is devoted to only one task, it becomes important to complete the task quickly to move on to the next item of business. Consequently, conciseness of expression is highly valued in monochronic cultures. A problem encountered by companies selling computer equipment and software internationally is that manuals written in the United States contain very little redundancy of information. Because strategic repetition of important points is often expected in educational materials in other cultures, including most Latin cultures (Mikelonis, 1994), this brevity works against the effectiveness of the documentation when translated.

In addition, cultures treat space differently. It is fairly widely known that members of the mainstream American culture require greater personal space than members of many other cultures. This is expressed in the distances maintained between speakers during conversations, the size of houses and apartments, and the preference for open and uncluttered work spaces. This probably also explains the American preference for large amounts of white space in business and technical documents.

CONCEPTS FROM SOCIOLOGY

Group-Orientation versus Individualism

Sociology looks at the behavior of people in groups. The behavior patterns revealed in this research are reflected in, and influence, communication patterns. For example, one continuum on which sociologists place cultures is that of group versus individual orientation. In group-oriented societies, everyone is a part of a group, whether that group be the family or some larger unit. The individual receives rewards from the group and is expected to contribute to the good of the group in return. This translates into loyalty to the employer, emphasis on group decisions, and rewards for conformity. In individualistic societies, individuals may still be members of family and business groups, but they are expected to achieve and survive on their own. This is manifested in "job-hopping" to advance the career, a desire for autonomy, and greater expectation for individual performance (Dorfman, 1994). The United States is placed by most sociologists at the individualistic end of this spectrum. But several of the subcultures within the United States are more group-oriented, which has often resulted in miscommunication between management and workers.

One of the ways in which this difference in orientation manifests itself in business communication is the use of the signature to assign responsibility. In American correspondence, contracts, and other documents, the signature indicates the individual who takes ultimate responsibility for the contents of the document. If an executive, for example, signs a contract containing terms that are unacceptable to the company the executive represents, that executive's job may be at risk. In Japan, on the other hand, contracts are often sealed

with the company stamp rather than the signature of an individual, reflecting the fact that the terms of the contract are the result of a group decision-making process. Even though this may seem a minor point, the emphasis on individual responsibility and achievement versus the group affects all phases of business negotiations and conduct.

Competition versus Consensus

Related to the differences in orientation toward the group or the individual is the difference in focus on competition versus consensus. When people strive for individual success, they are likely to be in competition with each other. This increases the emphasis on closing the deal and making the sale. The result is the kind of assertive, self-confident style of expression advocated in American business writing texts. In consensus-seeking, group-oriented cultures, the individual is unlikely to pose as having greater abilities or intellect than others, but will strive to appear humble and self-effacing. This is evident in the samples of Japanese business letters examined by Haneda and Shima (1982) and Chinese correspondence analyzed by Halpern (1983).

It has sometimes been stated, erroneously, that Japanese has no word for "no." What is true is that the Japanese, among other consensus-seeking cultures, are reluctant to say "no" in business negotiations, both for fear of destroying the possibility of reaching consensus and from reluctance to cause another to "lose face." Much anecdotal evidence exists for the problems this causes when correspondence goes unanswered because the answer is "no" or negotiators think an agreement has been reached because no one said "no" during the discussions. However, there is a remedy for this communication problem. English teachers working with students from consensus-seeking cultures have learned not to ask questions that might force the listener into an answer that would embarrass either party. "Do you understand?" is not likely to elicit accurate information, but "Would you like me to repeat?" permits a "yes" answer that insults neither the learner nor the teacher. Even better is "Which part of the lesson would you like to go over?" Similarly, in a business negotiation, training session, or needs analysis, questions that avoid the necessity of "no" responses will be more effective and less awkward.

HISTORY, POLITICAL SCIENCE, AND ECONOMICS

The political and economic history of a culture has a distinct impact on communication strategies. Think about how American business works: rewards, in the form of promotions and raises, are based on individual performance. If you get the deal signed, you get rewarded. If you don't, eventually you will probably find yourself out of a job. In recent history, this has been particularly true for management personnel as companies "down-sized." In the 1980s, an estimated 3 million managers lost their jobs. It is easy to see how the strong incentives to get the deal signed, partnered with the fear of being unemployed, led to the aggressiveness of the American business style. If time is

money, and money is the way success is measured by the society, then time is too precious to waste on developing relationships with business contacts or indeed on any activity that does not directly lead to increased profits.

In many other countries, including Japan and most of Western and Eastern Europe, instability of employment has not been the case. Employees were seldom fired, and promotions came with seniority, not performance. Also, the net of social services in these countries made the specter of unemployment considerably less frightening. Successful business dealings were still a goal, but there was less pressure to conduct business quickly. According to Robert Samuelson (1992, p. 48), a *Newsweek* analyst, "[G]enerous welfare benefits make it easier for people to survive without work. . . . In 1991, about 6 percent of unemployed Americans had been without a job for more than a year; in Europe, the comparable figure was 46 percent."

There are indications that this is changing. Articles in the European press in the past few years have discussed the need for greater flexibility in hiring, firing, and reassigning employees. Still, most attempts to reform employment practices are met with resistance and, at times, demonstrations and strikes.

The Central and Eastern European countries are in the process of change from a heavily socialized system, in which there were few rewards for individual achievement, but also few penalties for inefficiency or incompetence, to a market economy. Most of these nations have not yet reached a final determination on how much social support will be offered. Already, however, employers and managers have had to learn to give more specific information on business transactions and employment conditions than was true in the days when all these items were determined centrally, by the government, and everyone understood what prices could be charged and how much labor was worth (Hall & Thrush, 1992).

The effect of this difference on communication styles is understandable. If your job is not on the line every morning when you report to work, you are more likely to devote time and energy to long-term goals rather than to turning an immediate profit. Considerable anecdotal evidence exists of American companies losing major contracts because they rushed the negotiations or presented a written proposal, with its emphasis on bottom-line costs and profits, without establishing an interpersonal relationship of trust beforehand and without taking into consideration the values and goals of the foreign organization. On the other hand, where international business arrangements have been successfully completed, as in the opening of McDonald's in the Soviet Union (Puffer & Vikhansky, 1994) or Toys 'R Us in Japan and Europe ("The World," 1992), they have usually resulted from years of negotiation and study of local conditions.

Another effect of the political system seems to be the institutionalization of hierarchy. When political systems and business organizations are highly stratified, that structure is reflected in the communication style, especially in the maintenance of distance between reader and writer. It has often been noted that the Japanese language contains a system of particles that, added to words, indicates precise degrees of status between the reader and writer.

Although few other languages have such a finely tuned way of reflecting hierarchy as this, distance is often maintained by formality and impersonality of tone. Or, as an Argentinian commented, "The more closely you approach a dictatorship, the more formal the language becomes" (Boiarsky, 1995). In contrast, the more open, democratic style of American business is reflected in the friendly tone and "you" perspective prevalent in documents, from memos to proposals to operation manuals.

THE MULTICULTURAL WORKFORCE

As little as we know about technical communication in other countries, it is startling how little research has been done on subcultures within the United States, especially in light of the fact that they are expected to make up 21–25 percent of the workforce by the year 2000. This includes African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Asian-Americans as the largest groups of American-born minorities. The fact that little research has been done on the rhetorical styles of these groups (aside from some discussion of the language of sermons in African-American churches) is probably partly political. Discussion of whether a distinctive Black English vernacular exists has been highly controversial, with objections that the proponent supporting the existence of such a dialect were primarily white (Wolfram, 1990).

However, the problems raised by culturally patterned variances in communication style are widely recognized. The July 1994 issue of the *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* was devoted to articles on workplace diversity, most of them documenting difficulties experienced by companies with increasingly diverse workforces or implementing human resource policies fostering diversity.

Nasreen Rahim (1994) of the Institute for Business and Community Development in the San Jose/Evergreen Community College District teaches courses in workplace English and communication skills for companies in her area. In addition to vocabulary and basic grammar, she has discovered that her students need to learn how to be "politely assertive." That is, they need to be able to communicate with supervisors, particularly about equipment needs and safety concerns, and to learn how to persist until their concerns are heard. She concentrates on the use of expressions such as "could you" and "would you." These expressions moderate questions in English to make them more polite, and they are used much more extensively in English than their equivalents in other languages.

There are programs like Ms. Rahim's all over the United States, but they address almost exclusively the needs of immigrants in low-skill jobs. At the more highly skilled and management levels, many companies provide courses in writing or in making presentations; however, these are seldom focused on the problems caused by cultural differences. Seminars in diversity training address issues of culturally determined behavior and informal, oral communication differences, based on work done by researchers in the field of organizational behavior. But few researchers have looked specifically at differences in writing strategies or the processing of texts in subcultures of the United States. In fact, it is hard to find in the literature any acknowledgment that we need to understand these processes to produce effective technical documents and training materials for workplaces that include members of these subcultures. The need for research in this area is urgent; overcoming the political problems of getting funding and access will not be easy.

CONCLUSION

At the 1st Annual Conference on International Communications, held in Ames, Iowa, in the summer of 1994, two questions were raised that may be unanswerable at this point. Do certain principles of communication, whether from traditional rhetorical theory or from reading research, cut across cultural, national, and organizational differences? Should they be taught universally? One problem with the principles we normally teach in our classrooms is that they are all based on Western culture, whether we are teaching rhetorical principles from Aristotle to Bruffee, or relating research on how readers process texts. All that research was performed on American readers. Are the writing strategies that were successful with those readers successful because they corresponded with the expectations of Western readers or because all brains process text the same way? For example, cognitive linguists claim that readers of English expect to find some kind of statement of the main idea of a text at the end of the first paragraph in a short text, or by the end of the second or third paragraph in a longer text. Is that because American readers are accustomed to seeing main ideas in those locations? Until research can tell us whether members of other cultures process texts in the same way, we cannot be sure even that what we know about the advantages of headings, white space, and active verbs holds true for all audiences in all environments.

Some evidence has been found for similar argumentative structures across some European and American writing, including problem to solution organization, similar means of asserting and justifying claims, and awareness of audience (Connor & Kaplan, 1987). But this study did not examine more disparate cultures to see if those structures also existed in non-Western texts. Then how do we know what to teach to prepare students for the multicultural and international workplace they will be entering? As Nancy Allen (1994) pointed out recently in *Technical Communication Quarterly*, we need to do more than give students formulaic rules for making decisions in their writing. We can do this by referring to research that "illustrates the interactive nature of reading by describing ways in which readers draw on their own backgrounds, values, and communities to create meaning as they respond to verbal, visual, and cultural cues in the text before them" (p. 351). While most of the currently available workplace-based research does not deal with multicultural and international issues, we can enrich our examination of this research with the framework I've suggested in this essay for identifying the values and communities of a wide variety of possible audiences.

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