Commentaries and Critical Articles

Text–context Relationships and Their Implications for Cross Cultural Management

Muayyad M. Jabri
University of New England, Australia

ABSTRACT   Cross-national comparisons of culture-related values are largely based on an ontology that asserts a certain 'reality': the perceived sameness of the self with social others. This ontology is predicated on the presumption that comparisons and contrasts among cultures can be based on a universal pre-ordained set of dimensions upon which commensurability of comparisons and contrasts is advanced. The present article argues that a methodological approach combining 'text' and 'context' demonstrates that the presumed sameness of the self with social others leads to a loss of context-specific, experiential understanding. The approach suggested here thus destabilizes the presumption of a universal set of dimensions upon which comparisons and contrasts among cultures have previously been made. This, in turn, destabilizes the very concept upon which cross-national comparisons have been based.

KEY WORDS • cross cultural • Hofstede • narrative • Ricoeur • text–context

Introduction

Cross-national comparisons of culture-related values (Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaars, 1993) are widely accepted for comparing and contrasting cultures and determining whether countries can be grouped according to similar values. Such cross-national comparisons have previously facilitated an understanding of cultural differences (Boyacigiller et al., 2003); however, scholarship in cross cultural management is now facing pressing challenges. There is an increasing awareness of the variability of the spoken word and of the context-dependence of thought and action. These challenges provoke pertinent questions. How can scholarship account for the variability that exists in meanings, desires and aspirations at the level of individual discourse? How can scholarship relate variability at the individual level to culture? And how can scholarship go beyond a dualistic conception of person and culture – a dualism that has previously dominated the field of cross cultural management?

Zander (2004) elaborated on some of

these challenges in noting major themes in recent advances in cross cultural management. Some of these themes included the role of language, social construction, multiple identities and multiple cultures. These themes drew attention to a need to move beyond the conventional understanding whereby *language* is taken to correspond to a stable reality that is independent of culture. Reliance on language as a 'code' prevents a more productive approach whereby language and its creative capacities are understood to have the ability to generate multiple cultures.

Ricoeur's (1992) cultural philosophy is relevant to the social role of language in constructing culture. Ricoeur (1992) rejected the contention that the situations inhabited by people can be considered in isolation from the surrounding objective world. Rather, he contended that language at the level of discourse (local meanings, desires and aspirations) develops from the 'inside' through the interplay of tradition (text) and the accounts of people. These people live their lives and imaginatively reinterpret their accounts in the light of tradition (context). That is, changes in meanings, desires and aspirations are produced by a combination of text and context.

Understanding people using the relationships between text and context (language at the level of discourse) is becoming increasingly accepted as a serious form of organizational analysis (Boje, 2001; Jabri, 2004). This approach is derived from recent advances in ethnography (Rosen, 1991; Van Maanen, 1988; Wolcott, 1995), intercultural communication (Martin and Nakayama, 1999; Stohl, 2001), and discourse analysis (Grant et al., 2001; Hardy and Philips, 1999; Phillips, 1995). Shweder and Sullivan (1993) emphasized that text–context relationships must be taken into account, and that culture and self are mutually constitutive through language. When local meanings, desire, and aspirations are perceived as parole (speech), they are

simultaneously culturally construed (Kagitcibasi, 1997).

My purpose in this article is to build on the more recent advances achieved in cross cultural management, including the role of language (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000), multiple cultures (Boyacigiller et al. 2003; Sackmann and Phillips, 2004), negotiated cultures (Brannen and Salk, 2000) and the notion of levels of cultural processes (Erez and Gati, 2004). I plan to build on such advances by proposing a textual approach, which combines 'text' and 'context' as a methodology and as a valuable strategy for dealing with culture-constructing processes achieved through language. Much as my analysis has been inspired by these reviews, I wish to demonstrate the task of identifying and constructing cultures, grounded in Ricoeur's (1992) hermeneutics and Gadamer's (1997) notion of tradition.

The article begins by reviewing the mainstream management literature on cross cultural management. It then proceeds to describe certain types of textual composition on the basis of the distinction between traditional narratives (text) and voice narratives (context). The paper highlights the use of text and context, not only as a method of enquiry, but also as a concept of social ontology. The study demonstrates the inadequacy of perceiving culture as being constant and separate from the ways in which people live their own experiences in the present.

Cross-national Comparisons

For almost two decades, cross-national comparisons of culture-related values have been used to describe cultural differences among countries. Such comparisons are rooted in the classic sociological construct of Durkheim's 'collective conscience' and seek to explain how distinctive frames of mind, identities and systems are determined and maintained. These models assume that culture is a knowable empirical fact separate from the researcher (Burrell and Morgan, 1988). They

depict differences among cultures by emphasizing certain 'essential' traits of people generalized from pre-determined frameworks of national boundaries, physiological traits and regional features (Cerulo, 1997).

Although cross cultural management does require the use of such comparisons, a selective focus on pre-established social categories fails to take into account how experiential understanding is co-constructed in the context of daily life (Martin and Nakayama, 2004; Triandis, 1995). It fails to recognize variability in meanings, desires and aspirations at the individual level, and fails to describe how such variability at the individual level can be related to culture.

Many scholars have cautioned against relying on singular explanations rooted in regional and structural locations. Barth (1989), Clifford (1988), and Clifford and Marcus (1986) all demonstrated that meanings, desires and aspirations are not uniform among all members of a culture. Barth (1989), in particular, warned against the presumption that there are comprehensive models of culture; rather, he suggested that insights be sought in the wider field of social processes. Similarly, Voronov and Singer (2002: 461) noted that '. . . when a whole culture or society is pigeonholed in models of dichotomous categories (for example, masculine–feminine, active–passive, or loose–tight), subtle differences and qualitative nuances that are more characteristic of that social entity may be glossed over'.

Hofstede's (1980, 2001) work can be taken as an example. There are, of course, other examples (e.g. House et al., 1999; Trompenaars, 1993). Hofstede's work is taken as an example because it is generally considered to be the most influential source in the study of cross cultural management (Fang, 2003). Hofstede (1980: xvi) defined cultural orientations in values as 'anthropological distinctions between societies, affecting sociological and psychological processes'. To illustrate stable distinctions among societies, Hofstede (1998) depicted five orientations in values: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, long-term orientation versus short-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity versus femininity. Hoppe (1990) examined Hofstede's set of dimensions in terms of their psychometric properties and found them to be largely self-validated through their own analyses. The model has been widely reviewed (Roberts and Boyacigiller, 1984; Sondergaard, 1994), and has been variously praised (Smith, 2002), criticized (McSweeney, 2002; Williamson, 2002) and selectively critiqued for its conceptualization of specific dimensions (Fang, 2003).

The problems with Hofstede's work arise not because his model is incomplete – in the sense of not taking into account all of the differences that arise within a particular cultural setting – but because of the way in which these differences are approached, based on stability and the perceived sameness of the self with social others. That is, Hofstede claims to differentiate objectively between cultures based on some universal conceptual structure (or standard) along an axis on which cultural differences among cultures are apparently ascertained. The commensurability presumption is argued to have led to dichotomized, dimensionalized conceptions of culture which view culture (i.e. any given country-level culture as a unit of analysis) as a stable phenomenon. At the meta-theoretical level, Hofstede's claim of 'stability' is ontological, because it is largely inspired by the pursuit of an ontology based on asserting a certain view of 'reality' – in this case, social homogeneity among people. Homogeneity locates orientations in a conception of tradition in which the status quo is the desired state of affairs.

There are problems with the idea that tradition does not lead to changes in meanings, desires and aspirations. Such a perspective fails to take into account how people construct their identities *in relation* to each

other, how changes in general orientations emerge and develop, and how communication and empowerment generate change in tradition. The concept of tradition must therefore be reworked through an interpretive approach of narrative understanding that allows a more profound understanding of human action interacting with tradition in a way that facilitates change and innovation in tradition. Gadamer (1997) and Ricoeur (1992) both emphasized that no tradition is intrinsically closed, or constant over time. In accordance with this view, the 'text' of tradition and its 'con-text' are perceived as being complementary, rather than oppositional. A tradition is thus understood as remaining vital by a continuous innovative reinterpretation by agents who seek to articulate the relationship between the prevailing tradition and the changing meaning of events and identities. Gadamer (1997: 306) has argued that 'in a tradition this process of fusion is continually going on, for the old and new are always combining into something of living value, without either being explicitly foregrounded from the other'.

An essential component of innovative reinterpretation within a tradition is the retrieval of worthwhile aspirations and unfulfilled promises from the past. In line with Gadamer (1997), every encounter involves some sort of tension between the tradition itself and the real-life situation as experienced by the person.

The present article argues that the perceived 'sameness' of the self with social others, upon which the presumption of commensurability is based, leads to the loss of context-specific, experiential understanding. If 'text' and 'context' are combined, meaning can be interpreted from the 'inside'. According to Ricoeur (1991), culture develops from the 'inside' through the interplay of (i) discourse of life as inhabited by people; and (ii) imaginative reinterpretation of text, as people narrate their own experiences and representations. For Ricoeur (1991), the

'conversational space' between narrative text and context (accounts of life) is bridged by the human capacity to bring forth human precepts and ally them with their own experiences. In this way people come to know, understand, and make sense of their being in the social world around them.

Types of Narrative Texts

People *live* in the narratives they encounter and use them to reconstruct their knowledge of their own way of living and those of others. Schreiter (1985: 70) spoke of 'listening to a culture' by searching for its own narratives. Yang (1994) has made the point that understanding the prevailing cultural precepts is largely dependent on the way in which people reinterpret their own context by searching for narratives embedded in their tradition. Narratives that emphasize the importance of precepts have developed as a new area of study that offers great potential for cross cultural management (Boyce, 1995; Hatch, 1996; Jabri, 2000; O'Connor, 1995; Phillips, 1995; Van Maanen, 1996; Yang, 1994; Yanow, 1995).

Narrative can also assist in understanding culture from within (Bruner, 1990; Howard, 1991; Laslett, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1988; Rosman and Rubel, 1995). Mumby (1993: 5) made the point that narrative is 'a social symbolic act in the double sense that (a) it takes on meaning only in a social context and (b) it plays a role in the construction of that social context'. Narrative provides knowledge of the social locales (or milieu) into which employees are drawn and implicated. Such knowledge is essential 'background knowledge' if policies and practices are to be more responsive to the needs of the people affected by them.

The narratives by which people live not only reflect their experiences, but also constitute and shape beliefs, values, gender expectations, life experiences and life meanings. For example, the *Narratives of the Arabian Nights* (*Alf Layla wa Layla*, literally '1,000 Nights and

One Night'), which are a significant aspect of the culture of Bahrain, Qatar and Dubai, promote the Bedouin concept of *muru'ah* – including the virtues of generosity and hospitality – as a standard to which people should aspire. Similarly, in Greater China, various narratives – about 'good officials', 'filial administrators', 'virtuous leaders', and how 'trustworthy workers' should be loyal to those in authority – provide an influential perspective on how people should conduct themselves. A widely shared narrative is Hsün Tzu's oral narrative about a capsized boat, which enjoins that subordinates should understand their role as being the water supporting the boat (which, itself, represents the leader's role). Moreover, the leader should look after his or her employees to prevent the boat capsizing.

Text narratives (language at the level of discourse) make knowledge of the cultural setting more 'recognizable'. However, this is not to say that everyone in that culture agrees with what is designated as *muru'ah* (in the Arabian example described above) or filial piety (in the Chinese context). The 'assumed connection' between people and narrative text is often displaced by new representations that emerge in people's imaginative reinterpretations of their context (Geertz, 1988). A cultural narrative can thus become increasingly non-persuasive as the presumption of 'one place, one people, one culture' no longer holds the ethnographic imagination in check (Van Maanen, 1995).

Richardson (1995) distinguished two types of narrative: traditional narratives and voice narratives. Traditional narratives are narratives about authoritative precepts that are embedded in existing modes of thinking within a particular culture or group of people. These narratives aim to persuade people to think and act in accordance with 'ideal' standards embedded in tradition. They thus represent dominant values, cultural beliefs and practices that form a particular perspective of the world.

In contrast, voice narratives are self-representations and social representations that evolve in reaction to traditional narratives. Self-representations and social representations are thus critical responses to the power of traditional narrative. They emanate from the way in which people inhabit their experiences and aspire to new meanings. This article proposes a dialectic between traditional narrative and voice narrative. In this dialectic, changes in narrative occur between the traditional text and the actual experience of people as they reinterpret tradition in the light of their own situation.

Combining Text and Context

A text–context account is a totality – a discourse acting as a powerful ordering force for changes in tradition. That discourse has its own genre or style but it reflects a real-life situation. Such a discourse can be combined with the discourses of other people. According to Ricoeur (1984), combining text (traditional narrative) and context (real-life situation) involves a hermeneutic of meaning, as text is juxtaposed with accounts of life. This meaning is achieved by a person as he or she goes about reinterpreting the text in light of his or her own self-representation. This can bring forth a new meaning that might vary from the original perceived meaning. Through such a 'poetic resolution' (Ricoeur, 1988: 248, 1992: 142), the text comes to be viewed from a new perspective, thus realizing change in the individual.

A resolution is about 'crossing over' from an unchanging notion of an 'ideal' text (based on the sameness of the self with social others) to a more fluid conception (based on an interplay between real life and personal imaginative reinterpretations). Such a 'crossover' is not restricted to a 'universal bridge', in the sense of there being only one 'bridge' for every place, history or culture. People often change meanings, desires and aspirations as they reflect on the text in light of their own experiential understanding. This is

of importance in deconstructing fixed perceptions (stability and permanence) of cross culturality. A resolution about 'crossing over' rejects the notion that organizational cultures are immutable entities or discourses of fixed structure (Alvesson, 2002). Rather, it recognizes that they are dynamic entities (multiple cultures) that are achieved through conversations (utterances) that are continuously influenced by changing identities and encounters. Organizational cultures develop in a back-and-forth manner within a 'stretch of talk' as people exchange utterances, and as words are transposed among contexts and situations. The challenge is to capture how organizational cultures are produced anew, rather than reproduced, that is represented again and again.

Narrative Time

Time has an implicit role in the crossover whereby traditional narrative is imaginatively tacked onto events of the present. For example, the actual time of a text emphasizing filiality (*Xiao*) is in the past. However, when this is tacked onto events in the present, its new time is no longer historical; rather, it becomes 'narrative time'. That which is historical is recalled and combined with experiences in the present. Social tradition and human experience are thus mutually constitutive of each other. According to Ricoeur (1991), this mutuality is fluid and dynamic as it is shaped and reshaped. Meanings, desires and aspirations are not homogeneous; rather, they emerge as ontologically subject to change and renewal. Such an ontology is fundamentally distinct from a deterministic (top-down) presumption of preconceived categories and social formations.

This new ontology allows for new possibilities of change and renewal – and even for the creation of multiple cultures as the experiences of other people are communicated in their own textual accounts (discourses). There is no limit to the extent to which textual accounts can describe, narrate and

prescribe change. As Tsoukas and Chia (2002) have argued, change is the reweaving of actors' webs of beliefs and habits to accommodate new experiences obtained through interactions. This makes for a very different reality from that based on the dimensions derived from a pre-ordained set of generalized cultural orientations.

At the group level, people recognize themselves in the various accounts of others. A person's interpretation obtains its meaning from those of other people, thus generating new possibilities through top-down (contextual influences) and bottom-up (emergent) processes at more than one level of analysis (Kozlowski and Klein, 2000). This, in turn, leads to the intersections of multiple texts at other social levels (Cunliffe, 2002). Within each newly created culture, people come to recognize themselves anew.

Every culture has its own discourse – a sort of 'social language' that is peculiar to its own context. Each culture has its own emphasis on conversation as a productive process whereby people appropriate and negotiate various texts to their own needs (Alvesson, 2002). Each culture has its own identity, but this identity is relational and intertextual. It is accomplished through social construction, where it is treated as dependent on speech (dynamic and responsive), rather than being stable and enduring in time and location.

Discussion

By adopting the Ricoeurian approach of combining text and context, the present article has demonstrated the inadequacies of perceiving culture as a constant and failing to take into account the ways in which people live their own experiences in the present. By combining text and context through imagination, the concepts of commensurability and a universal structure of fixed cultural differences are challenged. The ontological approach presented in this paper posits soci-

ety and culture as dynamic processes. This approach allows for the social construction of multiple cultures and a better understanding of negotiated realities through an ontology that accounts for new possibilities, in contrast to Hofstede's (1980) conception of culture, which is anchored in a top-down approach whereby the status quo is the desired state of affairs.

Two consequences flow from the approach suggested here. First, the approach calls into question commensurability in cross-national comparisons of culture-related values on the basis of a presumed 'universal' structure. As demonstrated in the present study, such a fixed 'universal' view leads to a significant loss of context-specific, experiential understanding. Rather, the culture is realized, to a large extent, through individuals, and experiential situations produce different forms of understanding. To deny the importance of experiential understanding is to ignore a potentially fruitful field of scholarship and management practice.

Secondly, the basic ontological premises that sustain Hofstede's (1980) model have been challenged. To address changes in meanings, desires, and aspirations through a textual understanding is an interpretive approach, rather than a positivist approach. As such, it is an implicit critique of an artificial separation between the observer and observed (Chia, 1997). The relationship between the experiential situation of the observer and the observed facilitates understanding among people in general, and also between observers and subjects in the research situation.

The present article therefore takes a provocative position by significantly challenging the conventional view of cross-national comparisons. It reiterates Shweder and Sullivan's (1993) point that culture and self are mutually constitutive. It builds on the more recent advances achieved in cross cultural management, including the role of language (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000),

multiple cultures (Boyacigiller et al., 2003; Sackmann and Phillips, 2004), negotiated cultures (Brannen and Salk, 2000), and the notion of levels of cultural processes (Erez and Gati, 2004). At the same time, it contributes to the extant literature by emphasizing the centrality of a paradigmatic shift from a deterministic view of organizational culture to a textual formation of meanings, desires and aspirations.

The issue is not a lack of research. Rather, it is an issue of conceptual development, in particular, a development that would require seeing culture as something to be 'identified' and 'produced', rather than as something that is reproduced. Experiences in life change the meanings of other events, and fundamentally affect formations and renewals in cultures. There is therefore a need to move from a position whereby functionalism and positivism are the norm to a position whereby interpretive and textual understandings are the norm. The first step in such a move is to encourage the development of multiple streams of thinking (e.g. multiple cultures, social constructions, etc.) about our knowledge base in cross cultural management. The second step is to recognize the importance of combining text with context as a new way of researching the role of language in cross cultural management.

The strengths of this paper must be tempered with recognition of its limitations. More emphasis could have been placed on the role of language, and the way in which interpretations between text and context are modified by speech. This also involves a move away from a unitary presumption largely based on Saussure's (1983) views of language as an autonomous system of signs dissociated from social and cultural processes. By making a move away from such a view, organizational culture can then be approached on the basis of speech being that which gives meaning to behaviour in time and space. Bakhtin (1986: 147) noted that 'a code is only a technical means of transmitting

information; it does not have cognitive, creative significance'. He declined to accept that a sign is a mere expression of something that is fixed on the grounds that this leads to a reduction in the importance attached to the human experiential element in communication. Bakhtin (1984) therefore called for a synthesis between *langue* and *parole*, and this prompted him to advance his views of language as a 'living thing', dependent on an infinite and recursive chain of utterances between people. 'Language lives', said Bakhtin (1984: 183), 'only in the dialogic interaction of those who make use of it'. Space does not permit a full exploration of the role of language in general, and Bakhtin's contribution in particular. However, despite this acknowledged limitation, the approach proposed in the present study is useful in advancing scholarship and management practice beyond the notion of sameness with social others.

There is also much to be learned from a variety of other approaches that are emerging in discourse analysis, ethnography and cultural studies. Such approaches promise to be useful in expanding the reach of cross cultural management scholarship. For example, ethnography provides insight into how cultural narrative is conceived, familiarity with cultural values, and the significance of utterances and talk in depicting people's perspectives of self and society. Such talk could be pursued through contextual methods of analysis and engagement, and through analyses of self-representation and social representation (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1991; Richardson, 1995; Rosenau, 1992), including the use of language and metaphors (Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn, 2001).

The present discussion suggests a number of avenues for further research. One such avenue could involve comparing and contrasting how meanings, aspirations, agendas, etc. are socially constructed, especially in cross cultural team settings and similar global settings (Holden, 2002). Exploring

such frontiers brings forth a 'surplus of seeing' – a sort of capability that is much needed for implicating management in cross cultural contexts. Other related developments could involve expanding connections between multiple identities and the production of organizational cultures. Recently such terms as 'identity struggle' (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003) and 'shifting identities' (Jabri, 2004) have emerged. In this context, Cunliffe (2002) has suggested that people create their cultures, meanings and selves in embodied and situated dialogue. The task of capturing how people create cultures (social construction) and how cultures come to create identities is daunting, but responding to such a need is likely to be of significant benefit to cross cultural management scholarship. This is undoubtedly a challenging area in which to work, especially in terms of developing effective research methods and interpretive strategies. But the challenge is what makes it interesting and worthwhile.

Combining text and context as a strategy has important management implications for understanding the new challenges facing managers, especially in cross cultural team contexts and other global work situations. Recognizing cultural co-constructions and changes in tradition would allow managers a 'surplus of seeing' in assessing changing realities in organizations that are operating in foreign settings where knowledge of the tradition of the host nation remains crucial. Erez and Gati (2004: 587) noted that 'dynamic, rather than stable models of culture should serve for understanding the changing work environment in response to globalization'.

The challenge, therefore, is to work on two issues: (i) how understanding can be obtained through knowledge of tradition; and (ii) how accounts of life and accounts of organizations can be used to provide new sources of meaning and understanding. Moving forward along the broad lines presented in this article would motivate scholar-

References

Alvesson, M. (2002) *Understanding Organizational Culture*. London: Sage

Alvesson, M. and Karreman, D. (2000) 'Taking the Linguistic Turn in Organizational Research: Challenges, Responses, Consequences', *Journal of Applied Behavioral Analysis* 36(2): 136–58.

Aronowitz, S. and Giroux, H. (1991) *Postmodern Education: Politics, Culture, and Social Criticism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bakhtin, M. (1984) *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bakhtin, M. (1986) *Speech Genres and Other Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Barth, F. (1989) 'The Analysis of Culture in Complex Societies', *Ethnos* 54: 120–42.

Boje, D. (2001) *Narrative Methods for Organization and Communication Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Boyacigiller, N.A., Kleinberg, J., Phillips, M.E. and Sackmann, S.A. (2003) 'Conceptualizing Culture', in B.J. Punnett and O. Shenkar (eds) *Handbook for International Management Research*, 2nd edn., pp. 99–167. Oxford, UK and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Boyce, M. (1995) 'Collective Centring and Collective Sense-making in the Stories and Storytelling of One Organization', *Organization Studies* 16(1): 107–37.

Brannen, M.Y., and Salk, J. (2000) 'Partnering Across Borders: Negotiating Organizational Culture in a German–Japanese Joint Venture', *Human Relations* 53(4): 451–87.

Bruner, J. (1990) *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge. MA: Harvard University Press.

Burrell, G. and Morgan, G. (1988) *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Cerulo, K. (1997) 'Identity Construction: New Issues, New Directions', *Annual Review of Sociology* 23: 385–409.

Chia, R. (1997) 'Essai: Thirty Years On: From Organizational Structures to the Organization of Thought', *Organization Studies* 18(4): 685–707.

Clifford, J. and Marcus, G. (1986) *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Clifford, J. (1988) *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cunliffe, A. (2002) 'Social Poetics as Management Inquiry: A Dialogical Approach', *Journal of Management Inquiry* 11(2): 128–46.

Erez, M. and Gati, E. (2004) 'A Dynamic, Multi-level Model of Culture: From the Micro Level of the Individual to the Macro Level of a Global Culture', *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 53(4): 583–98.

Fang, T. (2003) 'A Critique of Hofstede's Fifth National Culture Dimension', *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 3(3): 347–68.

Gadamer, H. (1997) *Truth and Method*. New York: Continuum.

Geertz, C. (1988) *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books.

Gibson, C. and Zellmer-Bruhn, M.E. (2001) 'Metaphors and Meaning: An Intercultural Analysis of the Concept of Teamwork', *Administrative Science Quarterly* 46(2): 274–303.

Grant, D., Keenoy, T. and Oswick, C. (2001) 'Organizational Discourse: Key Contributions and Challenges', *International Studies of Management and Organizations* 31(3): 5–24.

Hardy, C. and Philips, N. (1999) 'No Joking Matter: Discursive Struggle in the Canadian Refugee System', *Organization Studies* 20(1): 1–24.

Hatch, M. (1996) 'The Role of the Researcher: An Analysis of Narrative Position in Organization Theory', *Journal of Management Inquiry* 5(4): 359–74.

Hofstede, G. (1980) *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-related Values*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hofstede, G. (1998) *Masculinity and Femininity: The Taboo Dimension of National Cultures*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hofstede, G. (2001) *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviours, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*, 2nd edn. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Holden, N. (2002) *Cross-Cultural Management: A Knowledge Management Perspective*. Harlow: Financial Times/Prentice Hall.

Hoppe, M. (1990) 'A Comparative Study of Country Elites: International Differences in Work-related Values and Learning and their Implications for Management Training and Development'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

House, R.J., Hanges, P.J., Ruiz-Quintanilla,

ship to gain a more profound understanding of the mutually constitutive nature of culture and human experience.

S.A., Dorfman, P.W., Javidan, M., Dickson, M., Gupta, V. and GLOBE (1999) 'Cultural Influences on Leadership and Organization: Project GLOBE', in W.H. Mobley, M.J. Gessner and V. Arnold (eds) *Advances in Global Leadership*, pp. 171–233. Stamford, CT: JAI Press.

Howard, G. (1991) 'Culture Tales: A Narrative Approach to Thinking, Cross-cultural Psychology, and Psychotherapy', *American Psychologist* 46(3): 187–97.

Jabri, M. (2000) 'The Role of Narratives in International Business Communication: A Critical Analysis', in M.A. Rahim, R.T. Golembiewski and K.D. Mackenzie (eds) *Current Topics in Management*, pp. 307–24. Boston: JAI Press.

Jabri, M. (2004) 'Change as Shifting Identities: A Dialogic Perspective', *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 17(6): 566–77.

Kagitcibasi, C. (1997) 'Individualism and Collectivism', in J.W. Berry, Y.H. Poortinga and J. Pandey, *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, vol. 3, pp. 1–49. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Kozlowski, S.W. and Klein, K.J. (2000) 'A Multilevel Approach to Theory and Research in Organizations: Contextual, Temporal, and Emergent Processes', in K.J. Klein and S.W. Kozlowski (eds) *Multilevel Theory, Research, and Methods in Organizations: Foundations, Extensions, and New Directions*, pp. 3–90. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Laslett, B. (1999) 'Personal Narratives as Sociology', *Contemporary Sociology* 28(4): 91–401.

Martin, J. and Nakayama, T. (1999) 'Thinking Dialectically About Culture and Communication', *Communication Theory* 9(1): 1–25.

Martin, J. and Nakayama, T. (2004) *Intercultural Communication in Contexts*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

McSweeney, B. (2002) 'Hofstede's Model of National Cultural Differences and their Consequences: A Triumph of Faith – A Failure of Analysis', *Human Relations* 55(1): 89–118.

Mumby, D. (1993) *Narrative and Social Control: Critical Perspectives*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

O'Connor, E. (1995) 'Paradoxes of Participation: Textual Analysis and Organizational Change', *Organization Studies* 16(5): 769–803.

Phillips, N. (1995) 'Telling Organizational Tales: On the Role of Narrative in the Study of Organizations', *Organization Studies* 16(4): 625–49.

Polkinghorne, D. (1988) *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*. Albany: State University of New York.

Richardson, L. (1995) 'Narrative and Sociology', in J. Van Maanen (ed.) *Representation in Ethnography*, pp. 198–221. London: Sage.

Ricoeur, P. (1984) *Time and Narrative*, vol. 1. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1988) *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1991) 'Narrative Identity', *Philosophy Today* 35(10): 73–81.

Ricoeur, P. (1992) *Oneself as Another*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Roberts, K. and Boyacigiller, N. (1984) 'Cross-national Organizational Research: The Grasp of the Blind Man', in B.M. Staw and L.L. Cummings (eds) *Research in Organizational Behaviour 6*, pp. 423–75. Stamford, CT: JAI Press.

Rosen, M. (1991) 'Coming to Terms with the Field: Understanding and Doing Organizational Ethnography', *Journal of Management Studies* 28(1): 1–24.

Rosenau, P.M. (1992) *Post-modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rosman, A. and Rubel, P. (1995) *The Tapestry of Culture*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Sackmann, S.A. and Phillips, M.E. (2004) 'Contextual Influences on Culture Research: Shifting Assumptions for New Workplace Realities', *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 4(4): 370–90.

Saussure, F. (1983) *Course in General Linguistics*, (R. Harris, trans.). London: Duckworth.

Schreiter, R. (1985) *Constructing Local Theologies*. New York: Orbis Press.

Shweder, R. and Sullivan, M.A. (1993) 'Cultural Psychology: Who Needs It?', *Annual Review of Psychology* 44: 497–513.

Smith, P. (2002) 'Culture's Consequences: Something Old and Something New', *Human Relations* 55(1): 119–35.

Sondergaard, M. (1994) 'Hofstede's Consequences: A Study of Reviews, Citations and Replications', *Organization Studies* 15(3): 447–56.

Stohl, C. (2001) 'Globalizing Organizational Communication', in F. Jablin and L. Putnam (eds) *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods*, pp. 323–75. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sveningsson, S. and Alvesson, M. (2003) 'Managing Managerial Identities:

Organizational Fragmentation, Discourse and Identity Struggle', *Human Relations* 56(10): 1163–93.

Triandis, H.C. (1995) *Individualism and Collectivism.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Trompenaars, F. (1993) *Riding the Waves of Culture.* London: Nicholas Brealey.

Tsoukas, H. and Chia, R. (2002) 'On Organizational Becoming: Rethinking Organizational Change', *Organization Studies* 23(5): 567–82.

Van Maanen, J. (1988) *Tales of the Field.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Van Maanen, J. (ed.) (1995) *Representation in Ethnography.* London: Sage.

Van Maanen, J. (1996) 'Commentary: On the Matter of Voice', *Journal of Management Inquiry* 5(4): 375–81.

Voronov, M. and Singer, J. (2002) 'The Myth of Individualism–Collectivism: A Critical Review', *The Journal of Social Psychology* 142(4): 461–80.

Williamson, D. (2002) 'Forward From a Critique of Hofstede's Model of National Culture', *Human Relations* 55(11): 1373–95.

Wolcott, H. (1995) 'Making a Study More Ethnographic', in J. Van Maanen (ed.) *Representation in Ethnography*, pp. 79–129. London: Sage.

Yang, M. (1994) *Gifts, Favors and Banquets: The Art of Social Relationships in China.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Yanow, D. (1995) 'Writing Organizational Tales: Four Authors and Their Stories About Culture. Introduction', *Organization Science* 6(2): 225–26.

Zander, L. (2004) 'Editorial: Dialogue on Identifying Culture', *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 4(4): 275–90.

Résumé

Les relations entre Texte et Contexte : implications en management comparé (Muayyad M. Jabri)

Les comparaisons internationales de valeurs culturelles sont largement fondées sur une ontologie qui postule une certaine « réalité » : la similitude perçue entre le moi et les autres. Cette ontologie part du postulat selon lequel les comparaisons et les contrastes entre cultures peuvent s'opérer sur des ensembles de dimensions universelles préfabriquées, sur lesquelles l'analyse des comparaisons et contrastes peut être poussée. Cet article propose que l'approche méthodologique qui combine 'texte' et 'contexte' démontre que la similitude perçue entre le moi et les autres conduit à une perte de la compréhension expérientielle, spécifique au contexte. L'approche suggérée ici prend à contre pied le postulat de l'existence d'ensembles de dimensions universelles sur lesquels les comparaisons et contrastes entre cultures ont généralement été faits. Ainsi, le concept même de comparaisons internationales s'en trouve affecté.