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TRAINING FOR A TRANSCULTURAL WORLD

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Editors

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Foreword

This issue asked for contributions focussing on research, models, strategies, and also practical exercises which either break new ground on classic linguacultural divides, or are able to reach beyond static, stereotypical 'cultural differences' and make some headway in improving communication and mutual understanding in an increasingly transcultural and virtual world. As we had such a response, boosted through the active contribution of SIETAR Europe papers given at Krakow "Interculturalism Ahead: Transition to a Virtual World?" (September 2011), instead of our usual 5-6 papers we have 10 but, sadly perhaps, no interview this year.

The first papers in this issue offer specific frameworks or models, all of which move us on from the static cultural-difference models, and chart how the transcultural turn is developing; while those on university training and translation give us a stark reality check. Though there is some light, and much investment in training, especially through foreign study, the picture regarding student perception of the training and of 'the Other', along with actual professional translation highlights the fact that there is still some way to go before we can talk of a real 'transcultural turn' in practice.

We hear much about EU supported initiatives in education and training. In particular there is FREPA a Council of Europe 'Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures' (Daryai-Hansen & Schröder-Sura) and INCA, the "Intercultural Competence Assessment" suite of tools (Cano). From the business world we have a fusion of cultural dimensions with the Reiss Life motives (Konigorski), rhizomatic (rather than tree diagram thinking) embodied in the analogy with the Mobius strip (Hale); WorldWork's 'International Profiler' (IP) and International Preference indicator' (IPI) (Ewington & Hill) along with a more communication focussed enhancement (Spencer-Oatey and Stadler).

Areas of perception of cultural difference include a German-American study of Facebook (Reeves), the intercultural benefits of EU supported 'Applied Language Europe' (ALE) European university study exchange

(Morón-Martín) and the 'Mobility in Higher Education' project (Cano). With regard specifically to translation and transculturality there is a discussion on the use of corpora and travel insurance texts (Peruzzo and Durán-Muñoz) and a case study on the translation of film titles.

David Katan
Cinzia Spinzi

**Perceptions and interaction on Facebook:
Germans and Americans.
Anxiety, openness, flexibility, privacy, growth and change**

Jacquelyn Reeves

Abstract

The Facebook phenomenon is now integrated into many aspects of our lives and through that, our national cultures. We use it to inform, share, to keep up with others, as a forum, to promote, to invite, to criticize and to have fun.

In this paper, an extrapolation and continuance of a learning and interactive presentation at the Sietar Europa Conference in Cracow, Poland, we will look at US and German perceptions of Facebook and examine them through use of statistics, survey data and examination of Facebook itself. We will look at adult learning theory as well as Mark Zuckerberg's vision of openness and changing social norms for Facebook and its impact on perceptions of Facebook across these two key cultures.

This paper will utilize the intercultural consultant Fons Trompenaars' "Sphere of Influence" (2008, pp. 81-100) dimension to explore the meaning of public and personal interaction, perceptions, expectations, results and learning and possible implications within the workplace in Germany and the US. Information gathered before and through the presentation will offer possible direction and ways forward.

We may ask if the Germans and/or Americans adjust their perception and use of private and public space through interaction with others with and within a larger public space and if so, how? Does small talk become big talk or otherwise? Do deep culture, or values and beliefs (Schaules, 2007) change? Does the concept of community change? What is being communicated? How is it being received? What are our expectations, reactions and perceptions to and of community on the Facebook platform?

Lastly, what are possible shifts in growth, learning and social change within Facebook? This is an exploratory paper with the goal of generating and stimulating thought.

1. Introduction

For more than 838,470,640 people worldwide, (Checkfacebook, 2012) Facebook has altered the way that we communicate and get things done. Although Facebook's (hereafter referred to as "FB") platform and core ideas originated within the US, there are more FB users (70%) outside the US than within. More than 70 languages are supported, and FB adds new users worldwide every month. It is growing (<http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/6128/The-Ultimate-List-100-Facebook-Statistics-Infographics.aspx>, retrieved on April 4, 2012).

Because FB is an international social networking site (SNS), it lends itself to asking the following questions within the intercultural communications and virtual communication fields:

- What are our expectations, our perceptions and reactions to other people, groups of people, cultures and differences?
- Are they similar to face-to-face encounters with other cultures and environments or are they altered in some way?
- Has FB impacted our cultural awareness of what is private and public?
- Has the nature of sharing information and our feeling of what should be shared changed?
- Is its style influencing our relationships, our values, our ideas about freedom, work and family?
- Are these groups prepared for the above mentioned points?

In this paper we will take a closer look at the dominant cultures of the United States and Germany within these contexts. Furthermore, we will use the 'Circles' or 'Sphere of Influence' model developed respectively by the social psychologist Kurt Lewin and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (ibid, 2008). More specifically, the latter model gives shape and meaning to behaviours, expectations and reactions of Americans and Germans in communication, and levels of involvement ,

2. The US and Germany in numbers on Facebook

In order to get a clearer picture of the groups in question, here is some foundational information about Facebook users in Germany and in the

US.

USA

Country Audience: number 1.

Number of users: 154,760,400

Percent of global audience: 64.69% (as of April 5, 2012).

Biggest population world wide

33% of FB users are between the ages of 23-35. This is the largest group of users. The second largest group is between 36-49 (25%). The average age is higher than in Germany and it is getting older (Pew Research Center, 2010).

58% is female and 43% is male.

Germany

Country audience: number 10

Number of users: 23,214,800

48% is female and 52% is male.

The biggest gain in the last 3 months was recorded in the age group of 25 - 34. (Socialbakers, 2012)

3. German and American communication styles

The “Sphere of Influence” model, typically referred to as the “Peach and Coconut” model in training environments, has proven to be a highly effective method to quickly and clearly provide information on communication preferences, historical influences, expectations, disappointments, perceptions and blind spots within American and German communication patterns (but also to the Dutch as peaches and many other cultures that may also resemble the coconut style model, though perhaps not as dramatically as between these two cultures.)

The circles refer to public, private and shared space. The Americans, pictured below on the left, typically have a comparatively large public space, meaning that there is a larger group of topics of conversation appropriate to share with an unknown or little known group of people, the public. This space may be experienced by the conversational partner as sweet and soft (peachy), in other words, easy and comfortable to access.

The Germans (coconuts) look almost opposite in terms of what is public and private. In figure 1, the large center on the right represents the German private space, which inhabits most of their communication and relationship environment. The public space is comparatively small, meaning that a low amount of information is appropriate to share with everyone, or the public. The private space has a thicker boundary around it. It is connected with responsibility and long-term orientation and is more difficult to enter (thus the hard shell of the coconut).

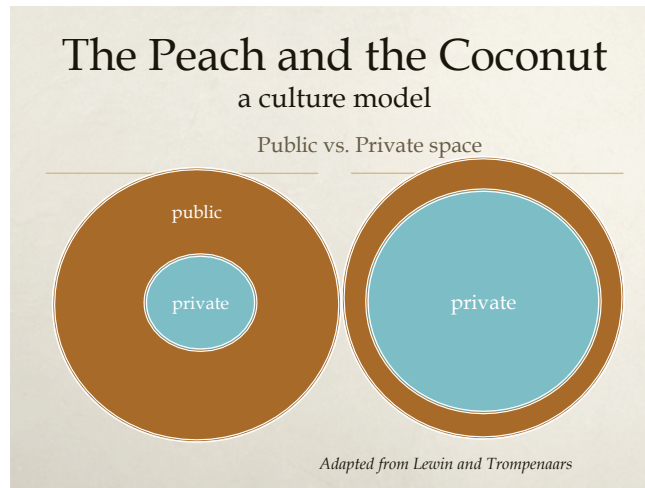


Figure 1. The “Sphere of Influence” model for training is called the “Peach and the Coconut”

At this point, we may ask “why are they different?” What are the origins, implications and unspoken expectations of the American open space, or multiple shared spaces communication style?

3.1 American values and connecting

US history is one of pioneering. Americans have been and are expected to move (pioneers) in order to seek their fortunes, a better lifestyle and a better world than they had for their children. The concept of moving or movement, is inherently connected with moving forward, moving up in society, monetarily or engendering a forward momentum that facilitates change. Change is perceived to be like the proverbial waters; they wash

away the bad, old or diseased and bring in the fresh, new, open and fertile.

In order to move successfully, Americans needed and need help quickly getting established in new environments. The large (larger than most world societies) public space grew out of the need to connect quickly; the value is survival under extreme conditions. Survival comes through the quick development of supportive communities. Its appearance is of friendliness, helpfulness, introducing people around, neighborhood barbeques, car pools, and small talk.

Small talk, as it is called, may not really be “small” at all, when one considers the purpose it serves. It is used to establish connection (relationship) and the smile is its ambassador. It is used to get important, practical information regarding who is in the community, food sources, weather, housing, prices, neighborhoods, and access to other needs like schools and medical. Information like this all fits easily into the public space of the peach. The message serves to give a big picture of the environment. The expectation is to be welcomed by the neighborhood. The welcome is part of an obligation by the community to help settle new people.

For the sake of brevity, one could say that this is why Americans (must) connect. These connections, or American-style friendships, are also for specific purposes, and are called “specific” cultures, because they devote certain life spaces to certain groups or societal functions, such as school, work, church, book club, kids’ friends’ parents. All of these life spaces tend to support a very large group of friends, who would probably be called “acquaintances” in Germany and in many other societies.

3.2 German values and the boundary

German communication and behaviors are based on a very different history and set of expectations. The Germans have a history of separation by and within (isolated) feudal states, set often in mountainous regions difficult to travel in. The need (value) was to stay close, stay deeply connected and not travel far. This lifestyle served to preserve safety and stability.

The German nation as such was formed in 1871 (in this regard it is younger than the USA) and its regional differences are dramatic. When movement or change occurred, it was often not of the people’s choice. It often involved war, starvation and death. Germany’s involvement in the

Thirty Years' War, for example, had very little to do with the Germans, but with the fact that Germany's land mass lay between the factions fighting. The Germans were caught in the middle and had very little control of their environment. Hence, the value of preserving stability. Indeed, the values in Germany, even across its many regions, are those of stability, security, the duty to secure it and of lasting local connections.

There is no large "public space" in Germany because there was no need to develop one. Groups stayed in one place because of geographic, environmental and political conditions and there was very little mixing of groups. Information that normally is freely and openly shared in the US public space was based on mobility and constant change. In Germany, change was and is not encouraged. In order to preserve the stability and security, information is stable, and is centralized. There are too many unknowns and unknown outcomes when one enters into a change process and it will not facilitate preservation of the local environment, the foundation of society.

3.3 Communication: Germans and Americans in conversation

The world has now changed. Germany is an important and powerful country. Germans are expected to and must now mix and travel with many kinds of people in order to preserve its interests as a global export leader. Germans especially are in frequent contact with US Americans: 1) as a (less and less) occupying force in West Germany and 2) with US companies and multinationals.

What, then, does interaction between the Germans and Americans look like? Below in Figure 2, the two cultures are in conversation: the US large public space (smile, connect and learn about the environment) and the German large private space, (low need for and value on sharing general information).

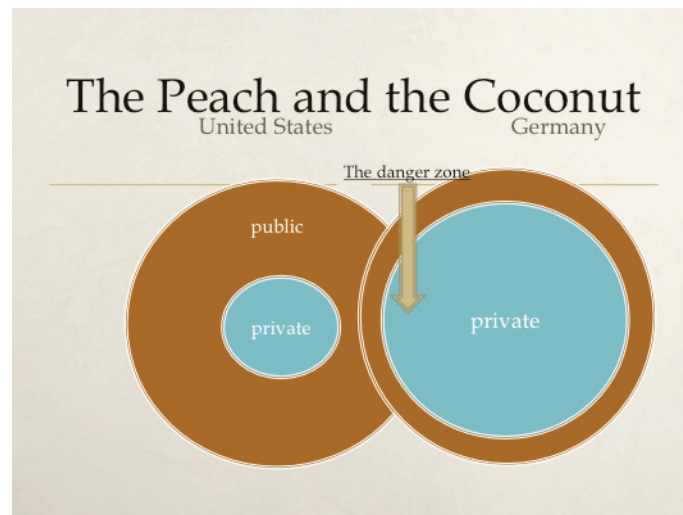


Figure 2. The Peach and the Coconut model: when Germans and Americans converse, which spaces are shared?

The peach and the coconut occupy a shared space, but the meanings conveyed are different because of the value of the type of information. From the American perspective, the space shared (subject matter) is expected and typical. The German space occupied in the same conversation is private. It may feel too close, like forced intimacy, especially if this is a first time meeting. It may even be experienced as an invasion. It may also feel good, but the American intention may be misunderstood. This is the classic misunderstanding of the German and American communication style. Trompenaars described this shared space as “The Danger Zone” (ibid, 2008, p. 85), because of the misunderstanding in this situation of what the relationship may be. The relationship that the American is building is one of immediacy and information sharing as well as enjoyment of the moment. A friendship may develop over time, but there is no obligation at this point. The relationship that the German is building is one of investment, duty and responsibility when the private or inner space is addressed (as above). It is a relationship of depth and longevity.

3.4 Perceptions: Germans and Americans in conversations (and relationships)

Consequently, values cross and are at odds with expectations, reactions and perceptions within the interaction incident. When the interaction (critical incident) occurs, information is perceived, evaluated and then reacted to. Judgments are made. Some of the possible perceptions of the Americans regarding Germans are: unfriendly, cold, unwilling to connect, and too detail-oriented or too much attention paid to the “small stuff”.

Some of the possible perceptions of the Germans regarding Americans are: shallow (*oberflächlich*) (Americans are not capable of great depth and feeling, do not follow through on invitations, do not mean it when they ask “how are you?”), small talk is not time productive because content is not productive; and randomness (too many jokes, fun, especially during business interactions),.

Because Germans and Americans are not generally aware that they are using different public/private spaces in the same interaction, the fall-out can be damaging, even though the situation may seem insignificant. Because small talk is by nature small, we may not see the lasting negative impression it leaves. The result of such cross-purposes in communication styles is a lack of or loss of trust. The term *oberflächlich* is now quite entrenched in German society when discussing the American culture. The fallout, though not the cause, can be seen in a chilly environment that Americans may face in some German workplaces.

Trust is fundamental to productive and stable relationships and to cooperative and collaborative working relationships. Most communication training is requested in order to foster and build trust, though it may take the forms of Communication, Presentation, Conflict Resolution, Teambuilding, Intercultural and Leadership workshops.

4. Facebook is American

When one understands the peach/coconut model, one can see that Facebook is a highly American, almost stereotypical invention. It was designed to share information in a culture that values sharing information and designed within a culture that values a very large public space. Facebook is the ultimate “peachy” platform, with venues for specific conversations, groups that can also be open or closed, forums for every purpose, photo pages (also with comment spaces), happy birthday greetings, and a conversation bubble zone that maxes out after a certain number amount of data is entered (not too much depth, please, try

another topic!).

The glue that holds FB together is commenting. One must make comments to really participate in FB, and to get comments back makes interaction fun. FB utilizes the highly valued (US) small talk model in a virtual application. So now we can comment with people we don't know well or have never met, depending on how you have defined your privacy settings, an art unto itself.

Privacy settings may be an indication of the American interpretation of privacy, or the small peach pit: highly selective, individualistic, and extremely personal. Non-Americans have described hitting the peach pit as shocking and painful, especially in contrast to the friendly and open style of the public space. The hidden or unspoken privacy of the peach may be reflected in the FB privacy settings: not well-defined, ambiguous and may point to online and social media pitfalls that have yet to be understood.

4.1 Facebook: the Americans and being extroverted

The most-used tool on FB may well be the "news feed". It is the open scroll of news, gossip, postings, jokes, photos, happy birthday greetings that are posted to all friends on a friend list. It is probably the most American of all the tools in that its messages are the most public (the loudest) and it also offers the greatest flexibility for posting of all the tools, inviting novelty, variety, surprises and fun, all American values.

Americans use the news feed plentifully. Current statistics (comScore, 2011) rank it as the most popular tool by Americans with 27% of Facebook time being spent on it (number 2 is photos at 25% (ibid, 2011). The American value of extroversion can play out on a big stage on the news feed. Some users post up to six times a day. Others use it as a personal marketing tool for small businesses, entertainment and other business sectors.

Some examples of the wide range of peach comments may be these:

- Gorgeous!
- My son got made fun of at a birthday party today
- Pretty Prague, pretty Prague!
- Graydon went down the slide today singing - "I'm naked, I'm naked!"
- *Caption:* My handsome guy on the first day of school

Following the peach and small talk model, the news feed is also used to give timely information (tornado watches), say “hello”, be friendly, be helpful by giving out medical information as well as making social commentary.

4.2 Facebook: The Germans and being reserved, or “the news feed is very quiet indeed”

One of the most marked behaviors of the Germans in comparison to the Americans is their much lower use of the news feed. The news feed is very quiet and the German value of reserved behavior comes through clearly.

Regarding communication itself, there is some indication that there is imitation of American language and behavior on the news feed. This would make sense, as it gives them a wider variety of use of the feed than the social norms of their own culture. Some evidence of this may be the use of English (American but also British) “*keisses!*”, *denglisch*, or a mix of German and English, used plentifully in modern conversational German, song lyrics, “*California here I come*”, and some use of a few fashionable expletives, which may shock some Americans, but may sound “cool” to German ears. It is also clear that many postings by Germans come from English language sites. “Youtube” is used by both groups extensively, but by Americans to post music videos (impossible to post from Germany with its tighter copyright protections) (<http://gigaom.com/2012/03/21/what-german-startups-really-think-of-web-privacy-rules/>).

A note on language use: German youth are obtaining a lot of social conversation expressions from dubbed US TV and movie language (e.g. “*Two and a half Men*”, “*How I Met your Mother*”), often literally translated. Thus, “*how are you?*”, similar to “*hello*” in American English is translated as “*wie geht es dir?*” in German. The correct appropriate answer is now “*gut*” or “*fein*”, a direct borrowing from the US English (*good, fine*), instead of an actual description of your current state to the asker, normally the default German answer.

4.3 Perceptions, reactions and interpretations by the Germans of American behavior

Germans students in at the Berlin School of Economics in the International Business Administration program originated this research.

Within the elective course “Strategies for Intercultural Competence”, two students, after discussing the “Peach/Coconut” model decided to investigate facebook behavior, and find out which culture posted the most and what kind of information. The results were discussed in a group of 17 German students, and it was recorded on video. The sources (listed in the biography) for the research showed that the sharing habits of Americans were frequent and the subject matter extensive if not often “too” private, as experienced by the discussion group. In the open discussion of reactions by this group regarding the Americans they know on Facebook, the author believes that they often drew on coconut values in their FB behavior. Tina, a student, said, “I have American friends from South Dakota. And I never write to them because I already know everything because they post it. I know how they are doing, how their kids are doing, how the dog is doing.” The group tended to experience American behavior as too personal. Again Tina: “And there is another person who has cancer and they upload pictures of this guy with cancer. This just seems wrong. I don’t want to know that.” They found Americans were making themselves easy targets for crimes such as robbery because they posted where they were and where they were going. (see the website designed to exploit this weakness: www.pleaserobme.com). There was some expression of condescension and scorn in this regard in student discussions.

The group also agreed that they chose smaller groups of friends: “We choose our friends really, really carefully. We have seen Americans with 7000 friends. We can’t imagine having 7000 friends” (Reeves CCM 3 class: *video*, 2011).

The German group also cited outlandish or extreme behavior in the “vocal or emotional level” of posts, especially sports but also over news headlines; over anti or pro Obama stances, posts urging their friends to save or adopt abandoned pets as well as outrage over mothers not taking care of their children (Casey Anthony, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Caylee_Anthony).

4.4 Perceptions, reactions and interpretations by the Americans of German behavior.

Judging from the group discussion at the Sietar Conference in Cracow (presentation of this material, September 23, 2011), American reactions

may be just as puzzled, but much more subtle. It is a feeling of missing connections, interactions and fun. Some Americans reactions are that Germans are hard to find, they disappear, don't comment (as) much, yet are, however, open to private chat and private messages (Milan follow-up Sietar Conference, May 3, 2012).

There is irritation over the fact that the Germans don't post pictures, and use too many and too stringent privacy settings. They don't allow themselves to be "tagged"¹² and check their pages much less often. There is far less anecdotal evidence from Americans because of the sheer number of Americans and the fact that internationally fewer Americans mix with Germans than Germans with Americans. But in general, Germans are perceived as being difficult to connect to (ibid, 2012). See comment no. 21.

4.5 Privacy and Germans

Privacy is a serious concern for Germans and much time is devoted to it, especially regarding FB, but in many other aspects of life as well. The German coconut has a large private space. One may then well infer that privacy is an important German value. German law and interest in privacy, data protection as well as access to personal information would seem to bear this out.

Germany (as well as the European Union) has some of the strongest privacy and data protection laws in the world. If one could name the most popular topics in the German public space, it is probable that data protection, or "*Datenschutz*", along with politics number among them.

4.6 New behaviors through and on Facebook

Facebook may be engendering new and accelerated networking or community behavior, based on the peach model. Consider this from the US based non-profit organization, Pew Research (Pew Research Center, "Technology and Social Networks" (2011) <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Technology-and-social-networks/Part-4/Points-of-view.aspx>, retrieved on April 5, 2012).

¹² Tagging is the act of the account holder labeling uploaded photos with a person's name that is displayed on their personal pages and on the news feed.

Social networking sites (SNS) provide people with the opportunity to friend members of their overall network of family members, coworkers, and other acquaintances. Much has been made of the use of the word “friend” in this context. Those who are listed as friends on SNS may indeed be friends in the traditional sense, but they can also be old acquaintances (e.g., from high school) or very casual connections between people who have never met in person. Some worry that as a result of using these services, people may become more isolated and substitute less meaningful relations for real social support. Others believe this might enrich and expand relationships.

By incorporating old networks (high school for mid-life generations, the generation that made Facebook the SNS of choice) with current ones as well as accepting “friends of friends”, networks expand exponentially. Other behaviors include getting to know people on FB, exchanging Facebook names instead of phone numbers, guys looking for dates by asking for girls’ names at college parties and then searching the name on FB.

4.7 Privacy and the Americans

The large public space has a privacy function. It is about staying specific, according to the “Sphere of Influence” model. It is “specific” because, although Americans have regular contact with a large group of people compared to other cultures, it is not actually one large group, but a variety of separate groups. This part of the model Trompenaars called “specific”. The Americans interact and share information with an overall large group but divide them up. For example, an American may interact regularly with groups at church, school, soccer, neighborhood, work and weight watchers. There will be very little overlap of these groups of “friends”, as they are called in the US. Other country cultures may call them “acquaintances”. They have groups of friends for specific activities. If one friend becomes closer, they may be invited to come along to another group. For example, a friend from work joining soccer practice.

The center core, or the peach pit is private space from all groups and may only be shared with a few people, or none at all, depending on circumstances, time of life, generation, gender, self-confidence and other factors. It is extremely private. Although in general, Germans believe that Americans share too much and too personally, there is a group of topics

that is not generally shared: they are the topics of religion, politics, and race (and a few others that may also include money and health). The German student group did not notice this, possibly because they were so overwhelmed by the sharing styles of the Americans. Indeed, they were quite surprised when statistics on information sharing on FB bore this out (<http://www.futurebiz.de/artikel/welche-informationen-teilen-nutzer-auf-facebook/> retrieved on April 10, 2012).

4.8 “Current social norms” (Zuckerberg), and a new communication model based on new virtual norms?

Are communication styles experiencing a shift? There is pressure on the German style to change, but the research does not (yet) bear that out. Are Facebook and its format developers creating a new communication style? Mark Zuckerberg’s vision is to create a new communication style, by making all or most information public and open to exchange and sharing (Rosen, 2010):

So far, however, Zuckerberg, Facebook’s C.E.O., has been moving in the opposite direction — toward transparency rather than privacy. In defending Facebook’s recent decision to make the default for profile information about friends and relationship status public rather than private, Zuckerberg said in January to the founder of the publication TechCrunch that Facebook had an obligation to reflect “current social norms” that favored exposure over privacy. “People have really gotten comfortable not only sharing more information and different kinds but more openly and with more people, and that social norm is just something that has evolved over time,” he said (Cox and Rosen, 2010).

5. Implications of this discussion

If we take the theory and our sample we can theorize about the two cultural groups in general, the result being that if the goal is to preserve an online private space, the two cultures are not equally prepared to handle these challenges. The Facebook model is the peach, and Germans are not peaches. That is the reason why they don’t post as frequently as the Americans. They post what is public for them, which is very little. The Germans are already skilled at keeping information private and establishing firm boundaries. In addition to this, there are strong data/identity protection laws in place.

What is happening on the American front may be far more alarming, extreme and difficult to navigate for Americans themselves. The fact that the model developed out of the home culture itself may be what will make it the most difficult to see through, discuss and evaluate effectively.

The model that Zuckerberg is using is not a hyper peach, it is a coconut turned inside out. His model effectively takes all that Germans keep private, some of which is already the American open space (peach) and renders it public space. The thin public layer is now a dot of privacy at the core in keeping with Zuckerberg's vision. All FB users are being pressed into a reverse coconut communication model, or a "One universal virtual Space" sphere. (Fig. 3)

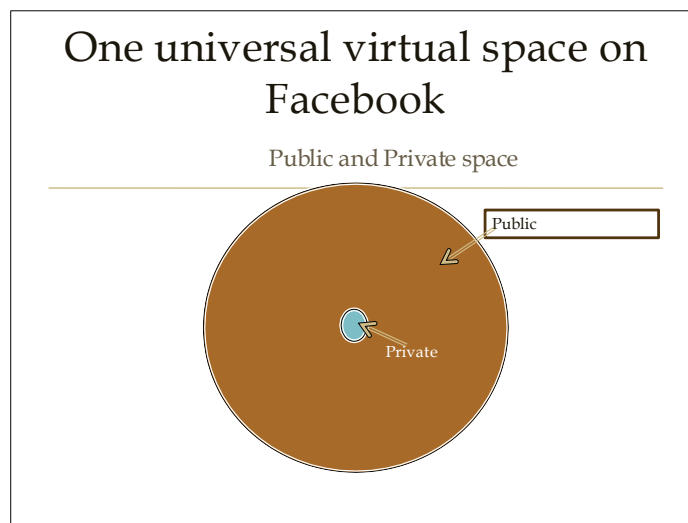


Figure 3. One universal virtual space on Facebook

Referring back to the use of public space and its division into groups that do not mix, Americans' view and use of the private sphere and specific spaces is fragile and individualistic. It is based on individual control and respect by others of the divisions. The case of Stacy Snyder in the US should be a wake-up call. A college student about to receive her teaching degree, Stacy was released from her pending teaching contract when she was shown on Facebook at a party drinking a beer. Although this is not illegal, she lost her court case when she tried to protest (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=128825584>).

When the school board in her district was asked for comment, they

suggested that Ms. Snyder needed to choose an area where public values are more aligned with her own (in this case not drinking alcohol or posting on Facebook? The spokeswoman did not elaborate). However, the outcome of this critical incident is clear and the implications are alarming. The following may be proposed: without individual choice and control, the peach communication and values lifestyle cannot work successfully. It is about segmentation and separation of specific social groups. It is about managing a lifestyle that demands a very large social space and interaction with many people who may not be familiar with 'other' core values and cultural preferences. The peach model, on the other hand, actively encourages movement toward and away from intimacy, spontaneously and flexibly based on context and need. The loss of this mobility and flexibility of the spaces has profound implications on communication styles, on human rights, on free speech, on the right to privacy and leaves many legally protected rights (drinking a beer at a party) open to prosecution or jobs open to dismissal if this issue is not proactively recognized and discussed openly by American leaders in all sectors.

The Germans are protected by their legal system as well as by their cultural preferences and behaviors. The Americans, as I have shown, much less so.

"it doesn't work to have a line between your work self and your play self, ... a psychology professor ... said ... "I have to reconcile my professor self with my having-a-few drinks self, but that's a good thing because we'll be less hypocritical and everyone will be more accepting ...

One thing privacy protects is the ability to protect different aspects of our identity in different contexts, to have a work self, a play self, a home self ... and when that segmented self disappears and you have to be held accountable ... for everything, ... I'm not sure it's good for ... individuality, creativity, all the things that we really value as human beings" (Cox and Rosen, 2010).

6. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to ask two questions. The first concerns communication on a visual, and audible level and how it is used by Germans and Americans on Facebook. The communication styles are based on the Peach and Coconut training model. It then draws the connection between communication to cultural values and in the end

singles out the subject of privacy for deeper analysis, drawing on the communication, values and use of communication space, as exemplified by the Peach and Coconut.

First, to what extent can the - “sphere of Influence” model developed by Kurt Lewin and later Fons Trompenaars be transferable to social media, in this case Facebook. The answer is that it can be easily transferred, and that similar and sometimes the same perceptions, reactions and expectations are playing out on the virtual stage that are already observed between Germans and Americans in everyday interaction. It was noted that language itself is in transition, due to media influences and trends, which may or (more probably in this author's opinion) may not be changing this communication style.

On the second question related to Mark Zuckerberg's vision for Facebook and to speculate on how the peach/coconut model could be altered or stretched to encompass this vision. It would appear that Zuckerberg's vision is something that the Germans are much more organized to handle than the Americans, due to their history, core values, communication preferences and legal system, which has more data protection laws than the American system.

I suggest that a dialogue is needed to address this issue, so that the case of Stacy Snyder does not set a precedent. This paper is not meant to create answers, the social media world is in its nascence; it is meant to shed light on emerging issues, ask questions and hopefully open the door to productive discussion and answers for all.

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