TRANSLATING “FORGIVENESS”:

THE VALIDITY OF THE MANDARIN VERSION

OF THE ENRIGHT FORGIVENESS INVENTORY

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ABSTRACT

The Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI) purports to measure a person's level of forgiveness. Now available in many languages, it joins the list of Western psychological inventories that have been exported to other cultures in the name of cross-cultural research. Actually, this constitutes intercultural research, as one culture (or here, its inventory) interacts with another (here, the respondents). For this study, back-translation and a questionnaire were used to evaluate the Mandarin EFI (MEFI) as a tool of intercultural research. Chinese and Western cultural differences relevant to forgiveness were also examined.

Respondents were asked to provide Mandarin characters to match Enright's definition of "forgiveness" and a definition of "tolerance". These were associated with selected characters, Chinese sayings, and MEFI items. The resulting data show little consensus regarding respondents' understandings of the definitions. The characters prompted by the definitions varied widely, and the four characters most frequently suggested for each definition held two in common. Of twenty-two MEFI items (there are 60), only four were identified (by a slim majority) to be connected to forgiveness. A majority agreed with one of Enright's major assumptions, but a majority disagreed with another.

Responses to Enright's definition in general and to the MEFI items in particular show that the respondents' understandings of forgiveness vary widely from Enright's and that they do not consider the MEFI to be closely related to forgiveness. Those who use the MEFI are in danger of proving true the Chinese proverb, "Two-thirds of what a person sees exists behind that person's eyes".

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DEDICATION

To those who travel to other cultures

to do things *with*, not *to*, their hosts.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEE	China Educational Exchange
CPAI	Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory
EFI	Enright Forgiveness Inventory
EFL	English as a foreign language
MEFI	Mandarin Enright Forgiveness Inventory
MJI	Moral Judgement Interview
MMPI	Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory

Chapter One

TRANSLATING "FORGIVENESS" IN CHINA

1.1 Ying letter, Yan explanation

> In the ancient Chinese city of Ying, a man was writing to his friend, the Prime Minister of Yan. As darkness fell, the man said to his servant, "Hold high the candle," absentmindedly writing the words as he spoke them aloud.
>
> Upon receiving the letter, the Prime Minister was puzzled by the reference to the candle, and finally interpreted the words to mean that Yan should be ruled in brightness, with able and virtuous officials holding the most important offices. The king accepted his Prime Minister's advice and Yan prospered. (Adapted from Wang, 1991, 116.)

"Ying letter, Yan explanation" (郢书燕说—*yǐng shū yàn shuō*) is a Mandarin Chinese set phrase referring to a situation where meaning is twisted, where misinterpretation occurs. Fortunately for the people of Yan, this misunderstanding yielded a positive result. Misinterpretations generally produce problems, not prosperity. The greater the geographical and cultural distances between "Ying" and "Yan," the greater the potential for misunderstanding. Since children in Canada, England, and New Zealand imagine that digging right through the earth will land them in China (Willinsky, 1998, 139), it is not surprising that there is a great deal of misunderstanding between the West and China—two cultures at the "opposite" ends of the earth. This thesis will explore the validity of a forgiveness inventory designed by and for Westerners in the

United States that has been translated into Mandarin, and ask whether or not the data collected from Chinese respondents constitute “letters from Ying”.

North American teachers working with China Educational Exchange (CEE) experienced a “Ying letter, Yan explanation” misunderstanding in their classrooms while teaching an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lesson to their Chinese students. The teachers were all using the curriculum, *Students and teachers learn together*, prepared by Dennette Alwine-Friesen (2000), a former CEE teacher with eight years’ experience teaching EFL in China. The course is designed to teach basic English oral skills along with peace-building skills. A Beijing conference held in 2001 included an evaluation session of this newly piloted curriculum. The teachers who came from across China were generally very pleased with the curriculum, and reported enthusiastic student responses as well—with one notable exception. At the evaluation session, teachers were surprised to discover that their students were not the only ones who had reacted unexpectedly to the lesson on forgiveness.

Each teacher had been somewhat perplexed by the negative student reactions prompted by a story from South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in which a frail black woman forgives the white police officer who had murdered her son and her husband. Students criticized, in some cases vociferously, the woman’s actions. The curriculum developer and the CEE teachers had all intended the lesson as not only an example of forgiveness, but also as an encouragement to practice forgiveness. This goal was definitely not met; in fact, it had the opposite effect on students. The North American

curriculum designer and the North American teachers had hoped to encourage their Chinese students to practice forgiveness, but the “Ying” lesson was misinterpreted by the “Yan” students.

These students were not the first Chinese to puzzle over a Western example of forgiveness. In the early 1900s, Missionhurst Fathers (Catholic missionaries) encountered Chinese mandarins

> . . . who were deeply moved by the Gospel and attracted to the person of Jesus but were baffled by the message to forgive. They would say: “We accept gladly your preaching and teaching but this notion of forgiveness is too difficult. We cannot live this sincerely. It is too hard.” (Terga, 1999)

Contemporary observers of China support this contention that forgiveness is a difficult notion. While many question whether or not repentance is a necessary condition for forgiveness, repentance does often play a vital role in the granting or withholding of forgiveness, so forgiveness would be relatively more difficult in Chinese culture where, according to Zha (cf. Huo, 2003, 10),

> . . . nobody confesses sins. . . . It has *never* been popular to acknowledge openly the wrongs you have done to others. . . . Forms of confession. . . are neither encouraged nor expected. . . . In fact, it's hard to talk about psychological issues in Chinese—the language just isn't well-equipped with words and expressions to discuss your inner demons. The common attitude is to leave the demons alone. (1995, 18)

Chao, an evangelical Christian scholar, bluntly states, “Chinese people lack forgiveness. Because there is no clear concept of sin and no atonement, there are few examples of forgiveness, except the concepts of forbearance [恕– *shù*] and tolerance [忍–*rěn*]” (1998). While Chao seems to suggest a close connection between the concepts of forbearance and tolerance and the concept

of forgiveness, Augsburger argues that there is a sharp contrast: “Forbearance requires only tolerance and indulgence in a virtual suspension of ethical issues; forgiveness demands the facing of justice, love, mercy, and the uncomfortable behaviour we call repentance” (1996, 115), so even Chao’s “few examples of forgiveness” are actually nothing of the kind. (These brief comments of Augsburger and Chao may typify Western and Chinese attitudes toward forgiveness and tolerance and the distinction, or lack of distinction, between the two.)

If it is true that “this notion of forgiveness is too difficult”, that “nobody confesses sins”, and that “Chinese people lack forgiveness”, there is little to suggest that anything resembling the Judeo-Christian concept of forgiveness can be found in China, even though some claim that forgiveness “is a universal human virtue” (Cameron & Kaza, 2002, 33—unfortunately, the only proof cited is that “*almost* every day individuals offer forgiveness to others for offenses or affronts in their interpersonal relationships. Likewise, *virtually* every modern religious tradition advocates forgiveness.” Italics are added—these qualifiers seem out of place in defending a “universal” virtue.) Dr. Robert Enright makes a similar (and similarly unsubstantiated) claim: “Forgiveness is an element of all cultures” (Park & Enright, 2000, 359).

Enright, “the forgiveness trailblazer” (Cole, Mitchell, Monroe, & Laughlin, 1999) and “the ‘guru’ of forgiveness” (Murphy, 2002, 41), is one of those who will be credited with sparking unprecedented academic interest in forgiveness. In 1985, Enright, along with graduate students, professors, and interested

people in the community, formed a think tank—the Human Development Study Group—at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 1994, as an outgrowth of this group, the International Forgiveness Institute was established, and in 1995 the University of Wisconsin-Madison hosted the National Conference on Forgiveness, the first conference on forgiveness held at an American university. In addition to a plethora of academic articles, Enright has published (with Fitzgibbons) a major study entitled *Helping clients forgive: An empirical guide for resolving anger and restoring hope* (2000), and has produced the Enright Forgiveness Inventory, which Enright (2001) claims is "the measurement tool of choice in forgiveness research."

The Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI) was developed to measure interpersonal forgiveness according to this definition: "Forgiveness is a willingness to abandon one's right to resentment, negative judgement, and indifferent behaviour toward one who unjustly injured us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her" (Enright, Rique, & Coyle, 2000, 1). The EFI is a 60-item, 6-point Likert inventory (ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree") that purports to be "an objective measure of the degree to which one person forgives another who has hurt him or her deeply and unfairly" (Enright et al., 2000, 5). The items are presented in three subscales: affect, behaviour, and cognition. Respondents are asked to think about a person who has recently hurt them and then answer questions about how they currently feel about the person ("I feel _____ toward him/her), act toward the person ("Regarding the person, I do or would

_____”), and think about the person (“I think he or she is _____”). Within each subscale, there are ten positive items (e.g., #50: “I think he or she is a good person”) and ten negative items (e.g., #53: “I think he or she is a bad person”—Park, 1998, 135-136). In scoring the items, negative items are reverse scored, resulting in total scores ranging from 60 (revealing a low degree of forgiveness) to 360 (a high degree of forgiveness). Essentially, “the higher the score, the more forgiving is the respondent” (Park & Enright, 2000, 360).

“Valid versions” (Enright et al., 2000, 7) of the EFI are available in German, Brazilian-Portuguese, Hebrew, Korean, and Taiwanese (i.e., Mandarin Chinese, *not* the indigenous language of Taiwan). This study will focus on the Mandarin Enright Forgiveness Inventory (MEFI). As shown above, there is a question as to whether anything like Western forgiveness exists in China for the inventory to measure, and, as a result, whether or not it is valid to make a claim such as this one:

> U.S. participants have higher scores on most EFI subscales and the total score than those in. . . Taiwan. The EFI score of 286, for example, for a. . . Taiwan participant means that he or she is more than one standard deviation above the mean, while the same score, 286, for an American participant means that he or she is average on forgiving. (Park & Enright, 2000, 361)

A Taiwan participant, then, must score one standard deviation above the mean in Taiwan in order to be as forgiving as the average American, so Americans are significantly more forgiving than the Chinese in Taiwan—at least according to the EFI/MEFI.

While many Western assessment tools have been exported to other cultures in the name of cross-cultural research (i.e., “studies dealing with how

culture influences human behaviour"—Brislin, 2000, vii), these interactions between Western researchers/instruments and non-Western respondents actually constitute *intercultural* research: "studies of people from different cultures [here, a Western instrument and Chinese respondents] coming into contact and interacting frequently" (Brislin, 2000 vii). This latter term also avoids the misleading imagery of cultures being monolithic, self-contained edifices between which one may actually "cross", an image that Salmon Rushdie questions: "Do cultures actually exist as separate, pure, defensible entities? Is not mélange, adulteration, impurity, pick'n'mix at the heart of the idea of the modern, and hasn't it been that way for most of this all-shook-up century?" (1999, A13). Many Western researchers seem to use the terms "cross-cultural" and "intercultural" interchangeably, and this penchant for researchers to ignore the intercultural aspects of their own research is problematic. In general, the implications and complexities of intercultural research have been ignored to the point that Dana (2002) decries the "unbridled exportation of assessment instruments internationally, often with inadequate translations or demonstrations of cross-cultural construct equivalence." The problem is exacerbated when the construct under consideration is a contested and "a morally charged concept [like] forgiveness [which] evokes discourses intersecting psychology, politics, philosophy, and religion" (Haaken, 2002, 188). There are, indeed, many points of forgiveness upon which scholars disagree: forgiveness is always a virtue—or is it? (Downie, 1965; Anderson, 1997); forgiveness is supererogatory—or is it? (McGary, 1989; Benbaji & Heyd, 2001); forgiveness requires repentance—or

does it? (Wilson, 1988; Narayan, 1997); saying, “I forgive you” is an Austinian performative utterance—or is it? (Martin, 1953; Digeser, 2001); forgiveness precludes punishment—or does it? (Forward & Buck, cited in Freedman, 1998; Yandell, 1998); forgiveness belongs to the primary victim and secondary and tertiary forgiveness are not legitimate—or are they? (Wiesenthal, cited in Tutu, 1999; Yancey, 1985); forgiveness requires reconciliation—or does it? (Wilson, 1988; Suderman, 1998); forgiving increases self-esteem—or does it? (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Anderson, 1997); forgiving is forgetting—or is it? (Huntington, cited in Lang, 1994; Morris, 1988); and finally, and this is the question most pertinent to this study, either forgiveness “seems to have the status of a cultural universal”, or “forgiveness is not a cultural universal” (Lang, 1994, 114; Newberg, d’Aquilli, Newberg, & de Marici, 2000, 100). While not attempting to settle these debates, this study will include a conceptual analysis of Judeo-Christian forgiveness and compare it with Enright’s definition, upon which the EFI is based.

Ransley is writing about people who share a common language when she notes that, “When people speak or write of forgiveness, they mean different things” (2004, 15). If “forgiveness” is such a complex and nuanced concept in English, it should not be surprising if such an unstable concept, elusive as it is within one language, does not translate easily, if at all, into other languages. In Mandarin, for example, “forgiveness” can be loosely translated into at least nine different characters, ranging from “*yuán liàng*” (原谅; for minor, unintentional slights) to “*kuān shù*” (宽恕; used rarely, and reserved for very serious matters).

This suggests that the concept of forgiveness may be even more unstable in Chinese culture than it is in Western culture. That forgiveness is contestable in both cultures may not be reason enough to assume that the MEFI is as valid in Mandarin as the EFI may be in English.

Some question the validity of any instrument developed in culture *X* when it is applied in culture *Y*. As Leung and Zhang (1995) observe, research studies are commonly exported from the West to non-Western countries in which the issues examined are, in many cases, of little or no relevance. Researchers often implicitly assume full-score comparability among results from different cultures, even though "personality tests developed in one culture and translated for use in other cultures are likely to be insensitive to cultural differences and to produce distorted results" (Triandis & Suh, 2002, 137) and "some item bias studies have shown a substantial proportion of items to be biased, sometimes more than half of the items" (van de Vivjer & Leung, 1997, 278). Several groundbreaking and venerated instruments have been shown to exhibit cultural bias, including Kohlberg's Moral Judgement Interview (MJI—Vine, 1986), the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI—Cheung, Leung, Fan, Song, Zhang, & Zhang, 1996), Hofstede's four culture dimensions (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987, 144) and the Big Five (Triandis & Suh, 2002, 147-149).

Since "social science is Western in origin, practitioners, and instrumentation" (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987, 144), it is not surprising

that cultural biases appear when instruments such as these are applied in non-Western cultures. Kohlberg's MJI, for example, reflects

> . . . a characteristically Western view of humans. . . as autonomous beings who, as moral agents, make free and rational choices. . . . [while] the Confucian (Chinese) view of human beings is quite different. . . . The preferred mode of solving moral conflicts in China reflects this world view, one that emphasizes collective and reconciliative decision-making rather than individual choice, commitment, or responsibility, as in the West. (Huang, 1990, 31)

One of Kohlberg's moral dilemmas (involving whether or not a 14-year-old boy should turn over the summer camp money he earned from his paper route when his father asks for it to go on a fishing trip) includes such obvious non-universals as "summer camp", "paper route", and "fishing trip". Of course, these details of the story could be adapted to Chinese culture by substituting "books", "*hóng bāo* (红包) money" (literally, "red envelope" money, given to children at Chinese New Year), and "mahjongg party". Such cosmetic changes will amount to little. Even if the story is presented in a completely Chinese context, Dien's prediction of the likely response of a Chinese respondent when faced with such a dilemma still rings true: "Under the Confucian precept regarding filial piety, the son is expected to obey parental orders and to make sacrifices for the happiness of his parents. What choice does the child in the story have?" (1982, 337). Chinese (and other non-Western) respondents are similarly left without options in the MMPI, which omits "important emic (culture-specific) constructs that are indigenous to a particular culture" (Cheung et al., 1996). There are also concerns that Hofstede's dimensions are culture bound, a concern which Hofstede himself indirectly acknowledged: "If we begin to realize that our own

ideas are culturally limited. . . we can never be self-sufficient again. Only others with different mental programs can help us find the limitations of our own" (1980, 374). As for the Big Five, after studies with Chinese participants, researchers have failed to identify one of the five and have identified a Chinese tradition factor that has no connection to the Big Five (Triandis & Suh, 2002, 150).

As Gries notes, "The idea that cultures can be so different that understanding one another is impossible is extremely pernicious. There is much that all humans share. . . . But. . . [we] do need to be aware of cultural differences" (2004, 112), and while some may despair at the futility of intercultural research—since "culture-free and culture-fair tests cannot be constructed" (van de Vivjer & Leung, 1997, 269) and "cultural bias. . . can probably never be eliminated fully from any testing instrument" (Vine, 1986, 435)—others have fortunately accepted the challenge to do intercultural research well, and to construct tests that are as culture-free and culture-fair as possible, with limited cultural bias. Samuel Huntington's general criticism in *The clash of civilizations* that what non-Westerners see as Western is seen by Westerners as universal (1996, 67) certainly applies to some Western researchers in particular, but it is not impossible for Western researchers to correctly identify Western cultural elements as such, and not treat them as universals. In this study, the validity of the MEFI will be assessed in two areas: as a tool of intercultural research (including the issues of establishing the universality of human behaviour, distinguishing between etics and emics,

translation equivalence, conceptual equivalence, scalar equivalence, possible cultural bias in Likert scales, and cultural attitudes regarding both self-disclosure and consistency between thoughts/feelings and behaviours) and by considering differences between Western and Chinese culture (including the effects of Confucian and Christian traditions, the differences between low- and high-context cultures, and what Ohbuchi, Fukushima, and Tedeschi (1999, 52) identify as "the most important cultural dimension in accounting for cultural differences": individualism-collectivism. The Interpersonal Relatedness factor, as defined by the Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory, will also be considered). These are important, essential questions to consider when researching and comparing behaviour in different cultures, especially when comparing two cultures as distant as the West and China. In the course of the study I will not only be forced to make gross overgeneralizations about the individuals who actually comprise both Chinese and Western culture, but will also attempt to discuss and define aspects of Chinese culture in English. I will use "Chinese" and "Western" as generic terms that do not suggest that there is one fixed way in which either Chinese or Westerners think or act.

In this study of the MEFI, my hypothesis is that in Mandarin, the concepts of forgiveness and tolerance are much less clearly delineated than they are in English. It is difficult to imagine two Westerners being unable to explain the difference between "I forgive you" and "I tolerate you" (see Augsburger, above), and it was in this context that the EFI was developed. When the inventory is

applied in a culture that may not make such a clear-cut distinction (see Chao, above), the question arises: what is being measured?

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Participants

Intercultural researchers often target university subjects in various cultures in an effort "to standardize as much as possible relative social class standing within culture, to control education across cultures, and to make more accurate developmental comparisons possible" (Park, 1998, 39). Researchers realize that "to make valid comparisons, subjects must be similar in terms of relevant background characteristics, otherwise differences may be due to sample-specific, rather than cultural differences" (van de Vivjer & Leung, 1997, 264). While university students from different cultures all, presumably, attend university classes in their home cultures, there may be little else that they share. Comparing data, for example, from "undergraduate psychology students" in two different cultures may seem to minimize sample-specific differences, but such a label may obscure substantial differences between the two groups, depending upon both the educational opportunities available and the popularity of different courses in the two cultures. As Bond (1995, 196) points out with respect to American and Japanese psychology students, since a relatively higher proportion of Americans attend university, and since psychology courses are relatively popular, American undergraduate students are more representative than their counterparts in Japan, where opportunities to attend university are

more limited and where psychology courses are less in demand. Japanese psychology undergraduates are less representative of their cultures. For this study, university students were chosen specifically *not* in the name of intercultural standardization but rather because if the MEFI were to be administered in China, university students would almost certainly be recruited as participants in an attempt at standardization that may well prove fruitless. There is little to suggest that university students in the USA and China are socially, educationally, and developmentally comparable. In China's highly stratified education system, in fact, it is recognized that even students in the same city who attend different colleges or universities do indeed, by virtue of their enrolment in these different institutions, vary widely in terms of social, educational, and developmental levels (personal communication in conversation, Chen Hongyan, July, 2004). That Chinese educational institutions are more stratified than Western ones is evidenced by the greater number of Mandarin terms for post-secondary institutions and the resulting difficulty in translating some institutions' names into English, since English does not distinguish between so many levels of post-secondary institutions.

University students attending West China Normal University (in Nanchong, a medium-sized city in Sichuan province) were asked to respond to my questionnaire. In order to avoid the potential problems involved in attempting to translate "forgiveness" into Mandarin myself on the questionnaire, the questionnaire is designed to be used with respondents having a high enough level of English to understand Enright's English definition of forgiveness

so that they can themselves provide the appropriate Mandarin term. All of the respondents were English majors in the university's School of Foreign Languages, and all were in the senior (fourth) year of their studies. All had successfully completed a one-month English-teaching practicum, all had submitted major term papers written in English, and all had passed the *Test for English Majors—Band 4*, the standardized national test required for convocation. An analysis of passages from the reading comprehension sections of six previous TEM-4 examinations (used from 1997-2002) yielded the following Flesch-Kincaid grade levels (based on the U.S. high school grade level system): 13.5, 13.4, 13.1, 13.9, 12.0, and 15.4 (*Tests for English Majors (TEM-4), 2003:* 13, 40, 60, 83, 109, 129*).*

These students, admittedly, have had a greater exposure to the West than the average Chinese university student, through language courses, courses on Western culture in general, courses in British and American literature in particular, and through prolonged exposure to Western teachers, both inside and outside of the classroom, over their four-year university career. While even non-English major Chinese university students are required to attain a level of English proficiency (determined by the *College English Test—Band 4*), their contact with Western culture would be very limited compared to the theoretical and personal knowledge of the West possessed by the respondents to my questionnaire. If anything, these student participants would be expected to have a more developed understanding of the English word "forgiveness" than the average Chinese university student. If it can be shown that these somewhat

“Westernized” respondents do not share a Western view of forgiveness, it can be assumed that the understanding of more truly representative respondents will be even further removed.

1.2.2 The questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1 for the original and Appendix 2 for English translations of the Mandarin sections of the questionnaire) is made up of nine questions. Questions 1 to 6 are objective questions. The first two questions ask for one Mandarin word corresponding to the English definition of forgiveness and one Mandarin word corresponding to the English definition of tolerance. In question three, these two Mandarin terms are then matched (according to closeness of meaning) to sixteen different Mandarin terms that have been offered as Mandarin equivalents to “forgiveness” or “tolerance”. The two terms are then matched (according to relevance) to twenty-six Mandarin sayings that seem to be related to forgiveness and tolerance (in question five) and then, in question six, to twenty-two items selected from the Mandarin Enright Forgiveness Inventory (MEFI). The remaining questions deal specifically with Enright’s definition of forgiveness. Given an English version of this questionnaire, data from Westerners would yield highly consistent results, since the concepts of forgiveness and tolerance are easily distinguished. (As will be shown, researchers often take great pains in delineating what forgiveness is *not*. While these lists are often long (Rempel, 2003, provides nine items; Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000, list 20) , “tolerance” does not appear,

suggesting that while other concepts may mistakenly be identified as forgiveness, tolerance is not included among these concepts—at least not in English.) If the results of this questionnaire show a wide range of answers, then the concepts of forgiveness and tolerance are not as easily distinguishable in Mandarin as they are in English, and the MEFI is actually an inventory of both forgiveness and tolerance, and, essentially, a letter from Ying.

Chapter Two

FORGIVENESS IN THE WEST

Three publicly recognized examples of forgiveness have recently attracted Canadian media attention. After a brief description of these events, the concept of forgiveness in the West will be discussed in general terms, and then relevant aspects of that discussion will be applied to the three examples.

On September 6, 2001, two young men broke into Grace Mennonite Church in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Once inside, they "went through various rooms, trashing almost everything in sight. Property inside the church was scattered and smashed, seven pews and the grand piano were overturned, the pulpit and alter [sic] were overturned and smashed, and the overhead projector smashed" (Polischuk, 2002). In all, the pair caused an estimated $40,000 in damages. The elder of the two, who had several previous convictions, was sentenced to five months on charges of mischief and break and enter, along with several unrelated charges. Ed Olfert, the church's pastor, visited him throughout his incarceration, and met with him within two hours of his release. Prior to his release, the young man had written a letter to the congregation expressing his remorse, his desire to make amends, and an offer to deliver his apologies in person. He met with members of the congregation "to discuss the emotions felt by the congregation, to begin healing for both parties,

and to find some sort of restitution" (Vis, 2002). While connections were made between the young man and members of the congregation, as Olfert observed, "relationship took more work than some of us expected. And eventually, his issues overtook him again, and back into jail he went" (personal communication via e-mail, April 8, 2004). This limited, but did not end, further contact between the young man and members of the church.

On April 28, 1999, a 14-year-old boy armed with a .22-caliber rifle entered W. R. Myers High School in Taber, Alberta, and seriously wounded one 17-year-old student and killed 17-year-old Jason Lang. Lang's father, Rev. Dale Lang, an Anglican priest, forgave his son's killer three days after the shooting. In the weeks and months that followed, Rev. Lang travelled around the country, describing to more than 200 high school audiences the details of the shooting itself, the shock he experienced upon losing his son, and how he was able to forgive the boy who shot Jason. Lang and his family continue to offer support to the boy and his family.

On September 29, 2003, the NHL 2002 rookie of the year, Dany Heatley, lost control of his speeding Ferrari and slammed into a concrete wall. Heatley was injured and his passenger, his Atlanta Thrashers team-mate, Dan Snyder, was killed. Following Snyder's funeral at Elmira Mennonite Church, the church the Snyder family attends, Snyder's father delivered a prepared statement to a room filled with reporters, which included the following statements:

> We are all human beings and we know that humans make mistakes. . . . We want you to know we do not lay blame on Dany Heatley for the accident that took our son from us. . . . Forgiveness is also a part of being human and we know there is nothing to gain from harbouring

> resentment or anger towards others. We are here to support him through this difficult time. (CBC Sports Online, 2003)

While forgiveness may be "part of being human", it is not common, as is noted by one commentator: "The manner in which [Dan's brother] Jake and his family have come to Heatley's aid is something you'd expect in one of those everything-will-turn-out-all-right-in-the-end Disney movies, but almost never see in real life" (Zeisberger, 2004). The family later testified that "they didn't want Heatley to go to jail or lose his hockey career" (Weber, 2005). In sentencing Heatley, Judge Rowland Barnes honoured that request and sentenced Heatley to three years of probation, with the requirement that during that time Heatley give 150 speeches about the dangers of speeding. While noting the Snyders' support of Heatley, Judge Barnes commented, "I don't know that I could do this if I were you" (Weber, 2005).

These three incidents are examples not only of forgiveness in the West but, more specifically, Christian forgiveness. Forgiveness has long been within the domain of the church. Hannah Arendt accounts for this ("the discoverer of the role of forgiveness in the realm of human affairs was Jesus of Nazareth"—1998, 238), but she does not believe that forgiveness should be confined within the church: "The fact that he made this discovery in a religious context and articulated it in religious language is no reason to take it any less seriously in a strictly secular sense" (1998, 238). Unfortunately, Arendt's 1958 admonition went unheeded for decades. Martin had complained that "forgiveness as a transaction between men has been almost entirely neglected by philosophers" (1953, 313)—psychologists were equally uninterested. Hope (1987) discovered

that neither “forgiveness” nor its synonyms could be found in the *Psychological Abstracts*, the *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*, or the *Handbook of Family Therapy*. Rowe et al. (1989) suggest that, in their roles as natural scientists, psychologists were more eager to focus their attention on areas more amenable to the experimental method. The complaints of Martin and Hope are now groundless, since philosophers and psychologists no longer neglect forgiveness. In the 1990s, more than 200 books about forgiveness were published (Wuthnow, 2000, 125), and Bishop Tutu observes that “the study of forgiveness has become a growth industry” (1999, 271). Detractors consider “slowing down the runaway forgiveness truck” (McKnight, 2004) and write disparagingly of “trendy forgiveness boosterism” (Lamb & Murphy, 2002, x), which would include treating forgiveness “as a form of therapy. Guilt is the disease. Absolution the cure” (Marino, 1995, 9).

Although forgiveness has attracted more attention within the last few decades, philosophers and psychologists have not been successful in agreeing on a stable definition of forgiveness—in fact, “some interpret the lack of consensus in definition to be one of the most pernicious problems in the field today” (McCullough et al., 2000, 7)—a field “bedeviled by clumsy definitions, confusing categories, and contextual dislocations” (McKnight, 2004, 36). Fincham points out that the danger in forgiveness research lies in the very familiarity of the construct. This familiarity breeds not contempt, but rather a proliferation of lay experts communicating about forgiveness when they have not ascertained (or even realized such clarification is necessary) whether they

have the same referents for the term. As Fincham points out, these "unarticulated assumptions that we share about forgiveness may obscure understanding and hinder research" (2000, 6).

It is easier to identify what forgiveness is not than it is to specify exactly what it is, and in this effort, I will call upon the assistance of Pat (the **p**erpetrator) and Val (the **v**ictim), for convenience' sake.

Forgiveness is not condoning (that would involve Val overlooking Pat's wrongdoing), nor excusing (in which Val would recognize that a wrong was done by Pat, but accept that Pat was not fully responsible). Val is unable to pardon Pat unless Val holds the relevant official position and has the legal authority to absolve Pat of his offence. Pat can deny Val's wrongdoing, or even forget about it, but neither of these qualify as forgiveness. Denial is a refusal to acknowledge the facts, and forgetting is not, strictly speaking, an action—in fact, the more Val tries to forget the offence, the more difficult the forgetting becomes. Forgiving is not the same as understanding, in spite of the aphorism, "Tout compris, c'est tout pardonné"—in fact, as J. L. Austin points out, "That's quite wrong; understanding might just add contempt to hatred" (1975, 37). Were Val to justify Pat's wrongdoing, that would involve accepting that Pat did it, but Val would have to deny that any wrong was involved. Finally, forgiveness is not reconciliation—that refers to the restoration of the pre-offense relationship—"reconciliation entails forgiveness, but forgiveness does not necessarily entail reconciliation" (Fincham, 2000, 7). While reconciliation often follows

forgiveness, reconciliation, as Kolnai writes, “emphasizes the *result*, not the essence, of forgiveness” (1973-74, 94).

Forgiveness is impossible in the absence of an offense—not just a mistake that needs to be corrected (but not forgiven), but a moral transgression that Pat commits which disrupts Pat and Val’s relationship. Martin (1953, 319) is critical of those who assume that “the former relationship between the persons can be re-established by the simple god-like fiat of the offended”—i.e., Val’s mouthing of the words, “I forgive you, Pat.” Val has to do more than that. What Val has to do initially is to get angry and resentful, since Pat’s action has led Val to three conclusions:

> (1) The act in question was wrong; it was a serious offence, worthy of moral attention.
>
> (2) The wrongdoer [i.e., Pat] is a legitimate member of the moral community who can be expected not to do such things. As such, [Pat] is someone to be held responsible and [Pat] is worth being upset by.
>
> (3) [Val], as the one wronged, ought not to be wronged. This sort of treatment stands as an offense to [Val’s] person. (Hieronymi, 2001, 530)

To count as genuine forgiveness, Val must abandon resentment without compromising these three conclusions. Val can downplay the seriousness of the wrong, or the worth of Pat (by saying something like, “you can’t really expect any better from Pat”), but that would be either condoning Pat’s action or diminishing Pat’s moral standing. Benbaji and Heyd recognize the paradoxical nature of forgiveness: “it does not reduce the commitment to those values on

the basis of which the initial negative response was made." That is "the whole point" (2001, 573).

There are a multitude of variables that may affect Val's response, if any, to Pat. Val may love Pat dearly, but it is possible for love and anger to coexist—in fact, the more Val cares for Pat, the more important Pat is to Val, the more angry Val will likely be. As William Blake notes, "it is easier to forgive an Enemy than to forgive a Friend" (1973, 15). As Hieronymi points out, "while anger and *love* are compatible, anger and *forgiveness* are *not* compatible" (2001, 539). Ideally, Val will not be content with the new status quo, since

> The process of forgiveness must be initiated by the offend*ed*. . . . Once mutual confidence and trust have been destroyed, they can be re-established, if at all, only by the person who is not guilty of destroying them in the first place. . . . Forgiveness begins with the refusal of the offended to accept the conditions of the relationship as final. (Martin, 1953, 320)

Of course Pat can help Val by repenting. While the forgiveness of an unrepentant offender is certainly a supererogatory act (cf. Benbaji & Heyd, 2001, 577; Downie, 1965; Fincham, 2000, 7), some feel a moral duty to forgive an offender who has apologized. Indeed, Wilson claims that "genuine forgiveness does require repentance on the part of the wrongdoer, and must be (so to speak) a bilateral and not just a unilateral operation" (1988, 534). Even if repentance is required to achieve true forgiveness, it is still not "in the *quid pro quo* sense that the offended will forgive the offender *if* he repents (Martin, 1953, 327). Hieronymi wonders what it is about an apology that suddenly transforms the offended person. She suggests that accepting a misplaced apology in order to help the offender feel better is a display of compassion, and perhaps mercy,

but not forgiveness (2001, 544). She explains that, “With forgiveness, the offended agrees to bear in her own person the cost of the wrongdoing and to incorporate the injury into her own life without further protest and without demand for retribution” (551). Hope (1987) also recognizes that “real forgiveness always, always involves a little death that is definitely not pleasant and easy to endure” (242). Hieronymi concludes her discussion with this admission, which is perhaps what Pat would say to Val: “I don’t want your pity. Not even your compassion will suffice. I need something at once more intimate and more costly—I need your forgiveness” (554).

Suppose Val forgives Pat. What is the result? Once their relationship has been re-established,

> . . . forgiveness has performed its function. . . . The moral law has not been circumvented, denied, or neglected. Its authority has been sustained and re-established. The moral law has not been denied, but affirmed. Nor has the offence been overlooked or forgotten. It has been dealt with in such a way that its destructive effect upon the relationship between the two persons has been destroyed. (Martin, 1953, 332)

McCullough et al. (2000, 9), offer a concise definition of forgiveness: “intra-individual, prosocial change toward a perceived transgressor that is situated within a specific interpersonal context.” The inclusion of “perceived” is problematic since, as shown above, an actual transgression must occur; a perception that a transgression has occurred is not enough. The “prosocial” aspect is necessary, since, “a definition that exclusively emphasizes forgiveness as the reduction of negative emotions may lead clients away from resentment or hatred, but into a cold neutrality that is not forgiveness” (Human Development

Study Group, 1991, 56). North offers a more readable definition: “If we are to forgive, our resentment is to be overcome not by denying ourselves the right to that resentment, but by endeavouring to view the wrongdoer with compassion, benevolence, and love while recognizing that he has wilfully abandoned his right to them” (1987, 502). Like Hieronymi, North insists that “cheap” forgiveness (e.g., condoning, excusing, etc.) is not genuine forgiveness. This insistence may surprise many who are happy to defuse difficult situations in just these ways. While “cheap” forgiveness may be instantaneous, genuine forgiveness takes time.

Forgiveness is widely seen as a process. In *Absolute friends*, John le Carré describes the letter Teddy Mundy writes to the former mentor/co-conspirator (and “absolute friend”) who “stole his girl”: “He determinedly forgives him Judith. He forgives Judith too. He has been forgiving her for longer than he cares to think, and failing every time” (2003, 129). Mundy’s experience echoes the accomplishment C. S. Lewis wrote of shortly before his death: “I think I have *at last* forgiven the cruel schoolmaster who so darkened my youth. I had done it many times before, but this time I think I have really done it” (cited in Smedes, 2001). Smedes’ comment on Lewis’ long struggle with forgiveness applies to both Mundy and Lewis: “Maybe, had he lived longer, he would have had to do it again” (Smedes, 2001). Enright (along with others—cf., Andrews, 2000; Benbaji & Heyd, 2001; Fincham, 2000; Govier, 2002; Martin, 1953; Wuthnow, 2000) recognizes forgiveness as a process, while acknowledging that “the processes people go through in the name of

forgiveness may vary widely" (Enright & the Human Development Study Group, 1991, 146). When he was interviewed about the anger that people were feeling shortly after the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, Enright indirectly suggested that in spite of this variation, the process of forgiveness may begin in the same way: "Rage is good. . . . Forgiveness starts with rage" (cited in Duin, 2001).

The procedural nature of forgiveness is important to consider in determining whether or not "I forgive you" is an Austinian performative utterance. While Augsburger classifies forgiveness as a performative utterance in the sense that "the actual occasion of forgiveness is performed by a recognized verbal formula" (1996, 12), the procedural nature of forgiveness would make "I forgive you" a "happy" utterance (to use Austin's term) only if it were uttered at the end of the process, and even then it would not be a performative utterance but a constative, reporting on an existing condition, and would be properly expressed as "I have forgiven you".

Haber (1991, 29) classifies "forgive" as an Austinian behabitive ("a kind of performative concerned roughly with reactions to behaviour and with behaviour towards others and designed to exhibit attitudes and feelings"—Austin, 1975, 83). Austin's examples of behabitives include the following: apologize, thank, deplore, compliment, congratulate, sympathize, resent, criticize, applaud, overlook, commend, welcome, bless, curse, and toast (1975, 160). These share, along with another Austin example of a performative ("I promise"—1975, 9), the potential of becoming "infelicities" (Austin's term for a situation where

“something *goes wrong* and the act . . . is therefore at least to some extent a failure: the utterance is then, we may say, not indeed false but in general *unhappy*”—1975, 14.) A promise may be broken, and an apology, a compliment, a criticism, a blessing, or a curse may all be “taken back”, but in each case, at the point of utterance, the action *was* performed, even if the speaker subsequently has a change of heart. If challenged by the recipient of the promise, apology, compliment, or criticism, the speaker would likely respond, “Yes, I did *X*, but I have changed my mind.” In many cases, this turnaround would be the result of some incident or some discovery that sheds new light upon the circumstances that initially prompted the original utterance. In this sense, forgiveness is qualitatively different, since in the case of lapsed forgiveness, the speaker would be more likely to explain the lapse not in terms of some external influence or change in circumstances but would be more likely to say, “When I said I forgave you, I thought I had, but—choose one—I really hadn’t/ I was wrong/ I can’t.” Forgiveness, in other words, had never taken place.

As Lang points out, when the words, “I forgive you” are spoken, “there surely is something of the character of a promise in that phrase” (1994, 109). Certainly “the harm-doer is likely to experience the statement as performative and be puzzled, annoyed, or angry when incompletely resolved feelings of resentment about the harm-doing intrude upon subsequent discourse or behaviour in the relationship” (Fincham, 2000, 17). While “I forgive you” takes the form of a performative utterance, the intention of the speaker could perhaps

be better expressed as, “I will try to forgive you” or “I promise to forgive you”. In that case, the lapsed forgiver would answer to accusations of breaking a promise (“But you promised to forgive me!”) rather than lying (“But you said you forgave me!”). “To promise” is a well-established performative, and it is perhaps the “promise”-like character of forgiveness that leads some to consider “to forgive” a performative as well.

Horsbrugh offers another test of whether or not an utterance is performative: “one cannot use the verb ‘to try’ in connection with any performative expression” (1974, 270). According to this test, “I forgive” is certainly not performative. (Horsbrugh, in fact, refuses to accept that this phrase can ever be used performatively, since “the uttering of these words never of itself constitutes forgiveness”—1974, 270.) He would agree that forgiveness occurs in the case of a sudden and dramatic reversal of feeling that ends a quarrel, but maintains that “this would remain true even if the words remained unuttered” (1974, 270n.; cf. Rempel, 2003).

Haber contends that “I forgive you” (“as an expression of how one feels”—1991, 31) is a behabitive performative utterance, and he ends a discussion of a situation in which Val has forgiven Pat yet still harbours resentment toward Pat with this perplexing conclusion: “the fact that [Val] continues to harbour resentment does not undermine [Val’s] having forgiven [Pat] at all” (1991, 31). His response to Horsbrugh’s test is that “it makes perfect sense to use ‘to try’ with such performatives as ‘I welcome,’ ‘I congratulate,’ ‘I do’ (take this woman, etc.), and so forth” (1991, 56). Horsbrugh

is admittedly vague in his claim that “to try” cannot be “connected” to a performative. Words can be connected in a number of ways, and Haber apparently associates this “trying” element with the actual utterance of the performative, even though a statement such as, “He was trying to say, ‘I do’” suggests a groom with a stutter or some other kind of speech impediment rather than a groom having second thoughts. While he is vague in the description of his test, Horsbrugh shows very clearly in his examples how “to try” should be connected with any possible performative: “The phrase, ‘I’ll try to forgive you’ . . . is not a performative” (1974, 270). The “trying” is connected to the verb itself, not to the physical act of producing the sounds.

That forgiveness is distinct from welcoming, congratulating, or saying “I do” is obvious when one compares the reaction of someone who hears the words, “I’ll try to forgive you”, with the reactions of people who are told, “I’ll try to welcome you,” “I’ll try to congratulate you”, or, “I’ll try to say, ‘I do’.” The former phrase would likely evoke feelings of relief, thankfulness, hope, and appreciation, while the latter expressions (if they were ever uttered in the first place, which seems unlikely) would arouse feelings of anger, indignation, and offence.

Haber also attempts to downplay Downie’s distinction between “I promise” and “I forgive” (i.e., uttering the words, “I promise” constitutes a promise even if the appropriate behaviour is not forthcoming, while uttering the words, “I forgive you” does not constitute forgiveness unless the appropriate behaviour is forthcoming—1965, 131). Haber accuses Downie of “being blind to

‘I forgive you’ as a behabitive” (1991, 54) and reasserts his position that forgiveness and resentment are compatible:

> As I see it, if a speaker has felicitously expressed forgiveness, then should he not have overcome his resentment—that is, changed his attitude—he has nonetheless forgiven, provided he is willing to try to do so in the future. (1991, 55)

As shown above, “forgive” is distinct from Austin’s behabitives, and Haber’s insistence on a resenting forgiveness is hard to accept. When considering their own feelings, most people would feel that they have not forgiven those against whom they still harbour feelings of resentment, agreeing with Rempel that “simply offering the words ‘I forgive you’ when underlying anger and resentment still exist is not true forgiveness” (2003, 10). A person who had offended Haber and been subsequently forgiven by him would understandably question Haber’s sincerity if Haber continued to express resentment over the “forgiven” incident.

The words, “I forgive you”, do not in themselves constitute forgiveness, while forgiveness may occur with no words spoken, which shows that the phrase is not an explicit performative utterance according to one of Austin’s own tests of whether or not a person has uttered a performative: “Could he be doing the action without uttering the performative?” (1975, 84). The words “I forgive you” can be tremendously significant, life-changing words, but they do not constitute a performative utterance—“the recitation of such words need not be required for a victim to forgive” (Rempel, 2003, 10).

With regard to the three case studies cited earlier, the words “I forgive you” were uttered—in two cases they were uttered in de facto press conferences. In each case there was undoubtedly cause for responses of, in

Enright's terms, "resentment, negative judgement, and indifferent behaviour" and also in each case those involved were seen to display "compassion, generosity and even love" to those who had, in one way or another, offended them (Enright et al., 2000, 1).

Those who forgive are not always applauded for their actions. Jeffrie Murphy (1988, 2000, and 2002) stands out as a critic/cynic among scholars who write on forgiveness—although some would charge that what Murphy often criticizes is actually pseudo-forgiveness—but laypersons have voiced reservations as well. After delivering a sermon in which he mentioned his son's murder and how he had forgiven the shooter, Dale Lang was approached by a woman who "said she couldn't understand how he could forgive the boy, because she'd lost her daughter 15 years earlier to a drunk driver, and she'd been angry ever since (Minister preaches forgiveness, 2000). Similarly, President of the Irish Republic, Mary McAleese, describes the response to the forgiveness shown by a father whose daughter died in the Enniskillen bombing:

> His words shamed us, caught us off guard. They sounded so different from what we expected and what we are used to. . . . But he had his detractors and unbelievably his bags of hate mail. How dare you forgive? they shouted. What kind of father are you who can forgive your daughter's killers? . . . . As one church-going critic said to me. . . "Sure the poor man must have been in shock," as if to offer love and forgiveness is a sign of mental weakness instead of spiritual strength. (1999)

Her comments are echoed by Sister Helen Prejean, death row counselor and author of *Dead man walking*:

> In our society, forgiveness is often seen as weakness. People who forgive those who have hurt them or their family are made to look as if they really don't care about their loved ones. But forgiveness is

> tremendous strength. It is the action of someone who refuses to be consumed by hatred and revenge. (1994)

The forgiveness shown by the members of the ransacked church in Prince Albert inspired an editorial in the local newspaper which concluded: “The church members are setting an example more of us should follow—the ability to forgive, if not forget, and a willingness to help those who have hurt us understand why it should not happen again” (Gustafson & Dahl, 2002). The editors commend the church members not only for their forgiveness, but also for their willingness to show the young man “the error of his ways”, which, despite the implication, is not included in the definition of forgiveness.

Of course, no definition can be exhaustive. The definition upon which Enright bases the EFI lends itself rather easily to a tripartite instrument that examines affective, behavioural, and cognitive responses: “Forgiveness is a willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, negative judgement, and indifferent behaviour toward one who unjustly injured us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her” (Enright, Rique, & Coyle, 2000, 1). The negative qualities listed here more closely correspond to their respective domains than do the positive qualities. Negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviours are labelled “resentment, negative judgement, and indifferent behaviour”. (The use of “indifferent” here is surprising—if Pat has the right to resentment and negative judgment after Val’s injury, surely Pat is entitled to behave toward Val with animosity and enmity, not merely cold indifference. While indifference has been identified as “the worst sin toward our fellow creatures” and “the essence of inhumanity” by George

Bernard Shaw (cited in Augsburger, 1970), and as “humanity’s greatest challenge” by Elie Wiesel (cited in Fry, 1997, 241), in the interests of consistency the definition should use “indifferent” to modify each of the domains to emphasize that true forgiveness involves positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviour and not just indifferent ones, as some seem to imagine.)

Among the positive qualities, “generosity” would exhibit itself through action (behaviour), but it is difficult to distinguish between “compassion” and “love” and identify which is in the affective and which is in the cognitive domain, or if, perhaps, “compassion. . . and even love” both refer to the affective domain, leaving the cognitive domain unrepresented. Indifferent behaviour and generosity are the two poles on the behaviour subscale, while resentment is the negative pole on the affective subscale and negative judgement is the negative pole on the cognitive subscale. The positive poles on the latter two subscales may be compassion and love, but it is difficult to be more specific. While the definition lends itself to a three-part division of forgiveness, the distinctions are not clear-cut.

The definition, of necessity, leaves some specifics of forgiveness unaddressed. Of the ten debateable issues raised in Chapter One, this definition addresses none. It does, however, provide a concise description of quantifiable criteria that may be quite objectively assessed by respondents and measured by researchers, although ambiguities are present. The definition also features a troubling discrepancy (or at least a lost opportunity for parallelism) in describing forgiveness as “a willingness to abandon” some attributes and

“fostering” others. Replacing the former with “abandoning” or the latter with “a willingness to foster” would not only accord the two halves of the definition similar status but also address an issue raised by McCullough and Worthington:

> Forgiveness should be distinguished from its consequences. Forgiveness is related to changes in affect, cognition, and behaviour regarding an offender, but it is unclear which among these changes forgiveness comprises per se and which ones are the consequences of forgiveness. Distinctions between content and consequences of forgiveness should follow logically from a definition of forgiveness. (1994, 12)

If forgiveness is defined as “a willingness” to abandon and foster certain attributes, the changes in affect, behaviour, and cognition are the consequences of forgiveness, i.e., it is after forgiving that one exhibits these changes; if, however, forgiveness is defined as “abandoning” and “fostering” the appropriate attributes, the changes themselves constitute forgiveness. It is highly unlikely that Enright did not intend to accord equal status to the definition’s positive and negative components, but as it stands, his inconsistent definition does not meet McCullough and Worthington’s standard.

It is not surprising that a construct as rich as forgiveness resists definition. Smedes reminds us that “reality is always more prickly and awkward than our definitions of it” (1998, 350), but in spite of this, an erroneous analysis is preferable to one that is not clear, since “science is advanced more by error than by confusion” (Fincham, 2000, 10). In the final analysis, however, it is one thing for researchers to agree upon a standard definition of forgiveness, but it is quite another to ensure that those being questioned have the same idea, since as Huang and Enright have observed, “not all who say they forgive understand

what that means in the same way" (2000, 77). Doing such research interculturally undoubtedly compounds the problem, since "the translation of the name of a concept from one language to another does not mean that the speakers understand the concept in the same way" (Davis, 2001, 88). That the research involves such a multi-faceted construct further increases the potential for misunderstanding since, as Kipnis describes it, "Translation requires unpacking one's own assumptions as much as describing foreign ones" (1995, 105). Ransley and Spy's admonition to therapists regarding their clients (where both share a common language) is equally, if not more, applicable to Western researchers and their non-English speaking respondents: "Language has power and in a world where bias is hard to avoid, it is clearly important that therapists [and researchers] check the precise meaning clients [or respondents] give to such words. It is their words, their meanings that matter" (2004, 5).

Chapter Three

FORGIVENESS AND THE ENRIGHT FORGIVENESS INVENTORY (IN ENGLISH AND MANDARIN)

3.1 Forgiveness and the Enright Forgiveness Inventory

Forgiveness is a complex construct, and the difficulties involved in working with such a contested concept are acknowledged in the *EFI User's Manual*: "considering that the word 'forgiveness' may generate conceptual biases, the authors took the precaution of *not* using the word 'forgiveness' in the EFI or during verbal instruction prior to administration" (Enright, Rique, & Coyle, 2000, 5). The EFI is designed to measure forgiveness as defined by Enright et al.: "Forgiveness is a willingness to abandon one's right to resentment, negative judgement, and indifferent behaviour toward one who unjustly injured us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her" (2000, 1). This definition serves to distinguish forgiveness from the many other actions that are sometimes mistakenly identified as forgiveness, and also makes it very clear that forgiveness involves not only abandoning the path that may lead to revenge but also fostering qualities which may lead to reconciliation. According to this definition, the three case studies presented in Chapter Two are all examples of forgiveness, and the members of Grace Mennonite Church, Rev. Dale Lang, and the members of the Snyder

family would be expected to score relatively, perhaps even exceptionally, high on the EFI, at least if the described incidents were chosen as their specific examples of injury.

The EFI items are divided as follows: items 1 to 20 measure one's present feelings; items 21 to 40 measure one's present behaviours; and items 41 to 60 measure one's present thoughts regarding the person responsible for "the most recent experience of someone hurting [one] unfairly and deeply" (Enright et al., 2000, 5). The *EFI User's Manua*l states that for the purposes of the inventory, "the key ideas concerning forgiveness. . . are: the reduction in negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviour and the development of positive feelings, thoughts, and behaviour toward an offending person" (Enright et al., 2000, 1).

Even with this narrowly defined focus, forgiveness is a complex construct, and each specific incident of Val forgiving Pat involves a wide array of variables: What did Pat do? Why did Pat do it? What is the relationship between Pat and Val? Were the effects of the injury short-lived or permanent? Was compensation forthcoming (or possible)? Is Pat still benefiting from the spoils of the injury in some way? Did Pat offer a sincere apology? How long ago did it happen? Was it a public injury or a private one? Do Pat and Val still have a relationship? Did Val in any way contribute to the injury? Was the injury the first of its kind or one in a long series of injuries inflicted upon Val? Did Pat receive any form of censure or punishment? This "baker's dozen" of variables is not exhaustive, but the answers to these and other questions may have a

significant impact upon Val's response to Pat and whether or not (or how soon) Val might forgive Pat. (While the EFI does ask for brief descriptions of the "degree of hurt", the "agent of hurt", the "status of the agent of hurt" (*not* apologetic/not apologetic or remorseful/not remorseful, but alive/dead), the "time since the injury", and a "description of the offence," the responses to these questions are not used in the calculation of the final score and the user's manual makes no mention of how (or if) this information is to be used.) If Val were to respond to the EFI (at some point after Pat's injury—options on the EFI "time since injury" question range from days to years), the resulting score would indicate not only how forgiving Val is, but would also reveal how forgiving Val is compared to other victims of injury who have themselves suffered a greater or lesser injury and who are similarly influenced by the multitude of variables affecting Val. At least that is the claim: "The higher the [EFI] score, the more forgiving is the respondent" (Park & Enright, 2000, 360).

Difficult to define, forgiveness may also be difficult to measure objectively using sixty questions on an inventory. Some of the items, most clearly some of the behaviour items, may measure more or less than forgiveness. Depending upon the circumstances, some people, believing that they should help anyone in trouble, would surely agree to some extent to "aid him/her when in trouble (38)" whether the person in distress happens to be a friend, a stranger, or even one who had committed some as-of-yet unforgiven injury. Similarly, one who agrees to "attend his/her party (40)" may conceivably be prompted more by the promise of good food and scintillating conversation than by any feelings of forgiveness.

In both cases, the responses may have little to do with the presence or absence of forgiveness.

Other items may be more indicative of forgiveness, but in some cases it seems that several different items are actually measuring the same indicator of forgiveness. They are synonymous to the point that strongly agreeing with one entails strongly agreeing with the other(s). In these cases, some indicators are weighted more heavily than others and affect the total score more than other indicators that are measured by a single item. The following sets of items, listed here according to subscale, are virtually synonymous and skew the total score by representing a single indicator up to four times:

Affect subscale: (I feel _____ toward him/her.)

warm (1)/kindness (3)

affection (18)/friendly (19)

tender (7)/caring (15)

repulsed (9)/disgust (14)

Behaviour subscale: (Regarding the person, I do or would _____ .)

put him/her down (26)/speak ill of him/her (29)

ignore (23)/not speak to him/her (33)

avoid (22)/stay away (36)

reach out to him/her (30)/lend him/her a hand (32)/do a favour (37)/ aid him/her when in trouble (38)

Cognitive subscale: (I think he or she is _____ ./I _____.)

of good quality (44)/worthy of respect (45)

horrible (43)/dreadful (46)

a bad person (53)/evil (42)/immoral (49)/corrupt (52)

wish him/her well (54)/hope he/she does well in life (57)/ hope he/she succeeds (59)/hope he/she finds happiness (60)

In all of these cases, it is hard to imagine a person not indicating the same response for each of the synonymous items, so those indicators will contribute far more (or less) to a respondent's total EFI score than those indicators that are mentioned only once.

The EFI total score ranges from 60 to 360. In order to receive the lowest score, one must "strongly agree" with all of the negative items and "strongly disagree" with all of the positive ones. To receive the highest score, one must "strongly disagree" with all of the negative items and "strongly agree" with all of the positive ones. If, within the positive and negative items within each sub-scale, there are any items that are mutually exclusive, these minimum and maximum scores are unattainable by even the least or the most forgiving respondents. For example: strictly speaking, could someone who strongly agrees to the negative behaviours of "avoid" (22), "ignore" (23), "not speak to him/her" (33), and "stay away" (36) also strongly agree to "be biting when talking with him/her" (39)—where "him/her" is the very person they are avoiding, ignoring, not speaking to, and staying away from? A conscientious respondent would be hard-pressed to respond in a meaningful yet logically consistent manner.

In addition to these concerns about specific items, there are wider-reaching questions as well. Forgiveness is widely recognized as a process by many writers, including Enright himself in many of his writings and in the *EFI User's Manual* in particular: "forgiveness takes time" and "may occur slowly" (2000, 10, 1). In addition to the question of whether a single score can adequately measure (based upon his or her response to one injury) how forgiving a person is to the point where various respondents can be ranked from least to most forgiving according to their EFI score, there is also the question of what a single score can possibly reflect upon an ongoing *process*. If forgiveness was a university course, the EFI would be a 100% final examination where every student chooses a different question to answer at different times throughout the semester. A similar inventory could measure respondents' proclivity to finish books (*PFB*) they begin reading by asking them, with reference to their current book, how many pages they have read (P) and the total number of pages in the book (T). One's *PFB* score can then be determined by the formula $P / T * 100 = PFB$, with a possible range of zero to 100. There are obviously many objections to be raised about the value of such a figure, especially if it were used to rank respondents according to those who tend, or tend not, to finish books they begin reading. There are simply too many unconsidered variables involved. Even if these variables were taken into account somehow, a single score derived from a single incident is simply inadequate to represent one's general rate of success in performing a multi-faceted process. Neither the EFI nor the PFB score reveals anything about

which respondents may actually complete the processes in question. The reader who happens to be on page 10 of a 900-page novel may finish every book he or she begins, while the reader who is on page 15 of a 20-page comic book may often get distracted and rarely read books through to the end. In the same way, a very forgiving person just recently wronged by a spiteful family member may end up forgiving the injury, while a person whose parked car was damaged in a hit-and-run accident months ago may no longer harbour harsh feelings for the unknown culprit, yet grit his or her teeth every time the remaining dent is noticed. In both of these cases, the wrong person would receive the higher score. As Enright et al. note in the *EFI User's Manual*, "*ceteris paribus*, a one-item test is less reliable than a longer one" (2000, 33). Unfortunately, a longer one may not itself be reliable. Translating the test into a foreign language and administering it in another culture will certainly make it no more reliable.

3.2 Forgiveness and the Mandarin Enright Forgiveness Inventory

While the EFI was developed in the United States, the MEFI is designed for use with Mandarin-speaking respondents. As Yang points out,

> The epistemology and metaphysics found in the predominant Chinese philosophies (e.g., Confucianism, Taoism) differ tremendously from the ones found in Western traditions, and Chinese people have been found to reason and behave differently from other people of other cultures. (2001, 666)

Before considering the implications and possible sources of error in the MEFI, Western and Chinese cultures will be examined briefly according to two

common Western intercultural spectra (low-context/high context cultures and individualist/collectivist cultures) as well as a factor identified by the Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory, whose developers wanted “to develop an indigenous instrument that covered personality characteristics for. . . Chinese people instead of depending on the adaptation of available English-language scales” (Cheung & Leung, 1998, 240). Originally designated the Chinese Tradition factor, it is now known as the Interpersonal Relatedness factor, since it does appear in other cultures as well. Forgiveness is, by definition, interpersonal, so this factor is significant, although “traditional Western theories of personality have omitted this important interpersonal dimension (Cheung et al., 2001, 425).

3.2.1 Low- and high-context cultures

The importance/necessity of “reading between the lines” (or listening to “the sound outside the strings”— 弦外之音—*xián wài zhī yīn*) during interpersonal communication often varies from one culture to another. In some cultures, the message is directly and explicitly stated within the lines themselves, while in other cultures what is stated explicitly may be completely ignored if the context of the communication is at odds with what is contained in the lines. Gries notes that even in Chinese politics, “It is striking how often the actual meaning of a diplomatic statement is the precise opposite of what is literally said” (2004, 9). Edward Hall defines these cultures as low- and high-context cultures:

> [In a low-context message] the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code. . . . A high-context communication or message is one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. (1976, 79)

Buruma ignores this cultural variable when he labels Chinese culture a "culture of duplicity" (2001, 13), but he is not the only one, as is evidenced by the "unfair and prejudicial stereotypes of the 'inscrutable' Asian or of the frank and rude Westerner" (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, 2).

People from high- and low-context cultures deal with situations of conflict in different ways. In high-context cultures,

> . . . the instrumental issue is intertwined with the person who originated that issue. To openly disagree with someone in public is. . . an extreme insult. . . . [In a low-context setting,] individuals are more efficient in separating the conflict issue from the person involved in a conflict over a task, and yet remain friends. (Chua & Gudykunst, 1987, 32)

(Note the low-context bias in these descriptions—the authors obviously prefer the latter method of dealing with conflict.) When faced with a conflict, those from high-context cultures tend to employ "implicit communication codes, point-logic style, intuitive-affective rhetoric, and ambiguous, indirect strategies", while individuals from low-context cultures use "explicit communication codes, time-logic style, rational-factual rhetoric, and open, direct strategies" (Ting-Toomey, 1985, 82). Chua and Gudykunst (1987, 34) found Chinese (from a low individualistic, high-context culture) and North Americans (from a high individualistic, low-context one) to be likely to handle an interpersonal conflict in different ways, with the Chinese suggesting that a go-between speak separately with the two disputants and the North Americans advising a joint meeting

between the two. Since forgiveness by definition involves interpersonal conflict, it is reasonable to assume that North Americans and Chinese may also handle forgiveness in different ways.

3.2.2 Individualist and collectivist cultures

While cultures may vary in many different ways, "the most important cultural dimension in accounting for cultural differences is individualism-collectivism" (Ohbuchi, Fukushima, & Tedeschi, 1999, 52). These two systems of cultural or social patterns are so often diametrically opposed that the values and emphases of the two can easily be set side by side and contrasted in a table (see Table 3.1). In the case of the MEFI, an instrument developed in the United States and administered in China, this particular value dimension is especially relevant, since Hofstede, in his groundbreaking study, ranked the United States number one (i.e., where individualism is most strongly promoted) and Taiwan number 36 in his ranking of 40 countries (where 40 is the country where collectivism is most strongly promoted—cited in Samovar and Porter,1991, 90). The People's Republic of China, with a history of much less contact with the West than Taiwan, would certainly score no closer to individualism than did Taiwan.

Western society is highly individualistic, and this emphasis on the individual is clearly seen in interpersonal interactions: since "people are expected to take the initiative in advancing their personal interests and well-being and to be direct and assertive in interacting with others" (Hu & Grove,

Individualism	Collectivism
conceives of social existence as individual-centered	conceives of social existence as relation-centered
involves individuals perceiving themselves as relatively independent of others	involves individuals perceiving themselves as interdependent with others
emphasizes individual needs, rights, contracts, and attitudes	emphasizes social norms, obligations, and duties
gives priority to personal goals and boundaries over group goals and social identity	gives priority to family or group goals over personal goals
encourages rational cost-benefit analysis of social relationships	values social connectedness and commitment even when it is disadvantageous to individuals
encourages independence and creativity	encourages obedience and cooperation
defines a healthy self as one who establishes independence from others	defines a healthy self as one who is interdependent
believes that the smallest unit of survival is the individual	believes that the smallest unit of survival is the collective
encourages active, assertive, confrontational tactics to resolve conflicts	encourages passive, collaborative, and avoiding tactics to resolve conflicts

Table 3.1 Comparison of individualist and collectivist social patterns (from Ho, 1982; Hu & Grove, 1999; Ohbuchi et al., 1999; Sandage & Wiens, 2001; van Hemert, Baerveldt, & Vermande, 2001)

1999, 23), it is not surprising that “the eloquent articulation of conviction is among the most valued virtues of [American] citizens, and the arts of argument and debate are encouraged in the home, school, and marketplace” (Barnlund, 1989, 101). Nadler, Nadler, and Broome identify one result of this emphasis upon personal interests: “North American individuals are expected to stand up for their rights, and this often involves open confrontation” (1985, 109).

In contrast, “harmony is one of the primordial values of Confucianism and of the Chinese culture” (Ruch, 1989, 273). In this context, “harmony measures one’s inner peace of mind and contentment, as well as interpersonal harmony. The avoidance of conflict and maintenance of the equilibrium are considered virtues in the Chinese culture” (Cheung et al., 1996). Wu identifies harmony as “the most deep-rooted desire of the Chinese people” (1967, 227), and therefore, “the ultimate goal of human behaviour is to achieve ‘harmony’ which leads Chinese people to pursue a conflict-free and group-oriented system of human relationships” (Chen & Xiao, 1993, 4). The Mandarin term for “individualism” (*gèrénzhǔyì*—个人主义) literally means “one person doctrine” and is not only “often used by the Chinese in a derogatory sense to imply selfishness” (Hu & Grove, 1999, 189), but this “individualistic, ‘everyone takes care of him/herself’ ethic [is denounced] as inhuman” (Anderson, 1999, 143).

Hwang lists several American/Chinese contrasts, all of which could have some impact upon the granting or withholding of forgiveness: “In comparison with their American counterparts, Chinese subjects tend to be less autonomous, less aggressive, less socially extroverted, more submissive, more conforming,

more subservient to authority, and more susceptible to the influence of powerful others" (1987, 959). Forgiveness can only exist in the context of a relationship, and Triandis and Suh identify "concern with relationships" as a defining characteristic of a collectivist culture. They also describe how this concern results in an un-individualistic way of dealing with conflict:

> Collectivists in conflict situations are primarily concerned with maintaining relationships with others, whereas individualists are primarily concerned with achieving justice. Thus, collectivists prefer methods of conflict resolution that do not destroy relationships. . . whereas individualists are willing to go to court to settle disputes. (2002, 139-140)

The advisability of going to court is vividly described in this Chinese proverb: "Better to die of starvation than to become a thief, better to be vexed to death than to bring a lawsuit" (饿死不作贼，屈死不告状—è sǐ bù zuò zéi, qū sǐ bù gaò zhuàng—Bond & Wang, 1983, 71).

The varying emphases of collectivism and individualism can result in significant cultural differences that hamper intercultural research. Kohlberg's theory of moral development was heralded as a description of universal stages, but Kohlberg, Snarey, and Reimer admitted in 1983 that "their scoring criteria are biased towards reasoning with an individualistic rather than collectivistic content" (Vine, 1986, 438). Scoring criteria for other Western intercultural instruments may be similarly biased towards individualistic content, even though, as Triandis points out, "about 70% of the population of the world lives in collective cultures" (cited in Samovar & Porter, 1991, 90).

3.2.3 The Interpersonal Relatedness factor

Although Ohbuchi et al. (1999) claim that the most important factor in accounting for cultural differences is individualism and collectivism, this dichotomy is a Western construct and claims for its universality may be overstated. King & Bond argue that "the Confucian conception of man cannot be neatly characterized by Western concepts of individualism or holism and should be considered in its own terms. . . . traditional Chinese society is neither individual-based nor society-based, but relation-based" (1985, 31). Their observation is supported by the Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory (CPAI), a multiphasic personality inventory "that is relevant to the Chinese people, a population that is about one quarter of humanity" (Cheung et al., 1996, 182). One of its four personality factors is the Interpersonal Relatedness factor, a factor that "cannot be encompassed by the Big Five factors" (Cheung et al., 2001, 41—the Big Five (supposedly universal) factors of personality are Surgency, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness). Personality characteristics which were deemed of interest to Chinese people but neglected in imported personality inventories include the following:

> Harmony, which refers to one's inner peace of mind, contentment, interpersonal harmony, avoidance of conflict, and maintenance of equilibrium;
>
> *Ren Qing* (relationship orientation), which covers adherence to cultural norms of interaction based on reciprocity, exchange of social favours, and exchange of affection according to implicit rules. . . .
>
> *Ah-Q* Mentality (defensiveness), which is based on a character in a popular Chinese novel in which the defence mechanisms of the Chinese

> people, including self-protective rationalization, externalization of blame, and belittling others' achievements, are satirized;
>
> Face, which depicts the pattern of orientations in an interpersonal and hierarchical connection and social behaviours to enhance one's face and to avoid losing one's face. (Cheung & Leung, 2001, 408)

The very existence of the Interpersonal Relatedness factor, a factor that "was found to stand apart from the presumably universal five-factor structure" (Cheung & Leung, 1998, 243) supports those researchers who have argued that Western "theories and findings may be shaped by the cultural background of the researchers and that their validity should not be taken for granted when they are exported to non-Western countries" (Cheung et al., 2001, 429). This is of particular importance in the field of forgiveness research in particular, where British therapists Ransley & Spy offer this caveat regarding Ransley's overview of the forgiveness literature: "almost all of [it]. . . stems from the USA" (2004, 7). If Chinese (not Western) researchers dominated the field of personality research, while using the CPAI (not the Big Five model) as their major instrument for research, the leading theory of personality structure would see "the merging of the Conscientiousness and Agreeableness factors, the exclusion of the Openness factor, and the inclusion of the Interpersonal Relatedness factor" (Cheung et al., 2001, 429). Under the present circumstances, the Interpersonal Relatedness factor remains untapped by Western personality inventories, and these inventories thus fail to take into account an important dimension of the Chinese personality. Cheung et al. (2001, 426) ask the consequential question: "What, then, would be the deficiencies arising from the reliance on these theories and instruments in understanding the Chinese personality?"

Based on these three cultural dimensions (low- and high-context, individualist/collectivist, and the Interpersonal Relatedness factor) Western culture and Chinese culture exhibit major differences, and in many instances seem to hold diametrically opposed values. Van de Vivjer and Leung's general caveat applies to the MEFI, developed in one culture, administered in the other, in particular:

> When the cultural differences between the groups of subjects involved in a cross-cultural study are extensive, it does not make much sense to assume the validity of the "all other things being equal" argument and to compare the groups as if the data were collected in a true experiment. (1997, 260)

3.2.4 Issues in intercultural research

Anthropologist Edward Hall identifies a common motivation for intercultural research: "Most cross-cultural exploration begins with the annoyance of being lost" (cited in Bond, 1995, 192). Researchers have discovered that attempts to lessen their annoyance often only increase their frustration. An early effort to demonstrate the universality of human emotions is illustrative of the hazards of intercultural research. In their discussion of differential emotions theory, Izard and Buechler identify ten fundamental emotions which are "innate, transcultural phenomena. . . . These emotion processes are recognized and identified as part of the human experience by individuals from widely varying cultural backgrounds" (1980, 167). Wierzbicka questions these claims: if they "are supposed to enumerate universal human emotions, how is it that these emotions are all so neatly identified by means of

English words?" (1992, 19). After offering one example of a language which lacks a corresponding term for one of the "universal" emotions and another example of a language which subsumes two of the emotions into one term, she cautions,

> English terms of emotion constitute a folk taxonomy, not an objective, culture-free analytical framework, so obviously we cannot assume that English words. . . are clues to universal human concepts or to basic psychological realities. Yet words such as these are usually treated as if they were objective, culture-free "natural kinds". (1992, 119)

(In the case of the EFI, two items directly correspond to Izard and Buechler's "ten fundamental emotions" ("anger" and "disgust"), and several items are loosely connected to "interest", "joy", and "contempt", which are also purported to be "innate, transcultural phenomena".)

3.2.4.1 Etics and emics

Establishing equivalence (i.e., determining if the concept being investigated, as well as the way the concept is measured, have the same meaning in different cultures) involves a consideration of etics and emics. Pike (1967, 37) coined these words from "phon**etics**" (the study of all possible human vocal sounds) and "phon**emics**" (the study of the significant sounds in a given language). Brislin describes etics as

> *. . . culture-common* concepts. . . that can be found among people all over the world. . . . [Etics are based upon the] demands people face in their desire for survival and the survival of their community. . . . [such as] maintaining harmony among people so that disagreements do not result in violence. (2000, 83)

Emics are

> . . . *culture-specific* concepts [that] are found in some societies, but not others. These concepts represent a culture's unique adaptations to the demands it faces. Often, culture-specific concepts represent additions to or variants on the culture common concepts familiar to all people. (83)

Complex concepts often feature an etic core with emic colourings. In the case of forgiveness, the etic core is the maintenance of harmony within a society. Forgiveness, along with condoning, excusing, and forbearing (which have all been proposed as examples of what forgiveness is *not*—Coyle & Enright, 1998; Downie, 1965; Enright, Gassin & Wu, 1992; Govier, 2002; Kolnai, 1973-1974; Park, 1998) are possible emic colourings that may appear in a particular culture. The emic colouring of forgiveness not only tints the etic of harmony but is itself coloured by a rainbow of different facets. As Dana observes, "almost all standard tests developed in the United States are culture-specific, typically based on Anglo-American emics in origin, and properly referred to as pseudo-etics" (1997, 121). If the EFI and MEFI do not provide equivalent measures of forgiveness in the West and in China, they are not the only standard tests to replace etics with pseudo-etics.

3.2.4.2 Equivalence

Three specific types of equivalence can be examined: translation equivalence (in which difficult-to-translate items often highlight emic features of one culture which, precisely because of their emicity, are difficult or impossible to translate into the language of another culture), conceptual equivalence (in

which it is assumed that the same purpose is served across different cultures by different aspects of a concept), and scalar equivalence (the assumption that a scale, or metric, measures exactly the same concept in two cultures, and that the resulting scores are directly comparable).

Translation equivalence is most often determined through the use of back-translation (i.e., the translated questionnaire is translated back into its original language and these results are compared with the original to identify any discrepancies). While the MEFI is written in the traditional (complex) Mandarin characters that are used in Taiwan and Hong Kong, the differences between these characters and the simplified characters used on the mainland of China have no effect upon the meanings of the characters. For this study, four graduate students were asked to translate the MEFI into English. Two were English major students in the School of Foreign Languages at China West Normal University and two were Chinese majors in the College of Chinese at the same university. (Selected responses are found in Appendix D. Translators 1 and 2 are English majors and Translators 3 and 4 are Chinese majors.)

Back-translated items were divided into three groups according to how closely the words or phrases suggested by the translators matched the original EFI items: those where all four translators offered the same word or a synonym; those where there was a lack of agreement among the translators; and those where the translators offered suggestions that were consistent but not synonymous with the original EFI items. In all, 75% of the items fell into the first group—the translators' suggestions were exactly the same as the EFI items or

were virtually synonymous. These items were not spread evenly throughout the sub-scales, as all but three of the affect items and all but four of the cognition items were successfully back-translated, while only twelve of the twenty behaviour items were problem-free. This may be due to the number of items within each subscale that are presumably easier to translate because they are comprised of only a single word (affect: 20/20, cognition: 9/20, and behaviour: 4/20). As Eco notes, "for isolated words there is a dictionary, [but] sentences designate states of affairs which are not registered by any dictionary" (2003, 175).

The translators failed to provide consistent translations for two items: "resentment (#10/NA—here, the number refers to the item's number in the EFI, while NA signifies a *N*egative item in the *A*ffective subscale; "P" will represent positive items and "B" and "C" will represent the behaviour and cognitive subscales)" and "put him/her down (#26/NB)". "Resentment" came out as "disgusting" twice, and as "abominable" and "be sick of". All three of these responses lack the initial offense that one could, according to the English word, resent. Especially in this context (where "him/her" is someone who has deeply hurt the respondent), the difference between negative feelings prompted by the hurtful action itself (resentment) and more general negative feelings (disgusted, sick of) may be significant. Two translators responded to Number 26 with "to be against him", and the other two suggested "sing a different tune to him". Putting a person down involves some kind of negative remark, but the two back-translations seem more to

involve malice and contrariness. ("Sing a different tune" here is a literal translation from the Mandarin and means contradicting everything another person says—an intentional "you say 'to-*may*-to', I say 'to-*mah*-to'" strategy). The English item need not involve any face-to-face interaction with the offender, but the Mandarin item requires such an interaction.

In 13 cases, the translators' suggestions differed (to a greater or lesser degree) from the EFI items. In ten of these, the translators were unanimous in their disagreement with the MEFI item, and in the other instances three of the four translators add components that are not present in the EFI items. For example, for "attend his/her party (#40-PB)", three translators add "or activities". This accurately represents the MEFI item which does not stop at the mention of the party (which would almost certainly involve a meal), but goes on to include "other activities". Why this was added is unclear, but perhaps the original translator considered that since in Taiwan most reconciliations involve a banquet hosted by the offender (Sheldon Sawatzky, long-term teacher/ administrator in Taiwan, personal communication via e-mail, April 13, 2002), and since in China the refusal of such an invitation is very serious and may signal the end of a relationship, the addition of "other activities" was thought to be a more faithful translation of the item's intent.

For "immoral (#49-NC)", three translators include a "go to hell" component. While both items are negative, the MEFI version is much harsher than the EFI one. For "corrupt (#52-NC)", three translators add the idea of society or community, and this may again serve to make the MEFI version

harsher than the EFI version as it emphasizes the effects of corruption on society as a whole and would conjure up images of specific abuses of power by someone in an official position.

Among the ten items where the translators consistently disagreed with the EFI terms, five items reflect a difference in degree, while the others introduce completely different ideas. For “cold (#13-NA)”, all four suggested “indifferent”, which is more passive and less harsh than the EFI item. “Affection (#18-PA)” was translated “enthusiasm”, which carries with it somewhat different connotations. For “lend him/her a hand (#32-PB)”, all four include difficult circumstances as well as feelings of pity or sympathy, which suggest a more serious and more touching situation than does the EFI item. The translators faithfully translated “disapprove of him/her (#55-NC)” literally: “he is rubbish”. To think of the person as garbage, with no redeeming qualities whatsoever, is certainly harsher than disapproving of the person—or more likely disapproving of one of his or her habits or actions. “Condemn the person (#58-NC)” also comes out harsher in the MEFI, as all four translators suggested “the person deserves death”. It should be noted that these differences in degree are present in the MEFI—the translators arrived at similar back-translations that disagreed with the EFI items because the MEFI items themselves were different in degree from the original items.

In some cases, the difference between the EFI term and the corresponding MEFI term is not simply a difference in degree but rather a complete difference in meaning. “Show friendship (#21-PB)”, is “respect” in the

MEFI. While it is possible for one to show a grudging respect for someone, it need hardly be an example of positive behaviour, and in a hierarchical society like China showing respect may have nothing at all to do with how one would like to behave. "Reach out to him/her (#30-PB)" includes the components of intentionality and difficult circumstances, and two translators point out that it will be "a great help" or "a big hand", which is specified in the MEFI item. This intentionality component refers to one's motivation to reaching out, and in this case, the implication is that one is reaching out not in an altruistic way, but that one is reaching out with ulterior motives for future benefit, so this item also may not always reflect a positive behaviour. At the same time, such ulterior motives may not be as sinister as they would seem in the West, since "Chinese often consciously or unconsciously expect to get something in return when they do a favour to others" (Chen, 2001, 63). The MEFI item "do a favour (#37-PB)" comes out specifically as "do a *small* favour", while in the EFI it is up to the respondent to decide how small or large the favour will be. Another item that becomes more specific in the MEFI is "aid him/her when in trouble (#38-PB)". In the MEFI, the aid is explicitly and only financial aid. While "be biting when talking with him/her (#39-NB)" requires actually speaking with the offender, the MEFI version of the item makes no mention of actually speaking, but rather describes "a threatening manner", showing hostility, making "threatening gestures" and being "fierce and quarrelsome".

While this last set of items most clearly reveals a lack of translation equivalence, the other items shown to exhibit differences in degree and

confusion among the translators also show that there are problems. Obviously some of the discrepancies between the EFI and the MEFI are intentional changes made by the translator(s) and not simply errors in translation. Unnecessarily replacing “friendship” with “respect” (#21), changing “favour” to “small favour” (#37), limiting “aid” to “financial aid” (#38), and expanding “party” to include “other activities” (#40) suggests an intentional effort to perhaps, in some way, make the MEFI more “culturally equivalent”, though it is difficult to discern that this has been done with any consistency. Cheung et al. offer this warning to translators who do more than simply translate:

> To revise the scale by deleting. . . or by adding new items. . . [will] have changed the original meaning of the scale and thus will limit the applicability of the empirical research findings of the original instrument. To a certain extent, the revised scale may be considered a new instrument. (1996, 182)

Judging from the back-translations provided by the four translators, 45 of the MEFI items are equivalent to their EFI counterparts, but 15 of the items, to a greater or lesser degree, exhibit translation non-equivalence.

The EFI was designed to be used interculturally, and the developers followed (in part) van de Vijver and Leung’s advice for developing an instrument that can be used across cultures: “In an early stage of a project the question has to be raised whether the same instrument can be applied in all cultural groups” (1997, 264). The developers of the EFI “aimed at developing the EFI in a simple format in order to facilitate administration and translation into different languages” (Enright et al., 2000, 27). While the developers attempted to make the EFI easy to translate, translation, of necessity, involves a second party, and

simply providing a supposedly easy-to-translate document is not enough to ensure a good translation. As mentioned above, several items are very nearly synonymous, if not completely indistinguishable, and to accurately translate such subtle shades of meaning would surely present a translator with a daunting task. As Eco points out, a successful translation requires more than a good dictionary: “Translation is always a shift, not between two languages but between two cultures. . . . A translator must take into account rules that are not strictly linguistic but, broadly speaking, cultural” (2003, 82). The EFI translators also faced a daunting question: “Should a translation lead the reader to understand the linguistic and cultural universe of the source text, or transform the original by adapting it to the reader’s cultural and linguistic universe?” (Eco, 2003, 89). Those who produced the MEFI, either consciously or by default, followed the former of the two options. As respondents complete the inventory, they are very much within Enright’s cultural universe, although they may have very little understanding of it—indeed, they may not even be aware that they have left their own “linguistic and cultural universe”. In the case of the MEFI, the concern of the EFI developers for translation equivalence is certainly justified, but no mention is made of any similar attempts to facilitate conceptual and scalar equivalence.

Conceptual equivalence, especially when the concept is a complex one, is difficult to establish. While there is much evidence of dissimilarity between China and the West in general, there is little to suggest that Western and Chinese “forgiveness” are equivalent.

Examples of scalar (metric) equivalence are, as Brislin points out, "clearest in their misuse. . . . [as] people often assume metric equivalence exists. . . rather than think about the complexities of emics, etics, and conceptual equivalencies" (2000, 103). In this case, assuming scalar equivalence, a Canadian scoring 275 on the EFI would be judged less forgiving than a Chinese scoring 285 on the MEFI. While Brislin cautions that "arguments for metric equivalence should be made only when researchers have extensive evidence to support their claims" (2000, 107), commentators who question the very existence of forgiveness itself within Chinese culture would certainly question the metric equivalence of the EFI/MEFI. There is no evidence to support the metric equivalence of the EFI and the MEFI, although such equivalence has been assumed (e.g., Park & Enright, 2000).

3.2.4.3 Other concerns

Concerns have also been raised about the form a questionnaire takes, and whether or not the very format of the instrument, regardless of its content, is free of cultural bias. Bond questions the validity of applying a Likert scale questionnaire interculturally—and questions its value not only in Japanese, but also in English:

> These [response] labels were, as usual, converted into numerical scores from five to one, implying, indeed requiring, psychologically equidistant steps from one label to the next. . . . one would have legitimate concerns about whether they were equidistant in Japanese (let alone in English!). (1995, 195).

The EFI offers the following response options: Strongly Disagree; Disagree;

Somewhat Disagree; Somewhat Agree; Agree; Strongly Agree. For scoring the EFI, responses to positive items are scored from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree), while responses to negative items are reverse scored, with Strongly Agree scored as 1 and Strongly Disagree scored as 6. The EFI total score is obtained by adding the scores of all 60 items, with a possible range of 60-360.

In the MEFI, the corresponding responses are 非常不同意 (fēicháng bù tóngyī); 不同意 (bù tóngyī); 有一点不同意 (yǒu yī diǎn bù tóngyī); 有一点同意 (yǒu yī diǎn tóngyī); 同意 (tóngyī); 非常同意 (fēicháng tóngyī). As Bond suggests, it may not be the case that strongly agreeing with one positive item, somewhat disagreeing with two, disagreeing with three, and strongly disagreeing with six (all resulting in a score of 6) show equivalent degrees of forgiveness and should contribute equally to one's final score. Even if they can be shown to be equivalent in English, there is nothing to suggest that the Chinese responses are similarly comparable. The Chinese phrase corresponding to "strongly" (非常—*fēicháng*) was back-translated into English by the four translators in four different ways, as "awfully", "extremely", "completely", and "absolutely". While the first two express a very high degree, as does the original English adverb, the latter two express states of total agreement or disagreement, which are on a qualitatively different level. This may make Chinese respondents less likely to choose the extreme responses.

Other cultural considerations may also inhibit Chinese respondents from selecting the “strongly dis/agree” responses.

There is a question as to whether differences between final EFI/MEFI scores reflect actual cultural differences related to forgiveness or whether they reflect different cultural tendencies in responding to Likert scale questionnaires. Obuchi et al. claim that, in general, “individualists tend to choose more extreme values on scales than do collectivists” (1999, 59). Comparing American and Chinese scores on such a questionnaire, when Americans are more likely to feel free to respond with any of six options and their Chinese counterparts are likely to limit their responses to only four (or perhaps two) of the six options, is clearly problematic. Choosing “agree” rather than “strongly agree” for positive items and “disagree” rather than “strongly disagree” for negative ones could reduce one’s total score by about 16%—as many as 60 points. In such a case the total MEFI score would reflect more upon a cultural aversion to extremes than upon any degree of forgiveness.

That thoughts, feelings, and behaviours all contribute equally to the MEFI score also raises a question. Behaviours generally require more effort than do thoughts and feelings. Should the items measuring behaviour be weighted more heavily in the total score calculation in recognition that committing to a certain course of action requires more of a commitment than simply to entertain, for example, “friendly (#19)” feelings or “nice (#51)” thoughts?

The section on behaviour is problematic for another reason as well. Among the twenty items comprising the behaviour portion of the EFI, the

following items do not appear:

> Regarding the person, I do or would join with him/her in slaying a black dog, cutting it in half, and pouring its blood along a fence.
>
> Regarding the person, I do or would suckle his/her baby.
>
> Regarding the person, I do or would brush off the three piles of dirt that he/she places upon my thigh after crawling to me on hands and knees.
>
> Regarding the person, I do or would recite an account of his/her misdeed while he/she engages in painful head washing.

These items may well have appeared in the EFI if it had been prepared by an African scholar of forgiveness, because these African rituals are all symbolic of forgiveness (Augsburger, 1992, 276). While a Western respondent would likely marvel at the strangeness of these behaviours if they were included in the EFI, an African (or Chinese) respondent may be equally bewildered by the items that presently appear.

In addition to translation and cultural concerns, the currently available MEFI makes it virtually impossible for Chinese respondents to score higher than American EFI respondents. While the total score of the EFI ranges from a low of 60 to a high of 360, it is mathematically impossible for anyone taking the MEFI to score more than 300. At the same time, it is possible for someone to receive a MEFI score lower than 60—in fact, it is possible for a Chinese respondent to receive a score of zero. The reason for these disparities is that the MEFI Likert responses are inexplicably converted to different numerical

values than are the EFI responses. While EFI responses are converted into numerical scores ranging from 1 to 6, MEFI responses are given values from zero to 5. These differing values make it impossible even to suggest that EFI and MEFI scores are somehow comparable, but like the erratic numbering of the 60 MEFI items (starting not with number one, but running 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10-20, and then jumping to 61-100) changes are easily, though perhaps grudgingly, made. (The EFI is now available through Mind Garden, Inc., and in their sample EFI questions, the options are listed as “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, slightly disagree”, “slightly disagree”, “agree”, and “strongly agree”—Mind Garden Inc., 2004. This error, if it appears on the EFI itself, is less easily rectified than the mistakes on the MEFI.)

Enright and his colleague from Taiwan, Tina Huang, identify yet another intercultural variable that may complicate research: varying degrees of willing self-disclosure among respondents from different cultures. As they explain, “In order to be civil and to show respect for others, Taiwanese people are more hesitant to overtly demonstrate anger than Americans may be. . . . Thus we have the problem of a client *saying* that he or she is not angry, but feeling anger *inward*” (Huang & Enright, 2000, 72). This discrepancy between outward display and inner feeling is a problematic complication for Western researchers, but is “normal” for those living in a collectivistic Chinese culture:

> Chinese persons are not subject to the same pressures for consistency between inner beliefs and outer behaviour as are Westerners. . . . Such [“inconsistent”] behaviour is not construed as hypocritical or insincere as it would be by Westerners; rather it is a culturally sanctioned mechanism enabling the individual to maintain a harmonious relationship with the external world. (King & Bond, 1985, 35)

Certainly this tendency to downplay existing negative feelings among Taiwanese MEFI respondents (and perhaps a corresponding tendency to exaggerate positive feelings) would certainly lead to skewed MEFI scores that will not be directly comparable to EFI scores, especially scores from cultures where consistency between inner beliefs and outer behaviour is expected.

Another cultural difference that will affect MEFI scores is identified by Ma, who found that “Chinese subjects showed a stronger orientation to perform affective and altruistic acts to first kin, close relatives, and best friends than did their English counterparts” (1992, 61). This suggests that one’s responses to the MEFI would vary considerably depending upon the closeness of the offender, and that while Chinese subjects might be expected to score higher than Westerners when the chosen offender is close to the respondent, they may score lower when the offender is not close to the respondent.

While there are serious questions about how accurately the EFI total score itself reflects a respondent’s level of forgiveness, the MEFI total score must answer not only those questions, but also the many others that arise from its status as a Western instrument translated into another language and administered in another culture.

Chapter Four

"FORGIVENESS" IN CHINA

4.1 The results of the questionnaire

As noted in Chapter One, the questionnaire was administered to Chinese university students—*not* with the assumption that "university student" constitutes an infallible standard category for intercultural comparison, but with the assumption that, since future researchers would likely select such students as respondents to the MEFI, it would thus be most helpful to explore Chinese conceptions of forgiveness among students in particular. In fact, no assumption is made that the students in this study are even representative of Chinese university students in general. As Education students majoring in English, they are more "Westernized" than their non-English major colleagues by virtue of their coursework and their contact with Western teachers. These students would be more likely to understand forgiveness (in the Western sense) than other Chinese students, and if these students show a lack of understanding, Chinese university students in general could be expected to show even less understanding.

Since this is very much an exploratory study, survey responses are examined with descriptive statistics in an attempt to reveal respondents' understandings of forgiveness according to the definition upon which the EFI

(and by extension the MEFI) is based (Enright, Rique, & Coyle, 2000, 1). Some survey questions required responses in Mandarin Chinese, and in this discussion such responses are referred to by assigned numbers, rather than by the actual Mandarin characters themselves. All of the Mandarin characters are provided in the appendices, but they do not appear in the text of this discussion. Survey results will be presented in the form of frequency distribution tables, and the discussion presents the general results for each question. In many cases, the English word "forgiveness" is used to translate Mandarin terms—while this may or may not be appropriate, it is unavoidable. The chapter closes with a series of conclusions based upon these results.

One of the major considerations in a study that involves the comparison of one concept in two cultures (and two languages) is this: how can one identify the target concept in the other culture (using that culture's language) when the concept may not even exist in the other culture? Translating the names of certain Chinese food items is sometimes difficult, if not impossible, since no English terms are, understandably, available for food items that are not available in the West. It should not be surprising that translating a complex concept from one language to another is difficult when finding a concise English term for a popular Chinese children's snack—a congealed lump of warm glutinous rice covered with ground sugar and peanuts—is problematic.

In this study, respondents were not presented with a Chinese term for forgiveness. The decision was made to design a survey that can be administered only to respondents who have studied English so that they can

provide their own translation of the word. They are not asked to simply translate the term: in Question 1 of the survey, respondents were asked to suggest the "Mandarin Chinese word [that] would best fill in the blank" in front of Enright's definition of forgiveness. Respondents were asked to write their response in Box 1. As the Mandarin term that best fits the definition of forgiveness, the character in Box 1 is essentially a translation of the English word. Question 2 asks for a translation of "tolerance" in the same manner, using a definition of tolerance based on Smith (1997, 32-33). This Mandarin character is placed in Box 2. (In further discussion here, these responses will be referred to simply as Box 1—i.e., the Mandarin translation of forgiveness—and Box 2—i.e., the Mandarin translation of tolerance.) If these questions were asked of native English speakers, the range of responses would be relatively narrow, although it would be a useful experiment to see which words native speakers would associate with these definitions and to see how widely their responses vary.

In this case, the 130 respondents suggested a total of 57 different words and phrases for the two definitions: 33 for Question 1, and 37 for Question 2. (For practical reference purposes, these responses have been listed alphabetically and numbered from 1 to 57, as shown in Appendix C.) Here, responses are identified only by their number—e.g., *kuān róng* (宽容) is referred to as #23.) Several of the responses are given only once in Question 1 (23 in all), and once in Question 2 (22). While 20 responses offered for Box 1 are not suggested for Box 2 and 24 responses given in Box 2 never appear in Box 1, many of the words (13) are suggested for both Questions 1 and 2 by different

respondents. This apparent confusion is not unique to these respondents—Chinese-English dictionaries also suggest that one Mandarin character can mean both “forgiveness” and “tolerance”—e.g., #2 and #48 (these are included in Question 3 as Items O and J, and their definitions are given in Appendix B). The most frequently suggested characters for both questions, interestingly, belong to this latter group.

For Question 1, the four most frequently suggested words are #23 (suggested by 43.1% of respondents), #24 (12.3%), #7 (9%), and #2 (9%). Two of these words also appear in the list of the four most frequently suggested words for Question 2: #45 (24.6%), #56 (16.9%), #2 (7.7%), and #23 (6.2%). Third-ranking #2 ranks fourth among the 33 different responses to Question 1, and fourth-ranking #23 appears in Question 1 as the most frequent response (see Figure 4.1). Obviously, respondents perceived some overlapping of concepts as they considered Questions 1 and 2.

While 43.1% of respondents suggested #23 for Box 1, the two most frequently suggested words for Box 2, #45 and #58, are given by a combined total of 41.3%. In that sense, the definition of forgiveness elicits a more unified response than does the definition of tolerance. (For responses to Question 1, see Figure 4.2, where the asterisk indicates the 23 responses given only once: 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 26, 27, 28, 31, 35, 39, 41, 43, 46, 49, 50, 55, 56; for responses to Question 2, see Figure 4.3, where the asterisk indicates the 22 responses given only once: 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 18, 21, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 43, 48, 52, 53, 54, 55, 57).

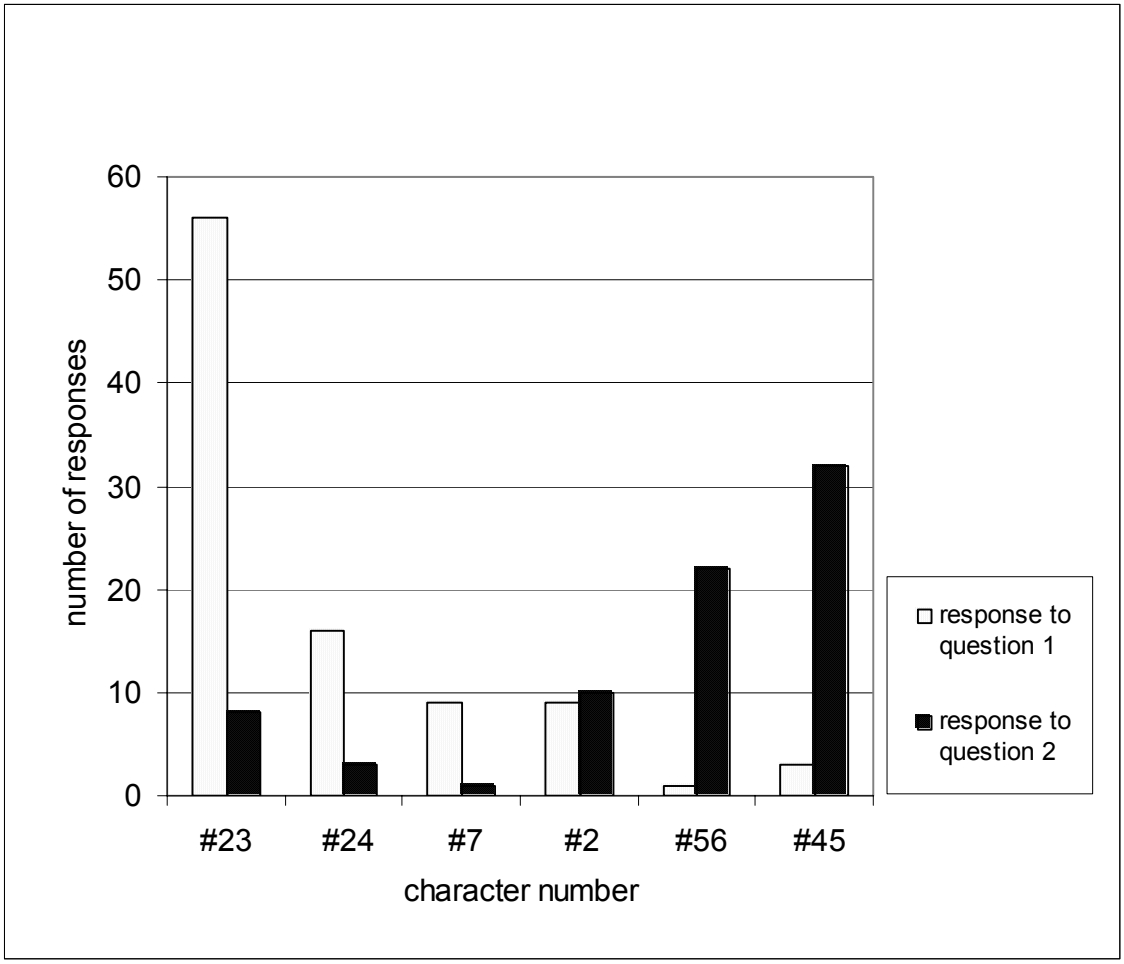

Figure 4.1 Four most frequent responses to Questions 1 and 2

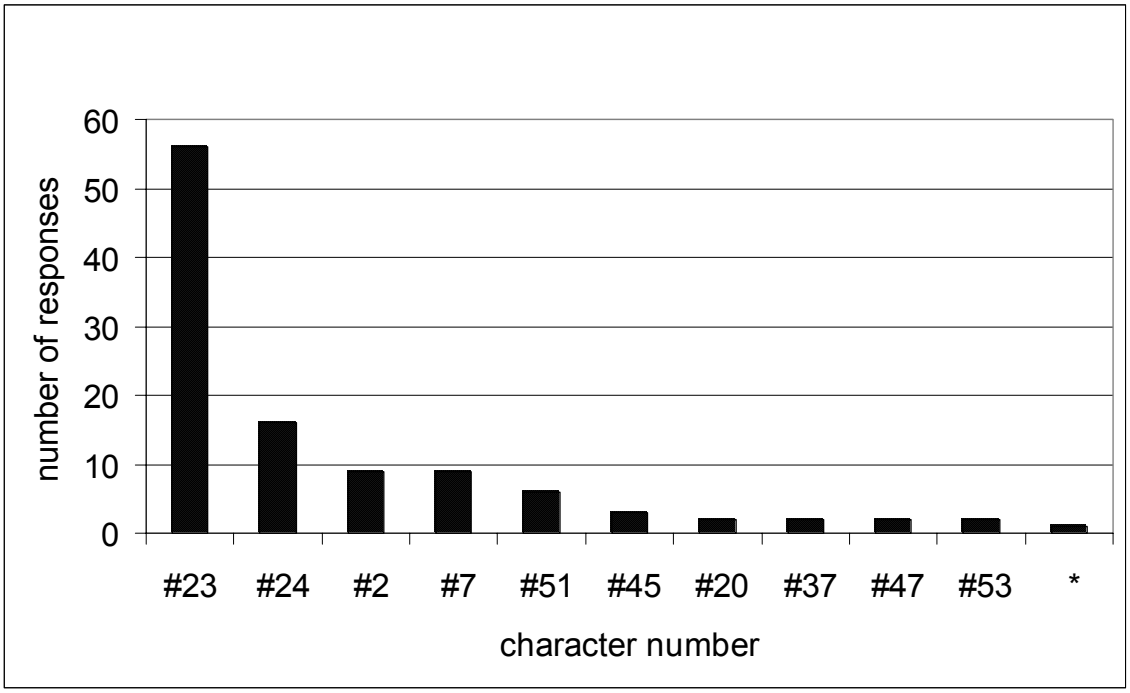

Figure 4.2 Responses to Question 1

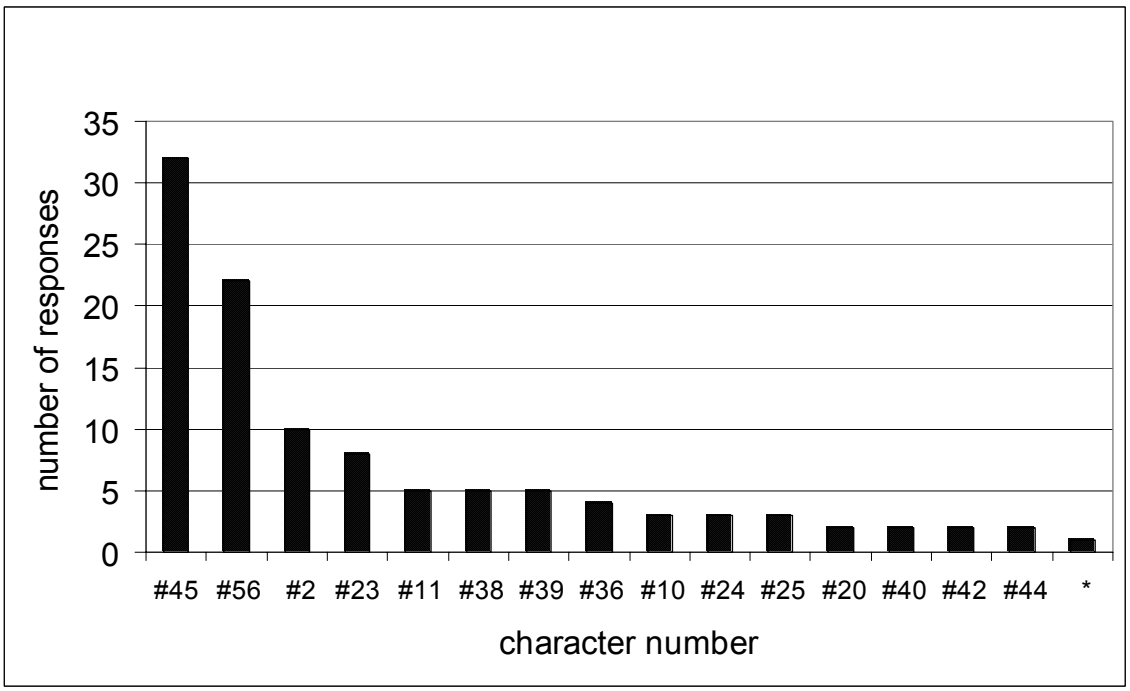

Figure 4.3 Responses to Question 2

Question 3 lists 16 Mandarin characters and asks respondents to indicate whether each item is synonymous with their response in Box 1, Box 2, both, or neither. Most of these terms are defined as “forgiveness” or “tolerance” (or both), but some are defined as “endurance” (Items A and E), “magnanimous” (Item P), and “accept” (Item C—see Appendix B for definitions of all the terms). Responses to these items vary widely (see Figure 4.4). Not a single possible option is left unchosen by the respondents—each of the 16 items is selected by at least five respondents (3.8%) as being either synonymous with Box 1, synonymous with Box 2, synonymous with both Boxes 1 and 2, or synonymous with neither Box 1 nor Box 2.

All of the terms listed in Question 3 appear as suggestions for Box 1 or 2, with the exception of Item A, although the majority of respondents indicated in Question 3 that Item A is either synonymous with Box 1, Box 2, or both (61.5%). Item A ranks as the item most indicated to mean both Box 1 and Box 2 (36.9%), so perhaps it is not suggested in Questions 1 or 2 as being synonymous with either Box 1 or Box 2 because it encompasses both meanings. On the other hand, Item A is also the top-ranking option for “neither” (38.5%), which would also explain its complete absence from responses to Questions 1 and 2.

Another surprising result in Question 3 is that the item here most frequently identified with Box 1, Item G, appears as a response in Question 1 only twice. Why did only 1.5% of the respondents identify Item G with Enright’s definition in Question 1 while 64.6% go on to identify Item G with the term they suggest for Box 1? It seems that while Item G does not match Enright’s

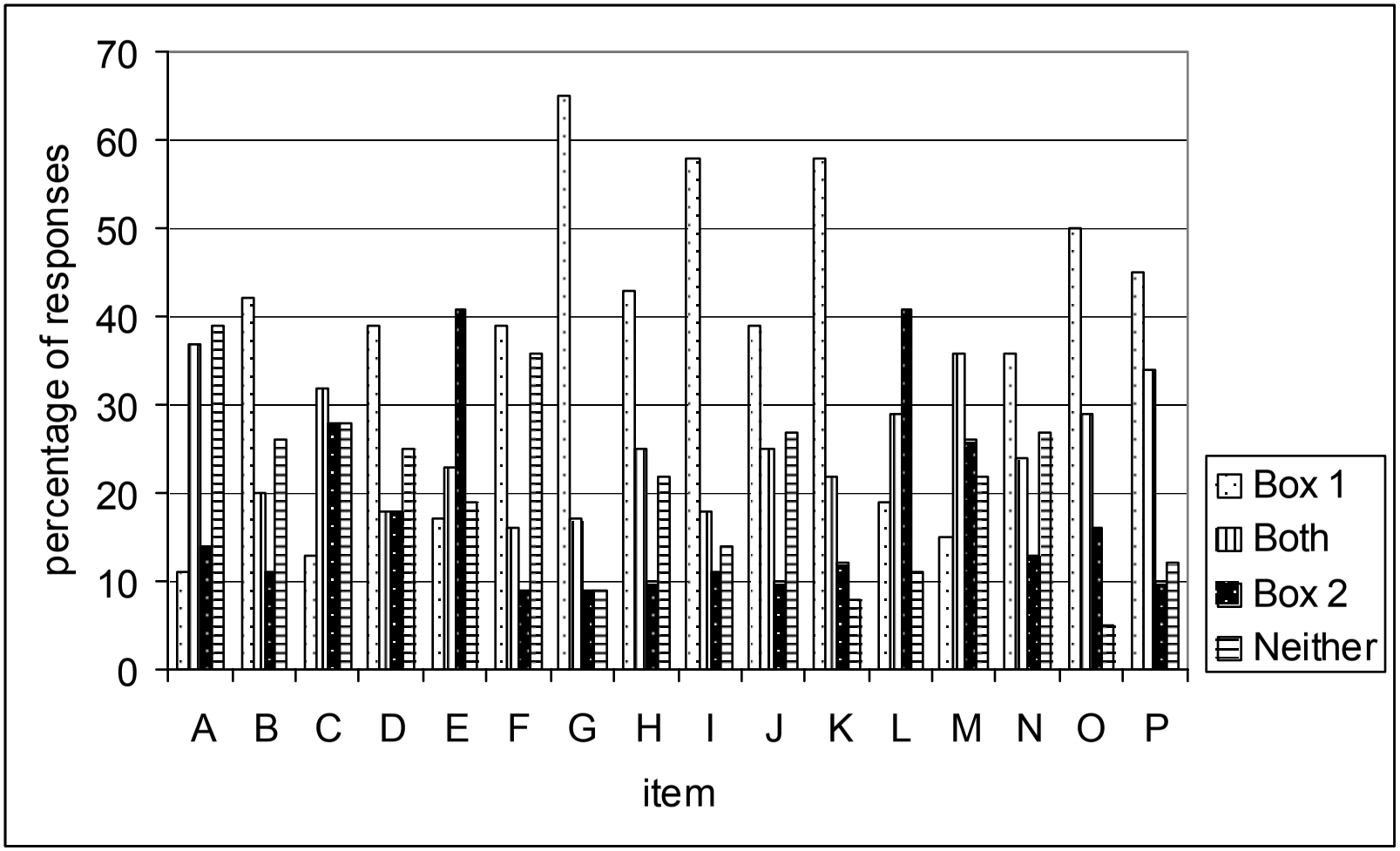

Figure 4.4 Responses to Question 3

definition, it is, in many cases, synonymous with words that do match the definition. These responses to Item G, along with those to Item A, and indeed those to all of the other items, which are each identified as being synonymous with Box 1, Box 2, both, or neither, suggest that the definitions presented in Questions 1 and 2 do not lend themselves easily to translation into Mandarin.

Question 4 asked respondents to again make use of their answers to Questions 1 and 2 (i.e., Boxes 1 and 2). The question consists of 26 Chinese sayings. Sayings, according to Gries, "are particularly useful at revealing deeply rooted, if not always realized ideals that form the basis for Chinese perspectives and behaviour" (2004, 153). Respondents were asked to identify if the saying "is more closely connected to the word in Box 1 or Box 2". These sayings were selected from among hundreds of responses given by graduate students at China West Normal University over a three-year period when they were asked to suggest Chinese sayings about forgiveness as part of a homework assignment for their first-year oral English class. Some of the chosen sayings promote what seems to be forgiveness, while others promote what seems to be revenge. The latter were included because although "revenge and forgiveness. . . mark ends of a spectrum. . . of attitudinal responses to wrongdoing" (Govier, 2002, vii), sayings promoting revenge can be considered to be sayings discouraging forgiveness, since "forgiveness is the exact opposite of vengeance" (Arendt, 1998, 240). Respondents were explicitly instructed that "the saying may refer to either the presence or the absence of the ideas in Boxes 1 and 2". All of the items in Question 3 were considered, by the

student(s) who suggested them, as having something to do with forgiveness (in the English sense of the word as they understood it).

Of the 26 sayings offered in Question 4, eleven are identified with Box 1 by a majority of the respondents: Q and Z (68% each), L (60%), B (62%), E and J (59% each), N (58%), R (57%), A (56%), C (55%), and D (54%). These sayings will now be discussed in depth. The remaining sayings are identified with Box 1 by 40% or less of the respondents.

Two items are most frequently identified with Enright's definition of forgiveness: Items Q—"*Never remember the wrongdoings of others"*, and Z—"*The sea is bigger than the land; The sky is bigger than the sea; Man's heart is bigger than the sky"*. Item Q suggests that the equivalent of forgiveness is not remembering an offence (i.e., forgetting), but the EFI user's manual explicitly states that "forgiveness is not forgetting" (Enright et al., 2000, 2; cf. Augsburger, 1996; Cole, Mitchell, Monroe, & Laughlin, 1999; Dillon, 2001; Konstam, Chernoff, & Deveney, 2001; Lang, 1994; Murphy & Hampton, 1988; Rodden, 1997; Smedes, 2001; and Witvliet, 2001. Govier suggests that "the appeal of the cliché ['forgive and forget']. . . may owe more to its alliterative qualities than to common sense or ordinary experience"—2002, 60).

As for Item Z, its emphasis on "capacity of heart" is very similar to three other items in the top eleven: A—"*The sea can accommodate one hundred rivers; its volume is huge"*; B—"*A chancellor's heart is large enough to pole a boat in"*; and C—"*A great man has great capacity"*. In A, "accommodate" is translated from 容—*róng*, which is defined primarily as "hold; contain", but has

the secondary definition of “tolerate” (Wei, 2002, 1035). In C, “capacity” is translated from 量—*liàng* : “capacity for tolerance or for taking food or drink” (Wei, 2002, 755). This sense of capacity and accommodation is reminiscent of the Latin term *magnanimus* (literally, “great-souled”—Morris, 1981, 784; rendered in English as “magnanimous”: “showing . . . a lofty and courageous spirit. . . nobility of feeling and generosity of mind. . . . enabling one to bear trouble calmly, to disdain meanness and revenge, and to make sacrifices for worthy ends”—Mish, 1983, 716). These four items are clearly more closely related to Box 2 than to Box 1.

Item L—“*Forgiveness is a good virtue”* includes the Mandarin character used in Item K in Question 3, which is identified with Box 1 by 58% of the respondents (although as mentioned earlier, Wei defines the term as “tolerance”—2002, 700). Item N—“*When you can forgive a person, you should”* includes the Mandarin character used in Item B in Question 3, which 42% of respondents identify with Box 1. Both of these are seen by a majority of respondents as being connected with the definition of forgiveness.

Two items feature the same grammatical construction: “convert. . . into . . .” (化……为…… —*huà. . . wéi. . .*). Accomplishing Items E—“*Convert an enemy into a friend”* and D—“*Convert weapons of warfare into gifts of jade and silk”* involves reconciliation, which requires the cooperation of one’s enemy. According to Enright et al., “forgiveness is different from reconciliation” (2000, 2). Item R—“*Treat your enemy with understanding, not provocation”* seems

aimed at reconciliation as well, and addresses not the manner in which to respond to an injury, but rather focuses on forestalling any injury from occurring. Item J—"*Do good for evil, not a bite for a bite"* does address how one should respond to a hurt, but "doing good" may involve much more (or much less) than forgiveness.

Some of the sayings address forgiveness indirectly by promoting its opposite, revenge. Question 4 states that "the saying may refer to either the presence or the absence of the ideas in boxes 1 and 2". Items T—"*You're a coward if you don't take revenge"*, U—"*A gentleman takes revenge—ten years is not too late"*, and V—"*Forgiving others gives them the chance to make the same mistake again"* promote an unforgiving attitude (in English, at any rate). Item V (chosen by 3% of respondents to be connected with Box 1) includes the character given as Item G in Question 3, which was identified with Box 1 by 65% of respondents. Apparently the vast majority of respondents misunderstood the "presence *or* absence" element of the question and focused their attention on items they felt promoted Box 1. Of course, the justification for including these particular sayings in the first place is based upon the opposed natures of the English words "forgiveness" and "revenge", and this justification may be absent in Mandarin.

While 58% of the respondents associate Item N with Box 1, Item P—*''Forgiving a person isn't foolish; it's foolish not to forgive a person"*, which includes the same characters for "forgiving a person" (饶人 –*ráo rén*) used in

Item N (and not just once, but twice), is chosen by only 25% of the respondents. It is not clear why so many associate Item N but not Item P with Box 1.

The responses to Question 4 show that, of the eleven sayings most often associated with Enright's definition of forgiveness given in Question 1, only two of those sayings deal with what Enright could consider forgiveness. Of the two sayings most frequently suggested, one equates forgiveness with forgetting, while the other (along with three other synonymous sayings) is much more closely related to tolerance than to forgiveness. Three of the other sayings aim at reconciliation, and one offers general advice on returning good for evil.

Question 5 is made up of 22 items from the MEFI, but respondents are not asked to respond to the items in the way that they would on the MEFI itself (i.e., rating their responses to someone who has hurt them). Rather, they are asked to identify whether the feelings, actions, and thoughts described in the items, if directed to someone who has hurt them, would be indicative of what they suggest for Box 1 or Box 2. All of the selected items are positive within their subscales, so the possible misunderstanding that appeared in Question 4 about also selecting items that indicated a *lack* of the concepts presented in Box 1 or Box 2 cannot occur in Question 5.

Almost all of the items are identified more with Box 1 than Box 2 (although in 16 of the 22 items, the most frequent response is "neither"—see Figure 4.5), but again there appears to be no clearly discernible distinction between the two concepts defined in Questions 1 and 2. Item M—"*Regarding the person, I do or would do a favour"* (*37/PB*) is associated with Box 1 by only

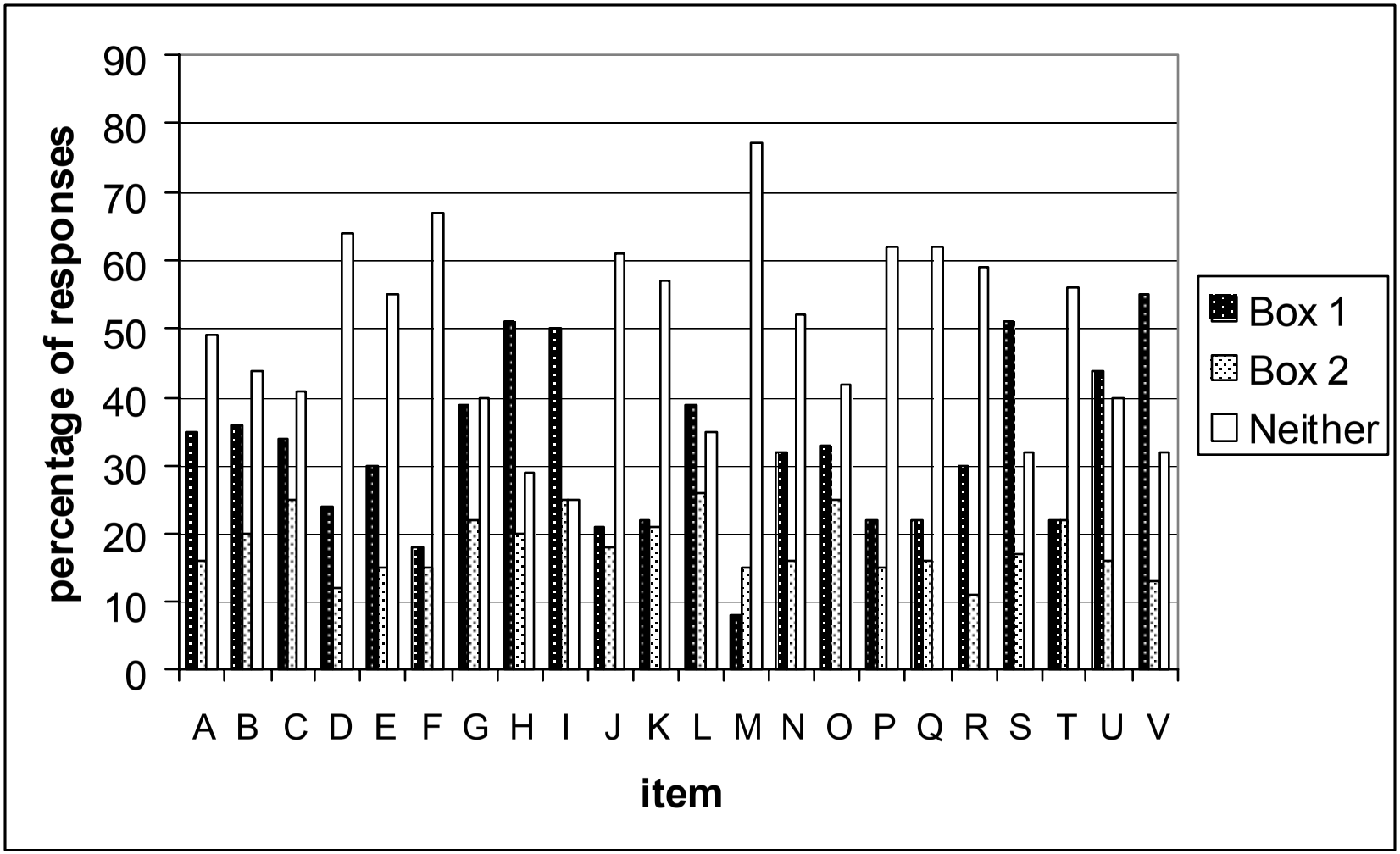

Figure 4.5 Responses to Question 5

8% of the respondents, and with Box 2 by 15%. The silent majority of respondents indicate no association with either box, but it is significant that for this item, more respondents see it as measuring Box 2 rather than Box 1. Item T—*"My attitude towards this person is that I think favourably of him/her"* (56/PC) is identified with both boxes by 22% of the respondents, so this item is seen as equally indicative of one's level of Box 1 or Box 2.

Of the 22 items, only four are indicated by 50% or more of the respondents as being indicative of Box 1:

55% selected V—"*My attitude towards this person is that I hope he/she finds happiness"* (60/PC)

51% selected H—"*Regarding the person, I do or would help"* (25/PB)

51% selected S—"*My attitude towards this person is that I wish him/her well"* (54/PC)

50% selected I—"*Regarding the person, I am or would be considerate"* (28/PB)

None of the affect subscale items are identified with Box 1 by more than 36% of the respondents. These indicators within the affective component of the MEFI total score, therefore, are seen by about two-thirds of the respondents *not* to be connected with Enright's definition of forgiveness. While affective factors may not be completely absent from Box 1, they do not seem to be as important as the behavioural and cognitive factors, although even these factors are not identified with Box 1 to a great extent.

The remaining 18 MEFI items in Question 5, then, are not identified by a majority of respondents as being connected to Enright's definition of forgiveness. In fact, eleven of the items are selected by more than 50% of the respondents as having nothing to do with either Box 1 or Box 2. Since the intention of Question 5 was to identify whether these MEFI items correspond with either Box 1 or Box 2, only those two options are available to respondents. Strictly speaking, a respondent cannot *indicate* that an item is not connected to either box, since no such option is available. They can only *not indicate* that an item is connected to Box 1 or 2, which may or may not be the same thing. (While the directions for Question 3 explicitly state, "If the word has no connection to either Box 1 or Box 2, leave the line blank", this is not stated in the directions for Question 5.) More than 50% of the respondents do not indicate that these eleven MEFI items have any connection to either Box 1 or Box 2:

D—"*I feel tender toward him/her." (07/PA)*

E—"*I feel caring toward him/her." (15/PA)*

F—"*I feel affection toward him/her." (18/PA)*

J—"*Regarding the person, I do or would reach out to him/her." (30/PB)*

K—"*Regarding the person, I do or would lend him/her a hand." (32/PB)*

M—"*Regarding the person, I do or would do a favour." (37/PB)*

N—"*Regarding the person, I do or would aid him/her when in trouble." (38/PB)*

P—"*I think he or she is of good quality." (44/PC)*

Q—"*I think he or she is worthy of respect." (45/PC)*

R—"*I think he or she is a good person." (50/PC)*

T—"*My attitude towards this person is that I think favourably of him/her." (56/PC)*

Considering the items by subscale, the proportions of items not identified with Box 1 (this list includes 3 of the 6 affect items, 4 of the 9 behaviour items, and 4 of the 7 cognitive items) seem quite consistent across the subscales.

Question 6 asks respondents if Box 1 and Box 2 share the tripartite nature of Enright's definition of forgiveness by asking if feelings, thoughts, and actions are or are not involved in their Box 1 and Box 2. The affective component is most identified as being involved in both Box 1 (by 66.2% of respondents) and Box 2 (55.4%). Box 1 involves behaviour a bit less (61.5%), and cognitive factors least of all (54.6%). Box 2 involves behavioural and cognitive factors almost equally (52.3/51.5%).

It is in Question 7 that the word "forgiveness" appears for the first time in the questionnaire, although the topic of the questionnaire was revealed in the consent form (see Appendix E) that respondents read immediately before they were given the questionnaire. The intent of this question is to determine whether respondents see "forgiveness" (whatever that English word may mean to them) and Box 1 as being spontaneous events or long-term processes. A majority of respondents identify both forgiveness and Box 1 as processes (61.5%/58.5%). A total of 23.1% see forgiveness as being both a spontaneous act and a process, while only 8.5% indicate that Box 1 shares this dual nature. Only 11.5% see forgiveness as being spontaneous, but Box 1 is seen as being

spontaneous by 26.2% of respondents. This is yet another example of "forgiveness" and Box 1 not quite matching up.

Question 8 asks for responses to Enright's implication in his definition that one has the right to resent those who unjustly injure one. While 2.3% offer no response, and 1.5% reply "maybe", 16.9% disagree, and 79.2% agree with Enright's contention that resenting an unjust injury is justified.

Question 9 asks for responses to another of the implications in Enright's definition: that someone who unjustly injures one does not deserve one's compassion, generosity, and love. While 10.8% reply "maybe", and 6.2% offer no response, 26.9% agree with Enright's implication, i.e., the injurer does not deserve the victim's compassion, generosity, and love. The majority of the respondents, 56.2%, disagree with Enright's contention, suggesting that suffering an unjust injury does not absolve one from a responsibility to treat the injurer with compassion, generosity, and love.

The responses to Questions 8 and 9—suggesting that one has the right to resent unjust injury but must still show compassion, generosity, and love to the one resented—present an apparent contradiction. Question 8 is concerned with feelings, however, while Question 9 deals with conduct. Ho observes that in Chinese culture, "feelings are irrelevant; only proper conduct counts. In such a world, out of necessity affect and role behaviour would be dissociated" (1987, 242). There is no contradiction between displaying proper conduct (i.e., acts of compassion, generosity, and love) toward someone one resents, because those feelings of resentment are, according to Ho, "irrelevant". While acts of

compassion, generosity, and love may be signs of forgiveness, such acts performed by one full of resentment cannot be said to meet Enright's standard for forgiveness. Again, the Western view of forgiveness and the Chinese view of Box 1 do not correspond.

4.2 Summary and conclusions

When asked to provide a Mandarin term to match Enright's definition of forgiveness, respondents offered many possibilities. While it has been suggested by Enright and his colleagues that "*shu* [i.e., 恕—*shù*] . . . is the principle word whose modern translation is forgiveness" (Enright, Eastin, Golden, Sarinopoulis, & Freedman, 1992, 86), this particular Mandarin character does not appear even once among the 33 suggestions for Box 1. (It is offered twice in Question 2 as a synonym of "tolerance", and ranks ninth in Question 3 as being synonymous with forgiveness. Chao (1998) defines it as "forbearance", and Wei (2002, 1150) defines it this way: "① forbearance ② forgive; pardon; excuse".) Not only is *shù* not "the principle word whose modern translation is forgiveness", but according to this data it is unlikely that such a "principle word" even exists, unless a word like #23, suggested by 43.1% of this sample, qualifies as a "principle word". (In this case, #23 also ranks as the fourth most suggested term for "tolerance".)

Data from Questions 1, 2, and 3 suggest that translating "forgiveness" and "tolerance" into Mandarin invites many overlaps and contradictions: the top

four suggestions for “forgiveness” and the top four suggestions for “tolerance” hold two words in common. Of 16 suggested Mandarin terms, each of them is identified as 1) being synonymous with forgiveness; 2) being synonymous with tolerance; 3) being synonymous with both; and 4) being synonymous with neither; the word most identified as being synonymous with both is also most identified as being synonymous with neither; and the word most frequently identified in Question 3 as being synonymous with Box 1 appears in Question 1 as a suggestion for Box 1 only twice (and as a suggestion for Box 2 once). Obviously, the English definitions given in both Questions 1 and 2 do not clearly define any Mandarin terms. Just as there appears to be no “principle word” for “forgiveness”, there also appears to be little consensus regarding the translation of “tolerance”.

Of the Mandarin sayings listed in Question 4 that appear to be connected with the presence or absence of forgiveness, the eleven most frequently chosen sayings include only two (ranking second and fifth) that might correspond to Enright’s definition. The other nine certainly do not, and the remaining two suggest that Box 1 is a good virtue that you should practice when (and this includes the implication of “if”) you can. These two sayings are not specific enough to clearly identify with forgiveness. The second-ranking saying is actually about tolerance according to Wei (2002, 700) and the other saying could refer to tolerance as well. With their ancient history and virtually unparalleled literary tradition, Chinese seem to have very little to say about forgiveness as defined by Enright.

With regard to the MEFI items in particular, only four of the 22 items in Question 5 are identified as being connected to Box 1 by 50% or more of the respondents (with 55% being the highest figure). This compares to 11 items that are not identified by a majority of respondents as having a connection to either Box 1 or Box 2. If the vast majority of items are not connected to Box 1, it is very possible that, whatever it is measuring, the MEFI is not measuring Box 1 (i.e., Enright's definition of forgiveness).

A majority of respondents agree with Enright that Box 1 involves affective, behavioural, and cognitive factors (in that order: 66.2%, 61.5%, and 54.6%). Box 2 was rated similarly, and the subscales appear in the same order, although the range is not as wide: 55.4%, 52.3%, and 51.5%.

Respondents are asked to compare the spontaneous/procedural aspects of forgiveness and Box 1 in Question 7. While most respondents see both as processes (61.5% for forgiveness; 58.5% for Box 1), over a quarter of respondents identify Box 1 as spontaneous, compared to 11.5% who see forgiveness as spontaneous. There is also a major difference in the number of respondents who see forgiveness and Box 1 as being "spontaneous processes" (23.1% and 8.5%). It not clear how something can, in the words of Question 7, "happen quickly and suddenly" and also be "a longer process that begins at some time and ends at a later time". It is also not clear how or why forgiveness and Box 1 differ in their capacity to exhibit this dual nature.

In his definition, Enright implies that one has the right to resent those who unjustly injure one. It is here in Question 8 that the respondents exhibit their highest degree of agreement: 79.2% agree that yes, one does have that right.

In Question 9, the majority of respondents (56.2%) disagree with another of Enright's implications—that a person who unjustly injures one does not deserve one's compassion, generosity, and love. This apparent severing of connections between feelings and conduct (since one should apparently show acts of compassion, generosity, and love to those one resents) suggests that one's actions may have little bearing on one's feelings (and vice-versa). This calls into question the weighting of the subscales in the MEFI, since each subscale is weighted equally and contributes equally to the MEFI total score. Responses to Question 5 reveal that each MEFI item in the affect subscale is identified with Box 1 by no more than 36% of respondents. Perhaps the expression of Box 1 depends upon conduct more than it does upon feelings. In any case, the responses to Question 9 reveal that most respondents do not agree with a major implication of Enright's definition, and it is upon this definition that the EFI and MEFI are based.

Of course, this set of data was collected using a questionnaire that exhibits shortcomings. No statement was included to encourage students to respond to each item, and some may have misconstrued the section of the consent form that stated they "may choose not to answer some of the questions on the questionnaire". Also, it is possible (though highly unlikely) that native English speakers would also give a wide range of suggestions to fill in the

blanks in Questions 1 and 2. That such data is unavailable is a shortcoming of this study, although it is certainly counter-intuitive that results from native English speakers would demonstrate as wide a range of contradictory suggestions as is seen here. As mentioned above, in Question 3, a lack of response is explicitly defined as “no connection”. In Questions 4 and 5, no such clarification is given. While the intention of both questions was to determine if items were more closely connected to Box 1 or 2, they should not have been asked as “either/or” questions, with no options for indicating “both” or “neither”. The inclusion of sayings that discourage what seems to be forgiveness in Question 4 also produced puzzling results, and either they should not have been included or else the question should make it clearer that respondents should consider both positive and negative references to Boxes 1 and 2. Questions 3 through 5 could have included more items, but in the interests of both the researcher and the respondents did not. Another limitation is that this questionnaire can only be administered to a small segment of China’s population.

This study is, of necessity, limited to Chinese with substantial knowledge of English. Could it be adapted for use with Chinese respondents who are monolingual? The English portions of the questionnaire would have to be translated, and it could perhaps be altered by providing definitions of “forgiveness” and “tolerance” in Questions 1 and 2, but the present results provide very little direction as to what those translations should be. Chinese education students majoring in English obviously do not share Enright’s

conception of forgiveness—nor do they seem to share any consistent conception with one another. If these "Westernized" (to some extent) Chinese respond to Enright's definition with such a variety and diversity of often contradictory deviations, the MEFI (which is based upon the definition) will likely prompt similar responses. Responses to the MEFI from Chinese students even less familiar with the West will likely reveal even more inexplicable results.

When faced with a data set such as this, one is tempted to dismiss it as nonsense. How can one word, *X*, be, at the same time, a synonym of word *Y*, a synonym of word *Z*, a synonym of both, and a synonym of neither? How can one word, when compared to two other words, be singled out from a group as being both the most synonymous and the most antonymous word of the group? In a case such as this, the researcher should remember the words of paleoanthropologist-turned-novelist Mary Doria Russell: "Wisdom begins when you discover the difference between 'That doesn't make sense' and 'I don't understand'" (1999, 170). If the data seem to be inexplicable, accountability lies with the researcher, not the respondents—with the questions, not the answers.

Chapter Five

THE MANDARIN ENRIGHT FORGIVENESS INVENTORY IN CHINA

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that the results of this research are perplexing. The respondents are, after all, Chinese, "the most incomprehensible, unfathomable, inscrutable, contradictory and illogical people on earth" (according to early 20th-century American traveller Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore, cited in Scotland, 1993, 25). Nor should it come as a surprise that forgiveness is apparently not clearly understood in China,

> . . . the land of topsy-turvydom, where a man shakes his own hand when he meets you. . . wears white at a funeral, plays badminton with his feet, calls North-East East-North, rows a boat facing the wrong direction, mounts a horse from the wrong side, knits his socks from the toe upwards, [and] stacks his books in piles and not rows. (Scotland, 1993, 166)

Nor should it be surprising that the racist and ethnocentric attitudes reflected in comments like these, made at the beginning and end of the 20th century, affect people's thinking in the 21st. (Chinese writers make similar comments. No less a philosopher than Confucius himself believed that "fastening clothes on the wrong (or left) side, was natural to the barbarian tribes in general" (cited in Spence, 2001, 168), and there is some truth to Hong Kong-based Larry Feign's snide observation that "according to local opinion surveys, Chinese people believe that only Caucasians are capable of being racist" (2002). Gries offers the example of "the notion that Asians can understand Shakespeare, but that

only Asians—not Westerners—can appreciate the Tang poetry of Tu Fu"—2004, 154.) Within the context of intercultural encounters, examples of cultural diversity often provoke suspicion and condemnation rather than appreciation and celebration. My questionnaire is yet another intercultural encounter between a Western instrument and Chinese respondents. The contradictory, nonsensical results of this research are not due to some quirk of the Asian personality, but to the primary subject matter of the questionnaire: Enright's definition of forgiveness, a Western construct that does not seem to translate well into Chinese, neither linguistically, philosophically, practically, nor theoretically. This, of course, has great bearing upon the validity of the MEFI.

One of Pargament, McCullough, and Thoreson's "critical questions for research on forgiveness" is this: "To what extent do members of different cultural, religious, and ethnic groups define forgiveness in different ways?" (2000, 313). My research suggests that Chinese themselves define forgiveness in different ways—in a wide variety of often contradictory ways. In another article, McCullough, Pargament, and Thoreson predict serious consequences if forgiveness researchers continue to ignore the effects of religion, culture, and experience upon people's understandings of forgiveness: "Without addressing religious, cultural, and situational variations, scientific notions of forgiveness are likely to be disconnected from lived human experience" (2000, 10). Their words, "lived human experience", echo Edmund Carpenter's "life energy" in his more harshly stated charges against those he sometimes labels "misanthropologists":

> Clothing themselves in liberal platitudes and employing what they called "scientific methodologies," anthropologists translated other cultures into

> unreadable jargon and statistics, almost none of it translatable back into life energy. . . . *Every category came from the dominant culture*. The indigenous culture wasn't preserved and presented: it was swallowed. (1976, 188-191—italics added)

LeBaron, for example, found that Western writing about conflict generally

> . . . reflects many culturally-rooted biases: it tends to be action-oriented and assume autonomous individual actors. It tends to privilege intellect and treat emotions as something to be managed and contained. Collectivist notions of hierarchy, face-saving and lasting links to a place and community go largely unaddressed. Culture itself is often not dealt with or oversimplified. (2001, 10)

The MEFI is undeniably scientific in form—it is advertised by its distributor as "an objective tool for forgiveness research" (Mind Garden, Inc., 2004), and seems to meet the needs of North American psychology, "with its strong preference for quantification and universalism" (Greenfield, 1997, 1115). Its orientation, however, is clearly one of cultural deficiency, and this effort of the *International* Forgiveness Institute may contribute less to the globalization of forgiveness research than to its "gobblelization"—Fernandez's term for what results when one does not experience "the decentering of one's worldview, the reconfiguring of power relations, and the pluralizing of one's world" (1997, 104). In a multi-author examination of religious perspectives on forgiveness Hallisey, an expert on Buddhism, suggests that, taken together, compassion and forbearance "*may* approximate the notion of forgiveness" (Rye et al., 2000, 23—italics added). In their conclusion, Rye and Pargament summarize and overstate Hallisey's comments on Buddhism: "Forgiveness is subsumed by the concepts of forbearance and compassion" (2000, 37). Not only is the caution of McCullough, Pargament, and Thoreson left unheeded, but the hesitation and

doubt of their own expert is ignored, and Rye and Pargament's conclusion is that Buddhist forbearance and compassion and Christian forgiveness are the same. Such a conclusion is unwarranted.

Enright makes it clear that forgiveness is a Judeo-Christian construct: "The two ancient systems with perhaps the most well-developed ideas on interpersonal forgiveness per se are the Hebrew and Christian approaches" and "although interpersonal forgiveness is discussed in [Confucianism and Islam]. . . they do not contain as many expositions as Jewish and Christian writing, nor are the subtleties and nuances as evident" (Enright, Eastin, Golden, Sarinopoulis, & Freedman, 1992, 86; Enright, Gassin, & Wu, 1992, 100). Govier makes a more subtle and more nuanced distinction: "There is a stronger emphasis on forgiveness and a greater stress on unconditional forgiveness in Christianity than in Judaism. . . . It is within the Christian tradition that forgiveness is most emphasized" (2002, 101 and 158). Hannah Arendt considers forgiveness to be "one of the two most original ideas in *Western* civilization" (cited in Rowe, et al., 1989, 233—italics added). When the EFI is administered to respondents from traditions where forgiveness is less emphasized (i.e., any non-Christian tradition), EFI final scores will likely be lower. This is significant when the EFI is used in Asia, since "the basic Buddhist and Hindu cosmology, shared by about one-fifth of the world's population. . . has no formal place for human repentance and divine forgiveness" (Elder, 1998, 158). My research reveals that Chinese students in particular respond to Enright's definition of forgiveness in a wide variety of ways.

One of the results of the cultural deficiency approach (i.e., using one's own culture as the standard, and examining how other cultures are not as good as one's own) is that the other culture inevitably fails to measure up. No culture is as "Chinese" as Chinese culture, and no culture is as "Western" as Western culture. Another result of this focus on how other cultures fail to measure up to our standard is that it not only hinders an appreciation of areas in which cultures differ (and with this mindset, difference = deficiency), but also offers no motivation to try to understand and appreciate these differences. While Sax claims that "the recognition of difference *does not always or necessarily* involve an inferiorization of the Other" (1998, 294—italics added), the fact that he finds it necessary to point this out suggests that such recognition routinely does involve inferiorization.

This attitude was displayed by 17th-century Western artists' responses to Chinese art: "Many Westerners assumed that Chinese painters had no grasp of Western realistic painting techniques, for if they had, they would have used them" (McIntyre, 1996). Chinese artists had actually, by that time, been employing realistic painting techniques for centuries. What had not occurred to these early Western art critics was that Chinese artists did have a grasp of realistic techniques and had deliberately chosen not to employ them. Most Chinese painters did not paint in a realistic style, but this was not the result of ignorance or lack of ability, but the result of a conscious decision. They thought that "Realistic techniques were merely methods of creating an optical illusion.

They felt that Western painting missed the point: that the true reality of things lies behind the illusion of outward appearances" (McIntyre, 1996).

When studying "forgiveness per se" (i.e., Christian forgiveness) in other cultures, many Westerners may dismiss any discovered differences in the manner of those early art critics and assume that Chinese have no grasp of Christian forgiveness, for if they had, they would employ it. This analogy cannot be carried too far, of course, because there is no evidence at all to suggest that Christianity in general and Christian forgiveness in particular have ever been tried and found wanting in the same way that realistic painting techniques were, but collectivist Chinese may in some ways feel that Western forgiveness, like Western realistic art theory, misses the point.

"Missing the point" is one of the dangers associated with applying an existing instrument in another culture. In many ways, existing instruments exported to other cultures function as what Eco terms "background books":

> We (in the sense of human beings) travel and explore the world, carrying with us some "background books". These need not accompany us physically; the point is that we travel with preconceived notions of the world, derived from our cultural tradition. In a very curious sense, we travel knowing in advance what we are on the verge of discovering, because past reading has told us what we are supposed to discover. In other words, the influence of these background books is such that, irrespective of what travelers discover and see, they will interpret and explain everything in terms of these books. (1998, 71)

Brislin warns that these existing instruments may miss culture-specific aspects of the phenomenon in question, and that researchers may impose conclusions based upon their own cultural concepts that may be foreign or to some extent incorrect when used in another culture. He also points out that an existing

instrument, of necessity, provides operational definitions of certain concepts: "There is no guarantee that those concepts, or those same operational definitions, exist in other cultures" (1986, 138-139). Those who impose existing instruments upon those of other cultures are often simultaneously "imposing an etic" (i.e., believing "that one's own etic-emic combination is true for all cultures. . . . [and] believing that one's cultural emics are part of the culturally common etic"—Brislin, 2000, 85). Examining other cultures from the perspective of an existing instrument guarantees that researchers will either find or fail to find what they are looking for, but it also guarantees that they will almost certainly never discover something they are not looking for. Margaret Mead makes the general claim that

> One of the principle contributions of anthropology should be to distil from our available treasure house of small and unusual social models—many of them outside the single narrow and steadily converging mainstream of "civilization"—new combinations and new forms that will release us from our historically [and culturally] limited imaginations. (1967, 225)

More specifically, "different perspectives on forgiveness can help social scientists to appreciate the richness and diversity of conceptualizations that exist rather than mistakenly characterizing forgiveness as a monolithic construct" (Rye et al., 2000, 18). Intercultural researchers must make a conscious effort to disprove the Chinese proverb, "Two-thirds of what a person sees exists behind that person's eyes" (Sodowsky and Johnson, 1994). In the case of the MEFI, where only 18% of the selected MEFI items were identified by a (slim) majority of respondents as actually being indicative of forgiveness,

much of what the MEFI (supposedly) reveals about forgiveness in China must, of necessity, exist behind the Western researcher's eyes.

Of course, what appears in front of a person's eyes is also significant, and in the area of forgiveness in literature, Chinese and Western literature vary significantly. Professor (and poet) Nadya Aisenberg has written of the social implications of forgiveness in the literature of Aeschylus, George Eliot, William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Joseph Conrad, and Henry James (Poetry Porch, 2004), and the list could be greatly expanded beyond these luminaries. James Fenimore Cooper, for instance, offers this analysis regarding cultural variations of forgiveness in Hawkeye's comments to an Indian dying from a wound inflicted by Hawkeye: "You were treacherous, according to your natur', and I was a little oversightful, as I'm apt to be in trusting others" (1963, 116). As King summarizes Hawkeye's philosophy as presented throughout this passage, "Revenge is an Indian gift and forgiveness is a White gift" (2003, 104). Western viewers often receive lessons in forgiveness while watching television programs and films. For example, *Buffy, the vampire slayer* and *Angels in America* present these forgiveness insights: "To forgive is an act of compassion, Buffy. It's not done because people deserve it. It's done because they need it", and, "It isn't easy. It doesn't count if it's easy. It's the hardest thing. Forgiveness. Maybe that's where love and justice finally meet" (Whedon, 1997; Kushner, 2003). Brandauer's analysis, in contrast, finds that "an emphasis on forgiveness is rare in Chinese literature. The normal emphasis is, instead, on. . . reciprocity. And the negative aspect of reciprocity is, of course, revenge" (1993, 421).

While this emphasis on revenge may seem out of place in a culture holding tolerance as one of its highest virtues, tolerance, regrettably, may not be amenable to riveting literature. The Western tradition, admittedly, certainly lacks no shortage of revenge tales, but stories of forgiveness are far from rare. In addition to listening and speaking courses taught by Western teachers, the respondents to my questionnaire have completed year-long courses in both British and American literature, and have watched Western films, both in formal classroom settings and extracurricularly. It is highly likely that they have come across examples of Western forgiveness in these classes. Were my questionnaire to be administered to non-English major students (who have not had most of these experiences), their responses would almost certainly be even more perplexing.

Enright and Fitzgibbons address the issue of cultural differences in the development of forgiveness, but they do so in a frustratingly ambiguous manner: "We doubt the progression is universal if we eventually find differences across cultures regarding people's understanding of forgiveness" (2000, 54). While it is impossible to determine their precise meaning, the "if" seems to suggest that their chosen approach is to take universality for granted until some future point at which they may "eventually" uncover some cultural differences. They anticipate that "if certain cultures have a generally similar understanding of forgiveness as in the United States (where the initial validation studies occurred), then we would expect general parallelism in the developmental progression across the cultures" (2000, 54). No mention is made of those

cultures which do not have a generally similar understanding, but they would probably not expect general parallelism, and, as a result, they would probably not expect comparable EFI total scores. They do, in fact, acknowledge that "the expression of forgiveness will vary by culture and religion. . . . There is no one specific way to express forgiveness to another, although certain cultures have rituals that are specific and idiosyncratic" (2000, 35). Again, an exception is made for "certain cultures", and again, the question arises: what will the EFI measure in those cultures? They strongly understate the potential for cultural differences when they suggest that "the Confucian idea of community harmony and tolerance may produce different responses than in the United States, where issues of justice and righting individual wrongs may be stronger" (2000, 281). In fact, emphases on harmony and tolerance notwithstanding, "the Confucian tradition had little warrant for forgiving serious injury out of mercy, and the Communist Party continued this tradition" (Madsen, 1990, 190), and the implication that Chinese may have a relatively weaker sense of justice is addressed (indirectly) by the response of Ohbuchi et al. to Western researchers' charges that there is no sense of fairness in Japanese culture:

> Justice is a complex or multidimensional concept, but in individualistic cultures, it tends to be equated to fairness. . . . In Japan, however, fairness in an exchange of resources may not be as important as. . . other social values, such as protection of social organizations or maintenance of interpersonal relationships. (1999, 53)

In their discussion of the EFI in particular, Enright and Fitzgibbons suggest that

> Forgiveness possesses certain features common to a wide variety of cultures. . . . at least in the cultures chosen. We doubt that forgiveness is a convention, subject to such deep and divergent cultural

> interpretations, as to render the concept unrecognizable when taken out of one cultural context and placed in another. (2000, 312)

Again, qualifications appear which effectively nullify any claim to universality, and to suggest that a concept is not rendered absolutely unrecognizable when placed in another culture is far from a claim of universality. The claim itself is questionable, since most Westerners, for example, would fail to recognize the African forgiveness rituals described in Chapter Three as having any connection to forgiveness.

Forgiveness varies not only across cultures, but also within cultures. McCullough and Worthington raised the question (mentioned at the end of Chapter Two) of distinguishing between the content and the consequences of forgiveness, a question directed at Enright and his definition of forgiveness. (McCullough and Worthington have differed with Enright before, with Enright claiming that their conceptualization of forgiveness is "incomplete"—Enright, 1999, 218.) They also question the validity of the one-sided, therapeutic forgiveness (i.e., forgiveness that is beneficial to the victim alone—McKnight, 2004, 36) defined by Enright:

> Forgiveness does not occur exclusively in the context of a single soul: forgiveness involves two or more souls. While forgiveness may produce individual healing, forgiveness is designed to heal souls *and* community. . . . [We should] remove forgiveness from the realm of individual health and place it in the service of human relationships, showing that we are connected to one another, for better or for worse. (McCullough, Sandage, & Worthington, 1995, 362)

Ranley concurs: "Forgiveness is a psychological construct as well as a social one. . . . It is important to be aware of both elements, though . . . some writers

focus more on one element than the other" (2004, 16). Augsburger accounts for these differing emphases in cultural terms:

> In a Western, individualist culture, unilateral "forgiveness" becomes the norm. . . . In more collective cultures. . . the understanding of forgiveness is that it is not a private act of intrapsychic release but instead a truly social transaction of interpersonal reconciliation. (1996, 14)

With regard to the EFI in particular, Augsburger claims, "The EFI actually measures the ability to restore an attitude of acceptance, not the transaction of forgiveness that is 'the mutual recognition that repentance is genuine and right relationships are restored'" (personal communication via e-mail, October 29, 2002). In his view, not only does the EFI fall short, but so too does Enright's definition: it is "minimal" (personal communication via e-mail, January 14, 2003). Ho's comments on "face" seem to apply to forgiveness as well: "The Western mentality, deeply ingrained with the values of individualism, is not one which is favourably disposed to the idea of face. For face is never a purely individual thing" (1976, 882). As mentioned above, examples of forgiveness in the West are often notable because they are the exception, rather than the rule, and only self-forgiveness is "a purely individual thing". While the EFI intends to gauge one person's response to another, as Elder notes, "where collectivities are involved, the issue of forgiveness becomes much more complicated than in the one-to-one model of an injured person and a wrongdoer" (1998, 161). It is not only forgiveness "experts" who recognize the relational nature of forgiveness. In his poem, *The star-splitter*, Robert Frost writes, "If one by one we counted people out/ For the least sin, it wouldn't take us long/ To get so we had no one

left to live with./ For to be social is to be forgiving" (1979, 177). To be social is to be forgiving—just as "being social" is culturally determined, so too is forgiving.

Attitudes regarding individualism are also culturally determined, and as noted in 3.2.2, Chinese use the term in the derogatory sense of being inhuman and selfish. In a culture where tolerance is the highest virtue, the doctrine of individualism is a frightening one. If one is only concerned for oneself, there is little reason to be tolerant of others and every reason to hope that one will be forgiven by others when necessary. One American teacher in China was told by his student that when the student and his roommate talk late into the night while their four roommates are sleeping (or trying to sleep), they make no effort to lower their voices, since the implication would be that their roommates may not be able to tolerate their talking (personal communication in conversation, M. Wiggs, 2003). Apparently the late-night talkers felt their roommates would lose more sleep at the thought of being considered intolerant than they would by the loud gossip. (This notion is somewhat similar to the Chinese tradition of *not* saying "谢谢" (*xiè xie*—"thank you") to family members or close friends for small or large courtesies—to do so would be to denigrate the close relationship, since one thanks only those within a relationship so distant that one would not expect such courtesy. Saying "thanks" indicates distance, not closeness, between the one who offers it and the one who receives it.)

These commonplace practices in China may seem paradoxical to Westerners who are generally more courteous to those close to them than to those in more distant relationships. One should not show courtesy to one's

close friends because it might imply that they are intolerant? One should not thank those who are close to one because it would indicate a lack of closeness? Perhaps another seeming paradox exists in China: one should not offer forgiveness because it would indicate one's lack of tolerance. As Augsburger notes, "Tolerating and forgiving are different processes. We tolerate what another has done when we overlook or ignore. We forgive what we cannot tolerate, will not overlook or ignore" (1996, 165). If we forgive what we cannot tolerate in a culture where tolerance is a virtue, then forgiveness displays a lack of virtue, and the question arises: which is the more highly valued virtue, tolerance or forgiveness? Is the one who forgives judged positively for having forgiven, or judged negatively for not being tolerant? According to Augsburger's distinction, saying "I forgive you" is equivalent to admitting, "I cannot tolerate what you have done". For example, were the sleepy roommates mentioned above to forgive their chatty roommates for being so noisy, would the beneficiaries of the forgiveness respond with gratitude or anger? In question 9 of the questionnaire, the majority or respondents disagreed with Enright's contention that, in this particular case, the late-night gossipers would not deserve their roommates' compassion, generosity, and love. Could it be that the tired roommates would not forgive their noisy roommates precisely because they still feel obliged to treat them with compassion, generosity, and love, and that to offer forgiveness would suggest that the noisy pair's actions were intolerable? In a culture where one does not thank those close to one, and where one may make no effort to minimize an irritation for fear that others will

interpret that as an implicit criticism, offering forgiveness may be interpreted not as the action of a virtuous person but rather as the action of an intolerant one.

While tolerance is a virtue in China, in the West, tolerance has limits, as is pointed out by the British orator and statesman, Edmund Burke: “There is a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue” (1769, 273). For some Christians, it is not a virtue, but a sin. According to theologian (and mystery writer) Dorothy L. Sayers,

> In the world it is called tolerance, but in hell it is called despair. . . the sin that believes in nothing, interferes with nothing, enjoys nothing, hates nothing, finds purpose in nothing, lives for nothing, and remains alive because there is nothing for which it will die. (cited in Callaway, 2003, 9)

It is possible that Chinese “tolerance” (a virtue) and Western “tolerance” (a sin) are two different things. The seven “nothings” of Sayers’ definition imply that there is, indeed, “something” to believe in, interfere with, enjoy, hate, find purpose in, live for, and die for. Chinese, of course, along with those of other cultures, also have things to believe in, interfere with, enjoy, hate, find purpose in, live for, and die for, but these things and Sayers’ things are not the same, and are dismissed by Sayers as “nothing”. A more “tolerant” approach is found in the words of contemporary theologian Brian McLaren: “Tolerance” is “a dirty word for many Christians. . . . But it is a beautiful word. . . if you are trying to live in community with others” (2004, 211).

While it is not obvious how many of those involved in forgiveness research are Christians, many forgiveness scholars have published articles in explicitly Christian publications (e.g., Enright, 1990; Gassin, 2001; McCullough, Sandage, & Worthington, 1995; Witvliet, 2001), and “we should not forget that

forgiveness is theological" (McKnight, 2004, 36). When adherents are encouraged to pray, "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (*Holy Bible,* Matthew 6: 12), they are given both a rationale and an encouragement to forgive. As Rye et al. note, "In theistic religions, forgiveness becomes a means of imitating God, carrying out God's plan, or enhancing one's relationship with the divine" (2000, 17). A characteristic of divinity, forgiveness is seen as a necessity for humanity. Meek and McMinn point out, "A Christian understanding of forgiveness begins with a recognition of the depravity inherent in humanity. . . . Christians view sin as an inseparable part of the current human condition" (1997, 52). Where there is sin, there must, of necessity, be forgiveness.

Chinese, in contrast, "generally believe that man is basically good and perfectible. . . . They therefore feel little need to be saved from [or forgiven for, perhaps?] anything" (Anonymous, 2001, 51-52). Indeed, world religions with no concept of an offended, holy God (including some Native American religions, along with Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism) make little mention of forgiveness. As Enright points out, "when the emphasis is on being one with the whole, individual offense is often interpreted as caused by ignorance not sin. If everyone has the essential nature of a supreme being, personal forgiveness becomes unnecessary" (Enright & the Human Development Study Group, 1991, 126). Indeed, according to Buddhist teaching, "the thought that one person can 'forgive' another reflects ignorance" (Elder, 1998, 159). While only a small percentage of Chinese would actually consider themselves Buddhists, Buddhist

thought has had, and continues to have, a profound effect upon Chinese culture. As a nontheistic religion, Buddhism has no "theology" per se, and it "doesn't have a word for forgiveness per se" (Fernandez, 2001). With its emphasis on the interconnectedness of all things, "the very notion of an 'enemy' needing to be forgiven is foreign to Buddhism" (Higgins, 2001, 9). Since time is suspended in Buddhism (as it is in some forms of Taoism), "the question of forgiveness isn't asked, since there is no judgement" (Kristeva, 2002, 285). While acknowledging that a spirit of forgiveness is not incompatible with Buddhist teachings, Govier concludes that "strictly speaking, human punishment, and reward, and forgiveness, would seem to have no place in this [Buddhist] picture of the world" (2002, 162). One questionnaire respondent gives a very Buddhist response to question 9, which asks if a person who hurts one deserves one's compassion, generosity, and love:

> A purposeful offense from others usually indicates a misunderstanding between the offender and the offended, and a lack of communication between them which I believe can only be dealt with through more efficient communication, which requires the establishment of a sound interpersonal relationship.

Something akin to forgiveness would be necessary for "the establishment of a sound interpersonal relationship", but it is far from certain that this necessary step is Christian forgiveness.

The questionnaire results raise many questions, but according to the respondents, the answer to the question, "Does the MEFI measure forgiveness?", is no, it measures neither forgiveness as defined by Enright in English, nor forgiveness as translated by Enright into Mandarin. The results

offer little direction as to what it does measure, although tolerance seems to be involved. A study that examined both forgiveness and tolerance in the West and China would be illuminating. As mentioned above, it would also be helpful to ask Western respondents questions one and two of the questionnaire, to see how widely the resulting answers vary. Presumably the majority of respondents would answer “forgiveness” and “tolerance”, but there might be other suggestions as well. The questionnaire needs improvements and additions, as noted in 4.2. This improved questionnaire could perhaps be replicated in other cultures that have been or will be able to utilize the EFI in their own language. According to the director of the International Forgiveness Institute, the firm that has distributed the EFI since 2004, Mind Garden, Inc., is currently preparing to distribute versions in Korean, German, Dutch, and Norwegian, along with the Mandarin version (M. T. Mead, personal communication via e-mail, October 14, 2004). Parts 3 and 4 of this questionnaire could not simply be translated into the target language—local synonyms and sayings that seem connected to forgiveness would have to be collected in the appropriate language. Presumably, such a study carried out in one of the European countries would reveal a more consistent view of forgiveness due to those countries’ Christian influences. A Korean study would perhaps reveal a less consistent and more perplexing view, similar to the results of this study. In the case of the EFI (and other inventories which deal with both internal and external factors), consideration should also be given to the effects of administering the inventory in cultures where thinking/feeling one way and acting in another is not

condemned as hypocrisy but recognized as a social necessity. Certainly, preliminary research of some kind should be carried out before the EFI is administered in these other cultures. This would be in the best interests of intercultural research in general and forgiveness research in particular. For intercultural research to be valid, "it is necessary to research the meaning or meanings that participants in the new culture attach to the instrument and to its procedure. . . when a given instrument is used beyond the culture in which it was developed" (Greenfield, 1997, 1122). As Enright and the Human Development Study Group point out, forgiveness "is idiosyncratic for each of us" (1991, 148). If forgiveness varies from individual to individual, certainly it will vary from culture to culture. By definition, intercultural research entails intercultural communication. Scollon and Scollon observe that effective intercultural communication "requires study of cultural and discourse differences on the one hand, but also requires a recognition of one's own limitations" (1995, 15).

Those whose view of forgiveness is informed by Christian theology may not be aware that theology also informs intercultural research. Some Christians certainly seem less willing to accept biblical instruction in this latter area. While the Bible offers many insights into forgiveness, it also indicates that all people (i.e., people in every culture) are formed in God's image. Christian groups that list "multiculturalism" along with "pressure to drink, have premarital sex, and experiment with drugs" as dangers faced by college students (Watters, 1998, 4) seem content to worship a monocultural god. Although this does not deter them

from proselytizing those of other cultures to accept “their” god, Western culture sets the standard for knowledge of the divine no more than it sets the standard for forgiveness. As Taiwanese theologian C. S. Song observes, “we have tailored God to suit our limited imagination and created an image of God that strongly reflects our cultural biases” (1996, 34). The EFI (and the MEFI) reflect a tailored, culturally-biased image of forgiveness.

Responses to the MEFI, then, are very similar to the ancient letter from Ying; the resulting MEFI total scores are explanations from Yan. While the archetypal letter promoted “holding the candle high” and the resulting misunderstanding led to prosperity, MEFI responses will provide little illumination, and MEFI total scores will not lead to a clearer understanding of “forgiveness” in China.

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Appendix A: The questionnaire

1. What **Mandarin Chinese** word (in 汉字) would best fill in the box in the following definition? Write your answer in Box 1:

   Box 1

   [ ] is a willingness to abandon one's right to resentment, negative judgement, and indifferent behaviour toward one who unjustly injured us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her.

2. What **Mandarin Chinese** word (in 汉字) would best fill in the box in the following definition? Write your answer in Box 2:

   Box 2

   [ ] is a willingness to allow behavior of which one does not approve, even though one has the authority to stop the behavior.

3. Write your answer to question 1 in Box 1 at the top of the next page.

   Write your answer to question 2 in Box 2 at the top of the next page.

   Consider the following words, A to P, and for each word do the following:

   - place a "✓" on the line underneath Box 1 if the meaning is the same as the word you wrote in Box 1
   - **or** place a "✓" on the line underneath Box 2 if the meaning is the same as the word you wrote in Box 2.
   - **or** place a "✓" on the line in the middle if the meaning is somewhere in between.
   - If the word has no connection to either Box 1 or Box 2, leave the line blank.

	Box 1		Box 2
A 耐性	_____	_____	_____
B 饶	_____	_____	_____
C 接 受	_____	_____	_____
D 见谅	_____	_____	_____
E 忍受	_____	_____	_____
F 恕罪	_____	_____	_____
G 原谅	_____	_____	_____
H 谅	_____	_____	_____
I 宽恕	_____	_____	_____
J 恕	_____	_____	_____
K 宽容	_____	_____	_____
L 容忍	_____	_____	_____
M 容纳	_____	_____	_____
N 饶恕	_____	_____	_____
O 包容	_____	_____	_____
P 大度	_____	_____	_____

4. Again, write your answer to question 1 in Box 1, and your answer to question 2 in Box 2. For each of the following sayings, indicate if the saying is **more closely connected** to the word in Box 1 or Box 2 by placing a "✓" on the appropriate line. The saying may refer to either the presence or the absence of the ideas in Boxes 1 and 2. If there is no connection to either Box 1 or 2, leave the line blank.

	Box 1	Box 2
A 海纳百川有容乃大	_____	_____
B 宰相肚里能撑船	_____	_____
C 大人有大量	_____	_____
D 化干戈为玉帛	_____	_____
E 化敌为友	_____	_____

F 夫妻没有隔夜仇 _____ _____
G 虚怀若谷 _____ _____
H 两败俱伤 _____ _____
I 怨恨在心快乐无缘 _____ _____
J 以德报怨不要以牙还牙 _____ _____
K 忍不能忍之而忍 _____ _____
L 宽容是一种美德 _____ _____
M 孰可忍孰不可忍 _____ _____
N 得饶人处且饶人 _____ _____
O 和气生财 _____ _____
P 饶人不是痴汉痴汉不饶人 _____ _____
Q 不计前嫌 _____ _____
R 冤家宜解不宜结 _____ _____
S 对敌人的仁慈就是对自己的残忍 _____ _____
T 此仇不报非君子 _____ _____
U 君子报仇十年不晚 _____ _____
V 原谅别人等于默许他下次
犯同样的错误 _____ _____
W 唾面自干 _____ _____
X 忍是心头一把刀忍字头上一把刀 _____ _____
Y 是可忍孰不可忍 _____ _____
Z 比陆地大的是海洋
比海洋大的是天空
比天空更大的则是人的胸怀 _____ _____

5. If you say the following statements about someone who has hurt you unjustly, are you showing what is described in Box 1 or Box 2 from above? Place a "✓" on the appropriate line. If there is no connection to either Box 1 or 2, leave the line blank.

	Box 1	**Box 2**
A 我对他/她的感觉是温暖的。	_____	_____

B 我对他/她的感觉是好心的。 _____ _____

C 我对他/她的感觉是正向的。 _____ _____

D 我对他/她的感觉是温柔的。 _____ _____

E 我对他/她的感觉是在乎。 _____ _____

F 我对他/她的感觉是热情。 _____ _____

G 对这个人，我现在会或将来会表示尊重。 _____ _____

H 对这个人，我现在会或将来会当他有困难时，帮助他。 _____ _____

I 对这个人，我现在会或将来会体谅他。 _____ _____

J 对这个人，我现在会或将来会当他有困难时，刻意帮他一个大忙。 _____ _____

K 对这个人，我现在会或将来会当他有困难时，看他可怜，帮他个忙。 _____ _____

L 对这个人，我现在会或将来会和他建立良好关系。 _____ _____

M 对这个人，我现在会或将来会当他有困难时，只帮他举手之劳的小忙。 _____ _____

N 对这个人，我现在会或将来会借钱给他，资助他。 _____ _____

O 对这个人，我现在会或将来会参加他的聚会或活动。 _____ _____

P 我认为他/她是优质的。 _____ _____

Q 我认为他/她是值得尊敬的。 _____ _____

R 我认为他/她是一个好人。 _____ _____

S 对于这个人，我祝他幸福。 _____ _____

T 对于这个人，我认为他是一个不错的人。 _____ _____

U 对于这个人，我希望他成功。 _____ _____

V 对于这个人，我希望他找到幸福。 _____ _____

6. Do the words you wrote in boxes 1 and 2 involve how you **feel** about the person who hurt you, and what you **think** about that person, and how you **act** towards that person, or do they involve only a few, or none of those things? Underline "does" or "does not" to show your answer.

Box 1

does/does not involve how I **feel** about the person who hurt me.

does/does not involve what I **think** about the person who hurt me.

does/does not involve how I **act** towards the person who hurt me.

Box 2

does/does not involve how I **feel** about the person who hurt me.

does/does not involve what I **think** about the person who hurt me.

does/does not involve how I **act** towards the person who hurt me.

Please answer the following questions in English.

7. A. The definition in question 1 has been suggested as a definition for "forgiveness". In your opinion, when you "forgive" someone for something they have done wrong, does that "forgiveness" happen quickly and suddenly, or is it a longer process that begins at some time and ends at a later time?

   B. Does what you wrote in Box 1 happen quickly and suddenly, or is it a longer process?

8. The definition in question 1 suggests that you have the right to resent someone who unjustly injures you. Do you believe you have that right? Why or why not?

9. The definition in question 1 suggests that someone who unjustly injures you on purpose does not deserve your compassion, generosity, and love. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Appendix B: The questionnaire with English translation

(Please note: This bilingual version of the questionnaire is for reference only and only includes questions requiring translation. The use of the English word "forgive" is unavoidable here, even though its use may not be appropriate.)

1. What **Mandarin Chinese** word (in 汉字—*Chinese characters*) would best fill in the blank line in the following definition? Write your answer in Box 1:

Box 1

[ ] is a willingness to abandon one's right to resentment, negative judgement, and indifferent behaviour toward one who unjustly injured us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her.

2. What **Mandarin Chinese** word (in 汉字—*Chinese characters*) would best fill in the blank line in the following definition? Write your answer in Box 2:

Box 2

[ ] is a willingness to allow behavior of which one does not approve, even though one has the authority to stop the behavior.

3. Write your answer to question 1 in Box 1 below. Write your answer to question 2 in Box 2 below. Consider the following words, A to O, and for each word do the following:

- place a "✓" on the line underneath Box 1 if the meaning is the same as the word you wrote in Box 1
- **or** place a "✓" on the line underneath Box 2 if the meaning is the same as the word you wrote in Box 2.
- Place a "✓" on the line in the middle if the meaning is somewhere in between.
- If the word has no connection to either Box 1 or Box 2, leave the line blank.

Box 1	Box 2

(The pinyin version of each term is given here, as well as the definition according to Wei, 2002 or Wu, 1995—in parentheses.)

A 耐性 _____ _____ _____
Nàixìng *patience; endurance*

B 饶 _____ _____ _____
Ráo *forgive*

C 接受 _____ _____ _____
Jiēshòu *accept*

D 见谅 _____ _____ _____
Jiànliàng *excuse me; forgive me*

E 忍受 _____ _____ _____
Rěnshòu *endure*

F 恕罪 _____ _____ _____
Shùzùi *pardon an offence; forgive a sin*

G 原谅 _____ _____ _____
Yuánliàng *excuse; forgive; pardon*

H 谅 _____ _____ _____
Liàng *forgive*

I 宽恕 _____ _____ _____
Kuānshù *forgive*

J 恕 _____ _____ _____
Shù *① forbearance ② forgive; pardon; excuse*

K 宽容 _____ _____ _____
Kuānróng *tolerant*

L 容忍 _____ _____ _____
Róngrěn *tolerate*

M 容纳 _____ _____ _____
Róngnà *tolerate*

N 饶恕 _____ _____ _____
Ráoshù *forgive; pardon*

O 包容 _____ _____ _____
Bāoróng *pardon; forgive (tolerant)*

P 大度 _____ _____ _____
Dàdù *magnanimous*

4. Again, write your answer to question 1 in Box 1, and your answer to question 2 in Box 2. For each of the following sayings, indicate if the saying is more closely connected to the word in Box 1 or Box 2 by placing a "✓" on the appropriate line. The saying may refer to either the presence or the absence of the ideas in boxes 1 and 2.

	Box 1	**Box 2**
	☐	☐
A 海纳百川有容乃大	_____	_____
The sea can accommodate one hundred rivers; its volume is huge.		
B 宰相肚里能撑船	_____	_____
A chancellor's heart is large enough to pole a boat in.		
C 大人有大量	_____	_____
A great man has great capacity.		
D 化干戈为玉帛	_____	_____
Convert weapons of warfare into gifts of jade and silk.		

E 化敌为友 _____ _____

Convert an enemy into a friend.

F 夫妻没有隔夜仇 _____ _____

A couple doesn't leave yesterday's anger until the next morning.

G 虚怀若谷 _____ _____

If you're tolerant, you can bear the most unbearable things.

H 两败俱伤 _____ _____

Getting revenge hurts you and your enemy.

I 怨恨在心快乐无缘 _____ _____

If you have anger in your heart, you will not be happy.

J 以德报怨不要以牙还牙 _____ _____

Do good for evil, not a bite for a bite.

K 忍不能忍之而忍 _____ _____

You must bear the most unbearable thing.

L 宽容是一种美德 _____ _____

Forgiveness is a good virtue.

M 孰可忍孰不可忍 _____ _____

Some things can be forgiven, some cannot.

N 得饶人处且饶人 _____ _____

When you can forgive a person, you should.

O 和气生财 _____ _____

Forgiveness brings wealth.

P 饶人不是痴汉痴汉不饶人 _____ _____

Forgiving a person isn't foolish; it's foolish not to forgive a person.

Q 不计前嫌 _____ _____

Never remember the wrongdoings of others.

R 冤家宜解不宜结 _____ _____

Treat your enemy with understanding, not provocation.

S 对敌人的仁慈就是对自己的残忍 _____ _____

Showing sympathy to the enemy is being cruel to yourself.

T 此仇不报非君子 _____ _____

You're a coward if you don't take revenge.

U 君子报仇十年不晚 _____ _____

A gentleman takes revenge—ten years is not too late.

V 原谅别人等于默许他下次
犯同样的错误 _____ _____

Forgiving others gives them the chance to make the same mistake again.

W 唾面自干 _____ _____

Let the spit dry on your face. (A scholar's reply to a student's query about what action the student should take if someone were to spit in the student's face. The scholar felt that even wiping the spittle away would be a provocation.)

X 忍是心头一把刀忍字头上一把刀 _____ _____

The character "rěn" ("tolerate") has a "dāo" ("knife") over one's "xīn" ("heart").

Y 是可忍孰不可忍 _____ _____

If one's patience is exhausted, there is no need to forgive.

Z 比陆地大的是海洋
比海洋大的是天空
比天空更大的则是人的胸怀 _____ _____

The sea is bigger than the land;
The sky is bigger than the sea;
Man's heart is bigger than the sky.

5. If you say the following statements about someone who has hurt you unjustly, are you showing what is described in Box 1 or Box 2 from above? Place a "✓" on the appropriate line.

	Box 1	**Box 2**
	☐	☐

[The MEFI items are followed by the corresponding EFI items. The bracketed initials following each item identify the item's number in the EFI and the subscale of the item (A=affect, B=behavior, C=cognition). All items are positive (P).]

Examples of Affect Items

A 我对他/她的感觉是温暖的。 _____ _____
I feel warm toward him/her. (01/PA)

B 我对他/她的感觉是好心的。 _____ _____
I feel kindness toward him/her. (03/PA)

C 我对他/她的感觉是正向的。 _____ _____
I feel positive toward him/her. (06/PA)

D 我对他/她的感觉是温柔的。 _____ _____
I feel tender toward him/her. (07/PA)

E 我对他/她的感觉是在乎。 _____ _____
I feel caring toward him/her. (15/PA)

F 我对他/她的感觉是热情。 _____ _____
I feel affection toward him/her. (18/PA)

Examples of Behavior Items

G 对这个人，我现在会或将来会表示尊重。 _____ _____
c show friendship. (21/PB)

H 对这个人，我现在会或将来会当他有困难时，帮助他。 _____ _____
Regarding the person, I do or would help. (25/PB)

I 对这个人，我现在会或将来会
体谅他。 _____ _____

Regarding the person, I do or would be considerate. (28/PB)

J 对这个人，我现在会或将来会
当他有困难时，刻意帮他
一个大忙。 _____ _____

Regarding the person, I do or would reach out to him/her. (30/PB)

K 对这个人，我现在会或将来会
当他有困难时，看他可怜，
帮他个忙。 _____ _____

Regarding the person, I do or would lend him/her a hand. (32/PB)

L 对这个人，我现在会或将来会
和他建立良好关系。 _____ _____

Regarding the person, I do or would establish good relationships with him/her. (35/PB)

M 对这个人，我现在会或将来会
当他有困难时，只帮他举手
之劳的小忙。 _____ _____

Regarding the person, I do or would do a favour. (37/PB)

N 对这个人，我现在会或将来会
借钱给他，资助他。 _____ _____

Regarding the person, I do or would aid him/her when in trouble. (38/PB)

O 对这个人，我现在会或将来会
参加他的聚会或活动。 _____ _____

Regarding the person, I do or would attend his/her party. (40/PB)

Examples of Cognitive Items

P 我认为他/她是优质的。 _____ _____

I think he or she is of good quality. (44/PC)

Q 我认为他/她是值得尊敬的。 _____ _____

I think he or she is worthy of respect. (45/PC)

R 我认为他/她是一个好人。 _____ _____

I think he or she is a good person. (50/PC)

S 对于这个人，我祝他幸福。 _____ _____

My attitude towards this person is that I wish him/her well. (54/PC)

T 对于这个人，我认为他是一个
不错的人。 _____ _____

My attitude towards this person is that I think favourably of him/her. (56/PC)

U 对于这个人，我希望他成功。 _____ _____

My attitude towards this person is that I hope he/she succeeds. (59/PC)

V 对于这个人，我希望他找到幸福。_____ _____

My attitude towards this person is that I hope he/she finds happiness. (60/PC)

Appendix C: Responses to questions one and two in Pinyin and Mandarin

Note: Reponses are listed first in alphabetical and then in tone order (i.e., 1st tone: ā; 2nd tone: á; 3rd tone: ǎ; and 4th tone: à) according to the first character of each word, so *rén cí*, (2nd tone) for example, precedes *rěn* (3rd tone).

1 *Ài rén*	爱人	27 *Liàng jiě*	谅解
2 *Bāo róng*	包容	28 *Méi guān xì*	没关系
3 *Bó dà*	博大	29 *Mín zhǔ qíng huái*	民主情怀
4 *Bù jì qián xián*	不计前嫌	30 *Mò xǔ*	默许
5 *Bù kě lǐ yǔ*	不可理喻	31 *Nì lái shùn shòu*	逆来顺受
6 *Dá liàng*	达量	32 *Qiān jiù*	迁就
7 *Dà dù*	大度	33 *Qǐng biàn*	请便
8 *Dù*	度	34 *Ràng bù*	让步
9 *Dù liàng*	度量	35 *Ráo*	饶
10 *Fàng rèn*	放任	36 *Ráo shù*	饶恕
11 *Fàng zòng*	放纵	37 *Rén cí*	仁慈
12 *Fù mǔ*	父母	38 *Rěn*	忍
13 *Guài yì*	怪异	39 *Rěn nài*	忍耐
14 *Hǎi nà bǎi chuān*	海纳百川	40 *Rěn ràng*	忍让
15 *Hǎo rén*	好人	41 *Rěn rǔ fù zhòng*	忍辱负重
16 *Huò dá*	豁达	42 *Rěn shòu*	忍受
17 *Jì wǎng bù jiù*	既往不咎	43 *Róng*	容
18 *Jiàn liàng*	见谅	44 *Róng nà*	容纳
19 *Jiāo zòng*	骄纵	45 *Róng rén*	容忍
20 *Jiē shòu*	接受	46 *Shàn*	善
21 *Kāi míng*	开明	47 *Shàn liáng*	善良
22 *Kuān*	宽	48 *Shù*	恕
23 *Kuān róng*	宽容	49 *Shù zùi*	恕罪
24 *Kuān shù*	宽恕	50 *Xīn xiōng kuān kuò*	心胸宽阔
25 *Lǐ jiě*	理解	51 *Yǐ dé bào yuàn*	以德报怨
26 *Liàng*	谅	52 *Yǒu zhì zhī rén*	有志之人

53 Yuán liàng 原谅

54 Zǎi xiàng dù lǐ néng chēng chuán 宰相肚里能撑船

55 Zhōng yōng 中庸

56 Zòng róng 纵容

57 Zūn zhòng 尊重

Appendix D: Selected back-translation results

(Note: For copyright reasons, only those items where back-translation produced differences are included here. The first column lists the original EFI items. The other columns list the translators' English translations of the MEFI items.)

The items in the table are to be inserted in the appropriate statements:

1-20: I feel _____ toward him /her.

21-40: Regarding the person, I do or would _____.

41-54: I think he or she is _____

55-60: My attitude towards this person is that I (feel he or she is) _____.

EFI item		Translator 1	Translator 2	Translator 3	Translator 4
10	resentment (NA)	disgusting	abominable	disgust	be sick of
13	cold (NA)	indifferent	indifferent	indifferent	indifferent
18	affection (PA)	enthusiastic	enthusiastic	enthusiastic	warm-hearted enthusiasm
21	show friendship (PB)	express respect	Show respect	show respect	treat with respect
26	put him/her down (NB)	always be against him	sing a different tune with him	sing a different tune to him	be against him
30	reach out to him/her (PB)	intentionally be a great help to him when he meet trouble	give him a big hand intentionally when he is in trouble	help him with intentional attention when he meets difficulties	help him purposely when he is in trouble
32	lend him/her a hand (PB)	do him a favour as he looks pitiful when he is in trouble	Help him out of sympathy when he is in trouble	help him with sympathy when he meets difficulties	when he is in trouble, help him because you think he is very pitiful
37	do a favour (PB)	do him a small favour when he is in trouble	just lift a finger when he is in difficulty	only give him a little help when he is in difficulty	help him a little when he gets into trouble

38	aid him/her when in trouble (PB)	lend money to him , give financial aid to him	finance him	lend him money and help him financially	lend money to him/ give financial aid to him
39	be biting when talking with him/her (NB)	be always in a threatening manner to him	show hostility to him	make threatening gestures to him	be fierce and quarrelsome to him
40	attend his/her party (PB)	participate in his party or activities	participate in his parties or other activities	take part in his party	take part in his parties or activities
49	immoral (NC)	deserving of going down hell	deserving ill	deserving of falling down to hell	should be cast into outer darkness
52	corrupt (NC)	the scum of the society	scum	the scum of the society	scum of a community
55	disapprove of him/her (NC)	consider him as rubbish	think of him as rubbish	regard him as rubbish	think he is rubbish
58	condemn the person (NC)	think he deserve to die	wish that he was dead	think he deserve to die	think he should die

Appendix E: The consent form

Consent Form

I would like to invite you to participate in a study entitled *Translating "Forgiveness": The validity of the Mandarin version of the Enright Forgiveness Inventory*. Please read this form carefully, and feel free to ask questions you might have.

Researcher: Todd Hanson

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University of Saskatchewan, Canada
E-mail: tjhanson@canada.com

School of Foreign Languages
Xihua Normal University
Nanchong, Sichuan
Phone: (0817) 231-2244

Purpose and Procedure: In this study, I will explore the concept of "forgiveness" in Mandarin. Much of my information will come from published material, but I will also use a questionnaire to get some opinions from you about specific questions. It will probably take you fifteen to twenty minutes to fill out the questionnaire. Most of it will be in English, but parts of it will be in Mandarin.

Potential Risks: I am required by the university to describe any risks or dangers you may face if you participate in this study. I cannot think of any risks in a study of this kind. I will simply ask you to answer questions about meaning on the questionnaire.

My hope is that the information you provide will help me to write a thesis that will bring both Chinese and Westerners to a deeper understanding of the important topic of forgiveness.

Your completed questionnaire will be stored at the University of Saskatchewan for five years, but no one will be able to identify which questionnaire is yours.

Confidentiality: In my thesis, I may quote some of your answers directly, but I will not identify you by name. Your name will never be connected to your questionnaire. This consent form requires your signature, but these forms will be stored separately from your responses. Please do not put your name on your questionnaire.

Right to Withdraw: I welcome your participation in this study, but you may certainly choose not to participate. If you choose not to participate after completing the questionnaire, let me know and I will not use your responses and I will destroy your questionnaire.

You may choose not to answer some of the questions on the questionnaire. In such a case, I will use your responses to the other questions.

Questions: If you have any questions concerning the study, now or at a later time, please feel free to ask. This study has been approved by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Sciences Research Ethics Board on May 7, 2004. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Office of Research Services (011-306-966-2084). You may call collect.

My thesis will be completed by December, 2004. If you are interested in discussing my thesis after that date, I will be happy to talk to you about it.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please sign your name below to indicate that you are willing to do so.

Consent to Participate: *I have read and understood the description provided above; I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I consent to participate in the study described above, understanding that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for my records.*

_____ _____

(Signature of Participant) (Date)

_____

(Signature of Researcher)