pany learned, the "one market, one strategy" approach did not work. On January 29, 2000, Coca-Cola issued a news release describing its new realignment strategy. Among other things, it said, "Our success depends on our ability to make billions of individual connections each day in every community around the world."

DISCUSSION

Now let's see how this case study can be an illustration of the Continuum Principle of intercultural communication.

1. Intercultural communication as a shared space. Intercultural communication in this chapter is discussed as a space, no part of which can be distinguished from neighboring parts. The interactions between Coca-Cola and the six European cultures can definitely be understood in terms of continua. There would be no interaction between them if they were not connected by lines made up of some ultimate parts. In this particular case, these continua can be represented by such global cultural dimensions as Power Distance and Uncertainty Avoidance. Thus, intercultural communication between Coca-Cola and the six European cultures can be seen as a shared space formed by (at least) two continua—High Power Distance/Low Power Distance and Uncertainty Avoidance/Uncertainty Acceptance. These dimensions apply to all the interacting cultures, such as American Coca-Cola and Belgium. In other words, intercultural communication must be viewed as a process of constructing a shared space.

As we saw, this process, as described in the article, was not successful in some cases and was more successful in others. Why was that? Why did the various European cultures react to the crisis differently?

2. Reasons for different cultural responses to the crisis. Now that we have identified the global cultural dimensions that form the continua, we can take a closer look at the positions that different cultures occupy along the continua. Not surprisingly, the countries that showed a lower tolerance for the crisis (Belgium, France, and Spain) have higher scores on both the Uncertainty Avoidance index and the Power Distance index. According to Hofstede's research, Uncertainty Avoidance scores are as follows: United States, 46; France/Spain, 86; Belgium, 94. Power Distance scores are as follows: United States, 40; Spain, 57; Belgium, 65; and France, 68. These scores explain why Belgium, France, and Spain were so displeased with Coca-Cola. First, because those countries have a low tolerance for uncertainty, they dislike the entry of any global product into their cultures. It might be said that the Coca-Cola company was condemned not so much for the tainting situation as for its silence for over a week after the first illnesses. Second, those countries were not happy with Coca-Cola's response to the crisis because Coca-Cola's claim that its products were safe challenged their authority. In addition, no formal apologies were made to the French public, ignoring a large distance between low power distance United States (40) and high power distance France (68).

The scores of the three Scandinavian nations on the two continua described above are more similar to those of the United States. According to Hofstede's research, Uncertainty Avoidance scores are as follows: United States, 46; Denmark, 23; Sweden, 29; and Norway 50. Power Distance scores are as follows: United States, 40; Denmark, 18; Sweden, 31; and Norway, 31. Thus, more successful communication between Coca-Cola and these cultures may be attributed to their similar attitudes toward risk and authority.

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