

**International Linguistic Association
Co-Sponsored by the Department of English
John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

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**What They Mean by What They Don't Say.
Managing Assumptive Frameworks Across Continents**

Common knowledge suggests that the Internet has made it easier than ever to bring far-flung communities together. The web, Skype, SMS, twitter, and e-mail on iPhones seemingly all converge into one instantaneously happy family. All the same, it remains fairly daunting to fully understand what a person means by what he or she does not say if he or she actually comes from that faraway place. Even more, it can at times be totally baffling to decrypt what he or she really means when familiar sounding words are spelt out verbatim. Now, although many users express themselves in either their local language or English as a *lingua franca* do they actually mean what they say? In this talk I will explore some characteristics of both English and French that emerge when meaning is negotiated across different cultures. More specifically, this includes the French *exception culturelle*, or aspects of life a French public take for granted but which need to be made more explicit to the world at large.

In the first part some Franco-American data from the Cultura Project in which students wrote in their mother tongues will be presented. I will then compare this data with Franco-Chinese interactions from the CANDLE II project where students wrote in English as a *Lingua Franca*.

In a final part I hope to provide some insights into teaching English in France and how the perception of English is changing now that non-native speakers outnumber the native speakers of English.

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11 AM

**John Jay College of Criminal Justice
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