Communication and Culture

James Starnes
Roger Williams
What is Communication?

Communication

Language

Speech

Writing

Signing

Paralanguage

Kinesics

Tone and character of voice/hands

Proxemics

Clothing, makeup, etc
### What is Culture?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topical:</td>
<td>Culture consists of everything on a list of topics, or categories, such as social organization, religion, or economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historical:</td>
<td>Culture is social heritage, or tradition, that is passed on to future generations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioral:</td>
<td>Culture is shared, learned human behavior, a way of life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normative:</td>
<td>Culture is ideals, values, or rules for living</td>
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<tr>
<td>Functional:</td>
<td>Culture is the way humans solve problems of adapting to the environment or living together</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental:</td>
<td>Culture is a complex of ideas, or learned habits, that inhibit impulses and distinguish people from animals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structural:</td>
<td>Culture consists of patterned and interrelated ideas, symbols, or behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symbolic:</td>
<td>Culture is based on arbitrarily assigned meanings that are shared by a society</td>
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</table>
Language

- Choice of language
  - Dialect
  - Accent
  - Pidgin/Creeole
- Speech
- Signing
- Writing
Paralanguage

- Kinesics
  - Body Language
- Tone and character of voice/hands
  - Register
- Proxemics
  - Distance between speaker
- Clothing, makeup, etc
Number of morphemes
Number of users

Meaning per morpheme

Frozen
Formal
Consultative
Casual
Intimate
High/Low Context Cultures

High-context cultures

• Long-lasting relationships
• Exploiting context
• Spoken agreements
• Insiders and outsiders clearly distinguished
• Cultural patterns ingrained, slow change

Low-context cultures

• Shorter relationships
• Less dependent on context
• Written agreements
• Insiders and outsiders less clearly distinguished
• Cultural patterns change faster
### High and Low Context Cultures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors / Dimensions</th>
<th>High Context</th>
<th>Low Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less important</td>
<td>Very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is his or her bond</td>
<td>Get it in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taken by top level</td>
<td>Pushed to lowest level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lengthy</td>
<td>Proceed quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A person’s word</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsibility for organizational error</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Negotiations</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perception

- Perception is *selective*.
- Perceptual patterns are *learned*.
- Perception is *culturally determined*.
- Perception tends to remain *constant*.
- We therefore see things that do not exist, and do not see things that do exist.
- We perceive what we expect to perceive.
FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS
Stereotypes

- Consciously held.
- Descriptive rather than evaluative.
- Accurate.
- The first best guess.
- Modified
References