

Understanding touch way in Australia

I want to explain about touch in terms of intercultural difference. There are some debate among people about the touch way of each other between China and Australia in the society. Specially, how to greet with each other when they meet. In my opinion, in China, people are tend to take handshake as the way for people to touch, that is, keep a certain distance between people. However, in Australia, especially those who were born from here, people are more likely to kiss on the cheek to say hello, which means that people are much more closer to each other in touch.

These intercultural difference may be due to the degree of indulgence and restraint described in Hofstede's cultural dimensions about China and Australia. According to Hofstede insights, showing that China has a 24 scores of indulgence. Also, comparing to Australia, indulgence score is high as 71 (Hofstede insights, 2023). This means that China is a much restrained society, and people believe that their behaviour is subject to social restraints and indulge themselves is a wrong thing. While Australia's indulgence score of 71 indicates that Australia is a indulgent society, where people generally show a willingness to express their wishes, at the same time, being more spontaneous.

This can explain why Australians are more close in touch distance while Chinese's touch distance a little bit far. Because the same touch way has different meanings in different cultures. As we all know, kiss is a common touch way for Australian to meet with others. But for Chinese, kiss means heavy love and almost impossible to use in greeting. For example, from my experience, when I took the bus through Perth city, I saw a Australian kiss an Asian as a touch way of saying hello, even though both were men, the Asian showed some awkwardness.

As a result, for better understanding and adjusting the touch way in Australia. My conclusion is that different touch way are used for different people. When I meet people, I decide to handshake with them first because handshake is a touch way that pretty universal. If the person is born from here, I will use kiss instead of handshake as a touch way for someone who will become more intimate in the future. What's more, in order to contact people from different cultures in the future, I will pay attention to social distance and actively learn more suitable ways to touch with others.

References

Hofstede Insights. (2023). Country Comparison. <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/countrycomparison-tool?countries=australia%2Cchina>Body: 423 words · Reference: 7 words