

Unit 10 Cultural Diversity

Unit Overview

When we talk about different cultures, the term “cultural diversity” comes up quite a lot. Yet despite its popularity, it could be a difficult task to describe the term. In this unit we are going to take up this challenge by focusing on a fundamental side of cultural diversity—how people view time in various cultures. We will also discuss how these views may influence people’s behavior and lifestyle.

Text A categorizes the ways to use time into three types, namely the linear type, the multi-active type and the cyclic type, followed by two case studies on how the Chinese and the Japanese use time. Taking us on a trip across cultures, Lewis shows us that although we cannot literally “see” time, it is possible to verbalize our ideas in metaphors and visualize them in figures.

Text B narrows the topic down to how the Aymara perceive of the past and the future. While many other cultures face the future, this Amerindian group seemingly faces the past. Further studies show that they do not use themselves as a reference point when they talk about very wide time spans, but always include themselves when they refer to shorter spans, thinking of the past in front of them. According to the researcher, it is because the Aymara prioritize what they have seen and always mark this fact in their language, which may affect a lot of other aspects of their culture.

Apart from the temporal views, we will also deal with other aspects of cultural diversity in the tasks after the texts. After studying the two texts in this unit, the students are expected to wrap up what they have learned about culture in Units 6-10 before moving onto the next module.

Teaching Objectives

Reading Skills

- Scan for required information
- Understand words and expressions in context
- Summarize the main ideas of the text

Communicative Competence

- Draw diagrams to illustrate your points
- Learn to paraphrase
- Use figures of speech to help clarify your points

Critical Thinking

- Use figures and graphs to visualize concepts and relationships
- Refine generalizations about cultures and be aware of the danger of overgeneralizations
- Evaluate the pros and cons of cultural diversity and other cultural phenomena

Intercultural Competence

- Appreciate cultural diversity
- Understand different views of time across cultures
- Interpret the impact of worldview on other aspects of culture

Teaching Suggestions

It is suggested to integrate Text A and Text B in class discussion as they complement each other in terms of writing style as well as point of view.

Generalization as an effective approach adopted in Text A could be controversial as well. The last task in “Evaluating the text” will remind the students to stay alert to overgeneralization which sometimes result in cultural stereotyping. As a comparison, Text B manages to avert the risk of generalization by reporting the research steps rather than the findings alone.

As for viewpoint, some claims in Text A could be challenged with evidence from Text B. For example, while Text A suggests that the American people take time as money, Para.9 in Text B makes it clear that “not only could different languages use different metaphors for time, but a single language could contain more than one metaphor.”

This unit may open up several areas for exploration such as cultural studies, cross-cultural communications, cognitive linguistics, and so on. It is important to encourage the students to develop or renew their own understanding of certain issues. On top of that, hopefully the students will also learn to express their ideas critically with effective tools after studying this unit.

Further readings:

Two months after the 9/11 attacks, the UNESCO issued The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity on 2 November 2001, which can be found at http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13179&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

For those who are interested in cultural studies, they may start with the following

book, which introduces the greatest thinkers in the field such as Stuart Hall, Judith Butler and Pierre Bourdieu.

McRobbie, Angela. (2005). *The Uses of Cultural Studies: A Textbook*. London: Sage.

To read further about how Stuart Hall, the “godfather of multiculturalism”, thinks of the multicultural question, visit

http://red.pucp.edu.pe/wp-content/uploads/biblioteca/Stuart_Hall_The_multicultural_question.pdf

To find out more about Lakoff and Johnson, the cognitive linguists repeatedly quoted in Text B, read

Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

蓝纯 (2005)。认知语言学与隐喻研究。北京：外语教学与研究出版社。

Preparatory Work

Classroom tactics:

The first task prepares the students for the topic of the texts in this unit, which may serve as a warming-up exercise at the outset. The students may find it easy to jot down some words representing their impression of time. However, as they are yet to learn to illustrate with figures and diagrams, they may come up with a draft diagram at this stage and be reminded to complete their drawings later on.

In the rest exercises in this section, the students are expected to crack the unfamiliar concepts and scan relevant works by themselves.

1. Objective: Draw diagram to illustrate your points.

Example 1: Time is money.

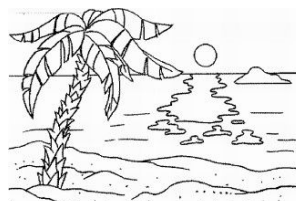
Why do we say so?

To illustrate the similarities between time and money, you may draw the following diagram in three steps.

- 1) You have some of it.



- 2) You can use it to do many things.



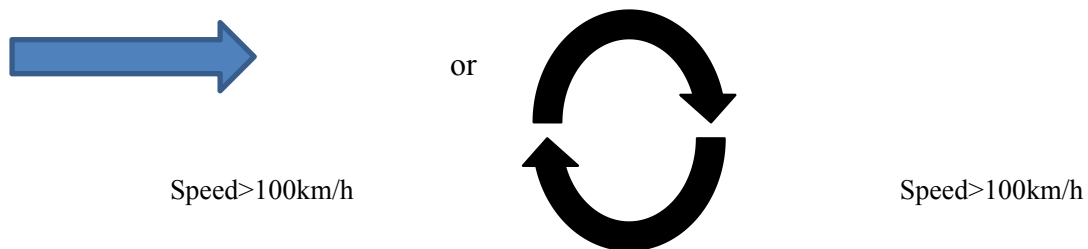
3) It is precious because you do not have an unlimited supply.



Example 2: Time flies.

Why do we say so?

To illustrate the fact that time moves and it moves fast. you may draw the following diagram.



2.

Fatalism:

Fatalism is a feeling that you cannot control events or prevent unpleasant things from happening, especially when this feeling stops you from making decisions or making an effort.

Fatalism is sometimes associated with ancient Indian philosophy.

Work ethic:

Work ethic is a value based on hard work and diligence. Christians and capitalists believe in the moral requirement of hard work and its ability to enhance character. In the context of class conflict, Marxists view the cultural ingrainment of this value as a mean to delude the working class into creating more wealth for the upper class.

Work ethic is usually associated with Christianity and capitalism.

Reincarnation:

Reincarnation is the religious or philosophical concept that the soul or spirit, after biological death, can begin a new life in a new body.

Reincarnation is a central tenet of the Indian religions.

Confucianism:

Confucianism is an ethical and philosophical system, on occasion described as a religion, developed from the teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius.

Confucianism is associated with Chinese philosophy.

Weltschmerz:

Weltschmerz, literally meaning “world pain”, is a term coined by the German author Jean Paul and denotes the kind of feeling experienced by someone who understands that physical reality can never satisfy the demands of the mind. This kind of world view was widespread among several romantic authors such as Lord Byron and Heinrich Heine.

Weltschmerz is usually associated with the German authors or the romantic authors who emphasize the feeling of anxiety caused by the ills of the world, especially

3.

A Common Core: Thais and Americans:

Thais and U.S. citizens have a number of striking cultural similarities. Both prize the freedoms they enjoy, both are quite pragmatic and individualistic, and both disdain pomposity and arrogance. These traits form a kind of common core that helps Thais and U.S. citizens connect in cross-cultural interactions. Nevertheless, there are also fundamental differences that must be bridged if mutually satisfactory relationships are to be established. This book examines the commonalities and explores the differences in depth. For instance, Thais have a very high regard for authority and status and live in an extremely hierarchical society; far different from the more fluid social milieu in the United States, where authority is easily questioned and status is gained by achievement.

Wrapping Culture:

Wrapping Culture examines problems of intercultural communication and the possibilities for misinterpretation of the familiar in an unfamiliar context. Starting with an examination of Japanese gift-wrapping, Joy Hendry demonstrates how our expectations are often influenced by cultural factors which may blind us to an appreciation of underlying intent. She extends this approach to the study of polite language as the wrapping of thoughts and intentions, garments as body wrappings, constructions and gardens as wrapping of space. Hendry shows how this extends even to the ways in which people may be wrapped in seating arrangements, or meetings and drinking customs may be constrained by temporal versions of wrapping.

Critical Reading

Classroom tactics:

Generally speaking, Text A is easy to follow due to its clear structure and straight-forward language. Potential difficulties in comprehension might come from figure reading rather than unfamiliar words or expressions. Therefore, it is worthwhile to invite some students to interpret the figures in class, as the third exercise in Comprehension Check requires. In so doing, the students will not only learn to describe and comment on charts in proper ways, but also prepare themselves for

explaining their own illustrations for the Chinese and the Japanese ways of using time.

I. Understanding the text

1. View of time

(1) Three categories

	Linear time	Multi-active time	Cyclic time
Characteristics	Time flows fast in a linear way. People do one thing at a time.	Time is subjective. People do several things at a time.	Time goes in a cycle. People do not forget the past and expect second chances in the future.
Countries	The U.S., Switzerland, German, Britain, the Netherlands, Austria, Scandinavia	Spain, Italy, Arab countries	Some Eastern cultures
Cultural implications	People cherish time, stick to a fixed schedule and equate working time with success.	Punctuality is not as important as personal interactions.	People take their time before getting down to business. Plans may be changed. In a Buddhist culture, not only time but also life repeats itself. Man cannot disturb nature.

(2) Two case studies

	Chinese view of time	Japanese view of time
Characteristics	Time is cyclic, but still needs to be valued. It is worthwhile to spend time on personal relationships.	Some activities are quick and some extremely slow. People segment time meticulously according to properness, courtesy and tradition.

Cultural implications	<p>People apologize for taking up others' time.</p> <p>Attending a meeting is contributing one's time.</p> <p>People arrive early for appointments.</p> <p>People are reminded not to waste time.</p> <p>People expect a liberal amount of time for further discussion of details and personal relationship building.</p>	<p>Factory workers maintain the breakneck pace.</p> <p>Contemplation in Japanese gardens and Noh play take very long time.</p> <p>Social gathers consist of various phases and layers.</p> <p>There are clear beginnnings and endings and unambiguous phase-switching signals.</p> <p>People do not make a quick approach to the heart of things.</p> <p>People are generous in their allocation of time to business partners or the particular transactions.</p>
-----------------------	---	---

2. Comprehension check

- (1) The Americans say time is money and qualify time in monetary terms when they say their time costs \$50 an hour. They also talk about wasting, spending, budgeting, and saving time. They value time as much as money because they believe time flows fast with no return and they have to make money with limited time. The more money you make in an hour, the more successful you are.
- (2) In the U.S., doctors, dentists and lawyers are paid on a hourly basis. Therefore, both they and their clients would count the amount of time very carefully. On the contrary, the value of the work of the fisherman, the priest and the artists bears no relation to the hours they use so they tend to take their time.
- (3) The left eyes in Figures 10.3 and 10.4 represent the Spanish perspective and the right eyes the German perspective. The straight line at the center of Figure 10.3 stands for June 9, the day things should be delivered. Though both sides agree on the date, as if they “see eye to eye” in Figure 10.3, they take it differently in reality. As shown in Figure 10.4, what the German sees is always a fixed date, yet for the Spaniard the date is actually flexible. According to the latter, considering the benign and longstanding relationship with partner, it is possible to postpone the delivery date, as the fan-shaped right half of Figure 10.4 indicates. The expanded reality is coined as “second Spanish horizon” in the figure.
- (4) “早知如此，就不那么做了。”Some people say like this in Chinese to express their regret, while it is less common to hear such expressions from the westerners. One

possible reason for the difference could be the different views of time. If you view time as going without coming back, as the westerners do, there is no point to envisage yourself in a previous situation because it does not make much sense to think of the past and you will not have a second chance anyway. However, if you believe that time goes in a cycle, then the past can enlighten your present and guide you in the future when come across the same time point again.

- (5) On the one hand, the Chinese value time. In business, they are acutely aware of how much time is used, both for themselves and for others. On the other, they expect a liberal amount of time for further discussion of details and personal relationship building.
- (6) The pace in Japanese factories are very fast while the tempo of the traditional Noh play is extremely slow. It is hard to say whether the Japanese value time or not. What really matters to the Japanese is that people should do the “right thing at the right time“. In Japanese activities, time is segmented meticulously according to properness, courtesy and tradition. When to begin, switch and end a phase is more important than how long each phase takes.
- (7) According to Lewis, as the linear use of time is favorable to historicity and industrial production, it will be adopted in industrialized organization. Yet in social and business spheres, people from different cultures will continue to use time differently. The underlying philosophies concerning the best and most efficient use of time and the ways to use it will remain radically different.

II. Evaluation and exploration

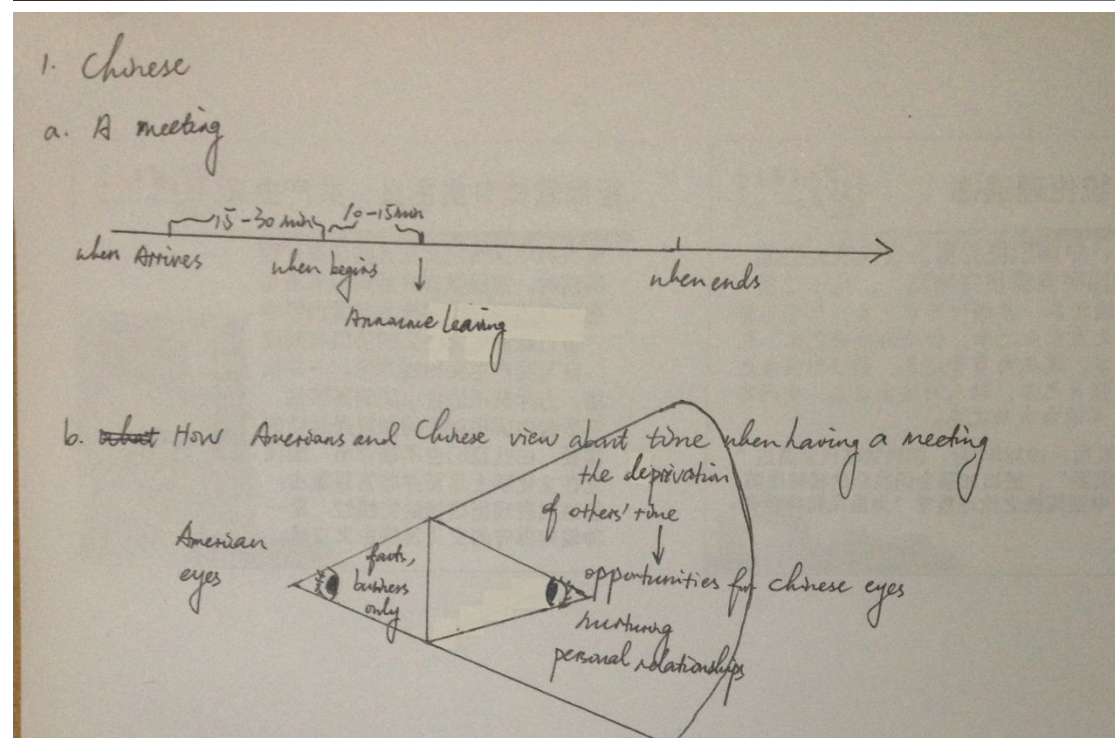
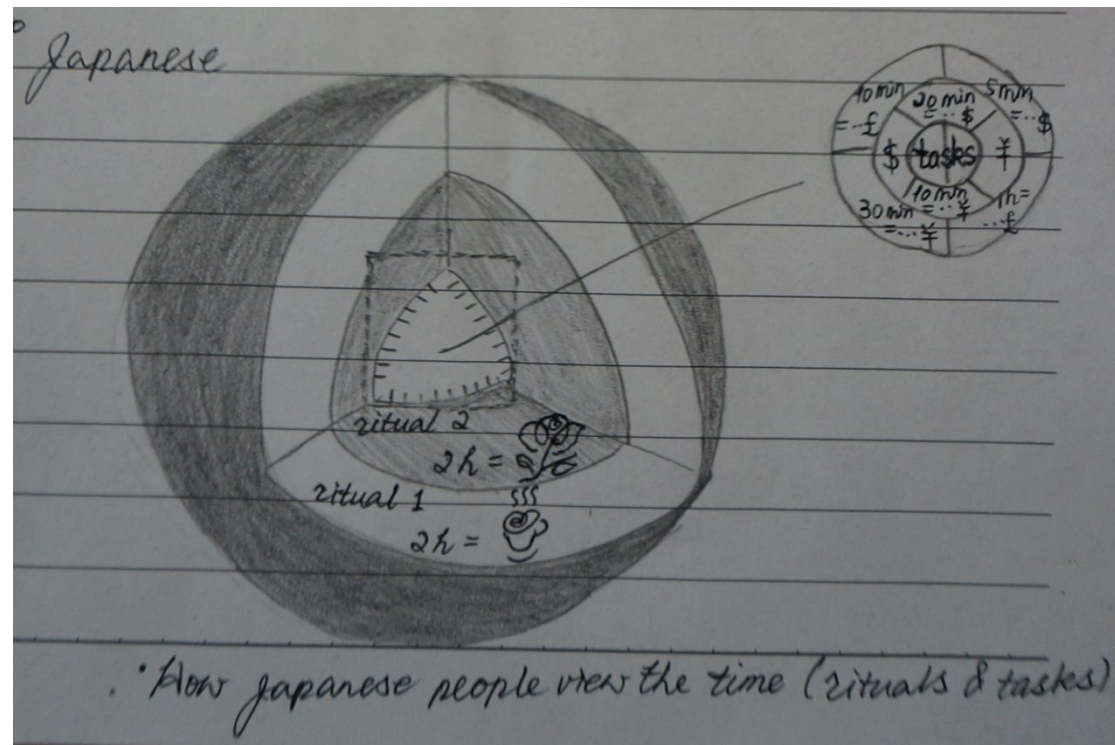
Classroom tactics:

Following the example set by Lewis, the students now have the opportunity to illustrate for the Chinese and Japanese views of time in the first exercise in “Evaluating the text”. They may come up with various kinds of drawings according to how they understand and visualize the text. Encourage them to describe the figures they draw.

After sharing what they draw, the class may move on to the fourth exercise in the same section and analyze Lewis' view of the Chinese use of time critically. This exercise offers a good chance to weigh the benefit and loss of generalization.

Other exercises are designed to stimulate critical and creative thinking and raise the awareness of multiple perspectives. As the students may want to do some research and talk it over with their friends, class discussions would be more efficient if the teacher could assign the tasks to groups of four beforehand.

(1) Two possible figures for the Chinese and Japanese views of time are presented below.



(2) According to Lewis, the Chinese may arrive 15 to 30 minutes early in order to finish the business before the time appointed for its discussion. If it is the first time meeting each other, the Japanese will reserve two minutes for business card exchange to mark the beginning of a relationship. The American tend to arrive on time while the Italian might be late.

During the discussion, the American would like to go over the issues one after another and try to cover everything on schedule. The Asians, including the Thai, the Chinese and the Japanese, would rather wait rather than rush into decisions. The Italian will try to do several things at the same time, with a lax adherence to schedule. For the Italian, the discussion may be longer or shorter depending on how interesting it is.

When a deal is settled, the American would leave while the Chinese might prefer to stay a while to build personal ties.

If one sticks to his or her own way of using time, others might get confused and the meeting would end up in chaos. To avoid misunderstanding, it is important to know not only how people behave but also why they do so. Before or during the meeting, it is important to double check whether everyone is on the same page and stay aware of the fact that people might be different because their cultures are different.

(3) Some possible answers are listed below.

Advantage of linear-active view of time: efficient, follow through with the plan

Advantage of multi-active view of time: flexible, fun-oriented

Advantage of cyclic view of time: ready for change

Disadvantage of linear-active view of time: too stubborn, hasty decisions

Disadvantage of multi-active view of time: lack of efficiency

Disadvantage of cyclic view of time: unexpected change

(4) To capture the common feature of large groups of people, we will inevitably have to make generalizations, as Lewis does in the text. However, generalization could also become a risky business especially when it comes to concepts like culture. People from the same culture may act differently from each other.

For example, an American writer might not calculate time in the same way as an American lawyer would do. However, the American way of using time is represented only by the latter in the text.

According to Lewis, the Chinese will always arrive 15 to 30 minutes early before the appointment. It is true that some people in China are always like this. But there are those who never show up until the last minute, or those who tend to arrive five minutes late.

2. Exploring beyond the text

(1) Australia: kangaroo

China: panda, noodle

Germany: wurst, beer

Japan: Noh, kimono, sakura

Kenya: coffee
Mexico: taco
South Africa: diamond
Spain: flamenco, bullfight
Thailand: elephant
U.S.: NBA

(2) In a melting pot, you mix all the ingredients and cannot distinguish one from another. This metaphor implies that all immigrants to the United States gradually become American, losing their original cultural and ethnic features.

In a salad bowl, you can easily identify the potato, carrot or chicken in it and tell the difference. According to this metaphor, people are encouraged to maintain their cultural roots and customs. In the same way, cultural mosaic means that all colors shine rather than overlap.

This change indicates a renewed understanding of diversity. As an immigrant country, diversity is no less important than assimilation.

(3) Pros:

If we do not preserve the aboriginal cultures, they will disappear one after another. Thanks to support from the government and society, local people are able to live their life in the traditional ways.

Cons:

Any ethnic or cultural group is entitled to choose their lifestyle. If a tribe decides to live a modern life, outsiders should not intervene.

Some traditional rituals make use of bird furs, chicken blood or ivory, which goes against modern ethics and should not be kept in the name of cultural diversity.

Language Enhancement

I. Words and Phrases

1. Articles and prepositions

- (1) on, of
- (2) of, of, in
- (3) at
- (4) to
- (5) the, of, to
- (6) by, in
- (7) with
- (8) the, upon, of, into

- (9) on
- (10) on

2. Phrasal Verbs

- (1) turn up
- (2) mess up
- (3) take up
- (4) divide up
- (5) build up
- (6) mop up
- (7) drive up
- (8) end up
- (9) keep up
- (10) use up

3. Proofreading

- (1) left → leaving
- (2) on → in
- (3) comes → goes
- (4) on → by
- (5) in → from
- (6) element → elements
- (7) ✓
- (8) Arabian → Arabic
- (9) at → in
- (10) book → a book

II. Sentence and Discourse

1. Paraphrasing

- (1) The Americans believe that if you work hard, your efforts will pay off. For the British people, this could be true only to a limited extent, because social class also plays a large part. In the southern European countries, it is very difficult for an ordinary man to succeed no matter how hard he works, because authority, privilege and birthright always come first in these countries.
- (2) Germans and Swiss, believing in punctuality, will get confused and even angry when others are not strict on time because they cannot understand the reasons behind the multi-active use of time.
- (3) The Americans follow the plans and schedules strictly and act accordingly. This sounds ridiculous to the Spaniard or Arab as they think the schedules are changeable and there is no need to hurry.
- (4) Asians take it as a good thing rather than a waste of time to leave things undecided because time runs in a cycle and there will always be a second chance. They have a lot of time to think things over before the second chance emerges.

- (5) If you know the Japanese culture well, you will find that the Japanese act very quickly sometimes and extremely slowly at other times— the Japanese workers race against time in factories but they are patient enough to contemplate in the garden and watch the Noh play in very slow motion.

2. Translation

- (1) 若让他们来排序，那么会面相对而言更有意思和意义，因而排在最前。
(2) 在阿拉伯和拉丁等多线活动型文化中，时间是受事件或个性影响的主观产品，是可以调控、塑造、拉伸或者分配的，与时钟指向几点无关。
(3) 以客观的时间观看来，未来如过去一样展开，因此在我们预测未来、制定预算和计划时，参照的正是过去的记录。
(4) After all the efforts, he had to reconcile himself to the difference between an ideal and a reality.
(5) As long as politicians observe the rule of noninterference, central banks will be perceived as unconstrained by political interests.
(6) Virtual parent communities present schools with the possibility of a viable alternative to traditional parent involvement efforts and warrant further discussion and evaluation.

3. Temporal Metaphor

Group 1: TIME IS OBJECT/ANIMAL

(1)-(5)

More examples:

He did it in three minutes.

We're almost out of time.

Time plays like an accordion in the way it can stretch out and compress itself in a thousand melodic ways.

Group 2: TIME IS SPACE

(6)-(8)

More examples:

Look ahead. That is where your future lies.

What's coming up this week?

We are approaching the deadline.

Group 3: TIME IS PERSON

(9)-(10)

More examples:

Only time will tell.

Time and tide wait for no man.

The years teach much which the days never know.

Intercultural Reflection

Classroom tactics:

The first two tasks in this section deal with how people view time and how these views affect the other aspects of culture. The students may want to go over the texts again for ideas and examples before reaching out for other resources.

The third task revisits the theme of the unit by focusing on specific countries. It is important to summarize and compare the group findings to stimulate critical thinking and awareness of multiple perspectives.

1. Linguistic diversity & cultural diversity

While the English-speaking cultures face the future, the Aymara faces the past. Their language reflects their notion of time and may play a part in influencing other areas of their thought. One example of this influence is the “great patience” of the Aymara. In the last but one paragraph, the author gives another example. It suggests that the Amerindian group respect women because they attach great importance to where you came from—your mother, again with an obvious emphasis on the past.

These examples suggest that the language people speak reflect and influence their views of the world. This is also pointed out at the beginning of Para.21, “the closer the languages, the closer the metaphors.”

Taking linguistic diversity as a crucial part of cultural diversity, the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity states that “all persons have therefore the right to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in their mother tongue.” In the Action Plan to implement the Declaration, the fifth objective reads “safeguarding the linguistic heritage of humanity and giving support to expression, creation and dissemination in the greatest possible number of languages.”

One thing to note is that the relationship between linguistic diversity and cultural diversity could be discussed in many aspects. For example, as Para.9 indicates, a single language could contain more than one metaphor. That is to say, although our language may affect how we think and act, it is not the single factor that contributes to who we are.

2. English and Chinese metaphors for time

According to George Lakoff, the cognitive linguist repeatedly quoted in Text B, all

the following expressions reflect the metaphorical concept “TIME IS MONEY”.

You're *wasting* my time.

This gadget will save you hours. I don't have the time to give you.

How do you spend your time these days? That flat tire cost me an hour.

I've invested a lot of time in her.

I don't have enough time to spare for that. You're running out of time.

You need to budget your time.

Put aside some time for ping pong.

Is that *worth your while*?

Do you have much time *left*?

He's living on I *borrowed* time.

You don't use your time, *profitably*.

I *lost* a lot of time when I got sick.

Thank you for your time.

These examples together with those in “Rhetorical devices” may be compared with the Chinese metaphors for time. Some examples are:

他们在英语学习上花了大量的时间和精力。

为了节省您的宝贵时间，我们特意为您提供了快速查询功能。

子在川上曰：“逝者如斯夫，不舍昼夜。”

光阴似箭，日月如梭。

时间过得飞快。

期中考试快要到了。

致我们终将逝去的青春。

As Text B suggests, we understand time in space and distinguish “front” and “back” to refer to the past and the future. There are more interesting findings by cognitive linguists about the English and Chinese metaphorical systems of TIME-AS-SPACE and how these understandings are reflected in our cultural behaviors. For further information, refer to Chapter Six in

蓝纯（2005）。认知语言学与隐喻研究。北京：外语教学与研究出版社。

3. Cultural diversity in different places

In simplest terms, supporters for multiculturalism are those who advocate cultural diversity. Yet multiculturalism is also one of the most complicated and controversial idea in cultural studies. Before digging into the experience of specific countries, read how Stuart Hall, the “godfather of multiculturalism”, thinks of the multicultural question at

http://red.pucp.edu.pe/wp-content/uploads/biblioteca/Stuart_Hall_The_multicultural_question.pdf

For the Australian experience in cultural diversity, read

Jupp, James. (1993). *The Challenge of Diversity—Policy Options for a Multicultural Australia*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

A recent news report entitled “Gillard defends nation’s diversity” can be found at
<http://www.smh.com.au/national/gillard-defends-nations-diversity-20120919-267d7.html>

For the African experience in cultural diversity, refer to
April, K. & M. Shockley, eds. (2006). *Diversity in Africa: The Coming of Age of a Continent*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

For the Swedish experience in cultural diversity, read relevant paragraphs in the paper
“Multiculturalism: New Policy Responses to Diversity” by Christine Inglis. The
whole article can be retrieved at
<http://www.unesco.org/most/pp4.htm>