

# Unit 15 Intercultural Communication Competence

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## **Unit Overview**

This unit deals with the development of intercultural communication competence. This competence is the converging point of foreign language education goals, because it consists of language communicative capability, knowledge of verbal and nonverbal communication, knowledge of other cultures and one's own culture, the willingness to suspend their biases, critical cultural awareness, etc. In a word, this unit draws on what we have learned in most of the previous units and put them in a grand picture.

## **Text A**

In intercultural encounters, people will have many frustrating experiences. One of the biggest barriers is the assumption of similarities. The assumption makes people believe that there are many universals among people from different cultural backgrounds, and affect people's mutual understanding and communication. In fact, in spite of the apparent similarities of cultures, there are differences invisible to the untrained eye. For this reason, contacts only will not necessarily lead to better understanding. The improvement comes from first-hand experience, an investigative and nonjudgmental attitude, and tolerance for ambiguity. Only by learning to reflect on our own values and assumptions can we have better intercultural communication.

## **Text B**

Besides the assumption of similarities, people also face five other barriers, namely language differences, non-verbal misinterpretations, preconceptions and stereotypes, tendency to evaluate, and high anxiety. Language barrier may take the form of vocabulary, syntax, idioms and dialects. Nonverbal misunderstanding may happen in what we see, hear, feel or even what we smell. Stereotypes, as a human strategy to cope with the unknown world, can be over-generalized. The tendency to evaluate keeps one from thinking from the perspective of other people. High anxiety may interact with the other five barriers to constitute "cultural shock". In order to overcome these barriers, one can learn about them, study other languages, learn to expect and face differences. In a word, with guided efforts, we can train ourselves to be competent intercultural communicators.

The two articles constitute the same paper, which has undergone several adaptations and is still very influential in intercultural communication realm. Text A is mainly devoted to

the first "stumbling block" and Text B deals with the rest five. They form an excellent introduction to intercultural education.

### **Teaching objectives**

Communicative competence:

- Comprehend and use language with accuracy, clarity and discernment
- Develop a coherent and cohesive oral/written discourse
- Illustrate your points with appropriate examples

Critical thinking:

- Assess the overall structure of the author's argumentation
- Identify and assess the materials the author uses to support her claims
- Evaluate the solutions provided by the author and propose alternative ones

Intercultural competence:

- Reflect on your own intercultural communication experience
- Evaluate your own culture within a global context
- Develop an awareness of ethnocentrism and devalue it

Autonomous learning:

- Be able to quiz yourself in various ways to check your achievement or progress
- Critically evaluate and validate information from the Internet
- Summarize what you have learned in the whole semester

### **Teaching strategies**

Text A and Text B are two parts of the same article bearing the same title. It is highly recommended that you teach both texts, so that your students will get a whole picture of what Barna has to say. You can encourage students to explore instances of such stumbling blocks in their real-life experience or experience of enjoying literary works.

In order to follow the academic trends, you can browse *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, an open-access academic journal, which runs 5 to 6 articles per issue. It can be found at <http://immi.se/intercultural/>.

If you want to get a bigger picture of intercultural communication research, you can read *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communications: Paradigms, Principles and Practices* (2nd Edition) compiled by Milton J. Bennett and published by Intercultural Press in 2013. The book provides a concise and coherent overview. The texts selected are arranged in terms of complexity, ensuring that the readers learn progressively.

### **Preparatory work:**

**(1) LaRay M. Barna, the author of Text A, is an internationally acclaimed expert in intercultural communication. Find more information about her.**

Research interests:

Barna was interested in intercultural communication, contemporary leadership, and intercultural competence.

Main contributions:

Barna is well-known for her contribution to the understanding of barriers to intercultural communication. The text, from which Text A and Text B were taken, has been cited by 364 journal articles.

Classroom tactics:

LaRay M. Barna's research interests can be located via academic search engines. In addition, you can demonstrate the influence of the article by drawing students' attention to its citation records in academic search engines such as CNKI, Google Scholar, etc.

**(2) Ethnocentrism is one of the most common words in intercultural communication studies. Look up its definition by consulting reference sources and give a few examples of ethnocentric ideas/practices.**

Definition:

Based on what they have learned in Unit 8, student can improvise something like:

The practice or tendency of making assumptions, many of which are false, about others' ways of doing things, based on one's own limited experience.

In definitions of ethnocentrism, such terms as *practice*, *tendency*, *false*, *assumption*, *other* and *one's limited experience/knowledge* are essential. Whatever form students' definition may take, as long as they have all of the key words, they have done the job.

Examples:

In Chinese, we have a variety of derogatory phrases reflecting ethnocentrism, such as 胡说, 胡闹, 蛮干, 蛮横, 胡搅蛮缠, etc. Most incredibly, the phrase 中国 in its archaic sense was also an example, where the ancient Chinese people assumed that their country was at the very center of the world and surrounded by barbarians.

In English, there are even more examples, particularly in English dictionaries, as observed by Phil Benson, who conducted research on the ethnocentric representation of China in English dictionaries.

Skill: Develop an awareness of ethnocentrism and devalue it

Classroom tactics:

This activity is designed to review the concept of ethnocentrism, which has been dealt with in Unit 8, where we have learned the seven biases related to ethnocentrism.

The teacher can ask students to give their own definition, remind them of the key elements they have learned if necessary.

References:

Benson, P. (2001). *Ethnocentrism and the English Dictionary*. New York and London: Routledge.

Race. (2015). In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved from <http://academic.eb.com/EBchecked/topic/488030/race>

Cooper, E. E. (2015). Ethnocentrism. *Oxford Bibliographies*. Retrieved from <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766567/obo-9780199766567-0045.xml>. doi: 10.1093/OBO/9780199766567-0045

Barger, K. (2014, July 31). Ethnocentrism [Web page]. Retrieved from <http://www.iupui.edu/~anthkb/ethnocen.htm>

Ken Barger, a famous scholar in anthropological and intercultural studies, gives an interesting combination of theoretical discussion and personal reflection, answering such questions as what ethnocentrism is, why people are ethnocentric, what the problem with ethnocentrism, and what we can do about it.

**(3) Margaret Mead was probably the most prestigious anthropologist in the 20th century. Search your library and the Internet to find her contributions to intercultural communication studies.**

Skill: Critically evaluate and validate information from the Internet

Contributions:

Margaret Mead (1901-1978) was probably the most prestigious anthropologist in the 20th century world. As a celebrity, she was most notable for her forays into such far-ranging topics as women's rights, child rearing, sexual morality, nuclear

proliferation, race relations, drug abuse, population control, environmental pollution, and world hunger. As an anthropologist, Mead had been trained to think in terms of the interconnection of all aspects of human life. The production of food cannot be separated from ritual and belief, and politics cannot be separated from childrearing or art. This holistic understanding of human adaptation allowed Mead to speak out on a very wide range of issues. She affirmed the possibility of learning from other groups, above all by applying the knowledge she brought back from the field to issues of modern life. Thus, she insisted that human diversity is a resource, not a handicap, that all human beings have the capacity to learn from and teach each other.

Classroom tactics:

More information about her contribution to intercultural studies can be found at following website: [www.interculturalstudies.org/Mead/biography.html](http://www.interculturalstudies.org/Mead/biography.html)

**(4) "Culture shock" is a recurring topic in intercultural studies. Use a search engine such as Google Scholar to look up its definition, symptoms and when the term was first used in literature.**

Definition:

An occupational disease of people who have been suddenly transplanted abroad.  
(Oberg)

Symptoms:

Generally, they suffer from frustration, anxiety, although individuals differ greatly in their symptoms, which may include excessive washing of the hands, excessive concern over drinking water, food, dishes, and bedding; ... a feeling of helplessness and a desire for dependence on long-term residents of one's own nationality; fits of anger over delays and other minor frustrations; delay and outright refusal to learn the language of the host country; excessive fear of being cheated, robbed, or injured; great concern over minor pains and eruptions of the skin; and finally, that terrible longing to be back home, ... reject the environment which causes the discomfort.

First occurrence:

Culture shock was first elaborated theoretically by Kalervo Oberg, although Cora DuBois had already used the phrase before him. Oberg's article, cited by more than 2380 scholarly works, was much more influential.

Skill: Comprehend and use language with accuracy, clarity and discernment

Classroom tactics:

The first occurrence of cultural shock can be located using Google Scholar.

Its definition can also be found in articles and books written by scholars such as Milton J. Bennett, whose articles are widely cited. The teacher can ask students to compare definitions given by scholars.

The "symptoms" question asks students to apply what they have learned to the examination of their experience, which may come from personal life, and their reading of literary works or academic articles mentioned above.

References:

DuBois, C. (1951, November). *Culture shock*. Talk presented as part of a panel discussion at the First Midwest Regional Meeting of the Institute of International Education, Chicago.

Oberg, K. (1954, August). *Culture shock*. Paper presented to the Women's Club of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

## Critical Reading

### I. Understanding the text

#### 1. Outlining

Thesis: The assumption of similarity keeps one from understanding people of other culture backgrounds and it should be addressed with a variety of means in order to better intercultural communication.

Para(s).	Main idea
1	The need to examine the reasons for frustrations in intercultural communication
2	The assumption of similarities, a stumbling block, is partly based on biological commonality.
3	The assumption of similarities is partly caused by people's inclination in dealing with differences.
4	The assumption of similarities lends support from Darwinian theory on facial expressions.
5	Emotions are actually determined by people's cultures.

6	We must treat each encounter as an individual case.
7	Assumption of similarities and differences affects people's attitude in intercultural practice.
8	Assumption of similarities will put one in discomfort.
9	Assumption of similarities keeps one from adjustment to local context.
10	Assumption of similarities will also cause misunderstanding among people in the host country.
11	Classroom discussion generates insights.
12	Intercultural classroom is also a place to understand nonverbal behavior in intercultural communication.
13	Increased contact does not necessarily increase friendship and understanding.
14	Tensions exist where there are intensive cultural communication.
15	Tensions, however, can be alleviated with expertise of intercultural communication.
16	Secondhand knowledge of local people's behavior and attitudes does not help.
17	A better strategy is to study local culture, develop an investigative, nonjudgmental attitude, and a tolerance for ambiguity.
18	The key lies in understanding the assumptions and values on which local people's behavior rests.

#### Classroom tactics:

1. As Text A constitutes but the first stumbling block only, there seems to be no clear divisible parts. However, if one examine it more carefully, they can find it can be divided into five parts, as outlined in the table below.
2. After your students have given main idea of each paragraph, you can move on, ask them to summarize the main idea of these five parts.

Part	Para(s).	Main idea
I	1	Introduction of the whole text
II	2-4	Introduction of the assumption of similarity
III	5-6	There are no universals or human nature that can be used for automatic understanding.
IV	7-10	The assumption of similarity has consequences.
V	11-18	Approaches to address the similarity assumption, i.e. intercultural communication classroom, seeking first-hand information, developing an investigative, tolerant and reflective mind.

## 2. Comprehension check

- (1) In Para. 3, there is a statement "people are people." What do you think it means?  
The statement "people are people" means there is similarity among people from different cultural background that allows them to understand each other. (Para. 3)
- (2) In Para. 6, the statement "people are people" appears again. What do you think it means here? What function does it serve, given the overall organization of the text?  
In Para. 6, the statement suggests that people are all culture bound and culturally modified, the differences cause difficulties in people's mutual understanding. It echoes the previous paragraphs, which express the opposite idea, and contributes to the cohesion of the article.(Para. 6)
- (3) What does the word "facade" in Para. 8 refer to?  
The word "facade" does not mean the front part of a building. It refers to the appearance of people and cities in the context of intercultural communication. One may find the appearances look similar, but people's values, the underlying mechanisms of their communication are not. (Para.8)
- (4) What does "nonevaluative thinking" in the last sentence of Para. 8 mean? You can also refer to Text B for hints.  
The phrase "nonevaluative thinking" refers to the attitude of not hurrying to conclusion, as discussed in Part V of Text B.(Para.8)
- (5) What does "third culture" mean in Para. 18?  
The phrase "third culture" refers to the virtual space created when two parties in intercultural communication try to adapt to each other. When you examine the last three lines of Para. 18 you will have such an idea, which is specified in *American Cultural Patterns: A Crosscultural Perspective* by Edward C. Stewart and Milton J. Bennett. (Para.18)
- (6) In order to support her idea, Barna uses participants' reflection, narration and her own reflection. Find examples of these three evidence the text.  
Skill: Identify and evaluate the materials Barna uses to support her point
  - (a) Participants' reflection: Students' narration and reflection in Para. 12;
  - (b) Research findings: Those of Stewart and Bennett in Para. 18;
  - (c) Her own reflection: Barna's own reflection in Paragraph 14.

## II. Evaluation and exploration

### 1. Evaluating the text

#### *(1) How does Barna start her essay? Is it effective? Why or why not?*

Barna starts her essay with a "why" question. Its effectiveness consists in two facts. First, a question itself draws people's attention. Second, the "why" question presupposes the



existence of frustrating misunderstanding, which needs to be addressed in the following paragraphs.

***(2) How would you describe Barna's tone in this essay? Give examples from the text to support your view.***

Barna's tone is neutral. She presents facts and people's performance as they are, not evaluating any party in the text.

***(3) In the first paragraph, Barna says, "New proximity and new types of relationships are presenting communication challenges that few people are ready to meet." What kinds of new proximity and new types of relationships do you think there are in today's world? What communication challenges do they bring?***

The new proximity and new relationship may refer to such events as increased overseas traveling, business outsourcing, the advent of the Internet etc. Additionally, when Barna wrote this article, the world just witnessed the end of the Cold-War, and countries in East Europe started their integration into the European Union and the world led by the U.S.

***(4) Para. 5 has it that a person's cultural upbringing determines whether or not his/her emotion will be displayed or suppressed, as well as on which occasion and to what degree. Do your own experiences support or contradict this claim? Can you give an example?***

This question requires students to understand the message conveyed in Para. 5 accurately before they can come up with evidence to support or to contradict the claim. The phrase "cultural upbringing" can cover topics ranging from religious background to pedagogical tradition, involving a rich variety of interpretations and examples.

***(5) For the first obstacle, the assumption of similarity, the author offers solutions in Para. 17. Do you think her solutions are effective? If not, offer some alternatives from your own experience.***

Skill: Evaluate the solutions provided by Barna and propose alternative ones

To decide the effectiveness of Barna's solutions in Para. 17, one should conduct empirical studies or to survey relevant literature. You can introduce the literature concerning intercultural training and its effect to students. After the literature review, the students may come up with alternative solutions which are original or, at least, "not reinvented wheels".

## 2. Exploring beyond the text

***(1) Do you think Barna has exhausted all the obstacles to intercultural communication? If not, what other obstacles has she neglected? Give some examples to support your point.***

- Skill: Illustrate your points with appropriate examples

This question invites students to examine Barna's text closely and explore beyond the text, in order to find what is left untouched. This question is designed to encourage students to read critically and challenge the authority with solid evidence.

***(2) Barna regards the assumption of similarities as a stumbling block of intercultural communication. By contrast, Chinese scholar Qian Zhongshu (钱钟书) believes: 东海西海, 心理攸同. What is your position on this issue? Use relevant evidence to defend your claim.***

- Skills: View the issue in question from an alternative perspective  
Explore the Chinese thoughts regarding intercultural communication

With the quote "东海西海，心理攸同”，this question invites students to read Qian Zhongshu's preface to 谈艺录 as well as articles entitled 诗可以怨 and 通感 in his "七缀集", to sample his rich insights. Students may disagree with Qian, but they should argue for their claims. Additionally, they can trace Qian's statement back to Lu Jiuyuan. Lu again echoes Mencius who said that Shun(舜) and King Wen(文王), thousand miles and thousand years from each other, had exactly the same values and principles.

By reading these classics, students can be expected to think profoundly and have less prejudice against the so-called "pedantic" figures, who actually opened up the realm of "心学".

References:

Qian, Z. (2004). 谈艺录[On the Art of Poetry]. Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company.

Qian, Z. (2001). 七缀集[Patchwork: Seven Essays on Art and Literature]. Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company.

***(3) Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity describes six stages one has to experience when staying abroad. Search online for information about this model. How do you think Bennett would respond to Barna on the issue of cross-cultural stumbling blocks?***

Milton Bennett's Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity(DMIS) a framework to explain how people experience and engage cultural difference. The DMIS is grounded theory; it is based on observations he made in both academic and corporate settings about

how people become more competent intercultural communicators. Using concepts from constructivist psychology and communication theory, he organized these observations into positions along a continuum of increasing sensitivity to cultural difference, namely denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration.

The positions along the continuum are also known as stages of development. At the first three stages, one is still ethnocentric. It is not until when they reach acceptance that they are steering out of ethnocentricity. Therefore, what distinguishes Bennett from Barna is that he elaborates the temporal or developmental dimension of intercultural experience, although Bennett subscribes to Barna's position.

Skill: Understand and compare related theories/assumptions

References:

Bennett, M. (1993). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience*(pp.21-71). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Bennett, M. (2013). *Basic concepts of intercultural communication: Paradigms, principles, & practices*. Boston, MA: Intercultural Press.

***(4) Some say that America and Britain are separated by the same language, each having its own tradition and values. Do you think the same applies to China and the Chinese-speaking communities in other countries, such as Singapore and Malaysia? What are the "stumbling blocks" in this case?***

Skills: Examine popular assumptions critically

Classroom tactics:

This question requires students to examine critically the assumption or expectation that all Chinese-speaking communities share the same national identity, values and even political ideology. For those students who are fans of certain entertainment or sports stars, such blocks are more evident when they interact with other fans from other Chinese-speaking communities. This question is designed to encourage them to speak out their opinion, guide them to categorize and make sense of their results.

## **Language enhancement**

### **I. Words and phrases**

#### **1. Word formation**

Words	Number of Morphemes	Bound Morpheme(s)
formation	2	-ation
unmistakable	3	un-; -able
hurriedly	3	-ed; -ly
alligator	1	--
knowingly	3	-ing; -ly
endangered	3	en-; ed
undeniable	3	un-; able
reply	1	--
jobless	2	-less
irresponsible	3	ir-, -ible

### **Classroom tactics:**

Some students may ask why "-able" is regarded as a bound morpheme here. You can remind them of the "-able" entry in dictionaries, according to which "-able" means more than the word *able* can convey. The suffix "-able" means not only "that you can do something", but also other meanings, such as "having a particular quality or condition", such as "knowledgeable" and "comfortable". Actually, even dictionaries have not exhausted the meanings of "-able". When you thumb through the dictionary for words ending in "-able" /"-ible" among entries starting with "un-", "in-", "im-", and "ir-", you will find many words in which "able" plays a variety of roles, such as "irritable", "perishable", "personable", "payable" and "seasonable". Thus the suffix "-able" is different from the word *able* which is a free morpheme and has only one of the meanings above.

## **2. Prepositions**

- (1) with
- (2) to
- (3) to
- (4) into
- (5) into
- (6) to
- (7) with
- (8) to

- (9) to
- (10) with

### 3. Proofreading

- (1) to
- (2) a
- (3) a
- (4) took
- (5) include
- (6) feet
- (7) NONE
- (8) problems
- (9) for
- (10) in which

## II. Sentence and discourse

### 1. Paraphrasing

- (1) To many people's surprise, it is not enough to have only good intention and the possibility of mutual benefit, and to use what one considers to be a friendly approach [to do away with intercultural misunderstandings].
- (2) The idea that we are similar does not often make us believe that we use the same language, but it does make us less careful in making sense of nonverbal symbols, signs, and signals.
- (3) The representatives from contrasting cultures may all wear Western dress, speak English and use similar greeting rituals. The apparent similarity, however, may deceive the representatives themselves into believing that they are the same.
- (4) If one assumes that different peoples are similar, he or she is more likely to be too confident to remain cautious. If one assumes that different peoples are different, he or she may be more cautious.
- (5) People generally assume that if we have more contact with representatives of diverse cultures through travel, student exchange programs, joint business ventures, and so on, our understanding and friendship will naturally be improved. However, the discussion above challenged this assumption.
- (6) If these nations were not in such intensive cultural communication with one another, there would not have been tensions within nations and between nations.

### 2. Translation

- (1) 误解和/或排斥发生的原因之一是许多人天真地认为, 世界各地的民族之间有足够多的共同点, 可以让沟通变轻松。(Text A, Para. 2)

- (2) 在交流方面，生物共性并不会产生多大帮助，因为在交流过程中，我们需要交换想法和信息，需要探索共同生活和共同工作的方法，或者需要给人留下某种我们希望产生的印象。(Text A, Para. 2)
- (3) 讲授跨文化交流的课堂是产生真知灼见的地方之一。(Text A, Para. 11)
- (4) The worst scenario is not that he resigns, but that he remains in office.
- (5) The arrival of tablets has rendered books obsolete.
- (6) Just as there is no key that opens all locks, there is no one answer applicable to all issues.

### 3. Paragraph Structure

Answer: 2-5-3-4-6-1-7

Skill: Develop an awareness of discourse coherence and cohesion

Classroom tactics:

You can encourage students to explicitly state reasons for their chosen orders and show them your strategy, in order to develop their discursive awareness. For example, the phrase "In short" should be put in the end, because it is generally used to summarize the main idea. The words such as "perception(s)", "deem" and "find" belong to the same semantic field, which means sentences containing such words cluster together. With this knowledge, one can put 3 and 4 together. Similar strategy can be used to identify the cluster containing 1, 6 and 7. With close examination, one can order them correctly. With the five sentences in place, the remaining slots will be easy.

## Intercultural reflections

**1. Amy Tan and other Chinese American writers tell stories of intercultural communication in their novels. Read “My Mother's English” by Tan in Unit 9 of this book again and consider in what ways Barna’s discussion in Text A and Text B of the present unit helps to explain Tan's experiences. You can refer to other works by other writers with immigrant family backgrounds as well.**

Of the six stumbling blocks, the assumption of similarity may lead one into misinterpretation. The assumption of difference may help one adjust their reaction and interpretation to what is happening. For example, in Para. 4, Tan mentions "switch in my English" and "our language of intimacy". In this case, a particular variety of English previously existed between her mother and her, which is different from standard English. Then her husband successfully adapted to and acquired it. Had her husband assumed that her mother, she and himself have the same understanding of things in every case because they all speak the same language, tensions would have arisen and their life could not have been so smooth as described by Tan.

Classroom tactics:

This is not only a reflection of Text A and Text B, but also a good opportunity to review what we have learned in Unit 9. In this project, students are asked to examine the scenarios in the literary works before applying what they have learned.

References:

Tan, A. (2002). Mother Tongue. In V. Zamel & R. Spack (Eds.), *Enriching ESOL Pedagogy: Readings and Activities for Engagement, Reflection, and Inquiry*(pp.431-436). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

**2. Para. 10 of Text A introduces a scenario of intercultural communication between foreigners in America and local American people. Find examples of Americans coming into Chinese communities and interacting with the local people. Do similar communication barriers exist? Give some examples and comments.**

Skills: Evaluate one's own culture within a global context

Reflect on one's own intercultural communication experience

Classroom tactics:

Students can find such cases not only in literary works, but also in their everyday life, where they have encounters with people from America, or other parts of the world. The teacher can guide students to find critical instances, examine the components of such instances, i.e. who did what with whom, how and why they did that, and why misunderstanding arose, etc.

The teacher is suggested to warn students of stereotypes in their analyses, as there are many idiosyncratic elements in people's behaviour, which cannot be ascribed to their "national character"(which is a form of stereotype).

**3. Sometimes, communication between a teenager and a senior citizen (born and raised in the same neighborhood) could be just as intercultural as that between two people from opposite corners of the globe. Have you had similar experiences in your life? Besides age difference, can you think of other factors that may lead to communication breakdown between two generations?**

Skill: Develop a coherent and cohesive oral/written discourse

Classroom tactics:

Students have such life experience and it is not difficult for them to come up with personal accounts. But it is your job to guide them into analysis after categorization of information and opinions. You can also refer them to Aristotle's elaboration on the temperament of the young and the old in his *Rhetoric*, which may provide some inspiration.

References:

Aristotle. (2011). *Rhetoric*(C. Lan, Trans.). Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

### **Creative Response**

#### **Wikibook project**

You may have observed that there are many stereotypes which get in the way when Chinese people and people from other cultures try to communicate with each other. Some of these stereotypes make good material for the kinds of jokes cracked by Huang Xi, the Chinese American talk show host. Others are not so funny. Compile a Wikibook on this topic in small groups and then share your books online. If possible, try to get some people from other cultures involved in your project. This should help you to become more aware of the stereotypes in cross-cultural communication and their potential dangers. To get an idea of what a Wikibook is like, you can refer to the following website: [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Main_Page)

Skills: Summarize what is learned in the whole semester

Check achievement or progress

Classroom tactics:



First, do feel assured that a Wikibook is not some daunting task. You may well catch up or understand it better than your students. It is a platform for knowledge, very much like the wallpaper you made in college years. The only difference is that a wikibook allows online interactions and multimedia elements. Feel free to join your students' collaborative programs. Follow the Wiki spirit, join and enjoy, but DO NOT try to be an omniscient and omnipotent master. The mutual trust between you and your class will harvest fabulous fruits.

Second, it is desirable if your feedbacks are generated and taken up in the context of your cooperation. Evaluation scheme can vary from class to class, as they may have different degrees of exposure to the Internet and different interests. As the most important part, the evaluation scheme is to be worked out by teacher and the class together, for example, how much weight is to be put on the interactivity of the Wikibook, how to decide its readability, etc.

After your participation in this collaborative project, you will understand that "记问之学，不足以为人师". If one wants to teach simply by memorizing some expressions, facts or authoritarian opinions, they will find it difficult to be a worthy and respectable teacher. What a teacher needs is not a bucketful of water to be poured into students' cups. Instead, they have to be like a spring whose refreshing waters never fail.