



Culture and Language

Presented by: Group 5

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1. Introduction

Culture and Language

- ◆ **Culture:** the ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people or society.
- ◆ **Language:** the collection of symbols governed by rules and used to convey messages between individuals.

Culture and Language

How is language related to culture?

2. Verbal Communication Style

- a. Direct and Indirect
- b. Elaborate-Succinct
- c. Formal-Informal

2.a. Direct and Indirect

Direct

Low-Context

- To low-context communicators, the meaning of a statement is in the words spoken.
- **Low-context cultures** use language primarily to express thoughts, feelings and ideas as clearly and logically as possible.

2.a. Direct and Indirect

Indirect

High-context cultures
value language as a way to
maintain social harmony.

The meaning of the words are
delivered through:

- nonverbal behaviors of the speaker
- history of the relationship
- general social rules

2.a. Direct and Indirect

Comparison

Low-Context	High-Context
Majority of information carried in the speech directly.	Important information carried in contextual clues (time, place, relationship, situation)
Self-expression valued by state opinions and desires directly.	Social harmony valued and maintained by indirect expression of opinion.
Clear, persuasive speech considered praiseworthy. Verbal fluency admired.	Communicators talk “around” the point, allowing others to fill in the missing pieces. Ambiguity and use of silence admired.

2.b. Elaborate-Succinct

Elaborate

- Involving many carefully arranged parts or details.
- Strong assertion and exaggerations.

2.b. Elaborate-Succinct

Succinct

- Briefly and clearly expressed
- Silence is value

2.c. Formal-Informal

Informal language: The informal approach that characterizes relationships.

Example: American always call a person by specify direct to their name even if friend, stranger, relative...

2.c. Formal-Informal

Formal language: To use proper speech.

Example: In Korea, for example, the language reflects the Confucian system of relational hierarchies.

Cambodia's people always use the formal word with the older person, teacher...



3. Language and Worldview

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Linguistic Relativity

- + Popular known as Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis
- + Holds that “The structure of a language of a language affect its speaker worldview or cognition.”
- + There are two version
 - _ Weak Hypothesis (Linguistic Relativism)
 - _ Strong Hypothesis (Linguistic Determinism)

Linguistic Relativity

Linguistic determinism: is the idea that language and its structures limit and determine human knowledge or thought.

This hypothesis is now generally agreed to be false.

Linguistic Relativity

Linguistic relativism: linguistic categories and usage only influence thought and decisions.



3.a. Understanding Diversity

LANGUAGE AND PERCEPTION

Non-English speakers cannot distinguish between two similar terms

Example:

The French cannot distinguish between mind and brain, man and gentleman.

The Spanish cannot differentiate a chairman from a president.



4. Language Use in North American Culture

4. Language Use in North American Culture

-The importance of language as a reflection of worldview isn't just a matter of interest for anthropologists and linguists, it also reflect and shape the way we view ourselves and others.

For example:

-A woman's choice of the label Miss or Mrs can be a statement about her identity.

-In Western society, women face a conscious choice about how to identify themselves when they marry.

- Taking husband's last name

- Hyphenate their birth name with their husband's

- Keep their birth name

-The labels that members of an ethnic group choose to describe themselves say a great deal about their identity.

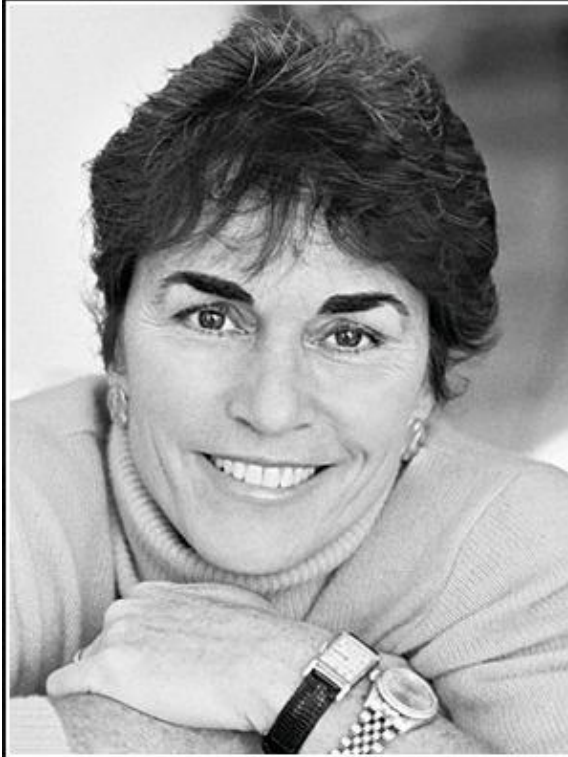
5. Summary



If culture was a house, then
language was the key to the front
door, [and] to all rooms inside.

— *Khaled Hosseini* —

AZ QUOTES



Language is the road map of a
culture. It tells you where its people
come from and where they are
going.

— *Rita Mae Brown* —

AZ QUOTES



Thank you!!