

Culture and Interpersonal, Day 1

2019-08-29

Course(s) Used:

- Interpersonal Communication

Goals and Objectives:

- Students can identify the difference between Cultures and Co-cultures.
- Students can list examples of co-cultures that they are members of.
- Students understand significant dimensions of culture used in interpersonal communication research.
- Students identify times that they code switch in everyday interaction.

Rationale: Culture has an enormous impact on the fields of experience that individual communicators have, and the degree to which they overlap. An understanding of cultural differences is essential to development as a communicator.

Materials Needed

Materials:

- None

Technology:

- Classroom computer and projector

Outline of the Lesson

1. Review of previous session's content
2. What is a culture?
3. Intercultural communication occurs across culture or co-culture boundaries¹
 1. Results in overlap in fields of experience (transactional models)
4. Culture vs. Co-cultures²
 1. Cultural and co-cultural differences are necessarily generalizations, not rules
5. Common cultural dimensions

¹ Cultural difference is more a question of degree than a yes/no question.

² Age, Race/Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, Nationality, Region, Ability, Religion, Activity, etc.

1. High context vs. Low context (directness)
2. Monochronic vs. Polychronic
3. Geert Hofstede's dimensions of National Culture³ VA
 1. Collectivism vs. Individualism
 2. Power Distance
 3. "Masculinity vs. Femininity" [achievement-vs-nurturing]
 4. Uncertainty Avoidance
 5. Long-term Orientation
 6. Indulgence
6. Code switching⁴ VA
 1. Hillary Clinton over 30 years <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCyvyyo6dtQ>
 2. Gillian Anderson in the US <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sg9i7Mxwm8w>
 3. Gillian Anderson in the UK <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlaUOqgZgAM>
 4. Race and code switching <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNbdnoyuUw8>
 5. Codes are more than just languages or accents, they are an entire set of verbal and nonverbal communicative behaviors.
7. Hands on group work: "Learn my code"
 1. We all code switch at times. Work to identify some unique aspects of the code of (one of your) co-cultures. Explain how to follow that code to the class
 2. Special note: Using a code you "haven't earned" can be considered *very* disrespectful. Use these codes outside the classroom at your own risk.
8. Lesson closing

Limitations

Hofstede's dimensions of national culture are a limited construct, and are not a complete description of either national culture or a variety of additional co-cultures. Not all nations have a single national culture or even a significant salient national identity.

Variations and Accommodations

Follow guidance from local accommodation authorities.