**Tutorial Week 11**

**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

Question 1: What do you understand by term intercultural communication?

**Ans:**

**Intercultural Communication**

It is the exchange of information, ideas and meanings by which people in different culture understand that skills process. This involves people from different cultural backgrounds, which could be having distinctive languages, social norms and values, beliefs and ways of communication. Purpose is to facilitate dialogue and collaboration across cultural boundaries that may lead to false interpretations or confusions.

Question 2: Define the term enculturation and acculturation and explain how they differ.

**Ans:**

**Enculturation**

In other words, enculturation is when an individual learns and adopts the behaviors, beliefs, norms, means of communication etcetera of their culture. It is a process that happens organically as one matures, usually derived from his or her family background, primary influences in education and socialization that help to create his/her cognitive view point whenever a cultural identity needs to be made.

**Acculturation**

Acculturation is one of the most common ways that language, customs, or social practices spread across cultures and usually occurs when members of a culture leave their homeland. While enculturation pertains to how one learns their own culture, acculturation is the process of adjusting to a new culture while also preserving some elements of one's original cultural identity.

**Key Differences:**

**The inspiration:** Enculturation is induced by the natal milieu when acculturation, influenced by another culture/new and different society.

In terms of scope, enculturation takes place in the self cultural setting/memory, and thus is a life-long process that acculturation only takes over when cultural communication or contact with external cultures.

**Nature:** Enculturation is a natural, lifelong process, while acculturation can be forced or voluntary and often involves negotiation between cultures.

Question 3: Describe the characteristics of high context and low context culture.

**Ans:**

**High Context vs. Low Context Cultures**

**High Context Culture**

In high-context cultures, meanings are derived from the unspoken parts of conversation and the environment. The work of more often Kramsch (Ostran, 2002) states that such cultures derive from how values are implemented through illusions rather than as written or pausterous explananations. Trust and relationships are important, hence, messages cut the chase and may take time, to be truthful. Japan and China, among several Arab cultures stand out as high context in their communication.

**Characteristics:**

* Depend on symbols, tone, and gestures especially when speaking.
* Communicative behavior is less straightforward, being more suggestive.
* Great encouragement of interpersonal bonds and commitment.
* Comprehending requires significant context and additional background.
* Use of plain language is minimum, nevertheless, ideas contained are pregnant.

**Low Context Culture**

People say what they mean in low-context countries and there’s little room for misunderstanding. Most of the information is conveyed through the language and very little is left for inferences that depend on the setting. Clarity and precision are the priorities here. Cultures in low-context communication are seen in the United States and Germany among others.

**Characteristics:**

* Communication is explicit and therefore standard associative meaning and directive speech acts are spoken.
* Non-verbal interaction siphons away the burden of communicative efforts.
* Emphasis in revealing and odering information is to economize time and also use appropriate forms.
* There are fewer things left unsaid; assumptions do not expect everything is course-corrected.
* Relationships and shared experiences are less emphasized in communication.

**Activity**

Form groups of 4 students.

**Step 1:** [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUXOhxh\_V0Q&ab\_channel=Magfirohfifi**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUXOhxh_V0Q&ab_channel=Magfirohfifi)

Watch the video looking for two things:

1. Identify five (5) examples of the differences in the business communication between the two cultures depicted in the video.

| **Japanese** | **French** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Punctuality is crucial; always on time. | 1. Punctuality is more casual and flexible. |
| 2. Business cards (Meishi) are exchanged formally, and the process must be respected before business begins. | 2. No specific emphasis on business cards, and they are exchanged more casually. |
| 3. Formal bowing is a common greeting, with much attention to ritual and formality. | 3. Handshakes are the customary greeting when meeting or leaving someone. |
| 4. Questions and clarifications are avoided during presentations; it is more respectful to wait until the end. | 4. Interruptions are discouraged, but small talk and conversation before business are common. |
| 5. Ceremonial meetings and gift exchanges often follow business dealings. | 5. There is less emphasis on ceremonial meetings or gift exchanges after business deals. |

B. In groups discuss the video by answering the following questions

1. What are the verbal and non-verbal differences in business communication illustrated between Japanese and French cultures?

**Ans:**

**Verbal and Non-Verbal Differences in Business Communication between Japanese and French Cultures:**

**Verbal differences:** Japanese culture values indirect communication and formal language, minimizing interruptions during presentations and focusing on structure.  
In contrast, French culture values directness and discussion. French executives frequently engage in small conversation before talking business, and they may speak more casually.

**Nonverbal Differences:** When exchanging business cards, the Japanese place a high value on bowing and formality, and they carefully inspect the card as a symbol of respect.  
Handshakes are common in France, while business cards and pleasantries are not as formal.

1. Thinking about how business is conducted in **your** country. Identify examples of cultural differences between business communication in your culture and in Australia.

Ans:

**Cultural Differences between Business Communication in Your Country and Australia:**

In certain nations, hierarchical communication and clear responsibilities between managers and employees are crucial. However, in Australia, communication is more casual and egalitarian, with free discourse promoted across all levels of a corporation.

Different cultures have different demands for time management and timeliness, such as Australia's rigorous timetable.

1. Identify different ways which we can use to reduce the communication barriers caused by cultural differences in communication.

**Ans:**

**Ways to Reduce Communication Barriers Caused by Cultural Differences:**

• **Cultural Awareness Training:** Educating personnel on diverse cultural customs, values, and traditions to promote mutual understanding.   
**• Use simple language:** To avoid colloquial terms and jargon that may not be easily understood across cultures.  
• **Active listening:** Paying attention to nonverbal signs and achieving complete knowledge before replying.   
  
• **Flexibility and Adaptation:** Adapt communication approaches to other cultures' preferences, including formality, directness, and time sensitivity.   
  
• **Technology-Assisted Communication:** Use translation tools or intercultural mediators for clear communication.