Culture Shock & You

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Culture Shock & Me...
It was just like the rest of us...
Wisdom I gained from Chinese culture

- To know others is wisdom, to know one’s self is clarity
  知人者智，自知者明 (Lao Zi, Dao De Jing)
- Know Others & Know Yourself – Win All Battles
  知彼知己，百战不殆 (Art of War)
- When you enter the village follow their customs
  入乡随俗 (Chinese saying)
- How does this speak to you?
What’s the bonding element? Can you feel it?
The 4 Phases of Culture Shock

- Please share stories & situations you thought of that fit as we go through the phases.
1. Honeymoon:

- Just arrived at the new country and everything is new and exciting.
- Fascination and curiosity abound.
- The newness is refreshing.
- Other thoughts?
2a. Shock & Frustration:

- As reality hits, we realize that the newness is waning off and things begin to get under our skin, but there is nothing we can do about it. Frustration and anger may surface and reveal itself via varied reactions and emotions.
- This is weird...what's going on?!
- Signs don’t make sense!
- What do they mean when they say that?
- Why are they looking at me?
- That's not what I meant!!
- Longing for something familiar – homesick.
- Where can I get a real cup of coffee??
- Do you have an example?
Consider both sides - your cultural perspective and that of the new culture

- **Language** - How does language affect cultural adaptation?
  - Different values for words than are found in the dictionary.
  - Words in one language that don’t translate.
  - Similar words that have different meanings.

- **Religion** - How does religion, or the lack of it, affect cultural adaptation?
  - Ideals and morals that influence individual values.
  - Concepts of right & wrong, trust, and friendship.

- **Humour** - It’s very different!
  - Examples?
Language may affect Social Interactions – A Survey

- Sometimes, while thinking of ways to cooperate better, I will think of words or ideas from more than one language. 13 out of 19 respondents agreed.
- Sometimes, when thinking about how to treat a person, I will think of words or ideas from a different language than what the other person speaks. 13 out of 19 respondents agreed.
- After considering the data from the questionnaire, it appears that most higher education students who were surveyed agree that they, in certain circumstances, consider other language options for social interactions.

Taken from: Effects of Language on Social Interactions of Bilingual and Multilingual Students by R Todd Cornell, Montana State University, 2016.
Things we don’t talk about.
3. Adjustment & Realignment

- Oh, now I understand what that means.
- It’s not an insult, they just do things differently!

- I understood, after asking my friends to explain.
- Do you have an example?
4. Acceptance & Balance

- After working through the process of Adjustment & Realignment, most people will be able to accept and feel comfortable in the new culture. This is a slow progression and does not happen all at once.
- I can’t wait to have a bowl of sweet red bean soup!

- I understand what that expression means and can react correctly.
- I know why they got angry at me for doing what I did. Next time, I’ll do it differently.
- Do you have an example?
“There was a time when I realized that constantly comparing and contrasting everything would never allow me to be really happy here. Qualifying the differences worked both ways, and I felt torn between my life here and what used to be my life back in Germany. So I began to see the differences as what they are—just differences—without trying to rate them or use them to put one place over the other. Over time, I felt much more at ease with my life in the U.S., and I began to understand that these differences are what living abroad is all about.”—Ame Plum
What they’re saying

“I think I just acknowledged homesickness and sadness as natural parts of my cross-cultural experience. I stayed in touch with my family and friends but also worked on making friends here in the U.S., and looked for any opportunities to experience new things and visit new places.”— Anamaria Knight, director of curriculum and instructional design, on her experience moving to the U.S. from Romania for graduate school.
Do you have anything to share?
What is Culture?

Asks the fish in water ...
Take aways

- Accepted & Familiar
- Power of curiosity
- Look at yourself
- Equality
- Personal space
- Cultural borders exist in the mind -> turn it into a Global Mindset
Share an intriguing cultural trait that you thought of …
Culture Drives Behaviour
Take aways

- Three ways to relate to the new culture
  - Confront (Sense that your behaviours are the right way)
  - Complain (Social bubbles)
  - Conform (Adapting to the new culture)

- Cultural lenses/glasses
- Boards composed of multiple cultures perform 35% better
- Differences in friendship - close vs. distant
The Cultural Iceberg

- Superficial Culture
- Hidden Culture
Superficial Culture
Hidden Culture

Communications Styles and Rules:
- Facial Expressions
- Gestures
- Eye Contact
- Personal Space
- Touching
- Body Language
- Conversational Patterns in Different Social Situations
- Handling and Displaying of Emotion
- Tone of Voice

Notions of:
- Courtesy and Manners
- Friendship
- Leadership
- Cleanliness
- Modesty
- Beauty

Concepts of:
- Self
- Time
- Past and Future
- Fairness and Justice
- Roles related to Age, Sex, Class, Family, etc.

Attitudes toward:
- Elders
- Adolescents
- Dependents
- Role Expectations
- Work Authority
- Cooperation vs. Competition
- Relationships with Animals
- Age
- Sin
- Death

Approaches to:
- Religion
- Courtship
- Marriage
- Raising Children
- Decision-Making
- Problem Solving
Culture Shock (circa 1940):
a sense of confusion and uncertainty sometimes with feelings of anxiety that may affect people exposed to an alien culture or environment without adequate preparation.
the feeling of disorientation experienced by someone who is suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture, way of life, or set of attitudes.
What is happening here culturally?
Cultural intelligence (CQ) is the capability to relate and work effectively in culturally diverse situations. It goes beyond existing notions of cultural sensitivity and awareness to highlight a theoretically-based set of capabilities needed to successfully and respectfully accomplish your objectives in culturally diverse settings.
Let’s take a 10 minute CQ assessment
Now, let’s queue up largest numbers to the right
The Four Strategies of CQ

Cultural Intelligence
- CQ Drive
- CQ Knowledge
- CQ Strategy
- CQ Action
CQ Drive
Level of interest or motivation to adapt culturally

- Do I have the desire to work through the challenges and conflicts that inevitably accompany cross-cultural situations?
- Am I interested enough in learning about other cultures that I will put forth the effort to do so on my own?
- What can I do?
  - Learn another language
  - Read novels based on other cultures
  - Follow international news broadcast – BBC, The China Daily
- Any other ideas?
CQ Knowledge
Level of knowledge about similarities & differences

- Do I have the cultural understanding needed to be more effective cross-culturally?
- Am I able to pull from previous experiences to interact comfortably with persons from other cultures?
- Do I have working knowledge of another language?
- Any other ideas?
CQ Strategy
Degree of ability to plan for cross-cultural situations

- Am I aware, and can I plan appropriately in light of the personal and cultural dynamics involved?
- Am I able to apply cultural knowledge that I have when needed?
- Can I plan ahead for how to apply cultural knowledge when interacting in cross-cultural situations?
- Anything else to add?
CQ Action
Degree of ability to change verbal & nonverbal actions

- What behaviours should I adapt for this cross-cultural situation?
- Can I adjust verbal and nonverbal habits by using cultural knowledge?
- Do I have cultural knowledge that I know how to apply in certain situations?
- Anything else?
Core values we’re not willing to compromise

What are some examples?
You don’t need to share yours, just keep it in the back of your mind.
CQ Core vs. Flex
Take Aways

- EQ versus CQ
- Ability to interact with others - not like me.
- Which bits are core? Where can you flex?
- CQ lies between core and flex.
- Loosen the knots in your core.
- Don’t judge with yourself as the benchmark.
- Stand up against cultural intolerance!
- The most difficult culture to crush is your own!
Yes or No

- Can I view my core any differently now than I did before?
- Am I able to practice flexing it?
Reverse Culture Shock

It all seems so familiar...

Identity crisis.
Reverse Culture Shock:

- A person may become so accustomed to their new culture that they would exhibit culture shock when they return to their home country!

- Why don’t you say thank you anymore?!
My Experience

- Everything was so familiar but I had changed.
- Too many choices.
- Nobody was looking at me!
- I moved to LA.
- Do you have any?
Thank you!
Discussion
Pair up with someone you don’t know
Discuss and share with the group

- What stands out most from this morning?
- Which ideas apply most to my context?
- What is the hardest part of intercultural interactions?
Happy Travels!

旅途愉快
Bon Voyage!

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