

# Teaching and Learning Across Cultures



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# Lightswitch FAIL



天花灯  
SMALLPOX



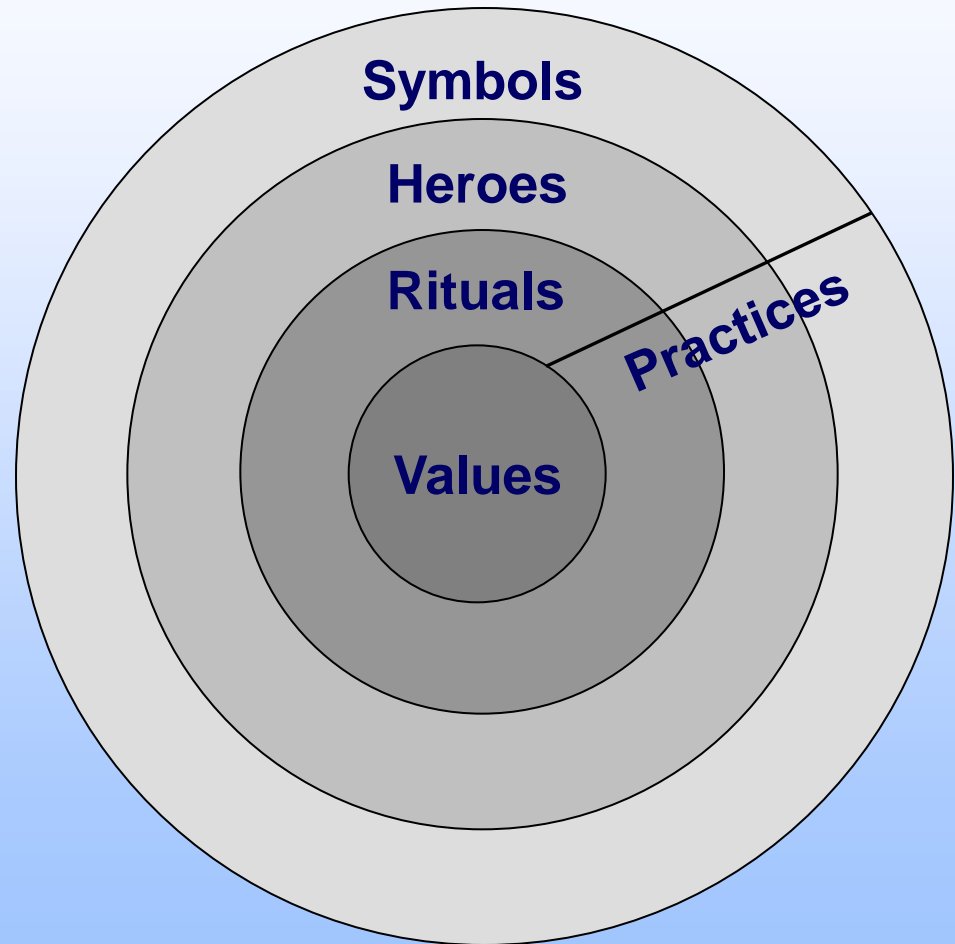
夜灯  
NIGHT LIGHT

# Introduction: What is Culture?

“...collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one human group from another... Culture in this sense includes systems of values, and values are among the building blocks of culture” (Hofstede, 1997)

► Multicultural Working Environments

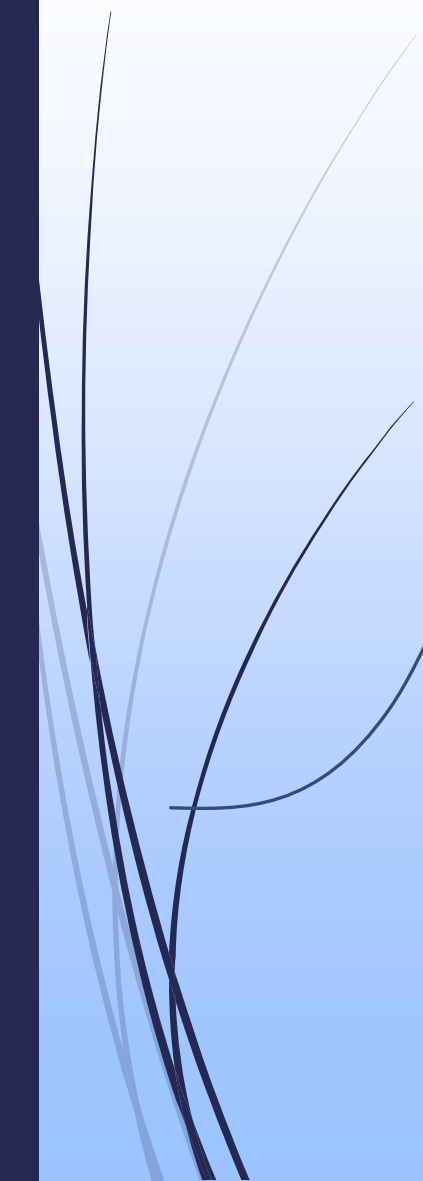
What does it mean?



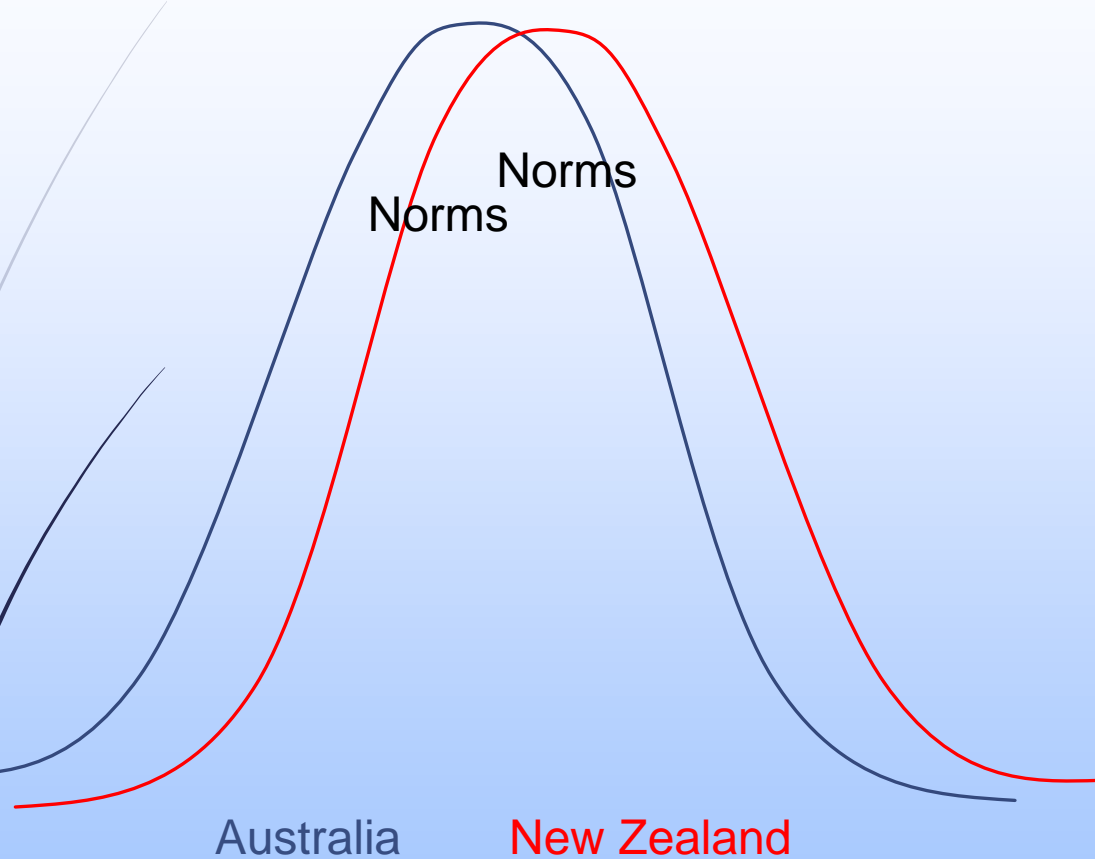
Of course, it's important not to stereotype...


Norms

Norms



What happens if...



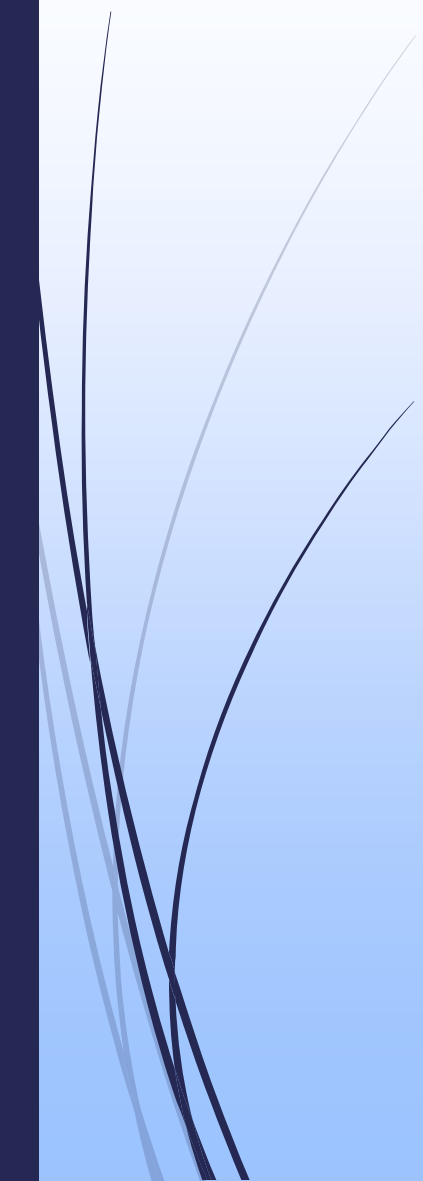


People differ from each other along the following dimensions/values:

- High Context - Low Context
- Hierarchical – Equal (Power Distance)
- High Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) – Low UA
- Individualism - Collectivism
- Clock – Event Orientation
- Confrontation - Avoidance



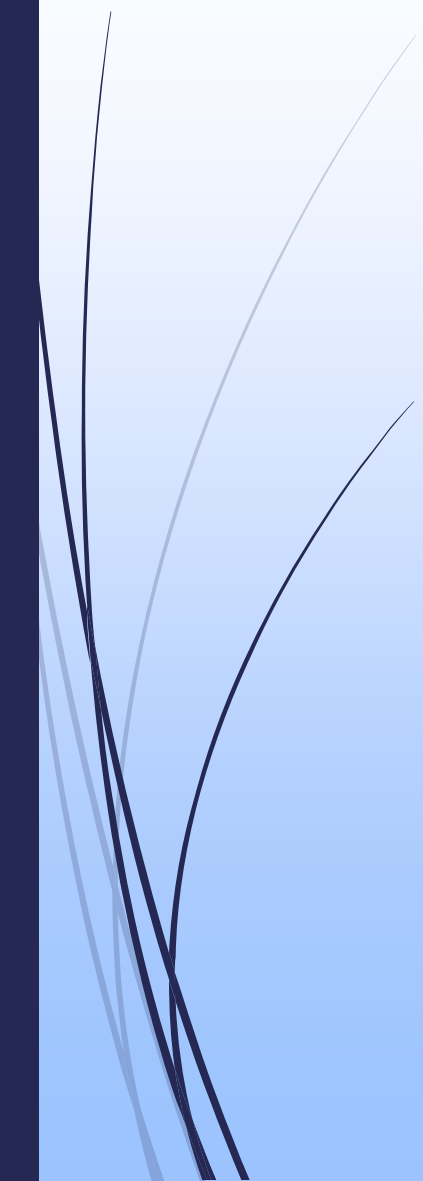
# *High Context / Low Context*



The level to which the communication in society is contextual and implicit (high context) rather than explicit (low context)



# *Power Distance*

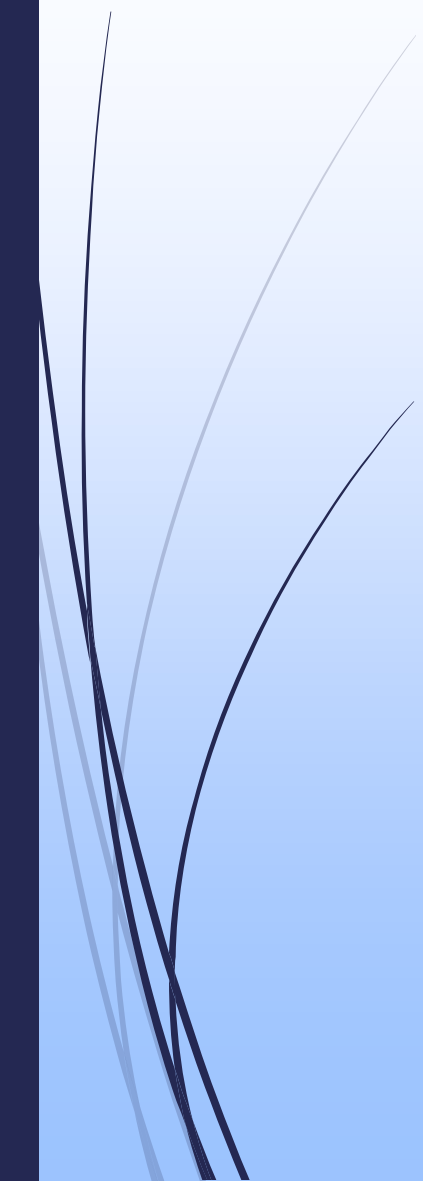


Relationship to authority and the extent to which people accept the unequal distribution of power. A lower power distance means lower tolerance of inequality in distribution of power.





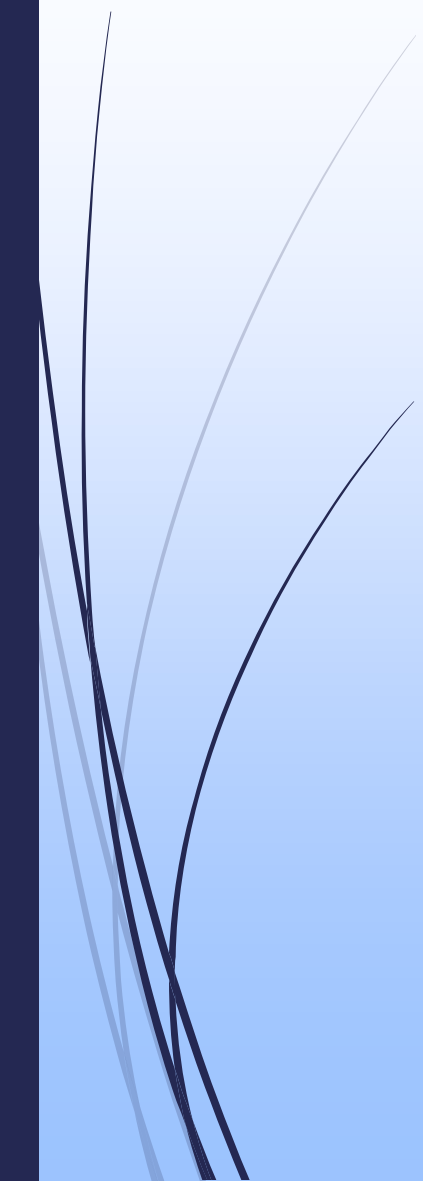
# *Individualism / Collectivism*



Reflects the extent to which people prefer to take care of themselves and their immediate families, remaining emotionally independent from groups etc.



# *Uncertainty Avoidance*



The level to which people prefer predictability and stability. Please note that uncertainty is different to risk. Risk is usually controllable and confined to particular areas. Uncertainty is more generic and unfocused.



# Communication Styles Across Cultures



Linear - Circular

Direct - Indirect

Intellectual - Relational

Restrained - Expressive





# Activity 1 - Perspective

- ▶ Indra stood six inches away from me when we talked
- ▶ Abdul was very quiet throughout the whole staff meeting, though some issues discussed were from his area of work
- ▶ Jane is constantly late for social gatherings in the workplace
- ▶ Chin hardly ever smiles in the workplace, and in his interactions with me

# Stereotypes

- Stereotypes in and of themselves, do not lead to miscommunication/communication breakdown.
- Inaccurate/ Negative stereotypes held rigidly can lead to inaccurate predictors of other's behaviour and misunderstandings (Gudykunst, 1994)
- Complexity and Specificity of Stereotypes
- Favourability and Consensus of Stereotypes
- Validity of Stereotypes

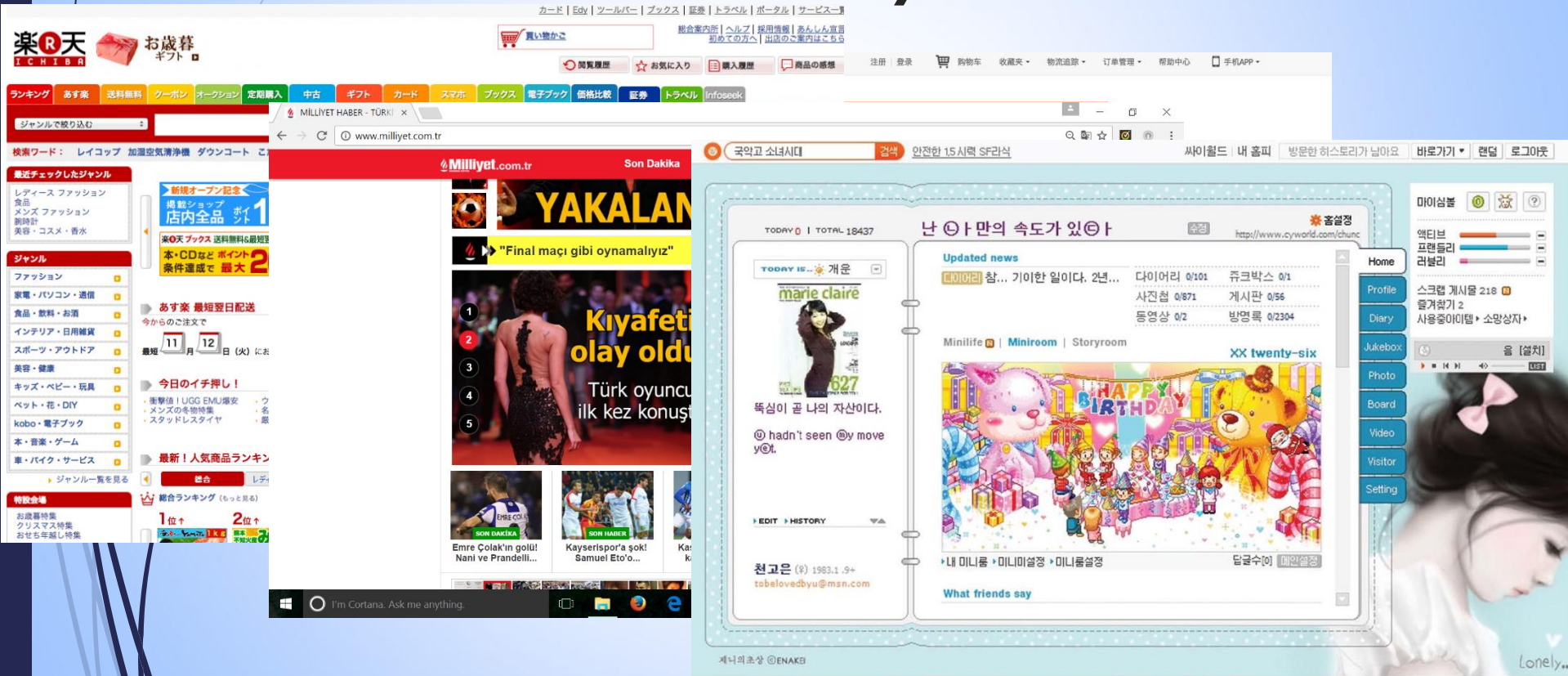
# Dealing with Stereotypes

- The one does not always represent the many
- Stereotypes can help explain behaviour, but don't let it guide your predictions about others
- Question the validity of our own stereotypes... *don't get too comfortable because our explanation is not always the right one*
- People are individuals at the end of the day





# Differences in Digital Environments between Home and Host Country







# Check this out

The University of Tokyo

<http://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/index.html>

Now – go to the top right “Language” and click the first option (which is Japanese) – What do you get?