

# CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS AT HOME: ACTIVITIES FOR THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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My name is Caroline!

I'm from...



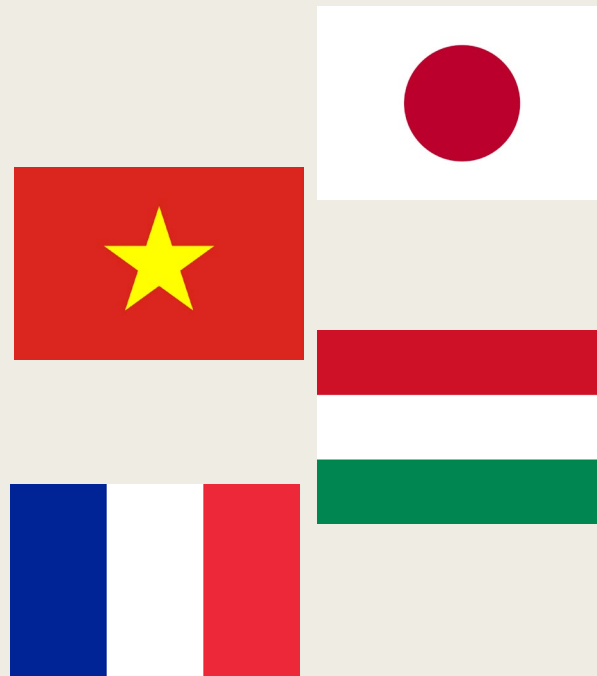
Are you from...?

I enjoy...



Do you enjoy...?

I've lived in...



Have you lived in...?



## Three Things in Common

Step 1: Find two or three people that you don't know, or that you don't know very well.

Step 2: Introduce your names and where you are from.

Step 3: Ask and answer questions freely. Find at least **three things** that you have in common.

*You decide what to share!*

# Discussion

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1. What do you understand by “culture”?

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2. In your own view, what (if any) role does culture have to play in the English language classroom, or course?

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3. What (if any) role does the learner's home language and culture play in your English language classroom, or course?

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Corbett (2022, 7)

# “Culture” in language teaching



High culture → broader definition



‘Pure’ linguistics → culture as context



Single ‘target culture’ → openness to multiple cultures



Intercultural competence essential to global citizenship

# “Culture” in language teaching

“Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard won communicative competence, challenging the ability to make sense of the world around them.”

(Kramsch, 1993, p.1)

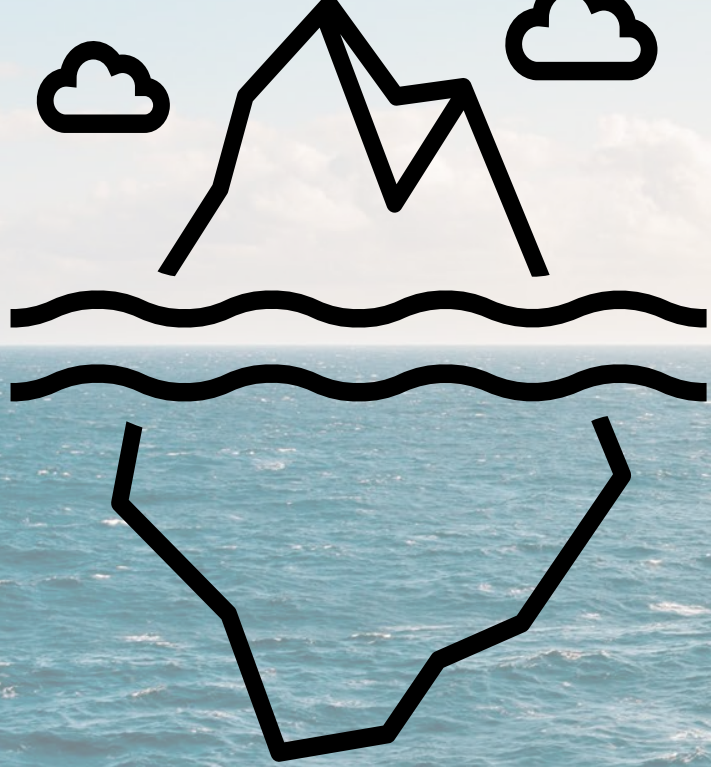
“An absence of input about culture does not leave a vacant cultural space which can be filled in later. Rather, it leads to a cultural space which is filled by uninformed and unanalysed assumptions based on assumptions and understandings from the learners’ first culture.”

(Liddicoat, 2004, p19)

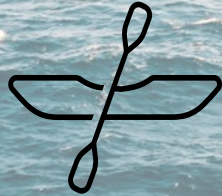
# Intercultural Competence: Common Themes

<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>Attitude</b>
Own culture Other cultures Sociolinguistics/ interaction Effects of cultural difference on communication	Interpret symbols Analyze/ evaluate/ relate to own culture Acquire knowledge/ listen/ observe Apply knowledge Reflect	Curious Open-minded Suspend judgement Respectful

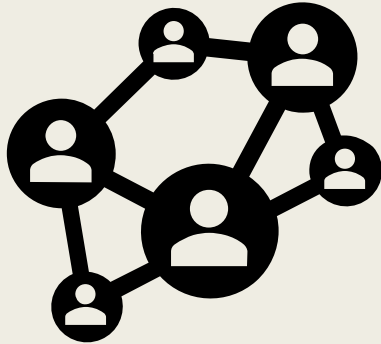
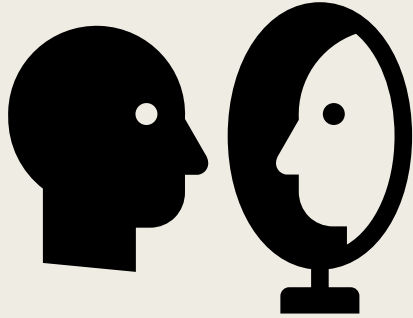
Based on Deardorff's (2009) summary of cultural frameworks by Hamilton et al (p11), Deardorff (p13), Byram (p17)



- 1 Personal culture
- 2 Cultural products
- 3 Cultural practices
- 4 Values/  
perspectives







# 1. Personal culture

Icebreakers → knowledge of self, others.

Connect to common knowledge of our group, research about other groups.

Culture of the classroom - communicative, personalized.

Students choose what to share.

## 2. Cultural products



Shibuya is one of the popular areas in Tokyo.

*Tatami* are floor mats.

*Shogi* is similar to chess.

*Ashi-yu* literally means “foot bath”.

An *oshiire* is a space for storing bedding.

A *kokeshi* is a Japanese doll made of wood

## 2. Cultural products: Practicing speculation

It could be one of the ...s in the UK.

It might be a ...

Maybe it's similar to ...

It might be used for .../  
...ing

It looks like it's made of ...





### 3. Cultural practices

“My Late, Your Early”

Based on Johnson & Rinvolucrici (2014, p61).

For each statement, write either a) a time (for example 8am) or b) a length of time (for example 2 hours).

They were invited to dinner with friends at 7pm. As they were polite, they arrived at the time their hosts expected they would.

	Range	Average
<b>UK (14 people)</b>	On time - one hour late	10 minutes late
<b>USA (8)</b>	30 minutes early - 30 minutes late	10 minutes late
<b>Canada (2)</b>	30 minutes early - 1 hour late	15 minutes late
<b>Australia (6)</b>	10 minutes early - 15 minutes late	On time
<b>Spain (1) 10 minutes late</b>	<b>Malaysia (1) 5-10 minutes late</b>	
<b>Hungary (1) on time</b>	<b>Japan (1) 30 minutes early</b>	

## 4. Values

Give students take a questionnaire about values.

They see pairs of statements. For each one, they decide which they agree with more.

Children's opinions are as important as their parents'.	10 20 30 40 50	Children should never question their parents' authority.
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# 4. Values

Add the two numbers for dimension B. Do the same for dimension C, then share with the class.

We will find out the average for the class.

## Dimension B

Society does not have many rules.	10 20 30 40 50	There are some rules that all people must respect.
Children should be taught to be flexible in new environments.	10 20 30 40 50	Children should be taught to be organized.
<b>TOTAL</b>		

## Dimension C

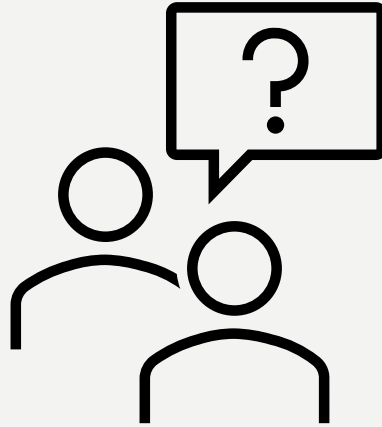
I care what other people think about me.	10 20 30 40 50	I focus on my own goals and rules.
People should have loyalty to the groups they belong to.	10 20 30 40 50	People should choose their friends based on likes and interests.
<b>TOTAL</b>		

**SAMPLE**

# B: UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

LOW Nobody is telling me what to do! I'm free!

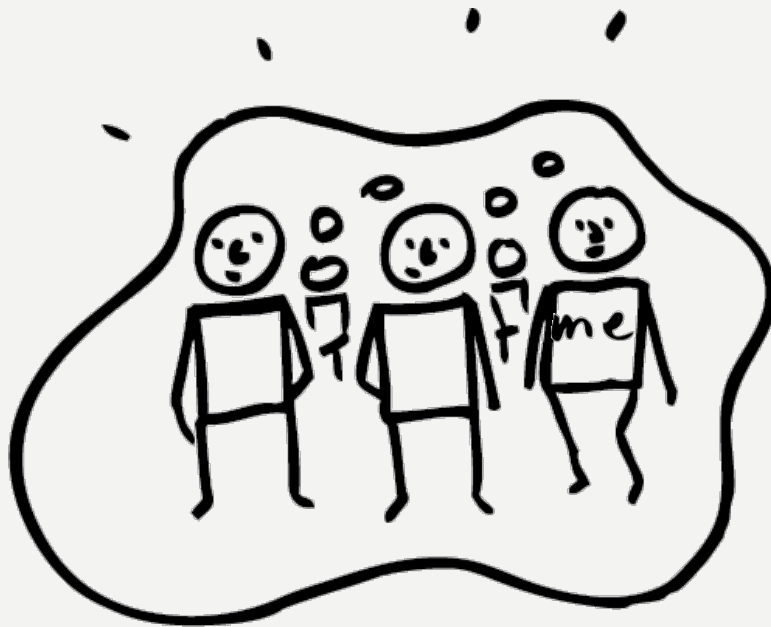
HIGH I don't know what to do! Help!





# DIMENSION C: INDIVIDUALISM

LOW We did it together!



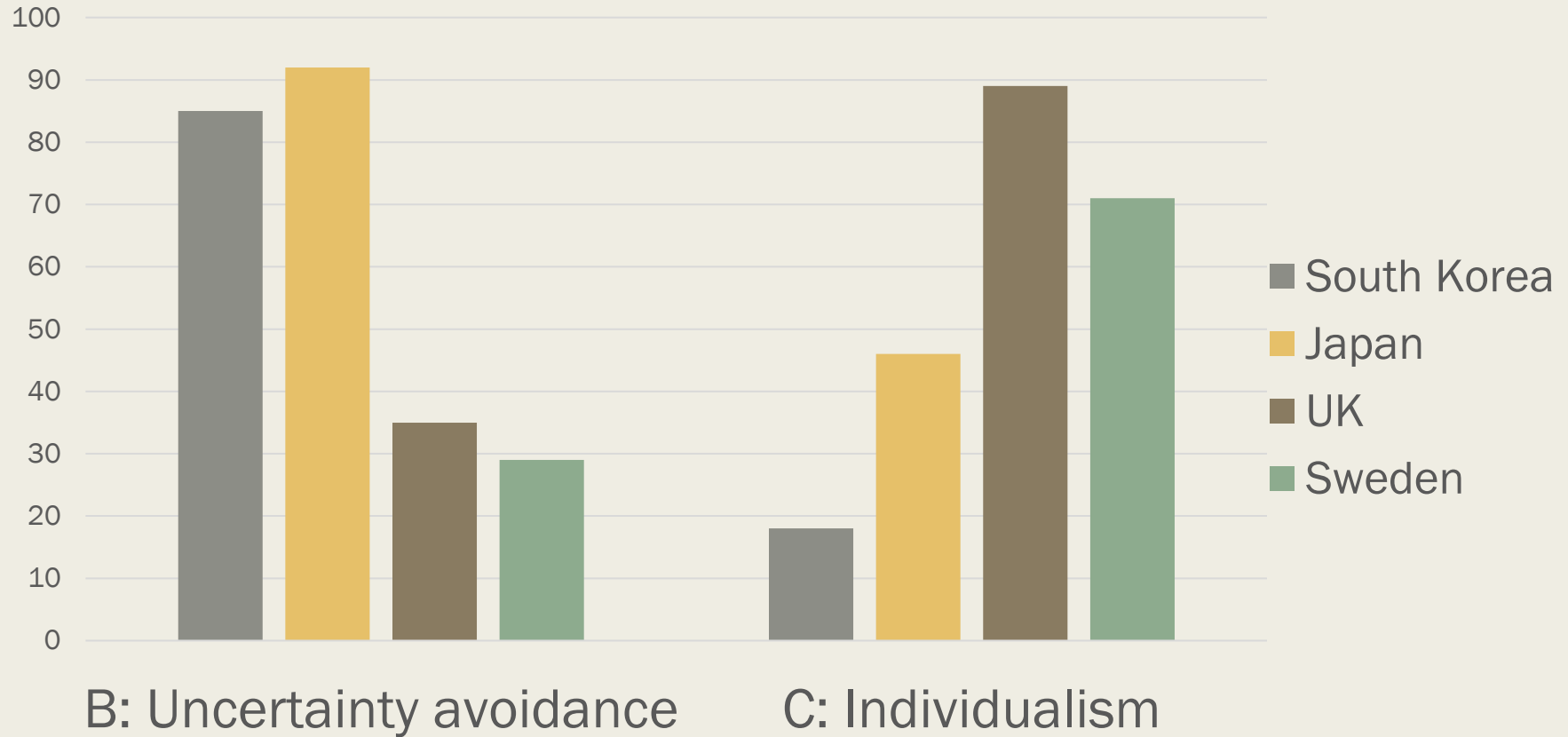
*the group*

HIGH I did it  
(with my group)!



*me*

## 4. Values: Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions



Source: Hofstede Insights <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/japan,south-korea,sweden,the-uk/>

# Layers of culture

Look at the picture.

Make sentences about what you can see.

(Image credited on next page)





[Chu Jen Junior High School students sleeping in rest time in Taichung City, Taiwan](#) by [enixii](#) is licensed under [CC by 2.0](#).

# Layers of culture

Which sentences describe factually exactly what you can see?

Which sentences interpret reasons for what you can see?

Which sentences evaluate what you see with your own subjective reaction?

# Conclusions & Questions

Gain knowledge of self, own culture and other cultures – use diverse teaching materials

Move between products, practices and values, familiar and unfamiliar examples

Learner-centred: students make own sense of material

Teacher challenge stereotypes, encourage cautious speculation, logical reasoning

Reflect on own position as teacher

# References

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