全国**教学型**本科院校商务英语系列规划教材

AN INTRODUCTION TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

跨文化交际基础

单晓晖 主编

对外经济贸易大学出版社
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An Introduction to Intercultural Communication

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出 版 说 明

随着经济全球化浪潮的日益高涨，中国与其他国家之间的经贸往来日益密切，既掌握娴熟英语又具有扎实商务专业知识的复合型人才已成为市场的主要需求。根据教育部发布的《国家中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要》中"建立高校分类体系，实行分类管理"的要求，对外经济贸易大学出版社专门针对教学型本科院校组织编写了这套"全国教学型本科商务英语系列规划教材"。

现在，我国的高等院校大致可分为研究型、教学研究型、教学型三大类。不同类型高等院校在人才培养类型、创新贡献和服务社会方面都应有各自的定位。与之相应的，其适用教材也各有不同。教学型高校作为我国高等教育的主力，量大面广、层次多、类型多，是培养应用型高级人才的主要力量。教学型高校以培养应用型、复合型人才为出发点，按"基础扎实，知识面宽，应用能力强，素质高，有较强的创新精神"的要求，以人为本，使学生"会学习"、"会创新"、"会做人"，既加强通识教育，同时也为终身教育作准备、打基础。

本系列教材面向全国教学型本科院校，目标群体明确。教材选题和内容均根据全国教学型本科院校课程设置而定，作者队伍选自全国教学型本科院校的优秀一线师资。本教材适用于全国教学型本科院校商务英语专业、财经专业和英语专业商务/应用/外贸外语方向的学生。

本套"全国教学型本科商务英语系列规划教材"包括《商务英语综合教程 1-4 册》《商务英语听说》《商务英语阅读》《商务英语写作》《商务英语函电》《商务英语翻译》《商务英语口译》《商务知识导读》《英语财经报刊阅读》《跨文化交际基础》《国际商务礼仪》《进出口贸易实务》《国际商务制单》和《国际贸易理论与实务》等。

本系列的编撰者们不仅具有丰富的语言教学经验，而且具备商务活动的实践经验，他们集教学经验和专业背景于一身，这是本套商务英语系列教材编撰质量的有力保证。

此外，本套教材配有辅导用书或课件等立体化教学资源，供教师教学参考（可登录我社网站 www.uibep.com 下载）。

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前 言
Preface

跨文化沟通指本族语者与非本族语者之间的沟通交际,也指任何在语言和文化背景方面有差异的人们之间的沟通交际。由于不同的民族所处的生态、物质、社会及宗教等环境不同,因而产生了不同的语言习惯、社会文化、风土人情等语境因素。不同文化背景造成人们说话方式或习惯不尽相同。随着经济的全球化,跨文化沟通活动将越来越频繁,渗透面越来越广。但并非学好外语就可以成功有效地与外国人进行沟通,因为跨文化意识的缺乏和对具体文化差异认识的不足都可能导致沟通的失败。全面、系统地了解跨文化沟通的内涵、研究及应用是成功实现跨文化沟通的前提和基础。新颁布的《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》特别提出要培养适应社会需要的既有专业英语基础又有相关专业知识技能的外经贸、外事类复合型人才。在经济全球化和文化多样性并存的今天,如何培养和提高跨文化交际能力就成为英语教学面临的主要任务之一。

目前,深入浅出地介绍跨文化理论及其在商务领域的运用的教材并不多见。鉴于此,为满足广大教师、学生、从业人员的需要,我们尝试提供一套全方位的、综合性强的现代跨文化沟通教材。

本书的作者具有丰富的教学、研究和实践经验,且参编过相关书籍。在编著过程中,作者花了大量的时间做了大量的调查和案头工作,力求使理论性、实用性、可读性有机结合。本书内容新颖、概念清晰,理论性和实用性强,通俗易懂、层次分明,特别贴近生活,案例非常丰富。其读者对象虽定位于高等院校商务英语专业的学生,但对于其他专业学生、外贸工作人员、商务管理人员、外企文员等,也大有裨益。

本书分为六章:跨文化沟通概念导入;最有影响的跨文化沟通理论回顾;跨文化国际商务;跨文化国际谈判;跨文化国际营销;跨文化案例研究方法。本书的内容涵盖了当今国际跨文化沟通的最新观点和最新动态。它可以让读者

了解在全球背景下跨文化商务活动的最新进展状况；并帮助读者做好准备，迎接新环境下跨文化国际商务研究和实践的新挑战。另外，每个章节后都附有丰富、多样的配套练习。由于其中绝大多数都是开放式题目，所以编者并未提供固定答案。读者还可以登录出版社网站（http://www.uibep.com）下载配套（PPT）课件。

本书在编辑过程中得到对外经济贸易大学出版社宋海玲和谭利彬编辑的无私热情帮助和专业技术指导，在此表示衷心感谢！

最后，由于编者水平有限，时间仓促，以及材料匮乏，不妥甚至错误之处难免，请各位见谅、指正。

编者

2014 年 3 月

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Chapter 1

Culture and Intercultural Communication

I am not different from you, I am different like you.
Culture is a framework in which we communicate.

—Stephen Roberts

The basic difference between Chinese and western culture lies in the thinking pattern.
—Ji Xianlin

1. Lead-in

CASE 1:

Americans tended to be more exaggerated when applying figurative expressions than we Chinese did. For instance, as to the same scene of Tom's driving too fast, what a Chinese guy would say and what the American counterpart would say always differed from each other to a great extent. In such conditions, Chinese people prefer to compare this scene to flying, lightning or just compare the speed to velocity of light. However, an American would rather say: "Wow, Tom's just like a bat out of hell!" You see the difference? Whatever we Chinese may choose, the objects would be related to those existing in the real world. But as to the figurative expression "hell", it is something that does not actually exist in this three-dimensional space. (Source: *Sarah's English BLOG*)

CASE 2：

With regard to suppliers in Japan, workers have a clear comprehension of the production scale and necessary production time. Whether it be the person who places the order from the supplier, or those who deal with the transaction thereafter, from beginning to end the level of service is consistently high. If we look at Western business culture, incompletion of a task within the designated period often sees the worker placing the blame on the boss by claiming that his directions weren't clear. Thus, for the Western worker, one can, to some degree, avoid responsibility. Contrastingly, in Japan, if business doesn't go according to plan, it becomes the problem of the individual undertaking the task. What's more, the Japanese deliver a service that goes far beyond what was originally requested, leaving many customers very satisfied. The fact that they carry out the job with consistency means they are easy to work with. (Source: *Why Foreign Businessmen are Receiving Lessons on Doing Business the Japanese Way http://en.rocketnews24.com/2013/03/26/why-foreign-businessmen-are-receiving-lessons-on-doing-business-the-japanese-way/*)

CASE 3：

I was running at a good clip on my usual route down a narrow street in Nanjing. Cars were passing so I stayed over to the side. Behind me a bicycle bell rang and I motioned for the person to pass, as there was plenty of room. Again the bell rang and again I motioned. Then a man's voice rang out a two-syllable phrase. He didn't pass though, and kept ringing his bell nonstop. Now, I do run fast and in China faster than most bike riders, but to my mind this guy obviously wanted to cause a hassle. He could have passed easily. Instead, he yelled his two-syllable phrase over and over. The tone of it sounded to me like what we Americans say when someone cuts us off in traffic. So, I decided to return the sentiment and gave him one of our best two syllable invectives (abusive language), the one referring to body parts. He immediately followed with his, and we were off, speeding down the street both of us yelling back and forth to one another. Later I learned that the phrase he used was *jiayou* (加油), which is used to cheer someone. It's like saying, "Go for it." I wonder what he thought I was saying? (by Greg Brock, *http://source.mastvu.ah.cn/dzjxb/kwhjj/CCC_50cases.htm*)

CASE 4：

I remember before I came to America, family members and friends all said that I wouldn't experience any culture shock, since I like KFC, McDonald's, Pizza, steak and salad already, and the fact that I speak fluent English is going to make my life in America a lot easier. All those things my family said to me were true, my capability to speak fluent English

undoubtedly make communication with local people a piece of cake for me. But the food was not as easy as I thought. Besides culture shock doesn't limit to food and language, there are a lot of other things which will be shocking to a foreigner.

Food is a big element in culture shock. A lot of times, when I go to a new country, the ethnic cooking can be very difficult to adjust. I indulged myself with the western food long before I came to America. But after I came here, I found the American food I had in China has few similarities compared to the real American food here. The way they cook the steak, the excessive sweetness of the cake, the bitter saltiness of popcorn, the deep fried sea food was beyond my imagination. I watched American people eat cheese with apple. I remember the combination of the two was very disturbing to my stomach at the time. One time I went to a restaurant wanting to have some mushroom. When the food came, I looked at my dish, puzzled and asked "What is this?" "Fried mushroom." The waitress said. I laughed hysterically. Does American have to fry everything? I am not complaining about American food, I am just pointing out the "shock" I experienced when I first came to this country. However after living here for almost 6 years, I love cheese and crackers, still unable to eat cheese with apple, somehow thinking the two together still make me sick a little bit. But who knows what will happen next year? I used to dislike American breakfast, now I love it so much. I had my first bagel this year, and it was delicious. I still don't like pan cakes, but everyone else seems to love them, maybe one of these days I will try it, you never know what will happen.

Manner is another culture shock for me. When I just came to America, I was living in a town of 2,000 people, which is very strange for me, due to the fact that I came from China which is extremely populous. I remember thinking that beggars wouldn't be able to make a living here. Everyone was so friendly to me, strangers would say Hi to me in supermarket, people would wave to me as they drive pass my car. I've never seen a person litter on the street since I came to this country. The fact that this country is so clean that they wear the shoes they walk on the street inside the house was astonishing to me, because in China I've never been to a house where I don't have to take off my shoes at the door. It is considered to be very rude to walk into people's house with your shoes on. So I learned to ask the host if they prefer me to take off my shoes. My mom always told me to be humble. When people say I am smart, I am supposed to say "Oh, no, I am not that smart." If I go to people's house and they offer me an apple, even if I want the apple, I am supposed to say "No, thank you." Unless they constantly offer it to me, then I can accept the apple. But in America, if a person comes to me and says "You are very pretty." I would say "Thank you so much!" And if a host offers me an apple and

I want it, I'd better say yes, because they won't ask me several times like a Chinese person would.

Living in another country can be very difficult. A lot of things are going to be different in another country. If you want to adjust yourself to the culture, you almost have to brainwash yourself, learning whole new ways of living and socializing. There were so many things strange to me, but now they seem so natural. I am not forgetting how to be a Chinese, I guess I am just Americanized a little bit. (Source: *From China to America: Culture Shock-living in a new country* by Kianna)

2. Main Text

2.1 Culture

The field of human communication is rich in its many principles and theories concerning relationships and their connection to messages. Over time, communication theorists recognized the vast influence of culture as a primary variable in the communication process. This emphasis has led to theories and principles which now trace culture's socializing patterns and imprints related to intercultural encounters. Of course, this book's aim is to introduce the many cultural elements that influence communication where intercultural situations develop.

DEFINING CULTURE

Definitions of culture cover a wide range of perspectives. When students are asked to describe culture, the following are words and phrases they use: *food, religion, language, music, region or geography, ethnicity, clothes*, and so on. Generally, there is always one person who raises his or her hand timidly and says, "I think culture is more than that. It's the things we don't see, like our beliefs or views about gender." Both are correct—culture represents the things we see, the tangible, as well as the intangible things. Someone describes and defines culture as "a monster", since it's so messy and sometimes it's too big to handle, and, it's scary because you don't know what you're dealing with.

Defining culture is not about positives or negatives—culture just is, and that is why it can be a challenge to describe it. Definitions of culture usually incorporate an expression of values and beliefs of groups, the learning that occurs in groups, and the expressions of those cultural norms. Edgar Schein (2010) said culture consists of the shared beliefs, values, and assumptions of a group of people who learn from one another and teach to others that their

behaviors, attitudes, and perspectives are the correct ways to think, act, and feel. Cultures show up in many forms and are expressed differently. Yet all forms and levels of cultures express and share three fundamental aspects: values, assumptions, and symbols. Value systems are fundamental to understanding how culture expresses itself. Values often serve as principles that guide people in their behaviors and actions. Our values, ideally, should match up with what we say we will do, and our values are most evident in symbolic forms. Our values are supported by our assumptions of our world. They are beliefs or ideas that we believe and hold to be true. They come about through repetition. This repetition becomes a habit we form and leads to habitual patterns of thinking and doing. We do not realize our assumptions because they are ingrained in us at an unconscious level. We are aware of it when we encounter a value or belief that is different from ours,˙ when it makes us feel that we need to stand up for, or validate, our beliefs.

In his seminal work *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973), Clifford Geertz outlined culture as "a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life."
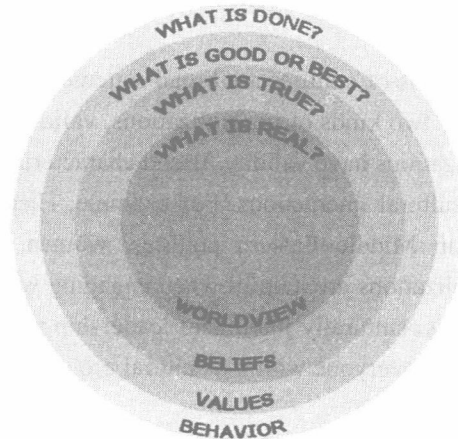
Figure 1.1   Different Layers of Culture
(*Source: http://www.buzzle.com/articles/what-is-culture.html*)

He believed that culture is a system based on symbols. He said that people use symbols to define their world and express their emotions. As human beings, we all learn, both consciously and unconsciously, starting at a very young age. What we internalize comes through observation, experience, interaction, and what we are taught. We manipulate symbols to create

meaning and stories that dictate our behaviors, to organize our lives, and to interact with others. The meanings we attach to symbols are arbitrary. Looking someone in the eye means that you are direct and respectful in some countries, yet, in other cultural systems, looking away is a sign of respect. The meanings we attach to symbols can create a cultural havoc when we meet someone who believes in a different meaning or interpretation; it can give us culture shock. This shock can be disorientating, confusing, or surprising. It can bring on anxiety or nervousness, and, for some, a sense of losing control.

One of the things that can happen in the context of discussing culture is falling into the stereotypes and generalizations of a cultural group or norm. It is important to recognize the difference and the impact these factors have in cultural interactions. In general, stereotypes are negative statements and interpretations made about a group of people. Stereotypes, whether deemed positive or negative, place people into boxes and categories and limit them to those specific perspectives. A stereotype, such as "Asians are good at math," does not provide the complete picture someone needs to understand the Asian culture or the differences between Asian cultures. Similarly, just because you meet a 70-year old who does not know how to use current technology, it does not mean that other individuals in that generation do not know how to use it.

By contrast, generalizations of cultures are broad statements based on facts, experiences, examples, or logic. There are two kinds of generalizations, valid and faulty, and it is your role to determine which generalizations have validity. Broad characterization of cultural groups can serve as a framework for cultural interactions. For example, Hispanic societies have a high degree of machismo, or, in Middle Eastern cultures, women have a lesser status than men—these types of generalizations are helpful when engaging with people of those cultures. But in all cultural interactions, culturally intelligent leadership requires you to recognize that generalizations do not apply to everyone within a cultural group.

THE ORIGIN OF CULTURE
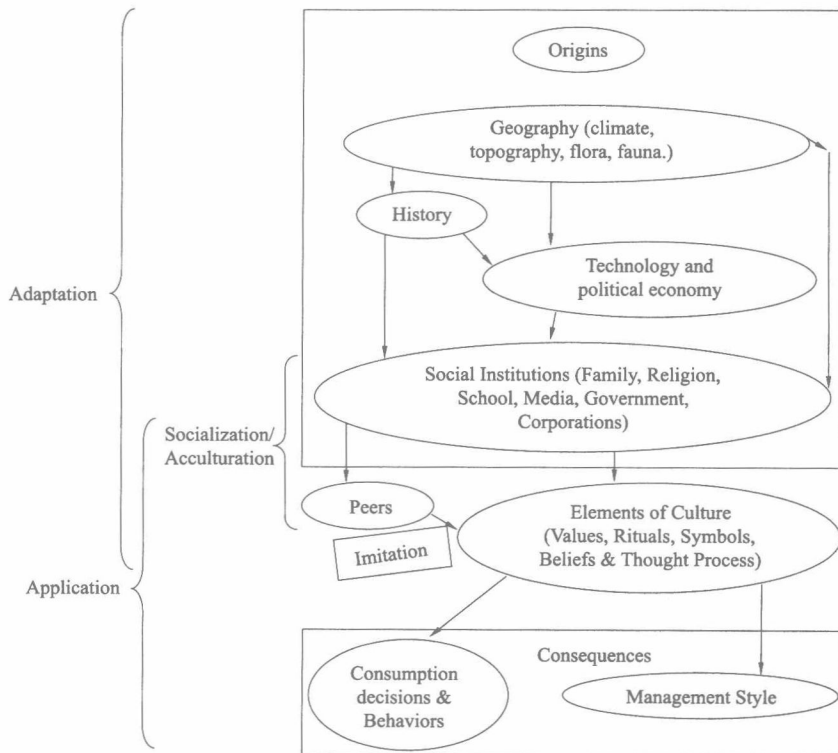
The origins, elements, and consequences of culture can be shown in the following Figure 1.2 at a glance.

TRAITS OF CULTURE

Culture is a powerful human tool for survival, but it is a fragile phenomenon. It is constantly changing and easily lost because it exists only in our minds. Our written languages, governments, buildings, and other man-made things are merely the products of culture. They are not culture in themselves. For this reason, archaeologists can not dig up culture directly in

their excavations. The broken pots and other artifacts of ancient people that they uncover are only material remains that reflect cultural patterns—they are things that were made and used through cultural knowledge and skills.

For instance, an English person who values personal space very highly may consider it rude when a Mexican stands too close. A Japanese who values conformity may find it inappropriate when an American expresses too much of his or her own opinions. The relative importance of values within each culture can also be revealed through sayings, such as "Time is money" (American), "A zebra does not despise its stripes" (African) or "No need to know the person, only the family" (Chinese). Such sayings impart values that are important in each culture and can provide us with a better understanding of others' cultural beliefs.
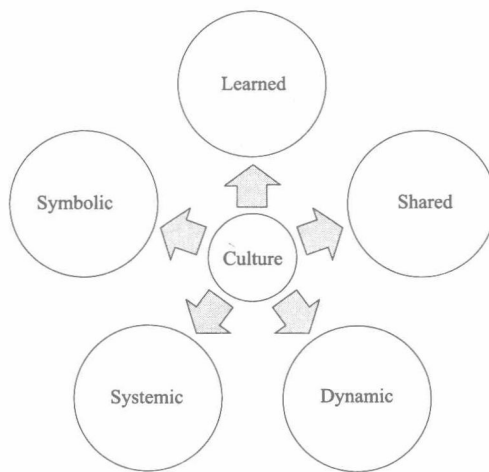

Figure 1.2   Origins, Elements, and Consequences of Culture

(MD. JOYNAL ABDIN, *IMPACT OF CULTURE ON INTERNATIONAL MARKETING*, 2008)

Wang et al., (2000:1-3) identify the essential features of culture. They are:

◇ Culture is the human-made part of the environment.

◇ Culture reflects widely shared assumptions about life.

◇ Culture is so fundamental that most people do not and cannot discuss or analyze it.

◇ Culture becomes evident when someone encounters someone from another country who deviates from his own cultural norms.

◇ Culture is transmitted from generation to generation.

◇ Even in new situations, people can make a judgment about what is expected in their own culture.

◇ Cultural values endure and change takes place over a number of generations.

◇ Violations of cultural norms have an emotional impact.

◇ It is relatively easy (although not necessarily helpful) to make generalisations about cultural differences.

Figure 1.3　Five Features of Culture
(*Source: http://2012books.lardbucket.org/books/cultural-intelligence-for-leaders/s04-understanding-culture.html*)

According to David Livermore, culture features the following five ways:

1) Culture Is Learned

Geert Hofstede (1991) views culture as consisting of mental programs, calling it *softwares of the mind*, meaning each person "carries within him or herself patterns of thinking, feeling, and potential acting which were learned throughout their lifetime." It is argued that mental models lock individuals and groups into a specific perception about the world. Like a computer, we are programmed to act or behave in certain ways. The conscious and unconscious

learning we undergo, over time, turns into beliefs that we consider to be valid. We then teach each other that these beliefs are cultural norms, and they are then expressed in our daily lives as behaviors and actions.

Think about your first day with your current organization or one you worked for in the past. Typically, your boss or a co-worker gave you an orientation to the company, describing its mission, products, and services. Most likely, you met your co-workers and received a tour of the office facilities. Perhaps you met and talked with co-workers to get a sense of how your job was related to their work. Maybe you spent time reading company materials, reviewing your department files, or talking with your supervisor about the details of your job responsibilities. Perhaps you had lunch with other staff members and were told about some parts of the organization such as, "Jane Doe should be fired but is still working here," "The CEO has control issues," or "The fax machine breaks down three times a day." Whatever you did in those first hours or days of orientation and training, you created an image of how you would fit into the company. In that moment, you told yourself a story of how you would work with the company and how it would work with you because others in that business culture told you how you needed to behave. This moment is so powerful that it shapes your experiences, including your thoughts, actions, behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes for the rest of your time with the company.

2) Culture Is Shared

Ming is a recent college graduate with a degree in accounting. She has taken a job with a large accounting firm. Although she gets along with members of her department and team, she tends to spend her free time with other colleagues who are of Asian descent, especially those who are in her generation. She feels that this group of co-workers understands her better and shares her values and ideas around work-life balance.

John has been with his state employer for thirty years, working up the ranks into seniority in his state agency. It's been customary for him and six co-workers of his age group to meet for lunch every day and discuss the latest sporting events. Once a week during the summer they meet up after work to play baseball at a local park and recreation site.

These two examples describe culture as a shared learning experience. Although you may think of yourself as an individual, you share beliefs, rituals, ceremonies, traditions, and assumptions with people who grew up or live in similar cultural backgrounds. It is easier for you to relate to someone who has shared value systems and ways of doing things than someone who does not share the same values.