
Intercultural competencies in second language classrooms

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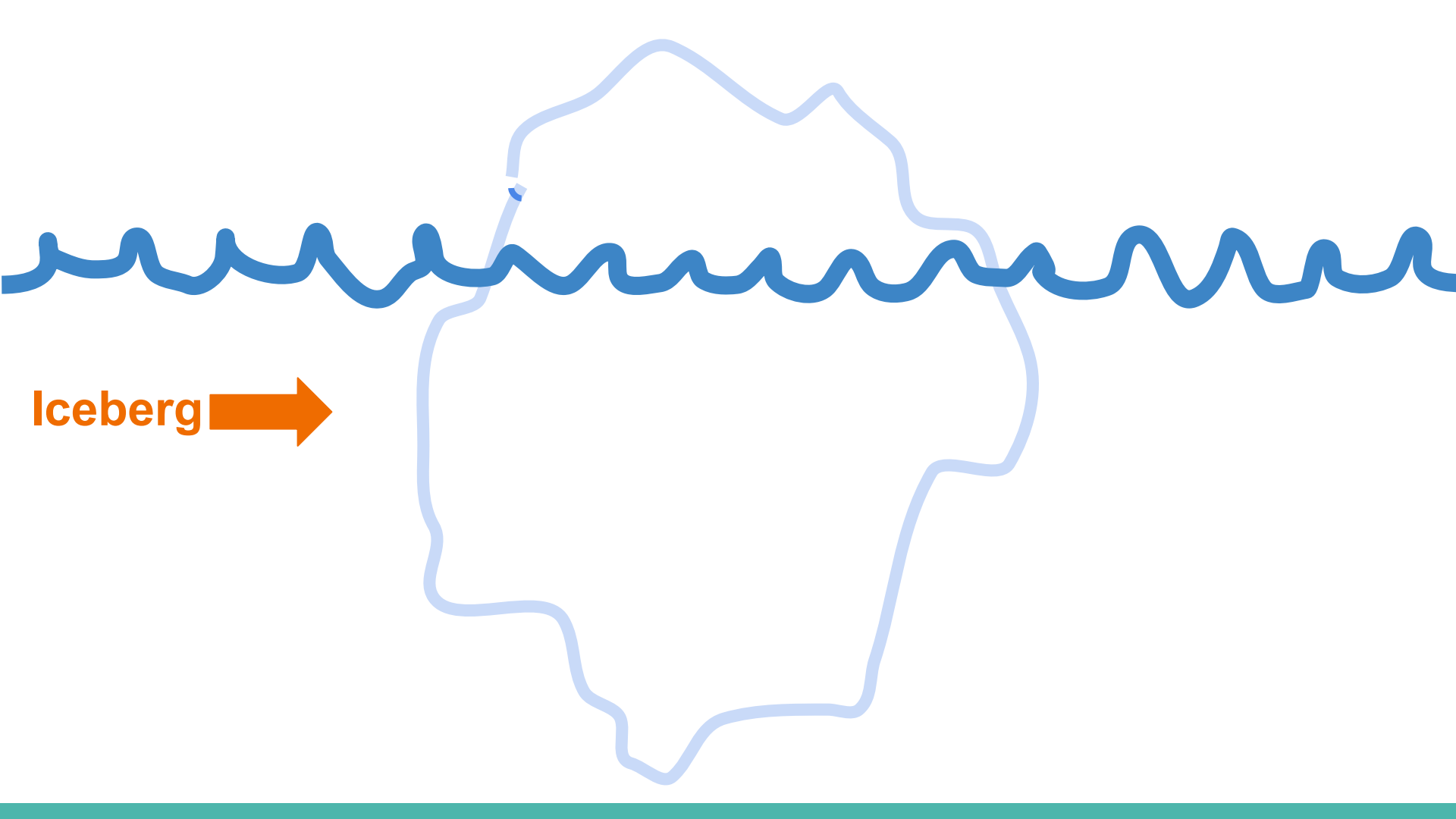
Outline

What is Culture?

Defining Intercultural Competence

Progression of Teaching Culture in Language

Culture Beyond the Classroom



Iceberg →

Culture

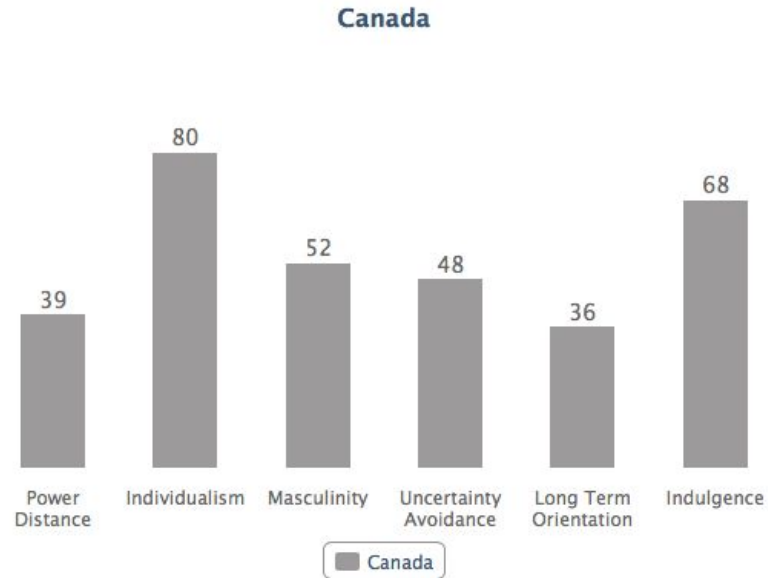
Culture is a set values, beliefs and expectations that members of a group come to share -*Edward Hall*

Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another -*Michelle LeBaron*

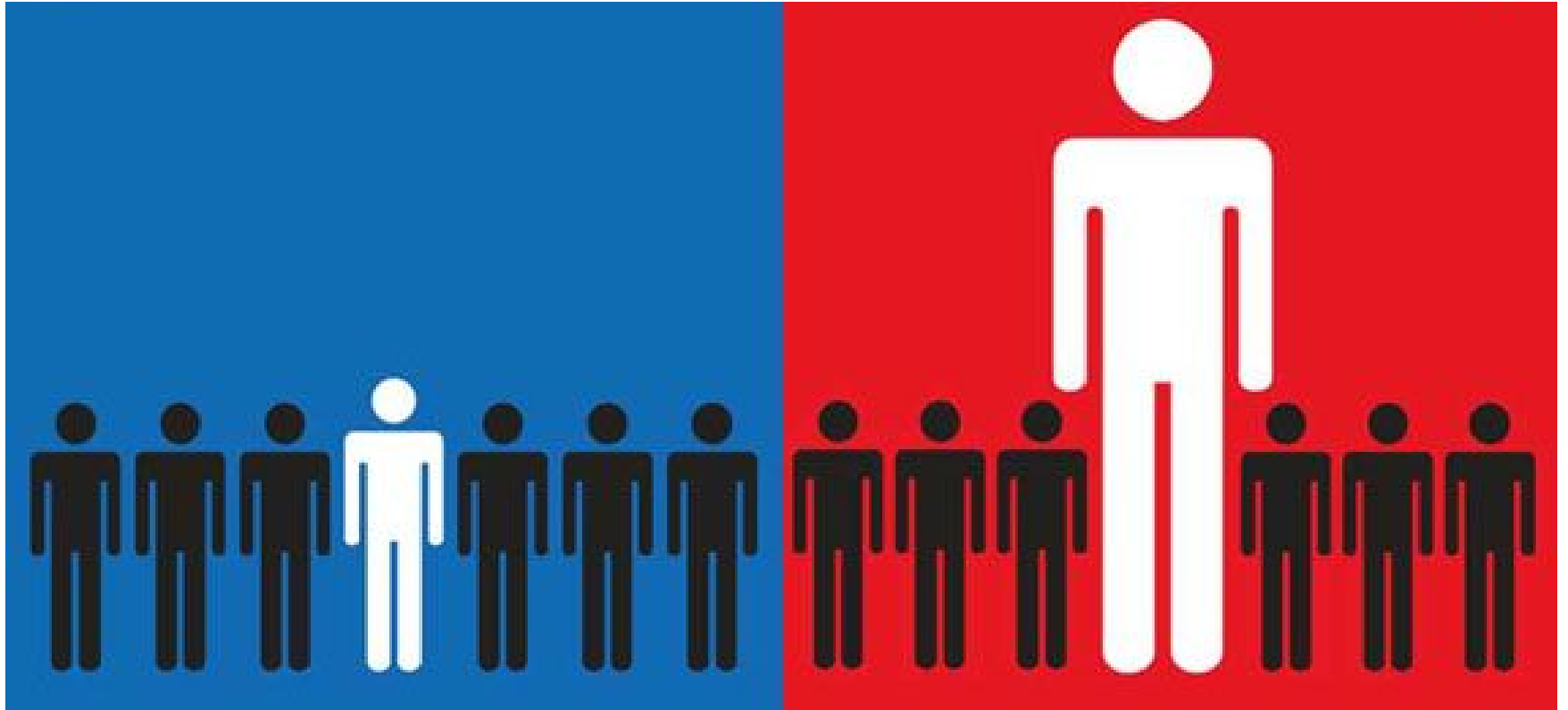
Culture provides the 'lens' through which we view the world; the 'logic' by which we order it'; the 'grammar' by which is makes sense. -*Auvuch and Black*

Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

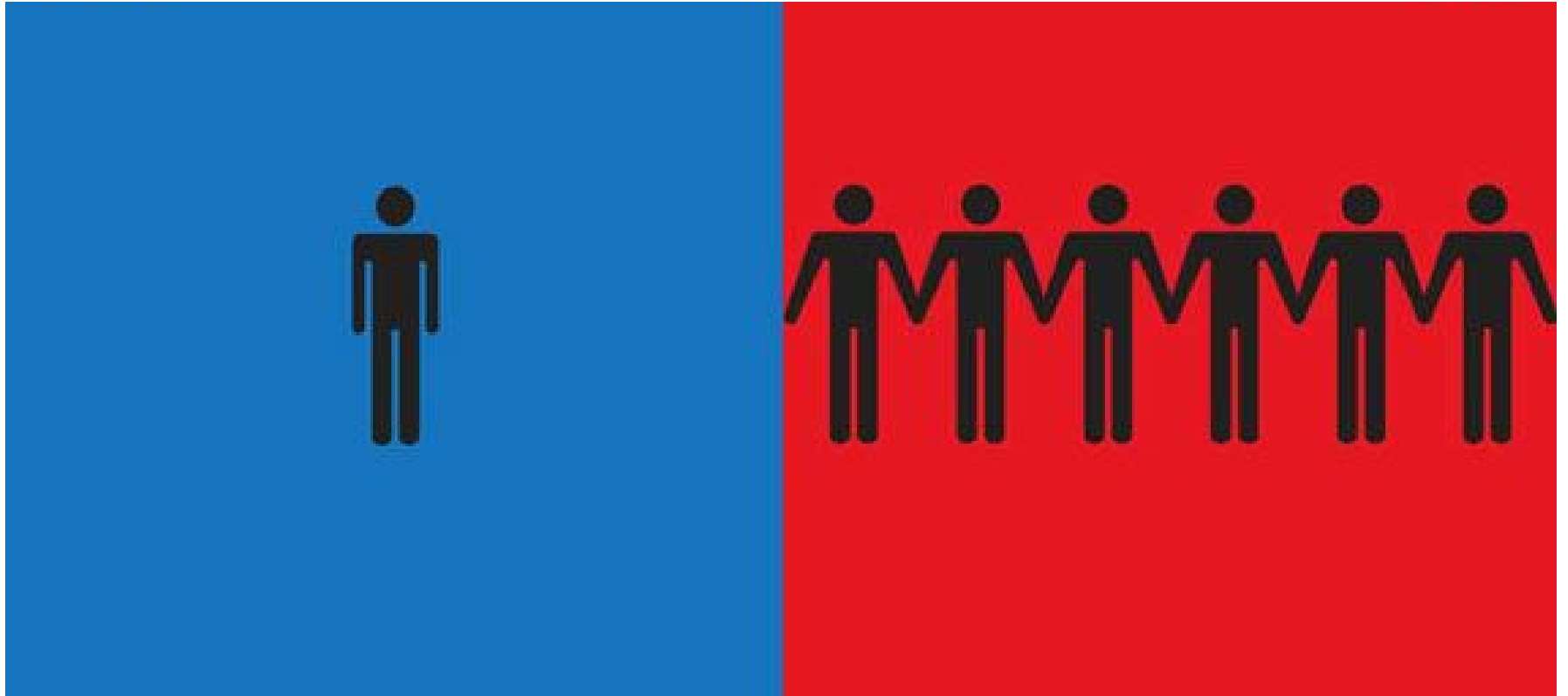
- Power Distance
- Individualism
- Masculinity
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Long Term Orientation
- Indulgence



Power Distance



Individualism



Cultural Miscommunication

American: "How long will it take you to finish this report?"

Greek: "I don't know. How long should it take?"

American: "You are in the best position to analyze time requirements."

Greek: "10 days."

American: "Take 15. Is it agreed? You will do it in 15 days?"

Cultural Miscommunication

American: “How long will it take for you to finish this report?”

Greek: “I don’t know. How long should it take?”

American: “You are in the best position to analyze time requirements.”

Greek: “10 days.”

American: “Take 15. Is it agreed? You will do it in 15 days?”

American: I asked him to participate.

Greek: His behavior makes no sense. He is the boss. Why doesn’t he tell me?

American: He refuses to take responsibility.

Greek: I asked him for an order.

American: I press him to take the responsibility for his actions.

Greek: What nonsense. I’d better give him an answer.

American: He lacks the ability to estimate time; this time estimate is totally inadequate.

American: I offer a contract.

Greek: These are my orders: 15 days.

Cultural Miscommunication

- ❖ In fact, the report needed 30 days of regular work. So the Greek worked day and night, but at the end of 15th day, he still needed to do one more day's work.

American: "Where is the report?"

Greek: "It will be ready by tomorrow?"

American: "But we agreed it would be ready today."

The Greek hands in his resignation.

Cultural Miscommunication

American: "Where is the report?"

Greek: "It will be ready by tomorrow?"

American: "But we agreed it would be ready today."

The Greek hands in his resignation.

American: I am making sure he fulfills his contract.

Greek: He is asking for the report.

(**Both** attribute that is not ready today.)

American: I must teach him to fulfill a contract.

Greek: The stupid incompetent boss! Not only did he give me the wrong orders, but he doesn't even appreciate that I did a 30-day job in 16 days.

Greek: I can't work for such a man.

Mr. Baseball

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdeFdFEbuqk>

Intercultural Competence

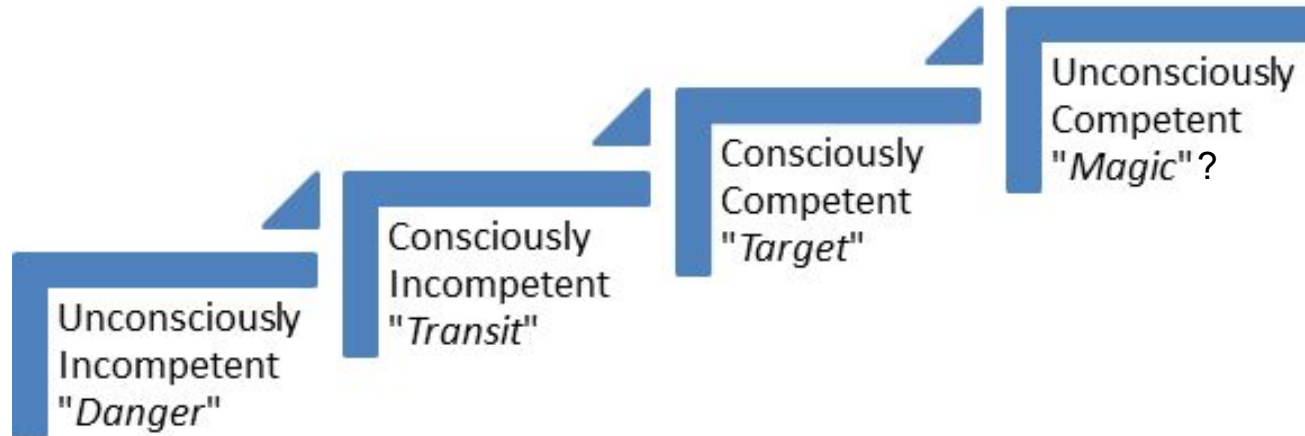
The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures

Combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes - Byram, Gribkova & Starkey

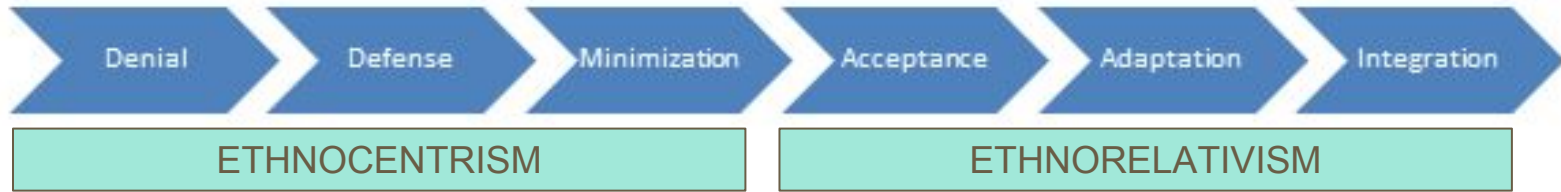
- Intercultural Attitudes - curiosity, openness "*Savoir être*"
- Knowledge - practices of one's own and other's countries and cultures "*Savoirs*"
- Interpreting / Relating - explain and relate an event to one's own culture "*Savoir comprendre*"
- Discovery/Interaction - acquire new knowledge of cultural practices "*Savoir apprendre/faire*"
- Critical Awareness - Ability to critically evaluate perspectives and practices "*Savoir s'engager*"



Howell's Staircase



Ethnocentric Stages of Development (Bennett)



The Progression of Teaching Culture in Language

4 paradigms (Lambert)

1. The traditional approach to teaching culture
2. The “Culture Studies” approach
3. The “Culture as practices” approach
4. Intercultural language teaching

The traditional approach to teaching culture

Teaches culture through literature

Ignores link between language and culture



The “Culture Studies” approach

1970's

Teaches culture as area studies

Cultural competence seen as knowledge about a country

Recognizes importance of communication with native speakers



The “Culture as practices” approach

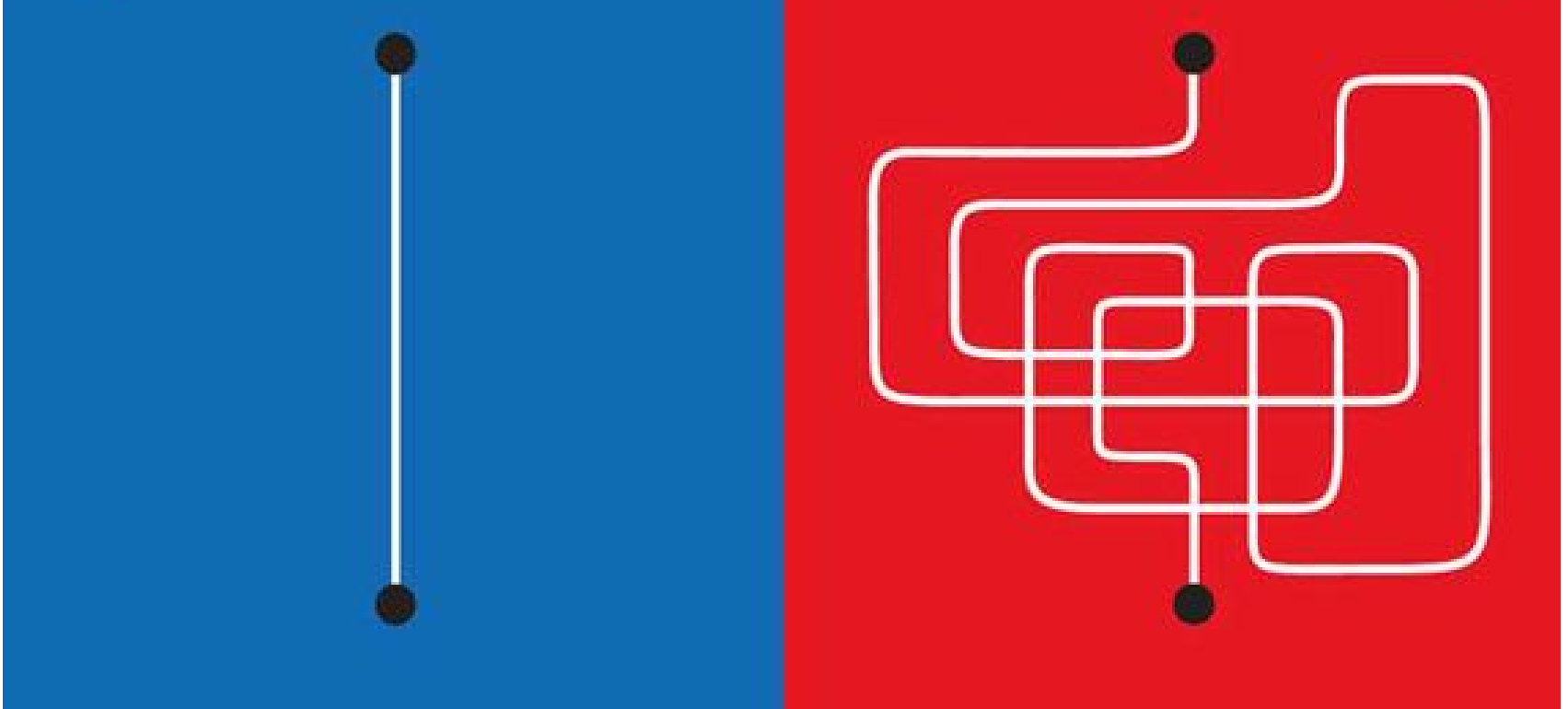
1980's

Views culture as common practices and values

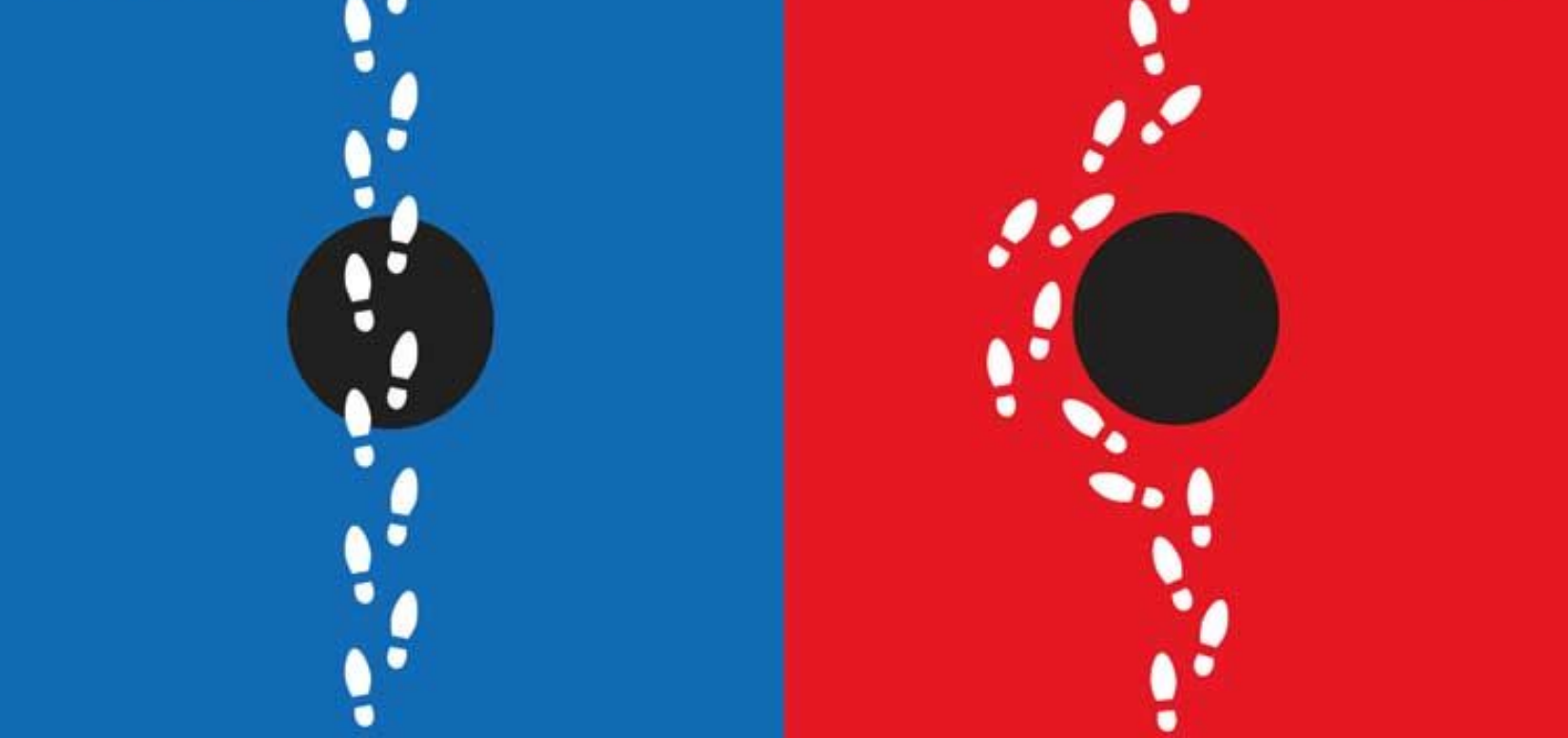
Strong link between language and culture

Culture is seen as static and homogeneous

Common Practices: Direct vs. Indirect Communication



Direct vs Indirect Communication Re: problem solving



Intercultural language teaching (Intercultural competence)

Three fundamental aspects

1. Teaching of a linguaculture

Linguaculture: a term that focuses on culture in language or the cultural dimensions of language

2. The comparison between learners' first language/culture and target language/culture
3. Intercultural exploration

Intercultural Language teaching (Intercultural competence) continued...

Views culture and language as inseparable

Aims to understand how culture shapes worldviews

Students gain insight into their own culture and the second culture

Develop skills

Skills for Intercultural Competence (Byram)

Skills

- Intercultural attitudes
- Skills of interpreting and relating
- Skills of discovery and interaction
- Critical cultural awareness

Culture Education: It's more than just the classroom!

A. Future academic settings

- Showing cultural sensitivity
- Demonstrating strong communication skills
- Speaking a foreign language (study abroad)
- Greater degree of empathy in group projects
- Lessen culture shock of meeting new cultures



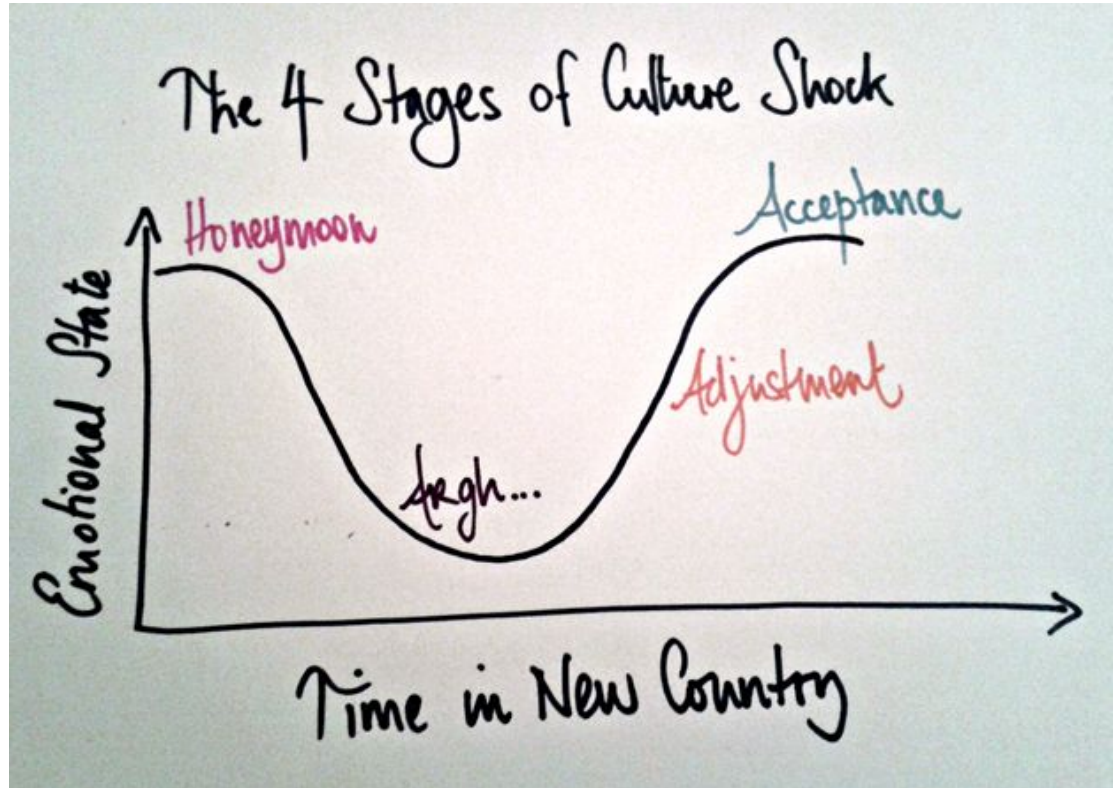
Culture Shock

Feelings of disorientation/dissatisfaction while adjusting to a new culture

4 phases

Factors affecting include

- How different are the cultures
- Previous intercultural experience
- Intended length of time in the target culture



Culture Education: It's more than just the classroom!

B. Professional/Vocational settings

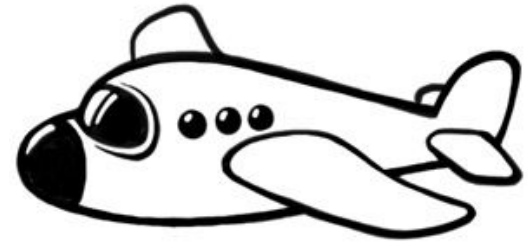
- The modern workplace is increasingly globalised and competitive
- Communicating with customers
- Bring in new clients
- Intercultural skills play a key role within the workplace, enhancing team working, fostering creativity, improving communication and reducing conflict.
- Greater efficiency, stronger brand identity, enhanced reputation



Culture Education: It's more than just the classroom!

C. Survival & Tourism

- One of the best ways to experience and understand other cultures is to actually live among them
- Overcoming stereotypes
- Practice the correct practice
- Respect (it's a privilege to visit)
- The better you understand the better your trip
- Expands the breadth of traveling experience



Discussion

What are your best strategies when teaching culture to a class? Brainstorm a level-appropriate activity/lesson.



Primary vs. Secondary vs. ESL vs. Adult vs. Non-teachers

Are there different strategies for different levels of education?

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