

Culture and International Public Relations



Approaches



Whether the diversity in culture itself challenges the practicality of the two-way symmetrical communication approach?



Approaches

Concurring, Omenugha (2002) identified

...culture as one of the factors that make IPR complex, stating that "it is believed that custom is a function of culture, which defines the way of life of any given society. Culture varies greatly from country to country... Care therefore, should be taken so as not to cause hostility or indignation among the target audience."



Elements of culture

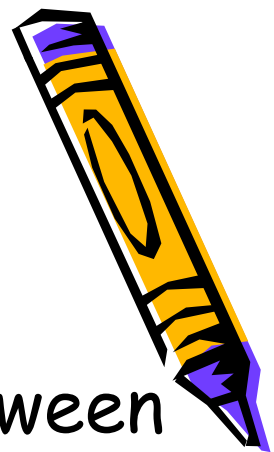
both LANGUAGE and CULTURE is needed to communicate effectively in any society, but success in the practice of international public relations relies heavily on the recognition of those CULTURAL PATTERNS and VALUES that shape the cross-cultural communications process.



Geert Hofstede's research

Understanding the differences between national cultures is thought to contribute to cooperation among different nations (Hofstede, 1991).

Hofstede's values work has been used as a foundation in business, communication, intercultural, interpersonal, and public relations research.



Geert Hofstede's research



.... describes culture as the "collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another"

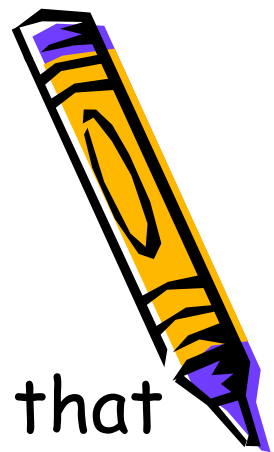
Each country characteristic according to Hofstede's dimension -

<https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html>



Geert Hofstede's research

.... identified five cultural variables that influence communication and relationships in organizational settings: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, individualism/collectivism, and Confucianism, or "long-term orientation" (LTO).



Geert Hofstede's research

POWER DISTANCE points to the basic differences in inequality across cultures (p. 65). It refers to "the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally".



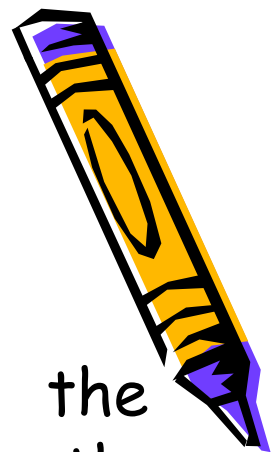
Geert Hofstede's research

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE refers to the ability for humans to cope with uncertainty (p. 176). It is defined as "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertainty or unknown situations".



Geert Hofstede's research

MASCULINITY - FEMININITY alludes to the duality of the sexes (p. 176). It measures the difference of social roles taken by men and women in a society. In a feminine society, men and women share similar personalities such as modesty and tenderness, while in a society of masculinity, men are more assertive, tough and ambitious, whereas women are more tender and modest. In addition, the preoccupation with material goods and status characterizes a masculine society.



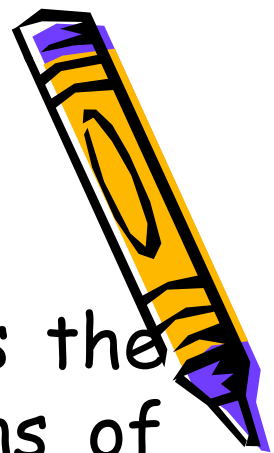
Geert Hofstede's research

INDIVIDUALISM - COLLECTIVISM refers to relationships between the individual and the collectivity in a society (p. 148). Collectivism favors group interests and obligations above individual interests and pleasure, and it defines self by including group attributes, whereas individualism prefers individual interests to group interests, and it defines self independently.



Geert Hofstede's research

Long-term vs. short-term orientation is the most important one for ethical questions of PR (Hopper et al. 2007, p.98). Discussion about the concept of lie may have a different outcome depending on the culture of the participant. Long-term perspective thinking is strongly bond with such concerns as reputation building, customer trust and reliability, which actually are classical motivators for ethical behavior within the field of PR.



Geert Hofstede's research

European and Anglo-American countries, have demonstrated a short-term orientation in systematic global comparisons (Lussier 2009, p. 392). People in those societies place emphasis on short-term results, rapid need-gratification (Samovar et al. 2009, p. 207). This for example can influence such areas as CSR. (Samli 2008, p.115, Riahi-Belkaoui, 1995, p.79).



Cultural dimensions to the studies of Internet-related communications.

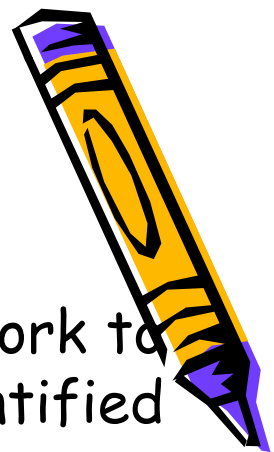


Cultural dimensions, collectivism versus individualism, through a text analysis of transcripts of a course's listserv. They discovered that students from collectivistic cultures perform differently than students from an individualistic culture when they interacted in listserv.

...Asian students were found to be more group-oriented demonstrating a stronger sense of "we" in their posted messages, whereas white Americans, particularly males, were found to be more individual-oriented. In this study, then the usage pattern on a listserv, a popular form of Internet use in organizational communication, was demonstrated to be shaped by cultural traits (Stewart et al., 1998).



Studies of Internet-related communications.



Marcus and Gould (2000) applied Hofstede's framework to their study of user-interface designs, and they identified Hofstede's cultural dimensions in different web pages from different cultures. Focusing on the structural and graphic elements of web page design, they found that a university web site from Malaysia, a culture with high power distance in Hofstede's framework, tended to emphasize the official seal of the university and pictures of faculty or administration leaders, which could not be found on a university web site from the Netherlands, a culture with low power distance in Hofstede's framework. Also, a web site for a national park from Costa Rica, a collectivistic culture, emphasized national agendas and political announcements, whereas a web site for a national park from the U.S., an individualistic culture, focused on the visitors and their activities.



Studies of Internet-related communications.



Following Marcus and Gould (2000), Zahir, Dobing, and Hunter (2002) revealed cultural differences in their study of national web portals from 26 countries. They found that despite the fact that most national portals followed the basic format of Yahoo, cultural dimensions could be identified. For example, the Philippines, a culture of high power distance in Hofstede's study, was found to be willing to demonstrate power difference in its web portal. Its national portal prioritized Filipinos working in foreign countries by providing them with special services, as these people made more money than those who worked within the Philippines. Another example was from Australia, an individualistic culture. The authors found that the national portal of Australia did not include items related to women's issues, religion, and personals, which were believed to be the means of bringing people together. This finding demonstrated that Australians acted in a relatively independent manner, and group-oriented activities were not very important in their culture, as evidenced by their national portal.



Dialogic communication approach

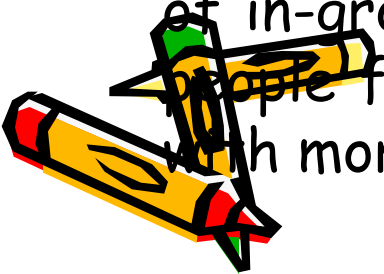
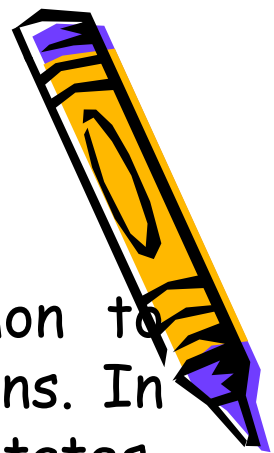
Other cultural models, such as Sriramesh's personal influence model and Kent and Taylor's (2002) research

...The personal influence model of public relations (Sriramesh, 1992) provides a valuable framework for understanding how culture may influence the development of public relations in a nation (or culture).



Dialogic communication approach

Research shows that personal influence is common to India, other parts of Asia, Africa, and other nations. In "low-context" (see below) nations like the United States, having access to, or exercising personal influence is not a requirement for organizational or personal success, but it often helps. Some types of occupations and institutions rely more heavily on personal influence for success. In "high-context" cultures, like South Korea, however, personal influence is crucial and members of ingroups and those with connections are often more successful at achieving organizational and personal goals; for example, party members in communist or socialist states, members of in-groups, royalty, individuals with higher social status, people from higher castes, businesspeople, and individuals with more resources (Taylor & Kent, 1999).



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL

As International Public Relation sphere is closely connected with communication in different cultures it is highly important to take into account circuit of culture model by S. Hall (2001). The circuit has the following 'moments' where meaning is created:

representation,
production,
consumption,
identity and regulation



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL

According to Hall culture can be understood in terms of 'shared meanings'. In modern world, the media is the biggest tool of circulation of these meanings. Stuart Hall presents them as being shared through language in its operation as a "representational (signifying) system" and he presents the circuit of culture model as a way of understanding this process.

The process that culture gathers meaning at five different "moments" - signification (representation), identity, production, consumption and regulation.



SIGNIFICATION
(what the thing *means* (*signifies*), and to whom—what *signifier/signified* relationships it contains, how and from whom it *takes them on*, and how and to whom it *gives them off*)

IDENTITY
(who all the agents involved with producing, consuming, and regulating the thing *are*—be they individuals, groups, and/or non-human entities—and how they got to “be” that way)

Usually visible
(the presentation/representation)

Usually NOT visible
(the labor/work)

REGULATION
(the formal and informal *rules* that affect and are affected by the thing, how they are(n't) *enforced*, and the formal and informal *authorities* that make and enforce them)

CONSUMPTION
(*buying* the thing, *using* the thing, becoming *part of the thing*, and/or making the thing *part of you*—and *paying for all this*)

PRODUCTION
(*making* the thing—*inventing* it, *fabricating* it, *reproducing* it, *distributing* it, *marketing* it—and *paying for all this labor/work* and the people who do it)



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL



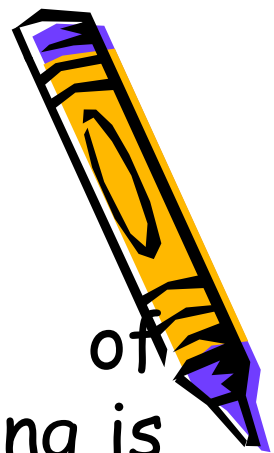
S. Hall emphasized
....the importance of specific cultural
conditions at every stage of any
communicational process.

....Creators of media texts produce them in
particular institutional context, drawing on
shared framework of knowledge etc. The
same media text is engaged by audience in
different context.



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL

Briefly, the discursive process of manufacturing and shaping cultural meaning is called representation. 'We give things meaning by how we represent them' (Hall, 1997, p. 3). Representation meaning from language, painting, photography and other media uses "signs and symbols to represent whatever exists in the world in terms of meaningful idea and concept, image".



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL



• PRODUCTION

- Follow the money! *Who's paying for it, and/or backing it? Where's the money (and other resources) coming from? Is it on Fox? Paid for in part by the Melville Trust?*
- *Who's making or producing it? What is his/her/their story? Socio-economic background? Interests (financial and otherwise)? Personal experiences? Positions (or "biases")?*
- *Who thought it up? (Same questions apply from above.)*
- *How different are the people who are paying for it, making it, and thinking it up? All together living in a co-op? All the same person? Paid for by a housewife in St. Cloud, made by a sweatshop laborer in Shenzhen, designed by a film in Wayzata?*



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL

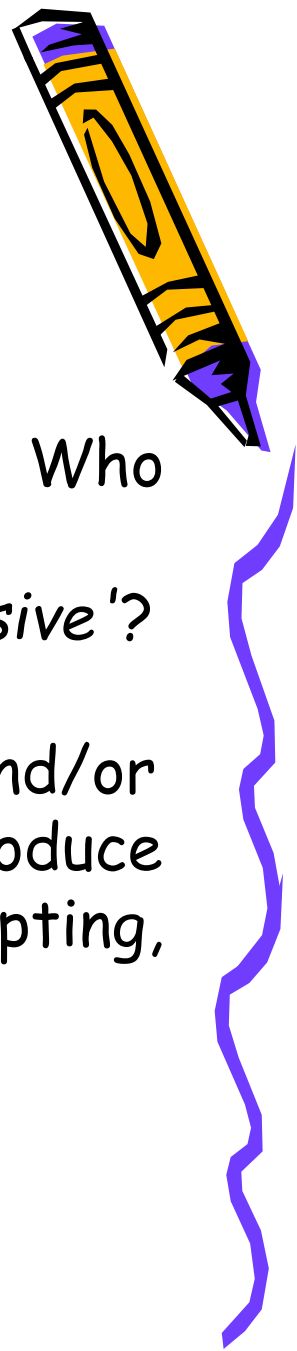


• CONSUMPTION

- Are the people who consume it (or use it, or do it) different from the people who produce it? If so, again as above: how different?
- Is it something you buy? If so, what does it cost? Who can afford it? Who can't? Why?
- *How, where, with whom, and why* do you consume (do/watch/read/listen to/eat) it?
- Is it *advertised or marketed*? If so, how, where, why, and to whom?



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL

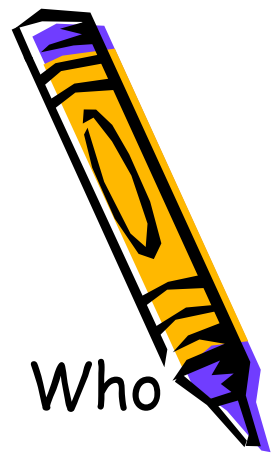


• REGULATION

- Is it *legal*, or *against the rules*? What rules? Who makes and enforces them? How/why?
- Is it '*obscene*'? '*pornographic*'? '*subversive*'? Why, and according to whom?
- What kind of *certification*, *acceptance*, and/or *rubber-stamping* do you need before you can produce or consume it? Who does this certifying, accepting, and/or rubber stamping?



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL



• IDENTITY

□ Who produces, consumes, and regulates it? Who would NEVER be involved with it?

Why?

□ Who *cares* about it? Who thinks it's *important*?

Why?

□ What others *think of* people who do/use it? Why?

□ What do you have to *know, understand, and believe* in order to do/use it? What has to be

"*common sense*" for you, in order to be the kind of person who does/uses it?

□ How does the object create insiders and outsiders—or, an "*us*" and a "*them*"? Who is "*us*"?

Who is "*them*"? Who decides? How?



THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE MODEL



• SIGNIFICATION

□ What does it *signify* (what is it a *signifier* for)? What *signifies* it (what is it a *signified* of)? And to whom: to its creators/authors/does? To other audience? To you?

□ In what *context* do you find it? What's going on around it?

□ What kind of *language* and *tone* and *feelings* are involved, and how do they work?

□ How is it *structured*?

□ What *genre conventions* does it work with? (A war? A chick flick? R&B? A rave?) What gives it away (i.e., what *signifies* adherence to these conventions)? How does it live up to, not live up to, or transcend the expectations of that genre?

□ What does it look, sound, smell, taste, and feel like—to you, and to others?

□ ~~What~~ *arguments* is it making—intentionally or not? How, and why, does it make them?



The circuit of cultural model in practice



Example: A Cross, Traffic lights

Consumption is where meaning is fully realised 'because meaning does not reside in an object but in how that object is used' (Baudrillard, 1988, p. 101). Consumers actively create meanings by using cultural products in their everyday life



The circuit of cultural model in practice



Example: A BIRD in a political conference between two nations can be a Symbol of "PEACE"

While the same bird in advertising of soup is a symbol of "beauty and softness".

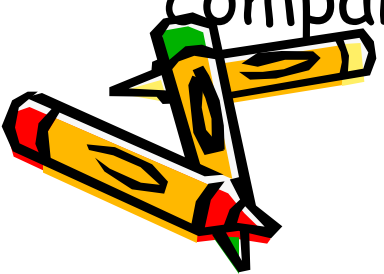
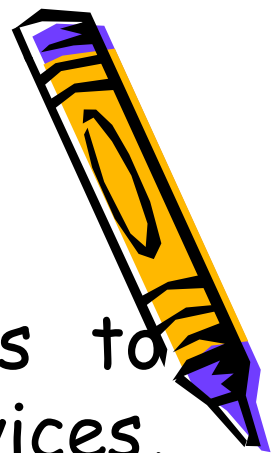
DOG is a symbol of Loyalty in USA but Abuse in Pakistan.



The circuit of cultural model in practice

Production, on the other hand, refers to meanings associated with products, services, experiences or in the case of PR the messages strategically crafted for targeted publics. Producers encode dominant meanings into their cultural products.

.....Example: The use of word "HALAL" in Islamic countries on the products of snacks "Lays" by its manufacturing multinational company.



Indian and Pakistani advertisement of Lays



Indian Advertisement of Lays



Pakistani Advertisement of Lays



Meanings derived through the production and consumption process form identities which are at once malleable, fragmented and complex as they include subjective and socially developed constructs such as class, gender, ethnicity and so on.

Example: To target the ideal young consumers: prizes had to be low. Name must be cool. Addition of new demand. (e.g. Diet coke).



*To understand
the
circuit model of
Culture
take the example
of "Pepsi".*

**It is not a
plastic bottle
but
a soft drink**

**ACTUALL ENTITY=
BOTTLE**

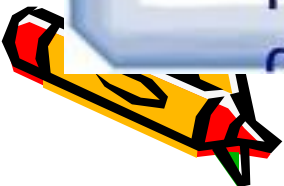
SIGN =

PEPSI NAME

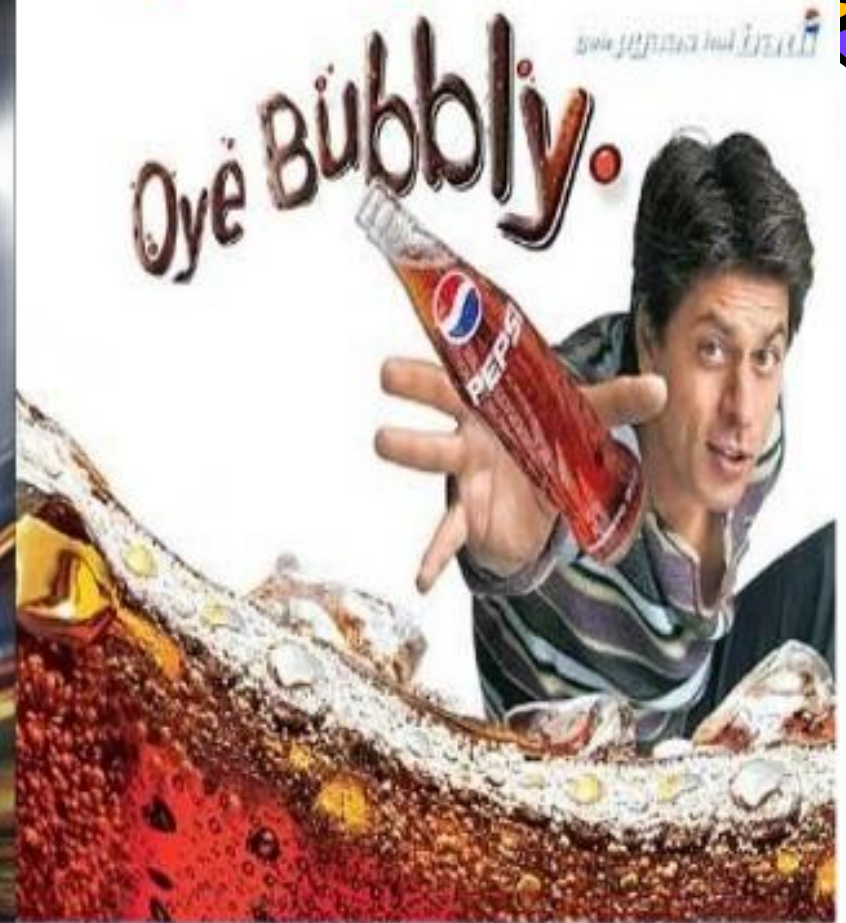
SIGNIFIED= A PARTICULAR DRINK



- Sign = Pepsi + Michael Jackson
- Signifier = particular drink
- Production = Soft drink Pepsi by Pepsicon
- Consumer = people of USA
- Representing = dance, Rock and



**In Pakistan dominating Cricket
In India dominating Bollywood**



Same Pepsi in Iraq and Africa



More Iraqis choose PEPSI over being destroyed by Bush's army.



Presenting Egyptian and Arab culture



TASK

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3. Richard J. Batyko, APR, Fellow PRSA The Impact of Corporate Culture on Public Relations in Japan: A Case Study Examining Tokyo Electric Power and Toyota // *Public Relations Journal* Vol. 6, No. 3, 2012
4. Gang (Kevin) Han, Ai Zhang Starbucks is forbidden in the Forbidden City: Blog, circuit of culture and informal public relations campaign in China// *Public Relations Review* 35 (2009) 395-401
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6. Michele Schoenberger-Orgad NATO's strategic communication as international public relations: The PR practitioner and the challenge of culture in the case of Kosovo// *Public Relations Review* 37 (2011) 376-

