


LITERACY COALITION OF CENTRAL TEXAS



LITERACY
FORWARD

ENGLISH FORWARD: WHAT WORKS IN 1 TO 1 TUTORING


MODULE 3

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE | UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS


NAVIGATION

Pause the video now and read the following:

You can pause the video in several ways:

- Click on the Pause Button on the video. 
- Click anywhere on the video image.
- Click the space bar on your keyboard.

To play again:


- Click on the Play Button to start video. 

Pause - Read - Play - Repeat

For each new slide, do the following:

- Pause the slide.
- Read the slide.
- Click the Play Button to hear narration and go to the next slide.

INTRODUCTION



OVERVIEW

1. How typical are you? The danger of stereotypes
2. Five stages of cultural adaptation
3. Video: I have a problem
4. Tips for Tutors
5. Points to Remember
6. Resources

1

BEWARE OF STEREOTYPES

STEREOTYPES: WHO IS THE TYPICAL AMERICAN?



REFLECTION: HOW TYPICAL ARE YOU?

How typical are you?	Totally Applies	Sort of	Not at All
1. I call everyone by their first name.			
2. I love guns.			
3. I think volunteer work is important.			
4. I think the US is superior to any other country.			
5. I chew gum at meetings.			
6. I don't see any reason to learn another language.			
7. I don't like to talk about sex, politics or religion at dinner.			
8. I talk in a very loud voice in restaurants and on the street.			

REFLECTION: WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR STEREOTYPES?

What images and thoughts come to mind when you think about students from:	Where do you think these images and thoughts originated?
China and Japan?	
Russia and Eastern Europe?	
Germany and Switzerland?	
Spain and Italy?	
Somalia and Ethiopia?	
Saudi Arabia and Dubai?	
Iraq and Iran?	
Mexico and Central America?	
Myanmar (Burma) and Indonesia?	

The Cultural Iceberg

Easy to see

- > customs
- > mores
- > courtesies

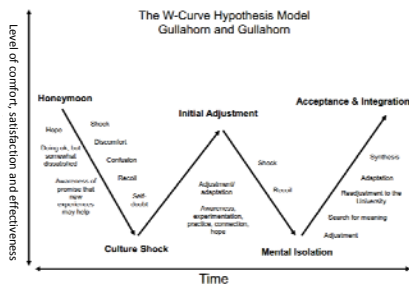
Difficult to see

- > values
- > priorities
- > assumptions

2

STAGES OF CULTURAL ADAPTATION


REFLECTION: THE 5 STAGES




Source: Mallikarjun, K., Mehta, R., & Nelson, M. (1995). Cross-cultural experience. In J.M. Schick (Ed.), International programming and student learning in college and university residence halls. Columbia, OH: ACCUHOA


HIGHS & LOWS IN CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. "Honeymoon" Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Euphoria • Curiosity • Awe | <p>4. Mental Isolation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-doubt • Frustration and depression |
| <p>2. Culture Shock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distress • Homesickness • Isolation and alienation | <p>5. Acceptance and Integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy • Stress can be managed |
| <p>3. Initial Adjustment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance of surface differences | |

 REFLECTION | HAVE YOU EVER HAD CULTURE SHOCK?



1. From your own experience traveling, which phase(s) of culture shock do you remember most vividly?
2. How did you feel?
3. What helped you get through it?
4. What might you do to help a person who is stuck in one of the down phases?



VIDEO: I HAVE A PROBLEM

SOCIO-CULTURAL CHALLENGES THAT STUDENTS FACE (1)

Video: The Lonely Neighbor

This video shows students enrolled in an ELL class at the Chicago-based Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly (CLESE) in a classroom discussion on "I have a Problem: the Lonely Neighbor."

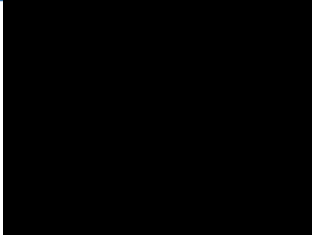
We apologize. The next two videos are old and are not quite in sync, yet we believe they are worth watching.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abWDZbOEScE&index=17&list=UUnbRTuazTtPtBsv9lAR6yKA>

SOCIO-CULTURAL CHALLENGES THAT STUDENTS FACE (2)

Video: A Real Life Problem

CLESE video on last part of "I have a Problem - My Medicaid is cut off"



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pMMDX3OpYA&index=4&list=UUnbRTuazTkPtBsv0IAR6yKA>

4

TIPS FOR TUTORS

6 WAYS TO OFFER SUPPORT

1. Help your student tell her story in English and offer comfort and support as needed.
2. Listen and validate emotions.
3. Teach "feeling words."
4. Use the internet to offer a window to the home country.
5. Contact a local support agency.
6. Connect your student to others with similar experiences.

TEACHING CROSS-CULTURAL SKILLS

A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

1. Engage your student in sharing ideas with you.
2. Compare holidays and celebrations. (Ask your student what people do on their favorite holiday.)
3. Draw storyboards comparing key cultural events in the US and in the home country.
4. Use a graphic organizer to help students get used to thinking in categories.
5. Encourage your student to interview others.

Cultural Items	My Country	United States
Most important holidays		
Food and drink		
Clothes worn on special events		
Symbols		
Family celebrations		

SENSITIVE CULTURAL ISSUES

MEETING YOUR STUDENT'S EXPECTATIONS

Student Perceptions of Teaching and Learning:

- School means the teacher lectures and dictates.
- Learning means repeating and copying things down.
- Dialogues should be memorized.

What you can do:

- Explain what will happen in each session and how different activities will help the student learn English.
- Include some traditional activities associated with school (grammar, phonics, dictations) and allow time for practice.
- Explain your emphasis on open-ended conversations as a very good way to learn practical English for life outside the classroom.

PERSONAL SPACE, TOUCH & EYE CONTACT

Cultural Issue

- The need for personal space and attitudes toward touching differ from culture to culture and from individual to individual.
- Efforts to show friendship through touch can be either welcoming or off-putting.
- Not maintaining eye contact as a sign of respect is often deeply ingrained; in times of stress, cultural habits take over.

What You Can Do

- Tread lightly, observe body responses, and ask questions.
- Treat you student as an individual but inquire about cultural norms.
- Don't insist your student change but explain US cultural expectations and possible reactions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TONE OF VOICE


Body Language and Tone

- Anthropologists estimate that 90% of communication is non-verbal.
- What we communicate through body language, facial expressions and tone often carries more meaning than the words themselves.
- ESL students often think that grammar skills are more important than communication skills and don't pay attention to tone.

What You Can Do

- Dramatize various ways of showing anger, frustration, or being happy and let your student guess the mood. Include a list of popular emoticons.
- Ask your student to act out similar emotions and talk about ways of expressing emotions in different cultures.
- Ask your student what role, if any, tone plays in her culture.

PHRASES THAT CHANGE MEANING DEPENDING ON TONE		
	Phrase	Meaning
1a	Excuse me.	Trying to get someone's attention.
1b	Well, exCUSE me.	Said by a teenager who has been scolded.
2a	May I help you?	Said by a friendly store clerk.
2b	May I HELP you?	What someone might ask you if you have no business being in a place.
3a	Do you have any idea what time it is?	Request for information.
3b	Do YOU have ANY idea what time it is?	Said by an angry boss when you come back to work 30 minutes late after your lunch break.



POINTS TO REMEMBER

Cultural norms that apply to a country may not apply to subpopulations or individuals. Treat your students as experts in their own lives and their communities. When you teach culture, consider teaching it from a cross-cultural perspective.



RESOURCES

ONLINE RESOURCES

Toolkit: The Cultural Adjustment Toolkit from the Cultural Orientation Resource Center (Center for Applied Linguistics)

- <http://www.culturalorientation.net/providing-orientation/toolkit/r-p-orientation-curriculum/r-p-orientation-curriculum-toolkit/cultural-adjustment-toolkit>

Brief: Janet Isserlis: Trauma and the Adult English Language Learner

- http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/trauma2.html

Reports: State Department Report on Human Rights (Somalia)

- <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper>

Photo Book: Cross-cultural Comparisons: What the World Eats

- <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5005952>

RESOURCES: BOOKS

Popular Books on Culture

- Jenny Horsman: *Too Scared to Learn* (adult students and trauma)
- Dave Eggers: *What is the What* (on the lost boys of Sudan)
- Susan Fadiman: *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* (a Hmong family caught in the health care system)

