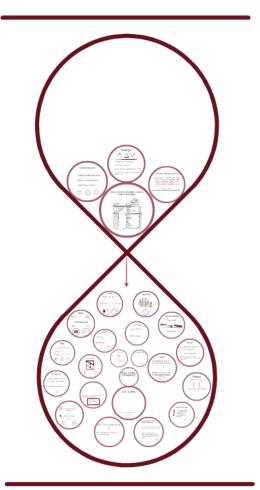
### **Cultural Orientations**

in Translating Cultures

David Katan (1999)

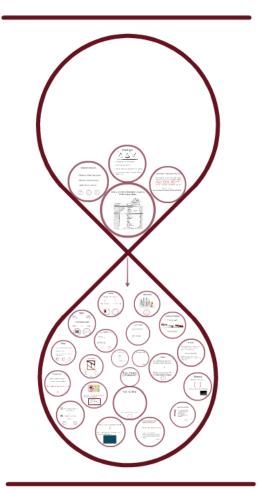


- Chunk size - Iceberg of Cultural Orientations - A taxonomy of orientation - Edward T. Hall's theory of

### **Cultural Orientations**

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Chunk size
- Iceberg of Cultural
Orientations
- A taxonomy of orientation
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contexting in communication

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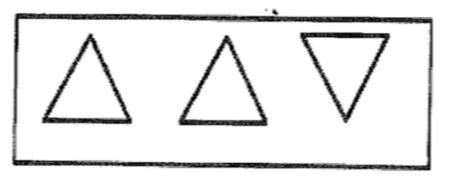
### Orientation = Metaprogram (in NLP)

"Metaprograms are systematic and habitual, and we do not usually question them if they serve us reasonably well [...] metaprograms are likely to change with a change of context..." O'Connor and Seymour (1993:149)

Our orientations govern how perception is generalized, distorted and deleted

on

## Chunk size



- A (single) picture of triangles
- Three separate shapes
- Some triangles, one upside down, in a picture
- A picture of two identical triangles and one upside down

### **Cultural Orientations**

- Kluckhohn's Value Orientations
- Hofstede's Four Dimensions
- Brake's Ten Orientations

Florence Kluckbohn

5 value orientations:

- Human Nature Orientation

- Man-Nature Orientation

- Time Orientation

- Activity Orientation

Hall's Value Orientations

- Space

- Time

- Contexting

4 dimensions:
- Power Distance
- Individualism/
collectivism
- Masculinity/Femininity
- Uncertainty Avoidance

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• So

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### Florence Kluckhohn

## 5 value orientations:

- Human Nature Orientation
- Man-Nature Orientation
- Time Orientation
- Activity Orientation
- Relational Orientation

## Hall's Value Orientations

- Space
- Time
- Contexting

## Hofstede

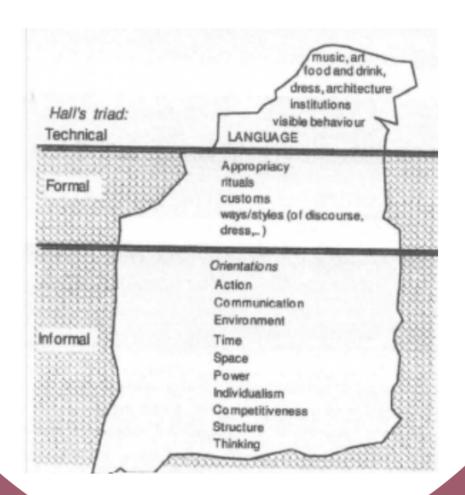
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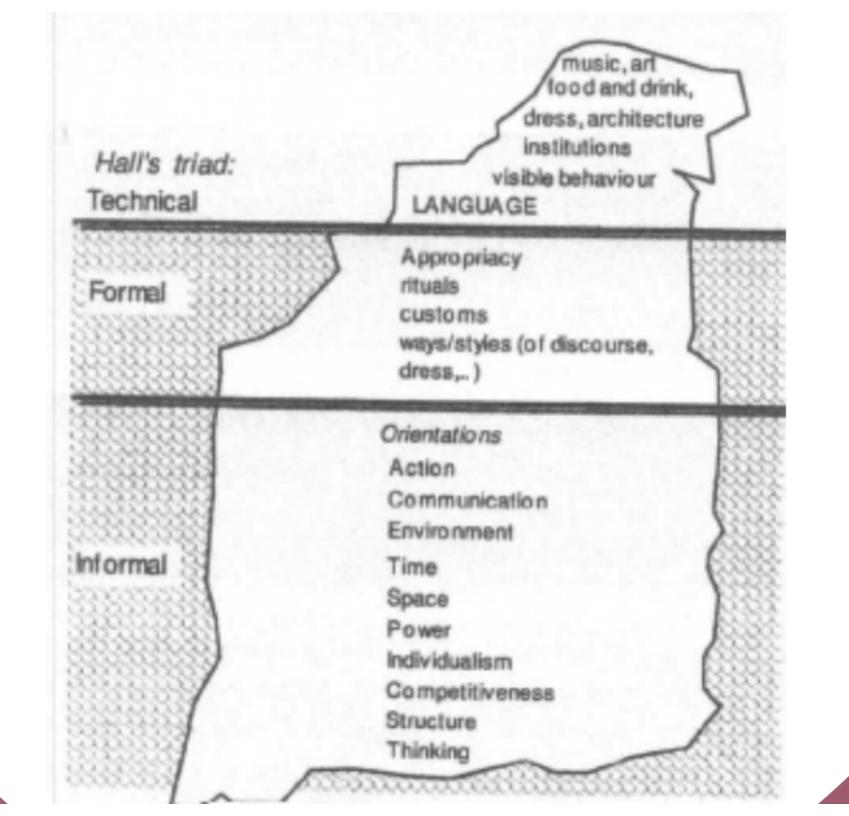
are likely to chang context..." O'Conne

Our original of the control of the c

## Iceberg of Cultural Orientations based on Hall's triad of culture







## **Environment**

Cultures control Environment

**Environment controls Cultures** 

The conquering of space vs acts of God



## Harmony



"Everest has been befriended not conquered! This is the difference."

## Time

Mono-chronic vs Poly-chronic Time

Fluid vs Fixed Time

Past Oriented vs Present Oriented vs Future Oriented







Hall (1983)

### Mono-chronic vs Poly-chronic Time

Time seen as the frame. The focus is on one task



VS



Time seen not as a frame. Great emphasis on multi-tasking

## **Fixed vs Fluid Time**

"Time is money!"

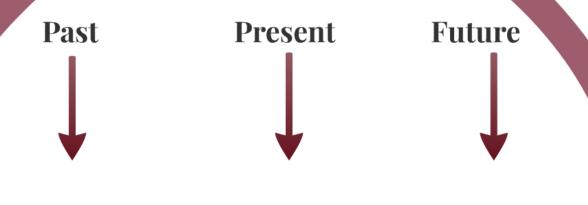


VS



What does "Subito" mean?

"I'll be with you when I have finished what I'm doing",



"Historia magistra vitae" "Forget yesterday, live today, don't worry about tomorrow"

" A little sacrifice today will bring a better tomorrow."

## **Space**

Private/ Proximity VS

Public/
Distance

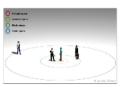
## **Psychological Space**

Diffuse

VS

Specific

Asian cultures have an orientation towards public space, but very little physical contact



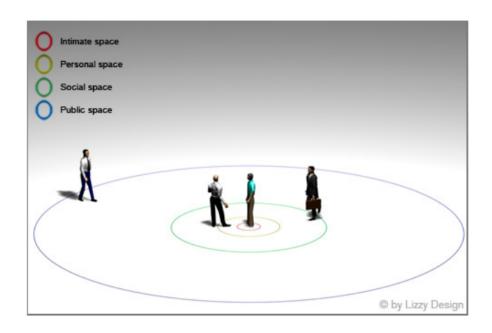
Americans and Europeans tend towards the private, but they tolerate higher levels of proximity

### Specific vs Diffuse

New acquaintances become intimate friends over a short period of time. The relationship is specific to a particular activity or sector.

Once a relationship has been formed, entry is expected to all areas of private space a fui

Low Cont 'Loosely l Asian cultures have an orientation towards public space, but very little physical contact



Americans and Europeans tend towards the private, but they tolerate higher levels of proximity

## **Specific vs Diffuse**

New acquaintances become intimate friends over a short period of time. The relationship is specific to a particular activity or sector.

Once a relationship has been formed, entry is expected to all areas of private space

## **Power**

The importance of respect



High power distance Low power distance







North Europa and North America

"He is supposed to be neutral, serving the interest of language comprehension'

· \*His role is to support his own team and to protect them from confrontational conduct by

## **Background vs Achievement**



Family and origin



Performances and actions

What is the role of the translator?

North Europa and North America

• "He is supposed to be neutral, serving the interest of language comprehension"

Japan

 "His role is to support his own team and to protect them from confrontational conduct by the Western negotiators"

## Individualism



### Particularism

Emphasis on differences

VS

### Universalism

Tendency towards generalization

"Minetuals are repail but see or ore now

## **Particularism**

Emphasis on differences

**VS** 

## Universalism

Tendency towards generalization

"All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others" (George Orwell)

# lency warus gent

"All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others" (George Orwell)

## Competitiveness

Live to work



Work to live

### Structure

Some countries such as Japan, Greece, Italy and Germany have a strong orientation towards order.

### on the other hand

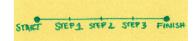
Anglo-American countries have a relatively high toleration for uncertainty and change.

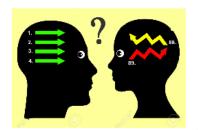
## **Thinking**

• Inductive vs Deductive



• Linear-oriented vs Systemic





### **Inductive vs Deductive**

Theory



Hypothesis



Pattern



Observation

Theory



Hypothesis



Observation



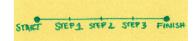
Conformation

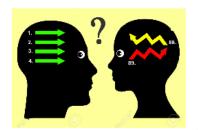
## **Thinking**

• Inductive vs Deductive

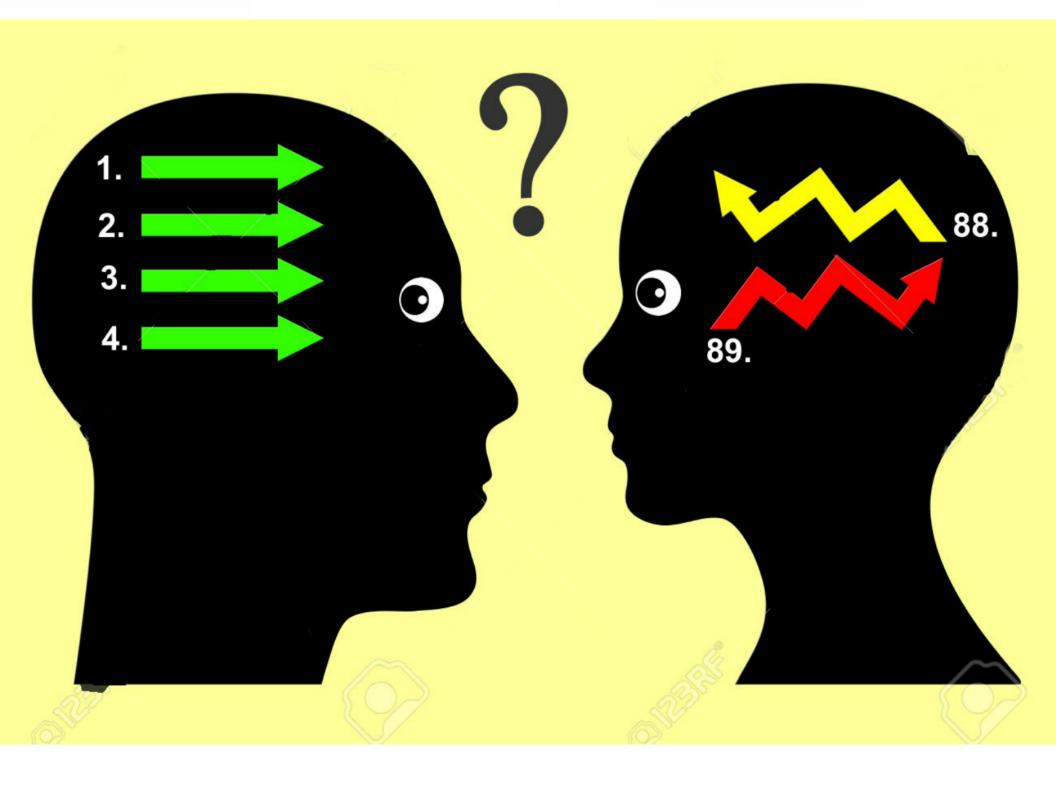


• Linear-oriented vs Systemic

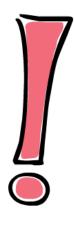




# START STEP 1 STEP 2 STEP 3 FINISH



## **Theory of Contexting**



"All communication necessitates context and...Without context there is no meaning"

Gregory Bateson commenting on Hall's theory.



# Communication entails both text and context

Text is "transmitted information"

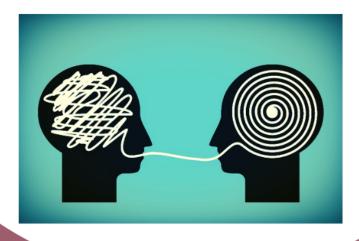
 Context is "the amount of information the other person can be expected to possess on a given subject"

Hall (1983)



Context as **perception** rather than reality

The speaker and listener have their own perception of the context





## Psychological Construct

Sperber and Wilson (1995)

VS



## Tangible Construct

Halliday (1989)





#### **Psychological Construct**



The subset of the hearer's assumptions about the world.

#### **Tangible Construct**



- The field: what is happening
- The tenor: who are taking part
- The mode: what part the language is playing



The importance of sharing mutual assumptions for a successful communication

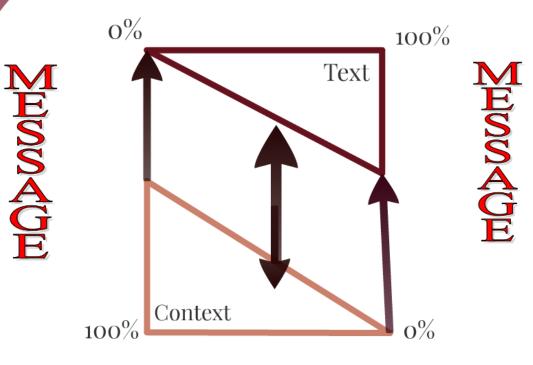
A: doorbell!

B: I'm in the bath

A: Ok.

Widdowson (1979)

#### Hall's Triangles



Culture A HCC High Context Low Text Culture B LCC Low Context High Text

Hall (1983)

### Contexting: a fundamental aspect of culture

Low Context 'Loosely knit' cultures



High Context Cultures
'Tightly woven' cultures







#### America and the U.K.



#### Italy and other Mediterranean countries



#### **Social Position**

Loosely knit cultures (LCC)
 CV-related



• Tightly woven cultures (HCC) network-related



# Arabs Arabs Americans Implicit Communication

tor (1992)

#### Change

Loosely knit cultures (LCC): low uncertainty avoidance



VS



Tightly woven cultures (HCC): high uncertainty avoidance



Anglo relati and c

#### E.g.: Unemployment

"The Conservative government believed that insecurity in the workplace motivates the workforce. [...] If work is not available you should simply ' Get on your bike' to find it. There is no such thing as 'a job for life'. "

www.eduvinet.de/eduvinet/ukoo5.htm

"[...] è naturale che i ragazzi, specie se diplomati o laureati, piuttosto che spostarsi preferiscono attendere qualche opportunità nella zona in cui hanno le loro radici."

Corriere della Sera (03/05/1995)

#### LCC vs HCC

Low context operating mode

More loosely knit shallow rooted

Emphasis placed on:

- text
- facts
- · directness
- · consistency
- substance
- rules
- · monochronic

High context operating mode

More tightly woven deep rooted

Emphasis placed on:

context

relationship/feelings

indirectness

flexibility (in meaning)

(social/personal) appearance

circumstances

polychronic

Victor (1992) & Simons et al. (1993)



#### **Appearance VS Substance**





#### The operating mode depends on:



- culture
- sub-culture
- gender
- class
- age
- situation
- individual personality

#### **Context Ranking of Cultures**

#### **Explicit & implicit communication**



Victor (1992)

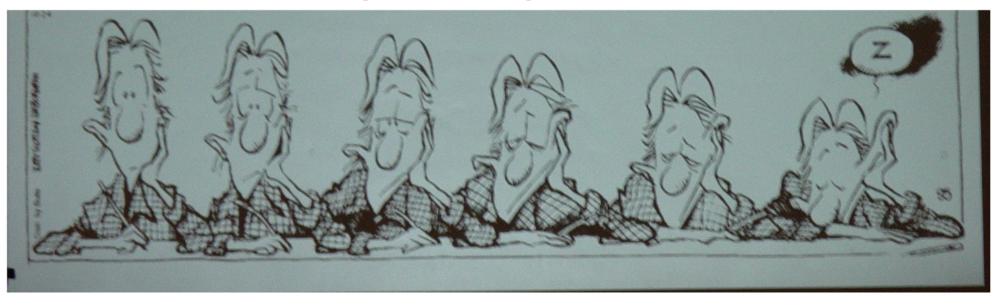
## "MY CULTURE IS THE BEST ONE!!"



#### Recap

- Chunk size
- Iceberg of Cultural Orientations
- · A taxonomy of orientation
- Edward T. Hall's theory of contexting in communication

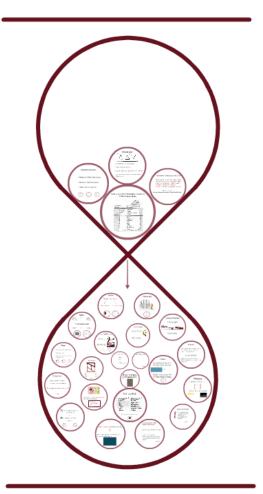
#### Thank you for your attention



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