

Session Plan Introducing some basic intercultural terms

Learning outcomes (tick + description) multiple LOs

Theoretical 1, 2

Stage (I, II, III) 1

Preparation needed (props, homework)

None for students.

Familiarise yourself with relevant theoretical sources.

Prepare lecture notes on culture, large vs small culture, identity if necessary/adequate in your context.

Prepare the table comparing the two paradigms of culture (large vs small) from Holliday, A., Kullman, J. & Hyde, M., p. 63 either on a slide to show on screen (in which case a multimedia projector and a laptop will be needed) or printout to distribute as a printout.

Prepare blank sheets of A3 paper and blue-tac for students to present their small-culture descriptions; alternatively, make sure there are enough laptops (one per group) for them to use and a multimedia projector to display their work.

Groups (lists the groups used in the activities)

Brainstorming individually, in pairs and in small groups

Sourcing individually, in pairs and small groups

Group presentations

Time (total suggested time) 80 min

Background for lecturer (bibliography, anticipated difficulties)

This material is closely related to

- Introduction to the Iceberg Theory'
- Comparing Cultural Values using Hofstede
- Identities
- Culture and Identity Reflected in Discourse and Translation Culture

Reference to theory

Seeley, N. (1997) Cultural Goals for Achieving Intercultural Communicative Competence. In Fantini, A. (ed.) New Ways of Teaching Culture. Bloomington, Illinois, TESOL, Inc.

Katan, D. (1999) *Translating Cultures: An Introduction for Translators, Interpreters and Mediators*, St Jerome Publishing, Chapter 2 – pp 16-18 and Chapter 4 – pp 60-61

Holliday, A. (1999) *Small Cultures*. Oxford journals: Applied Linguistics. Oxford Journals: Applied Linguistics, 1997, Volume 20, Issue 2, pp. 237-264.

Holliday, A., Kullman, J. & Hyde, M. (2004) *Intercultural communication: an advanced resource book*. New York, Routledge, on two paradigms of culture, p. 63 and Theme 1. Identity

Browne, K (2008) *Sociology for AS AQA*, Third edition, pp 38-39.

Activities (lead-in, main and debrief, where needed, Follow-up/homework

- a.i. Lead-in: Individually, students write definitions of culture, then compare and discuss definitions in pairs; student-centered, time: 10 minutes, theoretical 1

Teacher monitors pair work.

- a.ii. Task 1: Pair and small group discussion with the help of prompts and sample definition of culture from Student Worksheet; pairs write revised definitions, then compare them with another pair, then another, etc., using the snowball technique; student-centered; time: 10 minutes, theoretical 1

Depending on the depth of the discussion and the time, teacher may offer further definitions on culture in the form of lecture notes thus shifting the focus of the task from student-centered to teacher-led.

- a.iii. Task 2: Students brainstorm “definitions” of nationalities on their own, then compare them in pairs and identify the underlying overgeneralisations and stereotypes and disprove them as a whole group drawing on personal experience; mainly student-centered; 20 min; theoretical 1&2.

Teacher prepares sample completed sentences and disproving examples to help students if needed or in order to set the ball rolling.

The table comparing the two paradigms of culture (large vs small) from Holliday, A., Kullman, J. & Hyde, M., p. 63 is either shown on screen or distributed as a printout

- a.iv.* Follow-up: Using the ideas discussed in the previous tasks, students 'draw a picture' of the Masters of translation they are part of as a small culture; student-centered; 40 min; theoretical 2.
- a.v.* As a home assignment students may be referred to relevant theoretical readings such as the ones mentioned above.

Adaptations for an integrated approach

The above may be discussed during a series of sessions focusing on translating a certain text where issues of culture and elements of culture need to be dealt with, i.e. typical cultural realia such as the mundane London black cabs (if the source text is in English) or the different words used by married women to refer to their mother-in-law in Bulgarian.

STUDENT WORKSHEET

Lead-in. What do we mean by 'culture'

Write a definition of culture. Then compare it with a partner's. Note any similarities and / or differences.

Task 1. What elements does culture consist of?

Which of the items below have you / your partner included in your definitions? Do you feel these items can be considered elements of culture? Why?/Why not?

- A country's system of education
- A country's history
- Greetings
- Eating habits
- Cuisine
- A country's literature
- Every-day-life objects
- Religious rituals
- Relationships between people
- Behaviour shared by a group of people
- Folklore
- The language shared by a group of people

Now read the following definition of culture. How similar / different is it to the definitions you and your partner came up with?

Today's views on culture define it as a very broad term which actually encompasses "all aspects of human life" (Seeley 1994: xii); it is often seen as the substance which provides the "software of human brains" without which most human behaviours would seem "random", "unpredictable" or even "meaningless" to others. (Seeley in Fantini 1997: 23; Hofstede 2005)

With your partner, write a revised definition in the light of the above discussion. Compare revised definitions with another pair.

Task 2. Large versus small culture

Complete the definitions of these nationalities with the first expressions that come to your mind.

The English are.....

The Dutch are.....

The Bulgarian are

The (*your nationality*) are.....

Exchange definitions with a partner and discuss any similarities/differences.

Together with your fellow-students, discuss these questions.

- How far are these definitions true?
- On the basis of what have they been formed?
- Do you know anyone who is English/Dutch/Bulgarian who does not match the definitions you provided?
- What groups do you feel part of? Why?

Read A. Holliday’s explanation of small and large culture. Decide which of the two paradigms he talks about are exemplified by the definitions you just discussed.

According to A. Holliday (1999), there are two paradigms of culture – of large and small culture respectively. The large culture paradigm refers to prescribed ethnic, national and international entities, while the small culture paradigm “attaches culture to small social groupings or activities wherever there is cohesive behavior and thus avoids culturist ethnic, national or international stereotyping.”

Follow-up. "Masters of translation" as a small culture

In groups of 3/4 describe the culture of the "Masters of translation" you are currently a member of.

You may write up a short coherent text, or use graphs, mindmaps or other suitable ways to visualize your ideas. Display your work and present it to the whole group.