

Unit 13

Effective Communication—Language and Culture

有效沟通—语言文化

Comprehension questions:

1. What is relationship between language, cognition and cultural setting?
2. What three words are given as examples of close relationship between language and environment?
3. Why does the author say language is a mirror of culture? Give examples.
4. What is the main idea of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis? Why is it important?

Part A Exercises

1) **Directions:** *Listen to the news and fill in the blanks with figures and facts.*

Chinese vice minister of Culture Meng Xiaosi announced in Beijing _____ that the concept of Culture Year was created by the leaders of the two countries during their exchange of visits in _____ and 2000. Meng said the Chinese Culture Year will provide a comprehensive picture of Chinese society and its people, through the arts, _____, science and technology, education, architecture, religion and tourism.

The Chinese side will organize a total of _____ programs into three parts, focusing on _____ projects, including antiques, higher education, and joint performances by the two countries' artistic _____. Well-known film stars Gong Li and Jackie Chan will serve as representative _____.

2) **Directions:** *Listen to the two stories carefully and complete the following passages by filling in the missing information.*

Story 1: During _____ the British government asked the United States for _____ bushels of _____ to feed liberated populations. The British really wanted _____, and this language blunder cost a few million dollars to repair. The British term for core is *maize* or *Indian corn*.

Story 2: The problem was caused by the British interpretation of the phrase “_____,” which to them means to _____. The U.S. interpretation, on the other hand, was to _____, put it aside.

Part B Exercises

1) **Directions:** *Listen to the seminar several times and fill in the following table with*

appropriate information.

Participants	Metaphors of (Images of Culture)	Descriptions with examples	The purpose of learning culture
Student A	Culture is like _____.	Above the waterline: _____ Below the waterline: _____.	To raise _____ so that more of it becomes visible
Student B	Culture is like _____.	The first skin: _____. The second skin: _____. The third skin: _____. The core: _____.	To add _____ to increase its power and flexibility
Student C	Culture is our software.	Hardware: _____ culture: _____	To keep _____ by adding software as necessary
Student D	Culture is like _____.	Water: _____ Fish: _____	To be _____ we are in.
Student E	Culture is like _____.	Grammar: _____ Patterns: _____	Just as we need to know more than one language, we need to know _____.

Part C Exercises

1) **Directions:** Listen to the part on animal idioms and fill in the blanks with the appropriate animal words you hear both in English and Chinese.

- (1) as meek as _____
- (2) as naughty as _____
- (3) as cruel as _____
- (4) as busy as a _____

- (5) as cunning as a _____
 (6) as happy as a _____
 (7) as foolish as a _____
 (8) as wise as a _____
 (9) as blind as a _____
 (10) as strong as a _____
 (11) as stubborn as a _____
 (12) as stupid as a _____
 (13) as slippery as a _____
 (14) as majestic as a _____

2) Directions: Listen to the part on sports idioms and complete the following table.

Sports idioms	Sources and Meanings
term players	
step up to the plate	
game plan	
to jockey itself into position	
striking out	
out in the left field	

Acting out

- Pair work: Students should conduct an interview. One will be the CCTV host and the other will be the CEO of a Sino-U.S. joint venture in China. Below are the hints for questions and answers:
 - What makes a good communicator in intercultural business field? You may choose three the most important factors:
 - fluency in the language
 - an extensive vocabulary
 - being a good listener
 - physical appearance
 - a sense of humor
 - grammatical accuracy
 - not being afraid of making mistakes
 - an awareness of body language
 - How does culture influence language in your communication with people from different cultures?
 You may think of some examples from your own experience.
 - meaning of words
 - conversational styles
 - pragmatic rule
 - discourse patterns etc.
 - Which of the forms of written and spoken communication below do you use

- most?
- Written: e-mails, faxes, letters, memos, minutes, reports, etc.
 - Spoken: conversations, interviews, meetings, negotiations, phone calls, presentations, etc.
- (4) What kinds of problem can occur with some of the forms of communication above?
- formality / informality
 - jargon
 - standard ways of doing things
 - technology
 - tone of voice
 - visual gestures
- (5) What do you think are the most striking clash in their everyday interactions between Chinese and North Americans?
- Implicit vs. explicit way of expressing themselves
 - The use of We vs. the use of I.
 - Polite vs. impolite talk
 - Indirect vs. direct talk
 - Hesitant vs. assertive speech
 - Self-effacing vs. self-enhancing talk
 - Private vs. public personal questions
 - Reticent vs. Expressive speech
- (6) What strategies have improved Sino-American communication in your joint venture? And what are you going to do to further increase their intercultural communication competence?
2. Group work: Students should generate their own list of culture-loaded idioms from Chinese or English. Reflect on what meanings they hold of these words and how their meanings might differ from those held by people of other cultural groups.
- Compare: sun / 太阳, Fox / 狐狸, owl / 猫头鹰, cricket / 蟋蟀, dragon / 龙, propaganda / 宣传, west wind / 西风, *Yin and Yang* / 阴阳, individualism / 个人主义, privacy / 隐私, cadre / 干部, etc.
 - Explain: 燕子、松、鹤、梅、柳、雪、月、龙、虎 ...
Sea, shepherd, castle, church, nightingale, etc.
 - Distinguish different connotation of color words: red, green, black, white, yellow, etc.

Key to Exercises

Part A

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|---------------|--------|
| 1. Wednesday | 2. 1999 | 3. gymnastics | 4. 300 |
| 5. 60 | 6. troupes | 7. envoys | |

Story 1:

1. World War II 2. thousands of 3. corn 4. wheat

Story 2:

1. to table an item 2. to bring up the item for immediate consideration
3. to shelve or postpone the subject

Part B

Participants	Metaphors (Images of Culture)	Descriptions with examples	The purpose of learning culture
Student A	Culture is like <u>an iceberg</u> .	Above the waterline: <u>food, dress, paintings, architecture and dance etc.</u> Below the waterline: <u>views, attitudes, preference, love and hatred, customs and habits, etc.</u>	to raise <u>the hidden part of the iceberg</u> so that more of it becomes visible
Student B	Culture is like <u>an onion</u> .	The first skin: <u>symbols, e.g. Words, gestures, pictures, or dress hairstyles, flags, status symbols, etc.</u> The second skin: <u>heroes, e.g. Batman in the USA, and Wukong in China.</u> The third skin: <u>rituals, e.g. sporting events.</u> The core: values, e.g.	to add <u>new software to our basic operating systems</u> to increase its power and flexibility
Student C	Culture is our software.	Hardware: <u>operating environment</u> culture: <u>the software of the mind</u>	to keep <u>our computer up-to-date</u> by adding software as necessary
Student D	Culture is like <u>the water a fish swims in</u> .	Water: <u>culture</u> Fish: <u>human beings</u>	to be <u>aware of the environment</u> we are in.
Student E	Culture is like <u>the grammar of our behavior</u> .	Grammar: Patterns	Just as we need to know more than one language, we need to know <u>more than one cultural grammar</u> .

Part C

1) Directions: *Listen to the part on animal idioms again and fill in the blanks with the appropriate animal words you hear.*

1. as meek as _____ (deer /lamb)_____
2. as naughty as _____(monkey)_____
3. as cruel as _____(wolf)_____
4. as busy as a _____(bee)_____
5. as cunning as a _____(fox) (狐狸) _____
6. as meek as _____(lamb)_____
7. as happy as a _____(lark)_____
8. as foolish as a _____(donkey)_____
9. as wise as a _____ (an owl)_____
10. as blind as a _____ (bat) (蝙蝠) _____
11. as strong as a _____ (horse) (牛)_____
12. as stubborn as a _____(mule) (牛)_____
13. as stupid as a _____(goose) (猪)_____
14. as slippery as a _____(an eel) (泥鳅)_____
15. as majestic as a _____(lion)_____

2) Directions: *Listen to the part on sports idioms again and complete the following exercise.*

Sports idioms	Meanings and source
team players	General sports idiom for people who work together
step up to the plate	A baseball expression that means take responsibility
game plan	An American football expression that means a strategic plan
to jockey itself into position	A horseracing term meaning to put yourself in a good spot
striking out	Baseball talk for failure
out in the left field	Baseball expression meaning clueless