

What role does culture play in language teaching?

- Minghua Wong (DLI)
- Wenhua Cao (DLI)

Edward Sapir (1921)

- “There is always something behind language, and language can't go without culture.”
- “语言的背后是有东西的，而且语言不能离开文化而存在。”
- *Language : An Introduction to Study of Speech*

- Language and culture are intertwined and affect mutually.
- Integration of cultural awareness into a language teaching is very necessary for an overall achievement of competence in intercultural communication.
- Otherwise.....

Culture and Communicative Competence

- A: How are you?
- B: Fine. Thank you. And you?

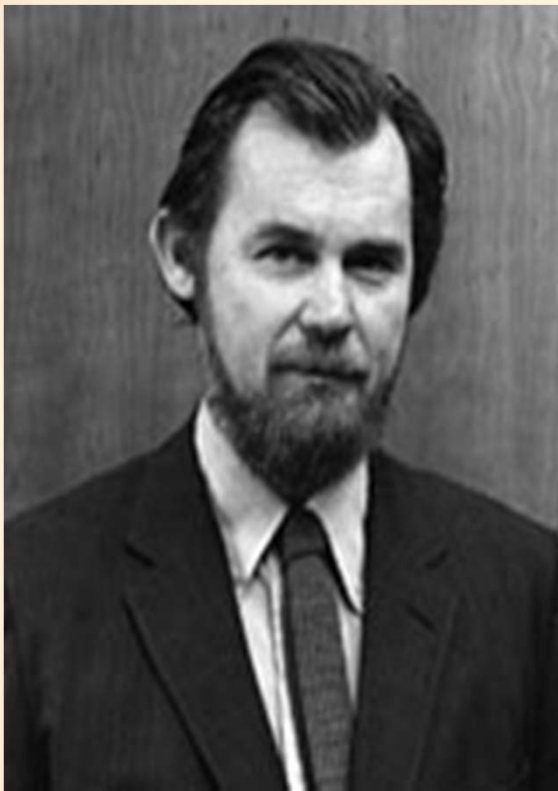
- A: Your Chinese is so good!
- B: Where? Where?
- A: Uh-Uh-

A : 你的中文真好啊 !

B : 哪里, 哪里 !

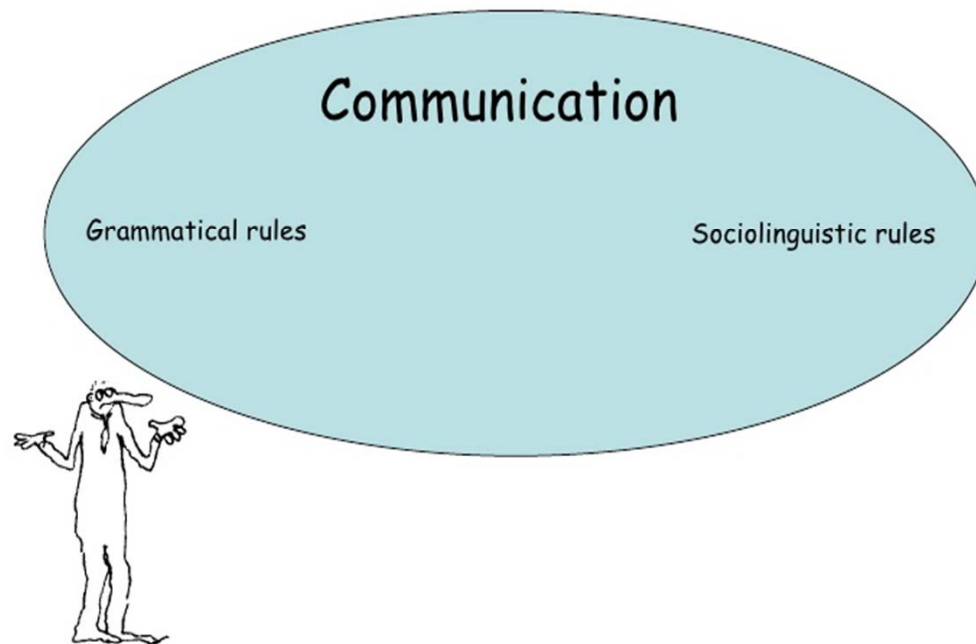
- A: Where are you going?
- A: Did you eat lunch yet?
- A: Are you married?

Communicative Competence



Dell Hymes

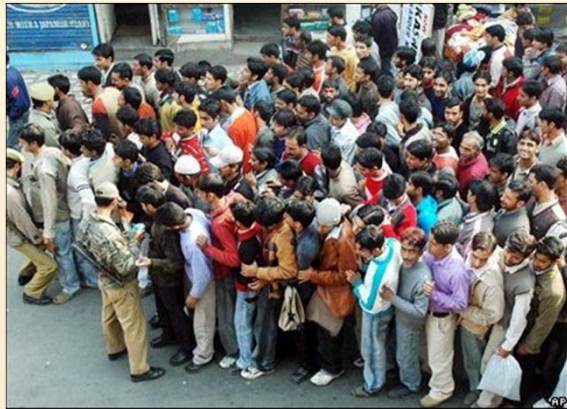
Communicative competence is concerned not only with how grammar/lexis is managed but also with the socio-cultural rules of appropriate language use.



What is culture?

- Culture has been broadly defined as the human-made part of the environment, including material and subjective elements of culture.
- --- Triandis (2002)
- Culture can be defined as a learned system of values, beliefs and/or norms among a group of people (Greey, 1994).

Culture & Social Norms

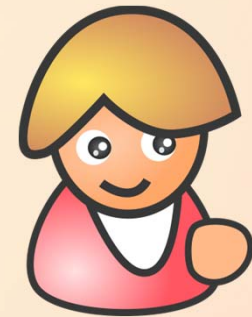


Cultural context



What time
is it?

The milkman
has just
arrived.



In England

Culture shapes our behavior

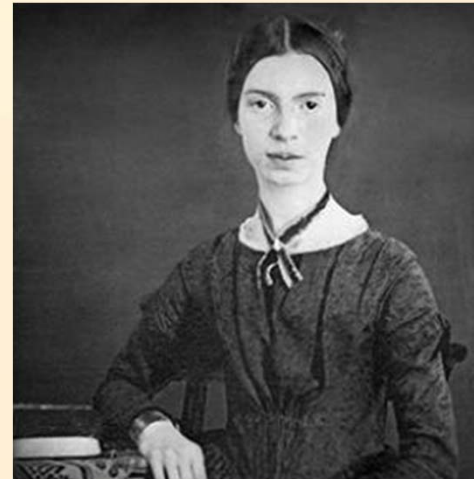
- [HSBC Commercial](#)



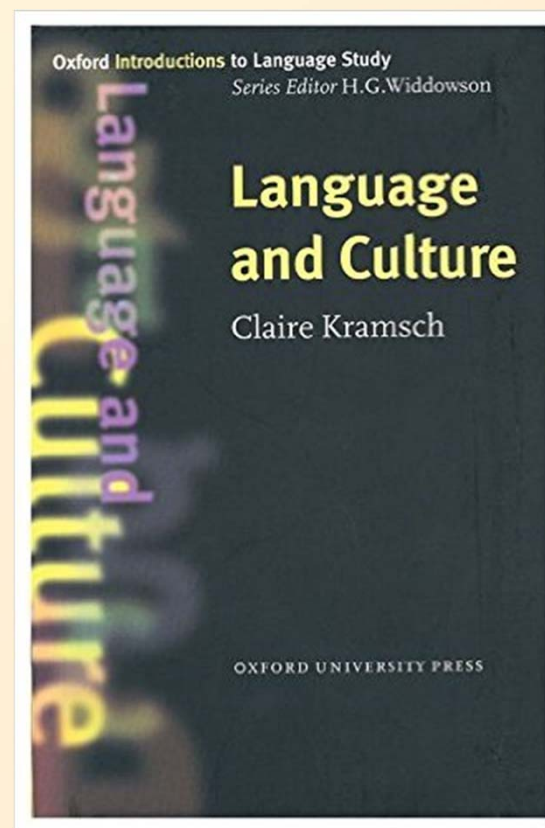
What is the relationship between language & culture?

- Essential Oils — are wrung by Emily Dickinson

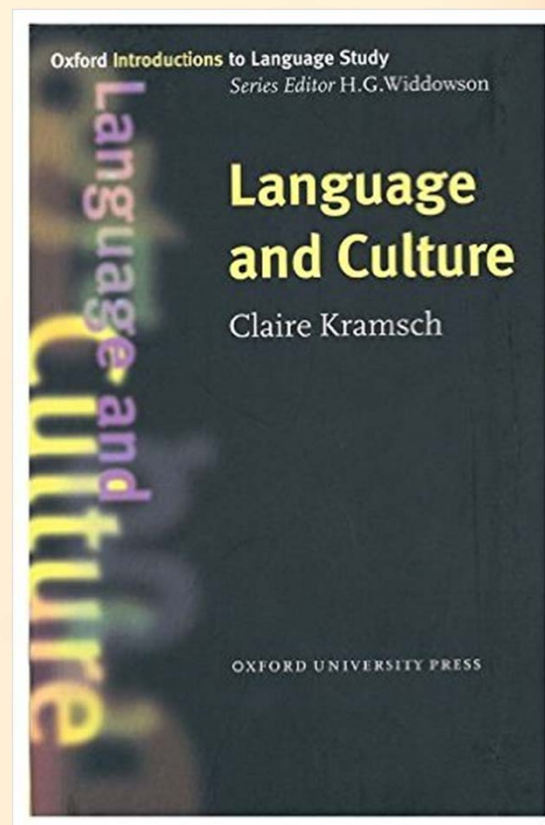
- Essential Oils — are wrung
The Attar from the Rose
Be not expressed by Suns — alone
It is the gift of Screws
- The General Rose — decay
But this — in Lady's Drawer
Make Summer — When the Lady lie
In Ceaseless Rosemary



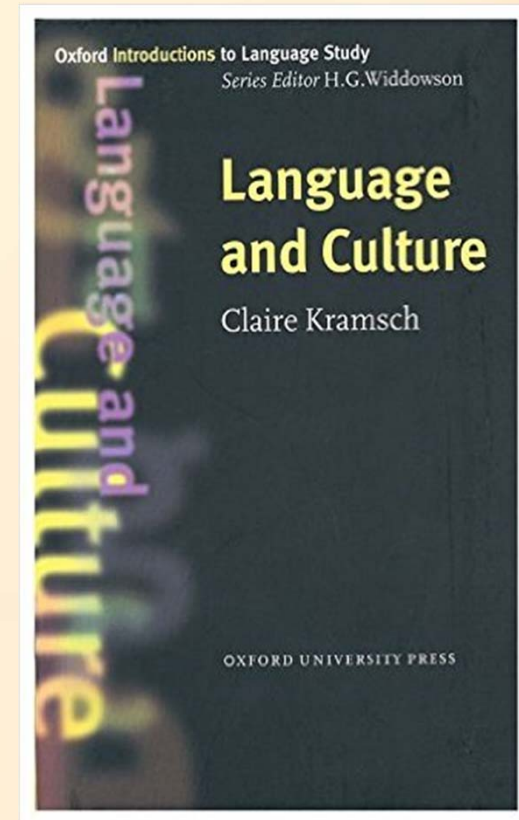
- “A rose in a flowerbed. A generic rose (“The General Rose”) is a phenomena of nature. Beautiful, but yet, faceless and nameless among others of the same species. Perishable. Forgettable. Nature alone can’t reveal nor preserve the particular beauty of a particular rose at a chosen moment in time. Powerless to prevent the biological “decay” and the ultimate death of rose and of ladies, nature can only make summer when the season is right.



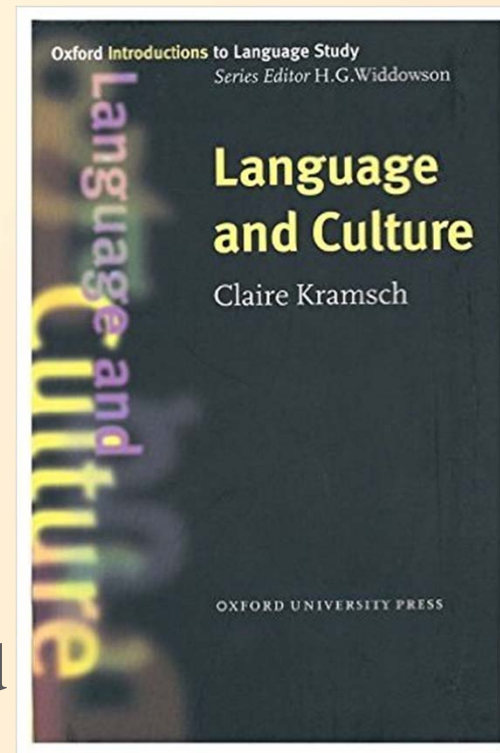
- Culture, by contrast, is not bound by biological time. Like nature, it is a “gift”, but of different kind. Through a sophisticated technological procedure, developed especially to extract the essence of roses, culture forces nature to reveal its “essential” potentialities. The word “Screws” suggests that this process is not without labor. By crushing the petals, a great deal of the rose must be lost in order to get at its essence.



- The technology of the screws constrains the exuberance of nature, in the same manner as the technology of the word, or printed syntax and vocabulary, selects among the many potential meanings that a rose might have, only those that best express its innermost truth and leaves all other unsaid. Culture makes the rose petals into a rare perfume, purchased at high cost, for the particular, personal use of particular lady.



- The lady may die, but the fragrance of the roses' essence (the Attar) can make her immortal, in the same manner as language of the poem immortalizes both the rose and the lady, and brings both back to life in the imagination of the readers. Indeed, "this" very poem, left for future readers in the poet's drawer, can "Make summer" for readers even after the poet's death. The word and the technology of the word have immortalized nature."



Why is it important to achieve 2+2+ and beyond?

My Personal Experience

- I. English jokes and Stand-up Comedy: 他们捧腹大笑 vs. 我一头雾水
→ 文化（历史，政治等）背景的缺失造成的理解障碍。
- II. English Literatures : 如果不了解当时的历史文化背景，根本就无法了解故事中人物的言行，也就根本深入不到人物的内心去体会作者真正想表达的感情。
- III. Language and Culture are so much interrelated that without properly understanding the cultural setting and social behavior of a language use, it might lead to errors or misinterpretation.

Robert Lado:

Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach

- Without solid cultural background, we can't teach a language well. Language is a part of culture, if you want to learn a language, you must understand the cultural modes and principles.
- 我们不掌握文化背景就不可能教好语言。语言是文化的一部分，要想真正学到语言，就必须懂得文化的模式和准则。

Louis Alexander: *New Concept English IV*

- “The student who has successfully completed an intermediate course in English often has good reason to feel disheartened when he embarks on an advanced course. The reason for this is not so much that he has at his command only a fairly limited vocabulary, but that he is suddenly thrust into the world of ideas.”
- “英语能力在提升到一定境界后，主要的瓶颈已经不再是词汇、语法等表层问题，而是如何将文章内容和语言形式结合学习的深层问题。而这个问题说到底就是解决英语思维的问题。”

I. Good to boost students' interest and enhance their learning motivation

- Make classes more enriched 使课堂丰富多彩
- Arouse students' interest to engage and to learn 激发学生的学习兴趣
- Strengthen students' language sensibility 增强语言感受能力

“china” 怎么念？

- 穷人读：钱哪儿？哪儿？
 - 光棍读：妻哪儿？哪儿？
 - 乞丐读：去哪儿？哪儿？
 - 地产商读：圈哪儿？哪儿？
 - 医生读：切哪儿？
 - 有钱人读：妾哪儿？
 - 小偷读：窃哪儿？
 - 贫民读：迁哪儿？
 - 官员读：权
 - 恋人读：亲
 - 强盗读：抢
 - 政府读：拆
- 最后得出的结论：还是政府发音最准确！城管听后不乐意了：我们读：踹哪儿？谁的标准？最后中纪委表态：查哪儿？大家都息声了。

II. Beneficial to cultivate students' communicative ability

- Final goal to learn a language is to communicate 语言是一种交流沟通工具
- Cultivate students' communicative competence 培养交际能力
- Be sensitive to cultural differences and behave appropriately 得当的言谈举止

“意思”都有什么意思？

- 阿呆给领导送红包时，两人的对话颇有意思。

领导：“你这是**什么意思**？”

阿呆：“没什么意思，**意思意思**。”

领导：“你这就**不够意思**了。”

阿呆：“**小意思**，小意思。”

领导：“你这人真**有意思**。”

阿呆：“其实也**没有别的意思**。”

领导：“那我就**不好意思**了。”

阿呆：“是我不好意思。”



III. Beneficial to promote students' self development

- Expand students' horizon and embrace the differences.
- With globalization, we all need to be more open-minded by exposing ourselves to different cultures.
- 例如介绍中国人的勤恳、节俭、孝顺的习惯，有利于培养学生懂得不怕苦，会理财，增强家庭观念。

- How did we do it?

I : Insert Cultural inputs whenever appropriate

- Whenever we encounter anything that is related to culture, we can bring it up. It could be a simple word “吃”, low frequency word “相濡以沫”, or “塞翁失马，焉知非福”, etc.
- 大相径庭
- 自然界的“红”跟社会含义的“红”**截然不同**：在中国红色代表着喜庆，“红火”、“红双喜”、“红包”、“红榜”、“开门红”，而英语中则**大相径庭**，用它来表示危险、发怒、禁止：Red alert, red flag, deficit。

I : Insert Cultural inputs whenever appropriate

- 乡谣俱乐部汇集了多款世界闻名的纯麦芽威士忌。这种威士忌比普通威士忌要**辣**，也要贵，带有一股儿烟味，泥炭味。这类酒通常为**10年到20年**的酒龄（标签上的酒龄）。
- The above passage talks about:
 - A. A kind of dish
 - B. A brand of liquor
 - C. A brand of cigarette
 - D. A kind of pepper

I : Insert Cultural inputs whenever appropriate

- Unit 6 Talk about Chinese Family

- 为什么中国人是「**一个团队带一个孩子**」，外国人是「**一个人带一个团队的孩子**」？
- 我们家小孩1岁半前，是一个团队的人在带，最高峰时外公、外婆、保姆、老婆四个人全职在家带，我下班回家也要帮忙。他们都反映，一天到晚都很忙。而且周围的亲戚朋友，家里都是这个的。

但国外，据说保姆很贵，父母也不会来帮忙，且丈夫一般要上班，因此就是妻子一个人带孩子。国外也没有计划生育，所以常常是一个女人在家带一堆孩子

- 带孩子的效率低，其实也是我们国家落后的一种表现：
 - 一、耗费了大量的人力在家务上，降低了全社会的效率。
 - 二、带孩子效率低下，导致年轻后辈不得不依靠长辈，事实上也降低了小家庭的独立性，并阻碍了年轻夫妇的成长。

Unit 7 Chinese Education System

从中美老师讲《灰姑娘》看教育的差异

美国 US	中国 CN
<p>老师先请一个孩子上台给同学讲一讲这个故事。他表示了感谢，全班提问。</p>	<p>老师：今天上课，我们讲灰姑娘的故事。大家都预习了吗？ 学生：这还要预习？老得掉渣了。</p>
<p>老师：你们喜欢故事里面的哪一个？不喜欢哪一个？为什么？ 学生：喜欢辛黛瑞拉（灰姑娘），还有王子，不喜欢她妈带来的姐姐。辛黛瑞拉善良、可爱、漂亮。后妈和姐姐对辛黛瑞拉不好。</p>	<p>老师：灰姑娘是格林童话还是安徒生童话？他的出生？作者生平事迹如何？ 学生：……书上不都写了吗？不会自己看啊？</p>
<p>老师：如果在午夜12点的时候，辛黛瑞拉没有来得及马车，你们想一想，可能会出现什么情况？</p>	<p>老师：这故事的重大意义是什么？ 学生：得，这肯定要考的了。</p>
<p>老师：最后一个问题，这个故事有什么不合理的地方？ 学生：（过了好一会）午夜12点以后，辛黛瑞拉的水晶鞋没有变回去。</p>	<p>老师：怎么这么多人睡觉啊？你们要知道考好成绩，不能考好成绩就不能上大学，不能上大学就不能……你们要明白这些做人的道理。</p>

Unit 8 Chinese Medicine 对比文化差异，使学生发表自己的独到见解，使课堂妙趣横生，使学生更受益

西医	中医

guide students to analyze the similarities and dissimilarities of cultures

II : collaborate with class schedules

- If the teaching content is about historical events, traditional customs, and etc., teachers can add relevant content as the lead-in or supplementary.
- 谈到一胎化政策，**文化大革命**等时，可借助图片、文章、以及YouTube视频给学生们介绍一些背景及其对中国发展的利弊。也可在学完后让学生们再做一些网络调查

鲁迅 《立论》

- 我梦见自己正在小学校的讲堂上预备作文，向老师请教立论的方法。
- “难！”老师从眼镜圈外斜射出眼光来，看着我，说。“我告诉你一件事——
- “一家人家生了一个男孩，合家高兴透顶了。满月的时候，抱出来给客人看，大概自然是想得一点好兆头。
- “一个说：‘这孩子将来要发财的。’他于是得到一番感谢。
- “一个说：这孩子将来要做官的。他于是收回几句恭维。
- “一个说：‘这孩子将来是要死的。’他于是得到一顿大家合力的痛打。
- “说要死的必然，说富贵的许谎。但说谎的得好报，说必然的遭打。你……”
- “我愿意既不说谎，也不遭打。那么，老师，我得怎么说呢？”
- “那么，你得说：‘啊呀！这孩子呵！您瞧！多么……。阿唷！哈哈！Hehe！He，hehehehe⁽²⁾！”
- 一九二五年七月八日

III : Teaching then Practice

- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned
- 成语故事：先学（听读），然后让学生虚拟情景表演
- 情景对话：如果你的孩子决定啃老怎么办？
- 小辩论会：送父母去养老院是不是不孝顺？

IV : Through Assignments

- Certain cultural, historical, and political topics, we assigned as homework in advance so that students would do research online and share during the class time the next day.

前一天作业 上网查：孙子兵法	前一天作业 上网查：中关村	前一天作业 上网查：大锅饭
YouTube : 百家讲坛孙子兵法 (0:40 – 1:58)	YouTube : 老梁观世界中关村还能不能火 (2:48 – 4:04)	YouTube : 首席经济学家张维迎：什么是 市场经济 (1:30 – 3:15)
课文：孙子和孙子兵法	课文：中关村的创业者	课文：中国的市场经济