Week 2 – Understanding Intercultural Communication and the Benefits of Bilingualism

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Foreign Languages & Cultural Awareness (BMIH5003)

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
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200
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Before we start

As there are quite a few of us here, please ensure that your microphone is muted during all teaching until you are asked a question or there is a group discussion to prevent background noise.

You should attend every class and have a private space to work so that you can concentrate fully on the lesson.

You should not be at work, shopping, driving or caring for children.

Your camera must be always on during lectures please. -Use the Teams university background to protect your privacy.

YOU must join via a laptop or PC/MAC –No attendance permitted on phones or tablets

You will be removed from the session and logged as absent if you fail to adhere to these criteria.

This and all sessions will be recorded so that you can watch it again

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Recap

- Introduction to the Module
- Assessments
- What is culture?
- Characteristics of communication

Today's Agenda

Cultural Awareness:

- Global Village
- Contributors to Cultural Diversity
- Understanding Intercultural Communication – Challenges/Choices
- Multiculturalism, Ethnocentrism, Cultural Relativism
- Stereotypes Vs Clichés

Foreign Language:

- The English Language
- Welsh Language Awareness

Challenges of Living in a Global Society and Understanding Intercultural Communication

Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication refers to communication between individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds and between diverse groups.

How can knowledge and skills of intercultural communication benefit us?

Why Study Intercultural Communication?

- 6 imperatives based on work by Martin and Nakayama (2004) follow to address this issue:

(1) technological imperative

(2) demographic imperative

(3) economic imperative

(4) peace imperative

(5) self – awareness imperative

(6) ethical imperative

The Global Village

Marshall McLuhan (1964) coined the term **global village** in which communication technology brings news and information to the most remote parts of the world.

Do we partake in a more unified or diversified world because communication technologies bring us closer?

Globalisation

Three perspectives on globalisation (Held and McGrew, 2007):

- *Globalists* view globalisation as an inevitable development which cannot be resisted or significantly influenced by human intervention
- *Traditionalists* believe that most economic and social activity is regional, rather than global, and they still see a significant role of nation-states in globalisation
- *Transformationalists* contend that globalisation represents a significant shift, but there is still significant scope for national, local and other agencies.

Which perspective is close to yours? And why?

Multiculturalism

The term **multiculturalism** can be used to describe the composition of a society made up of diverse cultures. It can also refer to a society's tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversity.

Features of **multicultural** societies can include:

- Multilingual populations
- Religious diversity
- Diverse political representation
- Normalisation of diverse cultural holidays

Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism means seeing our own culture as the centre of the universe and seeing other cultures as insignificant or even inferior.

Ethnocentrism may lead to prejudice, stereotypes or discrimination.

Examples:

- Expecting others to speak English
- Judging other countries' diets or cultural dress
- Colonial imperialism

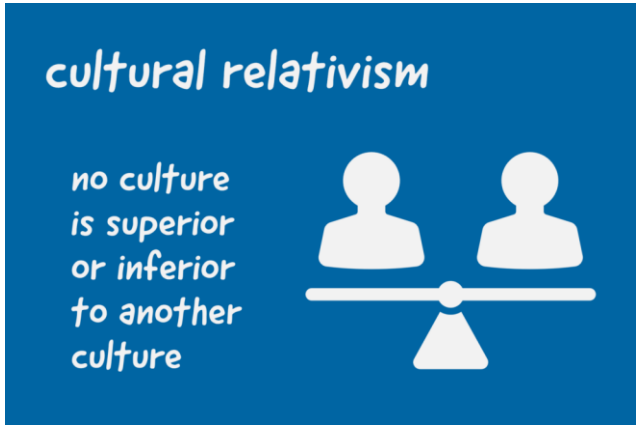
Cultural Relativism

Cultural relativism is the degree to which an individual judges another culture by its context.

Cultural relativism evaluates the behaviours of a culture by its assumptions about the reality.

<u>Examples:</u>

- Public breastfeeding
- Public affection
- Same-sex marriages



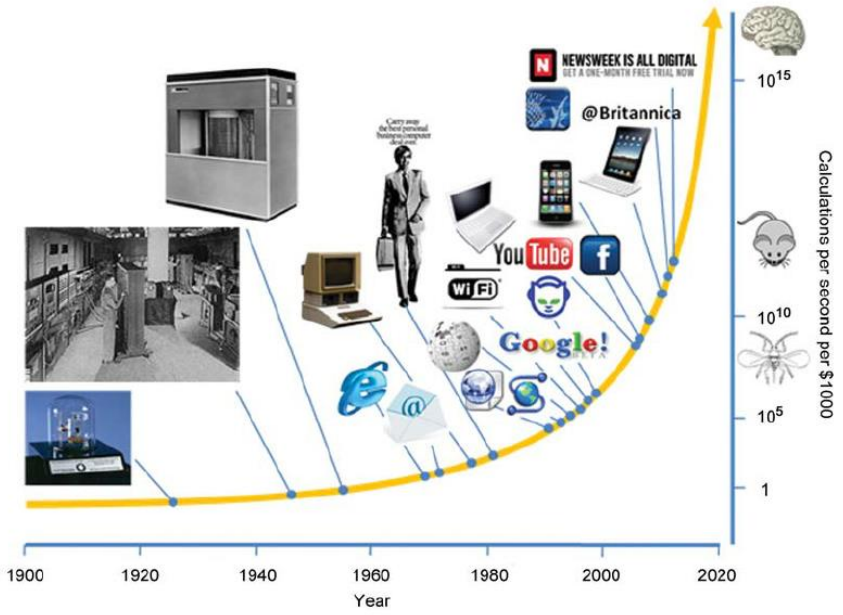
Contributors to Cultural Diversity (1)

Advanced technology and transportation systems:

- Internet, satellites, telephones, social media, podcasting, blogging
- Train, car, airplane etc.

Increased intercultural encounters create opportunities of understanding and possibilities of misunderstanding.

Understanding other cultures is a challenge we face today.



Contributors to Cultural Diversity (2)

Global economy and business transactions:

- Global transformation
- International expansion
- Diverse workforce

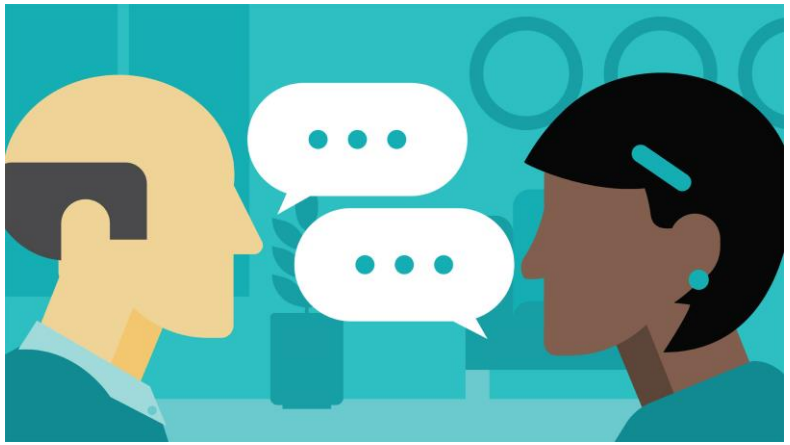
Understanding cultural tensions created by economic transformations is a challenge we face in the business context of intercultural communication.

Contributors to Cultural Diversity (3)

Mass migration and international exchange:

- Immigrations flow, mainly from developing to developed countries.
- Migrants who move to the host country for work or study

Promoting interethnic co-existence is a challenge we face in our multicultural society.



Necessity and Benefits of Intercultural Communication (1)

Building intercultural understanding:

- Understanding is the first step towards acceptance
- People around the world have accumulated a rich stock of cultural traditions and customs, but we are often not aware of the cultural rules governing our own behaviour
- To understand another culture, we need to communicate with its people

Necessity and Benefits of Intercultural Communication (2)

Promoting international business exchange:

- Three competencies essential in the global workplace are: intercultural communication skills, problem solving ability, and global leadership.
- Communicating with unfamiliar cultures does not simply mean finding a translator to facilitate the process.
- You need to know what to expect when someone engages in an interaction (e.g. Guanxi in business negotiation with Chinese)

Necessity and Benefits of Intercultural Communication (3)

Facilitating cross-cultural adaptation:

- Cross-cultural adaptation is a two-way process.
- The tension between immigrants and host nationals often centres on the issue of ethnic cultural maintenance.
- True multicultural society is characterised by mutual acceptance and equal societal participation.

Culture Shock

Why do we need to be conscious of the culture shock?

- **Culture shock** can lead to a sense of isolation. People may feel disconnected from others and feel like they do not fit in with the new culture. They may also be confused by rules, traditions, or customs unfamiliar to them
- When they are talking, they might be translating from English to their mother tongue and it might come across as rude, e.g. “GIVE ME THAT, SIR” -> no please, no excuse me
- It is quite hard to adjust, and it can be challenging as an adult when you are confronted with the changes and people struggle with someone telling you what you know and what we do is different.

Challenges to Intercultural Communication

A. Ethnocentrism – the process of judging another culture using the standards of your own culture

B. Stereotyping – can be good or bad.

C. Anxiety and uncertainty – You may feel anxiety or uncertainty when you are introduced to people who speak, look, and act differently from you (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997).

D. Misinterpretation of nonverbal and verbal behaviors.

Choices for Intercultural Communication

A. Know your biases and stereotypes.

B. Tolerate the unknown.

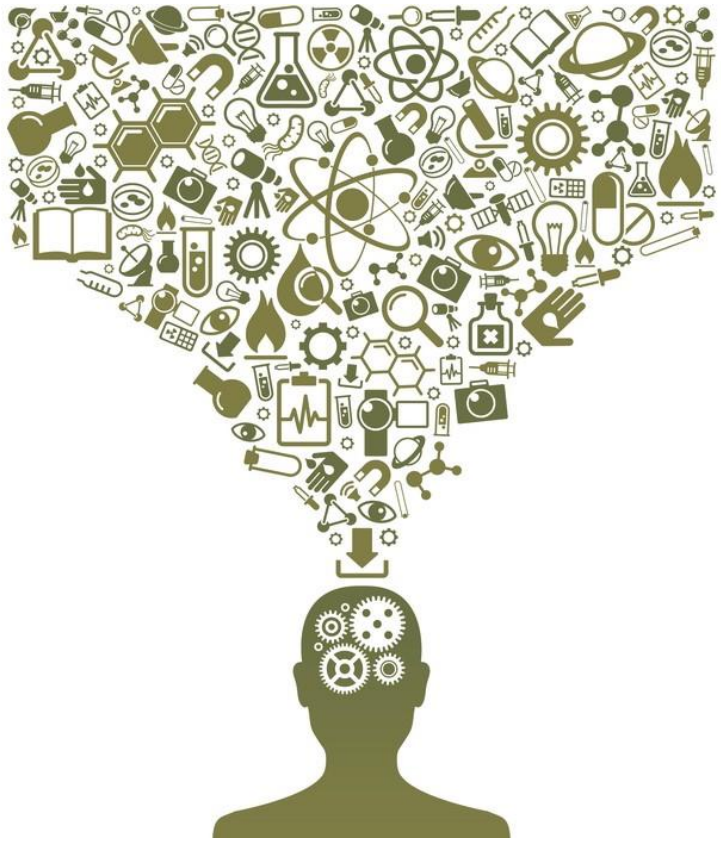
C. Practice cultural respect.

D. Educate yourself.

E. Be prepared for consequences.

F. Relate to the individual, not the culture.

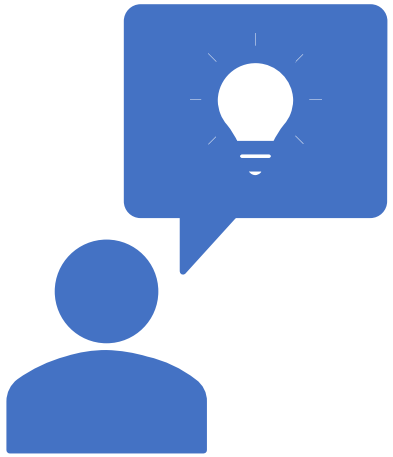
G. Reevaluate and eliminate your prejudices.



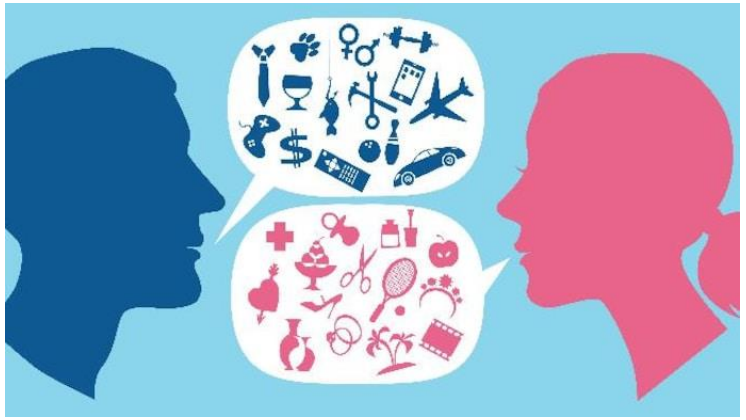
Activity: Stereotypes Vs. Cliché (15 min.)

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the difference between stereotypes and clichés? In your own words, come up with a definition for each of those two terms.
2. How are stereotypes formed?
3. Give 2 examples for each.



Stereotypes



A **stereotype** is an oversimplified and widely held generalisation about a group of people.

Stereotypes are formed through social learning and reinforced by confirmation bias. Breaking the cycle requires conscious effort and education.

Example:

- Girls are better at languages while boys are better in math.

Negative Effects on Communication

Stereotypes are harmful as they impede communication in at least four ways:

- They cause us to assume that a widely held belief is true when it may not be
- Continued use of the stereotype reinforces the belief
- Stereotypes also impede communication when they cause us to assume that a widely held belief is true of any one individual
- The stereotype can become a “self-fulfilling prophecy” for the person stereotype

Clichés

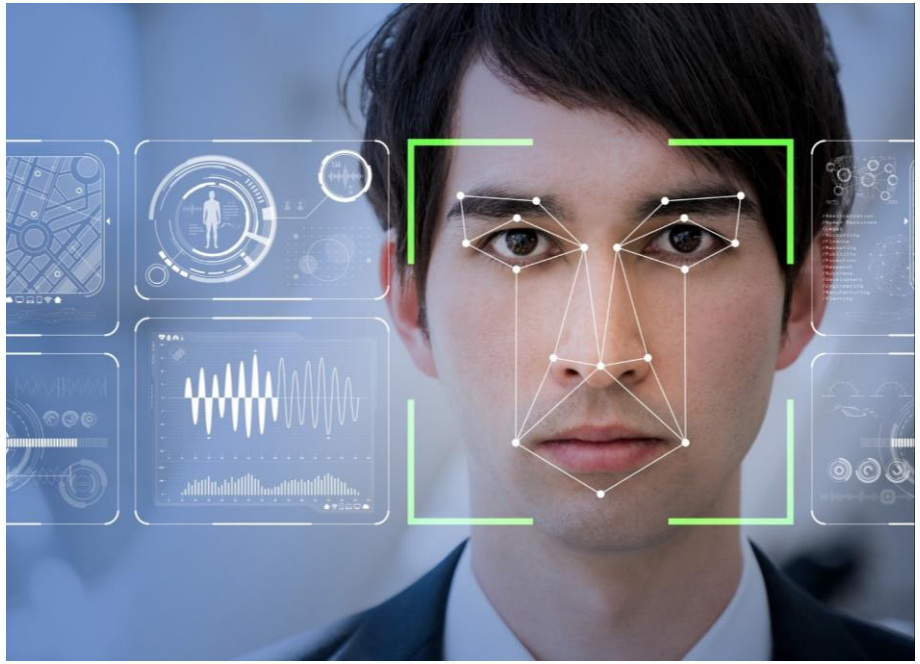
A **cliché** is an overused phrase or expression, and often lack of original thought.

They often add little value to communication or writing.

<u>Example:</u>

- “Don’t judge a book by its cover”

Profiling



Profiling refers to a law enforcement practice of scrutinising certain individuals based on characteristics thought to indicate a likelihood of criminal behaviour.

Example:

- Conducting traffic stops based on the vehicle occupant's perceived race, ethnicity, gender, or economic status.

Foreign Languages

- English
- Welsh Language Awareness

Activity: British/Welsh (10 min.)

Task:

- Make a list of stereotypes you heard about the British/Welsh.
- Where do you think these stereotypes come from?
- Do you think your stereotypes about another culture might be questionable?

Stereotypes about the British

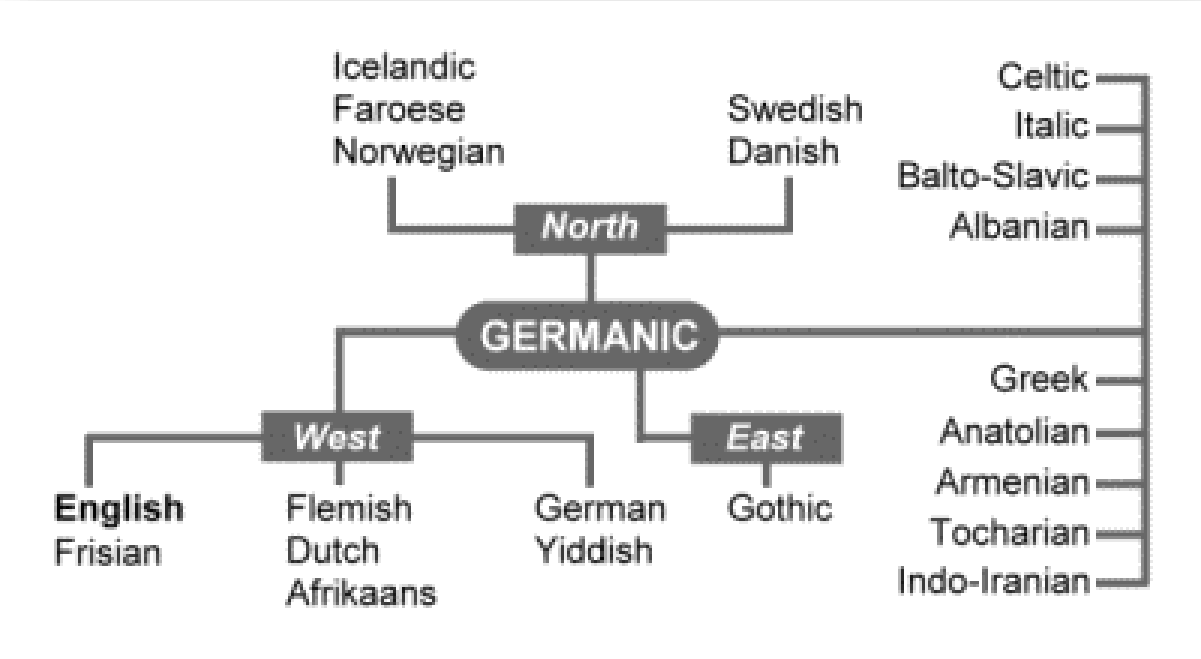
- bad teeth
- drink only tea
- greasy food (only fish & chips)
- humour
- Monolingualism
- anti-social behaviour abroad (e.g. holidays in Benidorm etc.)

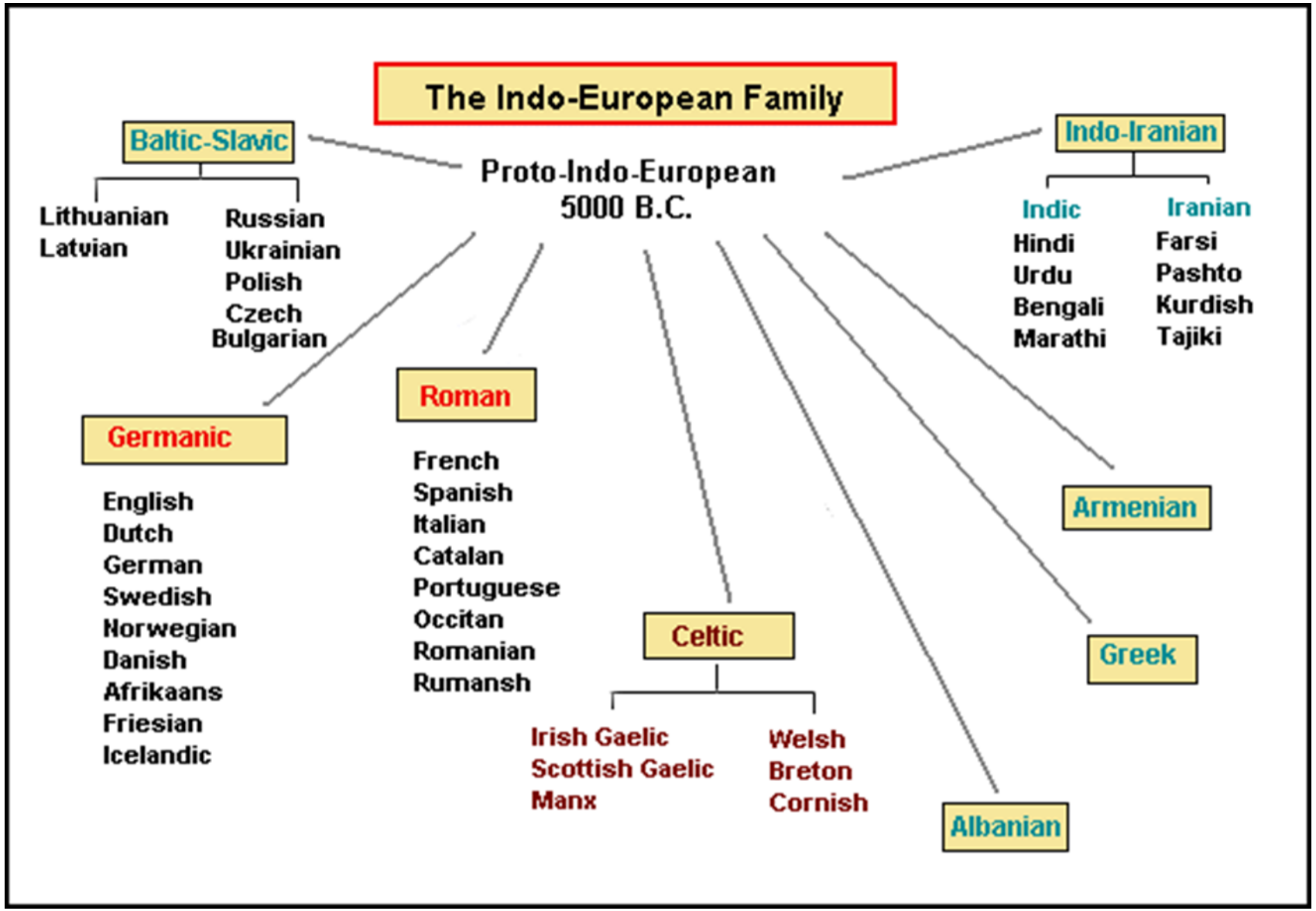
Stereotypes about the Welsh

- Getting excited to hear another Welsh accent on holiday
- Love to pronounce this sign
- No one speaks English, just Welsh
- Love for sheep

The English Language

- English is a West Germanic language and belongs to the Indo-European family of languages
- English is the official language in 67 countries




The Indo-European Family
Proto-Indo-European
5000 B.C.
Baltic-Slavic
Lithuanian
Latvian
Russian
Ukrainian
Polish
Czech
Bulgarian
Germanic
English
Dutch
German
Swedish
Norwegian
Danish
Afrikaans
Friesian
Icelandic
Roman
French
Spanish
Italian
Catalan
Portuguese
Occitan
Romanian
Rumansh
Celtic
Irish Gaelic
Scottish Gaelic
Manx
Welsh
Breton
Cornish
Albanian
Greek
Armenian
Indo-Iranian
Indic
Hindi
Urdu
Bengali
Marathi
Iranian
Farsi
Pashto
Kurdish
Tajiki

The English Language

Lingua Franca = a language used for communication between groups of people who speak different languages. The international business community sees English as a lingua franca.

- Modern English, sometimes described as the first global **lingua franca,** is also regarded as the first world language.
- English is the world's most widely used language in newspaper publishing, book publishing, international telecommunications, scientific publishing, international trade, mass entertainment, and diplomacy.
- English is also used as international language of seafaring and aviation.

English Language Variations

- Two major variations of the English Language are American and British English
- Both use the same alphabet
- Distinct differences in pronunciation, grammar, spelling and vocabulary/slang

Task: English Language Variations (10 min.)

<u>Complete the following task set:</u>

1. Find 3 examples for differences in **spelling** between British English (BE) and American English (AE).
2. Find 3 examples for differences in **vocabulary/slang** between BE and AE.
3. Find 3 examples for differences in **pronunciation** in BE and AE.

Answers: English Language Variations

Examples:

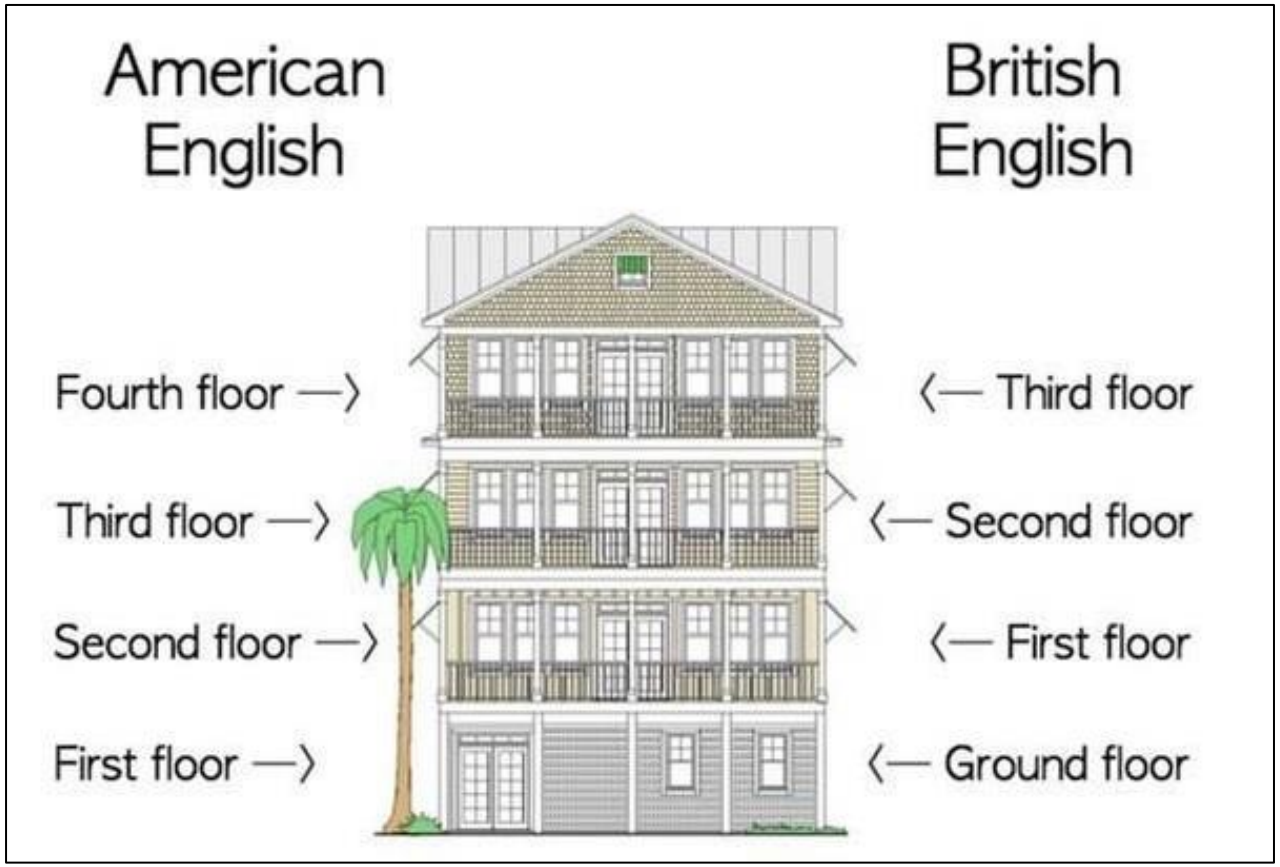
1. Behaviour (BE) vs. behavior (AE); organisation (BE) vs. organization (AE); prioritise (BE) vs. prioritize (AE).
2. Lift (BE) vs. elevator (AE); pavement (BE) vs. sidewalk (AE); flat (BE) vs. apartment (AE).
3. Yoghurt; data; Marriott.

English Language Variations in Hospitality

- One curious difference in BE and AE is when it comes to the floor labelling system in hotels/ buildings.

On which floor would you find the reception in Britain? And how about the front desk in America?

English Language Variations in Hospitality



Welsh Culture

- Wales is a culturally rich country with an incredible history of tradition, delicious cuisine, soulful music, fascinating language and so much more.
- Welsh national symbols/emblems: **red Welsh dragon** (national flag) **leeks** (national vegetable), **daffodil** (national flower), **harp** (national instrument), **love spoons** (gift of romantic intent).
- Wales is famous for several tasty dishes, both sweet and savoury: **Welsh cakes, Welsh rarebit, cawl, laverbread, bara brith**
- Music is a huge part of Wales' cultural identity and history. In fact, Wales is popularly referred to as the 'Land of Song'!

The Welsh Language

- Wales is very much a bilingual country with around 25% of the population speaking Welsh and this figure is still growing (with a government target of reaching 1 million speakers by 2050).
- The Welsh language is a beautiful but complex language for those unfamiliar with it. Common Welsh words and phrases include ‘Diolch’ (thank you), ‘Shwmae’ (hello), and ‘Croeso’ (welcome).
- Welsh is among Europe’s oldest languages
- Welsh is also a modern European language. It is estimated that it is spoken by around 750,000 people world-wide.

Welsh Language Awareness

- Wales and its distinctiveness are core values held by UWTSD, and it is a place to celebrate the vibrant culture, heritage and language of Wales.
- The Welsh language and culture can open doors to all students, whatever their current knowledge and experience of using the language.

Welsh Language Awareness e-module on Moodle

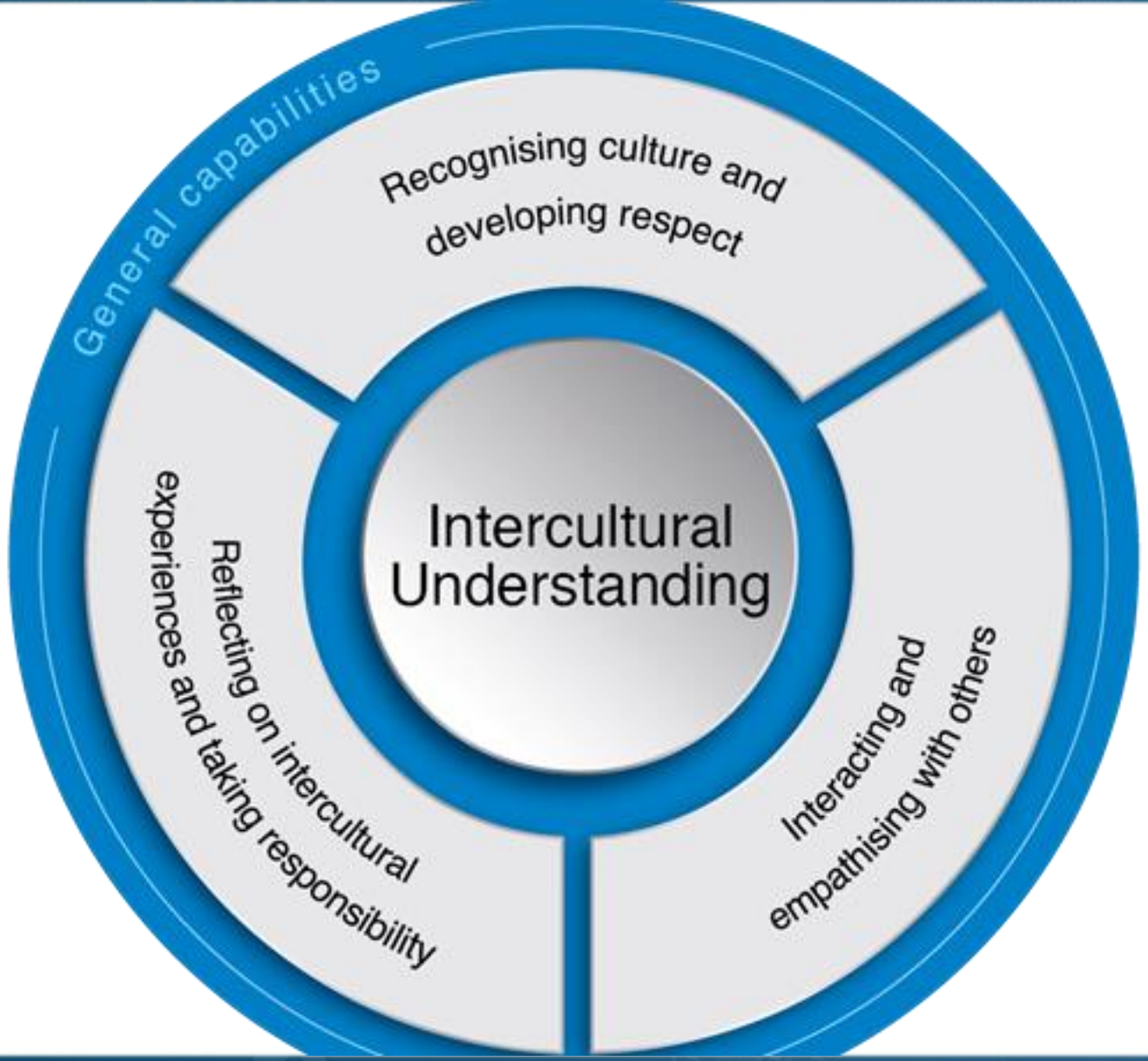
Activity: Welsh Language Awareness (45 min.)

Task: Complete *Section 1 to 4* of the Welsh Language Awareness e-module on Moodle/Week 2

Welsh Language Awareness E-module - Feedback

1. What did you find in the e-module?
2. What information about the Welsh Language did you find particularly surprising/interesting?
3. Are you interested in learning Welsh?
4. How do you believe Welsh language skills can enhance your hospitality skill set?

➢ For those of you interested in learning Welsh at UWTSD, explore *Section 5* (~20min) of the e-module


General capabilities
Recognising culture and developing respect
Intercultural Understanding
Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility
Interacting and empathising with others

Summary

Any questions?

References

- Davies, J. (2014) *The Welsh Language: A History*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Held, D. and McGrew, A.G. (2007) *Globalization/Anti-Globalization: Beyond the Great Divide*. 2nd Ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hofstede Insights (2023) *Country Comparison Tool*. Available at: https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool (Accessed: 25th August 2023).