Hall's Cultural Factors (1950)

Aniss Khalida

Puteri Mohaini

Muhamad Amiruddin

Context

- Low Context and High Context

1- Low Context
- More verbal communication
- More straight forwards
- Less misunderstanding

2- High Context

- More non-verbal communication.

- Implying the message in a more indirect method.

- More confusing.

Low Context VS High

Factor	High-context culture	Low-context culture
Overtness of messages	Many covert and implicit messages, with use of metaphor and reading between the lines.	Many overt and explicit messages that are simple and clear.
Locus of control and attribution for failure	Inner locus of control and personal acceptance for failure	Outer locus of control and blame of others for failure
Use of non-verbal communication	Much nonverbal communication	More focus on verbal communication than body language
Expression of reaction	Reserved, inward reactions	Visible, external, outward reaction
Cohesion and separation of groups	Strong distinction between ingroup and outgroup. Strong sense of family.	Flexible and open grouping patterns, changing as needed
People bonds	Strong people bonds with affiliation to family and community	Fragile bonds between people with little sense of loyalty.
Level of commitment to relationships	High commitment to long-term relationships. Relationship more important than task.	Low commitment to relationship. Task more important than relationships.
Flexibility of time	Time is open and flexible. Process is more important than product	Time is highly organized. Product is more important than process

Time

- Monochronic time
- Polychronic time

Monochronic time

- It means doing one thing at a time.
- Assumes careful planning and scheduling.
- A familiar Western approach that appears in disciplines such as 'time management'.
- Monochronic people tend also to be low context.

Polychronic time

- Human interaction is valued over time and material things
- Leads to a lesser concern for 'getting things done'
- They do get done, but more in their own time.
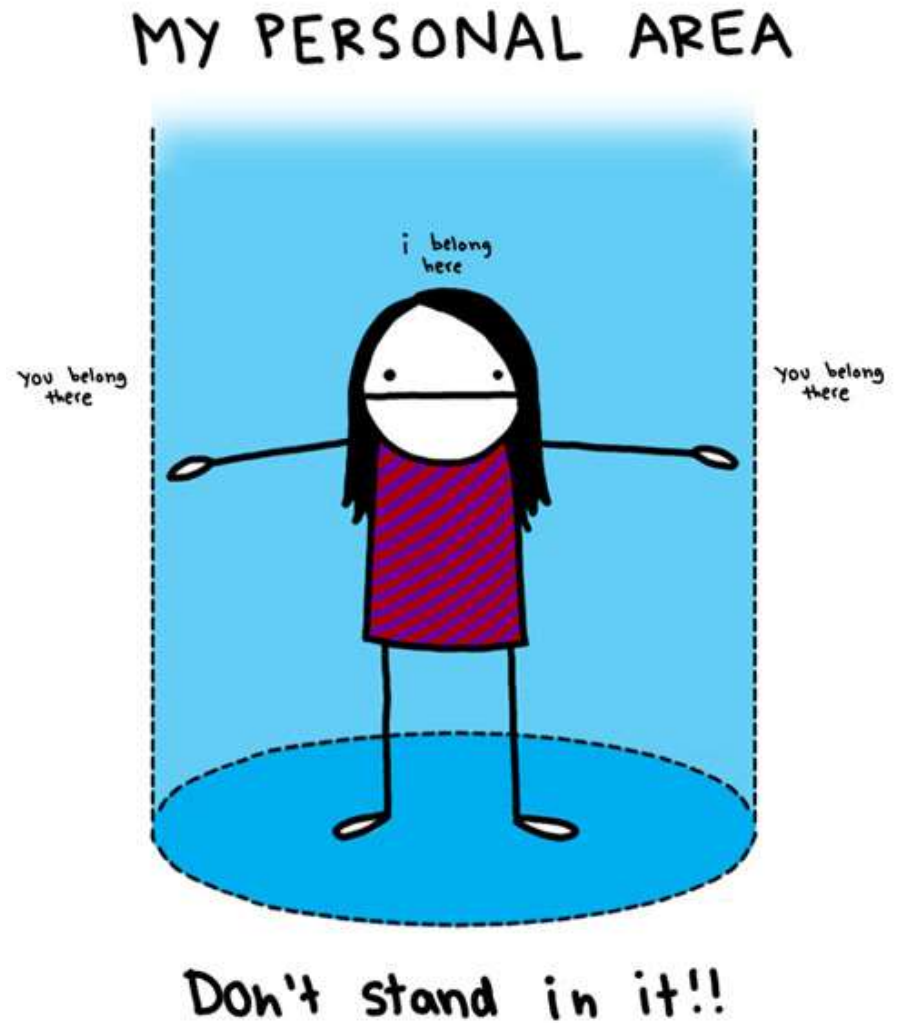- Polychronic people tend also to be high context.

Contrasting the two

- Western cultures vary in their focus on monochronic or polychronic time.

- Americans are strongly monochronic whilst the French have a much greater polychronic tendency

- For example, a French person may turn up to a meeting late and think nothing of it (much to the annoyance of a German or American co-worker).

- Note the similarity with Trompenaars' time as sequence (monochronic) and time as synchronization (polychronic).

Factor	Monochronic Action	Polychronic Action
Actions	do one thing at a time	do many things at once
Focus	Concentrate on the job at hand	Are easily distracted
Attention to time	Think about when things must be achieved	Think about what will be achieved
Priority	Put the job first	Put relationship first
Respect for property	Seldom borrow or lend things	Borrow and lend things often and easily
Timeless	Emphasize promptness	Base promptness relationship factors

Space

- The need for space
  - High territoriality
  - Low territoriality

MY PERSONAL AREA

i belong here

you belong there

you belong there

Don't stand in it!!

The need for space

Some people need more space in all areas so whoever who encroach into that space are seen as a threat.

- Personal space is an example of a mobile form of territory and people need less or greater distances between them and others.

- Some people need bigger homes, bigger cars, bigger offices and so on. This may be driven by cultural factors

- For example, the space in America needs to greater use of space, whilst Japanese need less space (partly as a result of limited useful space in Japan).

- A Japanese person who needs less space thus will stand closer to an American, inadvertently making the American uncomfortable.

High territorial

Some people are more territorial than others with greater concern for ownership. They seek to mark out the areas which are theirs

- Territoriality also extends to anything that is 'mine' and ownership concerns extend to material things.

- Security thus becomes a subject of great concern for people with a high need for ownership.

- People with high territoriality tend also to be low context

Low territorial

- People with lower territoriality have less ownership of space and boundaries are less important to them.

- They will share territory and ownership with little thought.

- They also have less concern for material ownership and their sense of 'stealing' is less developed (this is more important for highly territorial people).

- People with low territoriality tend also to be high context.

"So then what?"

- When working across cultures, pay attention to high and low cultures through the actions of others.

- For example if people are late for meetings it may be because they are polychronic, not because they are disrespectful or lazy.

- When you understand the personal, national or organizational culture, then you can seek to align with them and hence gain greater influence.

Reference List

Hall, E.T. (1959). *The Silent Language, New York: Doubleday*

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   Communication, Hamburg: Grunder and Jahr