

Global Personnel: Competency Development, Challenges and Opportunities

Prof. Helen Spencer-Oatey
University of Warwick

Overview

Challenges of working globally

- Communicating in English
- Managing across Cultures
- Power across Cultures

Sources of the Challenges

- The Impact of Culture

Opportunities for Development

- Courses at the University of Warwick
- Global TIES (Training in Intercultural EffectivenessS)

Challenges of Working Globally

Communicating in English

Proficiency level

- Why is English proficiency important?
- Aren't interpreters sufficient?
 - Impacts on participation and balance of power



Communicating in English

Turn-taking styles

Speed, pausing and back-channeling

- How can these be different?
 - Impacts on participation
 - Impacts on mutual understanding



Communicating in English

Directness-Indirectness

- How can this vary?
 - Impacts on mutual understanding
 - Impacts on perceptions of politeness



Managing across Cultures

Managing Meetings

- Who can talk when?
- Can you use mobiles (email, calls)?
- Can many people talk at once?
- Can people sleep?
 - Impacts on perceptions of politeness
 - Impacts on perceptions of interest/commitment



Managing across Cultures

Managing Staff

- What does/does not motivate staff?
- How important is small talk?
- Arrangements for lunch
 - Impacts on staff morale
 - Impacts on workplace atmosphere & mutual engagement



Understanding Power across Cultures

Hierarchical levels

- Identifying counterpart staff (i.e. equivalent roles & status)
- Decision-making authority
 - Impacts on negotiations
 - Impacts on people's evaluative judgments



Understanding Power across Cultures

Judgments of Prestige

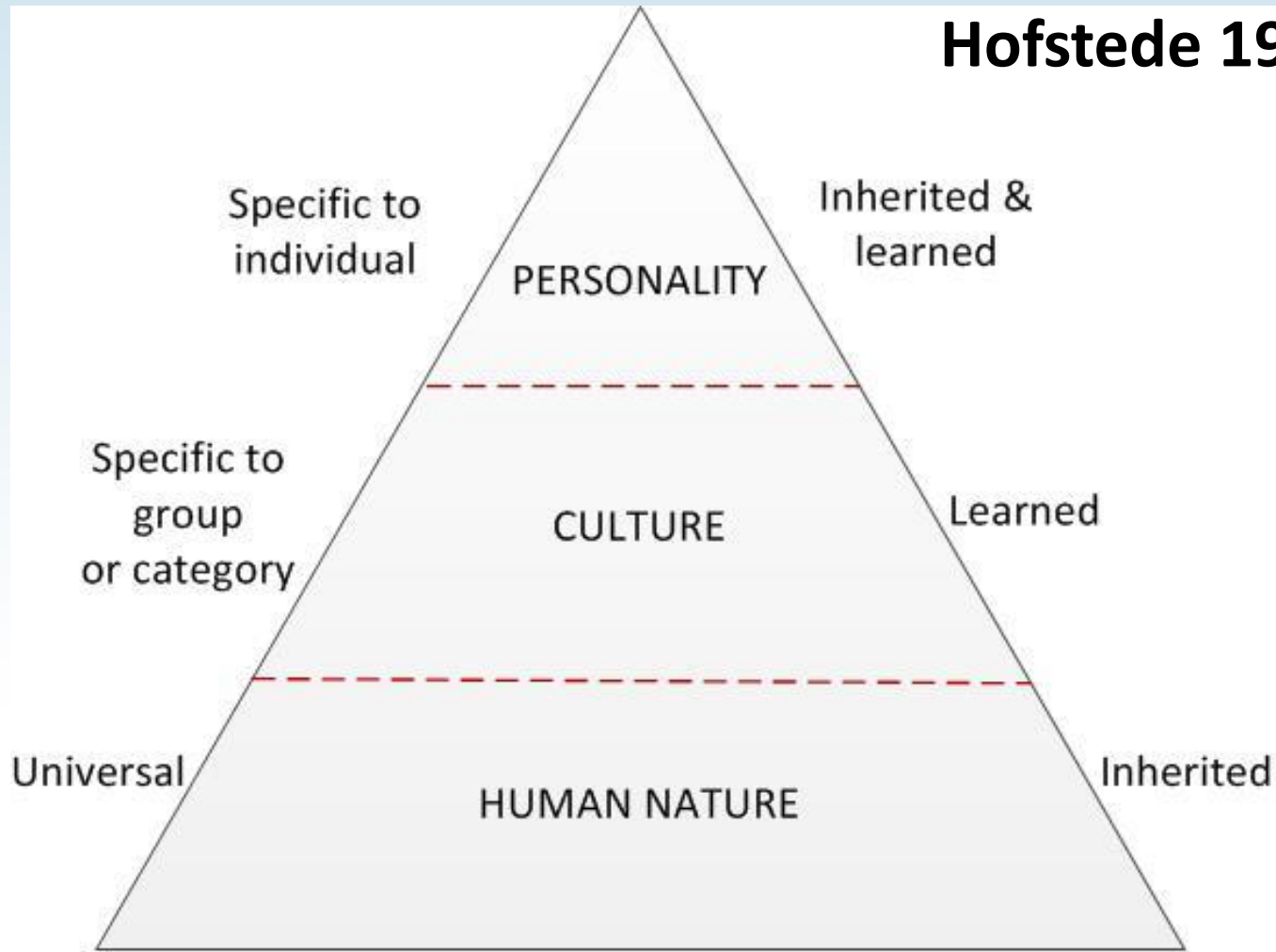
- Assessing people's status
- Assessing the status of sectors/ companies; e.g. Manufacturers or Distributers?
 - Impacts on negotiating power
 - Impacts on people's evaluative judgments



Sources of the Challenges

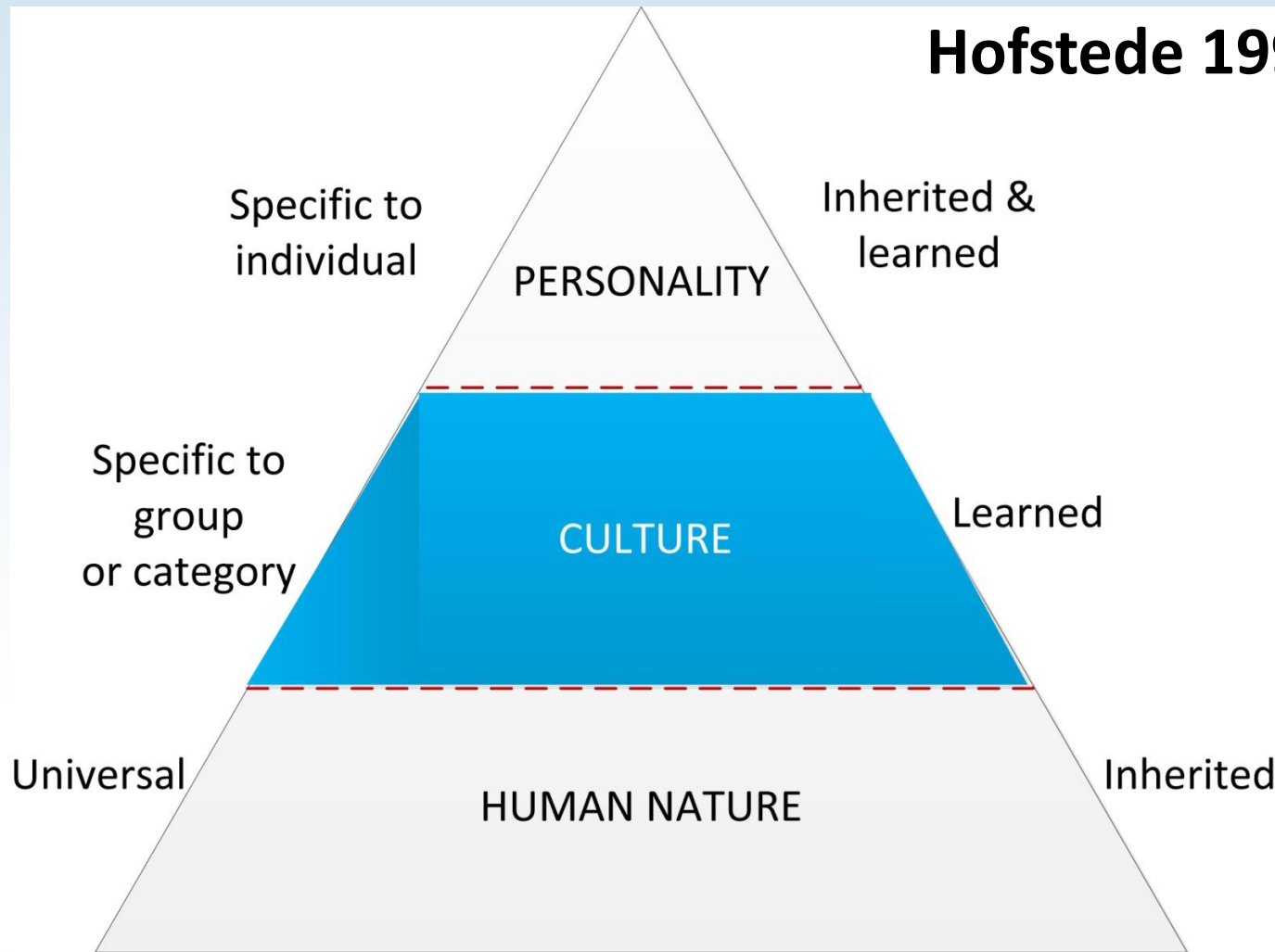
Influences on Behaviour

Hofstede 1991, p.6



Influences on Behaviour

Hofstede 1991, p.6



Culture as an Iceberg

Visible
↑
↓
Invisible



Products
↕
Practices
↕
Perspectives

The 3 Ps of Culture

Products



The 3 Ps of Culture

Practices



“President Obama’s embarrassing bow to the Japanese Emperor”

The 3 Ps of Culture

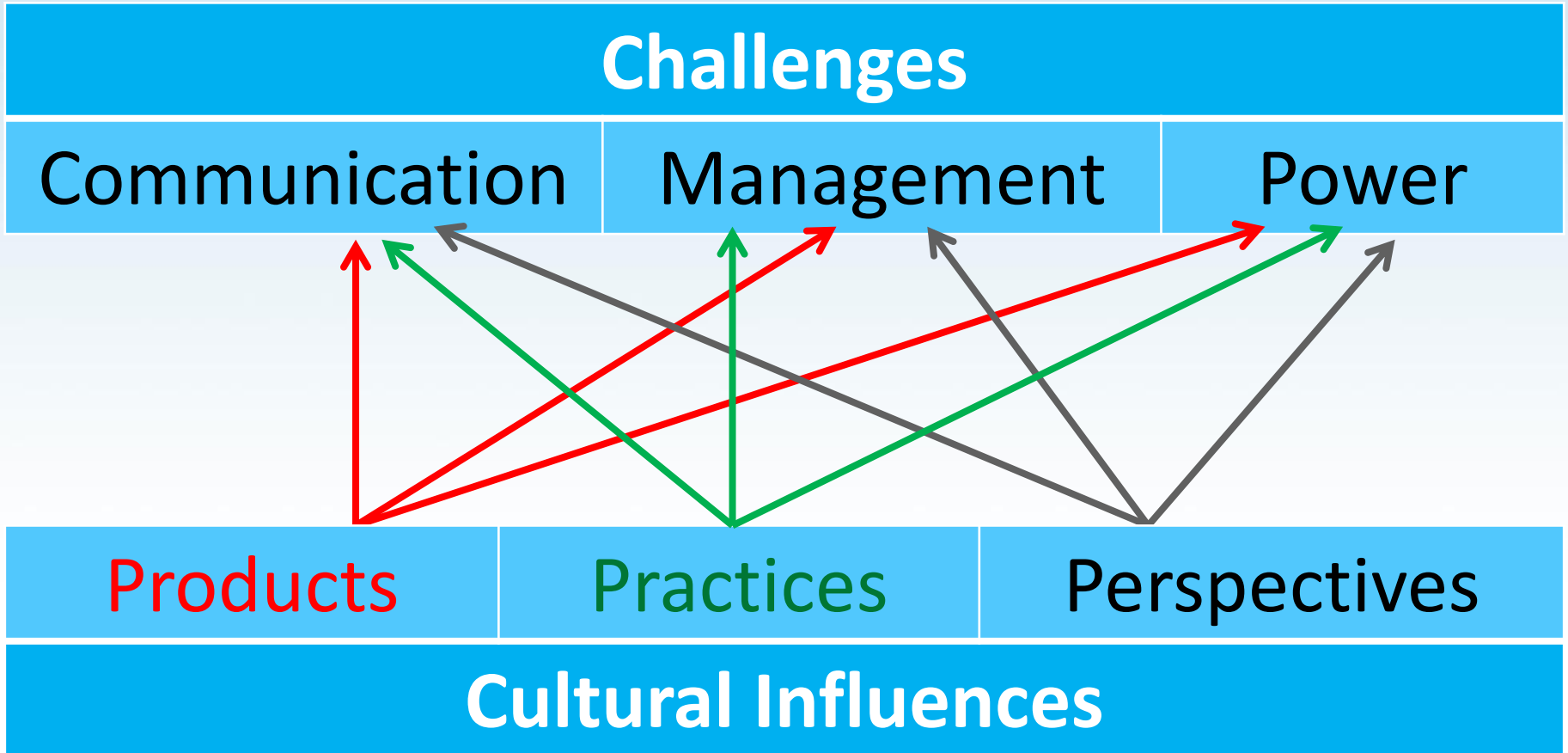
Perspectives

(Underlying beliefs and values)

e.g.
Hierarchy



Challenges & Culture

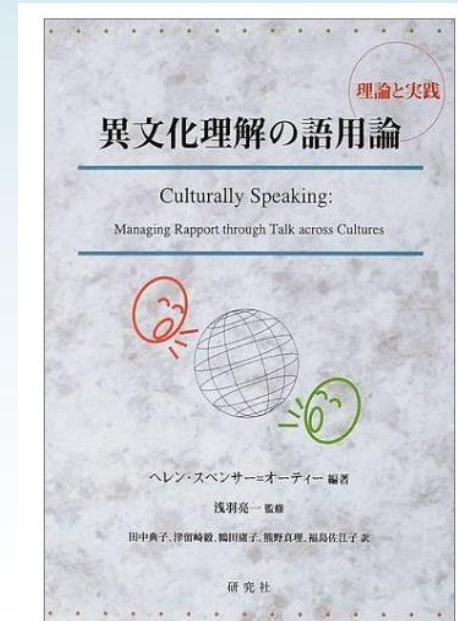


Developing Global Skills

Opportunities through Warwick

Expertise in ‘Global Skills’

- Active researchers
- International publications (e.g. “Culturally Speaking” in Japanese 異文化理解の語用論)
- Tutors with experience of working in different countries, especially China, Japan, & Malaysia



Opportunities through Warwick

Courses available

- Short courses (face to face in UK)
 - Global skills
 - English for the global workplace
 - Global skills with English for the global workplace



Opportunities through Warwick

Courses available

- For Global Skills champions:
 - MSc Intercultural Communication for Business and the Professions
- For undergraduate students:
 - BA Language, Culture and Communication





Opportunities through British Council Japan and Warwick

Global TIES (Training in Intercultural Effectiveness)

- Interactive e-Learning course
WITH
- Live video-conferencing sessions, using latest CISCO TelePresence technology, with two tutors at Warwick (with two British Council staff overseeing the sessions)

Course Design

- Assumes higher intermediate English language proficiency
- Uses business case examples from several different countries to reflect the impact of culture on the workplace (e.g. Europe, China, Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand)
- Live video sessions use tasks which ask participants to draw on their own professional experiences

Course Design Technology

Best delivery mode identified through testing and piloting phase:

- Moodle platform
- Xerte Online Toolkits for e-learning component
- Webex & Cisco TelePresence video conferencing for live sessions



Introductory live video session

(breaking the ice; introductory tasks; instructors assign Module 1 work)

Module 1: Understanding Culture for Work

- ✓ Conceptualises culture and explores the relationship between culture and communication
- ✓ Develops ability to analyse and interpret cultural influences in the workplace
- ✓ Includes strategies for dealing with difference at work and for developing intercultural effectiveness



Module 2: Becoming a Global Leader

- ✓ Explores the relationship between culture and beliefs and attitudes about leadership
- ✓ Provides opportunities to analyse cultural influences on leadership
- ✓ Examines the intercultural competencies needed for effective leadership in the intercultural workplace



Module 3: Working Effectively in Global Teams

- ✓ Explores beliefs and attitudes about working in teams
- ✓ Develops ability to analyse the ways culture influences team workers
- ✓ Deepens understanding of the intercultural competencies used by effective teams in the global workplace



Active Participation in the Live Sessions



Participant feedback

Trial with professionals

- ✓ “I think my understanding of intercultural communication has developed considerably as a result of taking the course”.
- ✓ “It was useful to analyze and consider how to deal with people from different backgrounds with different ways of thinking and working styles”.

Participant feedback

Trial with professionals

- ✓ “It is an ideal programme for people wanting to experience UK-style lectures and learn global communication skills”.
- ✓ “I would recommend the course within my own organization because we regularly work in multicultural teams and there are many beneficial practical elements to the course”.

<http://youtu.be/HHDXRSfaYdE>

Course Completion

Participants receive a Certificate of Completion from the British Council & University of Warwick



Course Length

- We recommend two months for the full version of the course, with the four live sessions taking place once every two weeks and self-learning on the e-learning materials in between.
- The course can be shortened or lengthened depending on your requirements.

Course Location

- E-learning materials can be studied in your workplace or at home - wherever you have a computer with an internet connection.
- Video lectures can be taken at your organization if you have a video conference facility. If not, they can be staged at a rented video conference facility.

Course Requirements

Number of participants

- 10 – 20 recommended

English level

- An English level of IELTS 6.0/TOEFL iBT 60 – 78/TOEIC 700 is recommended to make full use of the course.

Cost

- The total cost of the course varies according to your requirements (length of course, facilities, etc.).

Enquiries



Tom Mayes

Projects Manager

British Council

globalties@britishcouncil.or.jp



Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey

University of Warwick

globalpad@warwick.ac.uk