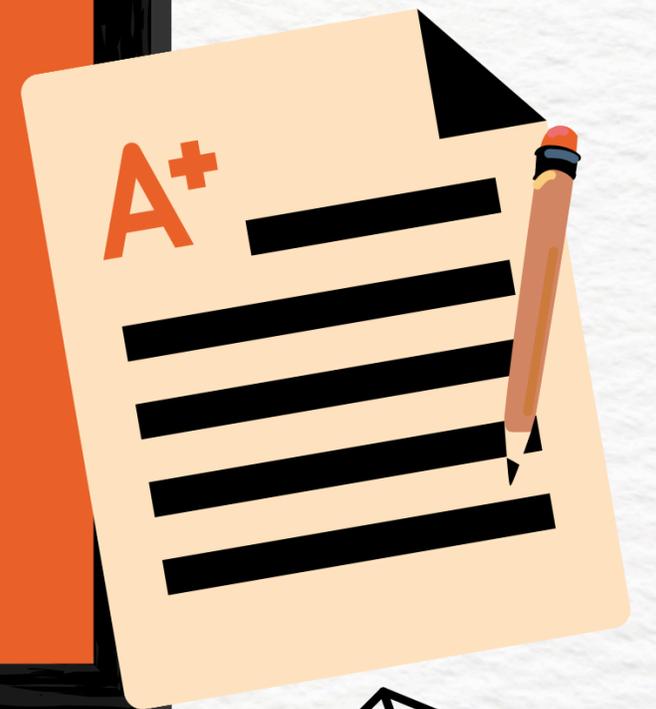
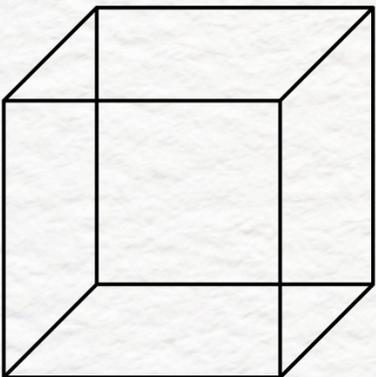


English Communications

Understanding Cultural Differences in Communication

Ifdhollia Muntriani



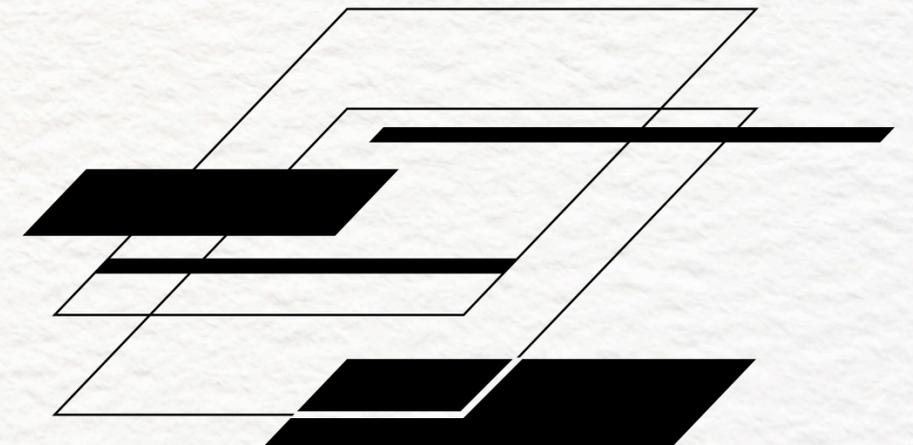
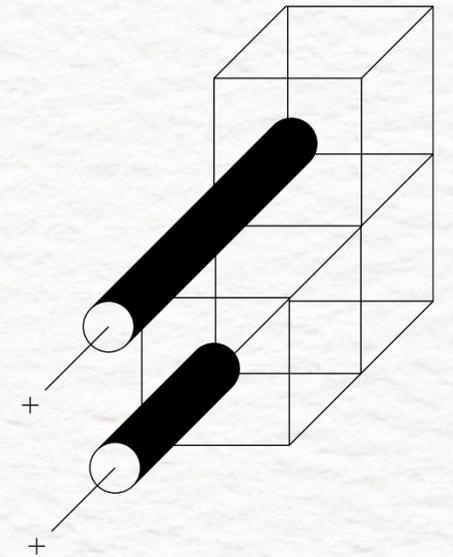
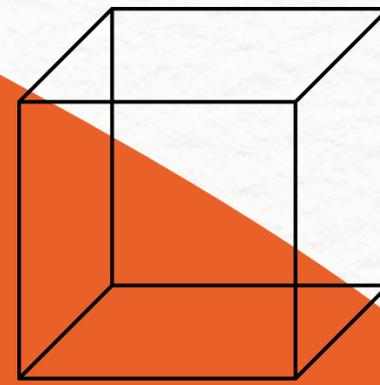
What Is Culture in Communication?

Culture is a system of shared beliefs, values, customs, and behaviors that shape how people interact and interpret messages.

🧠 Communication and culture are closely connected — communication reflects culture, and culture shapes communication.

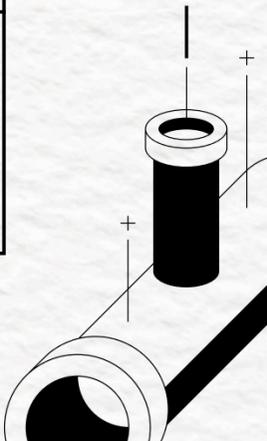
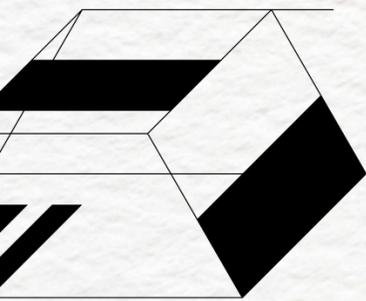
Example:

- In some cultures, saying “no” directly is seen as rude.
- In others (especially Western cultures), being direct and honest is valued.



Key Concepts in Intercultural Communication

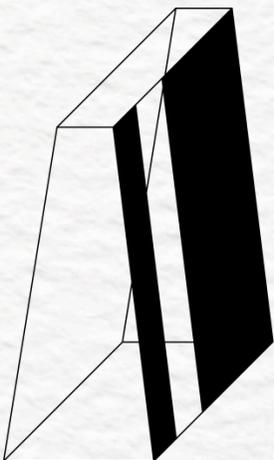
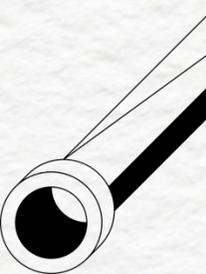
Concept	Explanation	Example
Individualism vs. Collectivism	Western cultures (e.g., USA, UK) emphasize individual goals; Asian cultures emphasize group harmony.	<i>Western: "I think..." / Eastern: "We believe..."</i>
High-context vs. Low-context	In high-context cultures, meaning is implied (non-verbal); in low-context cultures, meaning is stated clearly.	<i>Japan = high-context; USA = low-context</i>
Power Distance	Some cultures accept hierarchy (respect for authority); others value equality.	<i>Indonesia: teacher = authority; West: students can question freely</i>
Direct vs. Indirect Communication	Westerners prefer honesty and clarity; Asians prefer politeness and subtlety.	<i>"This is wrong." vs. "Maybe we can try another way."</i>



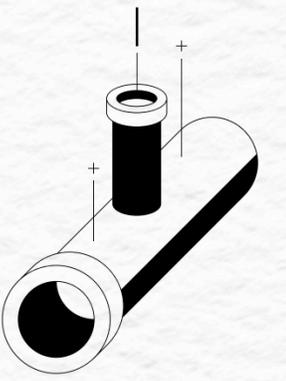
Western Communication Style



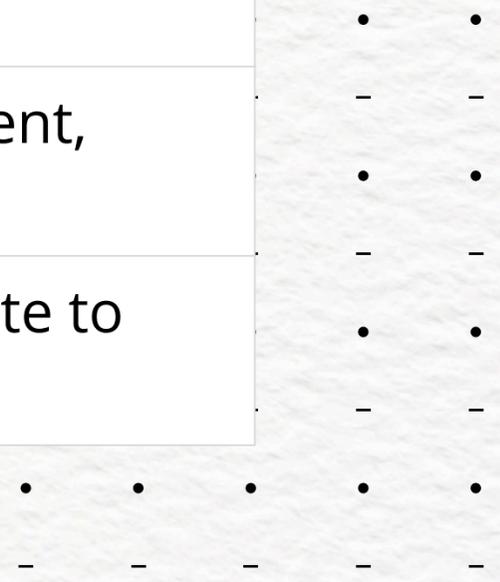
Characteristic	Description	Example
Direct & Explicit	People say what they mean directly.	"I disagree with that idea."
Individual-oriented	Focus on personal opinions and achievements.	"In my experience..."
Time-conscious	Value punctuality and deadlines.	Meetings start exactly on time.
Low-context	Messages are clear and verbal.	"Please submit your report by 5 PM."
Equality in interaction	Open discussions between students and teachers.	Students call professors by first name.



Eastern (Indonesian/Asian) Communication Style

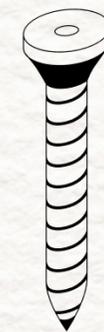
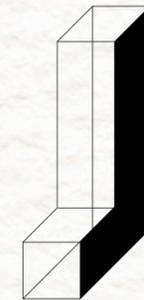
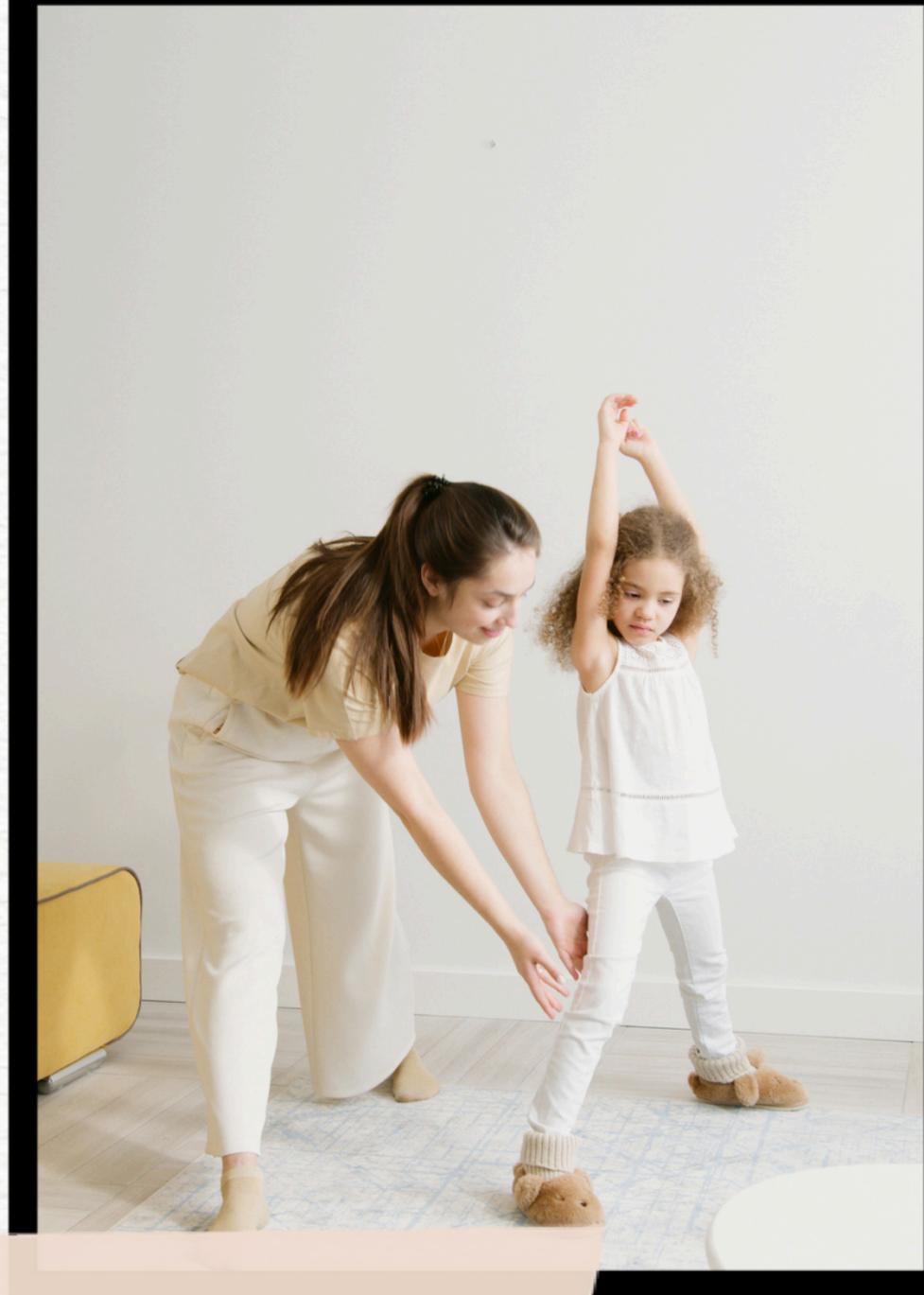


Characteristic	Description	Example
Indirect & Polite	Avoid saying things too directly to maintain harmony.	"That might be difficult," instead of "I can't do that."
Group-oriented	Decisions are made collectively.	"Let's discuss it together."
Respect for hierarchy	Show politeness and deference to elders or teachers.	Avoid interrupting or questioning openly.
High-context	Many meanings come from gestures, tone, or social setting.	A smile can mean agreement, politeness, or discomfort.
Flexible with time	Relationships valued over punctuality.	Meetings may start a bit late to allow conversation.



Common Cross-Cultural Misunderstandings

Situation	Possible Misunderstanding	Cultural Reason
A Western speaker says, "You're wrong."	Asian listener feels offended.	Westerners see debate as normal; Asians value harmony.
An Asian student is quiet in class.	Western teacher thinks the student is not interested.	Silence shows respect, not disinterest.
A Westerner expects quick decisions.	Asian colleagues need time to discuss.	Collectivist cultures prioritize consensus.



Strategies for Effective Intercultural Communication

- *Be aware of your own cultural norms.*

Understand how your background shapes your communication.

- *Avoid stereotypes.*

Not all Western or Asian people communicate the same way.

- *Be patient and open-minded.*

Misunderstandings happen – focus on learning, not judging.

- *Ask for clarification politely.*

Example: “Could you please explain what you mean?”

- *Observe non-verbal cues.*

Pay attention to tone, gestures, and eye contact.

- *Adapt your communication style.*

Be more direct or indirect depending on the situation and audience.

Welcome,
Students!

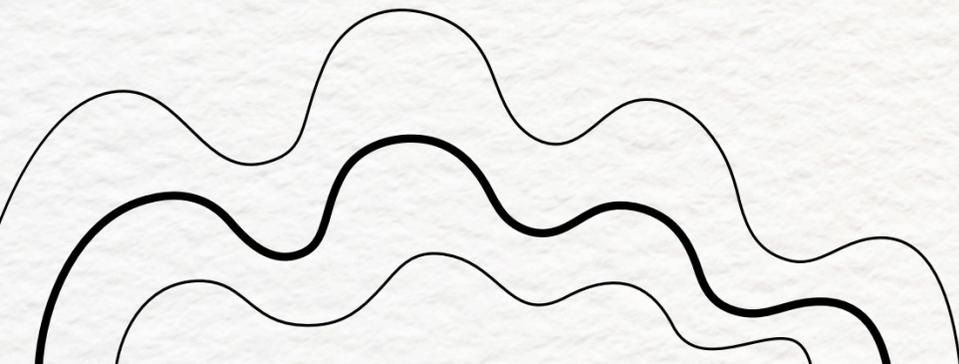


Assignment: Comparative Essay

Write a short essay (300–400 words) on the topic:
“Cultural Differences in Communication Between Western
and Indonesian People”

Include:

1. Introduction: definition of culture and communication
2. Comparison: 3–4 main differences
3. Reflection: how to communicate effectively across cultures



Thank
you

See you next time!