

SEMINAR 5 Cultural Differences Part 3 – Answer Key

Task 2 Here are 3 sample definitions from high B2 students:

- 1) We define culture as a combination of all the values, traditions, and beliefs shared by a group of people coming from the same origin(s), together with language, education, and ethnicity shared by a specific group of people.
- 2) We define culture as a combination of many factors such as language, education, religion, behaviour, and history that characterize a society or influence a specific group of people willing to share, and which both influence and are influenced by people.
- 3) We define culture as a combination of customs and religion carried by a group of people who share the same historical background and language, and have a language in common.

Task 3

Bates and Plog – Culture **can** be seen as... – This is an example of hedging as it includes the modal verb **can**.

Hofstede – Hofstede...described these elements of culture as...

Dahl – Culture is dynamic...

Task 4 Select the best paraphrase (1 – 3) of each author's selected characteristics of culture.

Bates and Plog – 3) a system of people's main beliefs and behaviours across generations

Hofstede – 1) individual differences within cultures

Dahl – 1) the changing nature of culture

Task 5

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1) USA vs. Continental Europe | poverty is the fault of the poor | the poor are victims |
| 2) West vs. East (in business) | West focuses more on detail | looks at things in the round |
| 3) Americans vs. Chinese | Americans focus on detail (e.g. tiger; Chinese focus on context) | |
| 4) West vs. East (socially) | West prizes individuality | complex social environments |
| 5) North Americans vs. Japanese | Americans follow agendas rigidly | Japanese follow agendas flexibly |
| 6) Australia vs. South Korea | Australians are self-centred, one-sided | Koreans apparently not so |

Task 6 Social perspectives: points **1, possibly 3, 4, 6**; business perspective: points **2, 3, 5, 6**.

Task 8

- 1) (Oudenhoven and van der See 2002)
- 2) (Nisbett 2005)
- 3) (Hofstede 1991; 2001)
- 4) (Hofstede 2007)
- 5) (Hofstede 1994)

Task 9 In paragraph 9 of the text, the authors' own evaluation: *the upshot is that business has to take cultural differences into account when considering entry to foreign markets through exports, joint ventures, or through take-over or green-field investment. (This is the first sentence of the concluding paragraph, where the reader would expect the text writer to express their view.)*

Reported evaluation: *Similarities...their culture (this is the second sentence and is referenced).*

Task 10

The authors conclude by emphasising the importance of taking cultural factors into consideration when doing business in other cultures.

Task 11

Noun phrases: a completely different (cultural context); a similar point; a more flexible approach; (cultural) differences between; Such differences

Subordinators: whereas; even though

Adverbials: on the other hand, however, also, nevertheless

Verbs (phrases): can vary significantly; has to take (cultural) differences into account

Task 12

*Cultural differences exist not only between countries but (1) **also** within them. Typical (2) **differences** may include attitudes towards other cultures. In the UK, for instance, in the (3) **larger** multicultural cities such as London (4) **and** Birmingham, people wearing (5) --- clothing from another culture may pass unnoticed, (6) **whereas** in some smaller towns and villages this might not be the case. Attitudes may also differ with regard to such things as diet and beliefs. For example, most cities and towns offer a wide variety of cuisines in their restaurants. (7) **similarly**, people living in these cities and towns may be accustomed to ethnic and religious diversity. People's beliefs and behaviours (8) **may vary significantly**. In smaller towns and villages, (9) **however**, such diversity is likely to be less common, and the choice of food might be more traditional (10) ---. These examples illustrate certain potential differences within a country, (11) **but** it should be noted that culture is dynamic: (12) --- what is common in a city today might be familiar in a small village tomorrow.*

Task 13

1. Despite having difficulties, he succeeded. (but)
He had difficulties but he succeeded.
2. In spite of trying hard, I failed. (although)
Although I tried hard, I failed.
3. Although they are neighbouring countries, their cultures are very different. (however)
They are neighbouring countries. However, their cultures are very different.
4. In spite of their poverty, the people there are very happy. (despite)
Despite being poor, the people there are very happy. **OR** Despite the fact that they are poor the people there are very happy.
5. Although he knew he was wrong, he refused to admit it. (in spite of)
In spite of knowing that he was wrong he refused to admit it. **OR** In spite of the fact that he was wrong he refused to admit it.
6. Her first book wasn't very good. Her second one has already sold 5,000 copies. (whereas)
Her first book wasn't very good whereas her second one has already sold 5,000 copies.

Task 14

1. French is a difficult language. I find German equally difficult. (as)
I find German as difficult as French.
2. The English are said to be prejudiced. I think the Swiss are even more biased. (less)
I think the English are less prejudiced (biased) than the Swiss.
3. The University had 30,000 employees last year. This year it has just 29,000. (fewer)
The University has fewer (1,000 fewer) employees than last year.

4. The president of the country does not seem to enjoy high popularity in his own country.
However, he is highly recognized abroad. (much)
The president of the country is much more popular abroad than in his own country.
5. The Italians are generally perceived as open-minded but I think the Dutch are more. (not)
The Italians are not as open-minded as the Dutch.
6. The average working week in France is 35 hours. In the Czech Republic, it is 42 hours. (long)
The average working week in France is not as long as in the Czech Republic.