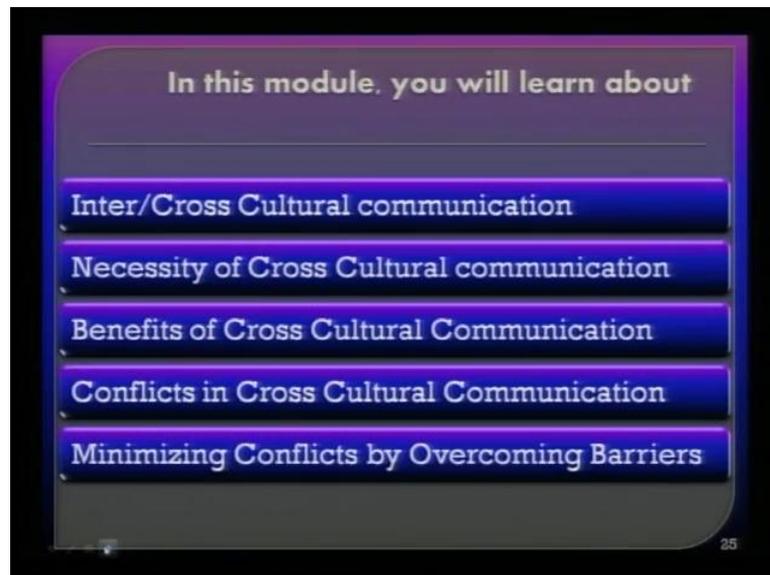


**Communication Skills**  
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**Module #11**  
**Lecture - 2**  
**Cross Cultural Communication**

Welcome to NPTEL's course on communication skills. We are now on module number 11, lecture number 2, particularly on cross cultural communication. This is also called as intercultural communication. So, we are now on cross cultural communication or intercultural communication. In the previous lecture, already I talked to you about some of the basic definition of inter and cross cultural communication.

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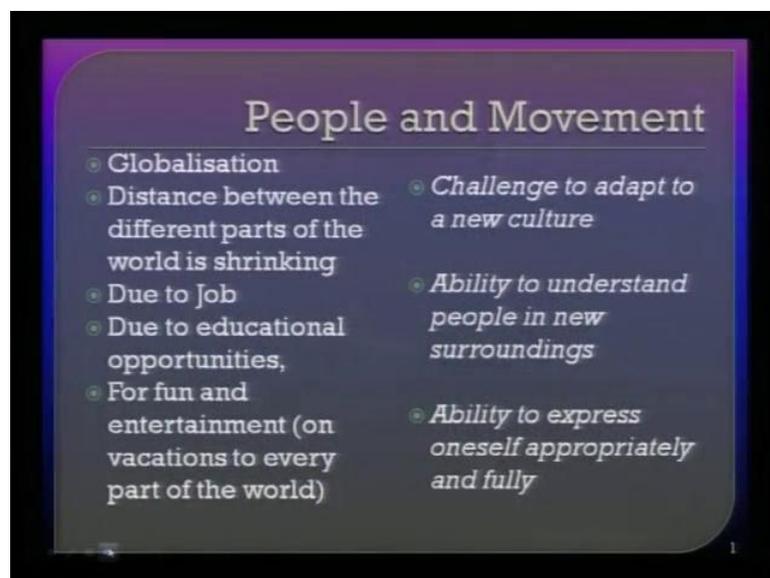
Followed by that, I also discussed about the necessity of cross cultural communication, why we need to know this? Why we need to know some of the strategies, in which we can communicate with people from other culture. So that has been discussed. And then I also talked about some of the very important benefits of cross cultural communication.

Now, in this lecture, we will just look at that in a detailed manner, and then we will just try to see what kind of conflicts will arise in cross cultural communication. So, conflicts

in cross cultural communication is something that is inevitable. Conflicts will be there, but we should also learn how to minimize the conflicts. So, in order to know how to minimize the conflicts we need to learn how to overcome some of the barriers which actually cause the conflicts.

Now, in this lecture, we will be slowly be moving towards minimizing that. I will be giving tips then and there, but I will tell you to how it will come and then we will also look at some theoretical models, particularly 1 model propounded on contextual model of communication in which culture is based at the center.

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Now, we will start once again with the aspect of people and movement. You know that man is a social animal and man is gregarious by nature. This means that man tends to talk to others, socialize and move from one place to another. In fact this tendency to be nomadic or to behave like a gypsy is there in all of us. The quest to search for something that is not there in one's own land and then to seek for something new is always there.

Today, this has become much more specific, much more focused in terms of globalization. The thing such as a job that was pertaining to a particular region has now become something that is universal, something that is available everywhere, anywhere and something that is global.

Now, what has happened because of this is that the distance between the different parts

of the world is shrinking now. Since, that is shrinking, the movement of the people have become much more than before. This happens due to the various job opportunities that people get from different parts of the world. So, people keep moving. This also happens because of higher educational opportunities. So, today if somebody does not get fellowship in India, it does not matter to him or her. One can get it in Denmark, Switzerland, US, or in the UK. So, why would one worry about 1 particular place and restrict ones opportunity to grow higher and better?

So, one moves ahead in terms of educational opportunities or one also goes to another places just for fun. So, you know one of the aims of education is just to experience the world apart from knowing things in a bookish manner. The general belief is that after knowing something through books you should also go out to the world, experience it yourself and confront the realities as it is. Now, people also move for fun. They also move just for entertainment. They just want to pass their time. People move on vacations. People crave holidays and then move to different places. They go spending a lot of money, even on the mode in which they travel. They spend for lot of things on cruise or ships and all that. My general point is that people keep moving today for various reasons.

Now, when they do this on the one hand, on the other hand there are lot of challenges, particularly the challenge to adapt to a new culture. Whether you are going there for a short period of time or going there for a long period of time, the challenge is there. One has to adapt to that new culture. Remember, culture is communication and communication is culture. If you really want the communication to be effective, you have to adapt to that culture.

Now, what are the challenges once you accept the fact that you will adapt? Now, 1 thing is that one has to develop the ability to understand people in new surroundings. It is easy to understand people in our own surroundings, the surrounding that we are quite used to, the place where we are born and brought up, but it is not that easy to understand people in a different surrounding. So, 1 challenge, 1 task is to develop that ability to understand people in different surroundings. Then, another one which is universal, which is there in all the people, is to develop this ability to express oneself appropriately and fully which means human beings as I said are gregarious in nature. They want to communicate. In fact, that is the need to communicate is there in all of us and this is something that is

differentiating human being from an animal.

Now once that is there, there is also this desire to express oneself appropriately. So, you do not want to cut a sorry figure when you go to some other culture and you said something which offended others or you said something which sounded very funny and people started laughing at you. So, appropriateness is speaking according to the decorum what is expected. So, knowing that we are aware of something that cross cultural communication can teach. Apart from that, I also said not just expressing oneself appropriately, but also fully. What do I mean by this? Most of the times when we are controlled by our own culture and when we interact in a cross cultural situation, we suppress certain aspect of us. We are not able to express that fully. May be, 1 aspect of emotion that is in us is not there in the other culture. Certain aspect of thinking that is in us is not there in the other one. We are not able to express or we are not able to realize the ways in which we can express ourselves fully.

So, now these are the challenges on the one hand and on the other hand people keep moving and interacting in cross cultural situations. Now, how are we going to overcome this and what are some of the basic barriers which we may come across?

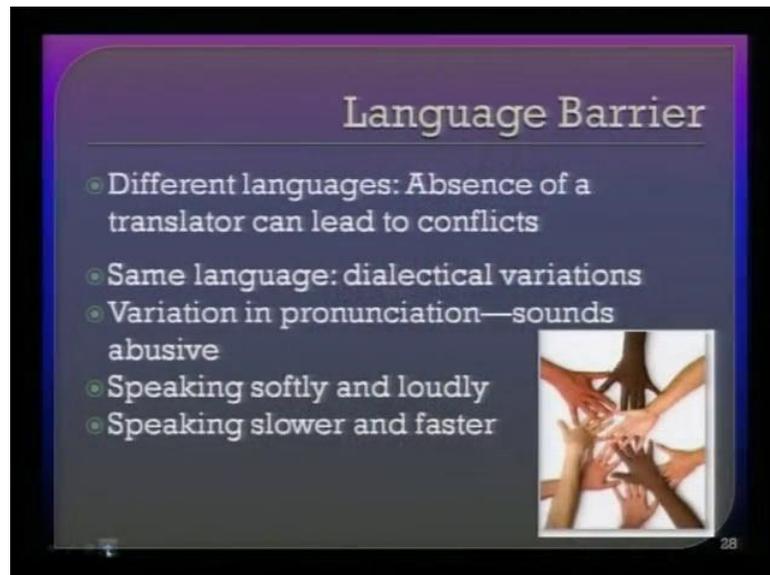
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Before we get into some theories, 1 barrier is language. Before I go to language, just look at a situation like this. Somebody is performing and then there are people around them from various cultures. The dress, the behavior, the way they stand, it indicates that each

one is emulating a culture that they are coming from. So, the difficulties faced by people while communicating cross culturally are the ones which actually occur because they are carrying some of those cultural imprints in their communication wherever they are going. So, 1 difficulty as I was just telling is the 1 that is based because of language.

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The slide is titled "Language Barrier" in a serif font. Below the title is a list of five bullet points, each starting with a small circle. The text is white on a dark blue background. To the right of the list is a small square image showing several hands of different skin tones reaching up and touching at the fingertips. The slide number "28" is in the bottom right corner.

- Different languages: Absence of a translator can lead to conflicts
- Same language: dialectical variations
- Variation in pronunciation—sounds abusive
- Speaking softly and loudly
- Speaking slower and faster

Even if the person is highly proficient in one's own language, unless the other person has equal competence in the language where he is interacting with the other cultural people, it is very difficult to overcome this barrier. Now, once we are in a cross cultural situation, we are obviously in different language groups. There may be this lingua franca. There is a common medium of communication chosen as a particular language. You have 1 particular language to communicate with the whole group. It may be possible, but it may not be possible sometimes. Then only nonverbal communication comes to your rescue. So, different languages are spoken by people from different cultures and the absence of a translator can lead to conflicts.

Now, even when I say translator the translator has to be an expert. Suppose the translator is also not able to translate certain things from one culture to another, he may also lead to miscommunication. Assuming that the translator is an expert, there is good communication possible. You cannot all the time presume that whenever you go and interact in a group there will be always a translator. That is also not possible and practically also it is not feasible to have a translator with you unless you are a diplomat.

Unless you are very rich and you can afford to a translator to be with you all the time, it is not possible.

Now, in that case obviously it will lead to barrier in communication because of language. This leads to that barrier in cross cultural communication. You will also be surprised to know that apart from different languages even it may be the same language, let us say, the same English spoken in U.K., spoken in U.S., spoken in Australia and spoken at different parts in the suburbs of U.S., the one that is spoken by surfers the people who are surfing on the sea and the one that is spoken by the bikers have differences.

Especially, they have different idioms to express certain feelings. Now what happens, even when the language is same, there are differences in terms of dialectal variation. This means, depending upon the user and depending upon the region, the language varies depending upon the user. So, as I said the in the bikers language the idioms are different from the ones used by surfers and so on. The same way depending upon the region, the central part of a country and then the extreme part of the country, the remote part of the country, there are variations to the same language. Now, if one learns a dictionary oriented language where you learn it literally, this means this there are certain things which even the dictionary has not recorded. So, this can again lead to barriers.

So, in the same language there could be dialectal variations and variation in pronunciation. Again in the same language sometimes what happens is that pronunciation can make a difference and then difference in language. For example, you speak your mother tongue and then that mother tongue is pronounced in a specific way than the foreign language that you know very well which you are speaking in a different place. But, then the pronunciation that you use in your mother tongue and sometimes you are speaking before others in your mother tongue to somebody from your own place, now the pronunciation that is used in one language is appearing to be funny, abusive to others in another language. Sometimes they misunderstand that you speak in their language and then you try to abuse them because of that mispronunciation. So, one has to careful with pronunciation also.

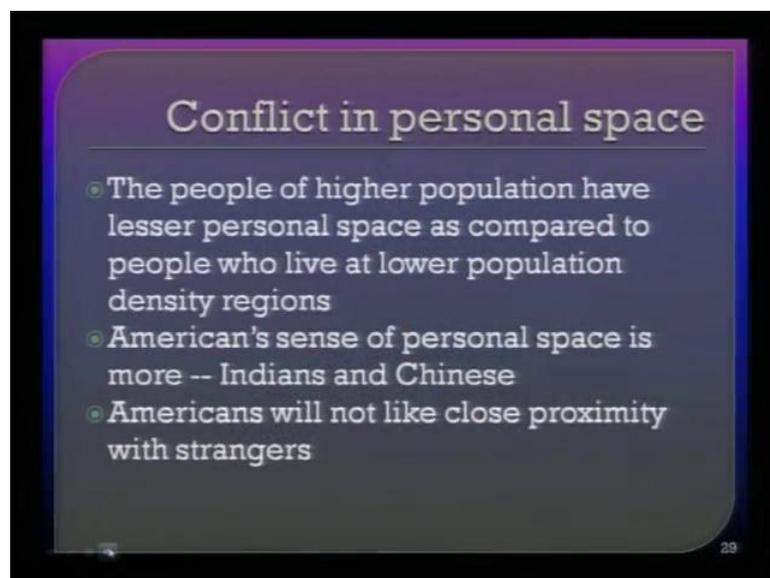
Apart form that, even the way one is speaking is important. Sometimes a person speaks softly and some culture thinks that soft spoken people are good. If the culture is oriented towards this, soft spoken people are considered decent, polite, gentleman and all that.

Some cultures give supremacy to the people who speak loudly. So, those people think that people who speak loud or bold are confident and manly. So, they are able to bring forth their ideas forcefully and so on.

So, even the way one is speaking culturally can give different meanings. So, one has to take note of this. In some culture people speak very slowly and in some culture people speak very fast. So, the person who speaks fast in a culture of people who speak slowly, will be understood as somebody who is in a hurry, who wants to do things very fast, who is impatient, who is insensitive and vice versa. Vice versa, in this sense, if the person who speaks very slow happens to be in the culture where the person is speaking very fast, the person who speaks slow tends to appear monotonous, boring, again not being sensitive to the feelings of the audience who want this person to speak very fast.

So, understand this even in terms of language. Whether you speak the same language or different language it can cause barriers. So, awareness of this and then trying to empathize with the communicative cultural context will enhance your communication in a very effective manner.

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The conflict can also come in terms of personal space. I will talk at length. Right now, I am just trying to give a kind of preview as what kind of conflict can come in the personal space. So, people from higher population and people from lower population have different perceptions with regards to space. So, for instance, the people of higher

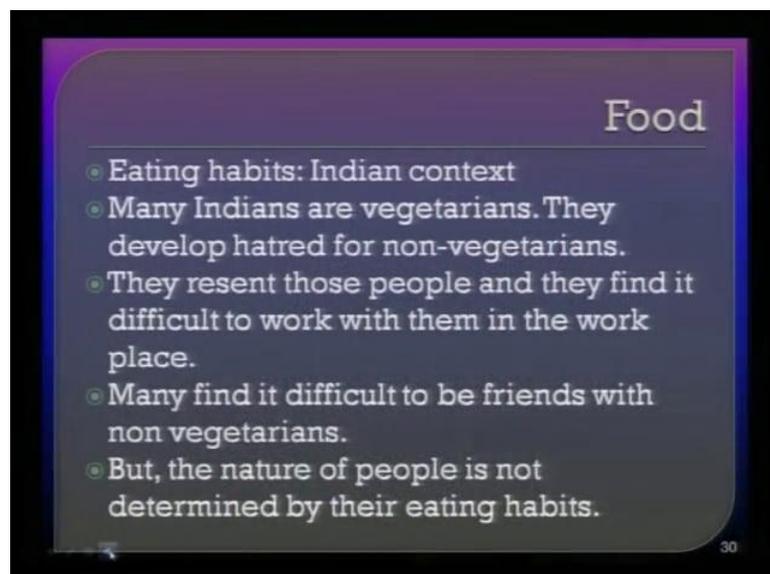
population have lesser personal space such as people in China and people in India. So, we are all used to giving less personal space.

We do not mind to squeezing in. In a chair that is meant for 3, we do not mind 6 people sitting there. We will squeeze him and we will adjust. But, if it is 3 in a place where the people are coming from lower population, they would like to use only for 3. They will be very unhappy if people will ask them to squeeze. They will feel very uncomfortable.

So, these people of higher population have lesser personal space as compared to people who live at lower population density regions. For, example again Americans sense of personal space is more compared to Indian's and Chinese. American will not like close proximity with strangers. Whereas, in case of Indians, for instance even if a stranger is sitting next to us and very close we do not mind it as a big difference. Then, if the stranger is just coming and trying to occupy our personal space we are not that hesitant and reluctant provided he gives a opening smile and all that.

But even then, for an American it will be slightly on the resistive side. The Americans would wonder, why this stranger is coming and occupying my personal space without seeking my permission? Without letting me allow this person to come into my private space, why is he encroaching on this? Why is he violating my personal space? These are the apprehensions and questions that the person having a higher space, that is from lower population place is coming.

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Food

- Eating habits: Indian context
- Many Indians are vegetarians. They develop hatred for non-vegetarians.
- They resent those people and they find it difficult to work with them in the work place.
- Many find it difficult to be friends with non vegetarians.
- But, the nature of people is not determined by their eating habits.

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Apart from language and space, food can be a very major barrier in terms of cross cultural communication because food itself is a very integral part of any culture. Let us look at the Indian context. That itself will make us understand very clearly the eating habit in India. Basically, the eating habit in India is having two broad polar categorizations in terms of the vegetarian and non-vegetarian eating habits. So, you can understand very well the vegetarians and the non-vegetarians. Sometimes certain stereotypical thinking goes along with this. So, the vegetarians have a lot of prejudices against the non-vegetarians and vice versa. So, what happens in India and especially in a place where the majority of the people happen to be vegetarians, there is a tendency to develop hatred, ill will and animosity for the non-vegetarians.

Now, once that is developed it goes to the next level of resentment. They resent those people who are non-vegetarians and they find it difficult to work with them, especially in the work place. Now, I keep telling you that if you want to become a good communicator you have to be a professional and you have to show that you rise above personal prejudices, personal emotions, personal ill will, personal biases, etcetera. But, this food habit that is embedded in the culture and in the blood system can act as a barrier psychologically. One will not feel that close depending on the food habit.

There are people who are averse to even looking at non-vegetarian food items. They cannot sit with the same person on the same table. Now, this goes to the level of not even making friends with people who are non-vegetarians. But, what should one keep in mind especially in a global scenario? Let us say, Indians going to places like U.K., US, where most of the times it is difficult for a vegetarian to survive. All the food stuff which are being given there has some part of non-vegetarian thing being added. Even, in soup some kind of fat is added and so on.

So, now how do you distinguish and at what level you start liking a person because the person is vegetarian or non-vegetarian? So, here absolutely that kind of prejudice will not work. So, one has to rise above from that. The other thing that I pointed out is that suppose somebody is averse to even looking at non-vegetarian dish being served on the same table where the person is sitting, then this is absolutely inevitable and unavoidable in a scenario where non-vegetarians are dominating and this is global now.

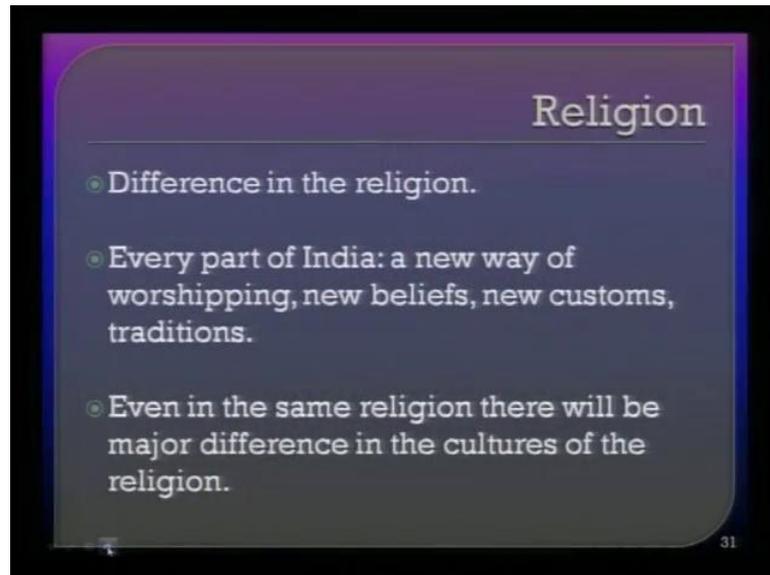
Now considering this, one should always keep in mind that the nature of the people is not

determined by their eating habits although there are theories saying that the people who eat non-vegetarian food tend to be aggressive and the people who are vegetarian are very calm. But, you will always find exceptions and plenty of exceptions to this kind of role where you find vegetarian dictators and non-vegetarian calm people and so on.

So, those theories are not substantiated by evidences and facts in terms of cross cultural communication. In terms of human communication in general, it is worthwhile to remember this that the nature of the people is not determined and it should not be determined by eating habits. This means we should not smile at people who are eating certain particular kind of dish and we should also not develop aversion towards some kind of food which we do not like. So, this is something that is coming from ones childhood and ones birth which is genetically encoded.

So, cannot do it sometimes. So, it is a person's choice and sometimes it is no choice. It is just given to the person socially. So, only when a person becomes matured and only when a person realizes that certain food choice is not healthy for that person, the person decides to change. We are nobody to impose our own ideas on certain people having certain food habits, but it is always healthy to think that human nature is something different from one's own food habits. Now, if we have that kind of thinking we will be able to assist the human nature based on certain other qualities which are emanating from the person as an individual and certain personality traits apart from his or her eating habits.

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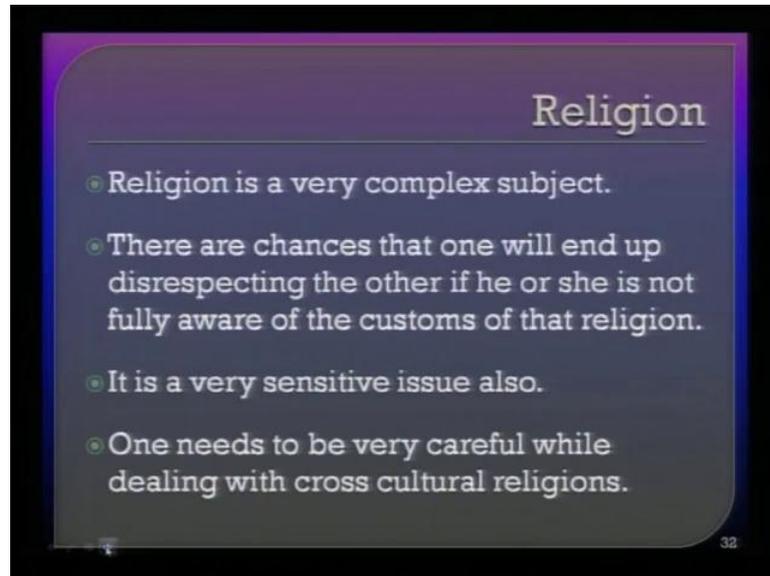
Now having said this, the next important barrier especially in India nowadays in global scenario, is the one that can come because of religion. Again, look at the difference in the religion that is prevailing in our own country. In India, in every part of India you go, there is a new way of worshipping. Although, we worship sometimes 2, 3, 4 or 5 Gods and then in different shapes and in 1000 forms the same basic God, the way of worshipping changes from place to place. Then, there are new beliefs and the new customs and traditions.

So, if you go from 1 place to another you cannot say that in this place I will not put the towel on my head, in this place I will not remove my shirt, in this place I will not put a towel on me, and I will not do this now. Then, you will not be allowed to worship that God. It is better to do that and show that you have some concern, sympathy and empathy for the cross cultural variations and intercultural differences. That will help you to build a good communicator image.

Now, apart from that even in the same religion there will be major difference in the cultures of the religion. So, suppose you say I am a Christian, I am a Hindu or I am a Muslim. Now, even within this category depending on the region where you are, depending on the place where you are originating from, there are again differences in terms of practices, say in some place or in some part. So, in some religion a lady is allowed to keep flowers, use lipsticks and all that, decorate herself beautifully and in

certain part a certain religion says that you should not do such things, in some part she can show the face fully, in some part they say the face should be partially covered and so on.

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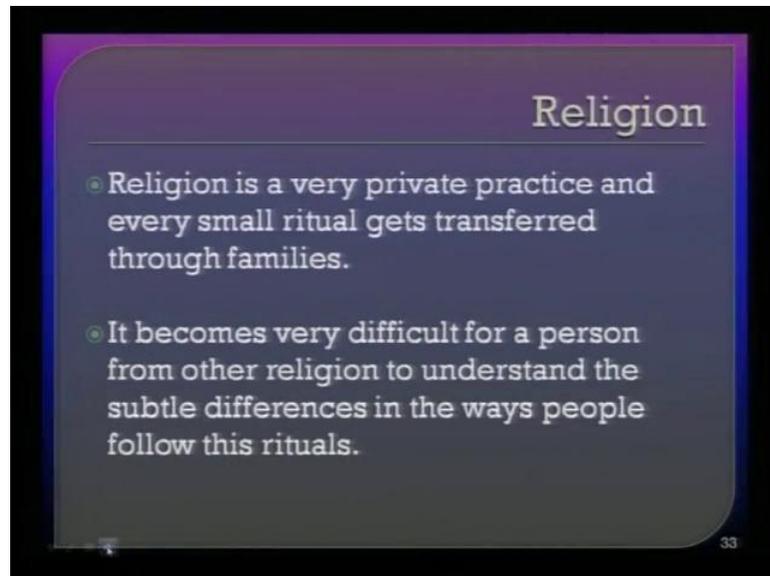
So, in the same religion even then there are differences in practice depending on the regional variations. So, if you overall look at religion, it is a very complex subject. It is not that easy even if you belong to a particular religion to understand that universally, but keeping an attitude that there are variations will always help. Then, there are chances that one will end up disrespecting the other. If he or she is not fully aware of the customs of that particular religion, which one should avoid and it is a very sensitive issue. Sometimes, it can lead to communal riots between people of 1 religious group doing something that is offensive and the other group takes that very seriously and then there are riots. That again should be avoided because it is not in the interest of the nation.

So, to build up a good and strong nation these kind of barriers should be minimized and remember I was telling you that the main objective of all communication is this harmony is this aspect of reconciliation. So, the more harmonious we are able to use communication or the more we use communication for generating harmony in the society, the more the society will become healthier. The more and the more the society becomes healthier, the people living in the society will become happier.

So, this is in the interest of the individual as well as the society and the whole world. So,

we should keep that in mind and one needs to be very careful while dealing with cross cultural religions.

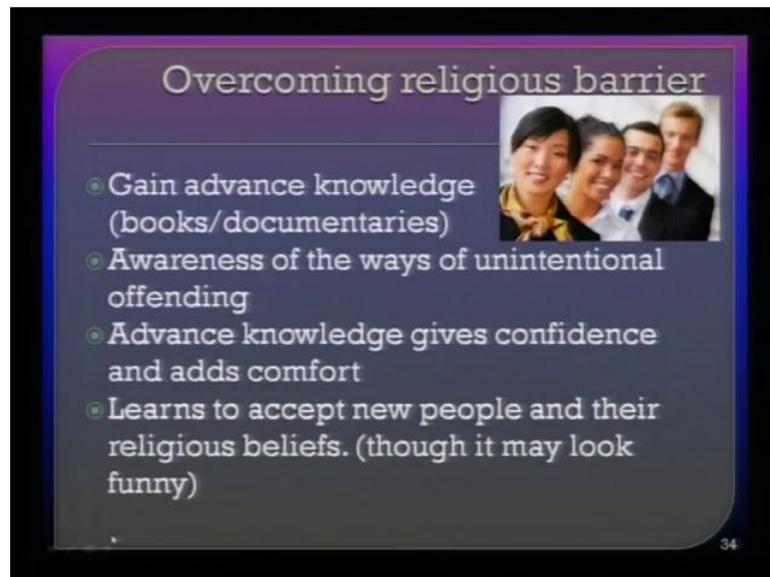
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Because religion is a very private practice and every small ritual gets transferred through families, so the family plays the role of society. Through the family every small every subtle practice, the way you are eating based on religion, do you say prayer before or after and to whom do you say prayer, how do you say that prayer, do you thank God for the food given or you feel that it is something that you need not thank God at all, everything comes from the family. But, based on the religious rites and the religious rituals, the family tells the individual how to behave.

So, it becomes very difficult for a person from other religion to understand the subtle differences in the ways people follow the rituals. Unless, one stays with them for a long time and keenly observes what is happening it is very difficult to identify the differences at a superficial level

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The slide is titled "Overcoming religious barrier" and features a list of four bullet points. To the right of the text is a small photograph of four people (two women and two men) smiling. The slide has a dark blue background with a lighter blue border.

- Gain advance knowledge (books/documentaries)
- Awareness of the ways of unintentional offending
- Advance knowledge gives confidence and adds comfort
- Learns to accept new people and their religious beliefs. (though it may look funny)

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What can one do to overcome this religious barrier? This is very important because one should overcome this. The first thing is to gain advance knowledge. This means one can gain it through books or one can gain through documentaries. Today, before going to a particular place it is worthwhile to watch some interesting channels which are actually showing some of the cultural practices prevailing in that particular place or worthwhile to go to encyclopedias, in libraries, books and other relevant materials or look at documentaries completely based on the religious and social etiquettes.

Now, this again creates an awareness in advance. Then, this awareness of the ways of unintentional offending will help in building good cross cultural communication awareness of knowing how not to offend a person unintentionally. Often the offence is caused not intentionally. Nobody from 1 religion wants to offend another person just for the sake of doing it, but often it is done unintentionally or inadvertently. This should be avoided. Advance knowledge gives confidence and adds comfort. When you have advance knowledge of a particular religion and their practice, what happens is you are very confident in the level of communication with them and people are very happy that you already have some advanced knowledge about their religion. When you want to communicate at their level, they are more receptive and more open. This makes the whole communication environment quite comfortable and then overall the individual learns to accept new people and their religious beliefs though it may look funny.

So, most of the times as I said 1 religious group when it looks at the other religious practices, it appears quite funny. But, tolerance is developed if you have advanced knowledge about this so that you do not burst into laughter looking at some practice. Once you know that it is a very serious practice, you know that you have to be grave in that situation, instead of being naturally spontaneous coming out with some light hearted response. So, that situation can be controlled when you keep these things in mind

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So, you can easily overcome problems coming out of religion. Now, slowly let us move into some theories associated with cross cultural communication and particularly I want to focus on 1 book on intercultural communication that focuses on the contextual model of cross cultural communication.

Now, before we go to the contextual model what do we mean by context? Now, the context itself is implied in intra-cultural communication. This includes the setting, that is the environment. The environment could mean are you from the highly populated place or are you from the lowest populated place and so on. The situation in which you are communicating, is it a personal one or a professional one? Is it a social one? Is it a joyful one or a mourning one? So, you can understand for instance, mourning itself follows the death of a person where people express their sadness. The way people do it also varies culturally and the color code that is used to express it also varies again culturally.

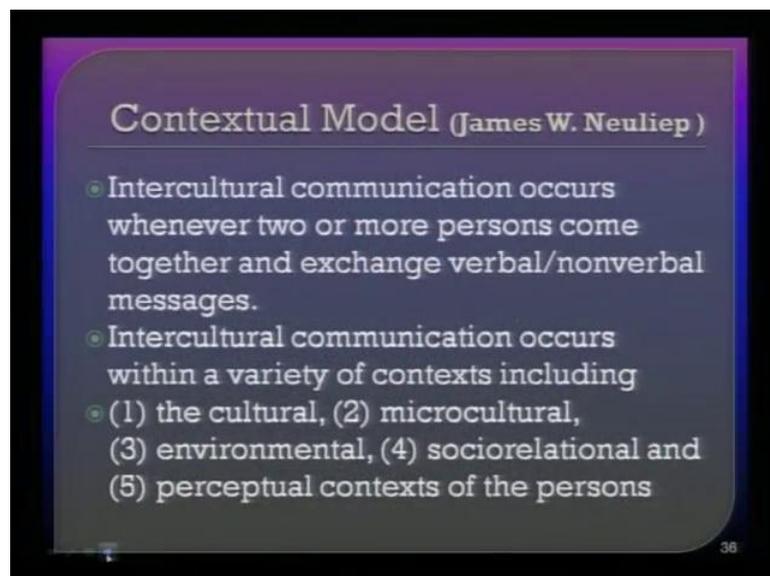
Now look at the Western culture and Indian culture. For instance, for mourning the death

of a person it is common to find in Western culture people coming in black dress. The color chosen to indicate mourning is black. In India, the color that is chosen to indicate mourning is white. You will find all the people dressed in white. Now, look at the opposite situation. A wedding ceremony, it is common to find in Western culture that the bride is dressed in white satin with very elaborate stylish work using laces and all that, but the basic color is white.

Now in India, the bride is dressed in any other color other than white because in India if a woman is dressed in pure white it can indicate that she is a widow. Now see the cultural difference. A woman who is going to start her life is wearing white dress in a Western scenario and a woman who has lost her husband is the one who is wearing white dress in an Indian context. So, this is what is indicated by depending on the situation and not only just the setting, but also the situation in which a person has been doing something.

So, that determines the person to behave culturally apart from that the circumstance. So, what is happening in the surrounding or what is happening in the nearby vicinity that is making the person to behave in a particular manner? Now, these three things are to be looked under the broad frame of context.

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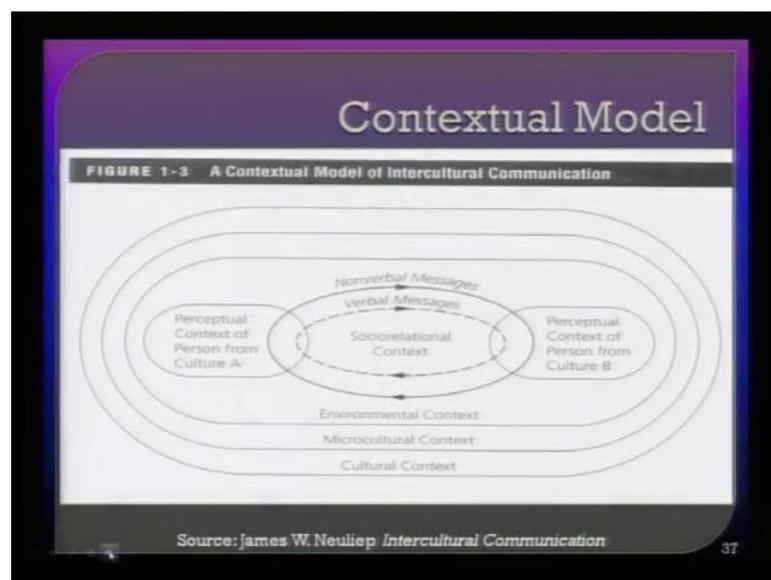


Then, the contextual model that I will be discussing is actually propounded by James W Neuliep. He is the author of the book on intercultural communication. Now according to him the contextual model one that is able to figure out cross cultural communication in a

very justifiable manner. He says that intercultural communication occurs whenever 2 or more persons come together and exchange verbal and nonverbal messages. I said this at the beginning also when 2 people interact verbally or nonverbally carrying the 2 different cultures. So, we are having this cross cultural or intercultural situation.

Now, intercultural communication occurs within a variety of context including the cultural context, micro cultural context, environmental context, socio-relational and perceptual context of the persons. Now, in the remaining part of the lecture we will be looking at each of these context in detail. The cultural context, micro cultural context, environmental context, socio-relational, and perceptual context we will be looking at it in detail. So, let us look at the contextual model proposed by James Neuliep in his book *Intercultural Communication*.

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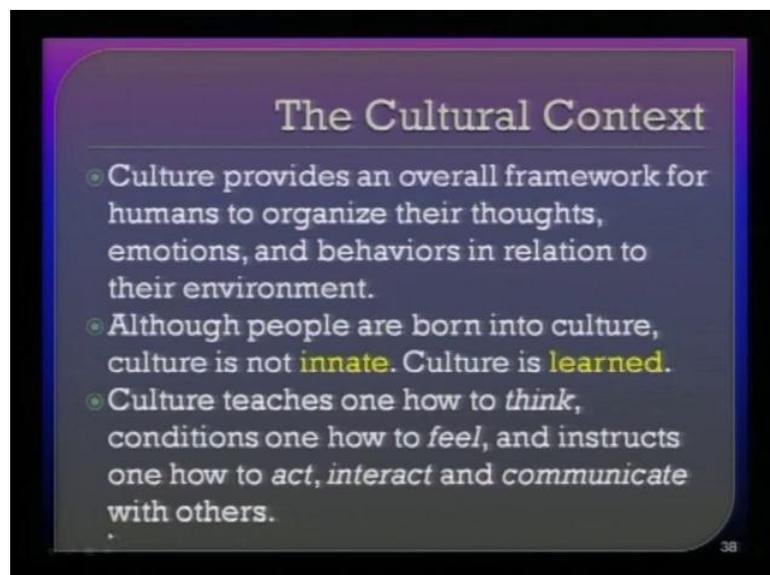
This is what he is suggesting, a contextual model of intercultural communication. Now, the cultural context is at the outermost side, but it is permeating everywhere. So, this is universal. This is enveloping everything. Now, the next level within it is that we have the micro cultural context. This means that there is a culture which is largely universal, but within that culture there are variations and then there are small local insulated groups which will come under micro cultural context.

Now, in the next level we have to focus on the environmental context. The environment at 1 level can just refer to the physical conditions or they living in a very warm

environment or living in a cool environment. So, in this way they can determine the manner in which the people communicate. Now, once you understand these 3 contexts, we know that it is moving towards the socio-relational context, which is where communication itself is located. But, this is again controlled and governed by perceptual context of a person from culture a with perceptual context of person from culture b. This means the way we perceive things are also controlled and governed by culture. So, the way 1 person perceives certain things may be as positive, the way another person perceives that as negative and when they are in a socio-relational context where they use verbal messages or nonverbal messages to communicate this.

So, one has to understand these variations. So, at the outside we have cultural context, lower level micro cultural and then environmental context. At the center, is the sociorelational context. The whole context in which communication is built up, the messages are sent verbally or nonverbally, but it is also controlled and governed by perceptual concepts emanating from culture a and culture b. Now this is the blue print. Now let us get into the details.

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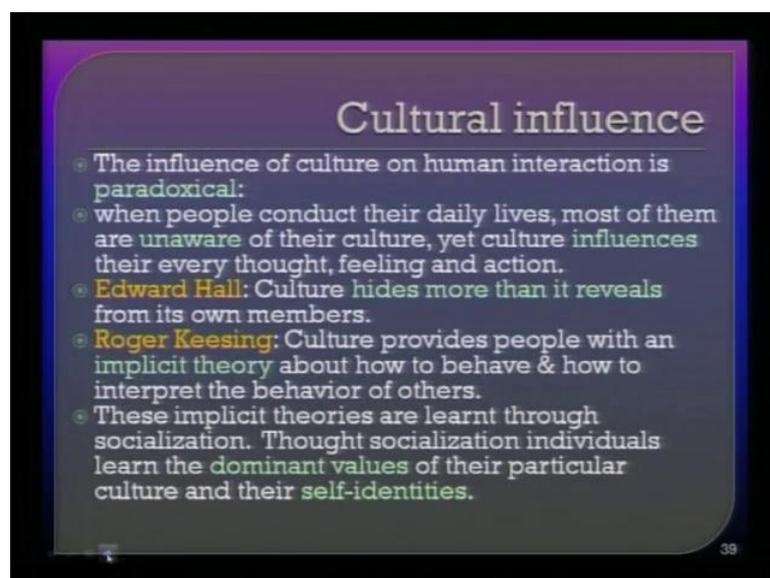
Let us look at the aspect 1 by 1. Let us look at the cultural context now. Culture provides an overall framework for humans to organize their thoughts, emotions and behaviors in relation to their environment. So, culture is providing an overall framework for humans to organize their thoughts. This means even when I am thinking I am conditioned by my

own culture and it is helping in my thinking emotions. I am feeling a certain thing at a certain way, I am responding joyously or I am responding sorrowfully because of certain cultural imprints in me and behaviors in relation to the environment.

Now, although people are born into culture as I said, culture is sometimes not coming as per our choice. It is not a choice that is given. So, we are just born into a culture but although this is a fact, culture is not innate. Culture is learnt. This means although we tend to think that culture could be genetically coded, the real fact is that it is not innate. It is not coming as something that is inbound, but it is something that is learnt, something that is practice through family customs, something that is learnt through traditions, something that is learned through social interactions and all that. So, when people tell that they do not do like this, do not point your fingers at others. This is not good in our culture. You have to bow before the elders. This is in our culture. You have to shake hand when you are receiving somebody, this in our culture and so on.

So, this is just something that is given socially and culturally. This is learnt. It is not innate. It is not inbound. Then, culture also teaches one how to think, it conditions one how to feel and instructs one how to act. So, this is what I said. It makes one think. It makes one feel. It makes one express that in the form of behavior, act and more than that interact and communicate with others expressing culture through ones behavior, but also it is used in the interaction and communication with others.

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### Cultural influence

- The influence of culture on human interaction is paradoxical:
- when people conduct their daily lives, most of them are unaware of their culture, yet culture influences their every thought, feeling and action.
- **Edward Hall:** Culture hides more than it reveals from its own members.
- **Roger Keesing:** Culture provides people with an implicit theory about how to behave & how to interpret the behavior of others.
- These implicit theories are learnt through socialization. Through socialization individuals learn the dominant values of their particular culture and their self-identities.

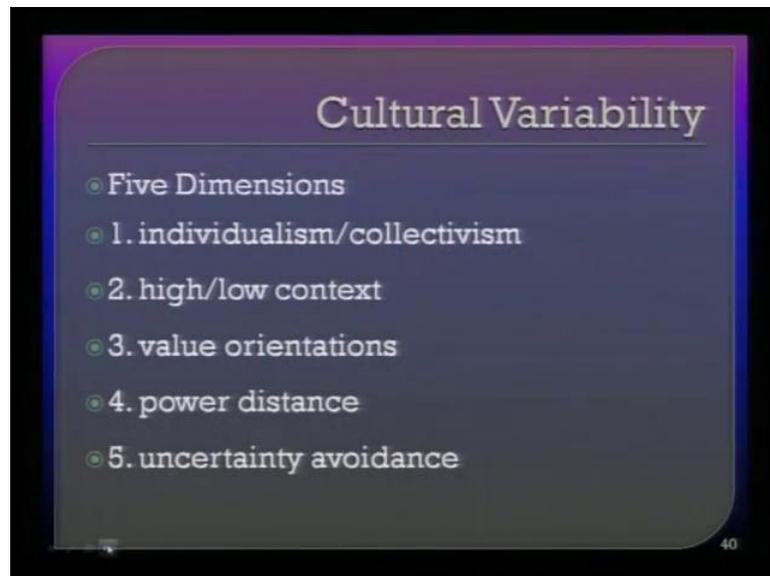
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So, cultural influence is there all the time everywhere and any time we are communicating. The influence of culture on human interaction is again paradoxical. What do we mean by paradoxical? It seems to be ridiculous at the outset because maybe 2 contradictory elements are put together, but it turns out to have a very valid inner meaning now. What is the paradox? The paradox is this. When people conduct their daily lives, most of them are unaware of their culture. This means the way we greet somebody, the way we respect our teachers, respect our elders, the way we eat and the way we dress, although it is culturally given we are unaware of it, but culture influences their every thought, feeling and action.

So, this is the paradoxical thing. We do not do certain things intentionally. We do not think certain things and do it. We do it unaware of the fact that we are doing it, but paradoxically the culture has already influenced every thought, every feeling and every action. So, this is the paradoxical situation about the influence of culture. Edward Hall, says that culture hides more than it reveals from its own members. This means culture is hiding making certain things implicit or unknown to its own members, that is, to the people who are practicing it rather than revealing every time. This is the cultural aspect which does not tell, but it is implicit in all the action, interaction and behavior expression.

According to Roger Keesing, culture provides people with an implicit theory about how to behave and how to interpret the behavior of others. This means, I have a theory in my mind that is already embedded through culture. When I speak, I use the theory and when I interpret the speech, that is the communication of others, I use this theory. So, this theory is implicit in the form of culture and I used to interact with others. These implicit theories are learnt through socialization. Individuals learn the dominant values of their particular culture and their self identities, that is, using social patterning of communication. Through socialization, individuals learn the dominant values, the prevalent values, important values of their particular culture and their own identities.

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Now, when we look at the cultural variability there are 5 dimensions to it. We are going to look into these dimensions very closely. The first one is individualism versus collectivism. So, the major culture variable in the first dimension is in terms of individualism versus collectivism, then high context versus low context, third value orientations, 4 power distance and 5 uncertainty avoidance. I am going to explain all these things with some examples so that it becomes easy for you.

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Now, first let us look at individualism and collectivism. Individualism as you can understand from the word itself, is a culture in which individuals are given importance. Individual rights are given more importance. Individual goals are of superior concern. Collectivism, the goals itself are set in a collective manner and individuals are expected to sacrifice their own selfish needs in favor of the collective goals.

So, the whole nation is moving towards collective interests. So, individualism versus collectivism, now when I say that they are not polar opposites and you cannot say that this culture is individual or practices individualism, which is incorrect. You can say that this culture practices high level of individualism and this practices high level of collectivism. Then we should also understand that there are certain cultures like the Norwegians. They possess both tendencies, which means they respect individual growth, but also they do not want the individual to go out of the collective context, that is they try to balance the individual goals with the collective goals.

So, we need to understand that there is no culture which is exclusively individual or exclusively collective on the one hand. On the one hand, there are cultures which balance both. Then, there are generally cultures which are high in any of these aspects and low in 1 of these aspects. Another important point is that we need to know that there is no culture which will remain forever as highly individualistic or highly collective, which means the culture that is known for its collectivism will be slowly moving towards individualism and vice versa.

So, after a period of time there will be the cyclical change. So, at 1 particular point when you look at it, then we will be able to say this is more on the higher side of individualism and this culture is on higher side of collectivism and so on. Now, how do we differentiate these 2 cultures? Individualistic cultures is one in which the individual is emotionally disconnected from in-groups such as family. So, the family is an in-group of the culture. and the society. Now, the individual is emotionally disconnected from this in individualistic culture, which means the individual cannot be emotionally blackmailed in terms of family. It cannot see what will happen to our family reputation.

So, who will take the blame? The family takes the blame. No, the individual is apart from all these things. So, in that sense he is or she is emotionally disconnected especially in terms of the choice one makes in terms of marriage. Individualistic culture, let us say

individual decides his or her own partner. There is no need for the person to go for a choice that is accepted by the whole family and he need not feel the emotional guilt that he or she went for a choice which is against the family's wish or which is lower than the status of the family and so on. So, in the individualistic cultures the individual is emotionally disconnected and the vice versa happens in the collectivist where the person is emotionally connected to the in-groups, family values, family reputation and family concern. These are the ones the individual is supposed to keep very high in his esteem and the decision making is based on these aspects.

Now, in individual culture people are taught to be creative. In collective one, people are taught to be conformist. Do not do things on your own, now follow the norm. In individual culture people are suppose to learn self reliance, to rely on oneself. The collectivist, the person is made to cohere with the family. When there is a problem come back to the family, come back to the social network and there is a solution waiting for you. You do not rely on yourself. You leave it to the elders and leave it to the society.

So, in the individual culture people are taught to be competitive. Individual competence is highly nurtured. People are praised and rewarded depending on their individual level of competence. Now, in collective culture people think that the group, the society and the nation as a whole should progress. In the individual one, the person is taught to be assertive while in the collective one the person is taught to be cohesive with the group, be meek, be humble, and not to be assertive because assertiveness can lead to aggression.

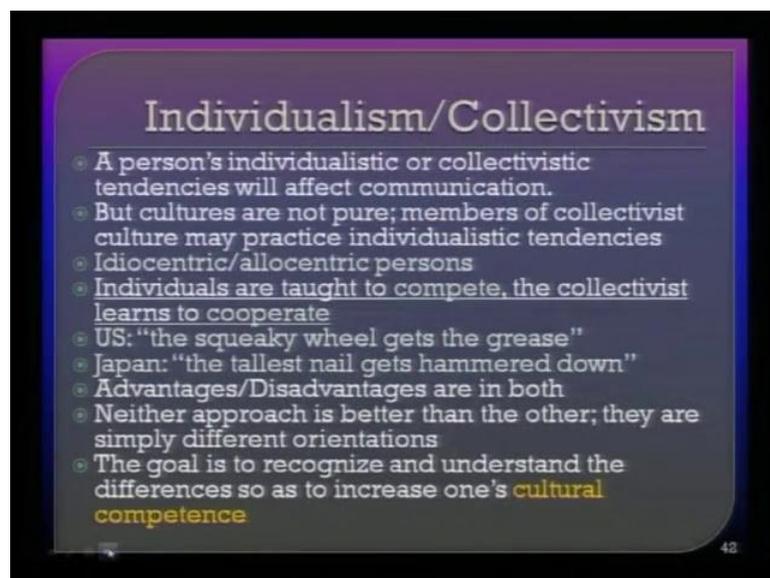
So, when I say this you need not form an impression that individual is good or collective is good. You will again form the opinion depending on your culture on the one hand. On the other hand, the point that I am trying to make is, neither individual nor collective is good or bad as it is. As I said, culture itself is dynamic. It is in a flux at 1 time. It is individual. It can become collective at another time and then in the same cultural scenario prevailing in the nation, different organization and different institutions can practice individual or collective cultures. This means that in the overall framework cultural context you may see individualism or collectivism at large, but in the micro cultural context there may be difference, the group may have a difference and so on.

Now, affluence is the material prosperity richness in terms of material wealth. This can also be correlated to individualism, which means countries which are affluent go more

for individual growth or practice individualism climate. Again we will also talk about the way people think. So, the countries which have cool environment again nurture lot of individualism and the countries which are warmer they nurture collectivism. So, you have lot of examples. The individualistic ones are the ones like US and Canada.

So, their social control is personal guilt rather than on shame on the family and all. That the guilt is associated with the individual, so countries like US, Canada, Germany, Switzerland and England all are individualistic. There are countries which are collectivist, where social control is more on shame that is public humiliation, so country's like Southern Italy, Rural Greece, Africa, Asia and Latin America all come under this category.

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Now, to continue with this thought a person is individualistic or collectivistic, tendencies will affect communication. But cultures that are not pure members of collectivist culture may practice individualistic tendencies. Also, that is what I said that at the cultural level it may appear to be by and large following 1 but, at the micro cultural level the members may tend to change them according to the level. So, we may also refer to persons as idiocentric, that is individual centric or all centric, that is collective centric. We can also make this category. Now, 1 important aspect of this is that individuals are taught to compete when they are idiocentric and the collectivist learns to cooperate.

So, when you compete you want to be one up than the rest of the people. When you tend

to cooperate you want the others also to be with you. You give a hand helping hand. You move as a group together. Now, in the US if you look at some of the proverbs, the proverbs themselves will indicate whether the culture is collectivist or individualist. So, in the US we have proverbs like the squeaky wheel gets the grease. This means if you are an individual you are noticed. In Japan, the tallest nail gets hammered down. So, if you outgrow the collective you will be pull down. As I said, there are advantages and disadvantages in both aspects of this culture, so we should not jump into conclusions that 1 is better than another and neither approach is better than the other because they are simply different orientations.

The goal is to recognize and understand the differences so as to increase ones cultural competence. We talked about communicative competence. Like that, now we are talking about cultural competence. If you know these things, if you know that I come from an individualistic culture, but my job is in a collectivist scenario, so I am moving from this to that. So, I should learn to respect the group's sentiments when I am there in that scenario so that is enhancing ones cultural competence.

Now, keep thinking about this. We have just started with the cultural context and then particularly I focused on individualism and collectivism. In the next lecture, I will go on with the other dimensions and slightly I will elaborate this in the next lecture. Then I will discuss the remaining dimensions of this cultural context.

Thank you so much for being patiently attending to this lecture and keep revising this till we meet on the next lecture.

Bye.