A Graphic Approach to Teaching
Communication-Concerned, Culture-General Constructs: Its Rationale, Design and Application

Shau-Ju Chang
National Taiwan Normal University
t22028@ntnu.edu.tw

Abstract
Although culture has increasingly received more attention in the local English classroom, its instruction has largely been limited to such conventional topics as festivals, etiquette, and literary works. Interesting and informing as it is, culture instruction of this nature is restricted in scope, fails to put together a more comprehensive picture about the target culture, focuses only on the “what” but overlooks the “how so” element of a culture, and is often peripheral to the use of language or communication behaviors. To redress these problems, a graphic approach was conceived to impart deep culture, or cultural values and beliefs. In the current development of the approach, three communication-concerned, culture-general constructs—individualism-collectivism, high- and low-context culture, and power distance—were selected, of which the meanings are transformed into and represented by symbols and graphics to facilitate comprehension. Application of the approach at a one-time Language and Culture class of 39 senior high school students at an English camp showed that the approach was effective in modifying the learners’ perceptions that cultural values and beliefs are abstruse and dull. The class attendants also confirmed that the approach could effectively help them retain their memories of the contents, assist them in analyzing language behaviors in different cultures, and prompt their interest to study cultures. Suggestions are then given about how the approach can be applied to students at a lower schooling level and how it can be further developed and tested for its teaching effects.

Key Words: cultural values and beliefs, culture-general constructs, cross-cultural communication, graphic approach
RETHINKING CULTURE INSTRUCTION IN LOCAL ENGLISH EDUCATION

The necessity of culture teaching in language education has been long recognized and well expounded in the literature (e.g., Brooks, 1968; Byram, 1991; Dimitrios, 2001; Kramsch, 1993, 1998; Liddicoat & Crozet, 2000; Seelye, 1993, to name just a few), but what to teach and how to teach it so as to maximize the learning of a language and its culture(s) are issues continually discussed and debated, given that culture is such an all-inclusive maze. Since culture learning was claimed as an important goal in the primary and secondary school English education in Taiwan (Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006), culture lessons imparted in the English classroom at these school levels, as mostly guided by the textbooks used, have largely focused on topics like holidays, festivals, etiquette, and literary works. Interesting and informing as these cultural contents are, they are not without pitfalls. To begin with, cultural information concerning such conventional topics as festivities is restrictive in scope, a weakness also maintained by in-service teachers in past studies (Chuang, 2002; Yang, 2004). When cultural awareness or understanding brought upon those topics is not guided by systematic, well-planned scaffolding for the connection between culture and language education, it at best leads learners to see only the trees but not the forest. In other words, the knowledge of, say, Christmas and table manners when imparted as token lessons of the target culture is most likely just that much, about “one” holiday and the behavioral norms of “one” everyday living activity, which can hardly add up to a well-rounded, more
comprehensive understanding of the target culture as a whole. Another drawback of the current approach to teaching of culture in local English education concerns the focus only on the “what” element while overlooking the “how so” element of culture. So, while introduced to Americans’ preference for more a direct communication style, learners were unaware of its plausible contributing factors or how this practice possibly came to be formed. By delineating only what the target culture is without delving into its historical and geographical backgrounds as the shaping forces of the culture, this cultural information runs the risk of being arbitrary and fails to make more sense if the reasons or explanations for others’ ways of living are not provided. But a more serious flaw about cultural instruction in local English classrooms at the primary and secondary school levels is that the information imparted may not be the most fundamental and pertinent cultural knowledge to be acquired for the ultimate goal of communicative language teaching, i.e., using and communicating in the target language effectively and appropriately. Apart from serving as conversational materials, the knowledge of Christmas, for example, may not directly facilitate learners in their daily association with English natives. Similarly, the information, say, about table manners in the target culture can hardly go beyond a dining table to assist learners in communicating in general with the target language users. In other words, when cultural topics or issues introduced in the local English curricula are irrelevant or only remotely connected to the pragmatic or communication dimension of the target language, cultural instruction fails to be truly integrated with the understanding and using of the language itself. Given the above deficiencies
concerning the approach of cultural instruction in local English education, an exigent question to be answered is what other aspects or topics of culture to be included in the curriculum to help learners better use the target language. The answer to that question perhaps can be found in Brooks’ (1968) demarcating work about culture instruction in the field of foreign language education.

Brooks (1968), one of the pioneers in culture and language education, maintains that patterns of living (or “culture4” in his five categories of culture) is the least well understood, yet the most important in the early phases of language instruction. Such patterns of living can be further resolved into two distinct and complementary areas: formal culture4 and deep culture4. While formal culture4 defines the individual’s aesthetic expressions in such domains as literature and fine arts, deep culture4 defines the process by which the individual accommodates his/her way of observing, speaking, eating, dressing, gesturing, thinking, behaving, living and valuing to that of those around him/her. While the features of formal culture4 are easily discernible in a social group and are actively present in or are accessible to the awareness of the individuals who are in it, deep culture4, due to its being a slow, persistent, and privately-transpiring lifelong process, catches no public attention and is usually undetected by the individuals of a social group. As deep culture4 concerns the patterns of speaking, gesturing, thinking and behaving and there is almost no awareness of their presence, it warrants more attention in a language classroom than formal culture4.

These patterns of thinking and behaving displayed by individuals of a cultural group, otherwise termed “the semantic meaning of
culture” (Adaskou, Britten, & Fashi, 1990, p. 3) or “behavioral culture” (Huang, 1993, pp. 313), are derived from the perceptions, or values and beliefs, individuals have about the world and about how they should behave in that world (Storti, 2001; Triandis, 1986). As these patterns of conceptualization are closely related to the pragmatic and sociolinguistic meaning of a culture (Adaskou, Britten, & Fashi, 1990), to understand how individuals of a particular cultural group communicate, including what to say and how to say it, one has to first learn about the hidden values and beliefs of that culture.

The decision to incorporate cultural values and beliefs into English language instruction, however, poses a few more questions to be tackled. For example, what values and beliefs should be taught provided the myriad of shared values and beliefs in any culture? Should the values and beliefs imparted address different aspects or domains for different cultures or should they be organized under a unified scheme and deal with the same domains for every culture? And how will these abstract and elusive cultural values and beliefs be presented in class so that they can be easily comprehended and effectively applied by learners to study a language? Chen (2003), for example, discussed how the four sets of the value orientation of the self—individualism-interdependence, age, sex, and activity (Condon & Yousef, 1975)—can be applied to analyzing and teaching the concept of self in American culture (i.e., American culture is primarily individualistic, youth- and gender-equality-valuing, and doing-oriented) and how comic strips can be used as a means of teaching for this cultural orientation. Yeh (2002) posited that three major differences between Chinese and Western ways of thinking reflected in the use of language, i.e., worship of the group versus
worship of the individual, excessive modesty versus straightforwardness, and the horizontal versus the vertical mode of thinking (Bi, 1989), need to be explained explicitly to ensure the correct use of the target language and to enhance intercultural communication. To do it, she suggested that language teachers help students learn cultural knowledge both inductively through aesthetic channels like cinema, literature, music and media, and deductively through culture capsule, culture cluster, culture assimilator, audio-motor unit, and web advertising. As another attempt to tackle the above questions concerning what cultural values and beliefs to teach and how to teach them, a graphic approach was conceived to teach, instead of culture-specific values and beliefs, culture-general constructs under which specific cultural values can be inferred. The following sections will first detail the content of the approach.

A GRAPHIC APPROACH TO TEACHING CULTURE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

Delineating this graphic approach means discussion of two sets of issues. The first set concerns the materials for instruction, which include the reason for introducing culture-general constructs and the contents of these constructs. The second set of issues deals with the method of teaching, in this case, the reasons for using symbols and graphics to present the chosen cultural constructs, and the ways in which the constructs are transformed to visually meaningful and memorable symbols and graphics.
Culture-General Constructs

To prevent the pitfall of culture instruction being only peripheral to communicative language learning as previously discussed, the cultural values and beliefs imparted in a foreign language class have to be highly related to the language behaviors, e.g., what to say and how to say it, of the people of both the target and the source cultures. To teach these cultural values and beliefs in a more organized and systematic fashion and to facilitate comparisons between cultures, rather than introducing for each culture a different set of specific values and beliefs, culture-general constructs will be used as a scaffold for deriving and structuring specific cultural values and beliefs.

Over the years a lot of culture-general constructs (e.g., individualism and collectivism [Triandis, 1986, 1995; Hui & Triandis, 1986], high- and low-context cultures [Hall, 1976], pattern variables [Parsons, 1951; Parsons & Shils, 1951], value orientations [Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961], cultural orientations [Steward & Bennett, 1991], structural tightness [Boldt, 1978], and cultural dimensions [Hofstede, 1980, 1983]) have received much attention and discussion in the discipline of intercultural communication regardless of the cultures studied, a fact that evidences a close link these culture-general constructs (or “cultural patterns” termed by Lustig and Koester, 1996, p. 91; or “cultural variability” by Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 39) bear to communication, and for that matter, language behaviors.

Although all these patterns of culture can have an influence on communication, the degree of their complexity and the extent to which they shape people’s ways of talking varies. To capture the relationship between culture and language usage for learners at a
lower schooling (e.g., high school) level with a more limited capacity to work on abstracts, the constructs that are less complicated and more directly related to language behaviors will be first targeted. Given such considerations, individualism-collectivism, high- and low-context cultures, and part of Hofstede’s (1980, 1983) cultural dimensions are chosen. These schemes of culture variability, their plausible historical or geographical shaping factors, and their influences on communication are detailed in the following sections.

**Individualism-Collectivism**

Individualism-collectivism, a major dimension of cultural variability isolated by theorists across disciplines, analyzes and organizes cultures by examining the individual’s interaction with and relationship to the groups to which s/he belongs. In individualistic cultures, people are supposed to look after themselves and their immediate family only, whereas in collectivistic cultures, people have strong bonds with groups, which are expected to look after them in exchange for their loyalty. The “I” identity takes precedence in individualistic cultures over the “we” identity, which predominates in collectivistic cultures. People in individualistic cultures tend to be universalistic and apply the same value standards to all, while people in collectivistic cultures tend to be particularistic and apply different value standards to members of their ingroups and outgroups. Thus, while people in individualistic cultures treat members of their ingroup and outgroup roughly equally and similarly, people in collectivistic cultures perceive ingroup relationships to be more intimate than outgroup affiliations. Concepts or values often in fusion
with individualism include privacy, equality, freedom, independence, and self-initiative and achievement, whereas concepts or values often associated with collectivism are duty, loyalty, interdependence, self-sacrifice, and group well-being.

Individualism-collectivism, as a dimension of cultural variation, came to exist under certain historical and geographical backdrops. Collectivistic cultures are more likely found in countries that are or used to be an agricultural society, for the ways of earning a living for most people in an agricultural society are farming-related, which normally requires a relatively large group of people living and working together as a cohesive group. Groups thus play a vital role in one’s life and identity, and keeping the group intact and strong is essential to one’s survival. Individualistic cultures, on the other hand, are brewed in a nomadic society or places in which hunting or gathering marked a way of living. As people in those environments functioned mostly individually or in much smaller groups, cultivation of attributes like self-initiative, self-reliance and looking out for oneself and one’s immediate family was pivotal to one’s survival.

Other contributing factors of this culture-general construct include economic development and climate (Hofstede, 1980, 1983). Wealthy cultures tend to be individualistic, while poor cultures collectivistic. As a culture becomes more economically advanced as a result of industrialization, it becomes more individualistic. Cultures in colder climates tend to be individualistic, for colder weather fosters and supports individual initiative and accrualment of individual power to better the chance of one’s survival. Cultures in warmer climates, in contrast, tend to be collectivistic because warmer weather, as a more survival-friendly environment, makes individuals’ achievement and
strengthening of their own ability far less important.

The different perceptions people in individualistic and collectivistic cultures have about who they are and their relationships with ingroup and outgroup members strongly influence how they interact and communicate with others verbally. Because people from individualistic cultures do not make sharp distinctions between ingroups and outgroups, there isn’t apparent difference between the way they interact with an inner circle friend and with a total stranger, and it is not difficult for an outsider to penetrate a group boundary and be treated as an ingroup member. However, because of these individualists’ strong “self” identity and their emphasis on privacy, there is always a safe and respectful distance kept between ingroup members, and a “mine is mine and yours is yours” mentality dominates members of the same group. In contrast, people from collectivistic cultures mark the boundary clearly between ingroups and outgroups, and while feeling socially close to ingroup members, they guard themselves against members of outgroups. Yet, the boundary between ingroup members is blurred and there is a relatively short social distance, or a “mine is yours and yours is mine” attitude, between members of the same group. Therefore, in individualistic cultures, while it takes one relatively little or no time to be included as an ingroup member, it can take a long time for the person to have intimate access to the life of other ingroup members. On the other hand, it takes one quite a long time to crack down the wall erected between ingroups and outgroups in collectivistic cultures, but once one successfully penetrates the group boundary, one is taken in and taken care of, sinking or swimming with the rest of the group. This
explains why people from collectivistic cultures are often surprised by the warm and friendly receptions they so quickly receive from people from individualistic cultures and misunderstand such a friendly gesture as a long-term friendship commitment. This also explains why many from individualistic cultures are ready and at ease when conversing with strangers, but most people from collectivistic cultures are reluctant and feel awkward in a similar situation.

In addition to dealing with ingroup and outgroup members, the individualism-collectivism culture construct also relates to conflict-resolution strategies people employ. People from individualistic cultures are more likely than those from collectivistic cultures to use confrontation strategies when handling interpersonal problems, while those from collectivistic cultures are likely to adopt avoidance, third-party intermediaries, or other face-saving techniques (Lustig & Koester, 1996). This difference can possibly be explained by guarding one's name and right as topping the priority for people from individualistic cultures but protecting the group harmony as the primary concern for people with a collectivistic orientation. Besides, in many situations, people from individualistic cultures are encouraged and will seize the chance to speak for themselves, for “the squeaky wheel gets the grease,” but people from collectivistic cultures remain muted, for “the nail that sticks up gets pounded.”

The degree to which a culture is individualistic or collectivistic also affects the nonverbal behavior of the people belonging to that culture. For example, people from individualistic cultures are more remote and distant proximally, whereas members of collectivistic cultures work, play, live and sleep in close proximity to one another (Andersen, 1997). Kinesic behavior tends to be more synchronized in
collectivistic cultures because where families work collectively, movements, schedules and actions need to be highly coordinated (Argyle, 1975). People in individualistic cultures smile more than people in collectively-oriented cultures (Tomkins, 1984) possibly due to the fact that individualists are responsible for their own relationships and happiness, whereas members of collectivistic societies regard personal happiness and welfare a value secondary to compliance with group norms (Andersen, 1988). Collectivistic cultures will foster emotional displays of their members that maintain and facilitate group cohesion, harmony, or cooperation (Matsumoto, 1991) and may suppress their members from both positive and negative emotional display that are contrary to the mood of the group for the purpose of maintaining the group (Andersen, 1988). In contrast, people with an individualistic orientation are encouraged to express emotions since individual freedom is of paramount value.

High- and Low-Context Cultures

Hall (1976) argues that every human being is faced with so many perceptual stimuli that it is impossible for him or her to pay attention to them all. Culture thus functions as a screen between the person and all those stimuli to indicate what stimuli to notice and how to interpret them. Based on this function, Hall (1976), in his high- and low-context cultural patterns, posits that cultures can be organized by the amount of information implied by the setting or context of the communication itself, regardless of the specific words that are spoken. High-context cultures, according to Hall, prefer high-context messages in which most of the meaning is implied by the physical
setting or internalized in the person; thus, very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. Low-context cultures, in contrast, prefer low-context messages in which the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code.

Other language behaviors related to high- and low-context cultures include the extent to which nonverbal codes are used, the degree of explicitness in reaction, conflict management style (Ting-Toomey, 1985, 1988), and face-negotiation strategies (Ting-Toomey, 1990; Ting-Toomey & Cocroft, 1994). In high-context cultures, nonverbal codes are heavily relied on and reactions are reserved. Reactions in low-context cultures, however, are explicitly articulated and readily observable. In high-context cultures, which value indirectness and ambiguity, conflicts and confrontation are typically avoided to maintain the external smoothness of the relationship, instead of solving the interpersonal problem. In low-context cultures, the conflict is expected to be explicitly revealed and named. In high-context cultures, the mutual preservation of face is paramount, and therefore indirect, obliging, and smoothing face-negotiation strategies are preferred. In low-context cultures, preserving one’s own face is more important than maintaining the face of others; consequently, direct, dominating, and controlling face-negotiation strategies are common.

Communication theorists like Ting-Toomey and Gudykunst (1988) believe that the dimensions of high- and low-context cultures and individualism-collectivism are isomorphic in that all cultures Hall (1976, 1983) labels as high-context cultures coincide with collectivistic cultures on Hofstede’s (1980, 1983) schema, and low-context cultures correspond to individualistic cultures. The connection between the two cultural dimensions can be used to
explain how high- and low-context messages or communication first came to exist. As members of the same group in collectivistic cultures have well internalized the group values, beliefs, and norms—an expectation and consequence for being a member of that group—messages conveyed need not be direct and explicit to be comprehended. Conveying indirect and covert messages, or high-context communication, also helps maintain the group harmony and sustain the group. The concern for the group or its members is not so strong as for oneself in individualistic cultures, and using direct and overt code, or low-context communication, can best serve the purpose of clear and efficient communication to one’s own advantage.

As directness versus indirectness is much related to high- and low-context messages, the contributing factors for this characteristic of communication may also shed light on the formation of the high- and low-context cultural pattern. Storti (2001) attributes the degree of directness in people’s communication to the social structure and demographic composition of a culture. According to Storti, in highly stratified societies, a legacy of feudalism, as people’s well-being depends largely on the goodwill and sufferance of their betters, they learned to be circumspect and indirect in their speech, i.e., to say what they think other people want to hear and to avoid saying what others wish not to hear. Direct versus indirect communication also hinges on the degree of homogeneity of a culture’s population. Storti maintains that people from a homogeneous society, for their intuitively knowing and understanding each other, can trust the other party to fill in what has been left unsaid. People in a heterogeneous society, on the other hand, coming from diverse backgrounds, have less in common and
therefore need to be explicit and direct about their message so that they can be well understood.

**Power Distance**

Power distance, one of the four dimensions of cultural variability derived by Hofstede (1980), is defined as the degree to which the culture believes that institutional and organizational power should be distributed unequally and the decisions of the power holders should be challenged or accepted. High power distance cultures prefer large power distances. They believe that each person has a rightful social station, that the actions of authorities should not be challenged or questioned, that hierarchy and inequality are appropriate and beneficial, and that those with social status have a right to use their power for the purposes and in the ways that they deem desirable. Conversely, low power distance cultures believe in the importance of minimizing social or class inequalities, questioning or challenging authority figures, reducing hierarchical organizational structures, and using power only for legitimate purposes.

Factors accounting for a culture’s preferred level of power distance, according to Hofstede (1980), include climate, population size, and wealth. Cultures that live in low-latitude areas and therefore have tropical or subtropical climates tend to have a high level of power distance, whereas cultures that live in high-latitude regions and therefore have moderate to cold climates tend to have a low level of power distance. Hofstede speculates that survival in colder climates predisposes people to seek more innovative approaches to nature’s obstacles, including mass literacy, independent thinking, technological innovations, decentralization of political power, and a
general questioning of authority. Survival in warmer climates, on the other hand, is far less dependent on intervention with nature, and thus people can continue practicing traditional approaches like learning from the elders and following the lead of the authority. Cultures that have a large population tend to have high power distance, for they need a political hierarchy that is more distant, more impersonal, and less accessible to function as a more effective governing mechanism. Finally, the more equally wealth is distributed (rather than the sheer amount of wealth) within a culture, the greater the culture’s power distance is. Though not stated in Hofstede’s study, money brings power, and as wealth is more evenly distributed within a culture, the power possessed by its people tends to be more equalized.

The influence of a culture’s level of power distance on people’s language behaviors is evident in the language system of a culture. The language systems in high power distance cultures emphasize and reflect an attendance to distinctions based on a social hierarchy. Kinship terms, for example, are much more differentiated in high power distance cultures; there are separate terms for older and younger as well as the oldest and youngest siblings, cousins, uncles, aunts, etc. While title (and there are many titles reflecting different rankings in a hierarchy) plus surname is often used as a way to address others in high power distance cultures, addressing people, regardless of their social stations, by their first names is a common practice in low power distance cultures.

The impact that power distance as a cultural construct has on the way people interact and communicate can also be observed in different realms of social life. For instance, children raised in high
power distance cultures are expected to obey their parents without challenging or questioning them, while children raised in low power distance cultures are taught to have their own opinions and seek reasons or justification for their parents’ actions. Similarly, students in high power distance cultures are expected to comply with the wishes and requests of their teachers and to adopt the views of the teacher, whereas students in low power distance cultures are under much less pressure to conform to the expectations of teachers or other authorities and are encouraged to ask questions, to voice an opinion different from the teacher’s, and to challenge the evidence leading to conclusions. In the business world, in high power distance cultures superiors are likely to prefer an autocratic or directive decision-making style and subordinates expect to be closely supervised. Alternatively in low power distance cultures superiors favor a consultative or participatory decision-making style and subordinates expect a great deal of autonomy and independence as they do their work.

**Transforming Culture-General Constructs Into Graphics**

The idea of graphing culture-general constructs originated from the self-revelation of a student after coming back from a year-long language exchange program in the US. Having taken my Language and Culture class before her one-year sojourn, the student maintained that her memory of a graph I drew in class delineating collectivism vs. individualism had greatly facilitated her communication and interaction with her American teachers and friends. As the graph she referred to actually came from my memories of a graduate class I took years ago, I, for the first time, was aware of the utility and power of using
concrete and plain graphics and symbols to teach abstract and intricate cultural values and beliefs.

While the decision to adopt a graphic approach to teaching culture-general constructs was incidental, the process of transforming them to comprehensible graphics and symbols was deliberate. Depending on the nature and the degree of abstraction involved in the cultural constructs, some like individualism-collectivism and power distance are more readily converted to symbols and graphics than others, such as high- and low-context cultures. When it is difficult to graph a construct, a boil-down approach will be taken, i.e., a major, more adaptable feature of the construct will be chosen to capture the essence of that construct. If a construct is broad in scope, i.e., encompassing many important values and beliefs, more than one graph is used for its presentation. Based on these principles, the construct of individualism-collectivism is graphed in the following three figures.

Figure 1, which is the illustration the world-renowned cross-cultural psychologist, Triandis (personal communication, 1989) gave in his class I took as a graduate student years ago, captures the gist about the relationship between the group and its members as well as the relationship among ingroup members. The big, outer circle drawn in the solid line on the left stands for the group boundary in collectivistic cultures, and the one drawn in dotted line on the right represents the group boundary in individualistic cultures. Just as it is more difficult to break through the solid line than the dotted line, it is more difficult for an outsider to penetrate the group boundary and to be included as an ingroup member in collectivistic cultures than in
individualistic cultures. The solid line or the strong group boundary, compared with the dotted line or less tight group bonding, also makes it more difficult for the one inside the group to break loose. The short social distance and intimate connection among ingroup members in collectivistic cultures is indicated by the small, inner circles drawn in the dotted lines in the left picture, and protection of one’s privacy and a hard-to-get access to other ingroup members’ life in individualistic cultures is indicated by the small, inner circles drawn in the solid lines in the right picture.

![Figure 1](image)

**Figure 1**

**Ingroup-Outgroup Relationship in the Cultural Construct of Individualism-Collectivism**

Figures 2 and 3 are important concepts that accompany the construct of individualism-collectivism. Figure 2 illustrates the value of conformity, signified by shapes of a much smaller variety on the left, versus individuality, indicated by a good number of different shapes on the right. Figure 3 stands for the value of interdependence versus independence. The lines crossing each other on the left illustrate the idea that people from collectivistic cultures believe in
interdependence among ingroup members; the parallel lines on the right symbolize that members of individualistic cultures are each an independent, self-reliant individual.

Figure 4 illustrates the cultural pattern of high- and low-context culture. The double-headed arrows indicate the message exchanged between the two interactants. As this cultural pattern is most apparently manifested through the degree of directness and explicitness involved in the message, the arrow marked by a zigzag, dotted line on the left indicates the roundabout and covert codes used in high-context cultures, whereas the one drawn in a less curved, solid line on the right signifies
Finally power distance is illustrated in Figure 5. The stair-like graph on the left speaks for the belief in and favor for an unequal distribution of power and a clearly established social hierarchy by the members of high power distance cultures. As one stair rises from another, the hierarchical power structure is relatively tight and resistant to change. The three bars of roughly equal heights on the right stand for the feature of more equally distributed power or minimized social or class inequality among the members of low power distance cultures. The separation between the bars indicates the power stratification is not as strict or fixed, with a higher likelihood of power fluctuation among individuals.
APPLYING THE GRAPHIC APPROACH IN A LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CLASS AT AN ENGLISH CAMP: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

Different from Chen’s (2003) and Yeh’s (2002) studies, which are descriptive in nature, this graphic approach was applied in a ninety-minute language and culture class at an English camp for high school students from various parts of the country to empirically test its effects. Given the limited time for instruction, the aim of applying this approach to teaching the class was primarily to investigate if the approach had the potential to function as an effective means of molding in learners a positive and correct attitude toward deep culture, i.e., cultural values and beliefs, and how the approach would be generally received by the students. The following sections detail the class participants, teaching content and activity, data-collection instrument and procedure, and results and discussion.

Participants

Thirty-nine students from 29 senior high schools across the country attended the class. Among them, 8 were male and 31 were female. Twenty of them had finished one year of senior high school education, and 19 students, two years. Students in this class had chosen the course “Language and Culture” over “Children’s Literature,” two elective courses arranged at the same time slot for the camp attendants to select.

1 Five schools are located in the north; 9 in central Taiwan; 9 in the south; 4 in the east; and one on an off-shore island.
Teaching Content and Activity

The rationale for introducing deep culture in the foreign language classroom was first provided. The five pictures were then introduced, including the culture constructs or values and beliefs they represent, the implications the constructs have for language usage or communication behaviors, and the cultural backdrop that helps contribute to the identified cultural differences. In addition to the explanations aforementioned concerning the constructs and pictures, specific examples were drawn from both Chinese and US American cultures for illustration. To impart such a great deal of information in a short period of time, a lecture-based method was adopted, interspersed by questions (e.g., “Compared with Taiwanese, Americans seem to greet and strike a conversation with strangers more frequently and easily. Why are they at greater ease socializing with strangers but Taiwanese feel more reluctant or have more difficulty talking to strangers?” “What spirit or value is embodied by stores selling parts of household objects like B & Q?” “What is the connotation of the Chinese expression ‘yi-lei’ [異類], and why in Chinese are ‘guai’ [怪] and ‘yi’ [異] put together to form a term?” etc.) used to arouse students’ curiosity and interest.

Data-Collection Instruments and Procedure

A questionnaire (see Appendix A) was designed to investigate how the approach affects the learner’s views of deep culture, or cultural values and beliefs. Besides questions soliciting the class attendants’

---

2 For fear that the term “construct” was unfamiliar and perplexing to those high school students, it was not used in the lecture-discussion and was replaced by more commonplace terms like “values and beliefs.”
personal information about their gender, year of school, and the names and locations of their schools, the questionnaire consists of 16 or 8 pairs of perceptual items, comprising one positively- and one negatively-worded statement on issues regarding the utility and comprehensibility of cultural values/beliefs, interest in learning values and beliefs, and relationship between values/beliefs and language learning. The attendants were asked to indicate their opinions for each of the 16 statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In addition, six scaled items (see Appendix B) were constructed to tap the class’ general reactions to this graphic approach. On the same five-point scale the attendants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that the approach is interesting, makes the contents easy to comprehend and remember, assists dissecting and understanding of one’s home and foreign cultures and their connections to people’s language behaviors, and induces or enhances one’s interest of learning about cultures. The class attendants were also encouraged to write down other opinions concerning this teaching approach.

At the beginning of the class, a pretest, which was the questionnaire consisting of the personal information items and 16 scaled-statements, was applied to the class. Following the pretest was a 90-minute lecture-discussion based on the graphic approach. Finally a posttest was given, which comprised the same questions in

---

3 A Cronbach’s alpha reliability analysis showed the standardized item alpha = .7998. A correlation coefficient test indicated that each of the 8 pairs of statements is negatively correlated in terms of the concepts that they are meant to capture; four of the pairs reached a 0.01 significance level. The results of the two tests confirm the reliability and internal validity of the instrument.
the pretest plus the six scaled-items for soliciting the class’ opinions of the graphic approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following sections detail the camp attendants’ reactions to and future applications and research of this graphic approach to teaching communication-concerned, culture-general constructs.

Effects of the Approach on Learners’ Perceptions of Cultural Values and Beliefs

Though the mean values were higher in the posttest for seven of the eight paired-statements about cultural values and beliefs, a t-test indicated significant difference for only 2 paired-items, i.e., questions 1 and 14, and questions 6 and 13 (see Table 1). In other words, after receiving the approach, the class considered cultural values and beliefs easier to understand and more fun to learn. The item-by-item t-scores basically confirm the same pattern, except that significant difference was also found for item 11 between the pre- and posttests, suggesting that after the approach the class found cultural values and beliefs easier to learn. A cross-tests comparison based on the attendants’ years of school yielded no significant difference for all but one pair of statements, questions 8 and 11 (see Table 2). Those who finished two years of high school education overall found it easier to learn cultural values and beliefs than those who had attended high school for only one year. No significant difference was found between males and females in their perceptions of all eight paired items (see Table 3).
Table 1
T-test Results of Participants’ Responses on the “Cultural Values and Beliefs Questionnaire”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$P$ (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 14</td>
<td>3.06 0.70</td>
<td>3.48 0.83</td>
<td>-2.41</td>
<td>0.018*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 &amp; 9</td>
<td>4.03 0.67</td>
<td>4.23 0.60</td>
<td>-1.31</td>
<td>0.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 &amp; 16</td>
<td>3.78 0.68</td>
<td>4.01 0.61</td>
<td>-1.54</td>
<td>0.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 &amp; 12</td>
<td>3.70 0.68</td>
<td>3.47 0.84</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 &amp; 7</td>
<td>4.03 0.64</td>
<td>4.19 0.56</td>
<td>-1.10</td>
<td>0.272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 &amp; 13</td>
<td>3.60 0.70</td>
<td>3.98 0.65</td>
<td>-2.47</td>
<td>0.016*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 &amp; 11</td>
<td>3.02 0.69</td>
<td>3.32 0.85</td>
<td>-1.69</td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 &amp; 15</td>
<td>4.14 0.54</td>
<td>4.07 0.70</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $N = 39$. strongly agree = 5; strongly disagree = 1

Table 2
T-test Results of Participants’ Responses on the “Cultural Values and Beliefs Questionnaire” by School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$P$ (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 14</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>0.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 &amp; 9</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
<td>0.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 &amp; 16</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>-1.50</td>
<td>0.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 &amp; 12</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>0.543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 &amp; 7</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 &amp; 13</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>-1.43</td>
<td>0.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 &amp; 11</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>-2.37</td>
<td>0.020*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 &amp; 15</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-0.30</td>
<td>0.759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The total participants included 20 first-year students and 19 second-year students.
Table 3
T-test Results of Participants’ Responses on the “Cultural Values and Beliefs Questionnaire” by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 14</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>-1.45</td>
<td>0.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 &amp; 16</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
<td>0.931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 &amp; 12</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-1.07</td>
<td>0.285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-0.86</td>
<td>0.390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 &amp; 13</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 &amp; 11</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>0.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 &amp; 15</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The present research involved 8 male students and 31 female students.

While it is cheering to know that the graphic approach had effectively changed the participants’ initial attitudes that cultural values and beliefs are abstract and difficult to understand and that it is no fun to study these values and beliefs, the fact that it only reinforced but failed to significantly sway their perceptions regarding other issues is not really bad news. On the contrary, it shows that the participants had well recognized that cultural values and beliefs often manifest themselves in diverse cultural phenomena, that cultural values and beliefs and language usage are intertwined, that learning of
cultural values and beliefs facilitates language learning, and that the knowledge of cultural values and beliefs is of great utility. Given that before the class these high school students were already aware of the role and importance of cultural values and beliefs to the learning of a language but nevertheless perceived such values and beliefs difficult and dull to learn, it can be argued that what they then needed was an instructional approach that could convert such a serious matter into something playful and could enable them to easily grasp those intangible concepts. This graphic approach, which was conceived for those purposes, may well be a key to helping them open the vault of mystical cultural riches.

The finding that the second-year high school students deemed cultural values and beliefs easier to learn after the instruction than the first-year high school students may suggest a connection between the intellectual development of the learner and the effect of the teaching approach, specifically the comprehensibility of the contents imparted in the approach. The somewhat symbolic graphics and the abstract concepts they represent, though already simplified and more concrete compared with the written description of the original cultural constructs, may possibly still call for a more mature mind to construe.

Learners’ General Reactions to the Approach

To discern the participants’ reactions to the graphic approach, frequency counts were applied to their responses to the six scaled-items. The analysis indicated an overall positive reaction from the class attendants toward the approach. Among the 39 attendants, 21 strongly agreed and 17 agreed that the approach, as a way of
introducing and imparting cultural values and beliefs, is quite interesting; 21 indicated strong agreement and 18 agreement to the statement that the approach can help learners comprehend the contents; 18 indicated strong agreement and 18 agreement to the claim that the approach can help learners remember the contents; 19 strongly agreed and 19 agreed that the approach can help learners analyze and understand some cultural phenomena and language behaviors of both their home and foreign cultures; 15 strongly agreed and 22 agreed that the approach can help learners approach and dissect differences between cultures; and 18 indicated strong agreement and 17 agreement to the statement that the approach can induce or promote learners’ interest to study cultures. While few participants held a neutral stance, indicated by their choosing the “neither agree nor disagree” option regarding those 6 scaled-items, no negative responses (i.e., choosing the “disagree” or “strongly disagree” option on the scale) were given to the six perceptual statements about the teaching effects of the approach.

Participants’ comments also indicated their liking of this approach in general. Out of the 26 participants who wrote down thoughts of the class, 12 had positive feedback about the teaching approach. One student, for example, wrote, “Originally I thought cultural values and beliefs are too abstract for me to grasp, but after your explanation based on this approach, they seem to be much easier to comprehend.” Another student stated, “By using something simple and concrete to talk about something complicated and abstract, this approach is very impressive.” Other comments include, “Unlike the traditional descriptive approach, which is quite boring, using graphics to teach the subject is a great idea,” “I like this approach; it can better
catch students’ attention,” “Before the class, I thought it would be something rather boring. But it was not; it was really interesting,” and “This graphic approach is good, for it can make us ‘think.’”

Although no negative comments were found, there were suggestions concerning the ways the graphic approach is presented in class. Three participants suggested that more examples, particularly those from real people captured in vivid images, be used to help learners better comprehend and remember the graphic representations of cultural-general values and beliefs. One participant posited that cultures other than the US could also be compared with learners’ home culture as a way of illustrating those values and beliefs. Another participant wished for even more concrete visual representations of abstract cultural values. Still another participant hoped to learn more about the historical and geographic backgrounds of those cultural constructs. Finally, two participants cautioned that for any culture there are no fixed graphic representations of its values and beliefs, and there are no fixed interpretations of the same graphic representations. When presenting them in class, the instructor should hold an open mind toward learners’ own inventions and interpretations.

All in all, the study has proved that this graphic approach is potentially an effective tool modifying the stereotypical views that learners often have for cultural values and beliefs, i.e., that they are something abstruse and vapid. Learners also confirmed its other teaching effects, e.g., helping them retain their memories of the contents, assisting them in analyzing language behaviors in different cultures, and prompting their interest to study cultures. In other words, this approach can equip students with the needed knowledge to
process and understand cultural phenomena in an active, analytical and independent way (Galloway, 1997). By studying both the manifested behaviors and the underlying perceptions as well as their historical backdrops, students may also less likely interpret the foreign cultures as bizarre and irrational but start seeing them as reasonable and believable, a pivotal goal of culture instruction (Hanvey, 1979).

**Future Applications of the Approach**

Though the study shows that students’ intellectual development may play a vital role in the extent to which the culture-general constructs introduced in the approach can be construed, it does not mean that it is inconceivable for those concepts or their graphic representations to be introduced to students of a younger age or at a lower schooling level. Caution, however, has to be taken regarding how they are presented in class. For example, rather than showering students with these culture-general constructs all at once and in their bare-bone versions, as did the instructional approach adopted in this study due to time constraints, teachers should introduce one construct at a time and pave the way for its entry with both pre-reading questions that guide the learner’s attention to the language/communication behavior in focus and a reading passage that appositely and vividly captures people’s language or communication behavior as a reflection of where the culture stands in the spectrum of that construct. The graphic representations can be auxiliary, imparted chiefly for the purpose of comprehension enhancement and memory retention. Information concerning the
culture’s historical and geographic backdrop for brewing the values and beliefs embodied by the construct can be included in the teacher’s manual to be used at the instructor’s disposal. Suggestions can be given on how such information can be transformed and disseminated to students of different age levels. When introduced to these communication-concerned, culture-general constructs, students should also be reminded that these differences are fundamentally generalizations made about the majority of people from different foreign cultures and that there are surely wide ranges of individual differences. Therefore, while using the information as general guidelines in their initial contacts with people from those cultures, students need to be always on the alert for and adaptive to individual disparities.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

Promising as this culture teaching approach is as indicated by the results of a preliminary study, more research efforts are needed to explore the teaching effects and pedagogical applications of the approach. To do so, first, the learners’ subjective accounts have to be cross-referenced by proofs from objective ways of assessment. Future studies therefore can construct measurements to objectively evaluate learners’ comprehension of the materials imparted via the approach and to test their memory retention of the materials. Apart from testing the effects of the approach via different means of evaluation, future research also needs to ascertain to students of what years and schooling levels can the approach be most effectively applied and how they can be incorporated into the current English curriculum (e.g., via what type of material and which foreign cultures to be
introduced). Future studies can certainly explore and include more culture-general constructs into the approach and better their graphic representations.

CONCLUSION

For years, culture instruction in the local primary and secondary English classroom has been equated with some token lessons of festivities, etiquette and literary pieces. Intriguing and playful as they are, these lessons are restrictive in scope, are plotted in the texts without guidance from a well-deliberated teaching plan, lack coverage of the historical or geographical backdrop of a culture, and are peripheral to language usage or communication practice. These drawbacks need to and can be rectified by going beyond the superficial and tangible and ascertaining the deep and hidden culture, specifically by exploring communication-concerned, culture-general constructs from which culture-specific values and beliefs can be derived. With that aim, an alternative, graphic approach was designed to teach three widely known patterns of cultural variability: individualism-collectivism, high- and low-context cultures, and power distance. Application of this innovative approach in a one-time language and culture class for a group of high school students showed that the students viewed the approach to be effective in making cultural values and beliefs fun to learn and easy to comprehend and remember, in assisting them to understand language behaviors of the source and target cultures and to analyze and dissect cultural differences, and in raising their culture-learning interest. Though
demonstrating the potential of being an effective means of guiding learners in their excursion in the culture maze way, this approach is only at the budding stage of its development. More planning and testing have to be done to make it a fully developed vehicle for teaching culture in the language classroom.

REFERENCES


Ministry of Education (2003). 國民中小學九年一貫課程暫行綱要
Chang: A Graphic Approach to Teaching Culture


**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Shau-Ju Chang is a Professor in the Department of English at National Taiwan Normal University. Her research interests primarily lie in the areas of oral English competence, pedagogy for oral English courses, and culture and language.
APPENDIX A
Questionnaire on Cultural Values and Beliefs

親愛的同學，
這是一份和「文化」有關的問卷，目的是想了解您對一些與文化中有關「信仰和價值観」議題的看法（此處「信仰」一詞所指的是「一群人的世上之事物所持的共同信念」，如何謂真的、對的、好的等等，而非指宗教信仰）。煩請撥冗回答下列問題；每個問題沒有所謂的「正確答案」，請就您個人所知及想法，仔細閱讀，誠實回答。謝謝您的合作。

師大英語系 常紹如老師 敬啟

高中就讀之學校：____________________（請用中文，並註明
學校所在之縣市）
年級：□高一升高二
□高二升高三
□已高中畢業
性別：□男，□女

請就每一題圈選代表您意見的號碼。
1. 一個文化的「信仰和價值觀」，常抽象難懂。 5 4 3 2 1
2. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的部分，和該文化之語言有著不可分的關係。 5 4 3 2 1
3. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的知識，往往實用性偏低。 5 4 3 2 1
4. 學習和一個文化有關的「信仰和價值觀」，不會對學習該文化的語言，增加額外的負擔。 5 4 3 2 1

39
5. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的部分，常不易和文化中其他部分或現象結合。

6. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的部分，往往枯燥無趣。

7. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的部分，可常在該文化的其他方面，獲得印證。

8. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的部分，常不易學習。

9. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的部分，和該文化的語言並沒有直接的關係。

10. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的部分，對學習該文化的語言幫助不大。

11. 在學習一個語言的同時，還要學習使用該語言之文化中的「信仰和價值觀」，是一項負擔。

12. 一個文化的「信仰和價值觀」，是文化中相當耐人尋味的部分。

13. 文化中有關「信仰和價值觀」的部分，不會深奧難懂。

14. 了解與一個文化有關的「信仰和價值觀」之後，可更有效且深入地學習該文化的語言。

15. 有關「信仰和價值觀」的文化知識，具有相當的實用價值。
**APPENDIX B**

*Questionnaire on the Teaching Effectiveness of the Graphic Approach*

請就這種「以圖形/圖象做為介紹一文化之信仰和價值觀」的教學方式，表達您的看法。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>請就每一題選代表您意見的號碼。</th>
<th>非常同意</th>
<th>同意</th>
<th>既非同意也非不同意</th>
<th>不同意</th>
<th>非常不同意</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 這種「以圖形/圖象做為介紹一文化之信仰和價值觀」的教學方式，十分新鮮有趣。</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 這種「以圖形/圖象做為介紹一文化之信仰和價值觀」的教學方式，有助於內容之理解。</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 這種「以圖形/圖象做為介紹一文化之信仰和價值觀」的教學方式，有助於內容之記憶。</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 這種「以圖形/圖象做為介紹一文化之信仰和價值觀」的教學方式，有助於分析、了解一些本國及他國之文化現象或語言行為。</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 這種「以圖形/圖象做為介紹一文化之信仰和價值觀」的教學方式，有助於分析、了解不同文化間可能之差異。</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. 這種「以圖形/圖象做為介紹一文化之信仰和價值觀」的教學方式，有助於激發或增進文化學習之興趣。</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

若有其他看法，也請您寫下您的想法。請用中文並盡可能詳細回答。謝謝您的合作。
以图形/图像方式教授与语言行为有关之文化类型建构：其理论基础、构思及运用

摘要
文化在本地之英语教学中虽逐年受到重视，但文化教学却常局限于几个传统常见的题目，如节庆、礼仪和文学作品。这些文化内容虽兼具趣味及知识性，但仍存有数项缺点，如涵盖范围过於狭隘、对标准文化之著墨过於片段不全、只介绍文化内容而忽略致使其存在之时空因素、以及文化内容与语言及沟通行行为间关系不夠密切等。为导正此等现象，本文提出以图形/图像方式来介绍文化信仰及价值观（即所谓的深层文化）之另类教学法。此教学法於现阶段先锁定三个与沟通行行为密切相关的文化类型建构——即个人/集体主义、高/低情境文化、及权力位阶差异——并将其意涵以较具体之图形/图像方式来呈现。此图形/图像教学法之后实地运用於教授一暑期高中英语营之『语言与文化』课程。试教结果显示此教学法能有效改变学习者对文化信仰及价值观的刻板印象，即文化信仰及价值观常抽象难懂且枯燥乏味。参与此课程之学员肯定此教学法可有效帮助记忆学习内容、分析一文化之语言行为、及提升文化学习之兴趣。本文最後就如何在高中以下阶段实施此教学法以及后续如何充实并进一步检定此教学法成效等议题，提出数点建议。

关键词：文化价值观念与信仰 概括性文化内容建构 跨文化沟通 图形/图像式教学