### 1 CHAPTER 5

The Perceptual Context

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## 3 The Perceptual Context

- Deals with how we take in, store & retrieve info
- Human universal, but how we see, hear, smell, taste is culturally determined
- When we communicate, we start from a perceptual frame of reference
- Based on our cultural "programming" (Hofstede)
- Same objects perceived differently as a result of cultural values or beliefs

## 4 The Perceptual Context

### 5 The Perceptual Context

- Clip: US products in India
  - What do Indians make of a cheesehead
  - For Hindus, the same object (cow) perceived very differently than in US
- · Geography helps determine how we perceive the world
- How Asian/Western viewpoints differ?
  - Relationships vs. similarities
  - Fish in tank / images of cow, chicken & grass

## 6 Stage 1—Input/sensation

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- Perception the mental interpretation of external stimuli via sensation
- · Perceptual filters:
  - Physiological—the senses
  - Sociological—demographic info & groups
  - Psychological—attitudes, beliefs, & dispositions
- · Same external stimuli may have different responses

- Examples in text:
  - Rap music
  - Anti-abortion speech

## 8 Input/sensation: Cross-cultural Differences

- · Conditions of the physical environment
  - Hearing loss: where?
- · Indirect environmental conditions
  - African miners
- Genetic differences
  - "alcoholic blush"
- · Cultural differences in the interaction with the environment
  - Sensotype: favoring one sense [Africans/Europeans]

### 9 Input/sensation

- Carpentered World Hypothesis
  - Effect of living in world of rectangles & right angles

# 10 Stage 2—Storage/memory

- Short-term memory
  - 7 plus or minus 2
  - May be affected by writing system
- Long-term memory
  - Episodic
    - Personal, unique experiences (also called autobiographical)
    - Earliest memories: Asian vs. western
  - Semantic
    - Not individualized
    - Preservation of the general conceptual world & language
  - Procedural
    - How to do something manually

## 11 Stage 3—Recall/retrieval

- Long-term memory capacity?
- · Long-term memory may be affected by:
  - Interference
  - Anxiety
  - Repression
  - Age
- Mnemonic devices: techniques for better recall

## 12 Memory Palaces

## 13 Other Memory Devices

- Acronyms
  - Used often in language learning: Mrs Van der Tramp
    - Verbs in French conjugated with être (monter, rester, sortir)
- Acrostic
  - Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally (PEMDAS)
  - Sequence in solving math equations
    - Parenthesis | Exponents | Multiplication | Division | Addition | Subtraction
- Keyword Method
  - Select a known key word that sounds like the new word.
    Next, imagine an image to associate the two [barrister => bear in court]
- Spaced repetition
  - Based on the "forgetting curve", that there is a frequent pattern for how people learn (and forget). This pattern dictates a particular rhythm for reviewing items to be learned, i.e. 1 - 3 - 7

## 14 Categorization & Stereotyping

- Categorization—grouping, sorting, or classifying objects, events, or living things into identifiable groups or compartments that share certain features or characteristics
- Stereotypes—membership in social categories that are

## believed to be associated with certain traits and behaviors

## 15 Categorization

- Used to makes sense of the world, give us a frame of reference
- · Many things categorized, including people
- · Categories formed from perceived differences
- · Dichotomy between Asian & Western process
  - Asian: holistic categories
    - Emphasis on relationships, environment
    - Parts not separated out
  - Western: analytical categories
    - · Similarities among objects used primarily
    - · Objects separated from context

## 16 Consequences of Categorization

#### Positive

- · Helps to confirm thinking
- Reduces the amount of incoming information to a manageable size
- · Increases the availability of incoming information
- · Reduces uncertainty & stress
- May help to link our own culture with others

## Negative

- · Ignores individual elements of the person
- Minimizes in-group differences
- Maximizes out-group differences

## 17 Stereotyping

- Stereotypes are categories with attitude.
- Stereotyping involves members of one group attributing characteristics to members of another group.
- These attributions can carry a + or -evaluation
- Can lead to prejudice and discrimination
- · Established early in life
- · In US, race & gender groups often stereotyped

· In other cultures, different social groups

## 18 Stereotyping

## 19 Explanations of stereotypes 1

- The out-group homogeneity effect
  - "those" guys are all the same
- The illusory correlation principle
  - Rare negative behavior remembered for all
- · Real conditions
  - Example: wide-spread poverty in a group

## 20 Explanations of stereotypes 2

- Serve self-fulfilling prophecies
  - Dominant culture creates adverse conditions
- · Help develop and maintain a positive self-esteem
- The *stereotype threat* phenomenon
  - When we sense that some aspect of our self (behavior, physical characteristics, social condition) seems to match the stereotype.
  - Examples
    - Women math / Elderly cognitive

## 21 Stereotype Content Model

- Warmth
  - Does this person intend to harm me?
  - Associations: honesty, trustworthiness, friendliness
- Competence
  - Are they capable of harming me?
  - Associations: skill, knowledge, intelligence
- Difference emotions emerge from these dimensions:
  - Contempt Pity Admiration Pride
  - Those lacking both warmth & competence = negative
  - Low-low: poor, druggies, Arabs
  - Competent but low warmth: Germany, UK, the rich

High warmth only: Spain, Austria, housewives

### 22 Ethnocentrism

- The tendency for any people to put their own group in a position of centrality and worth while creating and reinforcing negative attitudes and behaviors toward out-groups.
- · Natural, universal condition
- · Can have positive side
  - Fosters patriotism, solidarity, cooperation

### 23 Ethnocentrism

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- Ethnocentric attributional bias
  - Negative action of others seen as representative
  - Positive action of others seen as incidental
- Can negatively influence intercultural communication
  - Communicative distance
    - Indifference: talking loudly or slowly to non-native
      - Also in expressions such as "jew them down"
    - Avoidance: use of slang exclusive to in-group
    - Disparagement: open contempt ("chink", "nigger")

## 25 Communicative distance of indifference

## 26 Ethnocentrism in practice

- Communicative distance
  - Indifference
    - talks loudly and enunciates words clearly "Do you understand the words that are coming out of my mouth?"
    - doesn't try very hard to see if he is being understood
    - calls Jackie Chan "Mr. Riceroni"
  - Avoidance
    - use of slang that he assumes won't be understood

# 27 Ethnocentrism in the Workplace

- · Work place issues
  - Job interviews
  - Manager-subordinate communication
  - Consequences in a diverse society?

## 28 Relationship of Ethnocentrism & Racism

- · Racism: biologically based superiority
- Unlikely to be racist and not ethnocentric
- · Possible to be ethnocentric and not racist
- Ethnocentrism is considered innate.
- · Racism is considered learned.
- Frustration-aggression hypothesis
  - Racism especially seen in difficult economic times
  - Out-groups as scapegoats