

## LE BOTTEGHE DELL'INSEGNARE

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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### HANDOUT 3 - CULTURE

1. Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society  
**(Edward B. Taylor, 1871)**
2. Culture may be defined as the totality of the mental and physical reactions and activities that characterize the behavior of individuals composing a social group collectively and individually in relations to their natural environment, to other groups, to members of the group itself and of each individual to himself. It also includes the products of these activities and their role in the life of the groups. The mere enumerations of these various aspects of life, however, does not constitute culture. It is more, for its elements are not independent, they have a structure  
**(Franz Boas, 1911)**
3. Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action  
**Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952)**
4. What really binds men together is their culture, -- the ideas and the standards they have in common  
**Ruth Benedict (1934)**
5. Most social scientists today view culture as consisting primarily of the symbolic, ideational, and intangible aspects of human societies. The essence of a culture is not its artifacts, tools, or other tangible cultural elements but how the members of the group interpret, use, and perceive them. It is the values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized societies; it is not material objects and

other tangible aspects of human societies. People within a culture usually interpret the meaning of symbols, artifacts, and behaviors in the same or in similar ways

**Banks, J.A., Banks, & McGee, (1989)**

6. Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another

**Hofstede, G. (1984)**

7. ... a part of the distinctive means by which a local population maintains itself in an ecosystem and by which a regional population maintains and coordinates its groups and distributes them over the available land

**Rappaport (1968)**

8. " Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action

**Kroeber, A.L., & Kluckhohn, C. (1952)**

9. Culture...consists in those patterns relative to behavior and the products of human action which may be inherited, that is, passed on from generation to generation independently of the biological genes

**Parson, T. (1949)**

10. Culture is all the dreams and labour tending towards forging humanity. Culture requests a paradoxical pact: diversity must be the principle of unity, taking stock of differences is necessary not to divide, but to enrich culture even more. Europe is a culture or it is not

**(Denis de Rougemont)**

11. Broadly, social heritage of a group (organized community or society). It is a pattern of responses discovered, developed, or invented during the group's history of handling problems which arise from interactions among its members, and between them and their environment. These responses are considered the correct way to perceive, feel, think, and act, and are passed on to the new members through immersion and teaching. Culture determines what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, workable or unworkable. It encompasses all learned and shared, explicit or tacit, assumptions, beliefs, knowledge, norms, and values, as well

as attitudes, behavior, dress, and language

**(<http://www.businessdictionary.com>)**

12. culture: in CLIL also citizenship and community. Learners ... are encouraged to think of themselves as part of a larger group in society and to respect how others live and learn. Responsibility to self, others and the environment is developed

**(From The CLIL glossary for TKT, University of Cambridge ESOL Examination)**

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