



# Culture

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# Clashes

**Lorenzo Mule' Stagno**



# The Earth's Population in 2015

**7 324 782 000**



**How many are you?**



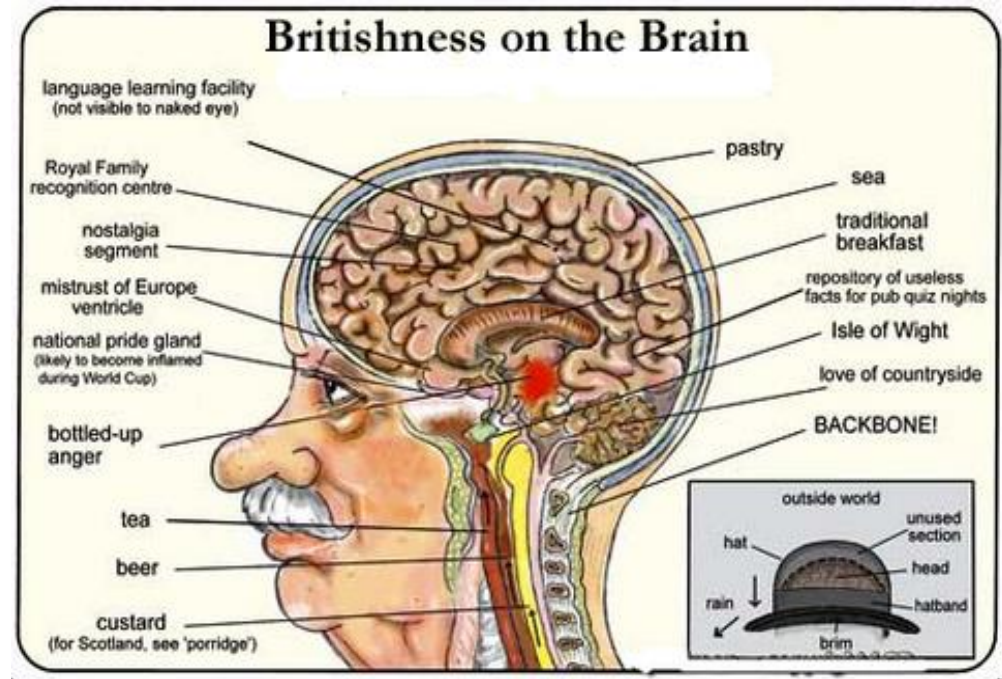
# ICEF DUBAI 2014



# Elements of culture

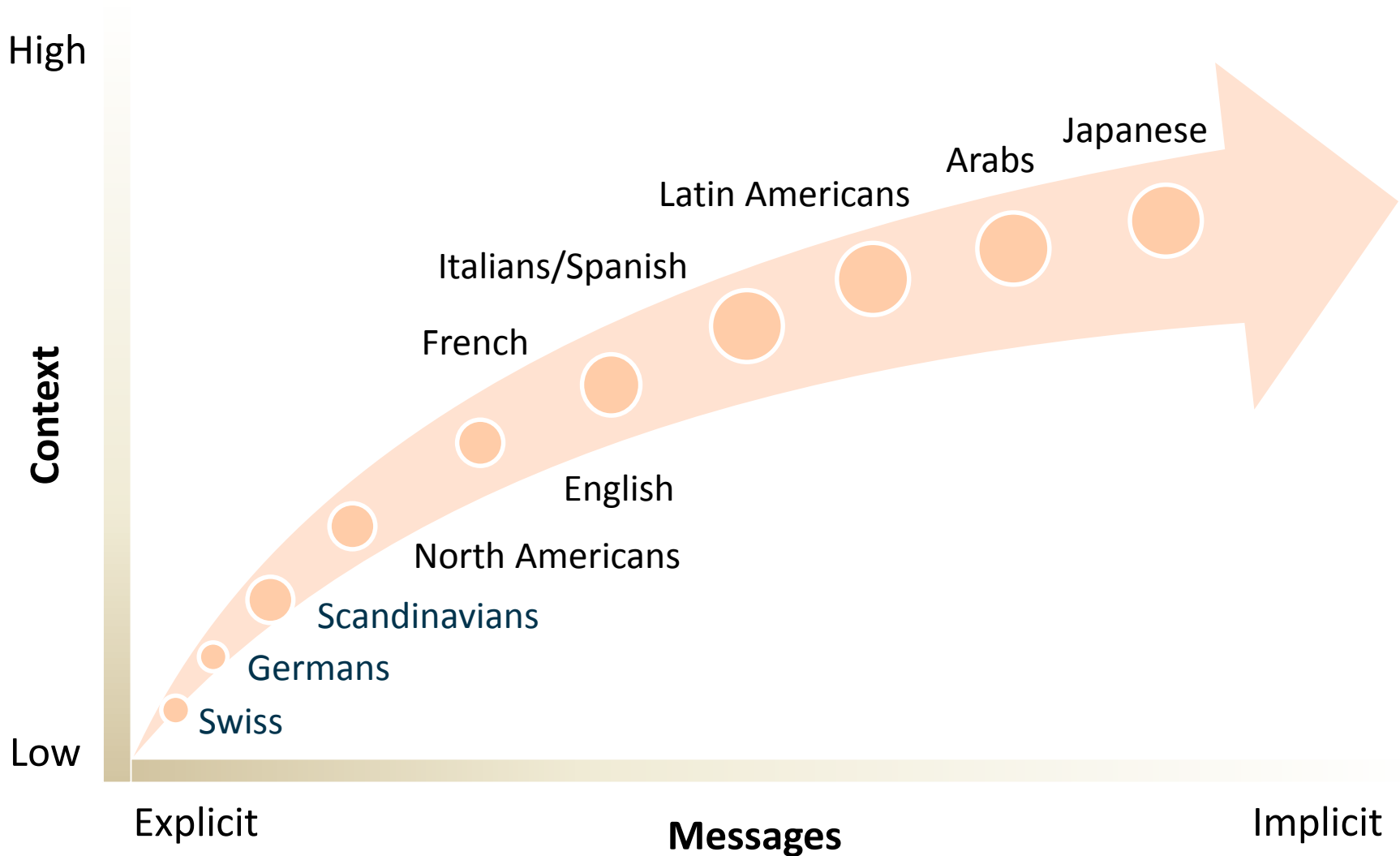
- Language
- Religion
- Values and attitudes
- Customs and manners
- Behaviour

**The way we  
do things**





## The contextual continuum of differing cultures (Hall/Usunier)





## **Translations Gone Wrong**

### **Nothing sucks like an Electrolux**

Scandinavia (vacuum cleaner)

### **Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave**

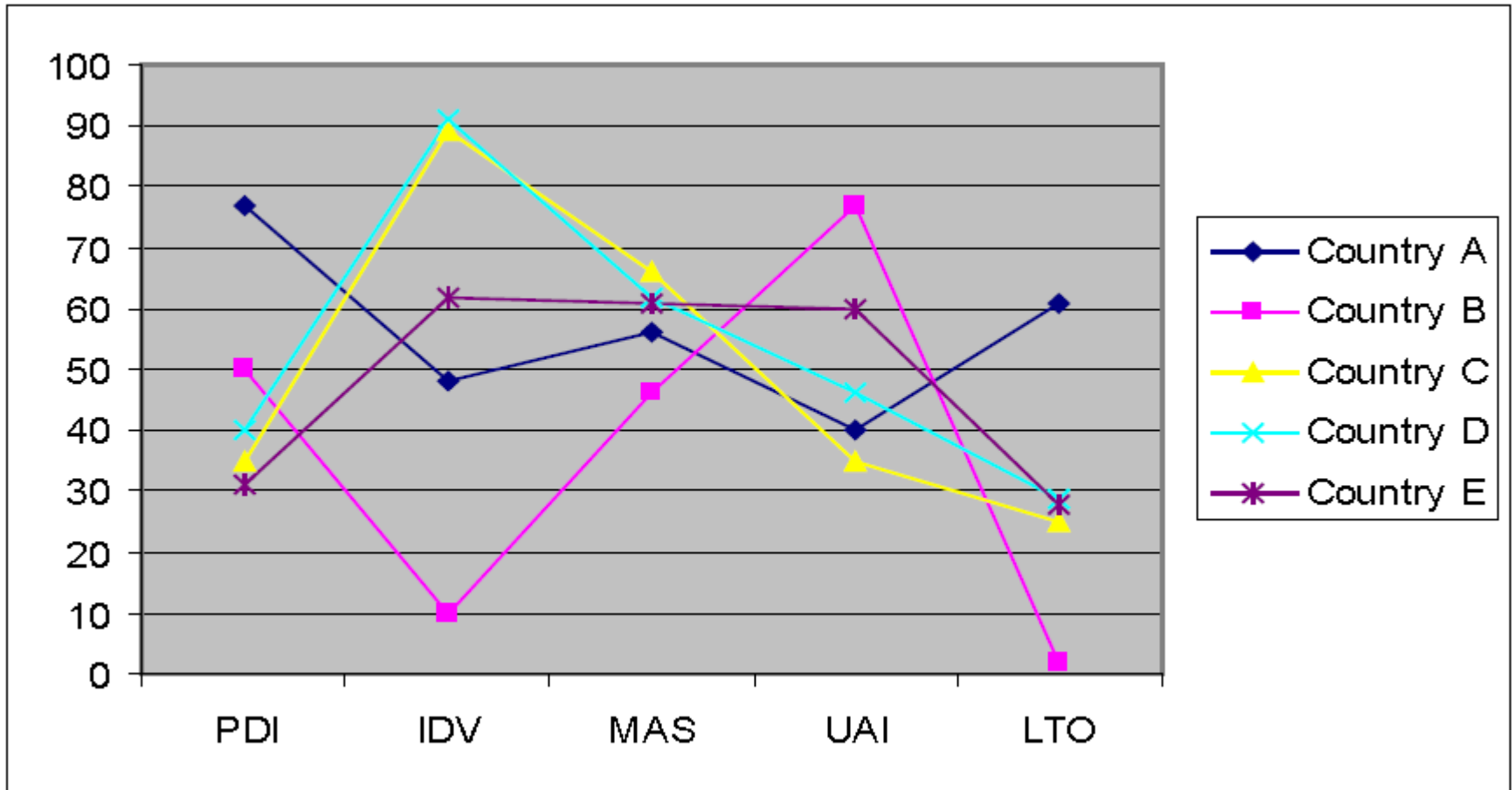
China (Come alive with the Pepsi Generation)

### **Parker pens - It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant**

Mexico (Embarrass has no relation to the Spanish verb embarazar)



# Can you match the countries to the scores?



UK, USA, PAKISTAN, INDIA, GERMANY



# Hofstede's 5 dimensions of national culture

## ■ Power Distance Index (PDI)

- The extent to which the *less powerful* members of organisations and institutions accept and expect that power is distributed unequally

## ■ Individualism (IDV) (*versus Collectivism*)

- The degree to which individuals are integrated into groups: individualistic societies have loose ties between individuals while collectivist societies have cohesive in-groups

## ■ Masculinity (MAS) (*versus Femininity*)

- Assertiveness and competitiveness versus modesty and caring: in masculine societies women are somewhat assertive and competitive, like the men, and in feminine societies men have more caring and modest roles, like the women

## ■ Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

- The intolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity and the degree of comfort felt in unstructured situations with fewer rules

## ■ Long-term Orientation (LTO) (*versus Short-term*)

- Thrift and perseverance (future focus) versus respect for traditions (present focus)





## Dealing with Arabic Countries

- 22 countries – religiously and culturally diverse
- Punctuality – appointments are just guidelines
- Hierarchy and Bureaucracy – not through rules and regulations but through people
- Personal relationships (but not too personal)
- Family (extended) is a priority (Paternalistic)
- Religion
- Honour – Shame avoidance



## Dealing with Arabic Countries

- Title plus first name
- Rules are just guidelines
- Everything is negotiable - taking advantage is being smart
- Oral vs Written communication
- The right hand
- Black, red, white, green, blue
- The number 7
  
- Insha'Allah



## Dealing with Germanic Countries

- Pride
- Punctuality
- Qualifications
- Bluntness
- Last-minute cancellations of meetings
- Preparation and detail
- Contracts and rules
- Meetings need to be scheduled well in advance



## Dealing with Germanic Countries

- Use titles plus surnames unless told otherwise
- Keep work separate from personal issues – do not call at home unless it is a genuine emergency
- Shake hands before and after a meeting
- Protocol – acknowledge the rankings
- Do not discuss salaries
- Care for the environment
  
- Vertrauen ist gut, Kontrolle ist besser



## Tips for Managing Cultural Diversity in International Business

### ■ Awareness

- Recognize diversity
- Research cultures (including language) or get an expert you can trust
- Learn about and check body language

### ■ Acceptance

- Keep an open mind

### ■ Adaptation

- Willingness

### ■ Adjustment

- How + practice



## Some More Tips

- Remember your objectives
- Remember that stereotyping is only an initial guideline to use with caution
- Never assume comprehension – check multiple times from different angles
- Everyone is a foreigner almost everywhere in the world



**Thank You**

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