

UNIT 11

Culture Shock

This Unit explores the topic of culture shock. This is an important topic for Korean students, since foreigners often find Korean culture exotic and very strong in its traditions and customs. This can be seen in the food (which is much spicier than in neighboring countries), the clothes, the customs, the scenery and even the way of thinking of Korean people. It is also interesting that contemporary Korean culture is changing every day and is largely unpredictable. This is itself can be cause for culture shock.

An important aspect of EFL study is being able to explain one's culture to foreigners. Students should also be aware of differences between their own culture and that of countries that use the target language. Such awareness will encourage understanding and tolerance.

It is hoped that this Unit will encourage Korean students to find out more about their culture, ancient and modern, and the ideas behind it.

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Brainstorming (individuals)

- Students set the learning schema by thinking about their culture. They probably do not realize how distinctive Korean culture is, so it will be good to take a few moments to think about it. It is important for Korean students to be able to explain their culture in English.

Culture Board Game (groups)

- Students play this board game according to the rules at the bottom of the page.

This is not only setting the learning schema. It is also a consciousness-raising activity, getting students to think about various aspects of their culture.

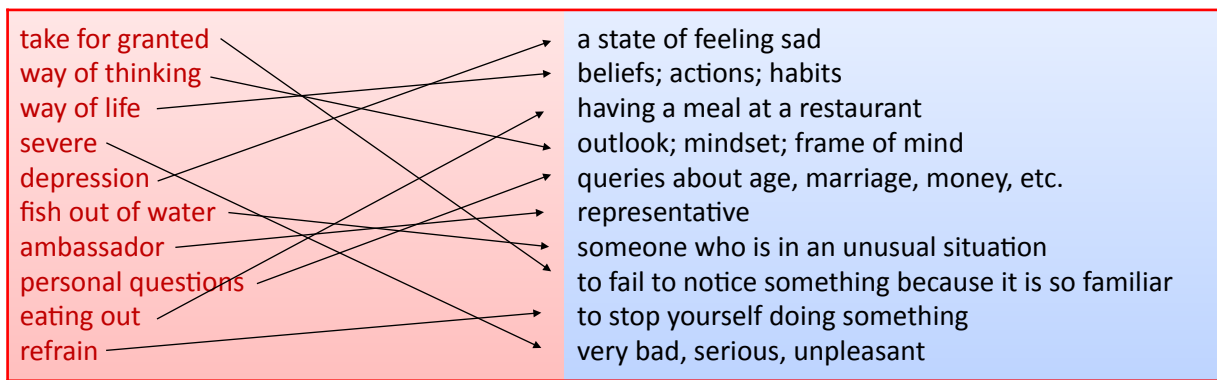
If students would like to make their own rules, they should be allowed to do so. They are typically very good at making interesting rules. When they have finished, they can be asked to explain their rules to another group - in English!

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Getting to Know You (groups)

- Students talk about the title.
- Teacher: Play the audio CD (Track 53) and ask students to read the passage silently while they listen.
- Ask students to read the passage again together and discuss any vocabulary or idioms they don't know.
- While they read, students should [match the words and phrases](#) at the bottom of the page.

Further Reading: The note at the bottom of the page reminds students about the extra reading passages and other resources on the online site.



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Comprehension Check (pairs or groups)

- Students answer the questions to confirm their comprehension of the reading passage.
- Students should by now be able to check their answers with each other.

Suggested answers:

1. We take many things for granted in our day-to-day lives, including our culture.
2. Culture consists of the beliefs, customs, arts and way of thinking of people in a society.
3. We experience culture shock when we go abroad.
4. It is not OK in Korea to start eating before elderly people.
5. Visitors should be on their best behavior because they are ambassadors for their countries.
6. If people ask personal questions, newcomers to Korea should try to understand.
7. Koreans do not hold the rice bowl when eating.
8. Other words for 'foreigners' in the passage are 'newcomers' and 'visitors.'

Think for Yourself

Students think about the cultural hints given on page 90.

Suggested answers:

- Visitors shouldn't write their names in red because this color symbolizes death.
- They should give and receive things with two hands because that is an old tradition in Korea.
- They shouldn't fold their arms in front of older people because this is disrespectful.
- There are many more cultural hints. for example ...

Background Information

This information here is about customs in various countries. Students might like to find out more about this topic by doing their own research.

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Discussion (groups)

- Students read the **Conversation Strategies** at the bottom of the page.
- Then they read and do the instructions.
- Students discuss the questions, using the Conversation Strategies: 'Stating a common idea' and 'Giving a different idea'.
- It can be helpful to ask students to use one conversation strategy phrase every time they speak.

Suggested answers:

1. I take lots of things for granted every day. For example, I take the Korean language for granted, Korean food, Korean ideas, Korean customs like bowing, my Korean family - everything. I don't think about them at all.
2. - Yes, I experienced culture shock when I studied in the USA for a year. I found that the environment, the ideas, the customs, even the food were very different. On top of that, the university life and the way of studying in university were very different. I had a difficult time until I got used to it all.
- No, I have never experienced culture shock, though I have heard about it from friends who studied abroad. It's easy to visit a culture for a short time, but when you live in it it can be very different. You have to get used to different ways of doing things and different ways of thinking, as well as a different language.
3. - Many people say that Korean culture is too difficult to adapt to. In reality, this isn't true. It has been a traditional culture for a long time and those traditional customs have become well fixed. It is a culture of family values and respect for old people.
- Because it is a 'group' culture, westerners often have a hard time trying to understand it. When Koreans ask them for personal information, so that they can work out how to address them properly, westerners get angry and say 'It's none of your business.' This is their 'single' culture speaking. However, once they get used to it, Korean culture makes sense. It is special because it is authentic. It is real. It has not been mixed with other cultures. Though this is changing these days.
4. Korean culture is different from American or European culture because it focuses on the group rather than the individual. It also gives importance to respect for old people. In the west, old people tend to be ignored. The west is a meritocracy. Korean traditional culture focuses on hierarchy. Even the Korean language is hierarchical.
5. You must have heard that Korean people suffer culture shock when they go abroad. For a start, it is very difficult to find Korean food in other countries, so Koreans often take it with them when they travel. Second, Not many people speak Korean outside Korea, so travelers have to find a way of communicating. Then there are cultural things like wearing shoes inside the house and calling people by their first names even if they are older than you. When Koreans go abroad, they have to forget about the things they take for granted and adjust to different values and customs.
6. Yes, I have some tips for visitors to Korea. First of all, just remember that Korea has a long tradition and a special culture. If you don't understand something, don't get angry. Don't say it is silly. Ask your Korean friend to explain. Keep an open mind and you will have a great time in Korea. You will discover all sorts of wonderful things.
7. Many people think that Korean culture is disappearing. After all, when we watch TV in Korea, we see *K-Pop* and *Hallyu*, with young people dancing and singing in outfits that would deeply shock their ancestors. At first it seems that Korea is taking on American ideas, values and lifestyles. Many young people don't know about traditional Korean ideas and customs. However, the culture has been going for more than 4,000 years and I feel that it will continue. I think it will take in western ideas but remain specially Korean.

8. It looks as if globalization is making every culture the same. After all, everyone around the world can now be in contact through the Internet, and everyone can learn about every culture in the world. Because of this, cultures are mixing together. Old customs are being preserved, of course, but they live mostly in museums. It looks as if the world is becoming one big melting pot.
9. In my opinion, the best way to get over Culture Shock is to immerse yourself in the culture. Don't run away from it or talk only to people from your own country. It is always difficult at first. However, if you persevere, the new culture becomes more natural. If you have a friend in the new culture, you can ask questions and gradually adjust. Above all, keep an open mind.

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Dialogue (pairs)

- Students read the instructions.
- They read the dialogue together, checking the vocabulary in the [Key Words and Expressions](#) box.
- The teacher plays Track 54 (CD-Rom).
- Students read the dialog again, changing roles.
- Finally, they answer the questions in the [Dialogue Quiz](#).

Suggested answers:

1. Seung-min is drawing a picture of American Indians in front of their tents (wigwams).
2. Seung-min has to be multi-cultural because it's not easy being from another country.
3. Seung-min does not say that he wants to go back to Korea. In fact he says he likes living in the USA.
4. Seung-min is not suffering from culture shock. He got over it long ago.
5. Mr. Brown's advice to Seung-min is to give it time.
6. Seung-min means that he feels like an alien from another planet. He feels out of place.

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Let's Make a Role-play! (three people)

- Students choose one of 3 role-card situations for their role-play.
- The situations that they are planing a two-week vacation. Each person has different preferences for what they should do. Therefore students will practice negotiating, suggesting, agreeing and disagreeing when they make the role-play on the following page.
- The three friends are each looking for a different cultural experience. This is noted in the instructions on the following page, where they will write their ideas and make a script. They might think about the sort of cultural shocks they might experience in their chosen places.

The phrases on the role-cards can give students ideas for what they will say in their role-play. This will be useful for students who need such scaffolding. However, if they are more proficient, they might like to be more creative and inventive. This page offers a foundation for those who need it.

Students are in groups of 3 in this role-play. However, they can add more characters if they wish and make this a group role-play. For example, they could add an extra friend, or a travel agent. Students are typically very creative with their role-plays.

Students can also be encouraged to make a video of their role-plays and upload them to YouTube. If the teacher makes a 'private' site, then only class members can view the videos.

Making videos is a great way of making the role-play more interesting and meaningful. Students also pay more attention to the grammatical content of the role-play when they know it is going online.

Sample role-play:

(In a coffee shop)

Friend 1: Hi everyone. What are you drinking?

Friend 2: I'll have a latte, please.

Friend 3: An espresso for me.

(Friend 1 exits to buy the coffees.)

Friend 2: Do you have any ideas for the vacation?

Friend 3: Yes, I've been looking at travel brochures all night.

Friend 2: What have you found?

Friend 3: Lots of great places.

(Friend 1 returns with the coffees.)

Friend 1: Here we are. Latte for you, espresso for you and flat white for me.

Friends 2 and 3: Great. Thanks.

Friend 1: Do you want to hear my ideas first?

Friend 2: Yes. Spill the beans.

Friend 1: I want to visit Europe. I want to take in Rome, Florence, Paris, London and Prague.

Friend 2: Well as for me, I want to have an adventure holiday.

Friend 3: I can't agree. I want a relaxing holiday.

Friend 1: Don't you want to visit famous art galleries and museums?

Friend 2: Everyone does that. I want to see the animals in a game park in Africa.

Friend 3: That's too energetic. Let's take it easy and lie on a beautiful white beach.

Friend 1: I want to see the Mona Lisa and the Eiffel Tower. I want to meet Europeans.

Friend 2: That's boring. How about seeing the Mayan Ruins at Cancun, in Mexico?

Friend 1: But Europe would be the experience of a lifetime!

Friend 3: Isn't there a beach at Cancun?

Friend 2: Yes, it's fantastic.

Friend 3: So we could visit the Mayan ruins, lie on the beach and go snorkeling.

Friend 2: I suppose so.

Friend 3: Europe will still be there next year. Why don't we go to Mexico?

Friend 1: OK. I can see that I'm outvoted.

Friend 2: Maybe there will be some famous places in Mexico.

Friend 1: You're right. I've heard that Mexican art is special.

Friend 3: So is Mexican food!

Friend 2: Do you think we'll experience culture shock?

Friend 1: That's a point. Let's check it out with the travel agent.

Friend 3: Mexico, here we come!

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Role-play Script (three people)

- Students make a script for their role-play.
- They perform the role-play.
- Then they perform it to another group.

Students have had lots of sample dialogues and role-plays by now and in this Unit they are encouraged to start making their own scripts, using the role-cards on page 94.

Students might like to think of possible culture shock as well. The teacher could ask how the cultures of the places they want to visit are different. This could be an interesting part of the role-play.

This is the first time that a whole page has been given over to writing a script. However, this is a good opportunity. The teacher can monitor students to see if they need help. They might want to do some brainstorming first.

This is a good chance to introduce grammar to those who need it. Typically, students will ask how to put something in writing: 'How can we say?' At this point, the teacher can give the appropriate information to the appropriate students at the appropriate time.

The vertical line on the left of the page is to help students in terms of organization. They should realize that each character starts on a new (horizontal) line, and that the name of the character is written to the left of the vertical line. If their speech takes more than one line, then it continues to the right of the vertical line.

Students might like to make a video of their performances, since they have put some effort into the script. These videos can be uploaded onto the Internet, using a protected site, so that only the students can see the videos.

Page 96

Brain Teasers (pairs)

- Students look at some simple logic problems and discuss the solutions.

This would be good in pairs or small groups. Students can use language such as 'What do you think?' 'How about if ...?' 'Maybe ...' 'Perhaps ...' 'Let's look at the answer.'

These are easy puzzles (though Puzzle 5 can be confusing), but solving them in a second language (English) is a good opportunity to practice various language functions.

These puzzles give students a chance to try out problem-solving in English. They are also very good for comprehension. Students have to understand every word in order to understand the problem and then the solution.

When students solve the puzzles or understand the solutions in the back of the book, they will have an enjoyable 'aha moment'. However, even if they are confused or don't understand the answers, this is still a valuable opportunity. The teacher does not need to focus on comprehension of the solution, but can encourage use of appropriate phrases: 'I don't get it.' 'I don't understand.' 'Really?' 'That doesn't make sense.' 'Is that true?'