



# LIVING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC MIGHT BE DIFFERENT

Introductory Ideas & Tools to Help Understand Differences Around Us

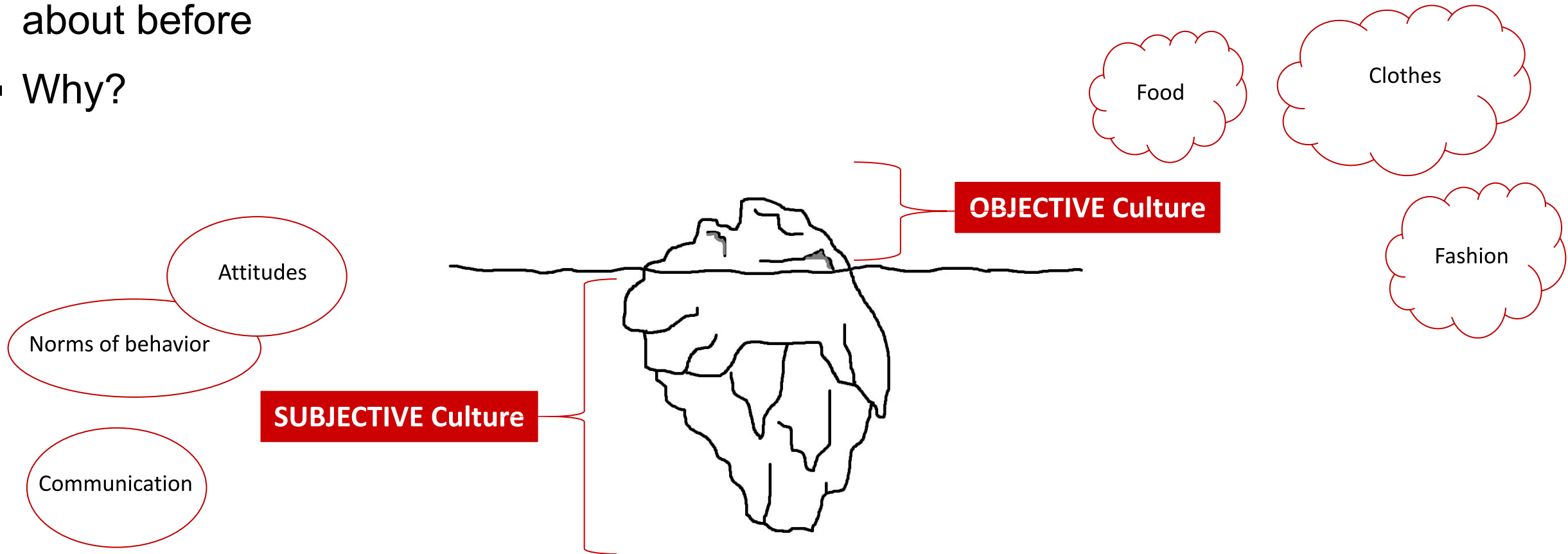


FACULTY  
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
Charles University

- Iceberg Metaphor for Culture
- Mindfulness
- High vs. Low-Context Culture
- Double-mindfulness
- Intercultural Communication
- Cultural Shock

# ICEBERG METAPHOR FOR CULTURE

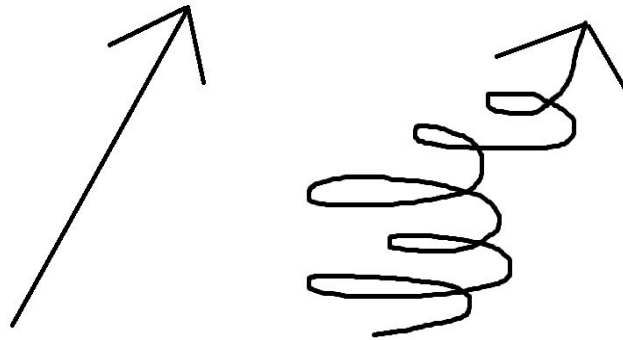
- You will experience many changes from the very beginning
- Your mind will be overwhelmed by other differences that you have not thought about before
- Why?



# CAN WE UNDERSTAND A DIFFERENT CULTURE?

- What is your goal? Why did you decide to study in Prague?
- “*We want to immerse ourselves in a different culture.*” Can we really do it?

## 1) Expectations vs. Reality



# CAN WE UNDERSTAND A DIFFERENT CULTURE?

## 2) To be MINDFUL, curious & ask questions



D.I.E.  
Describe  
Interpret  
Evaluate

*“Mindfulness” is awareness of your own thought processes, perspectives, emotional reactions, and behavior*



# SUBJECTIVE CULTURE

- *“Culture as the pattern of beliefs, behaviors, and values maintained by groups of interacting people”*
- Culture is everywhere. Anywhere you find values or assumptions, you find culture.
- ***“What is normal is a matter of values”*** – Geert Hofstede
  - ideas about what is right or wrong/fair or unfair/important or unimportant/good or bad/normal or abnormal

## Anotace

The seminar focuses on acquiring and developing intercultural communication competences. By improving our cultural sensitivity we will develop an attitude that sees diversity as an opportunity rather than a danger. We try to analyze and understand our cultural and communicative specific behavior, search for and explain cultural differences.

In the second part students become acquainted with Geert Hofstede's concept of "Cultural dimensions". Students present central aspects of this concept in form of group-presentations (powerpoint). The presentations serve as a basis for further discussion in class.

In the third part of the seminar we develop a more conscious communicative behavior by means of discussing "case studies", teamwork and role-playings. It will be asked, what we should change in our "normal" communicative behavior in order to succeed in intercultural communication situations.

## Syllabus

### 1. Introduction

Developing communicative competences - what does it mean - what is it about?  
- Awareness of cultural differences  
- The concept of "Culture as mental programming" (G. Hofstede)

### 2. "Cultural Values Map of Europe" - Video

Presentation of one's own country and culture

### 3. National cultural values in comparison Video presentations

4. Developing cultural and communicative sensitivity:  
The concept of "Cultural Standards" (A. Thomas)  
Exercise: Moonies and Sunnies

5. Culturally determined behavior in different situations:  
Alexander Thomas' "Cultural Standards"  
Hofstede's Five Basic Problems of Society

6. Hofstede's cultural dimensions: I Presentations in plenary

7. Hofstede's cultural dimensions: II Presentations in plenary

### 8. Midterm test

Awareness exercises I  
Case studies: Analysis and Discussion

9. Developing communicative competences

Role-Playing

10. Developing communicative competences

Awareness exercises II  
Case studies: Analysis and Discussion

11. Developing communicative competences  
Discussions in multi-national teams

12. Debriefing  
Repetition



# HIGH VS. LOW-CONTEXT CULTURE

High Context	Low Context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indirect</li><li>• People expect to infer meaning from nonverbal cues and layers of implied meaning</li><li>• The listener figures out the point</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Efficient, direct communication style</li><li>• People tend to ask questions</li><li>• Facts are more important than feelings</li></ul>
<i>Sometimes seems “pointless”, “confusing” to people with a low-context view.</i>	Sometimes seems “aggressive”, “simplistic” to people with a high-context view

HIGH Context

LOW Context



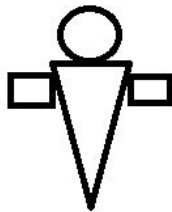
# DOUBLE-MINDFULNESS

## What is **Double-mindfulness**? And why is it important?

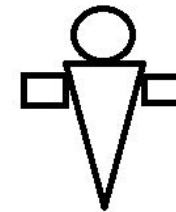
Double-mindfulness is being aware of two perspectives at one:

- 1) Your perspective
- 2) The perspective of the person you are engaging with

'All Czechs are racists!'



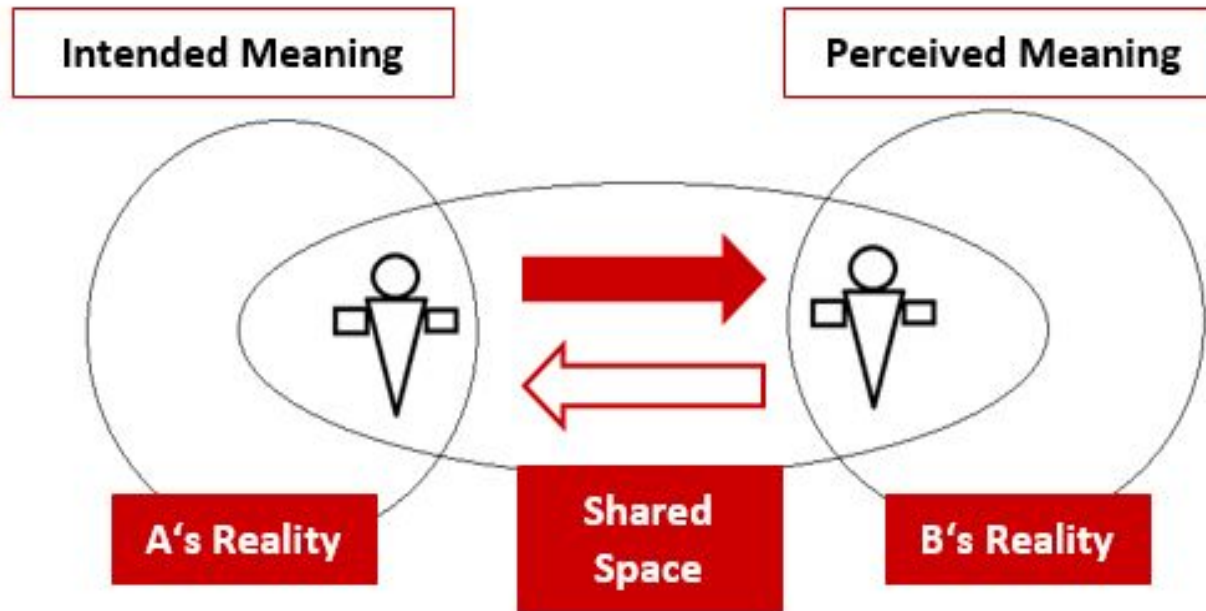
'Why? This is the devil (CZ Čert). It is a fairytale figure!'



# INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

## Intercultural communication

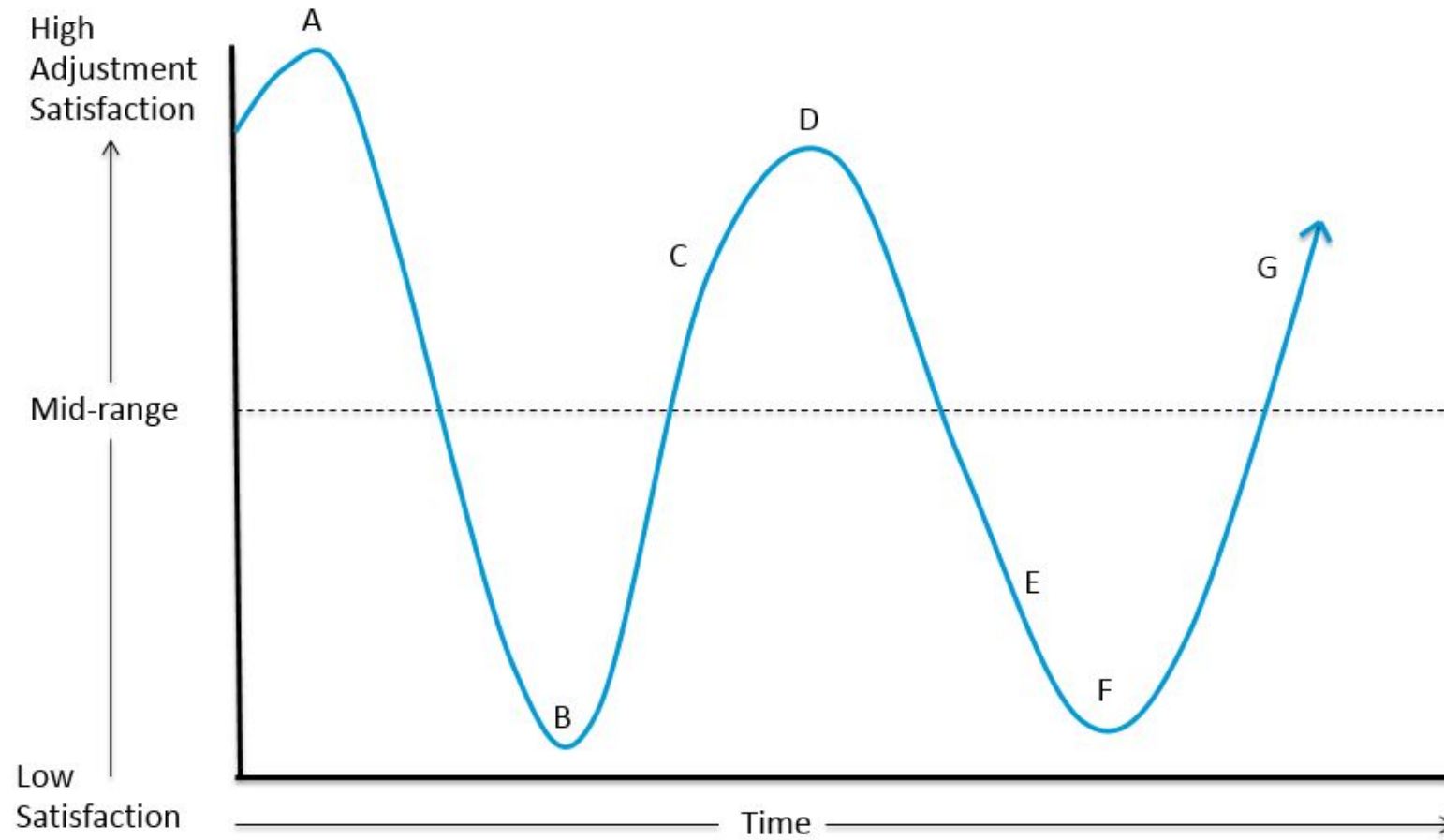
- From different cultures = Assumptions may differ
- Difference-based





# CULTURE SHOCK

Revised W-Shape Adjustment Model



A: Honeymoon Stage  
B: Hostility Stage  
C: Humorous Stage

D: In-sync Stage  
E: Ambivalence Stage

F: Re-entry Culture Shock Stage  
G: Resocialization Stage



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

If you have any questions, please, do not hesitate to contact **the [International Office](#)** of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

