

# TEACHING AND LEARNING ACROSS CULTURES

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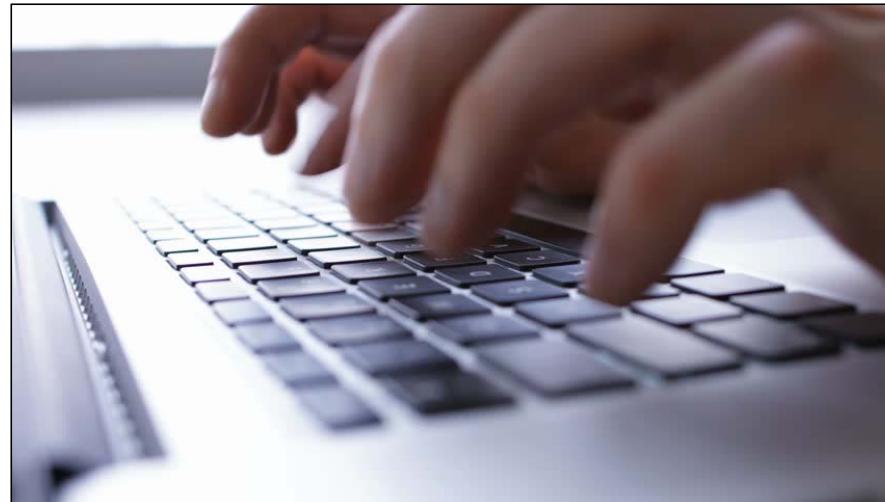
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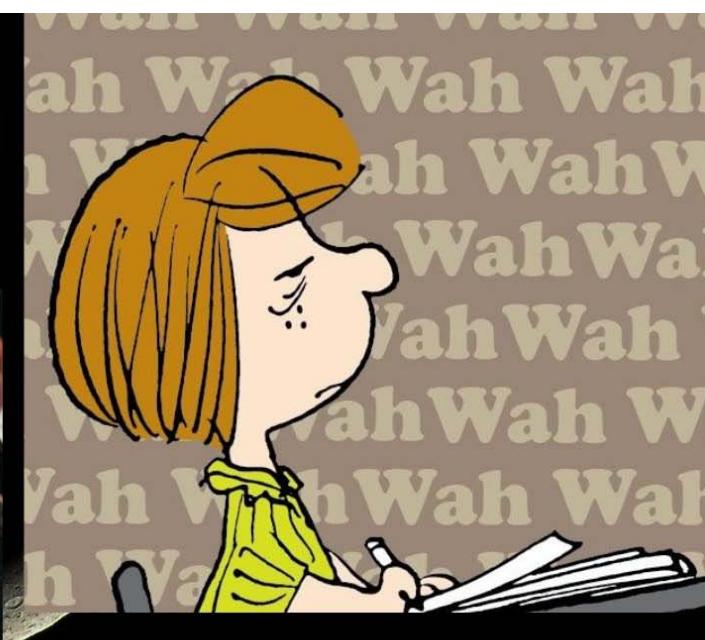
## Getting Started...

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Write in the chat box one question you would like addressed in this webinar.



# WAKEUP CALLS



# WHAT MY STUDENTS THINK MY CLASS IS LIKE...

# WAKEUP CALLS

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- **Conflicting Perceptions**

David Livermore: “AmeriCAN or AmeriCAN’T: a Critical Analysis of Western Training to the World?” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (Oct 2004):458-466

### American Pastors' Perceptions of Their Teaching

“They’re so hungry for the training we offer.”

“They listened so intently. They just hung on every word.”

### National Partners Perceptions of the American Pastors' Teaching

“You conclude that you’re communicating effectively because we’re paying attention when we’re actually just intrigued by watching your foreign behavior.”

“It was a nice day but I don’t think what they taught would ever work here. But if it makes them feel like they can help us in ways beyond supporting our ministry financially, we’re willing to listen to their ideas.”

<b>American Pastors' Perceptions of Their Teaching</b>	<b>National Partners Perceptions of the American Pastors' Teaching</b>
<p>“Teach biblical principles. Those are always the same.”</p>	<p>“You describe a different Jesus than the one we know.”</p>
<p>“Just teach the principles” without illustrations since they know that cultures differ.</p>	<p>Without illustrations the national pastors complained they were given purely abstract information with no help in implementation.</p>

**American Pastors' Perceptions of Their Teaching**

“We have so much. they have so little”

**National Partners Perceptions of the American Pastors' Teaching**

“You call us backward...You underestimate the effectiveness of our local church leaders.”

# WAKEUP CALLS

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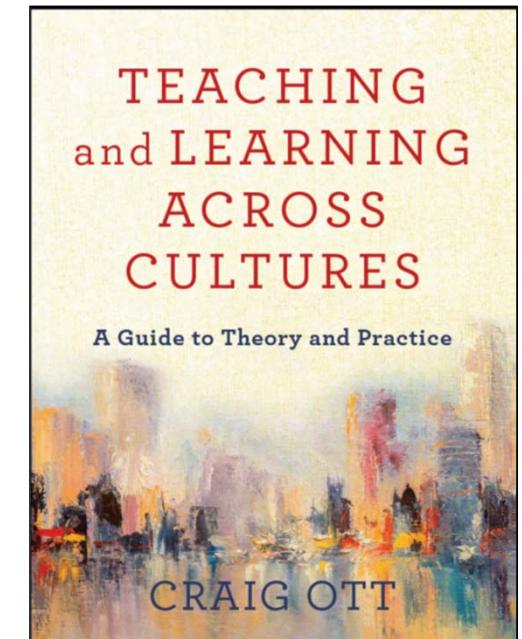
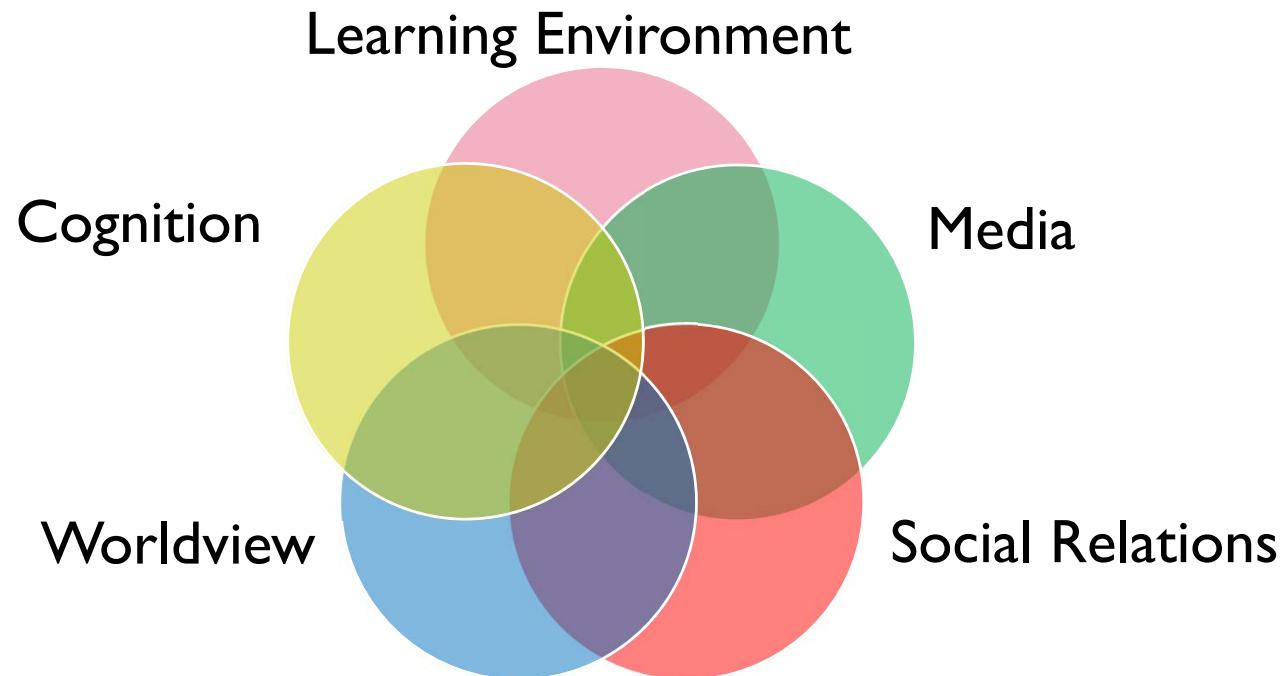
- Conflicting Perceptions
- Evolving Perceptions

Mingsheng Li, Expatriate English teachers in China

Chinese student views of expatriate teachers	Year 1	Year 4
I prefer Chinese teachers' teaching.	30.8%	79.1%
Expatriate teachers' teaching is disappointing.	1.9	56.4
I can learn more in Chinese teachers' classes than in expatriate teachers' classes.	48.1	91.9
Chinese teachers adopt better teaching techniques than expatriate teachers.	3.2	44.3

# DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE'S INFLUENCE ON LEARNING

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## DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE'S INFLUENCE ON LEARNING

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Our ability to adapt to these cultural factors affects...

- Learner motivation
- Teacher satisfaction
- Learning effectiveness
- Learning transfer

## DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE'S INFLUENCE ON LEARNING

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*Caveat:* Adapting teaching to the learners' culture doesn't mean that we conform our teaching to all learner expectations.

But it does mean

...we do not dismiss learner expectations without first understanding them,

...unfamiliar methods should be introduced thoughtfully, intentionally, and in a way that doesn't leave learners behind.

**“Culture affects not only what people think, but also how they think.”**



# HOW COGNITION INFLUENCES LEARNING

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- Cognitive Style
  - *The way people perceive, process, and structure information*
  - *Logical processes and argumentation*
  - *Language and systems of categorization*
  - *To be distinguished from cognitive abilities, cognitive strategies*

# HOW COGNITION INFLUENCES LEARNING

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- Types of Cognitive Style
  - Concrete vs. abstract thinking (high/low context)
  - Oral vs. literate orientation
  - Holistic vs. analytic thinking



These are not static, unchangeable categories. People can develop and expand their cognitive style!

# TEACHING CONCRETE LEARNERS

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- Begin with the concrete, then move to the abstract
- Story telling, the salvation-historical approach
- Allegory, parable, metaphor, analogy
- Drama and symbolic actions
- Case study and practical example
- Use of pictures, photos, videos

# TEACHING CONCRETE LEARNERS

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## The Church Planting Process

Prepare

Launch

Establish

Structure

Multiply

Targeting &  
commissioning

Understanding  
& strategizing

Evangelizing  
& discipling

Congregating  
& maturing

Expanding &  
empowering

Strengthening  
& sending

# TEACHING CONCRETE LEARNERS

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## The Church Planting Process



# TEACHING CONCRETE LEARNERS

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## Teaching on the Attributes of God

Abstract	Concrete
<p><b>God is omniscient. “He comprehends all things-- past, present, and future, things actual and possible. God has universal and complete knowledge”</b></p> <p>I Sam 2:3 “for the LORD is a God who knows,”</p> <p>I Chr 28:9 “the LORD searches every heart and understands every desire and every thought.”</p> <p>Isa 46:10 “I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come”</p>	<p><b>Nathan &amp; David:</b> I Sam 12 “You are the man!” (v.7)</p> <p><b>Daniel &amp; Nebuchadnezzar:</b> Dan 2:28 “but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come.”</p> <p><b>Jesus &amp; the Scribes:</b> Mat 9:4 “But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, ‘Why do you think evil in your hearts?’”</p> <p><b>Jesus &amp; the Samaritan Woman:</b> Joh 4:18 “you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband”</p>

# TEACHING CONCRETE LEARNERS

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## **Limitations of concrete teaching methods**

- Extraneous detail may distract from the relevant content and inhibit recall
- Familiarity with material may be detrimental to generalization
- Learning transfer from the concrete example to a new situation may be difficult
- Learning transfer occurs best with a combination of concrete and abstract teaching

Day, Motz, and Goldstone. 2015. "The Cognitive Costs of Context"

## THE SOCIAL DIMENSION

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Cultural influences on the social dynamics of teaching and learning:

- Social hierarchy and authority
- Collectivism and individualism
- Shame and honor



These are not either/or, black/white categories.  
Avoid stereotyping and pigeonholing!

## THE SOCIAL DIMENSION

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A common challenge of formal teaching in high power distance, more collectivistic cultures:



*How can I get students to participate in class discussion?*

## Reasons why learners do not participate in class discussion

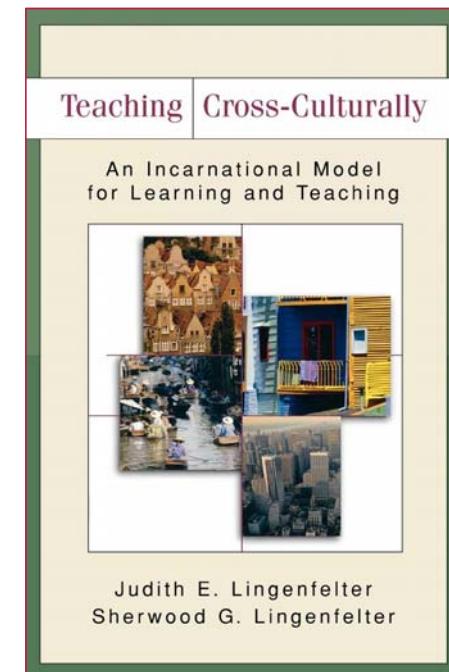
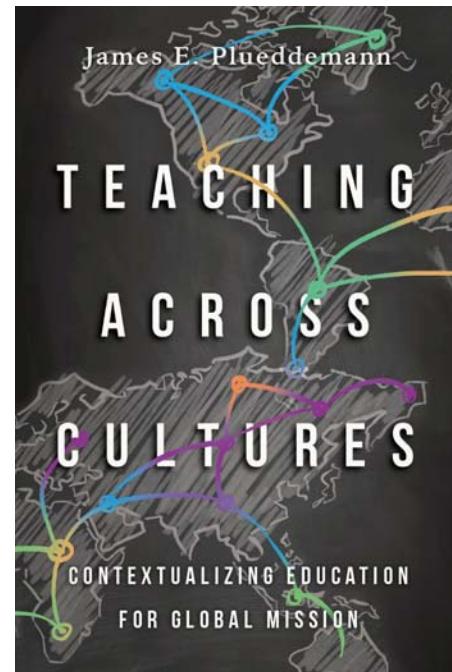
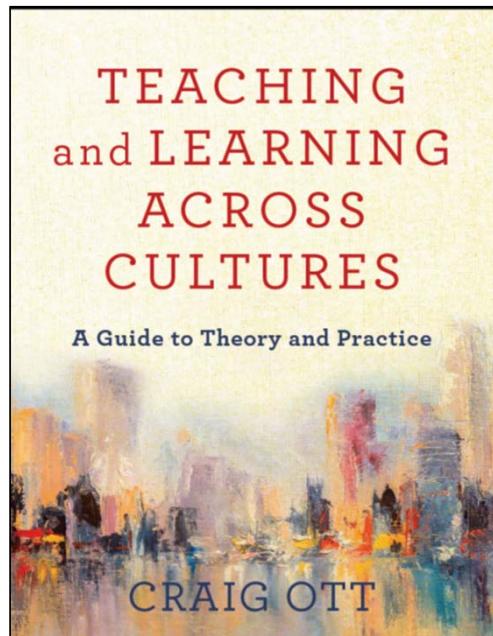
### Fundamental Convictions:

- The role of the teacher is to transfer knowledge
- The role of the learner is to receive and master that knowledge
- Knowledge claims of a teacher should not be questioned
- It is presumptuous for a student to think that they could discover knowledge for themselves
- The role of the teacher is to facilitate learning (not spoon feed).
- The role of the learner is to actively process and evaluate information
- Knowledge claims should be challenged and examined.
- Students learn best when they discover knowledge for themselves.

<b>Reasons why learners do not participate in class discussion</b>	<b>Ideas to stimulate participation in class discussion</b>
Fundamental Convictions	Explain the rationale for participative teaching methods
Language limitations	Give discussion questions in advance.
Not responding to discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shame of possibly answering incorrectly</li> <li>• not wanting to appear better than others (grandstanding)</li> </ul>	Split a large group into small groups for discussion, then have a spokesperson report findings to the large group. Promote a safe and welcoming social atmosphere.
Not asking questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for fear for appearing stupid.</li> <li>• for fear of embarrassing the teacher.</li> <li>• don't want to imply that the teacher did not explain clearly.</li> </ul>	Be available after class to individually answer questions. Find ways to allow anonymous question asking. Have students in pairs explain to one another what they have understood.

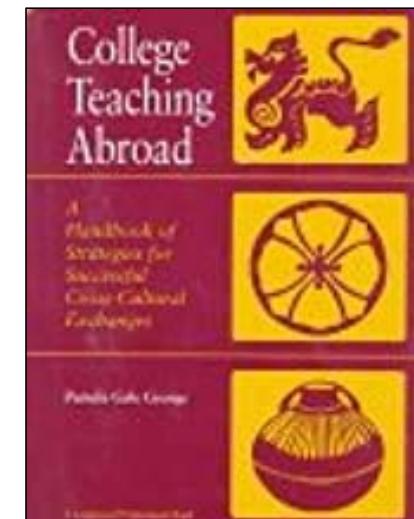
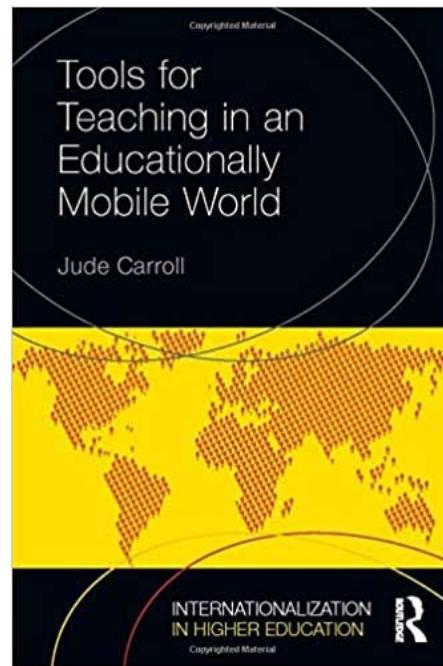
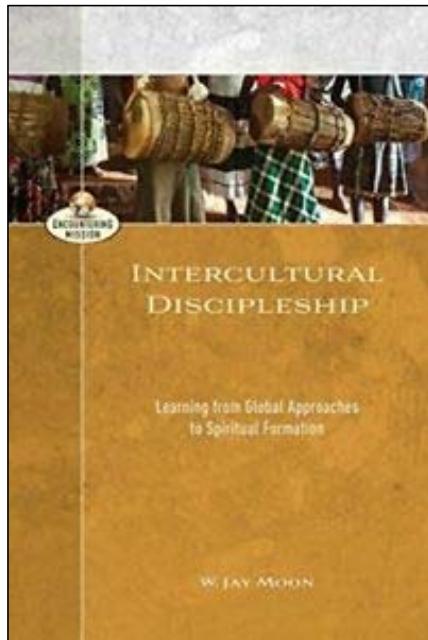
# RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ACROSS CULTURES

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# RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ACROSS CULTURES

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## QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONTACT

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