[Edited transcript]

Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey

What I'm going to do today is start with just a little bit of personal background and dealing with a few concepts around culture and global fitness. And then really what I want to do is to look at a particular critical incident that actually happened in China and do some analysis of it, and then talk about how you could apply this framework, the TRIPS framework, in real life. Then I'll give you some suggestions for follow-up reading, if you're interested.

So, like Kan Qian said, my first time in China was in Hong Kong, many years ago, and at that time I had recently graduated from university. I had actually no idea about Chinese culture. Actually, I was going to learn Chinese at the time, and shortly after I arrived in Hong Kong I went to the bank, around about lunchtime, and there was a young clerk, male, similar age to myself, we did the transaction and then he said to me, 'Have you had lunch?' I was really surprised because in a British way of thinking that's a preliminary to an invitation. I thought, 'he's a complete stranger', so I said 'Yes, yes, I've had lunch, thank you', and though. 'that's strange', and went on to the school. As I was walking in, I met one of the teachers and she said, 'Have you had unch?', and I thought, 'Why is everybody asking me this?' And because over the next few days everyone was saying the same thing, I thought, oh, it must be because I'm too thin and they were concerned about my health. Of course, later I realized that this was just a greeting.

Another occasion that happened very soon after I went to Hong Kong, a family invited me to their home and as soon as we came in they just poured me a cup of tea and I tasted it and I thought, oh gosh, this is really bitter and I, in my British way, I thought, well, I don't want to be rude; I'd better drink up the cup of tea and then I can relax. But of course, as I drank it, they filled it again. And I drank and they filled it. And I was saying, 'No, no, no, thank you, no, no, no, thank you'. They kept pouring and I was getting desperate. I didn't know how to stop them. Eventually I put my hand over the cup of tea, almost got scalded, and that again made me realise that language and culture are very closely interconnected.

So, what do we mean by culture? In a lot of the language curriculum, it's interpreted as products or practices: festivals, clothing, this kind of thing, and it's usually actually quite separated from language learning and use. But in our work, we like to think of culture in a very simple way as the 'Three P's'of culture. If we think of a Chinese banquet, you've got the physical features, the type of food, the chopsticks, etcetera. So there are physical features and these are the *products* and we can look and think, 'Oh yes, that's Chinese food', for instance. But then there are ways of doing things, [*practices*]. So for example, how to use

chopsticks, whether people are served, whether the the guest is served with the food by somebody else, where people sit and so on. There are ways of doing things and actually that's a common definition that some people use about culture: the way we do things around here. And then the third layer is perhaps *perspectives*, those underlying beliefs and attitudes. So for instance, where do people sit at the table? In the West, it's not always very prescribed, but we've got things like *hierarchy* and *roles* and *responsibilities*, so the most important guest is placed here and the less important guest is placed there, and so on. So these are three aspects of culture, but they're all interconnected. We can see the products and we can see the practices, but we don't always know how to interpret them. So, if you think of my example with the tea, I was saying, 'No thank you, no, no thank you'. That was having no effect because what does it mean to be a good host? A good host has always to give the visitor as much as they want, so there was that communication gap. If we think, about how communication works, a traditional model is what's known as the 'message model', which would be, have an idea, I put it into language and then I speak and so long as there's not too much interference the next person can decode and get the meaning. But in fact, it's that's not always the case. As we said, I was saying, 'No, thank you, no thank you', but it wasn't being accepted. Why? What happens is what I mean is not necessarily what the other person understands. That's because we always draw on this background contextual information. So, what does it mean to be a good host was influencing that host's behaviour towards me. I was thinking, what does it mean to be a good guest? But then when there are cultural differences in how we fulfill those roles, then we may get that misunderstanding. So, in communicating across cultures we've got three key features: language and meaning-making; you've got cultural patterns; and all of those will influence relationships, and we need to pay attention to all of them.

You may have wondered - as somebody asked me recently - why do you call it 'global fitness?' Well, really because when you say 'intercultural competence', most people have no idea what that means. And we also think that the notion of global fitness conveys that you always need to be paying attention. We're never *always* physically fit: we have to keep exercising, etcetera. So, we're not ever fully interculturally competent; we always need to have that ongoing attention. And also like with fitness, there are different aspects. There's the muscle development, there's the other aspects of of building strength and endurance, and so on. So similarly with intercultural competence, there are those different aspects to it. So, we'd see it as a kind of cycle; you've got the skills, qualities and values that we need to be able to work well, and then there's the steps and the things that we can do to help grow. But then there's also the environment and the context that we need to foster it.

In a moment I'm going to share a critical incident. But just briefly, what are *critical incidents*? Although they are called critical incidents, they're not necessarily *individual* incidents; they might actually be a sequence of events or episodes. And they're not necessarily 'critical' in the medical sense; it's more that they are *revelatory* or significant in some way. If any of you are researchers and you want to use critical incidents to get data, etcetera, I did a a live set of seminars recently on the platform Instats and if you're interested in that it will be available on demand, probably from the end of this month [November, 2025].

So, what's my aim for today? I want to show how intercultural learning - 'global fitness' - can be gained from critical incidents. I want to give you a framework, which I've called TRIPS, that can be used to support this learning, and that framework, I think, helps us understand why and how misunderstandings can occur, both in message meaning and in interpersonal

rapport. It's useful for understanding and supporting positive relationships. We've also found that it's very useful for teachers and trainers to help others handle the interpretation process, and we also find it's relevant in a wide range of situations and cultural contexts. In other words, it's not specific to any particular national culture or language.

So, that was quite a long introduction, now I'm going to turn to actually learning from critical incidents and share a particular critical incident that one of my former students shared with me. It concerned volunteering at an international summer camp in China with primary school children. I'll read it out:

> ‘A group of participants, - that's primary school children and their teachers - were due to arrive one morning and have classes in the afternoon. Actually, they didn't arrive until the early evening. One of the Chinese volunteers, Xiao Li, was told to take two of the international volunteer teachers to meet the children and ‘say hello’ to them. She did so.’ (*Just to note, Shelley had already started to develop a friendship with these volunteer teachers*.) ‘The international teachers introduced themselves to the children, spent a few minutes with them and then they planned to leave. However, the camp organisers wanted the teachers to stay longer and kept asking them to interact more with the children. The two teachers were annoyed because they didn't think they should stay that long. The staff from the school were not pleased either. So afterwards, one of the international teachers, said to Xiao Li, ‘Be careful when you speak to Western people; when you ask us to say hello to the children, we just say hello. If you want us to give a class, we need preparation and then we can give a really good one.’ Xiao Li commented, ‘I was surprised upon hearing her words. Although I didn't say anything, I felt a bit annoyed and frustrated.’

So what went wrong? Everyone was upset. Why was that? I want to show how the TRIPS framework can actually help us consider this from the different people's perspectives. So, what is TRIPS? Iit's an acronym: Triggers, Reactions, Interactions, People, and Settings. In linguistics, in pragmatics, these sort of summarize the key elements that are involved in an interaction, and as you can see, I've put ‘Interactions’ right in the centre; that's the heart of things: what is said and done - or it could be what's *not* said and done. Those interactions can trigger reactions, and they're all influenced by the context, the people who are there, and the settings.

So, we think first of all about the interactions. As I say, interactions are what people say and do, or don't say and do. In this case, they were asked to ‘say hello’. Now when we talk about ‘meaning’, in linguistics there's multiple meanings. You could say, ‘What is the *language code* meaning of this?’ In other words, the dictionary meaning. But then you've also got the *contextual* meaning, what those words mean in that context, taking that background information into account. But you could also say the *functional* meaning, what those words mean in terms of behaviour. So, if we analysed it like that, Xiao Li and the international volunteers were interpreting very similarly. The language code meaning: ‘say hello’, is just what it means: say ‘hello’. The contextual meaning: ‘meet the children briefly’. The functional meaning: introduce themselves briefly to the children. The camp organisers, though, seem to have a rather different interpretation. So, meet the children? Yes, but not necessarily briefly, and they actually wanted the volunteers to teach an initial class, not just briefly ‘say hello’. So then we might ask, ‘What were the reactions?’ And with reactions we can think of *emotional* reactions and *evaluative* reactions: rude, competent or whatever. As

to the camp staff reactions, we're told they were irritated, annoyed. We weren't told about the evaluative reactions, presumably thinking 'incompetent', 'not responsible', something like that. As to the international teachers' reactions towards Xiao Li and the camp organisers, they were annoyed, and again, no detail is given on the evaluations, but certainly they seem to be negative. and then there is the international volunteer, if we go on and think about the next thing she said, 'Be careful when you speak to Western people. When you ask us to say hello to the children, we just say hello. If you want us to give a class, we need preparation and we can then give a really good one.' So, Xiao Li's reaction towards all of this: she was annoyed, frustrated, offended, embarrassed, but she covered up her emotions. She said, 'I didn't show anything', and she felt that she had been blamed unfairly. So, then we might want to dig a little deeper. The Western volunteers implied it was culture to blame: 'Wwhen you speak to Westerners', implying Chinese and and Westerners could be different. I think if we go into the TRIPS analysis, we can understand more clearly why everyone was upset.

And here I want to introduce you to the notion of 'triggers'; these are things that *trigger* those reactions, whatever happens in the interactions that upset us in some way or annoys us. There are six of them. I've called them the GAAFFE triggers, and I'm just going to briefly go through each of them.

- **Goals**. We all want to achieve things, so you will have your goals for coming to this webinar, if it doesn't meet your expectations you may feel a bit annoyed.
- **Autonomy**. None of us like to be bossed around inappropriately. On the other hand, we sometimes like to be given clear direction. So autonomy is a dimension going from control to freedom, and we often need to have different preferences on that scale.
- **Attention**. None of us like to be ignored. On the other hand, we don't like too much attention. If you come to the Q&A and somebody picked on you, you might feel you didn't want that attention.
- **Face**. I don't think I need to explain too much with that. We all want to be respected and appreciated.
- **Fairness**: We want to be treated fairly.
- **Ethics.** We want there to be ethical'principles in the way things are handled.

If any of you want to follow up on that, some of this comes from interpersonal pragmatics. I did an article just recently which explains that. For those of you with more of a psychology background, it also comes from interpersonal psychology, two key dimensions: autonomy versus control, involvement versus non-involvement. There are lots of references to follow up on that as well.

So, then let's move on and see how we could apply those GAAFFE triggers to that little incident that we've looked at.

I've got here the six triggers and each of us would have those same those sensitivities. If there's alignment between them, then usually the rapport will be smooth. If there's misalignment, then there may be problem with rapport. So, here we're just looking at the camp organisers and the international volunteers. The camp organisers' goals would be a positive experience for the participants, in other words, for the primary school children and

their teachers. For the international volunteers, they also wanted to perform well, but that everyone would appreciate them as volunteers. In many respects their goals were aligned. However, when we look here, the camp organisers were expecting the volunteers to follow their instructions, to do as they were told, whereas the international volunteers were prioritising more the autonomy; they were not expecting their time to be controlled, they thought, 'You said, 'Say hello' and we've said hello, now you're trying to control us over and above that'. They had a concern about the sense of fairness, lack of notice, lack of clear instructions, so then they felt threatened in their teaching competence. It was like a threat to their face. So, you can see that whilst their goals were aligned, they were misaligned in these other areas.

If we go back to this, 'Be careful when you speak to Western people, when you ask us to 'say hello to the children', we just say hello. If you want us to give a class, we need preparation and we can give a really good one'. You can see their sensitivity there as to how they had performed. But then we have Xiao Li's reflection, she says, 'My frustration is mainly for three reasons. I considered myself to be innocent since I was just doing what I was told and shouldn't be the one to be blamed. I'd spent some time with the foreign teachers, I thought I'd built some friendship with them - well, particularly with this one - but her words were to some extent offensive and really hurt my feelings. I was also embarrassed that the situation was not handled well by our organiser'. Those were what my student wrote.

So, if we then think in terms of those follow-up comments, we think again of the international volunteers, Xiao Li, and then over here the camp organisers. Xiao Li felt it was not her fault, so this was an issue of fairness from her point of view. It was also the issue of face: she felt that she had been personally criticised when it wasn't her fault. But she also felt face threats in terms of the camp organisers because it seemed to show them in a bad light. But if you look at it from the international volunteers' point of view, why did they say that? Obviously, I don't know for sure, but my interpretation is to reduce the risk of unclear instructions in the future and its impact on teaching quality. So, to me they were trying to say, 'OK, yeah, we were upset about what happened. We're going to tell you this: speak to us clearly so that we don't have the problem again'.

So again, you can see quite a mismatch there in the triggers. What are the implications? I would say people may prioritise the rapport risk factors differently, for instance, the relative importance of goal achievement versus autonomy. They may interpret one or all the risk factors differently. For example, what counts as fair? What's fair to you may not be fair to me. These kinds of differences are likely to be more pronounced in global contexts, so that's why everyone needs to be mindful of their own and others' interpretations and prioritisations of the GAAFFE rapport risk factors and needs to take them into account. It.

OK, so we've had a thought about the interactions - 'say hello'- and the misunderstandings that took place there, and the follow-up comment that one of the volunteer teachers said. We looked at their reactions, we looked at some of the mismatches in their misalignments in those trigger factors, but we also need to take into account the context, the people and the settings. So, let's think about the people.

Typically, we'd be thinking about the number of people, nationalities, personalities, international experience. So here I'm going to ask how relevant was the nationality? Interestingly, Xiao Li and the camp organizers are all Chinese, but they had a

misunderstanding together. Then we might look at participant relations, hierarchical, unequal. There were people in ‘boss’ position, distance, closeness. Xiao Li was disappointed that the international volunteers didn't take this into account; they were treating her as though she was a relative stranger, one of the ‘others’. And then you've got role responsibilities, levels of authority, work-related rights and obligations. The camp organisers felt they had the right to give instructions to the volunteers. Understandable, but clearly the volunteers felt that that was not totally the case.

And then if we think of settings, now often in in the intercultural arena people are thinking at the national setting, by country, but actually, ‘setting’ is multi-layered and one of the most important ones is this one in the centre: the actual communication context, because every type of communication, whether it's a meeting or a social event, has some norms and practices associated with it. Here we've got an international summer camp, so we'd need to ask, what are the normal arrangements for this type of communicative event? How is the teaching arranged? Are there any rules or conventions? When I first saw this example, I was really surprised because I thought these were primary school children, they'd been travelling all day and they would be tired. Why would you give them a lesson in the evening of that day? So, this was part of my lack of understanding, perhaps, of how an international summer camp in China works. Normally we think of an organizational setting, as in a department or something. What's the culture of that organization? This one, though, is presumably a sort of temporary one set up just for the summer camp, so what does that mean in terms of hierarchy, autonomy, time-management? Clearly, I didn't know that. And then we've got the national setting, China, location, we don't know, but normally we would want to have background information on this so that we can make more interpretations.

So, hopefully you can see from that that though the incident was originally put across as an intercultural incident, we can see that it's more complex than that. It's not just a question of national culture; there are lots of other factors involved. So, let's see how we could apply that more in in real life.

Starting with interactions, as I said, interactions is what's said or not said, and it covers things like the message content. In other words, what is the message that's going to be getting across? You've got the communication style. Is it very direct? Is it indirect, friendly or what? You've got the communication dynamics, things like the turn-taking and so on. There will always be differences, especially in communication style, directness, indirectness, both within and across languages. So, you see one of the main problems here was the misunderstanding in the message content, perhaps because of the communication style. As we also noted, Xiao Li was Chinese, but she misunderstood what the camp organisers meant.

So, here are some things that are quite important to you, so we would say:

- Check the clarity of the language comprehension check.
- Ask questions if you're speaking to check what the other person is understanding, ‘Do you follow what I mean?’, for instance?
- If you don't understand somebody else, you might ask for repetition if you haven't heard it or ask them to say, ‘Pardon?’ or something.
- Then looking the other way around, a clarification request. Ask for further explanation of something that's not clear, ‘What do you mean by such and such?’ or

a confirmation check: ask for confirmation if I've heard something clearly, ‘Do you mean such and such?’

- Or then some would say, ‘let it pass’, just ignore the problem. Sometimes we have to do that. It can be dangerous if we do that continuously.

So, if we go on and consider here that neither Xiao Li nor the camp organisers carried out any meaning checks. There was no comprehension check. The camp organisers didn't ask Xiao Li, ‘Do you follow what I mean, understand what I want them to do?’ Xiao Li didn't ask for clarification: ‘What do you mean by…?’ That's a bit blunt, but perhaps she might have asked, ‘How long are you expecting the volunteers to stay?’ She really should have carried out verification requests or confirmation checks. I found that in our own work with graduate students who are having problems in their workplace, maybe their boss has asked them to do something or told them to do something, and they may not be very clear but they don't go through these clarification requests, which is very normal, especially worded sensibly. And then if there's a misunderstanding and the work isn't done properly, you get into these relationship problems like we saw in this particular case study. So, as I say, carrying out meaning checks are really, really helpful and important. So that's paying attention to the interactions -obviously, I can't go through everything in this short time - how to minimize the risk of a misunderstanding, but misunderstandings do occur and we will sometimes have reactions.

Managing our emotions. It's important to do that to prevent them festering. I'm sure you all know if something happened and we ignore it, afterwards we go over it and we can get more annoyed and angry with the other person. One of the things in emotional intelligence, I would say, is to actually clarify the emotions for yourself, and that in itself can help to reduce their intensity, but also understanding different people's perspectives, going through using the TRIPS and the triggers in particular, to see other people's perspectives in itself can also help reduce those emotions and adjust our evaluations. So if you're interested in that in our book, we have got a little framework to help with the emotion side.

Then I would say, as I've just indicated, use the triggers to check on what was really upsetting you, what might have been upsetting the other person. This helps you understand why you and the other person were upset, whether there was any misalignment, it can reduce the risk of cultural stereotyping, always just jumping to saying, ‘Oh, it's a cultural issue’.

And it's useful for language and behaviour planning. So, you might think, ‘OK, I've got my goals, but what about other people's goals? How can I take them into account? What about autonomy versus control? If you're the leader, ‘How much am I controlling the other person, which they're not happy with? Why am I giving them too much freedom that they don't know what to do?’

What about attention or inclusion? ‘Am I including everybody in an equal way or am I ignoring some people?’ Sometimes, if people see that it's somebody from outside their group, they just don't talk to them, and that person can easily feel excluded.

And then of course that also brings in questions of face, things like level of directness of criticism, treating people as fairly as possible.

Upholding ethical standards. I've been quite surprised really. Again, some of my former students who've been asked or told to do things, even in a university context, which are clearly unethical and then they're put in a very awkward situation.

So, all of these trigger factors need to be paid attention to so that you can try to think through your own position, the other person's position, and try to see where you're aligned or where you are misaligned.

And then, of course, it's the context, the people, the settings. Why analyse that? Well, as we've seen, it has a crucial influence on the interpretation of meaning. Things like: people, factors, hierarchy, distance, closeness, sense of role, responsibilities, these actually can be quite different across cultures when I was in China teaching there, the sense of what it meant to be a teacher and the teacher-student relationship was very different from what I was familiar with in Britain and notions of hierarchy can be very different, distance-closeness.

And, of course, the setting factors, particularly this notion of communicative events like meetings or wherever, who can talk when. These are all very culturally based, not just particularly national culture based, but also organizational culture based.

Now, those of you who are familiar with the intercultural field will know that there's a set of tools you could say. Some have called it DIA, some have called it DAE, ODIS. We called it the 3R, which is basically three steps, and the first is to describe objectively what goes on or what happened. Not as easy, by the way, to do it as objectively as you might think. The next step is to interpret or analyse or reflect on what happened. What we found was that actually our students could develop quite well how to describe something objectively, especially with some training, but they struggled with the analysis or the reflection because they didn't really know what to reflect on. And that was one reason why we also came up with the with the TRIPS framework because it gave or gives people some pegs or some things to look at and to reflect on. We put it into the 'reaction management' tool: Record, Reflect, Reassess: the 3R. Note down the facts of what happened using TRIPS as a guide. Reflect on why it happened and reasons for your reactions, particularly using the triggers. And then you would reconsider your interpretation and reactions in the light of that TRIPS analysis.

If you're interested in that, in our book, we have a lot of tools that guide you through those different steps. If you're feeling upset or annoyed, you've got the 'reaction management' tool. If you've got conflicts and disagreement, we have a 'discord management' tool.
If you're feeling silenced or excluded in meetings, we have a 'participation management' tool, especially for leaders, and then ones for getting on with your colleagues or problems with your boss, or if you're a leader, how to be a supportive leader. And all of them are built around the TRIPS framework.

OK, so I rushed through that quite quickly. If you are interested, both of our books, recent books, Global Fitness for Global People, Making Working Relationships Work are full of authentic stories, cases, critical incidents. We have tools and activities for learning and development. Each chapter ends with key takeaways. We've tried to use as little jargon as possible and hopefully useful for the teachers and trainers, etcetera.

If you want more detailed reading that really explains TRIPS in more detail, you can download a free copy of Chapter One from our website, and then recently I've done two

journal articles, both of which are open access.
This one, 'Rapport in intercultural interaction' is a relatively straightforward one. This journal of pragmatics one is a more academic approach to it. And then finally.
I have a little YouTube channel, so I've got two up there here on this topic, '*Managing Rapport' in Intercultural Interaction*', that was a keynote talk I gave for the China Association for Intercultural Communication last year and then last month I gave one on '*If nation-based models of culture are inadequate, where next?*' So, if you're interested in those, just go to my YouTube channel.

And now that brings us to the end. So, if you have any questions now, or if you want some of those references, just feel free to get in touch with me.

So, I'm now going to stop sharing and hand back over to KAN Qian for the Q&A session.

Note: The Q&A session is not included in the recording. However, a transcript of the session is provided below for those who may find it useful.

KAN Qian
Thank you so much, Helen, for the most fascinating, very insightful talk about your experiences, especially your analysis and the tools you provide. I'm sure there will be lots of questions in the audience.

Sylvia
I'm an intercultural trainer and I work also as a lecturer at the university. When it comes to questioning, what do you mean by, for example, what does it mean to say hello, what I experience very often is that it even doesn't come to the mind of the people that they should ask the question because they - myself included sometimes - we are so convinced that that's the way you see it and the other person will see it exactly the same way. So, I I would be interested to hear your thoughts about that. How do you go about that? How do you raise that awareness? Because, evidently, we cannot question everything because otherwise probably communication gets a little bit complicated. So yeah, I would love to hear your thoughts on that and thank you.

Helen Spencer-Oatey
Hi, Sylvia. Yeah, I mean, you're quite right. I mean, especially I think when the meaning seems obvious, like 'say hello' just seems obvious. When I was managing some projects with China and we were talking about a research project and we went two days without really reaching any agreement, because none of us stepped back and said, 'What do you mean by research?' I think there's no easy answer because, as you said, you can't always be doing this, but I think in this kind of situation when the camp organisers were saying,
'Tell them, get them to do this', or a boss I found saying, 'Do this', it's really important when you're giving instructions to just go back at that point and check.

All I can say is, yeah, it's not the default automatic reaction, but that's where I think we would just try to drill it in both to ourselves and to others: in key situations when there's

something important, check. Do a confirmation check. But you know, we're all humans and we forget still

But then the next thing I would say is what happens often is that it doesn't happen, and then we blame the other, so that's where we're hoping that actually, by using TRIPS, it encourages people to reflect that actually it wasn't just their fault, it was also my fault in different ways.

Sylvia
Thank you.

Zoe
Hello, thank you for this talk. I'm a linguist and I'm currently writing my MA thesis about intercultural communicative competence and going abroad and students. Supposedly, according to the EU and most university faculties, when you do a study abroad placement you magically somehow gain intercultural communicative competence. So I'm interviewing students about this because in the universities that I'm looking at or where I've had experiences, there isn't actually pre-departure training in place for people and I would just be really interested if you had any input on that or if you could say anything about where you see the responsibility lies in universities for people gaining intercultural competence, or as you call it, global fitness.

Helen Spencer-Oatey
If you go back to that little sort of diagram I had near the beginning, everybody has responsibility. The setting, the environment, the context. Universities have a responsibility, but then the students themselves in their engagement activities also need the responsibility to do things like going out of their comfort zone and so on. But you know, the reality is not everybody, not all universities, are providing that. And of course, to some extent if you cushion people too much, then you're preventing them getting these the experiences that they need of that discomfort, etcetera.

I would also say we did some interviews with students - this is going back a few years at Warwick - who perhaps had not had too much training before going from different departments and they were just saying thank you so much for talking with us, because what often happens, especially in university things, is they go abroad, they've done their period, they come back, university is just moving on to the next stage and they don't have time, they don't have that opportunity to talk through and reflect on those experiences. So it isn't just, I think, in advance, ideally you would also have some contact whilst they're abroad, but when they come back even more so. Spend time helping them think and reflect on those experiences and certainly we found that it was a big experience for the students. They wanted people to be interested, and it was disappointing when university life just went on to the next module. Don't know if that helps much, but…

Zoe
Thank you very much, that's great.

Helen Spencer-Oatey

Right. OK, good.

Rosina Marquez-Reiter

Hello again, Helen, and thank you so much for that for that talk. It's quite remarkable, Helen, how you managed to synthesize all those complex notions into a workable, practical, applicable framework for people to take with them and apply. It really is fantastic. My question isa linguistic one because it's very clear, crystal clear what you've presented - at least to me - account for racialisations such as the one you have in your data: 'When you talk to Western people', that level of othering, which is beyond, you know, I'm not too sure that the volunteer saw it. Would that be within autonomy control? Because it's not so much an institutional power, if you like, that these people have got. In the example you presented, they're more or less on a par with each other, right? The organizers and the volunteer. But, of course, you then have in your chapter more hierarchical relationships, but then here there this sort of power of the ideological thing.

Helen Spencer-Oatey

Yeah, yeah. So, to me, those would go within people and settings. So, within people - obviously I couldn't talk much about that today - but within people you've got both the individual's personal characteristics, including their biases, their sense of identity, etcetera, all of which are coming into play. So, things like stereotyping. For me that would be within their own ideological aspect, but then you've also got the setting where - well, take Britain at present with all the immigration f arguments. So, if you have that broader societal setting where you've got all that national debate going on, that's also going to impact on people and their own ideologies, etcetera. So, to me, all of that is underpinning and influencing what then goes on in the particular interaction, if that makes sense.

Rosina Marquez-Reiter

Yes, it does. Thank you.

KAN Qian

I'm afraid we're running out of time and I want to use the last 3-4 minutes to share some of the resources we have. I just want to take this opportunity to promote our Chinese language modules and some very short online courses.

We have an accredited learning module *Beginners' Chinese* which starts every October and the registration starts in March 2026 and then our intermediate Chinese 30 credit module is coming next year. Registration will start in March as well. You could combine these two modules with business management or law to get a certificate in higher education.

We also have a suite of short online courses. Each one is only about 30 hours learning, and then there is a *Chinese Business Culture Essentials* course in English and also we have intercultural competence courses as well.

That's all on this page. If you Google 'Open University short courses, language short courses', you'll find quite a lot of them.

And then finally, I'll let people know about our next public talk on Friday, January the 23rd. *Chinese symbolism and culture depicted in museum artefacts*, to be delivered by Doctor ZONG, Fang. She's a museum professional in Chinese culture. You can register now on our Eventbrite page.

Let me just finally say thank you so much Helen for this fascinating talk. So thank you again. Thank you everybody for engaging, for coming to the talk.

Helen Spencer-Oatey
Many thanks to all of you for joining, and good to hear your feedback.

[End of transcript]