How culture influences emotions

Portuguese Team

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

What is culture?

Culture is all the ways of life including ideas, customs, social behaviour of a society, arts, beliefs and institutions of a population that are passed down from generation to generation.

What is emotion?

Emotions are reactions to an environmental and cognitive stimulus that produces both subjective experiences and significant neurobiological changes. It's associated with temperament and personality.

Jeanne Tsai

Professor of Psychology at Stanford University and director of the Culture and Emotion Lab.
Her research focuses on
how culture shapes our emotions.

In their study they found that:
People across cultures have more or less the same emotional responses to stimulus.

Emotional responses are:

- Heart rate
- Breathing
- Facial muscle movements
- Sweating

They were really surprised that they found more similarities than differences across cultures

When they started separating how people actually felt from how they ideally wanted to feel, this is where they started finding some striking cultural differences…

In one study they asked European Americans and Hong Kong Chinese college students what is their ideal state:

"my ideal state is to be quiet serene happy and positive."

"I just want to be happy, normally for me that means I want to be doing something exciting, I just want to be entertained, I just like excitement"

Both wanted to be happy,
but they associated specific
states with happiness

Culture influences how **we want to feel,** our **ideal affective states** even more than how we actually feel.

How do we begin to learn how to want to feel?

Where do we learn what our culture values?

WE TURN TO THE MEDIA

They looked at the emotional content of popular media in the U.S.A and China

Julia Roberts' smiles vs. Buddha-like smiles

Christian Nilsson

Christian Nilsson

Christian Nilsson is an Emmy-winning video journalist, producer and director.

Mensagem

Seguido por 294 pessoas

christian-nilsson.com

Chang Susana

Chang Susana

Sou Susana,uma Chinesa.

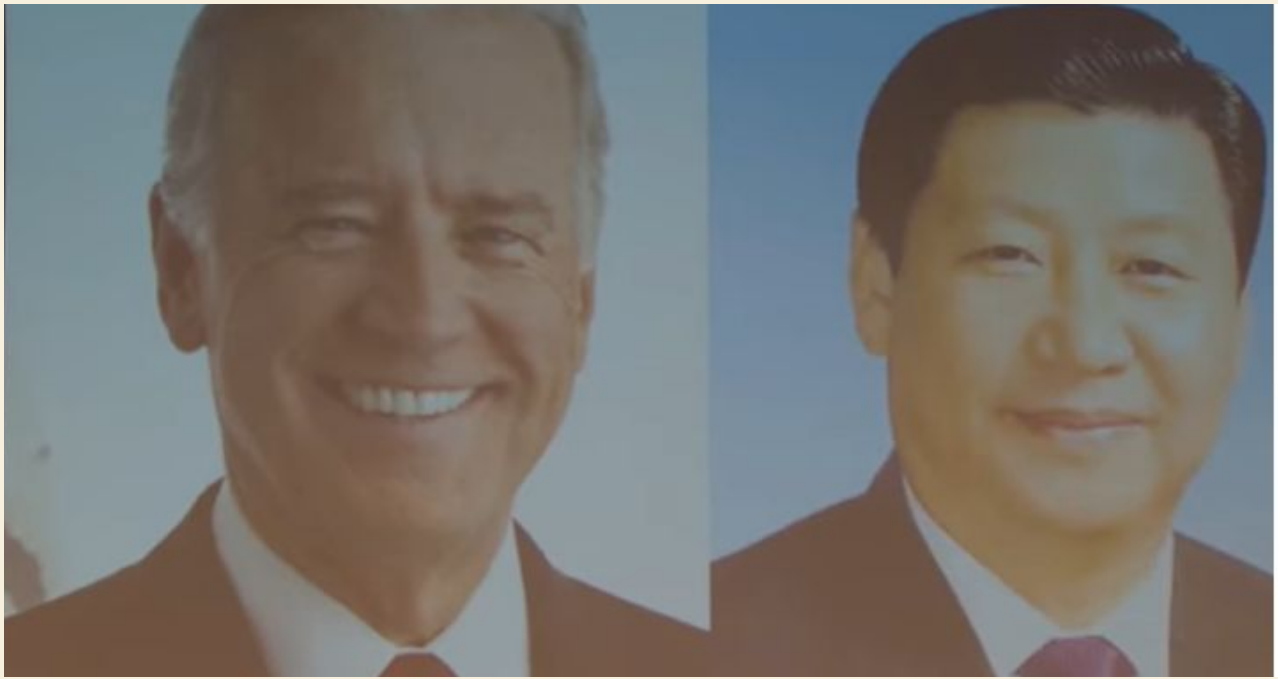
Adicionar amigo

Mensagem

Vive em **Pinhal Novo**

De **Pequim**

Excited vs. Calm



Whether it's in government in business or academia
American leaders show much more excited smiles

It's through exposure to these kinds of images that we begin to learn how we want to feel

How people want to feel influences their everyday choices, their everyday behaviors.

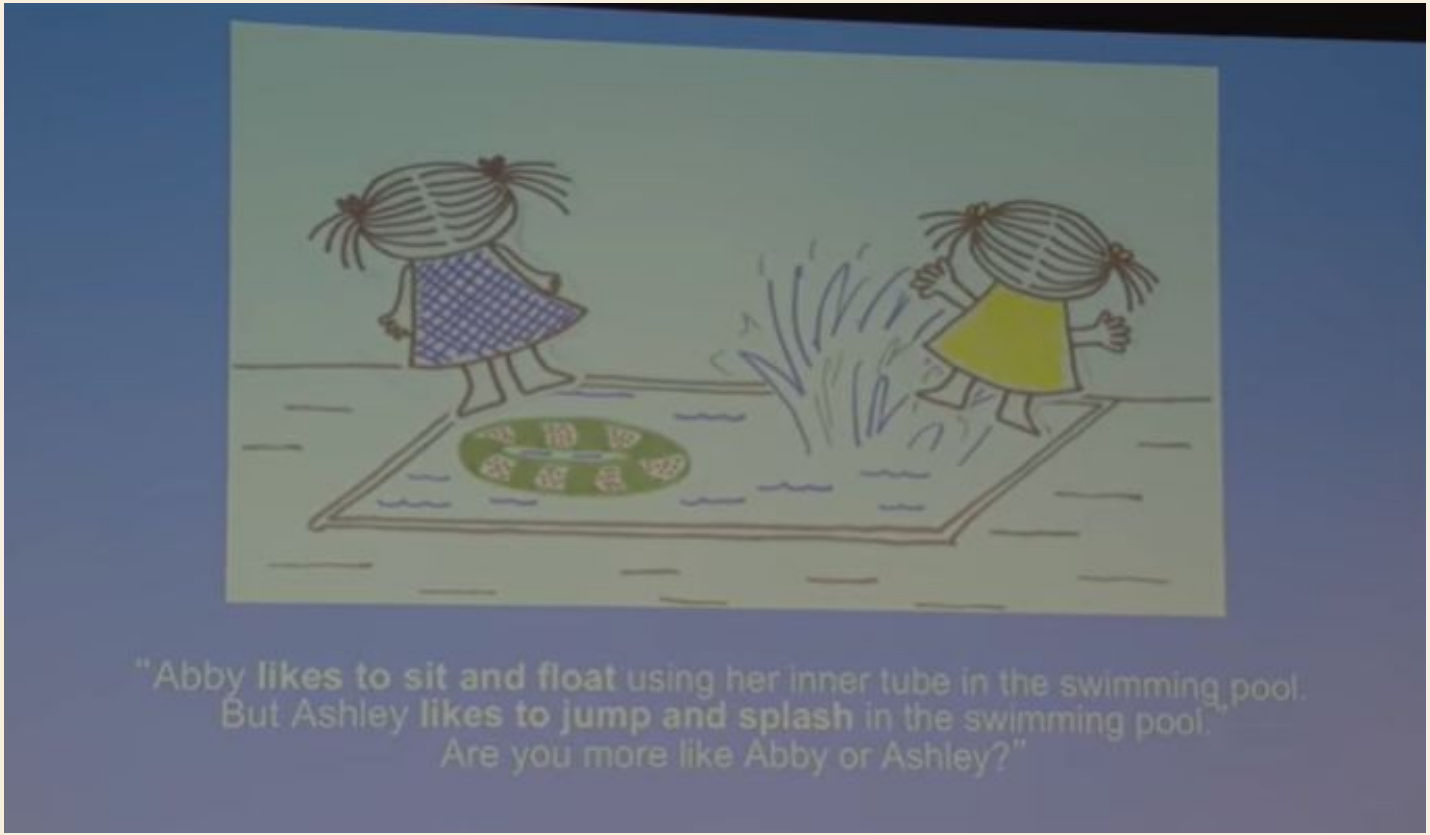
Ideal effect also influences our social choices, who we choose to be with and spend time with

But…

When does it start?

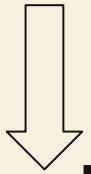
Should we see these cultural differences in ideal effect pretty early on in life?

Two friends having the perfect day



How do kids begin to learn to value certain emotional states?

Ideal effect



daily choices

Conclusion of the study:

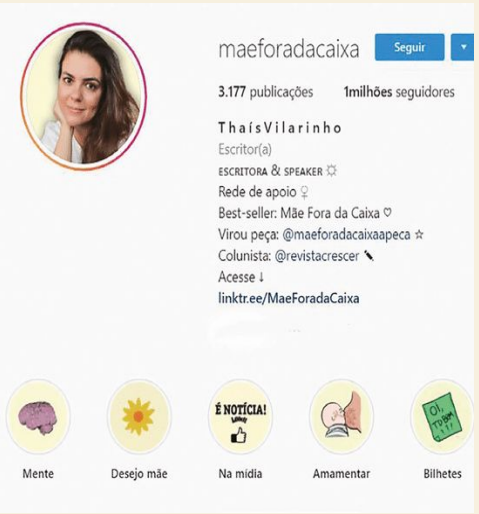
Culture influences how we want to feel and the choices that we make… relatively early in life.

Portugal

Leader

Magazine Cover

Children`s book



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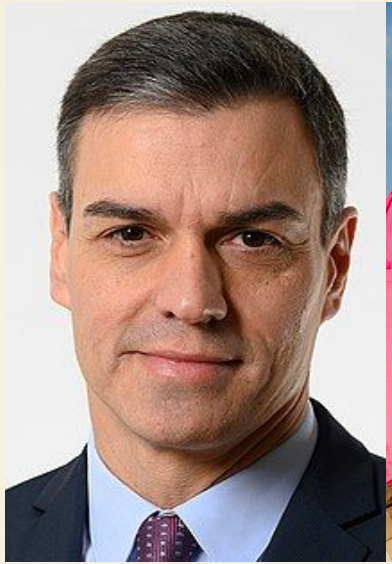

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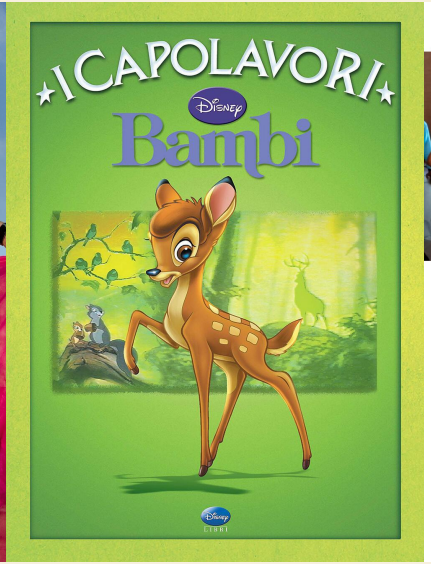
Magazine cover



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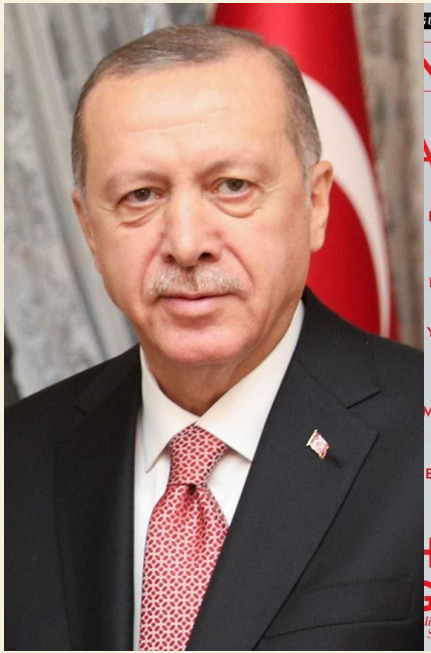
Turkey



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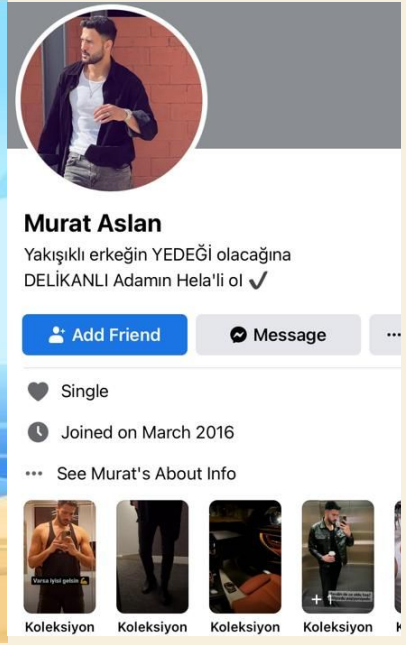

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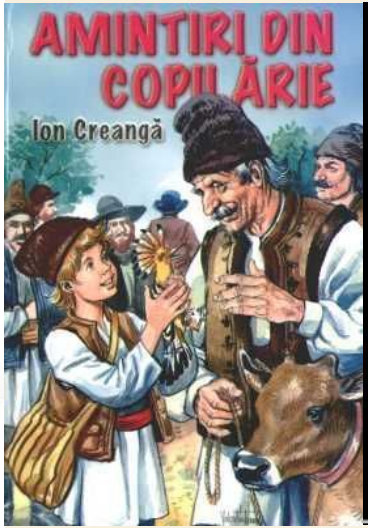

Children`s book

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Not only media influences our behaviors

Celebrating Birthday in U.S.A: jump up and down for an hour yelling and screaming and then give them pizza and cake afterwards

Our conclusion

Why is it important to know how culture influences our emotions?

- Different cultures interpret, express and experience emotions differently.
- From a global perspective it's important we understand how to read these differences and understand the nuances that could be present.
- Knowing that is mandatory to build a successful international team in the XXI century.

Activity

Each group is lead by a Portuguese student and will receive one base emotion like joy, sadness or anger…

Then you will do a representation of the emotion with your own characteristics and the other groups will try to guess which emotion is being represented.

We're going to take a picture of each group to compare it at the end.

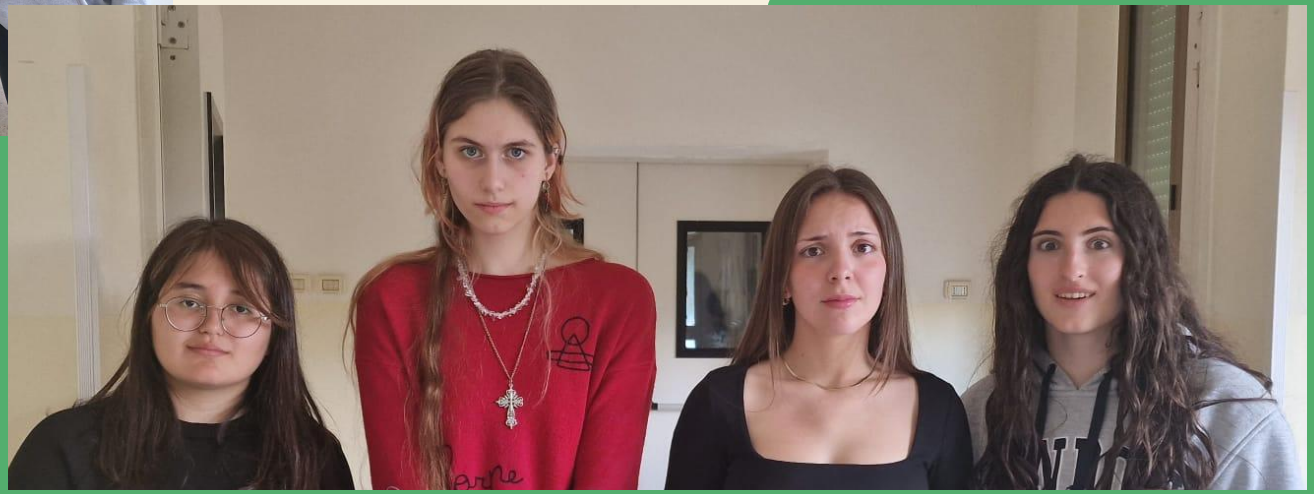
Then you will do a representation of the emotion with your
characteristics and the other groups will try to guess which emotion is being
represented.
We're going to take a picture of each group to
at the end.
STRONG

Sadness

characteristics and the other
represented.
We're going to take a picture of each group to
at the end.
EMOTIO
E
I M FAST

Anger

Fear



Disgust

guess which emotion is being
group to compare it at the end.
"It's not personal. It's strictly business."

teristics and the other groups will try to guess which emotion is being
group to compare it at the end.
FIRE & BLOOD

Joy

on of the emotion with your own
will try to guess which emotion is being
sented.
compare it at
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EMOTIONS MAPPING

emotion with your own
y to guess which emotion is
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oup to compare it at the
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