

Lecture on cross-culture issues impacting on business in Europe

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UCD Confucius Institute

- ❖ The UCD Confucius Institute is a joint venture between Hanban, Renmin University and University College Dublin and is located at Belfield campus in UCD.
- ❖ Its primary aim is to work with government, business and academia in Ireland and China to develop stronger educational, cultural and commercial links between Ireland and China.



Ongoing Survey on Irish Companies/Firms

- ❖ Survey on Local Irish Companies/Firms' Demand for Special Training in Chinese Language/Culture and Chinese Business expertise.
- ❖ Hosted jointly by the UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland and the Irish Institute for Chinese Studies, and the Quinn School of Business, University College Dublin, Ireland.
- ❖ Other organizations: IDA, Enterprise Ireland, the Ireland China Association, Business Section of Chinese Embassy in Ireland, the Association of Chinese Studies in Ireland, and the Association of Chinese Professionals in Ireland.



The Aims of Survey

- 1) to provide vital information for The Irish Institute for Chinese Studies in UCD & The UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland to design proper teaching and research programmes to meet local Irish companies' and firms' needs in receiving Chinese language/culture training and expertises in Chinese business
- 2) to provide Irish government with vital information about what cultural barriers local Irish companies and firms are facing when doing business in/with China and what the government should do to support Irish higher education to catch up and meet the new demand of local Irish companies and firms in the rapidly changing world in the 21st Century.



Intercultural Trust Study

- ❖ Inter-Cultural Trust in Chinese-Irish Cooperative Relationships: A Field Study in Dublin, Ireland
- ❖ Nomological framework: committing, convincing, adjusting
- ❖ Differences between Western culture and Chinese culture and their impacts on business



Research background

- ❖ Joint research project with Professor Cathal Brugha: Inter-cultural trust within relationship management between China and English speaking countries in Western Europe
<http://mis.ucd.ie/research/InterCulturalTrust>
- ❖ Post-doctorial research: Scholarship given by China Scholarship Council
- ❖ Support from home university: Xidian Univ.



Why “inter-cultural trust between China and the Western Europe”?

- ❖ Rising China is experiencing its cultural exchanges with the other cultures, including the cultures in Western Europe
- ❖ Developed Western Europe is realising cultural diversity
- ❖ Common benefits from inter-cultural trust



Why “Chinese-Irish cooperative relationships”?

- ❖ Active exchanges in education, culture, trade, business, and many other fields between two countries
- ❖ Irish culture is different from the cultures of the UK and the US
- ❖ Irish culture and Chinese culture have something in common
- ❖ Build a bridge between East and West



Main work in this study

- ❖ Use nomological framework to understand cultural distance
- ❖ Propose a model of inter-cultural trust
- ❖ Present some ways in which culture may affect trust
- ❖ Conduct a field study of inter-cultural trust between Chinese and Irish people in Dublin
- ❖ Provide tactics and methods to improve inter-cultural trust

Nomological framework for cultural comparison



- ❖ Committing: wants/needs, likes/preferences, values
- ❖ Convincing: technical/self, contextual/others, situational/world
- ❖ Adjusting: adjusting world, adjusting self
- ❖ Committing-convincing-adjusting balance

Nomological framework for cultural comparison



Figure 1: East-West Systems Bridge

Nomological framework for cultural comparison



Figure 2: Cultural Differences between East and West

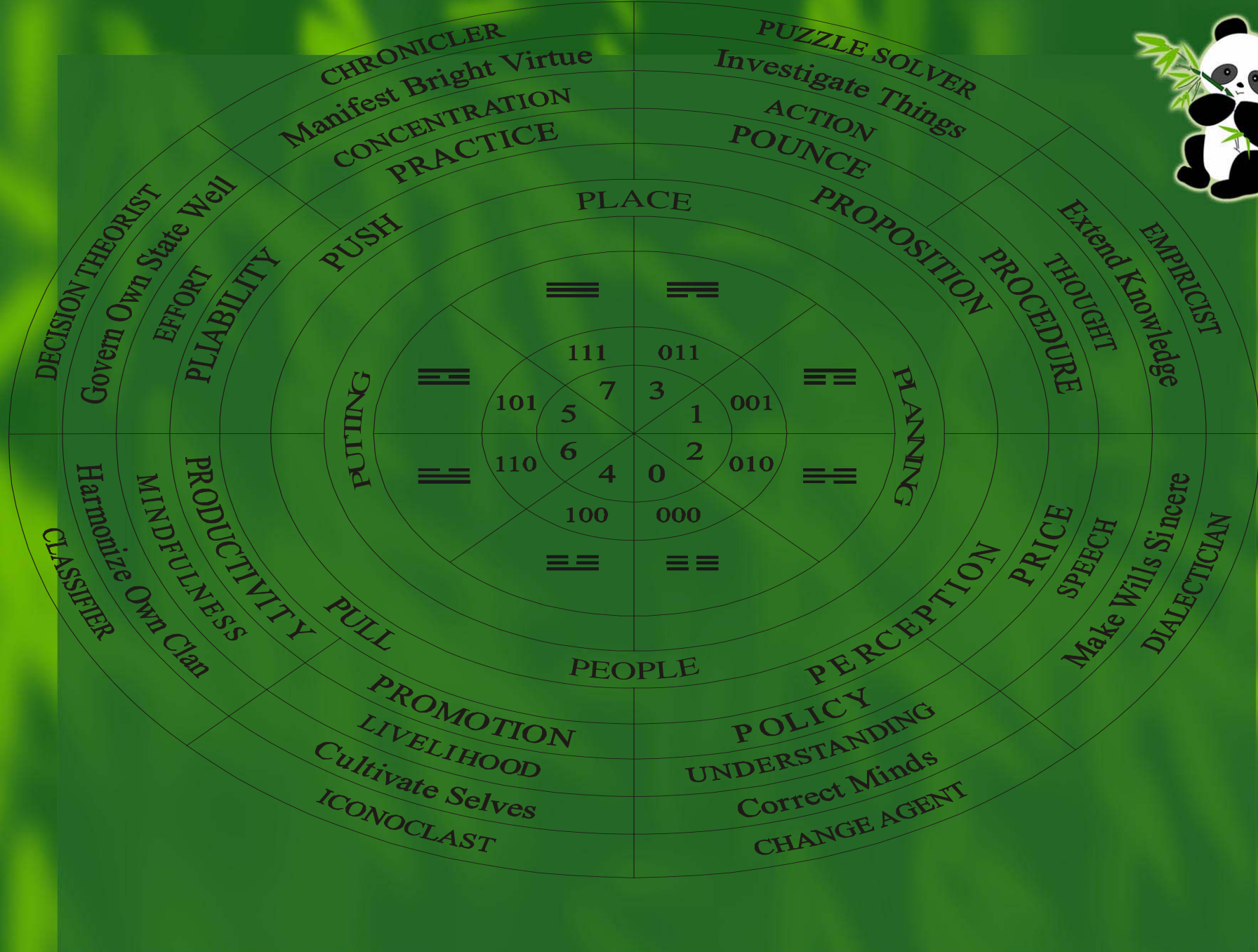


Figure 3: Eastern Adjustment Activities and Faces of Research

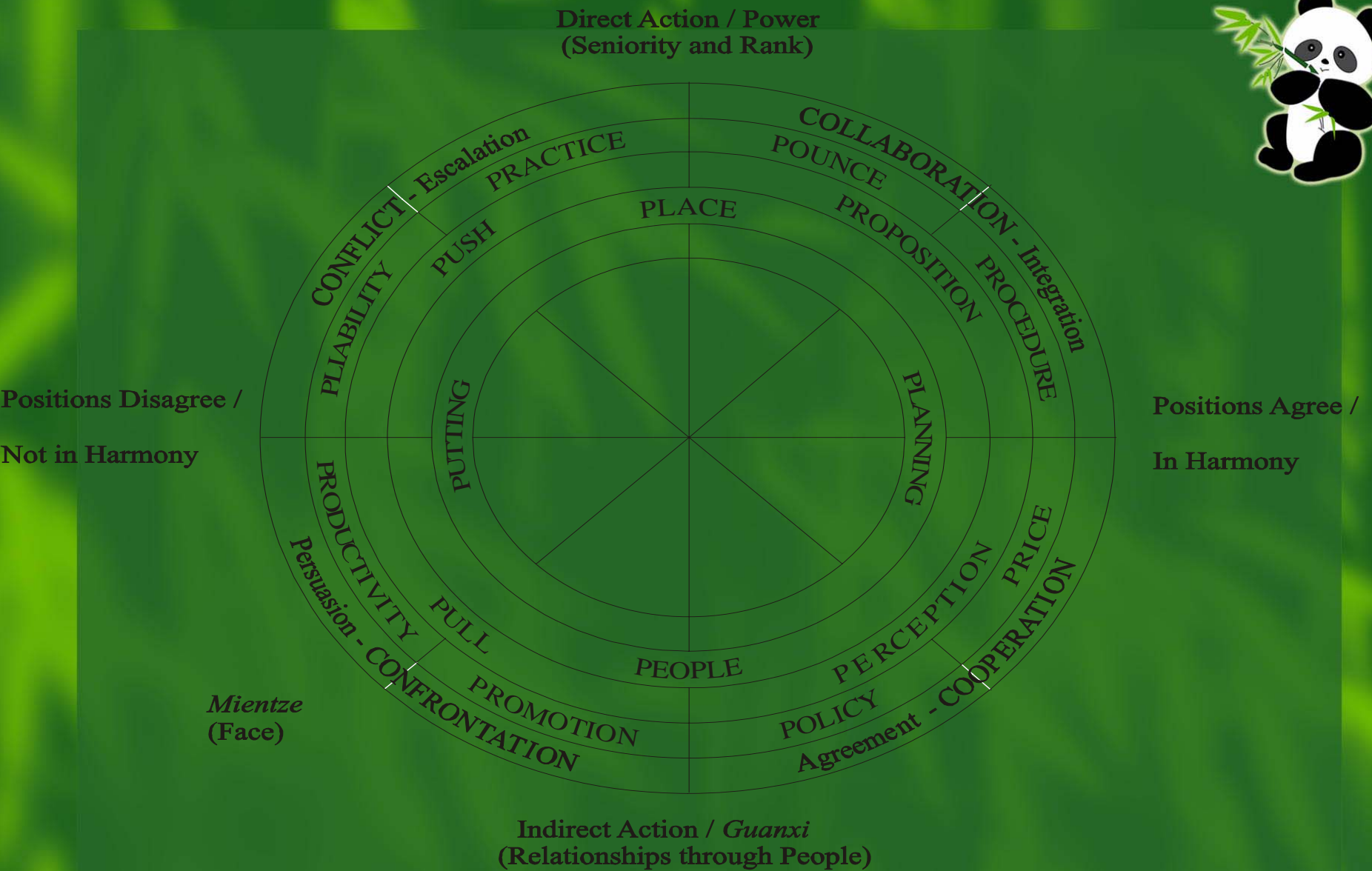


Figure 4: Conflict in Chinese Culture

Simple framework for cultural comparison



- ❖ Two dimension: committing and convincing
- ❖ Three layers for committing: somatic, psychic, and pneumatic
- ❖ Three levels for convincing: technical, contextual, and situational
- ❖ Three layers by three levels forms a nine-aspect framework to understand cultural differences.

Table 1. Nomological framework for cultural comparison



	technical	contextual	situational
somatic	physical	political	economic
psychic	social	cultural	emotional
pneumatic	artistic	religious	mystical

Inter-Cultural Trust Model

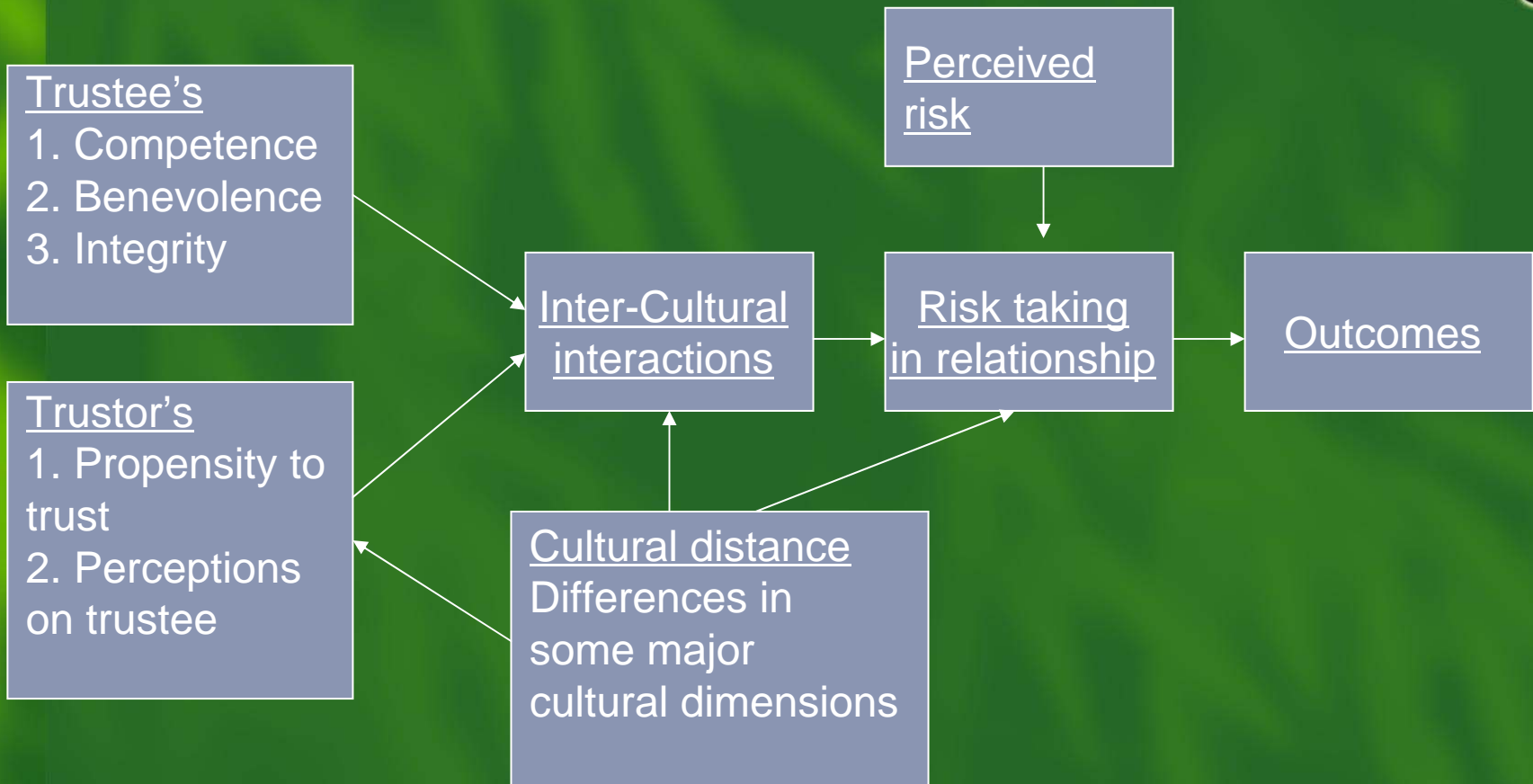


Some definitions

- ❖ Trustor: person who trust
- ❖ Trustee: person who is trusted
- ❖ Trustor's propensity to trust: initial trend to trust or not trust people
- ❖ Trustee's three major characteristics: competence, benevolence and integrity
- ❖ Trustor's perception and risk taking



Figure 1. Model of Inter-Cultural Trust





Three ways in which culture affects trust:

- ❖ Through the trustor's propensity variable. The antecedents of propensity include personality, experiences, and culture. Culture can also affect trustor's perception on trustee's ability, benevolence, and integrity and the importance given to each of these variables in the model.
- ❖ Through the process of inter-cultural interactions between trustor and trustee. In this process, culture can affect both sides' thinking and behaving.
- ❖ Through the variable of risk taking in relationship.

Methodology and Data



In our field study, we

- ❖ organised and attended seminars on the issues of inter-cultural trust,
- ❖ conducted a questionnaire survey,
- ❖ conducted open-ended interviews.

Topic: inter-cultural trust

Respondents and interviewees: Chinese visiting scholars, Chinese postgraduate students, and Chinese professionals in Ireland, and a few local Irish people who have interactions with China.



Summary of field study

- ❖ 10 seminars on inter-cultural trust
- ❖ 120 distributed questionnaires, 20 valid answered
- ❖ 16 interviews, including 3 Chinese visiting scholars, 4 Chinese assistant lecturers living in Ireland, 5 Chinese postgraduate students, 1 Chinese business man who runs a firm in Ireland for more than 20 years, 1 Chinese professional software engineer in an Irish company, and 2 local Irish people in Ireland.

Analysis and implications



Factors impact on Irish-Chinese inter-cultural trust

- ❖ Language barrier
- ❖ Cultural difference
- ❖ Prejudice and misunderstanding
- ❖ Miscommunication
- ❖ Lack of informal interactions or connections
- ❖ Lack of personal relationships
- ❖ Lack of interpersonal skill
- ❖ Lack of communication skill
- ❖ Difficulty with mutual trust



the most notable Irish cultural values are:

- ❖ Rural simplicity
- ❖ Romance and idealism
- ❖ Informality
- ❖ Love of literature, music and theatre
- ❖ Mistrust of British
- ❖ Vision and imagination
- ❖ Irony, sense of humour
- ❖ Poetic tendencies
- ❖ Warmth, charm
- ❖ Social anchors of land, church, family



the most notable Chinese cultural values are:

- ❖ Harmony
- ❖ Integration of human and nature
- ❖ Personal relationship with focus on ethics
- ❖ Respect authority and seniority
- ❖ Emphasis on unification
- ❖ Pursuing achievement
- ❖ Fame and responsibility for family
- ❖ Personal relationship / connection / guanxi
- ❖ Hardworking



Use nomological framework to see the differences between Irish and Chinese cultures

Dimensions	Irish culture	Chinese culture
1. Physical	low	high
2. Political	low	high
3. Economic	low	high
4. Social	high	high
5. Cultural	high	high
6. Emotional	high	high
7. Artistic	high	high
8. Religious	high	low
9. Mystical	high	low



Tactics and methods to improve inter-cultural trust

- ❖ Increase language skill
- ❖ Learn cultural knowledge and improve cross cultural awareness
- ❖ Respect and try to understand a different culture
- ❖ Improve effectiveness of communication
- ❖ Participate in more events to increase informal interactions or connections
- ❖ Build more personal relationships
- ❖ Enhance interpersonal skill
- ❖ Improve communication skill
- ❖ Build mutual trust on the basis of day-to-day interactions



Conclusion

Through the qualitative field study we have

- ❖ tested the basic idea of our inter-cultural trust model
- ❖ found some specific factors influencing the inter-cultural trust

The study shows

- ❖ building of inter-cultural trust is a dynamic, multidimensional process
- ❖ inter-cultural trust could be developed and improved in a variety of ways.



Further study

- ❖ Extended quantitative survey should be conducted in a wider scope to include large number of Irish and Chinese firms to verify our nomological framework on cultural distance, our presented ways in which culture affects inter-cultural trust, and our inter-cultural trust model.
- ❖ Measures and scale for inter-cultural trust should be designed and refined.



Ongoing joint survey with UCD Confucius Institute

- ❖ survey on Irish firms

Ongoing joint survey with colleagues at home university

- ❖ Survey on Sino-foreign firms in Xi'an, China

Potential future survey

- ❖ Survey on Huawei (overseas units and domestic units)

Further consideration

- ❖ Survey on more multinational companies in China and the West

Thanks for your attention

Questions and comments?

