

Did I Just Say That? That's not what I meant!

BCLA Preconference Workshop

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Session Outline

- Introductions
- Cocktail Party
- Theories of Communication
 - ***Coffee Break***
- Problems and exercises
- Culture of Libraries
- Practical Approaches

Session **Un**-Outline

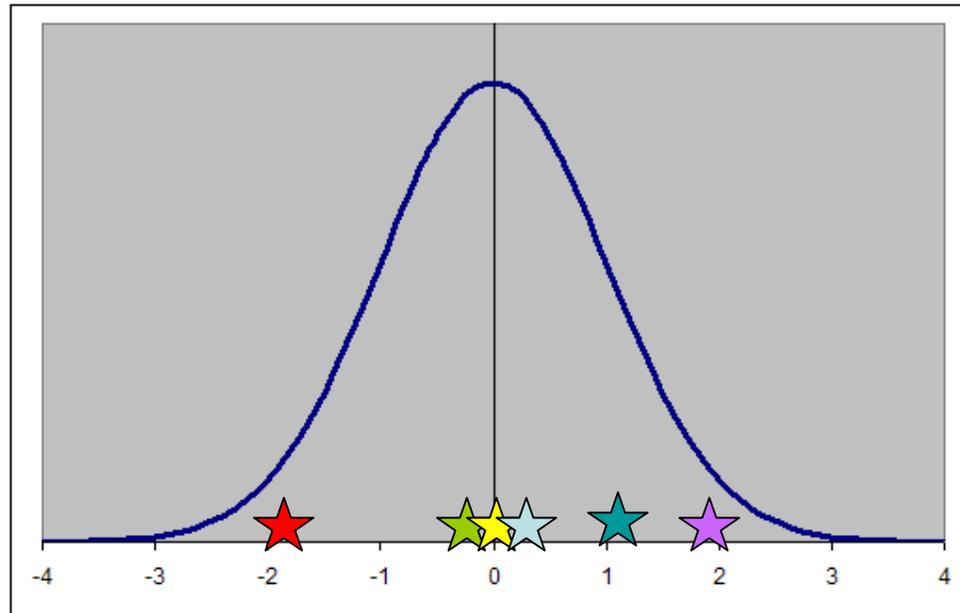
- How to talk to people from place X.
- Public service to people of religion Y.
- What to expect from children from Z.

WARNING!

If you hear a generalization, please interpret it to be short for

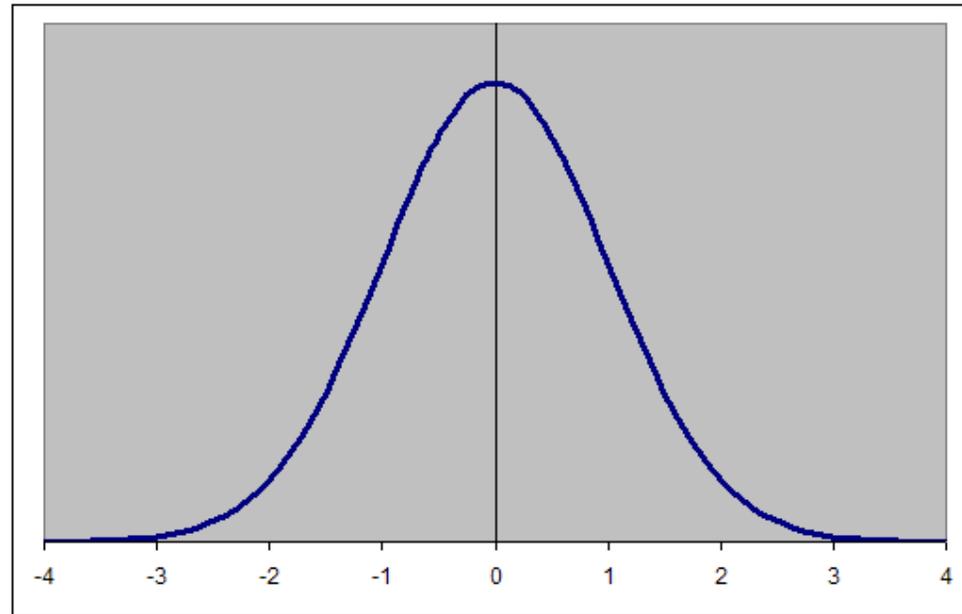
“well, not **all** people from X do this, but a significant number do, and practically everyone from X understands this and could do it if they had to, wanted to, whatever . . .”

Where do you fit?



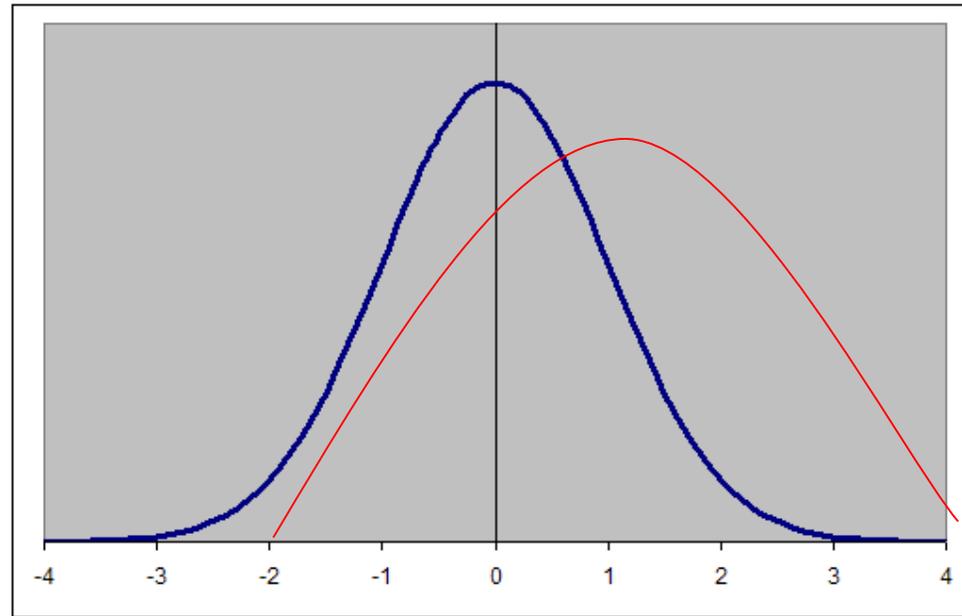
Different Variables

of people



Conversational speech,
measured in decibels

of people
Group A
Group B



Conversational
speech, measured
in decibels

“My, those people are loud!”

“My, those people mumble! You can barely hear them. It’s exhausting to try to have a conversation with them.”

What is CULTURE?

- learned (not innate)

- is a system

What is CULTURE?

- associated with race and ethnicity
- . . . and also age, gender, socioeconomic status, national origin, recency of immigration, sexual orientation, and disability

What is CULTURE?

- Behaviour that is shared and transmitted by members.
- The “man-made part of the environment” - symbols, ideas, traditions, institutions.

What is CULTURE?

- **Ways of DOING**

Food, dress, rituals, body language . . .

- **Ways of THINKING**

Attitudes, communication styles, perceptions, assumptions . . .

- **Ways of BEING**

Beliefs, values, world view . . .

What is CULTURE?



Above the surface . . .

- Food, clothing, rituals, language, literature, dancing, singing . . .

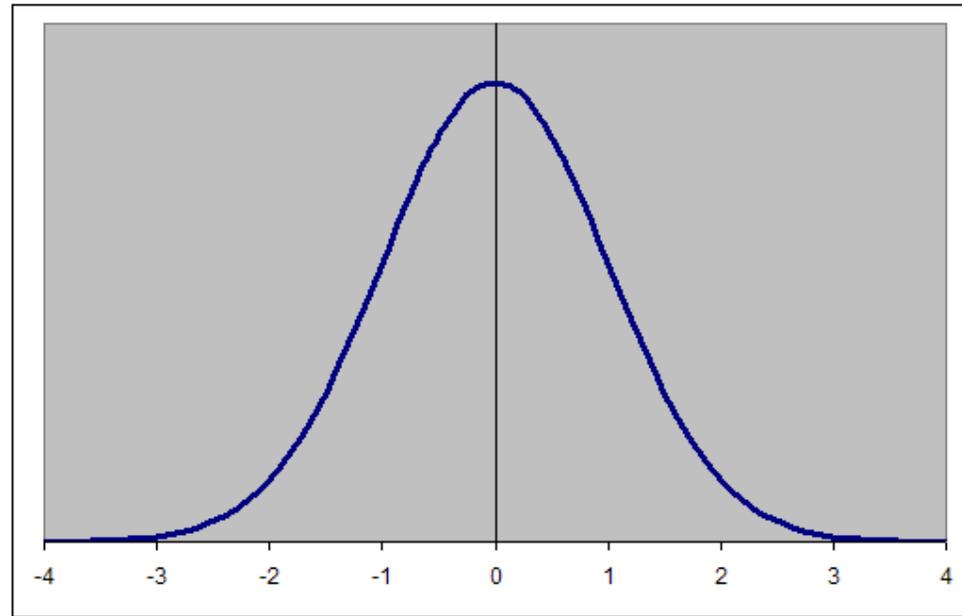
Below the surface . . .

- Future or past orientation
- Why work?
- Allocation of physical space
- How to be clean
- How to be a good friend/ brother/
daughter/ etc.

Below the surface . . .

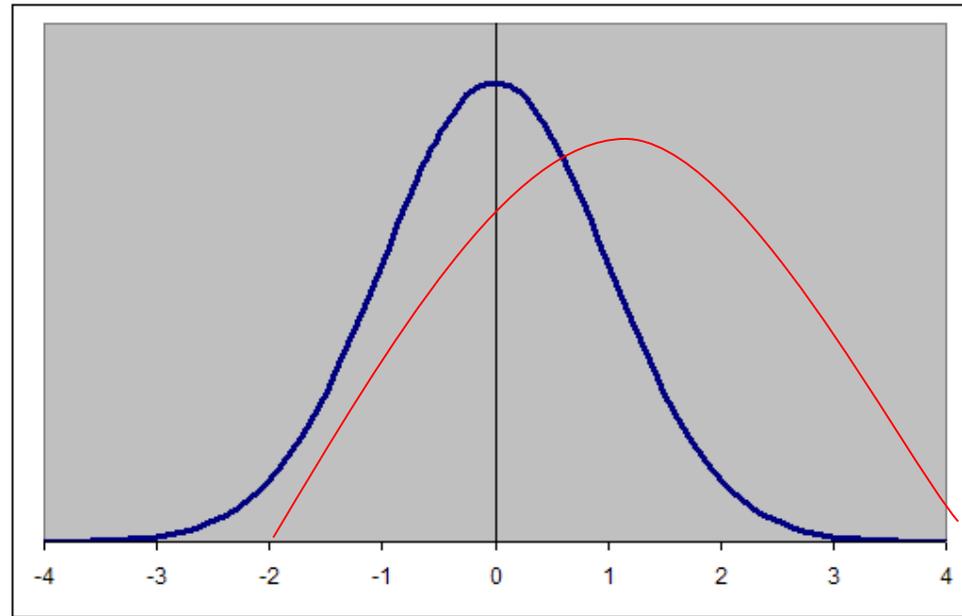
. . . all the really important things!

of people



Any variable

Any value



of people

Cultural Differences

There are many different ways of analyzing how cultures are different.

Geert Hofstede

Power Distance

Small: Austria, New Zealand, Israel

Large: Mexico, India, the Philippines

Individualism/Collectivism

Allegiance to self, focussed on **I**

Privacy, independence, self-reliance

Allegiance to group, focussed on **We**

Group support and obligation, loyalty to group,
organization or institution

Franz Trompenaars

Universalist/Particularist

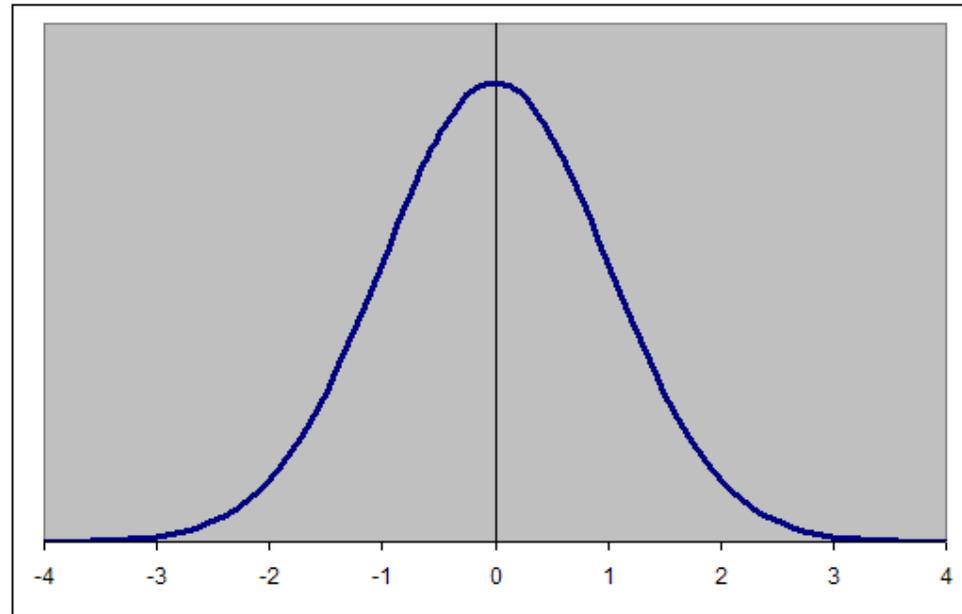
Rules before relationships

Relationships before rules

**There is only one truth or reality, that
which has been agreed to**

**There are several perspectives on
reality, relative to each participant**

of people



Any variable

Individualist/Collectivist

**People ideally achieve alone, and
assume personal responsibility**

**People ideally achieve in groups, and
the group assumes responsibility**

Individualist/Collectivist

Take vacations in pairs, or even alone.

Take vacations in organized groups, or with extended family

Neutral/Affective

Don't reveal what they are thinking
or feeling

Reveal thoughts and feelings
verbally and non-verbally

Specific/Diffuse

Direct, to the point, purposeful

Indirect, oblique, subtle

Specific/Diffuse

Direct, to the point, purposeful

Blunt, pushy and rude!

Indirect, oblique, subtle

Indecisive, apparently indifferent, and
basically incomprehensible!

High Context/LowContext

Implicit / Explicit

Manner of delivery

(Cut to the chase!)

Remaining silent

(Passive aggressive!)

Relative status of speakers

Mr. Big couldn't be here today . . .

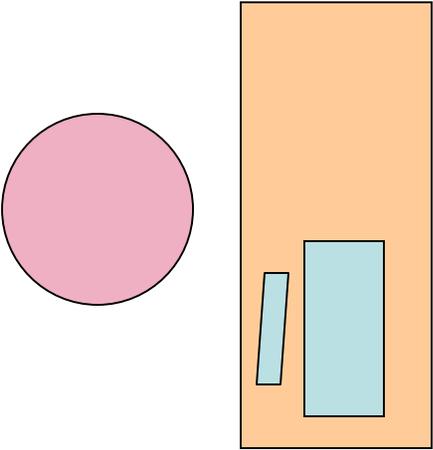
Polysynchronous/Monosynchronous

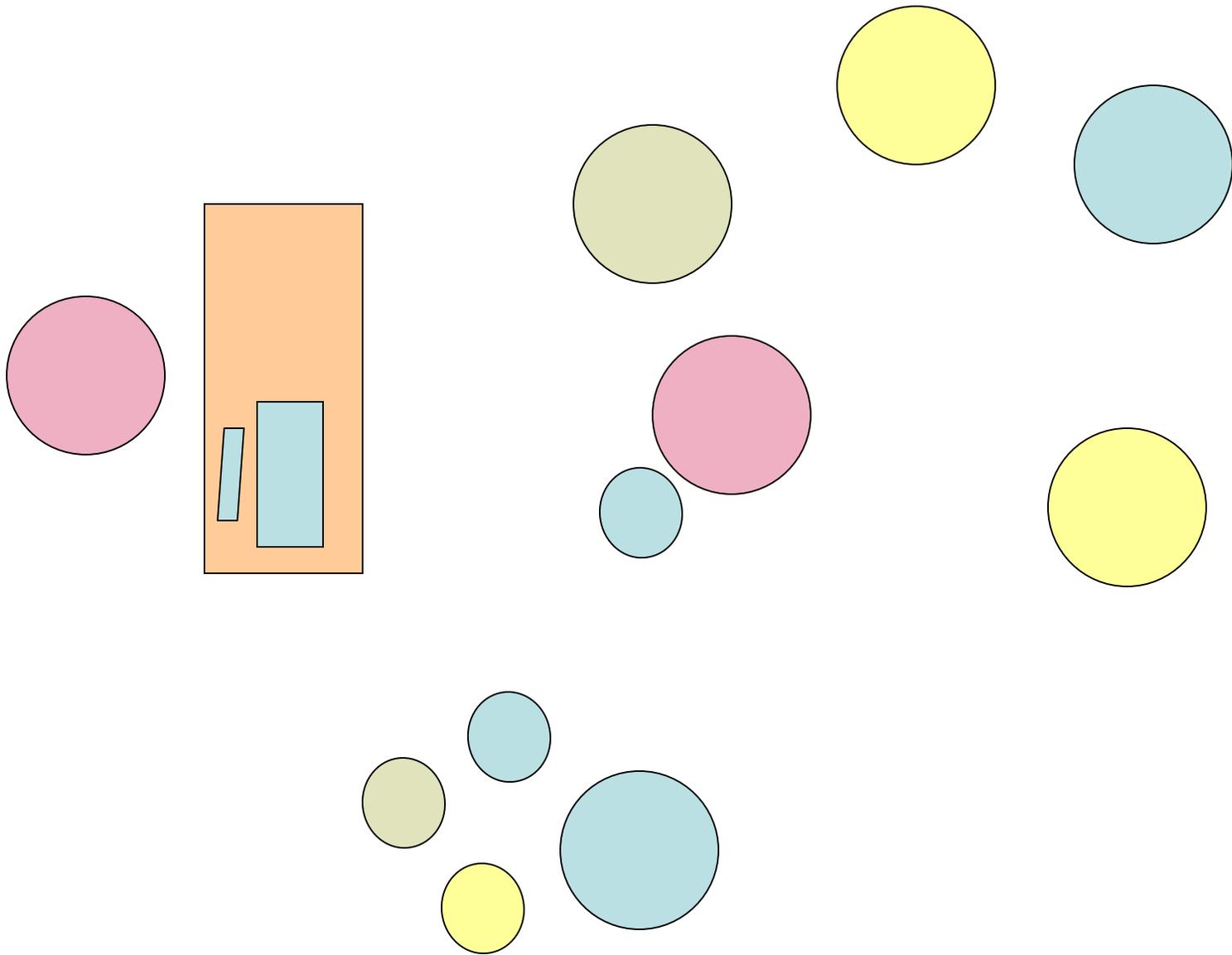
The original multi-taskers.

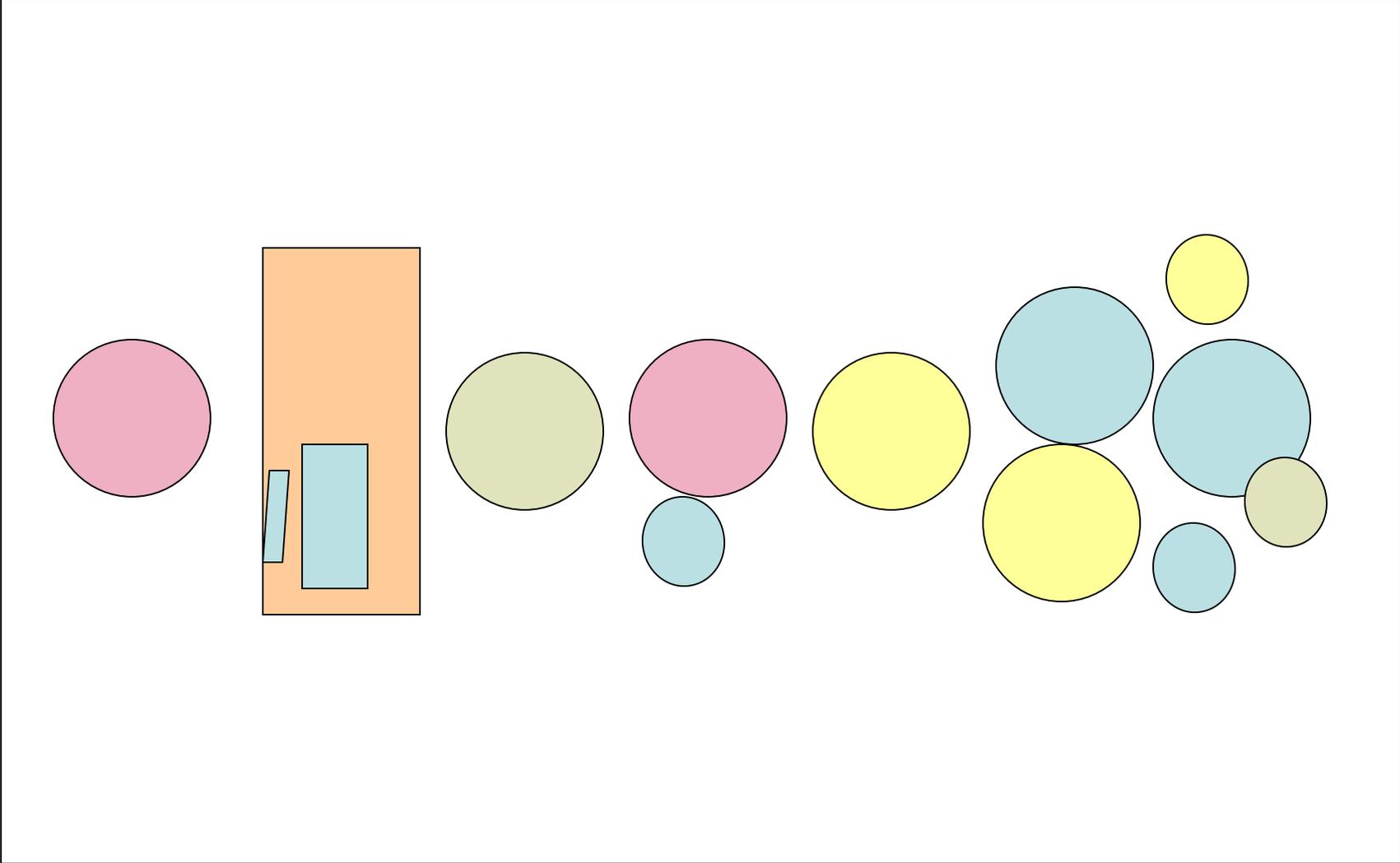
One thing at a time!

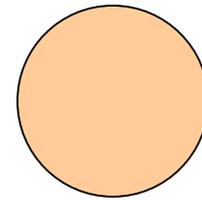
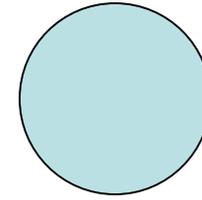
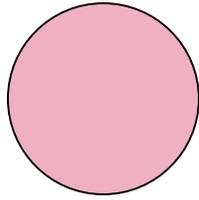
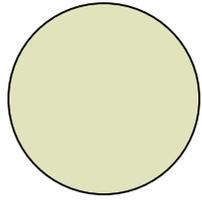
Some examples . . .

At the Circulation Desk . . .



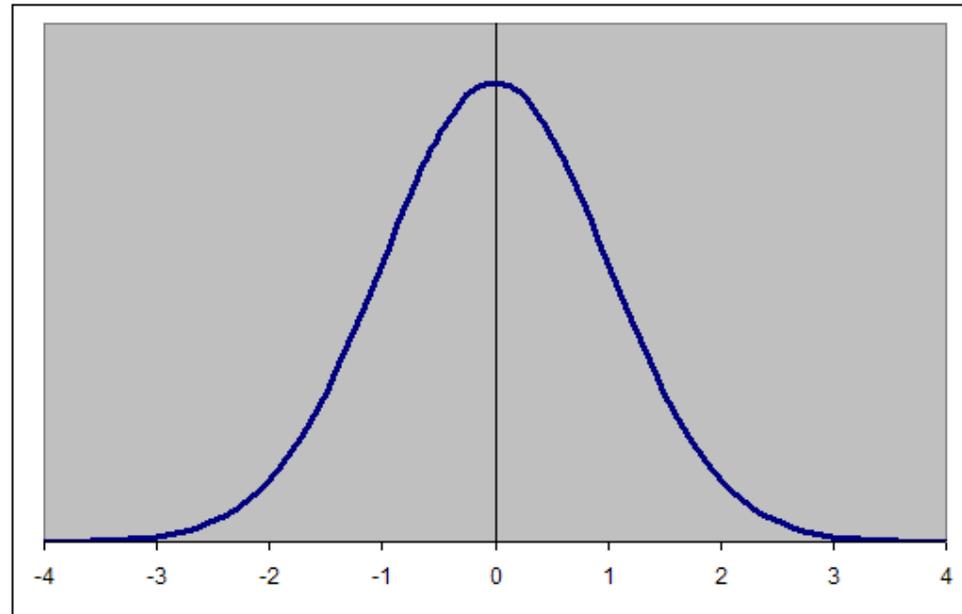






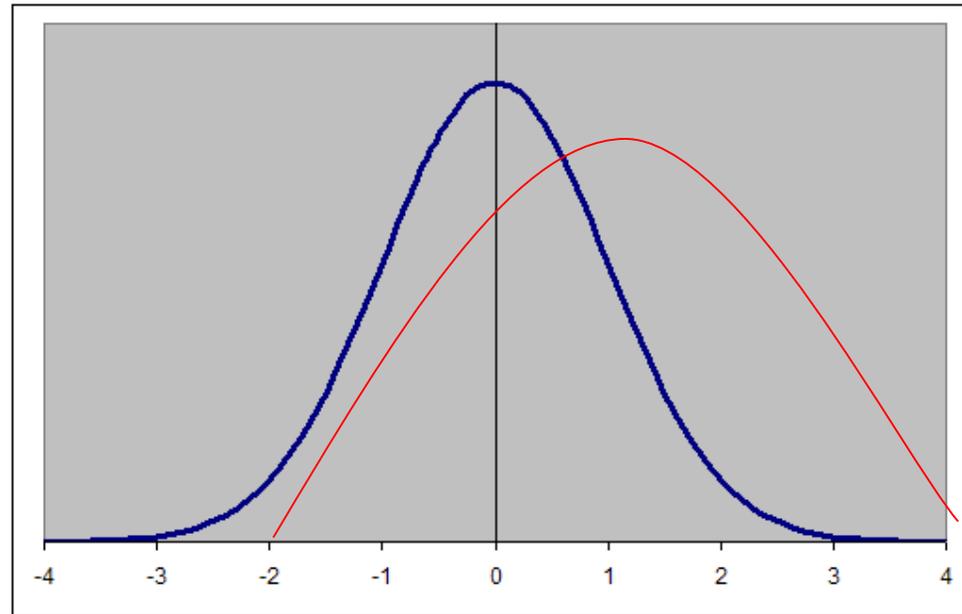
At the Cafeteria

people



Any value

of people



Any value

An Accent? Always!

Learning a new language means

- new sounds: to hear and to say
- new uses for elements of L1
- turning off rules of L1

Listen Carefully:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Listen Carefully:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. p ^h at | pat ^h |
| 2. shoe | sue |
| 3. jug (djug) | jug (jug, like in French) |
| 4. !kom | /’om |
| 5. boot? | boot! |

Learn this new R sound:

Retroflex R



Curl your tongue back on the top of your mouth.

If it's easier, make a trilling sound, but be sure to keep your tongue in the retroflex shape.

Read this with your new retroflex “r”:

Overharvesting is a danger to any oyster bed, and Dr. Mirhady predicts that the beds nearest Vancouver will be reduced to less than 10% of their current population by the end of the decade.

Say this:

- sing

- running

- ngai

New Uses for Elements of First Language

- (mā) "mother" □ high level- ("Well ...")
- (mA) "hemp" □ high rising- ("Me???)
- (mǎ) "horse" □ low falling-rising-
- (mǎ) "scold" □ high falling- ("Now!")
- (ma) question particle □ neutral

Stress - Makes a Difference!

	Cantonese	English
Timing	Syllable-timed	Stress-timed
Pitch	Word-tones	Intonation

	Cantonese	English
Timing	Syllable-timed	Stress-timed

1 2 3 4
 1 and 2 and 3 and 4
 1 and a 2 and a 3 and a 4
 1 and then a 2 and on Tuesday a 3 and next Saturday a 4
 1 and then a 2 and on Tuesday a 3 and next Saturday a 4



Time for a break!

