

Ted Lasso: An Analysis of the Representation of Cultural Differences and how they are Handled



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¹ Apple TV+ Press. (2021, March 21). „Ted Lasso“ von Apple punktet bei den WGA Awards und gewinnt in den Kategorien Best New Series und Best Comedy Series [Image]. Apple. <https://www.apple.com/de/tv-pr/news/2021/03/apples-ted-lasso-scores-at-the-wga-awards-winning-best-new-series-and-best-comedy-series/>

Abstract

The comedy series *Ted Lasso* has won many awards and is highly praised by critics. Thematically, it is about a US-American-football coach leading a British football club and dealing with cultural differences. This thesis combined two different qualitative content analyses using the *Linguistic Awareness of Cultures Model* (Müller-Jacquier, 2000) and the *Four Factor Model of Intercultural Competence* (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2004). Firstly, it was examined how *Ted* - as an US-American - is represented, how he differs from the Brits and what this says about the respective national characters. A second analysis substantiated these results by looking into the way how Ted manages handling these cultural differences. The main result is, that even though Ted is distinguished from the British characters, the analysed series creates an atmosphere of unity in which cultural differences can be laughed about but not at people themselves. In combination with the representation of Ted as a strong, empathic and culturally intelligent leader, such series can be an opportunity to create awareness of the benefits and opportunities of cultural differences. Moreover, *Ted Lasso* is an example on how a comedy series can promote cultural intelligence and the associated skill set to educate people about this competence.

Keywords: imagology; cultural differences; cultural intelligence; leadership; comedy

(Word count: 194)

Jessica: „So you think you’re not a proper football manager. Someone who’s never played the game before, or knows the rules.”

Ted: “No, I don’t know jack diddley about any of it.”

Jessica: “But who cares? There’s a great saying in Dutch football.”

Ted: “Oh, I don’t speak Dutch.”

Jessica: “That’s why I was going to tell you in English.”

Ted: “Perfect. Lay it on me!”

Jessica: “**Every disadvantage has its advantage.**”

Ted: “Ooh, I like that!”

Jessica: “**Sure, you don’t know what you’re doing, but doesn’t that mean that you see the game in a different way than any other football manager? And shouldn’t that empower you to cause complete and utter confusion?**”²

² Kelley, J., Hunt, B., Sudeikis, J. (Writers) & Delaney, M.J. (Director). (2020, October 2). The Hope that Kills You [Television series episode]. In Lawrence, B., Sudeikis, J., Hunt, B., Kelly, J. (Creators). *Ted Lasso*. Ruby’s Tuna; Universal Television; Doozer; Warner Bros. Television.

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1. Introduction

The comedy series *Ted Lasso* quickly became one of the most successful series on the streaming service *Apple TV+*, won several *Emmys* and other awards, and authors have used the role of Ted as an example of exceptionally good leadership. The series' main character *Ted Lasso* (henceforth just Ted when referred to the character and not the series title), an US Midwesterner, gets hired as a trainer by a British football club and needs to cope with his otherness from the Brits. But he not only has to get used to the culture that is foreign to him, he also has to take on the leadership role of the coach. *Ted Lasso* is a prime example of intercultural communication in fictive films or series, as it presents the difficulties and challenges that may arise when a foreigner enters a new culture without any previous knowledge. This situation is not far-fetched as we live in a globalized world and diversity is normal in everyday life. Equally, in the professional world, situations in which people with different cultural backgrounds come together are not uncommon (Wagner, 2002).

Beller & Leersen (2007) describe the field of *imagology*, which is concerned with the study of the representation of national characters and how they are used in literature, films and series. Films or series are a reflection of the socio-political discourse and it is important to study these fictional objects as they shape people's ideas about a specific culture (Hartley & McWilliam, 2009). There are many examples of studies that examine just this, using specific examples in films or series to analyse how they contribute to the formation of a national character. This thesis starts exactly at this point and explores how Ted is represented and what effect this has on the formation of the US-American (henceforth just American) national character. In doing so, detailed attention is also paid to how Ted differs from the British.

Ted Lasso is a particularly interesting case since in addition to addressing cultural differences, the second main content of the series is how to deal with them. His process of acquiring a certain cultural knowledge of the British culture is a second centre of the series and

also this thesis. In order to be able to gain insight into the cultural representation of the American Ted and the way he differs from the Brits but to also research his process of learning to handle these cultural differences, this paper makes use of two different theories developed for real life situations. By combining two different strands of research, it is aimed to add another layer to imagology often researching ‘just’ cultural representations. It will become clear in the course of the work whether this combination of two different models is suitable for the examination of a series and whether both procedures strengthen each other through triangulation.

The thesis begins with a contextual classification of the series. For this purpose, the series and its reception as well as current developments in the world of work are explained. The aim of this chapter is to justify the social relevance of the research. The following theoretical framework builds onto this chapter to form the academic basis of this thesis, explaining key terms such as imagology, *essentialism* or *stereotypes*, relating this to the genre of comedy and introducing stereotypes about the British and American. Likewise, the two models, on which the analysis is based, will be introduced as well. The main findings of the analyses are described in the subsequent chapter and further elaborated in the discussion. Here, the theories described in the theoretical framework are confronted with the results of the analyses. The aim of this chapter is to answer the sub-questions of this thesis, formulated in the theoretical framework, and to inform the reader about the limitations of this thesis. In the conclusion, the main research question is answered and thus, the findings of the thesis are summarized. In addition, suggestions for further research are provided.

2. Context

This chapter aims to describe and contextualise the content and background of the series. To do this, a part of the chapter is devoted to intercultural working environments since this is what Ted enters into. The chapter ends by formulating the research question and explaining its social relevance. In this step, the need for two analyses as different pillars for this research is justified.

2.1. The Series *Ted Lasso*

The comedy series is about an American, *Ted Lasso*, who gets hired by a British football club and gets more and more acquainted with the culture but also a new type of sport he has no previous experience in. Back in Kansas, Ted was a relatively successful American football coach and helped a college team to success. Once arrived in the new environment, he plunges into a new culture and differences between him and his new environment become visible. However, through his charm and learning from mistakes, he adapts progressively to the new culture without changing his whole personality. Regardless of him speaking the same language of his environment, there are many cultural hurdles he has to jump over. In the course of the series, he tries to convince the sceptical players and cynical fans of the club of himself. Even though Ted loses decisive games with his team, the club owner does not fire him but rather, plans a future collaboration due to his positive influence on the team.

The production of *Ted Lasso* is American. However, the series was created through collaboration with British people, for example Brett Goldstein, who in addition to a leading role in the series, was also significantly involved in writing the script. Furthermore, many cameos of famous British personalities from the football world take place. Examples include Arlo White, famous commentator, or Mike Dean, a *Premier League* referee.

2.2. Reception of the Series

The series has been mostly positively received and is especially praised for the writing, directing and acting which is reflected in numerous awards. *Ted Lasso* broke the *Emmy* record for a *Freshman Comedy* with the most nominations (Gonzalez, 2021) and won, among other awards, the category for the most *Outstanding Comedy Series* in 2021 (Television Academy, 2021). On *IMDB*, *Ted Lasso* receives a relatively high score of 8,8 (IMDB, n.d.) and critics have been largely positive about the series.

Positive response is also expressed by authors using the character of Ted as example or role model for teaching leadership lessons. An article on the news website *Business Insider* explains how Ted's friendliness and charm can create a positive work environment (Ho, 2021). A different article of the business magazine *Forbes* also draws a connection to the working world and explains that the '*Lasso way*' teaches valuable leaderships lessons by being empathic, building positive relationships with the team, and addressing topics such as wellbeing and mental health (Folkman, 2021). In an article on *LinkedIn*, Luce (2021) links Ted's leadership style to learning cultural intelligence and thus draws a first line to the topic of intercultural communication. Using examples from the series, she links the *Four-Factor Framework for Cultural Intelligence* (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2015) to Ted's behaviours and describes how he manages "to emotionally and authentically connect through his 'biscuits with the boss' initiative, lunch dates, asking questions of curiosity, observing, and listening to those around him in order to avoid future cultural missteps" (Luce, 2021, para.4). This framework will be further explained in 3.5 and used in the course of the thesis.

2.3. Globalisation and Intercultural Workplaces

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the term *globalisation* as "the fact that different cultures and economic systems around the world are becoming connected and similar to each other because of the influence of large multinational companies and of improved communication"

(Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d.). Many different academic disciplines study this development and it has implications for areas such as economics and management sciences or cultural and linguistic studies. Because of the ongoing globalisation, internationally active companies find themselves in diverse markets with culturally diverse customers. This was already found out in 2002, when Wagner explained from an economic point of view that the market and customer structures have become more diverse but also the companies themselves are developing into heterogeneous and multicultural organisations. This happens due to the increasing number of global cooperation and mergers or due to an increasingly diverse workforce (Wagner, 2002).

Diverse working environments compromise a big variety of beliefs, understandings, values and ways of seeing the world (Shen et al., 2009). For this diverse cooperation to succeed, it requires not only an acceptance of differences, but also the creation of an atmosphere of inclusion and making a commitment to valuing diversity (Shen et al., 2009). The importance and numerous benefits of diverse labour cooperation are widely recognised but to create the aforementioned atmosphere of inclusion, in which all members can thrive, a bigger skill set is needed (Clark & Polesello, 2017).

In the series, Ted himself has to deal with the peculiarities and problems of the sporting- and national culture of the London football club, but also with the players of various cultural backgrounds being part of the fictive *Richmond FC*. Football clubs are a very well-chosen theme for a series displaying intercultural processes in connection with the aforementioned findings about diverse working environments. Maderer et al. (2004) suggest that football teams are recruiting players regardless of their origin to make use of the global talent pool and to utilize the specific strengths of individuals with different cultural backgrounds. As an example, the *Champions League* final of 2012 was mentioned in which only ten players of the *FC Bayern*

Munich team of 18 were originally from Germany and with five teammates from the United Kingdom in the team of *FC Chelsea* this number is even smaller (Maderer et al., 2004).

2.4. Research Question and Societal Relevance

Ted Lasso is a prime example of how diverse working environments are presented in film or series and portrays the difficulties and challenges that may arise when a foreigner enters a new culture without any previous knowledge or a certain skill set. Besides the representation of cultural differences, the series focuses on the protagonist's development of cultural intelligence within the new British culture. The following research question results from these two points:

RQ: How are cultural differences presented in the series *Ted Lasso* and how does the protagonist deal with them?

Castañeda (2018) explains that media does not only entertain and inform but also has “the power to transform the popular imaginary into real world practices of love and hate, peace and violence” (Castañeda, 2018, p. 1). Further, she argues that mass media reaches almost everyone and therefore, influences people in how they think about themselves and others (Castañeda, 2018). Hartley and McWilliam (2009) describe similarly that storytelling displays a reflection of the socio-political discourse. Researching the cultural representations of the American Ted and the British will allow insights into how the creators of *Ted Lasso* present the two nations and therefore, contribute to the discourse about the two countries.

Ted was flagged as an inspirational leader figure. For this reason, dividing the thesis by using two different analyses is logical. In this way it is possible that both an analysis of the representation of the American Ted and the British - as well as an evaluation of the process of finding one's way in the new culture - can take place. Choosing this procedure will enhance the understanding of how not only cultural representations but also the portrayal of certain skills or character traits can influence a series' audience.

In the previous paragraphs it was elaborated that the series *Ted Lasso* is an interesting case study for diverse or intercultural workplaces and how football teams can be seen as an intercultural construct in itself. Further relevance is based on the series' ground-breaking success. By the end of 2021, the series had generated 509 million views spread over the 20 episodes (Mendelson, 2021), making it the most successful series to date on the Apple TV+ streaming service (Katz, 2021). Together with the predominantly positive reception of the series and the fact that *Ted Lasso* is used by several authors as an example of positive (intercultural) leadership, it makes sense to examine *Ted Lasso*, as the series has not yet been studied further before.

3. Theoretical Framework

This chapter will describe and discuss the concepts, theories and models which will be the basis of the methodology and the subsequent analysis. To do so, the first section will introduce the field of imagology with attention to stereotypes, *othering* and essentialism. Afterwards, it will be explained how these concepts manifest themselves in comedy before an overview about existing American and British stereotypes and the interrelation of both countries will be presented. The subsequent analyses will be based on the models presented in this chapter.

3.1. Imagology and Cultural Representations

In order to discuss the cultural representation of Ted and to contrast it with the series' portrayal of British culture, the field of imagology must first be defined. Beller and Leerssen (2007) have done fundamental work in this area. Beller (2007) explains that "from early on in the history, the encounter with other cultures, languages and customs has been governed by selective perception, which inspires curiosity, stimulates the imagination and evokes fascinating images in people's minds" (Beller & Leerssen, 2007, p. 6). Imagology specifically studies these 'fascinating images' and is interested in the dynamics between the images characterizing the other (*hetero-image*) and the image of oneself (*auto-image*) (Beller, 2007). The main focus are the attitudes, prejudices and stereotypes about the personal national character and that of the other (Chew, 2006). It is imagology's goal to clarify any prejudices (Beller, 2007). The goal is not to examine the true image of a country, but to find out what the reasons are for the respective representation of different national characters. This explains why imagologists agree that their research finds out more about the culture making representations about another culture than the represented culture itself (Chew, 2006).

Beller (2007) explains that cultural representations and certain national characters are often based on historical circumstances. Attitudes are reasoned in earlier intercultural

encounters when one culture met another and through the description of these meetings through travel writing or literary representations (Beller, 2007). Already in 1928 it was described that the formation of a national character has historical foundations but is nevertheless fluid and in constant change (Barker, 1928). Another origin of such assumptions can be the transfer of regional traditions to the national character. In this context Chew (2006) mentions the wearing of *Lederhosen* as typically German even though this is not traditional all over Germany. In the course of the 20th century, also famous persons such as sports heroes became focal points in the creation of national characters (Chew, 2006).

The notions of *stereotyping* and *attitudes* are very closely linked to cultural representations. To allow individuals a quick gathering and processing of information about a different culture or person, stereotypes are used to highlight differences, make predictions and simplify certain matters (Jackson, 2014). Beller (2007) notes that the number of concrete definitions for stereotypes is vast. He gives the following example, based on Aronson: “A stereotype is a generalization about a group of people which incidental characteristics are assigned to virtually all members of the group, regardless of actual variation of the members [...]” (Aronson, 2005 in Beller & Leerssen, 2007, p. 429). Stereotypes therefore make a situation manageable when a deeper understanding is not needed or possible (Bradley, 2018).

However, stereotypes also invoke *self-other oppositions* by presenting a different culture in a certain way and creating awareness for how it differs from others (Leerssen, 2016). Relating to the aforementioned dynamic between hetero- and auto-image, this process is called ‘othering’ and allows individuals to construct images of sameness and difference to allow an affirmation of the personal identity (Jackson, 2014). It can relate to a vast variation of identity markers such as nationality, race, religion, gender and so on (Dervin, 2016). Dervin (2016) continues in explaining that similarly to the use of stereotypes, othering is used to find one’s own place in society and make sense of the world. Holiday (2010) puts attention on the point

that othering is often used for the construction of the ‘demonized’ image of ‘them’ so that the positive self-image can be maintained. In that way, stereotypes are often used to show one’s superiority to another group (Jackson, 2014). Further, othering highlights mostly the differences between people and excludes the fact that people share a lot of similarities as well, even if they are from different places (Dervin, 2016). Studying how stereotypical representations are formed contributes to an analysis of processes of othering or inclusion and exclusion (ten Thije, 2016).

Concerning the generalization and simplified representation of cultures, the term essentialism becomes important as another danger of working with stereotypes and national characters. Holliday (2010) explains that essentialism stands for the view that people who come from the same cultural areas are equal and homogeneous and that their behaviour is determined by their cultural affiliation. Accordingly, there is a common cultural core that all members of a culture ‘essentially’ share (Holliday, 2010). The work of cultural scholars such as Geert Hofstede and Edward T. Hall is based on this concept in their desire to be able to understand and grasp cultures simply and clearly.

Taking all this into account, it becomes clear that the definition of a national character often is essentialist and that consequently, the notion of essentialism always needs to be considered in the discipline of imagology (Chew, 2009). Essentialism is mainly seen as a negative force since holding an essentialist view can lead to a reduction of cultures (Bradley, 2018). Experts in the field of imagology are aware of this essentialist aspect within their academic discipline, however, it is outlined how the critique is valid but misleading. Leerssen (2016) explains that the need to research cultural representations is more important than ever with hindsight on the ever-increasing populism and nationalism in many parts of the world. Political leaders like Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump, or Victor Orbán rely on stereotypes to create unreal boundaries between one culture and another. Even though stereotypes are

essentialist and generalising, they do exist and therefore, their origin and display in media needs to be studied (Leerssen, 2016).

Television depicts and represents the world and different cultures in a certain way (Allen & Hill, 2004). The next paragraph addresses the use of cultural representations for entertaining the audience in television, film and in particular, comedy.

3.2. Cultural Representations in Comedy

Humorous representations in film or series can be used either constructively or destructively when displaying cultural differences (Timmer, 2014). As already mentioned, Allen and Hill (2004) explain that representation is television's primary function and viewers often experience these portrayals as reality. Hartley and McWilliam (2009) add that television reflects the world through narration and therefore is an important storyteller. Television has the power to distort the truth and portray certain people in a way that is not accurate and the danger is that the audience cannot distinguish these representations from the truth (Rifesser & Ros i Solé, 2022). Rifesser & Ros i Solé (2022) likewise add that these media representations and stereotypes have the power to generate difference and otherness. In that sense, laughter can create social rupture separating those laughing and the ones being laughed about (Carty & Musharbash, 2008). Stereotypes can therefore be used to reinforce rather than to identify cultural differences. Another common problem is the already mentioned essentialist trivialisation and generalisation of a certain group solely on the basis of a handful of stereotypes (Reiman, 2010).

The points just mentioned put the humorous use of cultural differences in film in a negative light. There are, however, also advantages such as the possibility to "identify, explore and overcome some of the boundaries between cultures and to open up intercultural communication" (Timmer, 2014, para. 13). The representation of humour makes it possible to address issues that would otherwise be considered very controversial (Carty & Musharbash, 2008). Tensions between two cultures can be addressed and it can be laughed about them

together (Timmer, 2014). Whether humour is perceived as positive - and thus leads to bonding within a society and uniting several societies - depends on several factors such as the way the comedy is made and the audience's perception (Jiang, et al., 2019).

3.3. Models for Defining Cultural Differences

When contrasting cultural differences, ten Thije (2016) explains the distinction between universal or *etic* and relativist or *emic* framework when contrasting cultural differences. Emics are “ideas, behaviours, items, and concepts that are culture specific. Etics, roughly speaking, are culture general – i.e. universal” (Triandis, 1994 in ten Thije, 2016). Perhaps the best-known model to determine value systems and national characters and making them comparable are the *cultural dimensions* of the Dutch social scientist Geert Hofstede (McSweeney, 2015). This is an example for an etic framework. Because of its practicality, Hofstede’s framework is seen as pivotal in cross-cultural research and is used exceptionally often for different research (Venkateswaran & Ojha, 2019). Dimensions contrast, for example, the degree of *individualism* and *collectivism* of national cultures, or describe whether a culture tends to reject or accept uncertainty (Hofstede, 2003). There is much criticism of Hofstede's model. McSweeney (2002), for example, points out that there is no uniform national culture and that Hofstede’s surveys of a certain group do not allow conclusions to be drawn about an entire country. This relates to the notion of essentialism.

Müller-Jacquier (2000) observed that intercultural training concepts were often too focused on the American market and could not be applied to other cultures. According to him, these models have a too normative character “without explicit documentation and analysis of the concrete underlying verbal and non-verbal behaviour” (Müller-Jacquier, 2003, p. 3). He highlights the problem of an identification of certain value systems merely on the basis of different value orientations and without considering the communication itself in interaction actions (Müller-Jacquier, 2000). Accordingly, the special feature of the model is that it analyses

and contrasts differences in communication between two parties without directly attributing them to certain values and attitudes (Müller-Jacquier, 2000). On the basis of these problems, Müller-Jacquier (2000) develops the *Linguistic Awareness of Cultures* Model (henceforth *LAC-model*). The LAC-model provides a set of linguistic categories to describe typical problems occurring in cultural interactions (Müller-Jacquier, 2003). Even though the model was published in 2000 and is therefore relatively dated, it offers a way to better understand intercultural interactions and identify differences based on ten categories (see table 1). Through these categories it becomes possible to systematically approach the clash of participants of two cultures and was consequently chosen as the first foundational model for the analysis of *Ted Lasso*.

Müller-Jacquier (2000) chose Franco-German cultural differences as an example for his model, however, the model was by no means developed only for these two cultures. This suggests an etic application. He explains that when applying the model to two cultures, own examples for the respective categories have to be defined on the basis of critical interaction situations (Müller-Jacquier, 2000). Using these defined examples, an analysis of an intercultural encounter can then be carried out.

Table 1: Categories of the LAC-model (Müller-Jacquier, 2003, p. 27-40)

	Category	Description	Franco-German examples
1	Social Meaning / Lexicon	In addition to linguistic differences, the same words may have different uses in different cultures	Different interpretation of the word 'concept' French: Brainstorming German: Completely elaborated plan
2	Speech Acts	Speech acts (question, answer, request, etc.) are realized differently	German: "We are going to the cinema tonight, are you coming?" - May not be taken as an invitation
3	Organisation of Conversation	Conventions of discourse flow, treatment of argument / counterargument, specific conversation patterns	The French speak more overlapping than Germans
4	Choice of Topic	Different rules what can be made a topic in specific situation	Germans discuss political situations in private

5	Directness / Indirectness	Speakers' directness / indirectness in expressing their communicative intentions	Surprise at the directness of how Germans express agreement/disagreement
6	Register	Functional varieties of speech depending on reasons such as situation / status of the persons / age / gender	Different behaviours in professional situation e.g., when introducing new people
7	Paraverbal Factor	Rhythm, volume, word and sentence stress, speech rate, intonation	Defense of the speaker role through increased volume by Germans
8	Non-verbal Means of Expression	Facial expressions, gestures, body distance, eye contact	Rather slow presentation style of the Germans
9	Culture-specific Values / Attitudes	Based on Hofstede's five categories for comparing different countries value system	Individualism vs. Collectivism, strong vs. weak Power Distance
10	Culture-specific Behaviour	Isolated individually perceived action and situations revealed through surveys and interviews	Germans bowing to authority, e.g., waiting for the streetlight to turn green ("Prussian" behaviour)

Based on the above and in order to identify cultural differences in the series and draw conclusions about the representation of the American national character in relation to the British, the following first sub-question is nominated:

SQL: How is the American culture represented through the character of Ted and to what extent does his representation differ from the one of the Brits? To what extent are stereotypes and othering used to generate laughs and what impact does this have?

3.4. The United States and Britain

As described in chapter 3.1, national characters are rather hard to grasp. To get a first overview of existing images and stereotypes about the Americans and the Brits, it may be useful to look at the corresponding *Wikipedia* pages of "Stereotypes of Americans" (Wikipedia contributors, 2022) and "Stereotypes of the British" (Wikipedia contributors, 2022). As it is assembled and checked by the public, this information provides a starting point for widely circulating stereotypical ideas about the national characters of both cultures. Because *Ted Lasso* is an American and British production, only the English pages of the encyclopaedia were used. A listing of these stereotypes can be found on the next page.

Figure 1: “Stereotypes of Americans” (Wikipedia contributors, 2022)

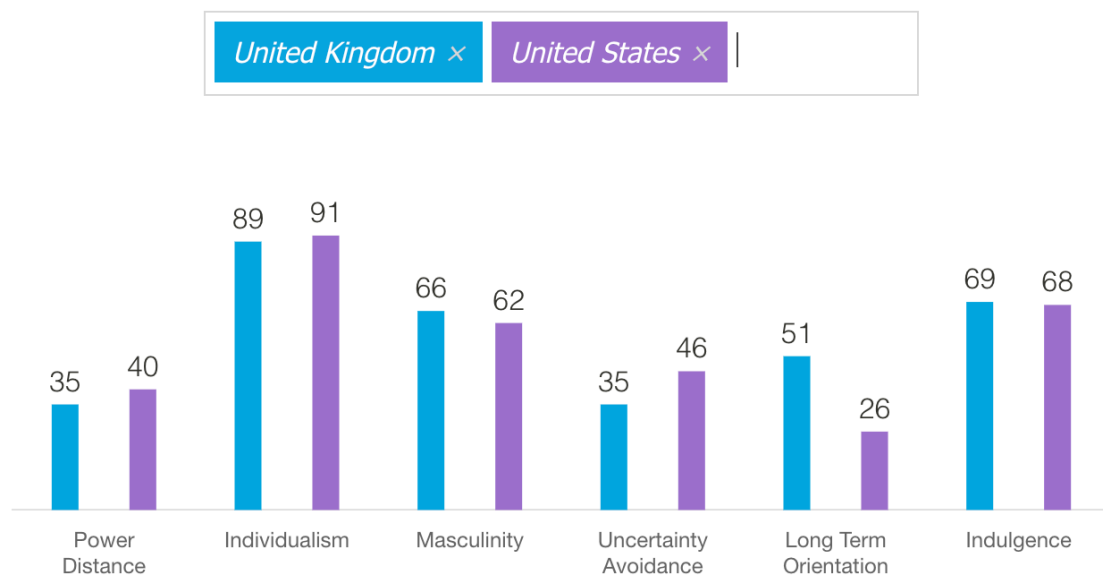
Generosity / optimism / hardworking nature / frontier mentality / friendliness / extroversion / obsession with guns / materialism, over-consumption, and extreme capitalism / lack of cultural awareness / racism and racialism / environmental ignorance / arrogance and nationalism / military zeal / workaholic culture

Figure 2: “Stereotypes about the UK” (Wikipedia contributors, 2022)

Politeness / humour (sarcasm, dark comedy, irony) / tea / lack of emotion / teeth / food (poor quality, inedible) / monolingualism / anti-social behaviour abroad

With regard to further identifying a national character by comparison, Hofstede’s (2003) model of cultural dimensions, which is widely relied upon internationally, could provide a first starting point, as it may present insights shared by the larger public as well. Furthermore, Müller-Jacquier (2000) adapted Hofstede’s model for his LAC-model and one of its categories. In this etic approach, the two nations score relatively similarly on most dimensions. Differences are primarily found in the categories *long term orientation* and *uncertainty avoidance*.

Figure 3: Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, USA/UK (Hofstede Insights, 2022)



Since both Americans and Brits were involved in the creation of *Ted Lasso* and both cultures are being represented it seems logical to characterize the US-UK relationship. Donaldson (2018) from the *British Council* characterizes the connection as ‘special’ due to its cultural ties with a common language, shared past and interest in each other’s popular culture (Donaldson, 2018). The closeness of the two countries is shown in an array of different fields such as the economy, politics or education (British Council, 2019). However, from his British perspective, Donaldson (2018) sees the cultural bond as the strongest link between the nations. Sharing the same language enables an ease when communicating, doing business and the access to cultural outputs (Donaldson, 2018). Nevertheless, Donaldson (2018) argues that the relationship is not entirely unproblematic. Often, the Brits see the US as some kind of “adolescent offspring” (Donaldson, 2018, p.7) of their own culture. The Americans, however, see the United Kingdom as their old-fashioned counterpart and cultural and political ‘poodle’ (Donaldson, 2018). Additionally, the Americanisation of culture and language is perceived as problematic by the Brits (British Council, 2019).

3.5. Defining Cultural Intelligence

The second part of this thesis deals with the question of how Ted manages to find his way around in the new culture and situation. In order to get further insight into the way this process of cultural acculturation is represented and whether the show is actually suitable as an example for well-executed leadership, the term *cultural intelligence* must first be defined.

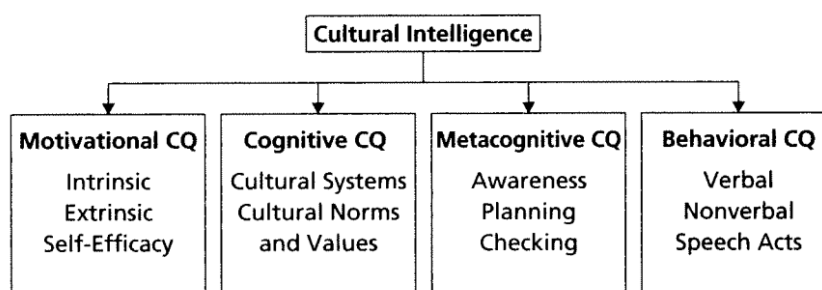
To fully leverage potential benefits of an increasingly globalised world, individuals must develop skills to be able to manage intercultural encounters (Clark & Polesello, 2017). Cultural intelligence (henceforth *CQ*), is defined as “the ability to relate and work effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds and it goes beyond existing notions of cultural sensitivity and awareness” (Cultural Intelligence Center, 2021). Livermore and Van Dyne (2010) stress the importance of CQ as a skill set that is crucial for contemporary leaders.

Culturally intelligent people understand how culture shapes organisation and communication, how it influences them, and know how they lead and interact with an effective emotional sensibility (Clark & Polesello, 2017).

There is a variety of models to determine an individual's level of CQ. The common feature of these models is that CQ always consists of different components. One of the earliest works in this area is the Model of *Intercultural Communicative Competence* in which Byram et al. (2002) introduce the following five categories: *knowledge*; *critical cultural awareness*; *attitudes* (curiosity and openness); and skills of *interpreting/relating* as well as *discovery/interaction*.

This study adopts the *Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence* by Livermore and Van Dyne (2010) for the second analysis. Similarly to the choice of the LAC-model, there is a big variety of different models and theories attempting to assess CQ. Livermore & Van Dyne's (2010) model was chosen eventually as it is not tailored to a specific sector, such as the business one, but can be applied to a wide variety of situations (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2010). The models' clear definition of different categories of CQ makes it easy to transfer them into a category system.

Figure 4: The Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2010, p.134)



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Motivational CQ refers to the individual's intrinsic motivation, level of interest, drive and energy to adapt to the new culture. In order to successfully develop motivational CQ one has to derive enjoyment from culturally diverse situations (Livermore, et al., 2010). An understanding of the definition of a culture, the way cultures can differ from each other and how cultural differences influence societies, norms and values is described by the *cognitive CQ* (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2015). The third component of the model, *metacognitive CQ*, considers the ability to strategize when entering a new culture and takes into account "whether we can use our cultural knowledge to plan an appropriate strategy, accurately interpret what's going on in a cross-cultural situation" (Livermore, et al., 2010, p. 136). Lastly, *behavioural CQ* describes the ability to be flexible in verbal and nonverbal situations and to act appropriately when communicating specific types of messages (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2015).

By answering the second sub-question it is aimed to describe Ted's process of becoming a part of the British culture and to assess his level of CQ. These results will be related to the character's use for leadership lessons (see 2.2) as well.

SQ2: How is Ted's process of acculturation represented and can his character be considered culturally intelligent? Is his role suitable for teaching leadership lessons?

3.6. Academic Relevance and Sub-questions

The academic field of imagology is long established and there is a great density of works looking at cultural representations in films or other material through different lenses. One famous example is the research of Western portrayals of Arabian culture which became known through Said's (1978) concept of *Orientalism*. Compared to the other works dealing with cultural representations in film or series, the cinematic representation of the process of cultural adaptation within a new culture and acquiring CQ has been studied less so far. This work will add to the prior scientific discourse about cultural representation in film by not only examining the series' representation of the American culture in relation to the British but also how Ted

adapts to the new cultural environment and how this is presented. By doing so, a second layer is added to the traditional imagological approach that examines the creation of national characters and representation of certain characters.

Further academic relevance is based on the application of two models that were originally designed for real life and not for fictitious situations. This leads to the third and final sub-question of this thesis.

SQ3: Is the use of two methodologies originally developed for real situations fruitfully applicable to a fictional series?

4. Method

4.1. Corpus

Ted Lasso is offered exclusively on the Apple TV+ streaming service. So far it consists of two seasons with ten episodes in the first season and twelve in the second. The series will continue and the third season is expected in summer 2022. Most episodes last about thirty minutes. The release of the first episode took place on the 14th August 2020. The main character of the series, Ted, is played by comedian Jason Sudeikis.

Several people are responsible for writing and directing the series, also including actors featured in the series. The main writers of the series are US screenwriter Bill Lawrence and actor Jason Sudeikis. Brendan Hunt (*Coach Beard*) and Brett Goldstein (*Roy Kent*), who play main roles in *Ted Lasso*, are also involved in writing the series. All episodes are structured as follows. After a short film sequence of about three minutes, which offers a foretaste of the respective episode, the title sequence follows, which shows Ted in the stands of the football stadium. The title song is by the lead singer of the British band *Mumford & Sons*. This is followed by the rest of the series.

Due to the timeframe of this study, not all 22 episodes could be analysed in detail. Nevertheless, an attempt was made to present Ted and the British (football) culture through a content-based selection of five episodes. Dörnyei (2007) calls this process *pre-coding* and explains it as a crucial move to make sense of our first impressions. Further, it “involves reading and reading the transcripts, reflecting on them, and noting down our thoughts in journal entries and memos” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 250). The entire series was watched once through and notes were taken. On the basis of the notes, five episodes were selected for this research project (see table 2), based on two factors. Firstly, the episodes must contain a certain number of representations of cultural differences or the development of cultural intelligence. In this way, certain episodes could be excluded. An example is the ninth episode of the second season

(*Beard After Hours*), which is simply about Coach Beard's drunken night after a loss in an important match and its aftermath. Little to no information important to answering the research questions could have been gathered here. Secondly, there must be certain gaps between the selected episodes. This was to ensure that Ted's process of acculturation and acquiring of cultural intelligence can be analysed.

Table 2: Corpus of the analysis

	Episode number	Title	Directed by...	Written by...	Release date	Duration
1	S 1, E 2	Biscuits	Zach Braff	Jason Sudeikis, Bill Lawrence, Brendan Hunt, Joe Kelly	14.08.2020	30 minutes
2	S 1, E 6	Two Aces	Elliot Hegarty	Bill Wrubel	04.09.2020	32 minutes
3	S 1, E 10	The Hope that Kills You	MJ Delaney	Joe Kelly, Brendan Hunt, Jason Sudeikis	02.10.2020	34 minutes
4	S 2, E 3	Do the Right-est Thing	Ezra Edelman	Ashley Nicole Black	06.08.2021	36 minutes
5	S 2, E12	Inverting the Pyramid of Success	Declan Lowney	Jason Sudeikis	08.10.2021	49 minutes

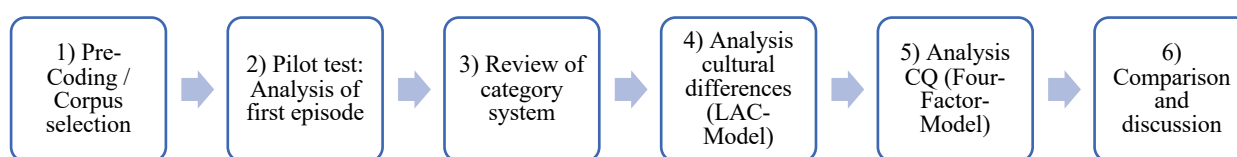
4.2. Research Design

The analyses carried out in this work is qualitative, which means that certain facts were described and evaluated interpretatively rather than on the basis of a set of data (Dörnyei, 2007). The philosophy of this research belongs to that of *interpretivism*, meaning that the result of this research was the product of subjective interpretation and influenced by the researcher.

Müller-Jacquier's (2000) LAC-Model and Livermore & Van Dyne's (2010) Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence described earlier in the theoretical framework were used as a basis for the following two analyses. For the coding of video sequences, the different categories of the two models were deductively applied to the chosen five episodes of *Ted Lasso* and formed the category system. The structure of the analysis was intended to ensure that both

research questions can be answered systematically on the basis of theories. Figure 5 provides an overview of the research design and the course of the research project. After the pre-coding and the selection of five episodes (see 4.1), the two category systems were applied to the corpus in a pilot test to ensure that the research can be conducted as smoothly as possible afterwards. After this, the main analyses could be started before finally, the results were presented and discussed in the last sections of this thesis.

Figure 5: Procedure of the analysis



The LAC-model was used as the foundation for the first category system. This relates directly to the first sub-question of the thesis and searched to examine the imagological representation of Ted and the American character in relation to that of the Brits. To do so, all ten categories were transferred one-to-one to build a category system. The different categories of cultural differences presented in the LAC-model were to be demonstrated in the series and proven by means of concrete video sequences. The second part of the paper proceeded in the same way as the first part of the analysis and takes the Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence as the basis for the category system. The four categories (motivational, cognitive, metacognitive and behavioural CQ) were equally attempted to be filled with video sequences in order to assess Ted's level of CQ.

The aforementioned two analyses were carried out with regard to the following three steps. In a first step, the series was watched again and important scenes and the corresponding timestamps were noted. As a second step, marked video sequences were re-watched and tables

were made to explain the different situations. As a last step, the appropriate categories were assigned to the individual video sequences.

4.3. Pilot

Both category systems were applied to the first chosen episode of *Ted Lasso* in this pilot test. The detailed results can be found in Appendix A. It was possible to identify most of the categories of the LAC-model in the episode. Table 3 shows an example of the assignment of multiple categories to one video sequence.

Table 3: Example analysis (cultural differences)

Category	Episode & Timestamp	Description
Social Meaning / Lexicon, Directness / Indirectness	S1, E2 10:15-11:10	Ted has dinner with Coach Beard in a traditional British pub. Beforehand, he set up a feedback box in the football club's changing room. Now he opens this box and discusses the feedback with his co-coach. The comments are very insulting and call Ted a "wanker". The waitress tells him that he should not let his team call him a wanker and explains the meaning of this expression.

However, for one category it was not possible to find examples relevant for this research and therefore it was removed from the category system and for further analysis. The category of *non-verbal means of expression* was excluded because this study is intended to focus only on the differences in communication and behaviour. Consideration of an additional visual level of analysis is beyond the scope of this study.

In order to best clarify the results, it was decided that only the scenes in which Ted is directly involved were included in the analysis to contrast the differences between his Americanness and British culture. For that reason, typical British behaviour in which Ted is not involved was not included in the analysis. Furthermore, it already became apparent in the first episode that Ted uses American English throughout the whole episode. This is particularly evident in expressions such as "Y'all", "Heck", "Fella", or "Buddy". Even though these can be assigned to the category *social meaning / lexicon*, this was not done, because otherwise this

category would have been used almost entirely and would have distorted the final results. Nevertheless, this fact will be taken into account in the discussion of the results as they are still relevant for describing Ted's representation. The category *social meaning / lexicon* applied when American English is explicitly compared with British English. It should also be noted that certain categories overlapped with others and that for certain scenes several categories came into play. Certain patterns will emerge after analysing all five selected episodes and will be discussed subsequently.

Overlaps in the assignment to the category system also occurred in the second part of the pilot test. Examples for the four different types of CQ could already be identified in the first episode analyses. However, at some points certain behaviours of Ted were assigned to two different types of CQ as categories overlap. It did not seem necessary to adapt the second category system based on the Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence. After the pilot and the adaptations to the LAC-model, it could be continued with the coding of the remaining episodes.

Table 4: Example analysis (CQ)

Category	Episode & Timestamp	Description
Cognitive CQ	S1, E2 20:55-21:40	Ted approaches Sam Obisanya, one of the football players, to give him a little toy soldier as a lucky charm for the next matches. Initially, Ted received a pack of these toys from his son in the US and they mean a lot to him. Because of Sam's Nigerian background and his home countries' imperial history, he declines the gift and tells Ted that he does not have "the same fondness for the American military". At first, Ted is slightly puzzled by this, but then recognises and respects the differences in culture.

5. Analyses

5.1. LAC-Model Analysis

Three categories of the LAC-model in particular came into play in the analysis of the chosen *Ted Lasso* episodes (see figure 6). With 27 occurrences, *culture-specific behaviour* is the most frequent characteristic of cultural differences. This is followed by *choice of topic* with 20 instances where Ted and his respective conversation partner see other topics as appropriate for the situation. The category *register* could be identified 19 times and refers to different behaviours in professional situations.

Figure 6: Results analysis cultural differences

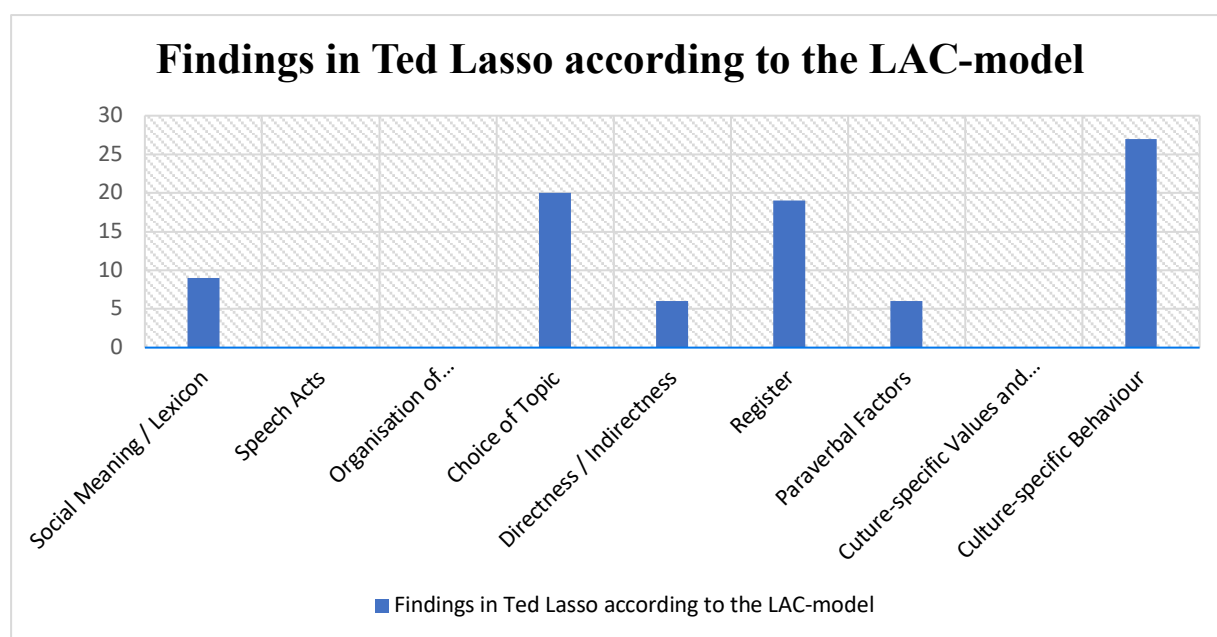


Table 5: Examples of cultural differences analysis findings

Culture- specific behaviour, (Register, Choice of Topic)	S1, E10 8:05-9:20	Ted enters his boss's office to drop off the daily biscuits. Jessica, his boss, notices something is wrong and he says "Good eye, small fry". The conversation is interspersed with other comical expressions such as "I don't know jack diddley about any of it".
Choice of Topic, (Register)	S1, E2 15:25-15:45	After embarrassing himself at the first press conference, he counters questions in a funny way. One reporter asks: "Can you explain the offside rules". Ted: "I'm gonna put it the same way the US Supreme Court did back in 1964 when they defined pornography. It ain't easy to explain but you know when you see it". This causes laughter.

Register, (Choice of Topic, Paraverbal Factor, Culture-specific Behaviour)	S1, E6 1:30-3:00	Ted is going through a divorce with his wife and seems very upset. He enters his office where Coach Beard and Nate are waiting for him. He talks a lot and fast while the other two characters seem quiet. Ted asks strange questions, for example what his colleagues favourite bath bombs are or whether they should give each other funny nicknames like “honey” or “babe”.
Social Meaning / Lexicon, (Choice of Topic, Register, Paraverbal Factor, Culture-specific Behaviour)	S1, E10 9:30-10:50	Ted is over-motivated and loud at a new training session with the team. He introduces a new set of tactics, all with funny names. Team members suggest names, some of which are reminiscent of their origins. “Midnight Poutine”, for example, is commented on by Ted as “It’s just super Canadian”. Ted compares trick plays to the British equivalent: “Today’s lesson is trick plays. At least, that’s what we call ‘em back home. What do they call ‘em here again?” Coach Beard: “Elaborate set pieces”. Ted: “Yeah, we gonna stick with ‘trick-plays’. That’s a lot more fun”.
Directness / Indirectness, (Choice of Topic, Register, Culture-specific Behaviour)	S2, E12 10:30-13:00	Ted gives a motivational speech to the team. He uses motivational examples from his personal life, such as his school days or references to American culture. An example is: “To quote the great UCLA college basketball coach, John Obi-Wan Gandalf [...]”. He does not get to the point and keeps deviating from the topic.
Paraverbal Factors, (Register, Culture-specific Behaviour)	S1, E6	FC Richmond’s manager works silently and Ted enters the room with a loud “Kock-a-doodle-do” and speaks in a really loud and extroverted way. He does not really respect the other persons privacy.

The frequency of the *culture-specific behaviour* category is explained by one main factor. This category applied, when Ted behaves ‘typically’ American and thus, refers to a more emic-oriented perspective and related for example, to the stereotypes about Americans (see 3.4). Especially when assigning video sequences to this category, a more subjective approach had to be taken since it was not possible to fall back on a catalogue of all stereotypes (see table 5). Here, Ted behaves culturally-specific American since he is behaving loud and extroverted which earlier was defined as stereotypical for Americans. Further, with “Jack Diddley” he refers an American fictive character.

A different *choice of topic* was identified when Ted refers to concrete US topics, objects and so on. For this category another example can be found in table five. With the US Supreme Court, it is referred to something specifically American. Another example would be “Hey! What’s the story, Paul Shorey” (S2 E 12, 5:50-7:00)”, referring to an American comedian.

Another example for the category *register* is how Ted behaves in situations like meetings with his boss, speeches to the team or press conferences (see table 5) differently to his British peers. This is often characterized by Ted's loud manner or extroversion. In the selected example, Ted talks to his colleagues about their favourite bath bombs and calls them names like "honey" or "babe". In comparison to his talking partners, this seems off and in appropriate.

As already observed in the pilot test, it is noticeable that some categories overlap. For example, the category *register* almost always appears together with the category *culture-specific behaviour*. As earlier defined, Americans are often perceived as loud and they behave therefore differently in professional situations than their British counterpart. Likewise, the *register* and *choice of topic* categories often overlap. Ted often finds himself in situations where he chooses private topics in a conversation with the boss, colleagues or the team that are perceived as inappropriate by his conversation partner. According to Müller-Jacquier's (2000) definition, both categories apply. Furthermore, *choice of topic* and *culture-specific behaviour* correlate with each other since the choice of private topics and American references in conversation is defined as culturally specific for Americans. The three categories mentioned in this paragraph occur together very frequently. An example of this is the last-mentioned example for the category *register*. Firstly, this category fits because Ted behaves inappropriately compared to the others. Secondly, *choice of topic* fits because he chooses a strange topic of conversation about bath bombs. Thirdly, *culture-specific behaviour* fits, since Americans were characterized as loud and extroverted.

The categories *speech acts*, *organisation of conversation* and *culture-specific values/attitudes* could not be demonstrated in the material.

5.2. Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence Analysis

All four categories of the model for determining CQ by Livermore and van Dyne (2010) can be observed in the analysed episodes and are likewise divided equally between all four categories. The first category, *motivational* CQ, was proven 13 times in the series. In Ted's behaviour all other three categories were identified 11 times.

Figure 7: Results analysis CQ

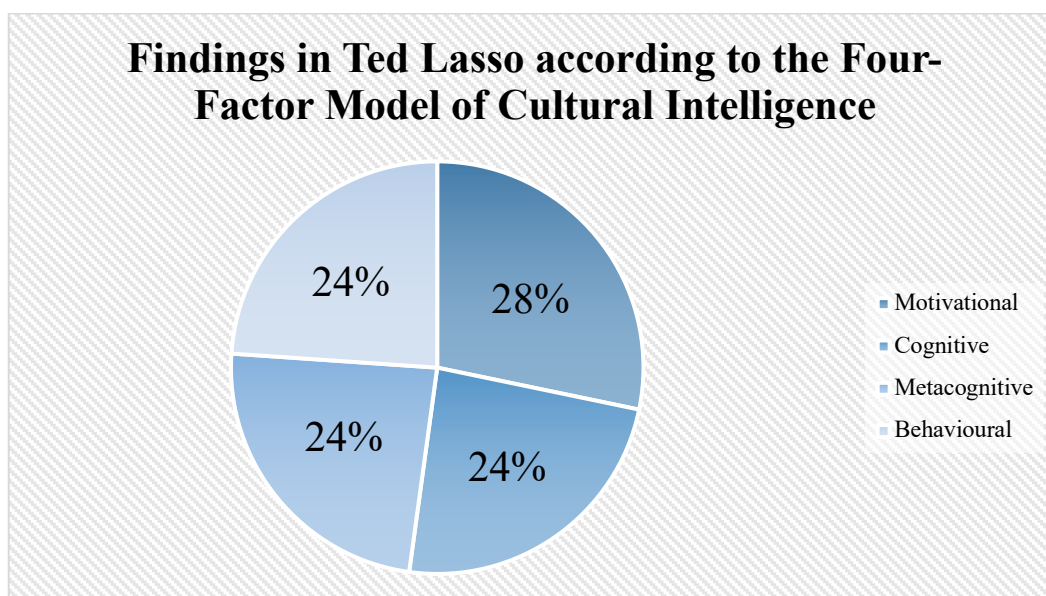


Table 6: Examples of CQ analysis findings

Motivational CQ	S1, E10 5:25-6:10	Ted and Coach Beard are once again staying in everyday British settings, eating in the pub. Ted asks many questions and is willing to learn more about the culture and rules. He is very observant and observes British behaviour. Advice from locals is taken on board.
Cognitive CQ	S2, E12 29:00-30:00	On issues Ted is not sure about, he tries to involve the whole team to make a decision. He is aware of the different people and backgrounds of the players and listens to the opinion of the direct Dutchman Jan Maas.
Metacognitive CQ	S2, E3 5:25-6:10	Ted is aware that footballers are often not serious because of his American looseness and language. He tries a method and behaves unfairly by yelling at players to make the players aware that it was better the way he was before. This seems to be working.
Behavioural CQ	S1, E6 5:25-6:10	Continuously, Ted Lasso learns from past press conferences and masters them better and better with humour. He knows about language differences and begins to play with them.

Motivational CQ describes the energy invested in learning and adapting to the new culture. This attitude is clearly pronounced in Ted's behaviour since he tries to learn as much as possible about British culture by integrating himself into everyday life. Outside the environment of FC Richmond, he tries to build relationships with British people and learn from them as he makes friends with people from his neighbourhood and often meets in the pub (see example in table six). Within the football club, Ted asks about things he does not understand and inquiries about the mental state of the players. Through the recurring 'biscuits with the boss', Ted also tries to connect emotionally with his boss by offering her a typically British treat every morning. Ted behaves attentively and learns from his mistakes.

As described in chapter 3.5, *cognitive CQ* broadly relates to the awareness of cultural differences and the way they influence societies. Ted is aware that he has a different cultural background than those around him and acknowledges this difference. He not only appreciates the British culture, but also the cultural backgrounds of players who for example, originally come from Nigeria or the Netherlands. As can be seen in table six, this happens when Ted specifically asks the new Dutch team member *Jan Maas* something. He wants to integrate cultural differences into the training and thus, creates a space in which it is possible for everyone to live out their own culture. Ted juxtaposes cultures and jokes in a respectful way about British and American differences such as the more pessimistic or optimistic attitude of both countries (S1 E10, 16:20-17:20).

An individual has a strong *metacognitive CQ* when actions are strategized and a specific plan is followed. Ted has a clear plan with the main priority of creating a good environment within the team. In order to do so, he tries new strategies throughout the series to find out which one works best (see example in table six). He also tries to unite the club's multicultural environment to create a sense of comradeship and belonging. Winning football matches is important, but it is even more important that the players and his colleagues are doing well. He

asks how his peers are feeling and tries to get to the bottom of problems and find out what is important to the different players. By admitting mistakes, being honest and listening to every player he tries to lower the hierarchy within the club.

The last category of *behavioural* CQ relates to the ability of appropriate acting in intercultural settings. When entering the new culture, Ted finds it difficult to adapt and his behaviour is perceived as unprofessional, inappropriate and amusing (for example press conferences). By observing the culture, however, it becomes easier and easier for Ted to adapt to British patterns. Ted manages to master difficult situations, for example in press conferences (see example in table six), and learns how to behave with his boss or other colleagues and players more appropriately. That does not mean he is changing his whole personality completely and he is remaining American in the way he is presented.

The exact progress of learning cultural intelligence in the new culture could not be determined by the Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence. Nevertheless, it can be seen that Ted already has three of the four competencies of CQ when he arrives in London. He is willing to learn about the new culture, has a plan or strategy and he is aware that cultures are different and how that influences society. However, he is struggling to behave adequately in certain situations (behavioural CQ). Over the course of the five episodes, an improvement can be observed. Key events are the press conferences, in which Ted is increasingly getting better at responding to the reporter's question and behaving appropriately without embarrassing himself as he did at the start of the series.

6. Discussion

In this discussion, the three sub-questions of this thesis will be answered successively. A synthesis of both the first and second sub-question - and thus also of the results of both analyses - takes place in the subsequent summary when answering the main research question.

6.1. Ted Lasso as the American Prototype

This subchapter is answering the first sub-question of the thesis: **How is the American culture represented through the character of Ted and to what extent does his representation differ from the one of the Brits? To what extent are stereotypes and othering used to generate laughs and what impact does this have?**

The character Ted arrives in the new and British culture without knowing much about the new environment he is going to be in for the next time. The meeting of Ted and his new peers is therefore a little bumpy and differences in behaviour become apparent during all five episodes analysed. These cultural differences can be observed at different levels and the first major observation is Ted's way of speaking. Already during the analysis of the first episode it became clear that he is distinguished not only by his accent and pronunciation, but also by his use of American English and typically American words ("Buddy", "Fella"), slang ("Y'all") or interjections like "Heck!". When Ted begins to speak, he can be immediately identified as American. These differences in the category *social meaning / lexicon* were disregarded at first in the LAC-model analysis in order not to distort other categories through the much higher frequency of these phenomena. More nuanced differences were then elaborated in the analysis part of the paper and cultural differences according to a modification of the LAC-model (Müller-Jacquier, 2000) were mainly in *culture-specific behaviour, choice of topic, and register*.

As culture-specific behaviour was the most prominent category in cultural differences between Ted and the Brits, further attention must be paid to the emic-oriented description of the two national characters of the US and Britain (see 3.4). Many of the introduced stereotypes about Americans can also be found in Ted's behaviour. Ted is portrayed as a loud, positive and cheerful person. He is extroverted, always trying to make a joke and uses many metaphors and comparisons, often referring to American culture. This loud behaviour is in contrast to the representation of the more reserved British, who are less emotional and see Ted's manner as surprising or even inappropriate. There are further incongruities between Ted's American optimism and the more pessimistic British, as well as the sarcastic nature of the British and the less cynical nature of Ted.

Earlier essentialism was defined as the assumption that a culture is homogenous and that the members' behaviours are determined by their cultural affiliation (Holliday, 2010). Ted, presented as some kind of 'American prototype', fits this description exactly. Everything the character does is presented as the way Americans speak, act, and behave. Character traits of Ted that could also lead to certain behaviour are disregarded because in the series Ted stands alone for all Americans. This effect is enhanced by the fact that he is the only American main character apart from Coach Beard, who has a less significant role in the series. Because he is the one entering Britain, he encounters a variety of different British characters and subcultures. Among others, there are the rich and posh English (his boss Jessica and her environment), the rough pub culture, the small-town environment of the London borough of Richmond or the multicultural environment of a football team. The image of the British is thus much larger and more nuanced than the one of the Americans which is just portrayed by Ted.

In the context of imagology, the analysed series is part of the tradition of reinforcing a certain image of countries and contributing to the creation of a national character (Beller, 2007). Since the contact with other cultures "stimulates the imagination and evokes fascinating images

in people's minds" (Beller, 2007, p. 6), *Ted Lasso* contributes to reinforcing the image of, for example, loud Americans in the minds of the audience. Chew (2006) claimed that in imagological research, more can be found out about the culture producing representation than about the represented culture itself. Therefore, the joint production of *Ted Lasso* by Americans and Brits brings an interesting dynamic to the previously mentioned statement. This relationship between auto- and hetero-image will soon be referred back to.

It is one of the main motives of the series to display the cultural differences between Ted and the Brits and by doing so the producers are pursuing othering. Dervin (2016) explained this concept as the highlighting of differences between people relating to identity markers such as nationality, race, etc. but excluding the fact that people also share a lot of similarities. *Ted Lasso* would not be interesting if intercultural communication and cooperation would be fully unproblematic. Stereotypes, cultural differences and critical interaction situations are used to generate laughs in the audience (Carty & Musharbash, 2009). Even though there are, of course, similarities (for example, the love of sport) in *Ted Lasso*, these are not in the foreground and the differences are highlighted.

Carty and Musharbash (2008) argued that the use of stereotypes in media has the power to generate difference and otherness and to reinforce rather than to identify cultural differences. Further, pursuing othering and highlighting differences consequently leads to an exclusion from the respective ingroup (ten Thije, 2016). Timmer (2014), however, explained that humorous representations of people from different cultures can be used either constructively or destructively. *Ted Lasso* is in line with a rather constructive use of humorous representations and the creators pursued good intentions by creating a space in which cultures are made fun of or certain groups are laughed at. Even if the creator used othering, this is not done to create a demonized image of the 'other' (Holliday, 2010). Neither culture is put into a worse light than the other. The series succeeded in generating laughter about cultural differences and not

about people per se. This kind of comedy was meant by Timmer (2014) when describing humour as a possibility to overcome boundaries between cultures and to open up intercultural communication. Through *Ted Lasso*, intercultural bonding (Jiang, et al., 2019) can occur between American and British people, both amused by the peculiarities of their cultures and their comparison with each other.

Donaldson (2018) characterized the US-UK relationship as special due to its cultural closeness. The fact that both Americans and Brits were involved in the creation of *Ted Lasso* suggests that the two cultures being represented are not solely a hetero- but also an auto-image (Beller, 2007). Here, Americans and Brits not only represent each other's culture but also their own. Whether the aforementioned positive outlook of intercultural bonding is caused simply through the creator's positive intentions or the bicultural creation of the series remains unclear.

6.2. CQ, Empathy and Well-Being in Modern Leadership

The following part deals with the second sub-question asking **how Ted's process of acculturation is represented and can his character be considered culturally intelligent? Is his role suitable for teaching leadership lessons?**

As the analysis showed, Ted is motivated to learn, has an understanding of how he is different from the British and also that other people have a different cultural background. He pursues the strategy to strengthen the sense of belonging within the team and learns slowly but steadily how he has to behave in order to succeed. With reference to the Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2010) and the aforementioned four points, it could be established that *Ted Lasso* is culturally intelligent as he proves ability in all categories of the model. CQ is defined as "the ability to relate and work effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds and it goes beyond existing notions of cultural sensitivity and awareness" (Cultural Intelligence Center, 2021). Heterogeneous and multicultural organisations are nothing new in this globalized day and age. Employees - and especially

managers or leaders - need to have a certain skill set in order to create an atmosphere of inclusion, resulting in an environment in which all members can thrive (Clark & Polesello, 2017).

When Ted arrives England, he already has several of these skills, as values such as openness and friendliness are part of his value system anyway. The fourth category, appropriate behaviour within the culture, is becoming more and more safe over time, but he still struggles to act appropriately in some settings. Ted goes through a process of adapting to British culture and learning to cope with it without abandoning his own cultural values and behaviours. But he not only copes in the new culture. Ted manages to come across presumed disadvantages caused through cultural differences and flips them into advantages which he uses for example in team-building measures. In a typical example Ted asks the players for their personal opinion on how to win the upcoming second half. He values the opinions of non-British players as much as those of British players, as they often have a different perspective on things (S2 E12, 29:00-30:00).

Cultural intelligence and an understanding of wellbeing and mental health are correlated (Folkman, 2021). This is particularly evident in the example of Ted's role. He is keen not to exclude anyone and to understand the personal problems of the people around him. This is only possible if he also understands the cultural background of the others since culturally intelligent leaders know how culture shapes organisation as well as communication and how they have to interact with an emotional sensibility (Clark & Polesello, 2017). Skills like that are crucial in order to be a successful and modern leader (Luce, 2021) and this strength of character is emphasised in *Ted Lasso* again and again.

In the context chapter of this thesis, it was reported how successful the series is and how much it is praised by critics. Of particular interest was the fact that the character Ted is used by many authors (Ho, 2021; Folkman, 2021; Luce, 2021) for articles on platforms such as Forbes,

Business Insider or LinkedIn to teach leadership lessons and that Ted's empathic and culturally intelligent nature is considered exemplary. The second part of the sub-question answered here deals with Ted as material for business lessons. In other words, to what extent can a fictional comedy series be helpful for real situations in the working world? It has already been described that Ted becomes more and more culturally secure after a period of acculturation and can therefore be described as culturally intelligent. The results of the analyses indicate that the exaggerated portrayal of critical intercultural situations and cultural differences can be presented more clearly and obvious in a comedy series than the often more subtle situations in real life. *Ted Lasso* is an example of a series that explicitly addresses this issue of cultural differences and how to cope with them. Transferring a fictional series into real life can therefore create a certain awareness of issues such as cultural intelligence and make people rethink their own behaviour. This makes particular sense when considering Castañeda's (2018) statement that media does not only entertain and inform but also transfers imaginary into real world practices.

Authors such as Ho (2021), Folkman (2021) and Luce (2021) are therefore correct in their assumption that Ted can indeed teach modern leaders in the globalised world and that by forming relationships with people in the new culture and by listening and observing, one will be more successful than colleagues with a less developed cultural intelligence. A series like *Ted Lasso* promotes the relevance of cultural intelligence not only in the business setting but also in people's living rooms.

6.3. Application of the Models and General Limitations

The analysis of the series took place in the academic field of imagology and the first research question dealt with the analysis of cultural differences and the role of *Ted Lasso*. The second question, on the other hand, dealt with the evaluation of Ted's CQ - a research question outside of the realm of imagology - based on the series' second main focus, the very positive review

and the use for leadership lessons. The third and final sub-question therefore, asks whether **the use of two methodologies originally developed for real situations is also fruitfully applicable to a fictional series?**

Initially, the LAC-model was chosen as it provides the opportunity to analyse the communicational behaviour in intercultural situations by contrasting two cultures with each other. Through the selection of this model, it became possible to systematically analyse differences between Ted with a set of categories. Even though the LAC-model was not developed for fictive material, it provided a good basis for the assessment of cultural differences in film or series. It seems worthwhile to choose a similar methodology based on the LAC model for other imagological projects as well. However, there were also some difficulties in the application. The following critique refers to the LAC-model itself and not necessarily to its application to media.

From the onset, one category of the model was excluded. In the further course of the work, it turned out that the category *culture-specific behaviour* proved to be difficult, because this category often overlaps with other categories and many video sequences could be assigned here (Ted's loud behaviour is a difference in *register* but also a 'typical' American behaviour). Even if the categories are given, the decision what is typical for a country must be made by the respective coder, since the model does not contain a catalogue of the behaviours of different cultures, as is the case with other etic models (for example Hofstede). This difficulty results from the fact that Müller-Jacquier (2000) explains that examples have to be chosen on the basis of interaction situations by the researcher themselves and have to be developed for the respective two cultures. This creation of these examples of American-British interaction situations was possible (see table 5, p. 31). However, the assignment of concrete situations to these categories is difficult because such a category as *culture-specific behaviour* is more complex than others and depends on a more subjective assessment.

Applying the Four-Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence to *Ted Lasso* turned out to be fruitful. In the analysis, all four categories could be demonstrated based on the descriptions for the individual cultural skills in Ted's behaviours. Occasionally, there were overlaps in the assignment of categories, but this was not a problem for identifying Ted as a culturally intelligent leader. It was interesting to see that the first three categories - *motivational / cognitive / metacognitive* CQ - are skills that one can already possess before entering the actual new culture. *Behavioural* CQ, however, needs to be trained further and further within the new culture.

The combination of both models in the sense of triangulation was successful since a second level was added to the typical imagological approach of determining the representation of a national character. A synthesis of the results of both analyses takes place during the summary in the next chapter when the main research question is answered.

Besides the occasional problem with category assignment described in the previous paragraphs, one disadvantage or limitation of the chosen research method is the problem that only differences were analysed and the similarities between the US and British culture were not directly addressed. Accordingly, it can be argued that this paper leads to othering itself and the resulting cultural demarcation. Nonetheless, in view of the fact that *Ted Lasso* is built on precisely these cultural differences, this explains the focus of the thesis and the need to examine differences rather than similarities. Another limitation results from the limited timeframe available for this thesis. A more detailed examination of the work with a consideration of all episodes would have led to a more valid result than the mere analysis of five episodes. Likewise, the coding of the material could have been performed by a second reader to increase the reliability and objectivity of the paper. This would have somewhat limited the subjective influence of the author in coding and interpreting the results.

7. Conclusion

Ted Lasso is an extremely interesting example of a series displaying not only the confrontation of two cultures coming together in a professional situation, but also how possible difficulties due to cultural differences do not have to be a problem, but rather, can be an opportunity. Additionally, the whole concept of the series is particularly interesting because of the following two facts. Firstly, football clubs are a cleverly chosen setting for such a series like *Ted Lasso*. Football clubs are intercultural constructs that connect players and staff from many cultural backgrounds. Collaboration is imperative. Secondly, the clash between an American and the British is interesting. Ted speaks the same language as his British peers and although on a purely linguistic level the same language is spoken, cultural differences become apparent and must be taken into account somehow.

This study explored the Apple TV+ series *Ted Lasso* analysing firstly the cultural differences between the American main character Ted and the new British environment which he enters. The second focus of the paper is on Ted's leadership style and aims to substantiate the findings of the first analysis by also researching how a culturally intelligent leader figure is presented and how they deal with cultural differences. To summarize the results of the paper and to synthesize the examples of both analyses, the main research question is answered first.

What significance do intercultural differences have in the series Ted Lasso and how are they presented and dealt with?

Intercultural differences play a very important role and run through the entire series. Due to his accent and also his behaviour, Ted immediately stands out as someone American and is separated from the Brits. Through the process of othering differences are highlighted instead of similarities. The biggest differences in the behaviours of both parties lie firstly in Ted's *culturally specific behaviour* - as an orientation to an emic determined typical Americanness - and associated stereotypes such as extroversion, optimism or friendliness. Secondly,

differences in Ted's *register*, for example behaviour perceived as unprofessional by the British in certain situations. Thirdly, differences in the *choice of topics* in conversations. Ted talks about topics that seem rather inappropriate because they very often refer to very specific US events or objects.

Ted's representation is in line with well-known stereotypes about Americans and especially because he is almost the only American in the series, he is represented as a personification of the US or the 'American prototype'. Although the British characters are also stereotyped, this happens in a more nuanced way through a higher density of characters. Comedy exaggerates characteristics and creates laughs through stereotypes (Carty & Musharbash, 2008). Accordingly, the producers contribute to the essentialization of cultures (ten Thije, 2016; Holliday, 2010). In doing so, the creators of *Ted Lasso* add to the creation of a certain national character and strengthen already existing stereotypes. However, this study found out that this happens very respectfully without degrading either culture. The main intention was not to have fun at the expense of a culture and to entertain people with it, but to laugh at the cultural differences and not the cultures themselves. In that sense, *Ted Lasso* uses cultural oppositions to create laughter without villainising certain characters. Topics such as the benefits of interculturality, respect and mental health are addressed as well. Through this type of comedy, intercultural dialogue is made possible through a shared laugh (Jiang, et al., 2019; Timmer, 2014).

In addition to addressing cultural differences, the second main content of the series is how to deal with them. Ted is an empathetic, optimistic and friendly person who cares a lot about building relationships with people around him and making everyone feel welcome. Because of that, authors used the role of Ted as an example of a modern leader and role model in the business context also because of his ability to deal with cultural differences. This thesis used this as a starting point and demonstrated cultural intelligence in the representation of Ted's

behaviour using specific examples. Cultural intelligence has been defined by the following four points, all of which are reflected in him. Firstly, the motivation, interest and drive to adapt and learn about the new culture. Secondly, the understanding that cultures differ from each other and how that influences the society. Thirdly, the ability to strategize and plan actions. Fourthly, to behave appropriately in certain situations.

The combination of two different methods worked well but relatively independently within the paper. Through this process, however, it was possible to reach a result combining both strands of research. Chapter 6.1 concludes with the argumentation that on the one hand, the British and American national character is further formed and stereotypes are consolidated; on the other hand, an intercultural bonding can take place by laughing together about funny intercultural situations. The following subchapter comes to an end by describing that through series like *Ted Lasso*, a cultural awareness is created and the need for skills to make intercultural communication possible is promoted. Intercultural communication is a 'hot topic' that will become more and more important due to various reasons. Series that create awareness of cultural differences, but at the same time present them not as a problem but as an enrichment, can be a tool to educate people about these issues and improve their skills. Here, imaginary can be transferred into real world practices. The audience can laugh at cultural differences but also learn how to positively work with them.

Building on the argumentation that a series like *Ted Lasso* can be used to teach people about how to mediate and succeed in intercultural settings and to promote and raise awareness about cultural intelligence, research can continue here. There are several series that deal with the clash of people from different cultures. Examples are the following: *Dear White People* tells the story about a group of Black students at a predominantly white institution; *Master of None* focuses on the complex identity of minorities being born in the US as a first or second generation after their foreign ancestors; *Unorthodox* presents a woman escaping from a Jewish

orthodox wedding and starting a non-religious life in Berlin. Continuing to research how these series deal with cultural differences and how the main characters cope in these situations would enrich this study by possibly finding more examples for teaching cultural intelligence on the basis of comedy but also other genres of series. A similar methodology addressing both aspects through two analyses seems logical.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Pilot Test

Cultural Differences (S1, E2)

Category	Episode & Timestamp	Description
Paraverbal Factor, Register Culture-specific Behaviour Social Meaning/Lexicon, Culture-specific Behaviour	S1, E2 1:50-3:00	<p>FC Richmond's manager works silently and Ted enters the room with a loud "Kock-a-doodle-do" and speaks in a really loud and extroverted way. He does not really respect the other persons privacy.</p> <p>Ted says: "I brought you a little something. Cookies! Or as y'all call 'em here, biscuits, right? Though, I do not recommend you smother these in gravy". Ted continues: "Tea is horrible. Absolute garbage water. I don't know why y'all do that.</p>
Directness / Indirectness, Register Choice of Topic	3:00-3:30	To connect with his boss, Ted is trying to get to know her by asking what her first and best concert was. His way of being extroverted does not match his boss' reservedness.
Social Meaning/Lexicon Choice of Topic	S1, E2 4:30-4:45	<p>Ted talks with Coach Beard and he explains to him that "cleats" are called "boots" in the UK. He tells him that he thought the "trunk" of a car was a "boot".</p> <p>Ted introduces a new line-up with he describes with a metaphor his team does not understand.</p>
Choice of Topic, Register	S1, E2 5:20-5:45	One player makes a mistake on the field and Ted calls him. He explains that the happiest animal on earth is a goldfish because of its ten-second memory. The player has a hard time understanding this nicely meant metaphor because he is not used hearing such advice from his coach.
Culture-specific Behaviour Register	S1, E2 7:15-8:30	To give the players an opportunity to give feedback Ted introduces a suggestion box. His team does not take that serious and jokes about the feedback culture. Roy, one player, approaches him and criticises his leadership style. Ted behaves overly nice which surprises the team and causes disrespect.
Social Meaning / Lexicon, Directness / Indirectness	S1, E2 10:15-11:10	Ted has dinner with Coach Beard in a traditional British pub. Beforehand, he set up a feedback box in the football club's changing room. Now he opens this box and discusses the feedback with his co-coach. The comments are very insulting and call Ted a "wanker". The waitress tells him that he should not let his team call him a "wanker" and explains the meaning of this expression.
Paraverbal Factor, Culture-specific Behaviour, Choice of Topic Directness / Indirectness, Register Social Meaning/Lexicon	S1, E2 12:00-13:30	<p>Ted enters his boss' office again overly motivated and very loudly which causes irritation on the side of his boss. He continues in asking about her favourite concerts.</p> <p>Ted gets told off: "I can't just have you waltzing in here whenever you wish". Ted does not take that serious and answers: "What if I soft-shoe in, huh"?</p> <p>His way of using words linked to American English make him seem unprofessional (e.g., "Buddy", "Heck").</p>
Choice of Topic, Culture-specific Behaviour	S1, E2 15:25-15:45	After embarrassing himself at the first press conference, he counters questions in a funny way. One reporter asks: "Can you explain the offside rules". Ted: "I'm gonna put it the same way the US Supreme Court did back in 1964 when they defined pornography. It ain't easy to explain but you know when you see it". This causes laughter.
Culture-specific Behaviour	S1, E2 25:20-25:40 26:55-27:30	Despite the team's loss in an important match Ted is trying to spread good mood. The team is hesitant at first but then throws a party with Ted. Everyone is dancing to American Hip Hop music and eating cake.

CQ (S1, E2)

Category	Episode & Timestamp	Description
Motivational/ Metacognitive CQ	1:50-2:30	To build a good relationship with his boss, Ted asks her private question and is starting his new tradition of bringing her “Biscuits” every morning when his work starts. By bringing Biscuits, he cleverly chooses a typically British sweet.
Motivational/ Behavioural CQ	13:00-13:10 25:00-25:10	Even most of the feedback in his newly set up feedback box are insults, Ted is listening to the few constructive of players and immediately fixes the shower pressure.
Metacognitive/ Cognitive CQ	13:25-13:35 20:40-20:55	Ted finds out that Sam is homesick for his home in Nigeria. As a birthday present, he organises gifts that come from his homeland, such as typical food.
Behavioural CQ	14:15-15:00	Jamie says he sees the team as a band. Ted tries to understand British pop culture references and counter them with jokes.
Metacognitive/ Behavioural CQ	15:25-15:45	In the first press conference Ted embarrassed himself and is trying to prevent the same mistakes in the second press conference. He is clinging on to his culture when cleverly answering provoking questions with humour.
Metacognitive/ Motivational CQ	17:35-18:00 19:10-19:40 23:35-24:30	Ted talks to his Boss about Jamie, one of the team members, being rude and mean to other players and causing problems on during the matches. She gives him advice to talk to Jamie’s girlfriend. With the tip to use positive reinforcement he is reaching out to Jamie and succeeds in that.
Cognitive CQ	20:55-21:40	Ted approaches Sam Obisanya, one of the football players, to give him a little toy soldier as a lucky charm for the next matches. Initially, Ted received a pack of these toys from his son in the US and they mean a lot to him. Because of Sam’s Nigerian background and his home countries’ imperial history, he declines the gift and tells Ted that he does not have “the same fondness for the American military”. At first, Ted is slightly puzzled by this, but then recognises and respects the differences in culture.
Metacognitive/ Behavioural CQ	25:20-25:40 26:55-27:30	Ted is holding on to his beliefs and values and is trying to motivate the team with his culture. He succeeds in that by partying with the teammates after a lost match. Not every player agrees with his leadership style.
Motivational Behavioural CQ	27:45-21:10	Away from the football club, Ted also tries to get in touch with the British. In this scene, Ted plays football with a neighbourhood girl.

Appendix B: Coding Tables Cultural Differences

Episode 2 (S1, E6)

Category	Timestamp	Description
Choice of Topic, Paraverbal Factor, Register, Culture-specific Behaviour	1:30-3:00	Ted is going through a divorce with his wife and seems very upset. He enters his office where Coach Beard and Nate are waiting for him. He talks a lot and fast while the other two characters seem quiet. Ted asks strange questions, for example what his colleagues favourite bath bombs are or whether they should give each other funny nicknames like "honey" or "babe".
Social Meaning / Lexicon, Register, Culture-specific Behaviour	3:40-3:50	Another press conference takes place and Ted takes questions from the reporters. A linguistic misunderstanding occurs, which Ted comments on in the following way: "And that right here is another example of how our English and y'all's English sometimes do not jive, innit". He mixes British with American English. This causes laughter among the reporters because the reporters are not used to such jokes
Social Meaning / Lexicon	4:35-5:10	Ted and his boss are talking and the word "plan" comes up. He is so confused by the emphasis of the word that after repeating it several times, a 'semantic satiation' occurs.
Choice of Topic, Culture-specific Behaviour	12:40-12:55	Ted: "Oh boy, I feel like we fell out of a lucky tree, hit every branch on the way down, ended up in a pool full of cash and Sour Patch Kids". Ted uses unusual metaphors with references to typical US sweets.
Choice of Topic, Register, Culture-specific Behaviour	15:15-15:45	Teammates are talking about a room that brings bad luck. Ted is not in on it and speaks in a loud voice: "One more person says something that me and Beard don't understand, I'm gonna have one of my son's classic temper tantrums. It's basically just him calling me a bunch of silly names, you know, like, I don't know, "dummy-head" or "poo-poo-face [...]". His comment sees out of place for his colleagues.
Choice of Topic, Culture-specific Behaviour, Register	17:00-17:40	Ted invites his entire team to the pub to give a speech. He uses references to typical US American stuff, such as "Look at the Boston Red Sox curse". He rambles on and talks about movies until Coach Beard interrupts him.

Episode 3 (S1, E10)

Category	Episode & Timestamp	Description
Culture-specific Behaviours	0:45-2:30	Former groundsman Nate is nominated as the new co-coach. This is celebrated with a big party that amazes the team members and Nate himself, as this was not so common in the club culture so far.
Social Meaning/ Lexicon	3:00-3:10	Ted and Coach Beard are talking about the different names of a medical product and the resulting confusion.
Culture-specific Behaviour	4:10-4:30 5:25-5:45	One player asks: "Coach, do they not have relegation in America?". Ted explains the differences between the US and British leagues to the players. Coach Beard helps Ted understand British football terms. Ted is confused by the different leagues, 'Premier League' and 'Championship' and has a hard time understanding terms like 'relegation'.
Culture-specific Behaviour	5:45-6:10	People in the pub approach Ted and tell him that the next game is already lost. Ted, however, tells them to have a little hope. The owner of the pub then comments that he has not lived in the country long enough to understand: "It's the hope that kills you".
Culture-specific Behaviour	7:25	Ted has posted signs saying "Believe" both in the locker room and in his private bathroom at home. This kind of motivation is met with surprise and smiles from others. Ted seems upset and full of courage as he reminds them to believe while the others have lost hope.
Register, Culture-specific Behaviour, Choice of Topic	8:05-9:20	Ted enters his boss's office to drop off the daily biscuits. Jessica, his boss, notices something is wrong and he says "Good eye, small fry". The conversation is interspersed with other comical expressions such as "I don't know jack diddley about any of it".

Paraverbal Factor		Ted doubts that he is the right person for the role of coach. Jessica encourages him and suddenly Ted seems very energetic and loud again. This contrasts the calmness and sobriety of Jessica. Jessica comments this with "Oh my god!".
Choice of Topic, Register, Paraverbal Factor, Culture-specific Behaviour	9:30-10:50	Ted is over-motivated and loud at a new training session with the team. He introduces a new set of tactics, all with funny names. Team members suggest names, some of which are reminiscent of their origins. "Midnight Poutine", for example, is commented on by Ted as "It's just super Canadian".
Social Meaning / Lexicon		Ted compares trick plays to the British equivalent: "Today's lesson is trick plays. At least, that's what we call 'em back home. What do they call 'em here again?" Coach Beard: "Elaborate set pieces". Ted: "Yeah, we gonna stick with 'trick-plays'. That's a lot more fun".
Culture-specific Behaviour	16:20-17:20	Ted recalls the British expression "It's the Hope that kills you" and states that he is not convinced. He explains that people in the USA are much more optimistic and asks the team: "Do you believe in miracles?".
Social Meaning / Lexicon	20:15-20:30	Ted says: "Ain't nobody here gonna kiss their sister". Nobody understands. He continues: "Which is an American phrase that I'm now realizing does now exist here".
Culture-specific Behaviour	29:15-31:10	The team loses the decisive match and the whole team is dejected. With his positive nature, Ted still manages to motivate the team.
Choice of Topic		Ted compares the goalkeeper: "Zoreaux, that dude had more saves than a Baptist preacher".

Episode 4 (S2, E3)

Category	Episode & Timestamp	Description
Choice of Topic, Register, Paraverbal Factor	1:55-3:15	Ted enters his boss's office and meets her and her sister. In a previous episode they had an affair with each other. Ted behaves loudly and extatically. The behaviour is met with surprise and Jessica asks her sister if he has been behaving like this with her all along.
Choice of Topic, Register	4:00-4:30	Ted uses comparisons that do not fit the environment in a press conference: "[...] think of me as his own personal Mr. Miyagi".
Choice of Topic, Register, Culture-specific Behaviour	14:05-14:55	Ted is talking to a girl from the neighbourhood. She is serious and asks him when they will finally win a game. Ted tries to lighten the situation and says: "Hey, what's the word, Larry Bird?". His behaviour is much more relaxed.
Choice of Topic, Directness / Indirectness, Culture-specific Behaviour	16:40-17:40	Ted talks to his colleagues about relationships. While the others are clearly more reserved, Ted brings up all kinds of private topics.
Choice of Topic, Culture-specific Behaviour	25:00-25:40	Coach Beard and Ted talk to the team's psychologist. Several references to their time as a coaching team in the USA come up. These are difficult for the psychologist to understand.

Episode 5 (S2, E12)

Category	Episode & Timestamp	Description
Choice of Topic, Register, Culture-specific Behaviour	5:50-7:00	Ted enters Jessica's office with a loud: "Hey! What's the story, Paul Shorey" which is a reference to a US comedian. The people in the room seem a little annoyed by Ted's good mood. Even though a very negative article was published about him, he remains positive and optimistic while his English interlocutors are clearly more pessimistic.
Choice of Topic, Register,	10:30-13:00	Ted gives a motivational speech to the team. He uses motivational examples from his personal life, such as his school days or references to

Culture-specific Behaviour		American culture. An example is: “To quote the great UCLA college basketball coach, John Obi-Wan Gandalf [...]”.
Directness / Indirectness		He doesn’t get to the point and keeps deviating from the topic.
Register, Culture-specific Behaviour	23:30-27:00	Even though the British colleagues are getting used to Ted’s loudness and enthusiasm, they seem much more reserved than he is.
Choice of Topic	28:10:28:25	The use of metaphors continues to stand out in Ted’s use of language and is met with astonishment by his colleagues. Ted compares the sight of the team to a Renaissance painting.
Culture-specific Behaviour	40:45-41:30	Ted enters his boss’s office. After winning the game, she wants to toast with him. He refuses champagne and when asked if he wanted bubbly water, he makes a face because this is not typical in America.
Choice of Topic, Register, Directness / Indirectness, Culture-specific Behaviour		Ted deviates from the theme and tells stories from his life: “You know, before living here, I used to think still water was just folks saying it’s still water, you know? Like, it was water, and it continues to remain to be water.” Jessica responds: “Well, there’s no greater education than travel”. Ted makes a typically US-American joke: "A-freakin-man“.

Appendix C: Coding Tables CQ

Episode 2 (S1, E6)

Category	Timestamp	Description
Behavioural CQ	3:15-4:00	Continuously, Ted Lasso learns from past press conferences and masters them better and better with humour. He knows about language differences and begins to play with them.
Metacognitive CQ	7:00-7:40	Some of his players, especially Jamie Tartt, do not take Ted seriously because of his looseness. Ted begins to understand this and adjusts his behaviour, becoming louder in some situations.
Motivational CQ	16:50-19:40	Ted still wants to get to know the everyday life of his new culture and organises a meeting in a typical British place, the pub.
Cognitive CQ	19:00-19:30	The football club seems to be cursed. In order to break this curse, Ted wants everyone to bring an object that is very important to the respective Person in the evening. He alludes to the various objects from the players' cultures and is aware of differences.
Metacognitive CQ	22:50-30:00	Ted meets with all players and other colleagues from Richmond FC. The items brought by the players are now to be sacrificed to break the curse. Ted manages to organise a big bonding session where the team learns more about each other. Players present items such as a photo of the Nigerian national football team. The team respects each other and even enmities within the team do not play a role that evening. Finally, the team celebrates together.

Episode 3 (S1, E10)

Category	Timestamp	Description
Behavioural CQ	5:00-5:10	Ted is called an "American rodeo clown", takes note and reacts maturely.
Motivational CQ	5:25-6:10	Ted and Coach Beard are once again staying in everyday British settings, eating in the pub. Ted asks many questions and is willing to learn more about the culture and rules. He is very observant and observes British behaviour. Advice from locals is taken on board.
Metacognitive CQ	8:05-9:10	Ted is looking to talk to Jessica, his boss, and wants to quit as he does not see himself as the best coach for the club. He reflects on his behaviour and wants the best for the club. Jessica points out to him that he has a very different perspective as he is not from England. This is a big advantage over other clubs.
Cognitive CQ	9:30-10:50	Ted names new tactics for playing football with all players, taking a wide variety of cultural references on board. He sees cultural diversity as an advantage and creates a positive atmosphere within the team through humour.
Motivational CQ	13:25-13:45	In a video call with his son in the US, he tells him that Richmond FC and the players are very important to him and that he wants to make a bigger impact: "So I gotta hope that everything I've been trying to teach 'em made some kind of impact on 'em".
Cognitive CQ	16:20	Ted succeeds more and more in compare British culture with US-American culture. Ted compares a very pessimistic British expression with a very optimistic one from his home country. This motivates the players a lot.
Metacognitive CQ		Ted has hung a sign with "Believe" earlier in the cabin. This was always smiled at. Now it is accepted by the team itself and even integrated into motivational chants.
Cognitive / Behavioural CQ	29:15-31:10	Despite a loss in the most decisive game of the season, Ted manages to motivate and cheer up the team. He explains that despite all the differences within the team, no one is alone: "There is something worse out there than being sad, and that is being alone and sad. Ain't nobody in this room alone". The football team is more important than differences.

Episode 4 (S2, E3)

Behavioural CQ	5:50-7:00	Press conferences are a recurring phenomenon and Ted is becoming more confident in them. He gives the reporters information about what plans he has for the team and how he wants to accompany certain players.
Motivational CQ	11:25-13:00	Ted builds relationships with the people around him. He also gets to know people outside of Richmond FC. In this scene, Ted is talking to a girl from the neighbourhood and attentively and empathetically asks how she is doing.
Motivational CQ	17:45-18:00	Despite having different views with Jamie Tartt, he listens to his opinions and tries to put himself in his place.
Metacognitive CQ	20:30-27:00	Ted is aware that footballers are often not serious because of his American looseness and language. He tries a method and behaves unfairly by yelling at players to make the players aware that it was better the way he was before. This seems to be working.
Behavioural CQ	40:50-41:50	Sam organises a protest within the team to boycott the main sponsor of FC Richmond and to paste over the trademark on the jersey. The oil company is exploiting his home country Nigeria. Ted listens to Sam's opinion, encourages him in his decision and asks how he feels about it.

Episode 5 (S2, E12)

Category	Timestamp	Description
Motivational CQ	3:30-4:40	Ted strolls through the neighbourhood and talks to locals. They know him and ask how he is. He has short conversations.
Cognitive CQ	10:30-13:00	Ted addresses the team and talks about how everyone makes different choices in life that ultimately landed them in England. This is on the other side of the world for many. Each of these decisions is an opportunity and nobody should not miss these.
Motivational CQ	17:45-18:30	Ted meets again at the pub and builds a friendly relationship with the owner. She continues to give him advice about life in England.
Cognitive CQ	29:00-30:00	On issues Ted is not sure about, he tries to involve the whole team to make a decision. He is aware of the different people and backgrounds of the players and listens to the opinion of the direct Dutchman Jan Maas.
Motivational/ Metacognitive CQ	30:00-31:30	The game seems almost lost at half-time. Even though Ted's "Believe" sign in the dressing room was laughed at before, it is now accepted by the team and even incorporated into the motivational chant. Ted is proud that he was able to motivate and unite the team.
Cognitive CQ	31:30-33:15	The new co-coach Nate develops more and more into the villain of the show. Ted asks him why he is angry with him. Nate calls Americans dumb and behaves very unfairly towards Ted. Nate: "Without me you wouldn't have won a single match. They would've shipped your ass back to Kansas, where you belong. [...] Cause you sure as hell don't belong here". Ted sincerely apologises to him and reflects on his behaviour. He becomes aware of the fact that, according to Nate, he still doesn't belong to the culture.
Cognitive / Behavioural CQ	40:00-40:45	Ted is part of another press conference and describes that a sense of unity is very important and that mental health issues need to be addressed.
Motivational / Cognitive CQ	40:45-41:30	In a conversation between Ted and Jessica, it becomes clear that they both believe that travelling is the best education and the only way to get to know a culture and its characteristics.