40th Anniversary Edition

Intercultural Communication A Reader

Larry A. Samovar

Richard E. Porter

Edwin R. McDaniel

Carolyn Sexton Roy

14th Edition

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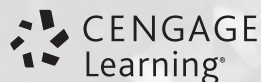# Intercultural Communication

A READER

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RICHARD E. PORTER, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Communication Studies at California State University, Long Beach, received his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. He developed his interest in intercultural communication in 1967 before there was an established field of study. His early work along with that of other pioneers in the field laid a basic structural foundation which has been used by many later scholars as the field developed and expanded. He created and taught undergraduate and graduate courses in intercultural communication for 30 years. Dr. Porter is the co-author and editor of 4 books with 24 editions that deal with the subject of intercultural communication.

EDWIN (ED) R. McDANIEL received his Ph.D. from Arizona State University. He is currently a Member-at-Large of the Japan–U.S. Communication Association and a member of the Thunderbird Educator Network at the Thunderbird School of Global Management. He is also a retired Professor of Intercultural Communication at Aichi Shukutoku University, in Nagoya, Japan, and has been a Japan ICU Foundation Visiting Scholar at the International Christian University in Tokyo. Dr. McDaniel has also taught at San Diego State University, CSU San Marcos, and Thunderbird. In May 2013, he was an invited speaker at the China Cultural Industry Forum (CIF) in Beijing. He is the co-author/co-editor of numerous books on intercultural communication. His articles and book chapters have been published in China, Germany, Korea, and Japan, as well as the United States. Before beginning his academic career, Dr. McDaniel was in government service for over 20 years, during which time he lived and traveled in more than 40 countries.

CAROLYN SEXTON ROY has been a member of the History Department at San Diego State University since 1989. Her doctoral studies in Colonial Latin American History were conducted at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is a well-practiced presenter of papers at regional, national, and international conventions, and has been published numerous times. She has traveled extensively in Latin America. A Fulbright Fellowship enabled her to conduct research for an extended period and salvage an archive in Parral, Chihuahua, Mexico. Her linguistic skills, particularly applied to Latin America, facilitate her high level of understanding of intercultural communication.

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Preface

We begin, as we have in each edition, with an expression of appreciation to all the students and faculty who have seen us through thirteen prior editions. However, this time our gratitude is accompanied by a sense of pride, and a touch of ego, as we introduce this Fortieth Anniversary special edition. Our enthusiasm derives from two sources. First, we are reminded that during the last four decades, tens of thousands of readers have found something of value in earlier presentations. Second, this volume affords us the opportunity to offer a collection of essays from past editions that we believe are "foundational" to the field of intercultural communication. Since the first edition in 1972, *Intercultural Communication: A Reader* has presented approximately 600 essays. A great many of these helped introduce and define the discipline of intercultural communication.

The first few editions drew most of their selections from a variety of academic fields. The content was eclectic because intercultural communication was in its infancy and searching for a basic set of core principles at that time. Our early editions were interdisciplinary, allowing users to gain an understanding of various approaches to intercultural communication while observing the historical, philosophical, and theoretical evolution of the field. These same characteristics served as the overriding goals for this new edition. Hence, the essays in this present volume represent the best "core" essays from the last forty years. They also demonstrate how the field has altered and expanded its description of intercultural communication during this same period.

As noted, since our first edition the study of intercultural communication has, like most academic disciplines, expanded and evolved. This growth demanded that we offer readers access to contemporary approaches and theories in each new edition. The requirement to adapt to changes in the field, some temporary and others more enduring, forced us to omit scores of older selections to accommodate the new essays. Some of the foundational essays were supplanted by newer materials. Over the history of the book many of the reviewers, as well as numerous instructors who used the text, have requested that particular selections be revived and returned to the anthology. In most instances these have been articles that can be considered "foundational." In addition, we frequently received requests from professors who sought permission to use specific selections from earlier editions in their classes. We kept an informal record of these requests and have taken this opportunity to include many of these essays in this fourteenth edition.

A POINT OF VIEW

In this special edition we have endeavored to remain true to the central mission of the forty-year history of the book. We have traditionally attempted to accomplish two goals. First, we have taken a culture-specific approach to intercultural communication, focusing on national cultures, co-cultural groups, and ethnicities. Second, we have introduced broad theoretical concepts within our examination of these individual cultures. This dual approach has been especially germane in the contemporary era of globalization and changing demographics within the United States. Individuals are now living, working, and traveling in a more intercultural social environment, and globalization and diversity remain the themes of this new volume as well. We begin with globalization. This word can no longer be applied solely to international economic activities, but now connotes the existing state of interdependencies and interactions among all the world's nations and people across almost every context. Globalization has stimulated the growth of both developed and developing nations and significantly increased the economic, political, and in many cases, military aspirations of what are now called "emerging markets." Brazil,

Russia, India, and China are but a few nations that need to be examined by anyone interested in intercultural communication. This new cluster of nations now influences how world international financial systems are managed, how goods and services are shared, and how people participate in worldwide conversations. The influence of religious ideology, whether in the Middle East, Central Asia, or the United States, is an important consideration in global stability. Although the idea may be a bit hackneyed, it is true that what happens in one part of the world has the potential to influence the entire world.

The changes and challenges brought about by globalization are not limited to the international sphere. Within the United States, people from a host of diverse cultures are coming together by both chance and design. These "meetings" are taking place in workplaces, classrooms, health care facilities, tourist venues, and a multitude of other locales. Most encounters are positive and lead to productive relationships, but not all. Whether it be issues of immigration, race, gender or sexuality, religion, or political ideology, sometimes negative, even destructive, interaction occurs. We feel that those failures are partially due to a lack of effective intercultural communication. Developing an intercultural awareness and transforming it into understanding remains at the heart of this book. As a member of this multicultural globalized world, your ability to successfully engage in intercultural communication may be one of the most important skills you will ever develop. Now, more than ever, you are being challenged by a future in which you will interact with people from a wide range of dissimilar cultural backgrounds. You no longer compete on a local, regional, or even national level. Competition today is worldwide!

Developing effective intercultural communication skills will require you to develop new ways of perceiving, thinking, and interacting. This will not be easy. First, because your view of the world is shaped by the perspective of your own culture, it is often difficult to understand and appreciate many of the actions originated by other people, groups, and nations. Your cultural perceptions tend to condition you to see people and events through a highly selective lens. Second, to be a successful intercultural communicator you must be open to new and different communication experiences, have empathy toward cultures different from your own, develop a universalistic, realistic worldview, and learn to be tolerant of opinions and behaviors that differ from your own. Although these communication characteristics are easy to read about, translating them into action is a very difficult task. Training in intercultural communication offers you an arena in which to work on these skills. In short, it is your ability to change, to make adjustments in your communication habits and behavior, that gives you the potential to engage in successful and effective intercultural contacts.

OUR APPROACH

Many aspects of our approach may well have trickled out by now. But let us be more specific about our orientation. The basic energizing motive for this book has remained the same since we became interested in the topic of intercultural communication over forty years ago. We believe that the ability to communicate effectively with people from other cultures and co-cultures is valuable to each of us as individuals. Effective communication has the potential to benefit the approximately seven billion people with whom we share this planet. We have intentionally selected materials that will assist you in understanding those intercultural communication principles that are instrumental to success when you interact with people of other cultures. Fundamental to our approach is the conviction that communication is a social activity; *it is something people do to and with one another.* The activity might begin with ideas or feelings, but these are manifested in our behaviors, be they verbal or nonverbal. In both explicit and implicit ways, the information and the advice contained in this book are usable; *the ideas presented can be translated into action.*

NEW FEATURES

As you have observed by now, the most significant new feature of this edition is the fact that we are presenting eight chapters containing the "foundational" essays of the last forty years. Because intercultural communication is a dynamic field in constant evolution, we also

have included a chapter of five original articles we believe reflect some new directions for the field in the coming decade.

The title page reveals yet another new feature of this volume—the addition of another editor. We invited Carolyn Sexton Roy to be part of this new edition. A member of the History Department at San Diego State University, Ms. Roy earned the Candidate for Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Colonial Latin American History at the University of California at Los Angeles. She was also a Fulbright Fellow doing research in Parral, Chihuahua, Mexico. Having lived in Mexico and traveled extensively in Latin America, she is fluent in Spanish and Portuguese. Her major research and teaching focus has been the social and cultural history of Latin America and the United States.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

We have already made indirect references to the selection process. However, that procedure is important enough to warrant further explanation. Selecting the most significant papers for this special edition from a list of more than 600 essays was a challenging assignment. We spent months discussing which selections to include and which to exclude. Not wanting to be capricious or arbitrary, we established the following criteria to guide us during our deliberations. First, in nearly every instance we have selected essays that were *originally written for the Reader*. Implementing that condition meant that several foundational selections are excluded from this edition. Because many of these pieces are considered "classics," we urge you to seek them out in other sources. Some of these are the seminal works of scholars such as Edward T. Hall, Geert Hofstede, Dean C. Barnland, Julia T. Wood, Marshal R. Singer, Anne B. Pedersen and Paul B. Pedersen, Harry C. Triandis, Richard Brislin, Peter S. Adler, Shirley N. Weber, La Ray Barna, Edward Stewart, Thomas Sowell, Kathy Jankowski, and others.

Second, many of the essays that constitute our final collection are incorporated into this volume because of their *continued popularity*. This positive status took two forms. First, prior to each edition our publisher conducted detailed reviews and surveys of faculty members who had adopted the book. An assessment

of that data helped us isolate which selections the users of the anthology found most beneficial. In many instances these essays had often been updated and were used in numerous editions. Many of them now appear in this special edition.

Third, when making our final selection, we wanted to include readings that had proved *instrumental in expanding the field of intercultural communication*. These essays were both new and innovative. Put in slightly different terms, we perceived that our book has been a conduit allowing various authors to stake out some new territory in the area of culture and communication. In this sense the anthology became a place where scholars could share their original ideas in a forum somewhat different from a traditional academic journal. By adopting this philosophy early in the history of this book, scholars such as Peter Andersen, Brian H. Spitzberg, Young Yun Kim, Stella Ting-Toomey, Edith Folb, Judith N. Martin, Mary Jane Collier, Mary Fong, Miike Yoshitake, Bernard Saint-Jacques, and Mira Bergelson, along with others, found an outlet for their pioneering ideas. We selected many of those essays for this commemorative edition.

Fourth, we would be less than candid if we did not reveal that in some instances we had to omit certain essays because we could *not secure a current permission*. In most of those instances the author was deceased, but had failed to make estate arrangements granting someone else the authority to permit the essay's republication. In a few cases, despite concerted efforts, we were simply unable to locate the author.

Finally, we conclude this section by offering our apologies to all those past contributors if we were compelled to omit your works from this current volume. Perhaps we will be able to include them in the Fiftieth Anniversary Edition.

UTILIZING THE BOOK

As in the past, we designed this anthology for the general reader who is interested in learning about intercultural communication. Therefore, we have selected materials that are broadly based, comprehensive, and suitable for both undergraduate and graduate students. Although the level of difficulty may fluctuate from essay to essay, we have attempted to select essays

aimed at the level found in most textbooks directed toward college and university students.

Intercultural Communication: A Reader is designed to meet three specific needs. The first comes from a canon maintaining that successful intercultural communication is a matter of highest importance if humankind and society are to survive. Events during the past forty years have created a world that sees us becoming increasingly linked in a multitude of ways. From pollution to economics to health care, to world hunger to terrorism, what happens to one culture potentially happens to all other cultures. This book is designed to serve as a basic anthology for courses concerned with the issues associated with human interaction. Our intention has been to make this book both theoretical and practical so that the issues associated with intercultural communication can first be understood and then acted upon.

Second, the book may be used as a supplemental text to existing service and basic communication skills courses and interpersonal communication courses. Third, the text provides resource material for courses in communication theory, small group communication, organizational and business communication, and mass communication, as well as for courses in anthropology, health care, sociology, social psychology, social welfare, social policy, business, and international relations. The long list of possible uses only underscores the increased level of intercultural interaction that is characteristic of what is now often called the "global village."

ORGANIZATION

The book is organized into nine closely related chapters. In Chapter 1, "Approaches to Intercultural Communication," our purpose is twofold: We acquaint you with the basic concepts of intercultural communication as we arouse your curiosity and interest in the topic. Hence, the essays in this chapter are both theoretical and philosophical. The selections explain what intercultural communication is, why it is important, and how it operates.

Chapter 2, "Cultural Identity: Issues of Belonging," has essays that demonstrate how different cultural and ethnic identities influence role expectations,

perceptions, and intercultural interaction. The various selections will instill in you an appreciation for how a person's cultural identity helps shape his or her view of the world.

Chapter 3, "International Cultures: Understanding Diversity," describes the communication patterns of cultures from Northeast Asia, India, Russia, the Middle East, and Africa. In other chapters of the book we examine additional international cultures in health care, business, and educational settings.

Chapter 4, "Co-Cultures: Living in a Multicultural World," moves us from the international arena to domestic co-cultures within the United States. For many of you these will be the groups you interact with on a daily basis. Although space constraints have limited the total number of co-cultures we could include, we believe that through the selection of African Americans, women, the disabled, and homosexuals, you will get a summary of the cultural diversity found in those groups. As is the case with international cultures, other co-cultures are discussed in other chapters.

In Chapter 5, "Intercultural Messages: Verbal and Nonverbal Interaction," we study how verbal and nonverbal symbols are used (and vary) in intercultural interactions. We offer readings that introduce you to some of the difficulties that might be encountered when your intercultural partner uses a different verbal or nonverbal coding system. We look at how verbal idiosyncrasies and distinctions influence problem solving, speaking, perception, and understanding. As noted, this chapter is also concerned with nonverbal symbols and explains some of the cultural differences in movement, facial expressions, eye contact, silence, space, time, and the like.

Chapter 6, "Cultural Contexts: The Influence of the Setting," continues with the theme of how culture modifies interaction. This time, however, the interaction is examined within a specific context and environment. The assumption is that "rules" that influence how members of a culture behave in certain settings will fluctuate across cultures. To clarify this important issue, we have selected "places" where people of different cultures are most likely to be confronted with situations in which the "rules" of interaction differ from those found in the United States. More specifically, we

look at settings related to business, groups, negotiations, health care, and education.

In Chapter 7, "Communicating Interculturally: Becoming Competent," the readings are intended to help you become a more competent intercultural communicator. The chapter highlights some inherent intercultural communication problems ranging from cultural differences in dealing with conflict to variations in interpersonal rituals. In addition, solutions are advanced to provide you with knowledge about and suggestions for responding to these and other difficulties you might face when communicating with "strangers."

Chapter 8, "Ethical Considerations: Changing Behavior," presents essays that deal with ethical and moral issues as well as future directions and challenges of intercultural communication.

Chapter 9, "New Perspectives: Prospects for the Future," contains five new, original selections based on the simple premise that intercultural communication evolves, as do all academic disciplines. Change is difficult to calculate because by its very nature it involves the future, so we invited several leading intercultural communication scholars to help us discern the future trajectory of the field.

Finally, we ask that you not conclude your study of intercultural communication with the reading of a single book or the completion of one course. We believe that the study of intercultural communication is a lifelong endeavor. Each time you want to share an idea or feeling with someone of another culture, you face a new and exhilarating learning experience.

ASSISTANCE

As in the past, many people have helped us rethink and reshape this project. We express appreciation to Content Developer Larry Goldberg. Larry saw to it that the manuscript was free of problems as he guided it through each phase of the production process. We also thank Alexandra Ricciardi who was instrumental in securing permissions for selections in this Anniversary edition. Since some of the permission releases reached back over forty years, her task was not a simple one. And, as we do with each edition, we call attention to our first editor, Rebecca Hayden. Becky had enough courage and insight four decades ago to decide that intercultural communication should and would become a viable discipline. We also recognize the contribution of our publisher Cengage Learning, who has been consistent in the determination to produce and market a quality textbook.

A special note of thanks is owed to the many instructors who have adopted previous editions of this reader over the past forty years. Their continued confidence in our ability to provide a useful pedagogical tool is especially gratifying. We would also like to thank the reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions: Katie Dunleavy, La Salle University; Vicki Karns, Suffolk University; Jaesub Lee, University of Houston; Carmen Mendoza, Trinity International University; Dante Morelli, Suffolk County Community College; Karri Pearson, Normandale Community College; Kipp Preble, Chaffey College; Natalie Rybas, Indiana University East; Miki Thiessen, Rock Valley College; and Jonathan Watt, Geneva College/Ref. Pres. Theological Seminary. We conclude by expressing our gratitude to those hundreds of scholars who allowed us to share their work with so many readers. Without all of your articles this collection would never have survived for forty years. You know who you are. Thank you.

Approaches to Intercultural Communication

I will say at the outset that there is only one world, and although we speak of the Old World and the New, this is because the latter was lately discovered by us, and not because there are two.

GARCILASO DE LA VEGA, FROM *ROYAL COMMENTARIES OF THE INCAS, AND GENERAL HISTORY OF PERU* (1690)

It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.

AUDRE LORDE, AMERICAN POET

This fourteenth edition of *Intercultural Communication: A Reader* is in some ways a historical perspective on the growth and evolution of intercultural communication. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider some of the societal dynamics behind that growth and how they have been reflected in past editions. When the first edition was published in 1972, the world was locked in the grip of the Cold War, dealing with two contending ideologies, led by the United States on one side and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) on the other. Both nations possessed nuclear weapons capable of total destruction. That awareness stimulated the need to increase understanding and communication between peoples holding varied worldviews. On the domestic scene, the civil rights movement of the 1960s had given minorities a voice, and understanding those voices required knowledge of nondominant communication styles.

The recognition that society was becoming more mobile was also highlighted in the early editions. This mobility was facilitated by technological advances in transportation and communication, which gave rise to significantly increased levels of international business. The time and distance barriers that had historically impeded cross-border interactions were rapidly being eroded. By the mid-1980s, selections

in the *Reader* reflected the significance of the growing numbers of refugees coming to the United States to escape political oppression and wars in their homelands. In addition to discussions on ethnic minorities, editions from the 1980s and 1990s began to include essays about the varied communication styles of U.S. social minority groups, such as women, gays, and the disabled.

The advancement of transportation and communication technologies continued unabated during the late twentieth century, enabling U.S. audiences to experience historical international events—such as the Tiananmen Square protests and the fall of the Berlin Wall—in near real-time. The collapse of the Soviet Bloc also enabled the many cultures of Eastern Europe and Central Asia to become active on the international stage. Continued internationalization of the economy increased the presence of U.S. commercial representatives abroad and promoted a growing number of international workers in the United States.

Essays in the *Reader* gave evidence of the increased importance of intercultural communication competency at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The influence of globalization became a theme in many of the selections. Additionally, the influence of culture in the health care setting, the increasing number of international marriages, and issues of ethnic identity were noted. Concurrently, articles discussing the importance of intercultural communication competence and ethical considerations in a globalized society were presented. This fourteenth edition offers a retrospective of those earlier articles, all of which illustrated the vital role of intercultural communication at the time they were first published and serve to remind us of the increased requirement to be able to communicate across cultures in today's contracted global society.

Our exploration of intercultural communication begins with four varied articles that (1) provide a foundation for further study of the discipline, (2) examine the impact of globalization on intercultural communication, (3) introduce a non-Western worldview and its role in perception, and (4) discuss the role of theory and research. As was done for each of the previous thirteen editions, the first essay in Chapter 1 is written with two objectives in mind—to motivate you to study intercultural communication and to provide the basic structure needed to conduct that study.

With this in mind, the essay "Understanding and Applying Intercultural Communication in a Global Society: The Fundamentals" is divided into two parts. Part 1 offers an overview of several selected historical eras in which intercultural communication played a primary role in social development on a grand scale. Part 2 provides you with an appreciation of the philosophy underlying our concept of intercultural communication and describes the fundamental components of communication, culture, and intercultural communication. After discussing the objective of communication, we define and preview its characteristics. Next is an overview of culture, to include what it is and how it guides our behaviors. Some of the specific dimensions of culture that are relevant to intercultural communication are explained. To assist you in understanding what transpires during communicative interactions between people with varied cultural backgrounds, we examine several major variables—perceptual elements, cognitive patterns, verbal and nonverbal behaviors, and social contexts. The essay promotes insight into what the study of intercultural communication entails and establishes a foundation for understanding subsequent essays.

Today, globalization is a frequent referent in discussions of geopolitics, international business, or almost any other contemporary topic. As you are now aware, the forces of globalization have created an environment where cross-cultural awareness and intercultural communication competence are daily necessities. This is the reason our next essay remains relevant.

Bernard Saint-Jacques examines the impact of globalization on the study of culture and intercultural communication. First, he critiques pre-globalization-era theoretical concepts of culture and proposes a new approach. Saint-Jacques contends that events over the past several decades have changed the way we should consider culture because globalization has created a "mixture of cultures and people within each culture." Thus, earlier cultural concepts, such as Hofstede's model of individualism–collectivism, are dated and no longer reflect contemporary societal complexity. Saint-Jacques contends that any theory of culture in the globalized social order must address "three basic facts: (1) Cultural Predestination! (2) Individual Values, and (3) a Set of Dynamic Processes of Generation and Transformation." These three constructs are then integrated to form the basis for his proposed theoretical approach to culture. Japan is used as a case study to illustrate how culture is being transformed by the continued growth of the global community.

The impact of globalization on identity is also discussed in the essay. Saint-Jacques sees people in modern society as "living at the same time within particular cultural settings on the one hand, and between different cultural environments on the other one," which results in multiple identities. In the second part of the essay, he proposes an approach to teaching intercultural communication in a globalized society. His method involves viewing culture as "ways of thinking, beliefs, and values," and a greater incorporation of language into the instruction.

This essay remains important because it shows that there are multiple ways of viewing culture, and these ways should not become static. Culture and communication are influenced by societal changes, and those changes need to be acknowledged in theoretical development, practical application, and classroom instruction.

We elected to include " 'Harmony without Uniformity': An Asiacentric Worldview and Its Communicative Implications" because it introduces and examines a different cultural perspective, one particularly relevant to the growing Asian presence on the world stage. Yoshitaka Miike proposes that conflict arises not from cultural difference itself but from an unawareness of that difference. Moreover, as global citizens, not only must we appreciate cultural diversity, we must learn from that diversity. According to Miike, too frequently cultural difference is viewed through the lens of one's own worldview, but to appreciate and learn from another culture, "we must understand the worldview of the culture and its impact on the forms and functions of communication."

The essay purports that much of the research underlying the intercultural communication discipline has imposed a European worldview on other cultures, producing a critical examination instead of an investigation designed to gain "insight and inspiration." To commence the process of learning *from*, rather than merely *about*, other cultures, Miike suggests that you need to (1) understand your own worldview, (2) understand the worldview of other cultures, and (3) understand how your culture is perceived by other cultures. The latter recommendation is particularly relevant to the success of relations in a globalized society.

The second half of the essay discusses an "Asiacentric worldview and its communicative implications in local and global contexts." Miike offers five Asiacentric communication propositions, which reflect his interpretation of the Asian worldview. These include (1) circularity, (2) harmony, (3) other-directedness, (4) reciprocity, and (5) relationality. Awareness and understanding of these propositions provide greater insight into Asian cultures and offers an alternative to the Eurocentric worldview. The essay posits that the processes of globalization have heightened the requirement to not only learn *about* other cultures but to find ways that promote and facilitate intercultural *learning*.

In this chapter's final article, "Relevance and Application of Intercultural Communication Theory and Research," written more than twenty years ago, Felipe Korzenny highlights three significant aspects of intercultural communication, all of which remain relevant today. He begins with a discussion of the synergistic relationship between culture and communication, explaining how each is necessary to construct and support the other. Next, Korzenny highlights the role theory and research have had in shaping the actual practice of intercultural communication. The final section describes nine important reasons to engage in the study and practice of intercultural communication, all of which remain as relevant today as they were twenty-plus years ago. These benefits range from increasing self-understanding to the possible prevention of war. Particularly prescient among these benefits is Korzenny's discussion of how people from varied cultural backgrounds may interpret the same information differently. This is an especially important consideration in view of the global reach of contemporary media sources.

Understanding and Applying Intercultural Communication in the Global Community: The Fundamentals

Edwin R. McDaniel

Larry A. Samovar

You are no doubt already familiar with terms such as "globalization," "global village," "culture," "communication," and "cultural diversity," all common expressions today. Perhaps you have even heard or read something about "intercultural communication," but it is less likely that you have been exposed to an in-depth examination of what it is, how it works, and why it is important. Answering those questions is the purpose of this chapter.

Our exploration begins with a brief overview of the role that intercultural communication has played in some of the notable eras of world history. We then provide a summary of how intercultural communication has developed as an academic discipline over the past seventy years. This historical review will help you realize that intercultural communication is not a new phenomenon, but rather a process that has long been an integral part of human interactions. Following the two historical synopses, the chapter examines what are considered the fundamentals of intercultural communication. Understanding these basic concepts will facilitate your study and appreciation of how prevalent, and important, intercultural communication is in contemporary society.

All rights reserved. Permission to reprint must be obtained from the authors and the publisher. Edwin R. McDaniel is a Member-at-Large of the Japan–US Communication Association (JUSCA); Larry A. Samovar is Professor Emeritus in the School of Communication at San Diego State University.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Beginnings

The history of intercultural interactions is as old as humankind. The migration of peoples, whether seeking new homelands, engaging in trade, or bent on physical or ideological conquest has brought people from different cultural backgrounds into contact. Often these interactions have proven beneficial, but sometimes they have led to disaster. Let us look at a few examples of how intercultural communication has been instrumental in shaping sweeping global changes.

Consider for a moment how two of the world's great religions originated in the Middle East and subsequently spread globally. Christianity began its journey from a small area in what is today Israel and Palestine, and over a couple of centuries spread across the globe to become the world's largest religion. A few hundred years after the rise of Christianity, Islam was founded in the desert of modern-day Saudi Arabia and ultimately spread across the Middle East, Northern Africa, Central Asia, and South Asia. It is now the world's second largest religion. During the Seventh Century, Buddhism arose in contemporary northeast India and over the next several hundred years spread eastward throughout Southeast Asia, China, Korea, and Japan. Today, it is the world's fourth largest religion. The ability to promulgate, establish, and sustain the religious philosophy of each of the faiths across such a diversity of cultures and languages required competent intercultural communication.

Commerce is another context that easily lends itself to demonstrating the historical and enduring effect of intercultural communication. Let us reflect on just two very early examples—the Phoenicians and the Silk Road. The Phoenicians were an ancient trading civilization located in the coastal area of what is now Syria and Lebanon. By the late 800s BCE, they had established trading routes, outposts, and colonies along the southern Mediterranean coast and ventured into the Atlantic along the peripheries of Spain and West Africa. The Phoenicians focused on maritime trade rather than territorial conquest, which obviously required a keen appreciation for different cultures and

languages. Their legacy remains evident today in the word "Bible," which the Greek's derived from Byblos, the name of an ancient Phoenician city (Gore, 2004).

Reference to the "Silk Road" often conjures up a Hollywood based romantic image of caravans transporting exotic goods across Central Asia between China and the West. In actuality, however, there were numerous roads, or routes, linking China with the west, beginning late in the first millennium BCE and lasting until the fifteenth century CE. These tracks passed through Central Asia, South Asia, along the coast of the Arabian Peninsula, and through today's Middle East. In addition to the many tradesmen, the routes were traveled by explorers, religious prelates, philosophers, warriors, and foreign emissaries. New products, art works, technology, innovation, and philosophical ideas traveled in both directions to consumers in the east and west, as well as those in between. These overland conduits passed through the domains of many different cultures. Thus a successful transit required the knowledge and ability to effectively interact with peoples instilled with contrasting worldviews, possessing varied cultural values, and speaking a multiplicity of languages.

These several examples from the distant past illustrate two important factors. First, globalization is not new. Peoples from other lands and diverse cultures have been interacting across the span of time. The advent of new technologies has simply accelerated the process. Second, these historical vignettes demonstrate the instrumental role intercultural communication has played in the establishment of today's global social order. We will next look at the development of intercultural communication as an academic discipline.

Intercultural Communication as an Academic Discipline

Despite a lengthy historical legacy, intercultural communication as an academic discipline is relatively new, commencing only about 70 years ago. A focused examination of culture and communication arose out of a need to understand allies during World War II and to better carry out the post-war reconstruction of the many nations destroyed by that conflict. The continued growth of international commerce in the 1970s and 1980s created a need to understand how to effectively interact with, and manage, people from other cultures. As a result, scholars became interested, launched research projects, and began offering classroom courses treating different contexts. The end of the Cold War, in the early 1990s, coupled with technological advances in transportation and communication made intercultural competence a necessity. Suddenly, there were unprecedented levels of interaction among people from different national, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Commercial and social organizations realized the importance of communicating across cultures on both an international and domestic level. This heightened the demand for increased scholarly inquiry and topic specific literature, which continued unabated into the new century. Post 9/11 conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrated a need for cultural awareness training among U.S. forces.

Today, the rapidly globalizing social order has made the study and practice of intercultural communication a requisite for success in both the international and domestic arena. Now, an appreciation of cultural differences is needed in order to succeed in almost any endeavor. The essays in this text are designed to help you achieve that awareness and assist in acquiring the ability to become a more skilled intercultural communicator. Each chapter introduces you to a topic considered critical to acquiring and improving intercultural competence.

Before moving further into the study of culture and communication, however, we need to specify our approach to intercultural communication and recognize that other people investigate quite different perspectives. For example, some scholars who examine mass media are concerned with international broadcasting, worldwide freedom of expression, the premise of Western domination of media information, and the use of electronic technologies for instantaneous worldwide communication. Other groups study international communication with an emphasis on interactions among national governments—the communication of diplomacy, economic relations, disaster assistance, and even political propaganda. Still others are interested in the communication needed to conduct business on a global basis. Their concerns include such issues as cross-cultural marketing, negotiation styles, management, and conflict resolution, as well as

daily communication within domestic, multinational, and transnational organizations. And scholars who apply critical theory seek to demonstrate how communication can be used as a means of domination.

Our focus, however, relates to the more personal aspects of communication: What happens when people from different cultures interact face to face? Thus, our approach explores the interpersonal dimensions of intercultural communication across different contexts. The essays we have selected for this edition focus on the variables of culture and communication that are most likely to influence an intercultural communication encounter—those occasions when you attempt to exchange information, ideas, or feelings with someone from a culture different from your own.

With this in mind, we adhere to the following definition: *Intercultural communication occurs whenever a person from one culture sends a message to be processed by a person from a different culture*. Although this may seem somewhat simplistic, it requires a thorough understanding of two key elements—communication and culture. Therefore, in the following section we begin by examining communication and its various components, after which culture is explained. Finally, we explore how these two concepts are fused into the components of intercultural communication.

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION

Communication is inescapable. It is something we have to do and something we enjoy doing, and in the Digital Age, we do a lot of it. Think about the many different ways that you engage in communication every day—watch TV, listen to music, talk to friends, listen to a class lecture (well, at least pretend to), daydream, send and receive messages through e-mail, Facebook, and Twitter, search for something new on YouTube, wear a suit to an interview, and in many, many other ways.

These are but a few of the communication events you participate in on a daily basis. To function in today's data rich society, one cannot avoid communicating. Moreover, we seem to have an innate need to associate with, and connect to, other people through communication. Thus, the motives for entering into

any communicative interaction can be categorized under one of three broad classifications. When people communicate, regardless of the situation or context, they are trying to (1) persuade, (2) inform, or (3) entertain. In other words, when you communicate, you do so with a purpose, an objective.

Explaining Communication

It should be intuitively evident that communication is fundamental to contemporary daily life. But what exactly is communication? What happens when we communicate? In answering those questions, we will first define and then explain the phenomenon.

Communication has been defined variously, and each definition is usually a reflection of the author's objective or of a specific context. Often the definition is long and rather abstract, as the author tries to incorporate as many aspects of communication as possible. In some instances, the definition is narrow and precise, designed to explain a specific type or instance of communication. When studying the union of culture and communication, however, a succinct, easily understandable definition is in everyone's best interest. Thus, for us, *communication is the management of messages with the objective of creating meaning* (Griffin, 2005). This definition is somewhat broad, yet is precise in specifying what occurs in every communicative episode. Nor does it attempt to establish what constitutes successful or unsuccessful communication. Success is actually determined by the involved participants, can vary from one person to another, and is frequently scenario dependent. The only qualifiers we place on communication are intentionality and interaction. In other words, if communication is considered to be purposeful—to persuade, inform, or entertain—then we communicate with an intention, and we achieve our objective only by interacting with someone.

The Framework of Communication

Employing the definition of communication provided above, let's now examine the eight major structural components used to manage messages and create meaning. The first and most obvious is the **sender**—the person or group originating the message. A sender

is someone with a need or desire, be it social, work, or public service, to communicate with others. In completing this desire, the sender formulates and transmits the message via a channel to the receiver(s).

The **message** consists of the information the sender desires to have understood—the data used to create meaning. Messages, which can be verbal or nonverbal, are encoded and transmitted via a **channel** to the receiver. The channel is any means that provides a path for moving the message from the sender to the receiver. For example, an oral message may be sent directly when in the immediate presence of the receiver or mediated through a cell phone, a conference call, or a YouTube video. A visual, or nonverbal, message can be transmitted directly by smiling to indicate pleasure or mediated through a photograph or text. Today, websites such as YouTube, Facebook, or LinkedIn provide channels offering senders a means to reach millions of receivers through mediated messages.

The **receiver(s)** is the intended recipient of the message and the location where meaning is created. Because the receiver interprets the message and assigns a meaning, which may or may not be what the sender intended, communication is often characterized as *receiver based*. You may text a friend, but for a variety of reasons, such as lack of nonverbal cues or insufficient context, the receiver may misinterpret the message and feel offended. After interpreting the message and assigning a meaning, the receiver may prepare a **response.** This is any action taken by the receiver as a result of the meaning he or she assigns to the message. A response can be benign, such as simply ignoring a provocative remark, or, at the other extreme, a physically aggressive act of violence.

The **feedback** component of communication is related to, yet separate from, the response. Feedback helps us to evaluate the effectiveness of a message. Perhaps the receiver smiles, or frowns, after decoding our message. This offers a clue as to the meaning the receiver assigned to the message and helps the sender adjust to the developing situation. Depending on the feedback, we may rephrase or amplify our message to provide greater clarity, ask whether the message was understood, or perhaps even retract the statement.

Every communicative interaction takes place within a physical and contextual **environment.** The physical environment refers to the location where the communication occurs, such as a classroom, coffee shop, business office, or on an airplane. The contextual, or social, environment is more abstract and exerts a strong influence on the style of communication employed. Think about the different styles of communication you use during an interview or when applying for a student loan, asking a stranger for directions, visiting your professor's office, or apologizing when late meeting a friend. We alter our communicative style in response to the occasion and the receiver—the contextual environment.

Noise, the last component of communication, concerns the different types of interference or distractions that plague every communication event. *Physical noise* is separate from the communication participants and can take many forms, such as two people chatting in the back of the classroom during lecture, someone talking loudly on the subway, the sounds of traffic coming through the window of an apartment, or static on your cell phone.

Noise that is inherent to the people participating in the communication episode can take a variety of forms. Suppose during a Friday class you find yourself concentrating more on plans for a weekend road trip than on the lecture. Perhaps you are in a funk after learning your car needs an expensive brake job, or you might be worried about a term paper due next week. These are examples of *psychological noise* that can reduce your understanding of the classroom communication. *Physiological noise* relates to the physical well-being of the people engaged in the communication activity. Coming to class with too little sleep, dealing with a head cold, or simply feeling too hot or cold in the room will interfere with your ability to fully comprehend the classroom activity.

The final type of noise often occurs during intercultural communication and can easily produce misunderstandings. For effective communication in an intercultural interaction, participants must rely on a common language, which usually means that one or more individuals will not be using their native tongue. Native fluency in a second language is very difficult, especially when nonverbal behaviors are considered. People who use another language will often have an accent or might misuse a word or phrase, which can adversely influence the receiver's understanding of the message.

This type of distraction, referred to as *semantic noise,* also encompasses jargon, slang, and even specialized professional terminology (Wood, 2013).

Collectively, these eight components provide an overview of factors that facilitate, shape, and can hamper communication encounters. But there is also another influential factor that normally plays a role in communicative interactions. Our *culture* provides each of us with a set of standards that govern how, when, what, and even why we communicate. However, you must first understand the concept of culture itself in order to appreciate how it impacts communication.

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture is an extremely popular and increasingly overused term in contemporary society. Expressions such as *cultural differences, cultural diversity, multiculturalism, corporate culture, cross-culture,* and other variations continually appear in the popular media. Culture has been linked to such diverse fields as corporate management, health care, psychology, education, public relations, marketing, and advertising. You may have heard that before deploying to Afghanistan U.S. troops receive training about the local culture and language. The pervasive use of the term attests to the increased awareness of the role that culture plays in our everyday activities. Seldom, however, are we provided a definition of just what constitutes culture or exactly what it does. This section will provide that information.

Explaining Culture

As with communication, the term culture has been the subject of numerous and often complex, abstract definitions. What is frequently counted as one of the earliest and most easily understood definitions of culture, and one still used today, was written in 1871 by British anthropologist Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, who said culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" ("Sir Edward," 2012, para 1).

Ruth Benedict offered a more succinct definition when she wrote, "What really binds men together is their culture—the ideas and the standards they have in common" (1959, p.16). A more complex explanation was provided by Clifford Geertz, who said culture is "a historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (1973, p. 89). Contemporary definitions of culture commonly mention shared values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, norms, material objects, and symbolic resources (e.g., Gardiner & Kosmitzki, 2010; Jandt, 2012; Lustig & Koester, 2012; Martin & Nakayama, 2010; Neuliep, 2011; Samovar et al., 2012). Indeed, the many and varied definitions attest to the complexity of this social concept called culture.

We propose an applied and hopefully more simplified explanation of culture. Stop for a moment and think about the word *football*. What mental picture comes to mind? Most U.S. Americans will envision two teams of eleven men each in helmets and pads, but someone in Montréal, Canada, would imagine twelve men per team. A resident of Sydney, Australia, might think of two eighteen-men teams in shorts and jerseys competing to kick an oblong ball between two uprights, while a young woman in São Paulo, Brazil, would probably picture two opposing teams of eleven players each attempting to kick a round ball into a net. In each case, the contest is referred to as "football," but the playing fields, equipment, and rules of each game are quite different.

Try to think about how you would react in the following situations. Following your successful job interview with a large Chinese company, you are invited to dinner. At the restaurant, you sit at a round table with other people, and plates of food are continually being placed on a turntable in the table's center. People are spinning the table, taking food from different places, talking with each other, and urging you to try items you are completely unfamiliar with. *How do you feel*? At a later date, one of your close friends, whose parents immigrated from Mumbai, India, invites you to his home for the first time. There, you are introduced to your friend's grandfather, who places his palms together in front of his chest as if praying, bows, and says, "*Namaste.*" *What do you do*? In each of these examples perhaps you felt unsure of what to do or say, yet in China and India these behaviors are routine.