



# Intercultural Communication for Everyday Life

John R. Baldwin, Robin R. Means Coleman,  
Alberto González, and Suchitra Shenoy-Packer

**WILEY** Blackwell



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# Preface

## Global needs meet an engaged community

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There are increased interconnections in the world at large—from international business and education opportunities to domestic and international crises. There is open conflict in Syria, Burma, Somalia, and Colombia, and dormant conflicts, quiet but never quite resolved, in Palestine, Cyprus, Northern Ireland, and many other places. Recent natural disasters of cataclysmic proportions have struck Indonesia (2004), Japan (2011), and Haiti (2012), each demanding forces of collaborating international and domestic workers. Governments work across cultures and across nations (concepts we will treat separately in this book) to fight against the international flow of the drug trade, human trafficking, and other issues. And, at the same time, we have seen great changes within and across societies, from the “Arab Spring” and the overthrow of several totalitarian governments to the renewed debate over same-sex marriage in the United States in 2013.

Grand-scale problems require complex solutions; and these solutions require the synergy of efforts of people with different cultural perspectives. But even if we do not see the connection of global issues to our own lives or ever travel abroad, culture touches our lives. We live in a multicultural, global economy, where, to survive, most large businesses employ, buy, and sell across cultural and national lines. Many of us, regardless of our country of residence, have doctors, teachers, bosses, students, or employees from “cultures” besides our own. With new and interactive media, we might play online games, chat, or develop friendships or romances with people in other lands without leaving our own borders. Besides this, we each live within and are influenced and sometimes constrained by our own cultures. The more we know about our own culture, the more effective we will be where we live, the more we can engage in issues and problems within our own community (which have cultural elements), and the more we will see the strengths and limits of our own culture. As we see these strengths and limits, we will have more likelihood of being able to make choices and change those cultures.

Whether we are discussing world-level crises or community issues, there is a bright spot as we talk about social issues, and that is the rise of involvement of citizens in the public sphere—at least in some ways. Russell Dalton (2009) reports statistics showing that while the younger generation (Gen Y) has a decreased sense of citizen “duty” in terms of things such as following the law without thought, or voting, they have an increased sense of citizen “engagement”, which includes seeking to understand opinions of others, “direct action, and elite-challenging activities” (p. 32). Engagement and duty are both impacted by things such as level of education, racial background, and religiosity. Increasingly, companies are encouraging their employees to participate in the community, and universities are promoting civic and political engagement.

There seems to be a fresh wind in the air as students in secondary schools, colleges, and universities seek to give back to the community. After a post-2005 decline, voluntarism increased to a high-point in 2011 (“Volunteering and Civic Life,” 2012; Volunteering/Community Service, 2010), and service learning opportunities at universities abound. Some have said that one of the characteristics of the up-and-coming generation is a sense of social responsibility, though one study suggests that the Millennial Generation “may not be the caring, socially conscious environmentalists some have portrayed them to be” (Chau, 2012). Instead, they might be focusing more on “money, image, and fame”. Statistics suggest that, at least in terms of volunteering, 16–18 year olds and those aged 25 and older historically volunteer more than the 18–25 set (Volunteering/Community Service, 2010). Students (especially in Western cultures like the United States, where “pragmatism” or “practicality” is a core value) have always wanted to study “what works”—what leads to better message production and consumption, better workplace practices, better relationships. But many students today often also seek ideas to help them engage better with the community. And knowledge of culture is central to such engagement.

## Why another intercultural text? (Features of this book)

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The need for solutions for community, as well as the growing interest in community engagement, is a driving force for the present book. We have three main goals in writing this text. First, we want to provide responsible knowledge of things cultural. Many introductory textbooks present simple explanations of things for the student new to cultural issues. We believe students are capable of deep thought, so, where possible, we introduce basic ideas, but then challenge students to critical thought about those ideas. Our second goal is for readers to be able to take something practical from the text for their own workplaces, relationships, and schooling, the traditional focus of intercultural studies. But the third goal is to bring an imagination of possibilities for community engagement—civic or political. We want to encourage readers, and ourselves as authors, to find ways to make the knowledge practical for making people’s lives better, to address social issues, to meet the personal needs of people in our lives and in our classrooms. With this in mind, this book has several distinctive features:

- The authors write for introductory readers, with clear definition of terms, but use original frameworks and introduce theories in a way that does not condescend to the reader.
- We treat culture complexly. While we sometimes discuss national cultures, through most of the book we see cultures as distinct from national boundaries. Some cultures cross national boundaries, and a single city might have people of many different cultures within it. There are regional, urban–rural, or other cultural differences within nations; even organizations have cultures.
- We construct a vision of culture that uses examples from around the world as much as possible, seeking to remove some of our own U.S.-centric bias as authors, and we use examples that relate to a variety of types of diversity, including age, sex, race,

religion, and sexual orientation. While these, in and of themselves, do not constitute cultures, they often contain cultural elements, and there are cultural constructions of how a society treats different groups that deserve our attention as engaged citizens.

- As authors with diverse backgrounds—rhetoric, media and African American studies, organizational communication, and intercultural/interpersonal communication—we (re)introduce notions to the study of intercultural communication not present in many books, including large sections on intercultural ethics and chapters on media, rhetoric, and globalization.
- Throughout the book, we promote civic engagement with cues toward individual intercultural effectiveness and giving back to the community in socially relevant ways; we do this throughout the chapters and with discussion questions and engagement activities at the end of each chapter.
- We weave pedagogy throughout the text with student-centered examples, thought (or “text”) boxes, applications, critical thinking questions, a glossary of key terms, and online resources for students and instructors. These online resources include sample syllabi, test questions, glossary terms, power points, and class exercise options.

## Focus and direction of this book

With these goals in mind, our text begins with a discussion of the foundations of intercultural communication. In chapter 1, we introduce several reasons why it is important to study intercultural communication, with updated situations and examples of world and community diversity. In chapter 2, we introduce our central concepts of political and civic engagement and discuss the importance and nature of ethical intercultural communication and cultural research. We then turn to different ways to define culture (chapter 3).

The second portion of the book focuses on elements that inform the intercultural communication process, starting with the foundation upon which all communication rests—values, beliefs, and world view (chapter 4). We consider the view we have of ourselves as that relates to the groups to which we belong—identity (chapter 5)—and then look at our attitudes towards those of other identities (chapter 6).

In the third part of our book, we look at the exchange of messages through different channels. We begin with verbal communication—that is, face-to-face communication as it relates to the use of words in interaction (chapter 7). We next consider the various channels of face-to-face communication that do not use words—nonverbal communication (chapter 8). This includes discussion of things such as space, time, touch, eye contact, and gesture. We examine messages given by speakers or in texts to persuade—rhetoric (chapter 9). Finally, we look at aspects of mediated communication, in terms of how we mediate identity and culture (chapter 10).

Our final section contains issues and contexts of intercultural communication, starting with the impacts of globalization, especially on media (chapter 11), then moving to cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural communication competence (chapter 12), intercultural relations, conflict, and negotiation (chapter 13), political communication (chapter 14), and finally the organizational context (chapter 15).

The order is intended to be flexible for the instructor. As we have used drafts of this text in our own teaching, we find that, after the foundational chapters, each chapter stands on its own; we can choose the chapters that best meet our needs, for example, with a special unit on media (or leaving media out), or skipping over the section on personal relationships. We encourage the student reading this preface to start each chapter you read by looking at the objectives at the top of each chapter—those are things that we, the authors, felt were most important as we wrote. Then read the discussion questions at the end. As you read, start with an understanding of the larger structure and bolded terms in the chapter, before you try to learn specific details.

In each area, there are areas for practical applications of culture to work and school, ways in which knowledge of culture will teach us about ourselves and give us more freedom over our choices, and aspects that will allow us to be more effective and engaged citizens in our communities.

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Suchitra dedicates this book to her students at Purdue University and DePaul University.



# About the website

This text has a comprehensive companion website which features the following resources for instructors:

- Powerpoint slides to accompany each chapter
- Sample syllabi for both undergraduate and graduate courses
- Testbank, containing problems for each chapter, along with answers
- Glossary
- Exercises for all chapters, along with a resource list and some general assignments.

Please visit [www.wiley.com/go/baldwin](http://www.wiley.com/go/baldwin) to access the materials.

# Walk through

Contexts

Part four

**11 Global media, global cultures**  
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The channels of messages that we discussed in part three are used in different contexts and present us with several issues. Rather than separate contents and issues, we treat them together here, because issues arise within specific contexts. Globalization, for example, places message exchange within the “context” of global media and message flow, but presents “issues” of cultural change and preservation. In chapter 11, we address globalization. We note that much of globalization occurs as a result of global media flow; however, we also point out that such flows are not always equal for all parties involved and are, in fact, resisted by many in non-Western cultures, as they spread ideas and behaviors congruently with greater flow from cultures with more powerful market economies and media structures.

Chapter 12 introduces the context of cultural adaptation. Many people travel abroad, so we should know the types of symptoms that accompany “culture shock.” However, we note that cultural transition need not be a bad thing, so it also brings in personal growth. We present—and discuss—the commonly used “U-curve” or stage model of acculturation that many universities use to guide their students, and present other ways to understand both going abroad and coming home. Much of what helps one adjust is also what makes one a competent communicator, and travel experience often makes one more interculturally competent, so we also address the idea of cultural competence in this chapter.

Another context in which we experience intercultural communication is relationships, so we address this in chapter 13. Specifically, we compare different views of how relationships might grow between people of different cultures and what issues might be present in such relationships, as well as different cultural patterns an intercultural couple might adopt.

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**Part opening page** The book is divided into four parts. Each part opens with a list of the chapters it contains, followed by a short introduction summarizing the purposes of each chapter:

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Part three: Messages

Summary

Our focus in this chapter has been on various aspects of verbal communication as they relate to culture and intercultural communication. We considered elements that make up the language system—down to the smallest parts of sound (phonemes) in language woven into myth, ritual, and practice. We considered perspectives of language and culture, such as whether linguistic relativity is a valid concept, that is, whether the language that a culture speaks creates the reality that the speakers of that language inhabit. We gave special attention to the use of language in building myth, communication episodes, and social dramas.

Beyond lists of dimensions of language variation (e.g. formal to informal), we provided some overarching ideas to explain how these might vary across cultures, such as speech acts and face theory. We considered explanations of what happens when people of different groups or cultures speak to each other, through the notion of communication accommodation. Finally, we suggested ways that people use verbal language, perhaps without intention, to reinforce power structures and social discourses, such as discourses of traditional gender roles or ideas of group stereotypes.

An understanding of the elements of language and how they can differ among cultures is useful as we engage ourselves with a multicultural world. Realizing how adjusting our language to others can often be helpful may help us to be aware of our own communication behavior when interacting with others. And, while our focus has been on how language might oppress others with or without intention, we can use this knowledge to speak more respectfully with others. Indeed, many scholars today are using this knowledge to give those who are in groups that dominant culture subordinates new ways of speaking that provide more equality of power among communicators.

KEYTERMS

<p>language, 118</p> <p>semantics, 119</p> <p>denotation, 119</p> <p>connotation, 119</p> <p>discourse, 140</p> <p>Speech/Whorf hypothesis, 140</p> <p>pragmatics, 141</p> <p>speech acts theory, 141</p> <p>directives, 142</p> <p>phases, 142</p> <p>remediation, 142</p> <p>remediation, 143</p> <p>power, 143</p> <p>solidarity (national distance), 143</p> <p>face, 144</p> <p>negative face, 144</p> <p>positive face, 144</p>	<p>script, 144</p> <p>differentiated and undifferentiated codes, 146</p> <p>register, 146</p> <p>instrumental and affective styles, 146</p> <p>exaggerated style, 146</p> <p>emerging style, 146</p> <p>secret style, 146</p> <p>discursive elements of language, 147</p> <p>overt form, 147</p> <p>conversational episode (CE) or communication unit, 148</p> <p>discourse, 148</p> <p>social domains, 149</p> <p>metaphor, 150</p> <p>metaphorical archetype, 150</p> <p>attributor, 151</p>
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**End-of-chapter pedagogy** Each chapter ends with a summary, a listing of the key terms in the chapter; discussion questions, action points, details of further resources under the heading “For More Information,” and references.

Chapter 8

Nonverbal communication: Can I make nonverbal blunders and not even know it?

Chapter objectives

After this chapter, you should be able to:

- ➔ Differentiate functions of nonverbal communication as it relates to verbal communication
- ➔ Describe different cultural views of silence
- ➔ Summarize perspectives on the universal expression of emotion
- ➔ Explain and evaluate the notion of the contact cultures as an explanation of cross-cultural differences in nonverbal communication
- ➔ List and define three different ways of thinking about cultural differences in time orientation

Forms and functions: How should we act nonverbally when in another culture?

Issues in nonverbal communication: How can I compare several cultures at the same time?

Nonverbal expectancy violations: What does your nonverbal behavior mean?

*Intercultural Communication for Everyday Life, First Edition, John R. Badros, Rubin R. Mann, Melissa Coleman, Alberto González, and Isabella Sherry-Parker.*  
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**Chapter opening page** Each chapter opens with a list of the main chapter objectives and the chapter table of contents.

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Part three: Messages

Discussion questions

- 1 How do you attempt to create identification with others? In social settings? At work? At school? Do you think about how others are attempting to create identification with you?
- 2 Make a list of three public figures you admire. What rhetorical tradition (or traditions) helps to explain how these individuals relate to audiences? What rhetorical tradition guides what these individuals say and do?
- 3 What is the presence of vernacular terms and meanings on Facebook? On YouTube?
- 4 Have you ever spoken with members of a community on a particular issue? How did you build the relationship? What was the outcome?

Action points

- 1 In 2010, members of the Trojans lacrosse team were denied travel to England to compete in the lacrosse world championships. To respect the sovereignty of their native nation—the Trojans Confederates—team members would not obtain U.S. passports. Yet due to new rules by Homeland Security, the U.S. and England required that team members have U.S.-issued identification. Research this case. How did this situation end?
- 2 Conduct a Google search for Mount Graham. Why is this a unique location for Native Americans, scientists, and environmentalists? What current actions are underway to resist development of this area?
- 3 Pick a local magazine or newspaper and look through its advertisements. How can you tell the local advertisements from the chain or national advertisements? Do the local advertisements reflect “what everybody knows” about your area?

For more information

Hagen, M.A. (2006). Culture, communication, and identity in the Côte d’Ivoire: *Le pays perdu*. In M.P. Obo, B.J. Allen, & J.A. Foret (Eds.), *The same and different: Acknowledging the diversity between and within cultural groups* (pp. 195–235). Washington, D.C.: National Communication Association.

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Rogers, R.A. (2009). “Your genes is as good as any”: Indeterminacy, dialogue, and dissemination in interpretations of Native American rock art. *Journal of Intercultural and Intergroup Communication*, 2, 44–65.

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For four Contents

Wallace Schmidt and his colleagues (2007) summarize a three-phase intercultural conflict negotiation model. In the background phase, parties undertake essential planning for the negotiation session. This includes analyzing one's own position in the process and carefully planting one's communicating language. Each party should gather and organize pertinent information regarding the situation, keeping in mind all the involved people, their varied interests, available options, and criteria such as market values, expert opinions, customs, laws, industry practices, and others (Fetehi, 2008). In addition to identifying one's own interests, priorities, goals, and strategies, one must also understand the mindset, personality attributes, perceptions, cultural values, norms, beliefs, and expectations of the other negotiating party. Even as one collects cultural information about the other party, one should also be mindful of the dangers of cultural stereotyping and cultural profiling (Schmidt et al., 2007).

In the process phase, the actual negotiation, collaborative engagement or competition occurs between the parties. Parties communicate back and forth within their intercultural context and shape the reality of the ongoing negotiation with the unique characteristics they bring to the table. According to Schmidt et al. (2007), two specific negotiating styles emerge during this phase: a distributive, or positional, negotiation, which involves competitively pushing for one's own goals and agenda with little regard to the other party; and integrative, or principled negotiation that uses collaborative strategies and considers the needs and expectations of the other party to develop mutually satisfying ends. Principled negotiation (PN) advocates negotiating on merits. PN "provides parties to a negotiation with a method of focusing on basic interests and mutually advantageous solutions" (Fetehi, 2008, p. 200). PN values other members' perspectives, and negotiation is being gained trust and credibility—work to share information reciprocally and improve their mutual situation. The last stage, the outcome phase, is the culmination of all events and communication that comprised the conflict negotiation process. The process itself and the outcomes are evaluated to see whether expectations were surpassed or fell short of predetermined goals. This phase determines the nature of future interactions and whether or not there is potential for new business partnerships.

Of course, an intercultural/intercultural negotiation is never an event, it is always a process, and that process can be a really long and time-consuming one. In addition to negotiations, mediation and arbitration are two other methods used in conflict reconciliation. Mediators are neutral third parties that try to resolve disputes with reason and compromise instead of more aggressive measures. They have no power to impose a decision on the disputing parties but work collaboratively with the two parties to arrive at a third party mediated, mutually acceptable solution. Mediation by a third party is particularly helpful if the two conflicting parties have reached a stalemate or voluntarily agreed to have a third party intervene (Schmidt et al., 2007). Ann Neville-Miller (2012/2009) notes the use of mediators of various sorts is an essential part of Sub-Saharan African culture, not only in the workplace, but also in interpersonal and dating relationships. Arbitration is yet another dispute resolution alternative that conflicting parties can opt for. Arbitrators are neutral, objective, third parties that can resolve a conflict based on the facts of the conflict situation presented to them. Unlike mediators, arbitrators are permitted to impose a binding decision on the parties in conflict (Schmidt et al., 2007).

Even with all the information gathered from the earlier discussions, if individuals do not behave in culturally intelligent and sensitive ways, no negotiation will be successful. Culture influences not only the style of negotiating but also what groups consider important within

Glossary

**Accommodating (yielding):** A conflict approach in which one party gives in to the requests or demands of the other.

**Acculturation:** The process of learning another culture, and one's sense of identification with that culture—in part or whole—either through moving to live in that culture or through two cultures living side-by-side in the same geographical space.

**Adjustment:** Usually defined, the process one goes through changing one's behavior and adapting psychologically to transition to another culture.

**Adaptation stage:** The third stage of the U-curve, in which residents feel a growing sense of understanding and being able to live and succeed in the new culture.

**Agency:** The degree of choice one has in acting in a particular situation.

**Altruistic approach:** An approach to returning home from another culture in which the traveler becomes overly critical or bitter about the home culture.

**Altruism:** The notion of doing good for someone, even a stranger.

**Anxiety:** Feelings of uneasiness, tension, or apprehension that occur in intercultural interactions.

**Appreciations:** The attitude and action of not only accepting a group's behaviors, but also seeing the good in them, even adapting them, and actively joining in with a group.

**Arbitrator:** A neutral, objective, third party who can resolve a conflict based on the facts of the conflict situation presented to her or him.

**Argot:** Language used by those in a particular subculture, often different themselves from a dominant culture (e.g., profanity, profanity).

**Arms race:** A series of actions in which two might be friendly toward people of other races, but want to have their own arms culture in which they are neighbors, friends, or economic partners.

**Assimilation:** Going up one's own culture to become one's neighbors, friends, or economic partners.

**Authenticity:** Living up one's own culture to become one's neighbors, friends, or economic partners and, thereby, doing things that behaviors and underlying ways of thinking.

**Autism spectrum:** Someone who is lacking global perception from the new state, rather than simply missing their because of conditions of autism.

**Attitude:** A disposition to relate to things, actions, or people in certain ways.

**Attribution:** A process by which we give meanings to our own behavior and the behavior of others.

**Avoiding (withdrawing):** A conflict approach in which individuals prefer to simply avoid confrontations with the offender or may be afraid of consequences resulting from a direct confrontation of the issue.

**Axiology:** A set of assumptions about the role of values in research.

**Backchanneling:** Verbal and paralinguistic cues used to indicate we are listening to another communication.

**Background phase:** The initial phase of negotiation, in which parties assess their positions, consider what they know of the other parties, and plan out their communication language.

**Barnes hypothesis:** A hypothesis by anthropologist Keith Barnes upon observing eye of contact among the Apache, that people may use silence to respond to situations of uncertainty.

**Behavioral response:** The expectancy relation theory, the positive or negative evaluation we give to a behavior that violates our expectations.

**Belief:** An assumption that someone has about the nature of something a cognition (thought) about the connection between two or more concepts.

**Beliefs system:** A set of interrelated beliefs, including beliefs, world view, norms, and sources of culture.

**Body cell:** A relationship form in which two partners build relationships with increasing frequency, but when one contacts the other for sex, the second person declines.

**Boundaries/careers:** The notion of individuals moving between organizations with increasing frequency.

**Break it down:** An acronym for breaking down the number of social areas that we self-disclose.

International Advisory Board: First Edition: John R. Robbins, Robert M. Stebbins, Robert M. Stebbins, Robert M. Stebbins, and Robert M. Stebbins. Published 2013 by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

**Key terms and glossary** Key terms are introduced in bold and clearly defined both in the text and in a complete glossary at the end of the book.

Chapter 9 Rhetoric and culture How does my culture relate to persuasive writing and speaking?

**ON THE NET**

Search an online speech bank for a speech from someone in a country or co-culture besides your own. Think about the content of the speech and how the speaker tries to persuade the audience. Do you see evidence of the types of rhetorical traditions represented here? How is the speech different in style, structure, and type of argument than the rhetorical tradition in your own country?

There are different speech databases to choose from. For example, <http://thespeechsite.com> contains transcripts of speeches from Phileas X. Aung San Suu Kyi, and Sadako Ogata, as well as student speeches from several countries. <http://www.meritcenter.com> has text, audio, or visual reproduction of more than 5000 speeches; its database, which lists speakers alphabetically, provides links to speeches by Elie Wiesel, Dmitry Medvedev, Rex A.J. Sharpton, Corretta Scott King, Mother Theresa, Swami Vivekananda, Zainab Al-Suwaidi, and many others. <http://www.khanacademy.com> specifically focuses on world social issues; its "speeches" link (<http://www.khanacademy.com/speeches.html>) gives access to speeches from different parts of the world. Or you might find other databases that give speeches of a particular speaker, such as Martin Luther King, Jr. (<http://www.martinlutherking.com/speeches.html>).

**Vernacular rhetoric: How does everyday communication seek to persuade?**

While an understanding of rhetorical traditions is important in placing a speech or text in a cultural context, another exciting concept is also available. **Vernacular discourse** refers to locally produced meanings that is, speech that has been adapted to audiences to elicit persuasion or cooperation by taking the form of the everyday communication of the community in which the speech occurs. Critical focus is upon marginalized communities because vernacular discourse "makes visible power relations among subjects" (Cahaff & Delgado, 2004, p. 6). Since local meanings often function persuasively to mediate relationships between marginalized and dominant communities, we also use the term **vernacular rhetoric**.

**Vernacular rhetoric in Africa**

In the early 2000s, the Feminist International Radio Endeavor (FIRE) expanded its South American operations to Sub-Saharan Africa. The goal of FIRE was to facilitate community radio broadcasting that centered on women's voices and women's issues (Gatta et al., 2009). Through a variety of means, including audiotapes, or recorded content, and the Internet, FIRE created programming for tens of thousands of women and their families.

The programs created by FIRE contained many vernacular elements. In countries such as Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Burundi, and Congo, FIRE used community radio to promote local issues in locally understood ways. Radio in Africa remains an affordable, accessible, and versatile communication medium. First, FIRE sponsored workshops to train women journalists. Many African countries have no independent media, only state-owned media.

**On the net** This feature provides students with an activity based on visiting a website that ties into the text discussion.

Chapter 9 Rhetoric and culture How does my culture relate to persuasive writing and speaking?

1911. The early inspiration for the movement came from the Mexican Revolution. The plan was an important persuasive tool since it could be read in both Spanish and English and could be copied and delivered to many workers and politicians. The plan stated that the workers were entitled to fundamental human rights, that the workers' belief in God would ensure their endurance, and that they were united in their cause (Hammerback & Jensen, 1994).

Without doubt, Cesar Chavez was influenced by the early labor leaders, and peace activists such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. However, identifying the rhetorical tradition of Mexico lends a fuller explanation of how Chavez achieved identification with the farmworkers whose trust he needed.

**Break it down**

Many college campuses have student organizations that are involved in political activism or focused on promoting the interests of a particular ethnic or identity group. For example, at a U.S. university you might find organizations aimed at fighting global warming, advocating human rights around the world ( Amnesty International), or encouraging vegetarianism. Or you might find student groups focused on African American, Latina/Latino, Dual GBLT, or other identity groups.

Locate a particular group and get permission to analyze its message (for example, its recurring messages, motivational speeches at activities). Do the style, form, and content of the message (that is, the rhetorical strategies) seem appropriate and effective for their audience? If such a group wanted recommendations, what recommendations would you make for more effective messages?

**Native American tradition: Rooted in nature**

An important cultural value among many Native American communities is a "circular and flexible" notion of time (Shapiro, 2012, p. 134). When enacted, this approach to time would observe the connectedness of the present to the past. This approach also would observe approximate times for the beginning and ending of events. The people and the event itself—rather than time—were the controlling factors. This approach is in contrast to the dominant Western notion of linear and exact time. Whenever we expect punctuality or when we say that we've "moved beyond" or "gotten over" something, we are creating the linear notion of time (see chapter 9).

In public addresses, those differing values are apparent. In Arizona, a dispute arose over a proposed astronomical observatory on Mount Graham (Carbaugh & Wolf, 2000). The four tribes of the Western Apache Nation regarded the mountain as a sacred space, a place of worship for generations that connected modern Apaches to their past. The tribes argued that it must be protected, and one way to protect the space against outside interference and show reverence was to speak about the belief that the time-tested existence and behavior of the space was self evident and beyond argument.

**Break it down** These exercises encourage students to engage in civic action and apply their knowledge to the world at large.

Chapter 3 Identity, struggle, resistance, and identity: How can I think about my identity and that of others?

music was that the lyrics centered on messages of anti-materialism, anarchy, freedom from conformity, and peace. The music launched a movement among young people who called themselves "Punks." Punk embodied the music through dress, speech, and lifestyle. It is a lifestyle, or scene, that has been particularly attractive to Whites, even promoting White identity through its representation of non-Whites (Duncombe & Tremblay, 2011). Though the punk scene has been understood to be predominantly White, this cannot be further from the truth. James Spooner, in his 2000 documentary film *After Punk*, chronicles a social movement within Black communities in the U.S. that led Black youths to the punk culture. You can even listen to "punk international" radio stations online. So, even though punk began as an expression of engagement among a particular youth identity in working class Britain, it continues to evolve, creating a connection that crosses national and race identities.

**What do you think?** View Afro-Punk artist James Spooner's film (<http://www.afropunk.com/gigs/afropunk-the-movie>). What are some of the reasons that Black youth would join a predominantly White movement (one that has often been understood at the margins to be exclusionary and racist)? What crises, conversations, and conflicts do Black youth encounter from Whites, Blacks, and society as a whole? How does their decision to fit diam to and proclaim their identity as punks need this to be an identity politics "move"? Overall, what are the identity experiences of Afro-Punks?



Figure 5.3 James Spooner, Toronto, September 10, 2009. Source: Scott Green/Getty Images.

**What do you think?** These boxes ask the reader to think critically on an issue or examine their own opinions on a subject.

Part three: Messages

The FIRE-trained journalists are aware of community issues, and know how to create independent content for local media. Second, the program content reflects community issues. Circumstances vary across the continent. At times, information about food, employment, and health may be most important. At other times, literacy and general education may be most important. Community radios can quickly address topics that are immediately relevant to the community. Third, programs were recorded and broadcast in local dialects. UNESCO estimates that there are more than 2000 languages and 6000 dialects spoken on the continent. FIRE recorded programs in the dialect of the community as opposed to a "standard" dialect. This ensured that a maximum number of listeners would be able to understand the information delivered (Gatta et al., 2000).

A second example of vernacular rhetoric in Africa is the Knowledge Center project in Ibadan, Nigeria (Hu et al., 2008). This project provided free internet service to the people of Ibadan. A special website was established that allowed farmers to share information with each other. The farmers found the website to be informative and enjoyable since the local knowledge of the community was the basis of its content. The farmers were able to socialize via the website using references to places, people and events that were well understood.

FIRE and the Knowledge Center engaged in vernacular rhetoric as they empowered communities to respond to self-identified priorities. Further, the community members engaged radio and the website to persuade the community to avoid infection, read more, or grow better crops, in their own dialect and with well-understood community meanings. These practices often resist larger government structures that centralize the needs of capital cities and urban areas to the neglect of smaller and remote villages.

With its Creole imagery, King Cakes and Krewe, Mardi Gras is a ritual that is truly identified with New Orleans (Figure 9.3). Mardi Gras is an example of a vernacular celebration. What vernacular celebrations surround you?



Figure 9.3 Mardi Gras is a ritual celebration on the eve of the Christian Lenten period. Source: Alamy/PhotoAlto/Getty.

**Pop culture** This feature uses examples from the media and pop culture as jumping off points for the reader to apply their knowledge.



# Foundations

## 1 A rationale for studying intercultural communication

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## 3 Origins

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If you try to build a structure of some sort, you know that you need certain materials to make it—bricks, wood, plastic, metal—and some plan for the structure—a blueprint. As you consider these things, you will need to think of how the building will be used. Will it be a restaurant? A bank? A hockey rink? But before you lay the first brick, you must make sure that your building is on firm footing: you need a good foundation.

In the same way, we will soon describe the things that make up intercultural communication (part two), the ways we use it (part three), and the different functions we can use it for (part four). We provided a general road map to the book at the end of the Preface. But before we do any of that, we need to lay a groundwork—a foundation—of some basic principles. That is the purpose of the first part of the book.

In chapter 1, we provide a rationale for studying intercultural communication. Many companies and students no longer require a reason for studying intercultural communication, as the need for skills in this area are part of conventional wisdom. Still, you may find the facts in the section interesting, and as you talk to future employers of your skills in intercultural communication, some of them may still need convincing of the need to consider culture. Even though there are many benefits of studying intercultural communication, there are also some limitations, which we also address. Finally, we speak briefly about the history of the study of intercultural communication. We speak of it because it gives us context for what we study, and context is important to understanding what we do and why we do it. We treat it briefly, as we want to keep our focus primarily practical.

Chapter 2 introduces what we feel are the most important principles for practicing and researching intercultural communication. We could, here, discuss what it means to be a

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“competent” communicator across cultures, but we need to know more about sending and receiving messages first. It is important that we be aware of what it means to be ethical in our communication, so we discuss different ethical approaches in depth. It is an ethical position by the authors that leads us to feel that communication—and intercultural communication especially—should be related to civic and political action, so we introduce these terms and their relationship to intercultural communication. Finally, as much of what we understand about culture involves research of some sort, we introduce different ways of seeing the world as they relate to studying culture and communication.

Finally, in chapter 3, we are ready to introduce a definition of culture; but we notice that defining culture is not that easy, because people from different disciplines often see culture in different and opposing ways. We discuss some of these ways and provide our own tentative definition. We describe some of the key components of culture, such as values, norms, and beliefs, and then provide a model to help explain the influences that might be present, to greater or lesser degrees, in any communication, but especially in intercultural or intergroup communication.

With these foundations—a reason to study culture and communication, an understanding of ethical communication and civic engagement, and an view of the nature of culture—we will be able to look more closely at the components that impact the creation and interpretation of messages between and within cultures.



# Chapter 1

## A rationale for studying intercultural communication: Why should we know about other cultures?

### Chapter objectives

After this chapter, you should be able to:

- Provide several reasons, with evidence, as to why it is important to study intercultural communication
- Describe possible limitations of studying intercultural communication
- Summarize briefly the history of intercultural communication as a field of research

**Building a rationale: Why do we need to know about intercultural communication?**

**The history and focus of intercultural communication: Where did we come from?**

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In 1994, a tsunami hit countries in the Indian Ocean, triggered by an earthquake measuring 9.1 on the Richter scale—the power of about 23,000 atomic bombs (*National Geographic News*, 2005). The tsunami destroyed whole cities and vast tracts of farmland and made many formerly occupied islands uninhabitable. It killed more than 225,000 people in countries including Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the Maldives (Brunner, 2007). The World Bank Fact Sheet (Tsunami recovery in Indonesia, Dec, 2006) listed the need for 80–100,000 homes and noted the destruction of more than 2000 schools and 100 health facilities. The World Bank enlisted the help of 15 nations and international agencies (the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the European Commission) to help with the repair and restoration of the region (Aceh Post-Tsunami Reconstruction, 2006). Many such disasters have occurred since, including the 2011 earthquake and resulting tsunami in Japan (see Figure 1.1).

In this story, we see a major international crisis that required multicultural and multinational cooperation. While this case reflects an obvious need for intercultural communication, individuals can also benefit from such an education, even if they never travel outside of their hometown. Many students around the world today are re-investing in their community, with a sense of social responsibility that surpasses that of their parents. Many readers of this book are members of that generation, but even those of different ages may find themselves increasingly aware of the world around them. In this chapter, we highlight the importance of understanding intercultural communication. We then turn our attention to the reasons that we should bring that understanding back to the communities—local, regional, and world—in which we live.

**Figure 1.1** International workers cooperate after the Japanese Tsunami of 2011. What role could you have in international cooperation to solve world problems?

Source: YONHAP/EPA.



## Building a rationale: Why do we need to know about intercultural communication?

Many university researchers, journalists, business leaders, civic leaders, and bloggers around the world have begun to call our attention to the need to understand cultures and intercultural communication. Whereas at one time, one had to justify the need for an organization or individual to study other cultures, in today's globalized world such a need seems simply to be assumed. The reasons and benefits of studying intercultural communication are broad, from personal growth to community investment to financial incentives. We review these and other motives here.

But before we begin, we should probably define some key terms. Each of these is complex, and we will discuss them in more detail in chapter 3. We will define **culture** simply as the way of life of a group of people, including symbols, values, behaviors, artifacts, and other shared aspects. Culture continually evolves as people share messages, and, often, it is the result of struggle between different groups who share different perspectives, interests, and power relationships (Hecht *et al.*, 2006). For our purposes, **communication** is the process of creating and sending symbolic behavior, and the interpretation of behavior between people. And **intercultural communication** occurs when culture impacts the communication between two or more people enough to make a difference. This differs from **international communication**, which focuses on media systems. Communication between diplomats and international politicians is intercultural, but this is a special type of communication as the communicators represent not only their own interests, but also those of larger organizations or nations. This last form of communication might take place for economic advancement or for the addressing of world problems. UNESCO, in its 2009 World Report executive summary, highlights the need for dialogue across many areas of social and global development. In its closing recommendations, it advocates the development of guidelines for cross-cultural dialogue, the creation and distribution of audio-visual (mediated) materials that are culturally sensitive, the promotion of (cross-cultural) media literacy, the development of minority–majority member dialogues within national cultures, and the creation of “real and virtual forums” for the development of “cultural intelligence” in the business and marketing world (UNESCO, 2009, p. 35). In fact, the name of the UNESCO report involves “cultural diversity” and “intercultural dialogue.” But as we shall see, addressing global problems is only one reason to study intercultural communication.

### The personal growth motive

Many students live in the here and now—the world of room- or apartment-mates, school or sports organizations, and jobs. Our first motive has to do with the benefit to you, as a person, of learning about other cultures. While there are many personal benefits in learning about other cultures, we will focus on three: worldmindedness, self-awareness, and personal empowerment.

First, learning about cultures and intercultural communication can simply help us better understand others in the world. Bradford ‘J’ Hall (2003) lists “freedom from ignorance” as one of the benefits of studying intercultural communication (p. 22). Knowing about other cultures helps us to be more responsible employees, travelers, consumers and producers of media, and world citizens, bringing to each interaction

an increased awareness of others and competence. Hall states, “As we are freed from ignorance and negative attributions, we are able to build better relationships. . . with a wide variety of people” (p. 22). Communication and contact over time can bring us, in both our face-to-face and socially mediated interactions, from a state of ethnocentrism, where we feel that our way is best, to a state where we see the value in the perspectives and ways of living of others. The greatest benefit will come from both education and contact, as these can help us to appreciate cultural difference within our own nation and across borders (see chapter 5).

As we learn more about other cultures, we also learn more about our own cultures and about ourselves. The more people study other languages, the more they learn about their own language; much the same is true when studying cultures. If you grow up in a culture that makes arguments through deductive, linear logic (“If A is true, and B is true, then C must be true”), you may never be aware of that approach to argumentation until you study or live in a culture in which one makes an argument through an extended, even circular story.

Finally, knowledge of and extended experience with other cultures make us more flexible as individuals. Young Yun Kim and Brent Ruben (1988) suggest that learning new cultures gives us new ways to think, feel, and act. We might, over time, become “intercultural persons,” able to move freely between cultures, or at least understand different cultural perspectives more easily. This knowledge makes us aware that the things that we always took for granted as simply fact, or “natural,” are, in fact, cultural. We realize that what we always thought was friendship, success, beauty, family, or democracy is in fact something that our culture has defined for us, and often such forces are not simply the neutral flowing of culture from one construction of beauty to another, but are manipulated by corporations, advertisers, politicians, and citizens who benefit from particular views of the world. Knowledge of cultures gives us the agency to choose between different ways of being a friend or being successful. It “gives us a broader view of our own lives and the problems we face” (Hall, 2003, p. 22), even if our choices are constrained by social, political, and economic circumstances.

### *The social responsibility motive*

We are not simply isolated individuals—we live in contact with others, and we have responsibility to live together peaceably and ethically (see chapter 2). But, as Marshall McLuhan’s (1962) metaphor of the Global Village illustrates, our communities become more interconnected because of increased technology, media, and ease of travel. In addition, more and more people share this planet with its limited space and resources. As well, a complex web of changing labor relations, social policies, tribal and international conflicts, religious fervor, and other things lead to an increase in social problems. Some of these come from the growing stress on the environment brought about by an increase both of people and of industry. As we face global environmental change (and debate the causes of that change), there is an increased need for global discussion among leaders for policies that are equitable to nations and that can seek to preserve and improve the environment. One such effort was the Kyoto Protocol (2012), an initiative by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, aimed at encouraging 37 industrialized nations to work more actively to reduce greenhouse gases.

## ON THE NET

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change lists 191 nations that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol, established in 1997 to reduce greenhouse emissions: [http://unfccc.int/kyoto\\_protocol/status\\_of\\_ratification/items/2613.php](http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/status_of_ratification/items/2613.php). Is your nation among those that have ratified it? Go onto websites such as <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2011/jan/31/world-carbon-dioxide-emissions-country-data-co2> or [http://www.carbonplanet.com/country\\_emissions](http://www.carbonplanet.com/country_emissions) to see where your country ranks in total and per capita emissions. What are some of the reasons that some of the countries with the highest production of greenhouse gases might not ratify an agreement such as the Kyoto Protocol? What are the implications for such choices for citizens of the countries involved?

Of course, the environment is only one of the issues that demand global cooperation. A global population clock (Current world population, n.d.) gives the population of the world, at the writing of this paragraph, as 7,109,925,897. According to the World Bank (2013), about 20% of those live in poverty (defined here as less than \$U.S. 1.25 income per person per day), or 1.22 billion in 2010. Although it is good news that poverty is down from 43% of the earth's population in 1990, poverty still remains a pressing problem. But how we address it requires a “dialogic” approach (Martin, *et al.*, 2002), in which we talk with people within the situation to understand their own view of poverty and how to address it (see chapter 2). A UNESCO World Report (2009) advises, “Cultural perspectives shape how poverty is understood and experienced” (p. 25). Developmental approaches must take into account local cultural perspectives to be successful. This holds true for issues such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, child soldiers, violence against women, and the search for cures for illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, cancer, or heart disease.

In addition to social issues, wars and armed conflicts are occurring throughout the world. One website, Wars in the World (2012) outlines “hotspots” involving 61 different nations and 313 militias and separatist groups. In many cases, struggles are not armed, but are battled over prestige, social status, and social capital within nations, as groups strive to gain recognition and equal opportunity within their own countries, from the Roma in Hungary and other European nations to the Ainu of Japan. This includes struggles for equality for groups of different races, sexes, sexual orientations, and religious affiliations. Some might include within this discussion social class inequalities. For example, Global Finance's online magazine (Global Finance, n.d.) ranks counties based on how great the difference is between poorest and richest families, with Chile, Turkey, Mexico, and the United States being at the unequal end of the spectrum, and Slovenia, Denmark, and Norway having the most equality in incomes. Difference in worker pay may be another indicator of inequality. A popular Internet image (see Figure 1.2) points out supposed disparity among CEOs and average employees in certain countries. However, a *Tampa Bay Times* online news article links to reports that show that the U.S. figure has no basis in research (*Tampa Bay Times*, 2012). The article cites several reputable organizations like the Institute for Policy Studies and the Economic Policy Institute to note that the current ratio is probably only somewhere between 185 to 1 and 325 to 1. Such discrepancies led to the 2011 Occupy Wall Street movement and the protest for economic justice for the “99%.” U.S. American CEOs don't consider the contrast to worker pay or even to their cross-national peers, to be important. Rather, they consider their pay comparable to peers in other high-producing industries.

**Figure 1.2** This Internet image suggests a greater disparity in pay between senior employees and average workers in some nations than others. However, some research suggests the figures may be exaggerated. What are the benefits or issues of having extremely highly paid CEOs? Source: *Tampa Bay Times*, 2012.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Ratio of pay CEO : Average worker</i>
Japan	11.1
Germany	12.1
France	15.1
Italy	20.1
Canada	20.1
South Africa	21.1
Britain	22.1
Mexico	47.1
Venezuela	50.1
United States	475.1

### *The economic motive*

Even though movements like Occupy Wall Street claim economic injustice, in part, at the hands of big business, we could not exist without corporations, and they have made contributions to societies worldwide. Most students work for some organization at some point in their lives, and it is the business context that provides our next motive for the study of intercultural communication. An E-How Money Internet site (Nelson, n.d.) suggests corporate profitability as the first motive for knowing how to communicate well across cultures. The article cites Wal-Mart's failed \$US 1 billion expansion to Germany, led by an American manager who sought to import American practices and clerk–customer relations that just did not make sense in Germany. The company eventually withdrew from Germany.

It should come as no surprise to us that such difficulties would occur, with an ever-expanding and ever-more-interconnected international economy. Multinational corporations continue to grow, constituting an ever-increasing piece of the world economy. Several writers have argued that some multinational corporations (MNCs), such as Wal-Mart, Exxon Mobil, General Motors, and British Petroleum (BP), surpass many nations when comparing company revenues to gross domestic product (de Grauwe & Camerman, 2002). The International Trade Administration, in the United States, reports that manufactured exports support six million jobs, or nearly one out of five manufacturing jobs in the United States (Ward, 2009). Such statistics represent trends around the world. A joint study by the International Labour Office and the World Trade Organization reports that in the mid-1980s, 30% of world GDP was related to global trade; that figure had risen to 60% of world GDP by 2007.

Both the OECD and current CEOs (in an interview study of 1500 CEOs worldwide by an IBM “CEO Study”) see a coming shift in global economic power from developed nations to developing nations (Radjou & Kalpa, 6 Aug, 2010). This is evidenced by world events, such as when the nation island of Samoa changed time zones from one side of the dateline to the other, skipping Friday, December 30, 2011, altogether. This changed its alignment from the United