Intercultural Communication in Contexts 7th edition Martin Solutions Manual

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Chapter 2
The History of the Study of Intercultural Communication

Learning Objectives

After studying the material in this chapter, students should be able to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Identify four early foci in the development of intercultural communication.
2. Describe three approaches to the study of intercultural communication.
3. Identify the methods used within each of the three approaches.
4. Explain the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.
5. Identify three characteristics of the dialectical approach.
6. Explain the strengths of a dialectical approach.
7. Identify six intercultural communication dialectics.

Key Terms

- Afrocentricity
- Anxiety uncertainty management theory
- Collectivistic
- Communication accommodation theory
- Conceptual equivalence
- Conversational constraints theory
- Critical approach
- Cross-cultural training
- Dialectic
- Dialectical approach
- Diffusion of innovations theory
- Distance zones
- Diversity training
- Emic
- Ethnography
- Etic
- Face negotiation theory
- Functionalist approach

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- Hybrid identity
- Individualistic
- Intercultural competence
- Interdisciplinary
- Interpretive approach
- Macrocontexts
- Paradigm
- Participant observation
- Perception
- Postcolonialism
- Processual
- Proxemics
- Qualitative methods
- Quantitative methods
- Rhetorical approach
- Sapir-Whorf hypothesis
- Social reproduction
- Social science approach
- Textual analysis
- Translation equivalence
- Variable
- Worldview

Detailed Chapter Outline

I. The Early Development of the Discipline

- The current study of intercultural communication is influenced in part by how it developed in the United States and in part by the **worldviews**, or research philosophies, of the scholars who pursue it.
    - The roots of the study of intercultural communication can be traced to the post–World War II era, when the United States increasingly came to dominate the world stage.
    - However, government and business personnel working overseas often found that they were ill equipped to work among people from different cultures.
- The U.S. government in 1946 passed the Foreign Service Act and established the Foreign Service Institute (FSI).
    - The FSI, in turn, hired Edward T. Hall and other prominent anthropologists and linguists (including Ray Birdwhistell and George Trager) to develop "predeparture"

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courses for overseas workers.
  - Because intercultural training materials were scarce, they developed their own.
  - In so doing, FSI theorists formed new ways of looking at culture and communication. Thus, the field of intercultural communication was born (Martin, Nakayama, & Carbaugh, 2012).

A. Nonverbal Communication

- The FSI emphasized the importance of nonverbal communication and applied linguistic frameworks to investigate nonverbal aspects of communication.
  - These researchers concluded that, just like language, nonverbal communication varies from culture to culture.
- Edward T. Hall pioneered this systematic study of culture and communication with *The Silent Language* (1959) and *The Hidden Dimension* (1966), which influenced the new discipline.
  - In *The Silent Language,* for example, Hall introduced the notion of **proxemics,** the study of how people use personal space to communicate.
  - In *The Hidden Dimension,* in elaborating on the concept of proxemics, he identified four **distance zones**—intimate, personal, social, and public—at which people interact and suggested that people know which distance to use depending on the situation.

B. Application of Theory

- The staff at the FSI found that government workers were not interested in theories of culture and communication; rather, they wanted specific guidelines for getting along in the countries they were visiting.
- Hall's initial strategy in developing materials for these predeparture training sessions was to observe variations in cultural behavior.
  - At the FSI, he was surrounded by people who spoke many languages and who were from many cultures, so it was a great place to observe and test his theories about cultural differences.
- The emphasis on the application of theory spawned a parallel "discipline" of **cross-cultural training**, which began with the FSI staff and was expanded in the 1960s to include training for students and business personnel.
- More recently, it has come to include **diversity training**, which facilitates intercultural communication among members of various gender, ethnic, and racial groups, mostly in the corporate or government workplace (Landis, Bennett, Bennett, 2004).

C. An Emphasis on International Settings

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- Early scholars and trainers in intercultural communication defined *culture* narrowly, primarily in terms of "nationality."
- Usually, scholars mistakenly compared middle-class U.S. citizens with all residents of other nations, and trainers tended to focus on helping middle-class professionals become successful overseas.
- One might ask why so few scholars focused on domestic contexts, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s when the United States was fraught with civil unrest.
    - One reason may be the early emphasis of the FSI on helping overseas personnel.
    - Another reason may be that most scholars who studied intercultural communication gained their intercultural experience in international contexts such as the Peace Corps, the military, or the transnational corporation.

D. An Interdisciplinary Focus

- The scholars at the FSI came from various disciplines, including linguistics, anthropology, and psychology.
    - Not surprisingly, in their work related to communication, they drew from theories pertinent to their specific disciplines.
    - Contributions from these fields of study blended to form an integrated approach that remains useful to this day.
- Linguists help people in understanding the importance of language and its role in intercultural interaction.
    - They describe how languages vary in "surface" structure and are similar in "deep" structure.
    - The **Sapir-Whorf hypothesis**, developed by linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf, explores phenomena such as the use of formal and informal pronouns.
    - Linguists also point out that learning a second or third language can enhance people's **intercultural competence** by providing insights into other cultures and expanding their communication repertoire.
- Anthropologists help in understanding the role that culture plays in people's lives and the importance of nonverbal communication.
- The so-called scientific study of other peoples is never entirely separate from the culture in which the researchers are immersed.
- An **interdisciplinary** focus can help people acquire and interpret information in a more comprehensive manner—in ways relevant to bettering the intercultural communication process, as well as producing knowledge.
- Psychologists such as Gordon Allport help people understand notions of stereotyping and the ways in which prejudice functions in their lives and in intercultural interaction.

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    - Other psychologists, such as Richard Brislin (1999) and Dan Landis (Landis & Wasilewski, 1999), reveal how variables like nationality, ethnicity, personality, and gender influence one's communication.
- Whereas the early study of intercultural communication was characterized as interdisciplinary, over time, it became increasingly centered in the discipline of communication.
- Communication scholar Dreama Moon (2010) noted that how culture is defined determines how it is studied.
    - She also argues for expanding the notion of culture to include the idea of a struggle over power.
    - So while intercultural communication is more firmly rooted in the communication field, the definition of "culture" has expanded to make intercultural communication more interdisciplinary.

II. Perception and Worldview of the Researcher

- A second influence on the current study of intercultural communication is the research **paradigm**, or worldview, of the scholars involved.
- People understand and learn about the world through filtering lenses; they select, evaluate, and organize information (stimuli) from the external environment through **perception**.
- All of the information people have already stored in their brains (learning) affect how they interpret new information.
- Some of the learning and perception is group related.
    - That is, people see the world in particular ways because of the cultural groups (based on ethnicity, age, gender, and so on) to which they belong.
    - These group-related perceptions (worldviews or value orientations) are so fundamental that people rarely question them (Singer, 1998).
- Academic research is also cultural behavior because research traditions require particular worldviews about the nature of reality and knowledge and particular beliefs about how research should be conducted.
    - For example, researchers studying communication often reflect their own cultural assumptions in their research projects.
    - Asian scholars say that U.S. communication scholars often emphasize individuality and rationality—two strong cultural beliefs held by many U.S. Americans—and ignore human interdependence and feeling in human encounters, important beliefs for many people around the world (Miike, 2007a, 2007b).
    - And these research paradigms are often held as strongly as cultural or spiritual beliefs (Burrell & Morgan, 1988; Kuhn, 1970).
    - There are even examples of intercultural conflicts in which scholars strongly disagree.

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        - For example, Galileo was excommunicated from the Catholic Church in the 17th century because he took issue with theologians' belief that the earth was the center of the universe.
- More recent examples of the relation between academic research and cultural behavior can be seen in the social sciences.
    - Some communication scholars believe there is an external reality that can be measured and studied, whereas others believe that reality can be understood only as lived and experienced by individuals (Casmir, 1994).
- Beliefs and assumptions about reality influence research methods and findings, and so also influence what people currently know about intercultural communication.
- At present, one can identify three broad approaches, or worldviews, that characterize the study of culture and communication (Gudykunst, 2005a; Hall, 1992).
    - All three approaches involve a blend of disciplines and reflect different worldviews and assumptions about reality, human behavior, and ways to study culture and communication.
    - How one thinks about "culture" influences how it is studied.

III. Three Approaches to Studying Intercultural Communication

- Three contemporary approaches to studying intercultural communication are: (1) the social science (or functionalist) approach, (2) the interpretive approach, and (3) the critical approach.
    - These approaches are based on different fundamental assumptions about human nature, human behavior, and the nature of knowledge.
    - These approaches vary in their assumptions about human behavior, their research goals, their conceptualization of culture and communication, and their preferred methodologies.
    - It is important to understand the assumptions behind the scholarship that is being undertaken.

A. The Social Science Approach

- The **social science approach** (also called the **functionalist approach**), popular in the 1980s, is based on research in psychology and sociology.
- This approach assumes a describable external reality.
    - It also assumes that human behavior is predictable and that the researcher's goal is to describe and predict behavior.
- Researchers who take this approach often use **quantitative methods**, gathering data by administering questionnaires or observing subjects firsthand.
- Social science researchers assume that culture is a **variable** that can be measured.

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- Social science researchers often use theories to predict human behavior.
  - What predictions might be made about intercultural encounters between immigrants and individuals from the host country?
  - One approach might be to investigate how various communication technologies affect cultural adaptation.
    - For example, one study tried to find out whether Muslim migrants' use of Facebook affected their cultural adaptation to the United States.
    - Specifically, the researchers predicted that immigrants' use of Facebook to communicate with other immigrants would impact their rate of adaptation to the United States and their perceptions of America.
    - Perhaps not surprising, they discovered that, over time, these immigrants used Facebook mostly to interact with other Muslims and were also less likely to culturally adapt to the U.S. culture, and more likely to have a negative perception of the United States.
    - They suggest that one reason for this outcome is the negative political and social situation in the United States and the War on Terror where Muslims have been the center of attention.
  - However, another similar social science study found slightly different results.
    - Like the previous study, communication researchers Young Yun Kim and Kelly McKay-Semmler (2013) measured Asian and European immigrants' use of social media and e-mail to communicate with people from their own country and also with Americans.
    - They also measured the immigrants' face-to-face contacts with the same two groups.
    - Based on Kim's **integrative theory of adaptation,** they predicted (and found) that the more immigrants communicated with people in the United States (both face to face and on social media), the better adapted they were to U.S. culture and the less they communicated with friends and family back home.
  - Another group of social science researchers predicted that immigrants' degree of acculturation in the United States might influence their perceptions of racial discrimination and their need for social support (Hanasono, Chen, & Wilson, 2014).
- Other contemporary research programs illustrate the social science approach.
  - One such program was headed by the late William B. Gudykunst (2005b), a well-known communication researcher.
    - He proposed the **anxiety uncertainty management (AUM) theory**, which explains the role of anxiety and uncertainty in individuals communicating with host culture members when they enter a new culture.
    - This theory predicts certain optimal levels of uncertainty and anxiety, and how they motivate individuals to engage in successful interaction.

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- A related social science program is Stella Ting-Toomey's (1985, 2005) **face negotiation theory**.
  - *Face* is the sense of favorable self-worth, and in all cultures people are concerned about saving face.
  - Ting-Toomey suggests that conflict is a face negotiation process in which people often have their face threatened or questioned.
- In contrast to AUM, **conversational constraints theory**, developed by Min-Sun Kim (2005), attempts to explain how and why people make particular conversational choices.
  - It suggests five universal conversational constraints, or concerns: (1) clarity, (2) minimizing imposition, (3) consideration for the other's feelings, (4) risking negative evaluation by the hearer, and (5) effectiveness.
- The **communication accommodation theory** is the result of another social science program in which researchers attempted to identify how and when individuals accommodate their speech and nonverbal behavior to others during an interaction.
  - Unlike AUM and conversational constraints theory, communication accommodation theory focuses on adaptation during intercultural interaction.
- The **diffusion of innovations theory**, developed by communication scholar Everett Rogers (2003), explains how cultural practices can be changed—largely due to communication.
  - This theory explains why some innovations, like computer technology or the Internet, or certain behaviors, like "safe sex," are accepted by some people and rejected by others.
  - The theory posits that in order for people to accept a new technology, they have to see the usefulness of it and it has to be compatible with their values and lifestyle.

- Many social science studies explain how communication styles vary from culture to culture—often based on **individualistic** versus **collectivistic** values (Gudykunst, 1998).
- Many of these social science studies have been useful in identifying variations in communication from group to group and specifying psychological and sociological variables in the communication process. However, this approach is limited.
  - Many scholars now realize that human communication is often more creative than predictable and that reality is not just external but also internally constructed.
  - People cannot identify all of the variables that affect their communication.
    - Nor can they predict exactly why one intercultural interaction seems to succeed and another does not (Ting-Toomey, 2010).
  - Scholars also recognize that some methods in this approach are not culturally sensitive and that researchers may be too distant from the phenomena or people

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they are researching (Kim, 2012).

- To overcome these kinds of problems, social scientists have developed strategies for achieving equivalence of measures.
  - A leading cross-cultural psychologist, Richard Brislin (1999), has written extensively on guidelines for cross-cultural researchers.
    - He has identified several types of equivalencies that researchers should establish, including **translation equivalence** (the linguistic sameness that is gained after translating and back-translating research materials several times using different translators) and **conceptual equivalence (**the similarity of linguistic terms and meanings across cultures).
  - Machine translation can be enormously helpful for common phrases and rough drafts, but these translations cannot yet do away with humans.
  - Researchers can establish conceptual equivalence by ensuring that the notions they are investigating are similar at various levels.
    - Once this equivalence is established, researchers can identify culture-specific ways in which problem solving is achieved.

B. The Interpretive Approach

- The **interpretive approach** gained prominence in the late 1980s among communication scholars.
- One interpretive approach, rooted in sociolinguistics, is the **ethnography** of communication (Hymes, 1974).
  - Ethnographers of communication are devoted to descriptive studies of communication patterns within specific cultural groups.
  - Interpretive researchers assume not only that reality is external to humans, but also that humans construct reality.
  - They believe that human experience, including communication, is subjective and human behavior is neither predetermined nor easily predicted.
- The goal of interpretive research is to understand and describe human behavior. (Predicting behavior is not a goal.)
- Whereas the social scientist tends to see communication as influenced by culture, the interpretivist sees culture as created and maintained through communication (Carbaugh, 1996).
  - This type of research uses **qualitative methods** derived from anthropology and linguistics such as field studies, observations, and participant observations.
  - For example, a researcher engaging in **participant observation** contributes actively to the communication processes being observed and studied.
  - The researcher thus is intimately involved in the research and may become good friends with members of the communities he or she is studying.)

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  - Another example of interpretive research is the **rhetorical approach,** also used by critical researchers, perhaps the oldest communication scholarship, dating back to the ancient Greeks.
    - Rhetoricians typically examine and analyze texts or public speeches in the contexts in which they occur.
- Cross-cultural psychologists use the terms **etic** and **emic** to distinguish the social science and interpretive approaches (Berry, 1997).
  - Social science research usually searches for universal generalizations and studies cultures objectively, with an "outsider's" view; in this way, it is "etic."
  - In contrast, interpretive research usually focuses on understanding phenomena subjectively, from within a particular cultural community or context; in this way, it is "emic."
- The question—how might an interpretive researcher investigate the communication experiences of immigrants?—can be addressed using one possible approach, which would be to talk with immigrants about their experiences in a foreign country.
  - This approach was taken by communication scholar Julie Semlak, who conducted two focus groups with African immigrant women living in South Dakota.
    - She and a team of researchers transcribed and analyzed these focus group discussions.
    - They found that these immigrant women expressed conflicting feelings about their interactions with host country individuals and labeled these feelings *dialectics*.
    - They identified four dialectics: positive-negative; acceptance-rejection; inclusion-exclusion; and real-ideal (Semlak, Pearson, Amundson, & Kudak, 2008).
  - A similar study also involved focus groups (Korem & Horenczyk, 2015).
    - In this study, researchers asked young immigrants from Ethiopia living in Israel about their experiences and specifically what communication strategies they used to adapt to live there.
    - These young men and women described the differences between Ethiopian and Israeli cultural values and communication preferences.
    - They described their home (Ethiopian) values as a strong emphasis on respect for elders and parents and the total loyalty one has for a friend.
    - They also contrasted the strong emphasis on gentleness and reservedness in Ethiopian relationships with the more assertiveness and directness preferred by Israelis.
    - They described how they sometimes emphasized cultural commonalities and sometimes differences in their interactions in the foreign country—depending on the context.
  - One can observe that immigrants in both studies describe some ambivalence and

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contradictory feelings in their adaptation experience—on the one hand, recognizing and even embracing their own unique cultural background and values and at the same time, trying out the new values and communication patterns.

- Some interpretive studies investigate the language patterns in many different groups.
- Other interpretive studies investigate the different communication patterns of one cultural group.
- A number of interpretive scholars have emphasized that descriptions of the communication rules of a given people must be grounded, or *centered,* in their beliefs and values (Alexander et al, 2014; Asante & Miike, 2013).
    - Most scholarly studies of communication are rooted in a European American perspective, and this frame of references is not necessarily applicable to communication of all cultural groups.
    - For example, Molefi Asante (1987, 2001) developed the framework of **Afrocentricity** to apply to studies about African or African American communication. He identifies five cultural themes shared by peoples of African descent:
        - A common origin and experience of struggle
        - An element of resistance to European legal procedures, medical practices, and political processes
        - Traditional values of humaneness and harmony with nature
        - A fundamentally African way of knowing and interpreting the world
        - An orientation toward communalism
- Similarly, Asian scholars have developed Asiacentric frameworks to study communication of people from Asian cultures.
    - Communication scholar Yoshitaka Miike (2003, 2004) has identified five Asiacentric themes (circularity, harmony, other-directedness, reciprocity, and relationality).
    - Based on these themes, he developed five propositions on human communication.
    - Communication is a process in which:
        - People remind themselves of the interdependence and interrelatedness of the universe.
        - People reduce their selfishness and egocentrism.
        - People feel the joy and suffering of all beings.
        - People receive and return their debts to all beings.
        - People moralize and harmonize the universe.
- Another important interpretive theory, a communication theory of identity, was developed by Michael Hecht (1993).
    - He argues that communication is a communicative process and people's identities emerge in relationships with others and are expressed in core symbols, meaning, and labels.

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- The utility of the interpretivist approach is that it provides an in-depth understanding of communication patterns in particular communities because it emphasizes investigating communication in context.
- The main limitation of this approach is that there are few interpretivist studies of *intercultural* communication.
    - Interpretive scholars typically have not studied what happens when two groups come in contact with each other.
    - A second limitation is that the researchers often are outsiders to the communities under investigation, which means they may not represent accurately the communication patterns of members of that community.

C. The Critical Approach

- A third approach to the study of intercultural communication includes many assumptions of the interpretive approach.
    - For instance, researchers who use the **critical approach** believe in subjective (as opposed to objective) and material reality.
- They also emphasize the importance of studying the context in which communication occurs—that is, the situation, background, or environment.
    - However, critical researchers usually focus on **macrocontexts**, such as the political and social structures that influence communication.
    - Critical scholars, unlike most social scientists and interpretivists, are interested in the historical context of communication.
- Critical scholars are interested in the power relations in communication.
    - For them, identifying cultural differences in communication is important only in relation to power differentials.
- Culture is, in essence, a battleground—a place where multiple interpretations come together but a dominant force always prevails.
- The goal of critical researchers is not only to understand human behavior but also to change the lives of everyday communicators.
    - Researchers assume that by examining and reporting how power functions in cultural situations, they can help the average person learn how to resist forces of power and oppression.
- Like interpretive scholars, critical scholars also use interviews, focus groups, and rhetorical methods in analyzing encounters between immigrants and host groups.
    - They also use **textual analyses**.
        - That is, they analyze the cultural products such as media as powerful voices in shaping contemporary culture.
- One critical study used informal, conversational face-to-face interviews to understand the larger societal contexts of one group of immigrants—Montagnards who settled in

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North Carolina.

- The Montagnards come from the Central Highlands of Vietnam and fought with the United States against the Vietnam government in the 1960s.
- After the war ended, they were persecuted by the Vietnamese for helping the United States and many fled the country and settled in the United States.
- In this study, communication scholar Etsuko Kinefuchi (2011) asked a group of Montagnard men to talk about their experiences in coming to the United States and to discuss what place they see as their home and why.
- In analyzing the interview data, she found that many of the men still thought of Vietnam as home, had strong emotional attachment to the people there and their indigenous land.
- Unlike social science scholars who usually focus on the immigrants' experience and initiative in adapting to the host culture, critical scholars like Kinefuchi focus on the structural (societal) limitations that prevent the Montagnards from having satisfying interpersonal encounters with Americans.

- A similar study analyzed the stories of foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong who recounted their intercultural encounters with host culture members—the Hongkongese (Ladegaard, 2013).
  - The Hongkongese report enormous challenges of their immigrant situation.
  - They are paid extremely low wages, have very few legal protections and rights, and are often exploited and even abused by their employees.
- Taken together, these various viewpoints emphasize how different migrant groups experience cultural adaptation in a new country and their encounters with host members there.
- A critical perspective would emphasize the economic, political, and cultural differences among these groups, in understanding their experiences and their reception by host members in the new culture.
  - An important critical perspective is **postcolonialism**, an intellectual, political, and cultural movement that calls for the independence of colonized states and liberation from colonialist *mentalité,* or ways of thinking.
  - Postcolonialism is not simply the study of colonialism but the study of how people might deal with that past and its aftermath, which may include the ongoing use of the colonial language, culture, and religion.
    - For example, a study by Marwan Kraidy (2005) explores how youth in Lebanon negotiate their postcolonial identity through their media consumption.
    - He concludes that, because of their colonialist legacy, they gravitate toward Western shows in addition to the Arabic shows, and this media consumption ultimately contributes to their having a **hybrid identity**—an identity comprised of both Western and Arabic elements.

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    - In his study of the use of Kiswahili as a regional language in East Africa, linguistics professor Benson Oduor Ojwang (2008) points to the colonial past of this part of Africa as a foundation for unification.
        - Known as East African Cooperation, the former colonies have a colonial past that they are using to forge a new postcolonial entity.
        - Kiswahili is emerging as the language on which this new integration might occur, rather than English.
- A final example of a critical study is Dreama Moon's (1999) investigation of gender and social class communication in the U.S.
    - In her study, Moon analyzed interviews of white women from working-class backgrounds.
    - Subtle communication practices that reinforce social class differences are not so invisible to women from working-class backgrounds.
    - Moon shows how culture, social class, and communication work together to reproduce the contemporary social structure.
    - She also identifies some strategies used by these women to resist this process of **social reproduction**.
- The critical approach emphasizes the power relations in intercultural interactions and the importance of social and historical contexts.
- One limitation is that most critical studies do not focus on face-to-face intercultural interaction.
    - Also, this approach does not allow for much empirical data.

IV. A Dialectical Approach to Understanding Culture and Communication

A. Combining the Three Traditional Paradigms: The Dialectical Approach

- There are many different ways to approach the study of intercultural communication.
- The social science, interpretive, and critical approaches operate in interconnected and sometimes contradictory ways.
- Rather than advocating any one approach, it is advisable to follow a **dialectical approach** to intercultural communication research and practice.
- The dialectical approach emphasizes the processual, relational, and contradictory nature of intercultural communication, which encompasses many different kinds of intercultural knowledge.
    - First, with regard to the **processual** nature of intercultural communication, it is important to remember that cultures change, as do individuals.
    - Second, a dialectical perspective emphasizes the relational aspect of intercultural communication study.
    - A third characteristic of the dialectical perspective involves holding contradictory

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ideas simultaneously.

- Research findings can make a difference in the everyday world.
  - From the social science perspective, people can see how specific communication and cultural differences might create differing worldviews, which can help them predict intercultural conflicts.
  - An interpretive investigation gives people an opportunity to confirm what they predicted in a hypothetical social science study.
  - A critical approach might focus on the different access to economic, political, and material resources among the cultural groups–such as which cultural groups were or were not welcomed and how these power differentials influenced their intercultural experience.
- Thinking dialectically forces people to move beyond their familiar categories and introduces them to new possibilities for studying and understanding intercultural communication.

B. Six Dialectics of Intercultural Communication

- The following are the six **dialectics** that have been identified to characterize intercultural communication.
  - Cultural–Individual Dialectic: Intercultural communication is both cultural and individual, or idiosyncratic.
    - That communication is *cultural* means people share communication patterns with members of the groups to which they belong.
  - Personal–Contextual Dialectic: This dialectic involves the role of context in intercultural relationships and focuses simultaneously on the person and the context.
    - Although people communicate as individuals on a personal level, the context of this communication is important as well.
  - Differences–Similarities Dialectic: Intercultural communication is characterized by both similarities and differences, in that people are simultaneously similar to and different from each other.
    - Emphasizing only differences can lead to stereotyping and prejudice emphasizing only similarities can lead people to ignore the important cultural variations that exist.
  - Static–Dynamic Dialectic: This dialectic suggests that intercultural communication tends to be at once static and dynamic.
    - Some cultural and communication patterns remain relatively constant, whereas other aspects of cultures (or personal traits of individuals) shift over time—that is, they are dynamic.
  - History/Past–Present/Future Dialectic: This dialectic emphasizes the need to focus

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simultaneously on the past and the present in understanding intercultural communication.

- Privilege–Disadvantage Dialectic: This dialectical perspective recognizes that people may be simultaneously privileged and disadvantaged, or privileged in some contexts and disadvantaged in others.

C. Keeping a Dialectical Perspective

- The dialectical approach is not a specific theory to apply to all aspects of intercultural communication.
  - Rather, it is a lens through which to view the complexities of the topic.
- The dialectical approach that is taken in this book combines the three traditional approaches (social science, interpretive, and critical) and suggests four components to consider in understanding intercultural communication: culture, communication, context, and power.
  - Culture and communication are the foreground, and context and power are the backdrop against which people can understand intercultural communication.

Discussion Questions

1. How have the origins of the study of intercultural communication in the United States affected its present focus?
2. How did business and political interests influence what early intercultural communication researchers studied and learned?
3. How have the worldviews of researchers influenced how they studied intercultural communication?
4. How have other fields contributed to the study of intercultural communication?
5. What are the advantages of a dialectical approach to intercultural communication?
6. How did Edward T. Hall's work contribute to the origins of the field of intercultural communication?
7. What are the strengths and limitations of using only the social science approach to study intercultural communication?
8. What are the strengths and limitations of using only the interpretive approach to study intercultural communication?
9. What are the strengths and limitations of using only the critical approach to study intercultural communication?
10. Why do critical scholars see culture as a site of struggle?
11. What are some dialectics found that characterize intercultural communication?

Classroom Exercises and Chapter Activities

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1. Dialectical Approach Assignment: In this assignment, students should assume the position of researcher and analyze their culture using the three different approaches described in the chapter: social science, interpretivist, and critical. The students should describe what each approach would allow them to see and understand about their culture and what it would hide from them. The goal of this exercise is to help the students understand the strengths and limitations of each approach, understand the value of the dialectical approach, and become more conscious of their cultural position. This exercise could be used as a follow-up or a part of the "Becoming Culturally Conscious" assignment given in the text.

2. Dialectical Approach Exercise: This variation of the "Dialectical Approach" assignment presented here could be used as in-class preparation for writing the paper. Have students pretend that they are researchers interested in culture and assume the perspectives described in the chapter. Ask them to work alone and prepare research questions that are appropriate for these perspectives. Next, they should pick partners and interview each other about their cultural backgrounds using the questions they have prepared. Three or four of the student pairs could be given a few minutes to present the information they discovered to the class. Debrief the exercise by leading a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of each approach, stressing that a combination of the approaches gives a fuller picture of each person's position.

3. Mini Ethnography Exercise: Explain that one of the methods used by anthropologists to learn about cultural variations in nonverbal communication is the observation and recording of behaviors. Students are then assigned to go in pairs to a public place on campus for 20 to 30 minutes where they can unobtrusively observe a specific nonverbal behavior (for example, how far apart people sit at the bus stop, what types/colors of clothing people wear to school). They should take notes on their observations, recording different behaviors and the frequency of their occurrence. When they return to class, they should look over their notes for recurring behaviors and see if they can identify the conditions under which these occurred. Are there any ways to classify the behaviors they observed into categories? Explain that ethnographers go through a similar process after their observations to identify patterns in the groups they have observed. Debrief the exercise by having students share ideas about what was challenging in trying to do the exercise and some limitations in their observations that might limit the generalizability of their conclusions to other groups.

4. Ethnography of Communication Assignment: Students are required to read Donal Carbaugh's Donahue study and complete a mini duplication of his study by using his communication rules to analyze four segments of another talk show. Students should write a report that outlines their findings and discusses whether their findings support or

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contradict Carbaugh's rules. If they discover that Carbaugh's rules do not fit the show they have observed, they should identify other rules and provide a rationale for their conclusions.

5. Fieldwork Assignment: Ask students to go to a setting they are not very familiar with (for example, a bar for someone who does not go to bars or a bus stop for people who rarely take the bus) and observe it for an hour on two different occasions. They should record observations of what they see and experience during these two hours. After finishing their observations, they should read their notes to identify any behavioral patterns that may suggest the rules and norms for people's behavior that exist in this setting. Students should hand in their field notes along with a discussion of their conclusions and a rationale for them. They should also attempt to draw conclusions about what it would be like to communicate in this setting without knowledge of the rules and norms.

6. Dialectical Approaches in Research Assignment: This assignment will help students become familiar with how researchers use each of the three approaches (social science approach, interpretive approach, and critical approach) to study intercultural communication. Ask students to locate one research article or chapter from a book that is based on one of the three theoretical approaches. Depending on the abilities of the students, instructors may have to provide them with lists of journals and books or refer them to the bibliography at the end of the chapter for ideas. Students should then write a one-page review of the article. If the class is small, they could give a brief report on the article in class. The review or report should include the following points:
   - The complete title, author, year, and publication information
   - The theoretical approach used by the researchers
   - A summary of the article or book chapter
   - A description of how the research was conducted
   - The research findings

   If the assignment is presented in the form of class reports, debrief the activity by encouraging the students to compare the approaches used in the different articles. Invite students to discuss what might have happened if a researcher had chosen to use a different approach in a study. For instance, if the researcher had used a critical approach rather than a social science approach, what different information might the researcher have discovered or what different methods might the researcher have used?

7. Perception Exercise: This exercise is designed to demonstrate how differing perceptions can affect communication. Students should write (or tell) a partner about a situation they were involved in with one other person where miscommunication occurred because both of them had different perceptions of the interaction. Instruct students to begin by briefly

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describing the "facts" of the situation and then briefly describe their own perspective of the situation. Then, ask students to try to switch perspectives and attempt to describe the situation from the perspective of the other person involved, even if they disagree with that person's perspective. Partners will read (or listen) to each other's presentation. The readers (or listeners) will provide feedback to their partners about whether they have presented the other's perspective as completely and nonjudgmentally as possible. Debrief this activity by leading students in a class discussion about the difficulties involved in trying to see events from others' perspectives, particularly when one is emotionally committed to one perspective. Encourage them to identify reasons why it might be important to consider others' perspectives in intercultural interactions.

8. Dialectics and Current Events Activity: This exercise is designed to give students the opportunity to practice using a dialectical approach to examine intercultural events. Prior to class, find newspaper articles describing current intercultural situations such as a political conflict, a business concern, an effort between two cultural groups to reach some shared goal, and so forth. Bring these articles to class, and share one article with the class for a class discussion or distribute one each to groups of three to five students. Instruct students to discuss how each of the three (social science, interpretive, and critical) approaches could be used to obtain an understanding of these situations.

9. Perception Process Activity: This activity is designed to help students review the steps of the perception process. Prior to class, choose three sheets of colored paper. Each piece should be a different color. On one of the pieces, write a brief message in a large size that fills the page (For example, "Today we will have a treat in class" or "Today we will learn about dialectics of intercultural communication."). Stack the pieces of paper together, and cut them into medium-sized puzzle pieces (about 8 pieces). Then, drop them in a container, and mix up the pieces. During class, select a volunteer to come up to the front of the class. Tell the class that you are going to give the volunteer a message and you want them to watch how he or she perceives it. Place the message on a table in front of the volunteer, and ask him or her to make sense of it. Generally, the volunteer will immediately begin to select the pieces with words on them. Stop the volunteer, and ask the class what the volunteer is doing with the pieces of paper. Prod them until they suggest that the volunteer is sorting out or selecting the pieces with writing. Remind them that this is the first step of the perception process: sensory selection. Let the volunteer continue until you see him or her trying to put the pieces with words on them together. At this point, stop the exercise, and ask the students what the volunteer is doing. They will note that he or she is now putting the pieces together, at which point you will ask if they could also say that he or she is organizing the puzzle pieces. Remind them that the second perception step is organization. Let the volunteer finish putting the puzzle together, and then ask him or her to interpret the message for the class. Remind the class that the third step in the perception

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process is interpretation. Then, lead a discussion that reviews the steps and how our cultural backgrounds influence them. The following questions may help:

- What determines the information in our environment that captures our attention?
- How does our past experience influence how we organize the information we select?
- How does our past experience influence how we interpret the information we select?
- How might our cultural backgrounds influence the steps in the perception process?

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