INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION FOR THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Karen Krumrey-Fulks
Lane Community College

LibreTexts™

Lane Community College

Intercultural Communication for the Community College

Karen Krumrey-Fulks

This text is disseminated via the Open Education Resource (OER) LibreTexts Project (https://LibreTexts.org) and like the thousands of other texts available within this powerful platform, it is freely available for reading, printing, and "consuming."

The LibreTexts mission is to bring together students, faculty, and scholars in a collaborative effort to provide an accessible, and comprehensive platform that empowers our community to develop, curate, adapt, and adopt openly licensed resources and technologies; through these efforts we can reduce the financial burden born from traditional educational resource costs, ensuring education is more accessible for students and communities worldwide.

Most, but not all, pages in the library have licenses that may allow individuals to make changes, save, and print this book. Carefully consult the applicable license(s) before pursuing such effects. Instructors can adopt existing LibreTexts texts or Remix them to quickly build course-specific resources to meet the needs of their students. Unlike traditional textbooks, LibreTexts' web based origins allow powerful integration of advanced features and new technologies to support learning.

LibreTexts is the adaptable, user-friendly non-profit open education resource platform that educators trust for creating, customizing, and sharing accessible, interactive textbooks, adaptive homework, and ancillary materials. We collaborate with individuals and organizations to champion open education initiatives, support institutional publishing programs, drive curriculum development projects, and more.

The LibreTexts libraries are Powered by NICE CXone Expert and was supported by the Department of Education Open Textbook Pilot Project, the California Education Learning Lab, the UC Davis Office of the Provost, the UC Davis Library, the California State University Affordable Learning Solutions Program, and Merlot. This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1246120, 1525057, and 1413739.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation nor the US Department of Education.

Have questions or comments? For information about adoptions or adaptions contact info@LibreTexts.org or visit our main website at https://LibreTexts.org.

This text was compiled on 06/13/2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface

Chapters

- Licensing
- 1.1: Why Study Intercultural Communication?
- 1.2: Communication Principles and Process
- 1.3: Cultural Characteristics and the Roots of Culture
- 1.4: Self and Identity
- 1.5: Verbal Communication
- 1.6: Nonverbal Communication
- 1.7: Relationships
- 1.8: Conflict
- 1.9: Pop Culture
- 1.10: Tourism
- 1.11: Business
- 1.12: Education
- 1.13: Health Care
- 1.14: Conclusion
- Index
- Glossary
- Detailed Licensing

Index

Licensing

A detailed breakdown of this resource's licensing can be found in ***Back Matter/Detailed Licensing****.*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Front Matter

TitlePage
InfoPage
Table of Contents
Licensing

Lane Community College

Intercultural Communication for the Community College

Karen Krumrey-Fulks

This text is disseminated via the Open Education Resource (OER) LibreTexts Project (https://LibreTexts.org) and like the thousands of other texts available within this powerful platform, it is freely available for reading, printing, and "consuming."

The LibreTexts mission is to bring together students, faculty, and scholars in a collaborative effort to provide an accessible, and comprehensive platform that empowers our community to develop, curate, adapt, and adopt openly licensed resources and technologies; through these efforts we can reduce the financial burden born from traditional educational resource costs, ensuring education is more accessible for students and communities worldwide.

Most, but not all, pages in the library have licenses that may allow individuals to make changes, save, and print this book. Carefully consult the applicable license(s) before pursuing such effects. Instructors can adopt existing LibreTexts texts or Remix them to quickly build course-specific resources to meet the needs of their students. Unlike traditional textbooks, LibreTexts' web based origins allow powerful integration of advanced features and new technologies to support learning.

LibreTexts is the adaptable, user-friendly non-profit open education resource platform that educators trust for creating, customizing, and sharing accessible, interactive textbooks, adaptive homework, and ancillary materials. We collaborate with individuals and organizations to champion open education initiatives, support institutional publishing programs, drive curriculum development projects, and more.

The LibreTexts libraries are Powered by NICE CXone Expert and was supported by the Department of Education Open Textbook Pilot Project, the California Education Learning Lab, the UC Davis Office of the Provost, the UC Davis Library, the California State University Affordable Learning Solutions Program, and Merlot. This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1246120, 1525057, and 1413739.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation nor the US Department of Education.

Have questions or comments? For information about adoptions or adaptions contact info@LibreTexts.org or visit our main website at https://LibreTexts.org.

This text was compiled on 06/13/2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface

Chapters

- Licensing
- 1.1: Why Study Intercultural Communication?
- 1.2: Communication Principles and Process
- 1.3: Cultural Characteristics and the Roots of Culture
- 1.4: Self and Identity
- 1.5: Verbal Communication
- 1.6: Nonverbal Communication
- 1.7: Relationships
- 1.8: Conflict
- 1.9: Pop Culture
- 1.10: Tourism
- 1.11: Business
- 1.12: Education
- 1.13: Health Care
- 1.14: Conclusion
- Index
- Glossary
- Detailed Licensing

Index

Licensing

A detailed breakdown of this resource's licensing can be found in ***Back Matter/Detailed Licensing****.*

1.1: Why Study Intercultural Communication?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Understand why we study intercultural communication.
- Be able to list and describe the six imperatives.
- Explain how each imperative is related to the others.
- Identify which imperative is the most important to them.
- Explain how studying intercultural communication can lead to increased self-understanding.

We live in a rapidly changing world with larger forces driving us to interact with others who are culturally different from ourselves. National disasters, technology, business and educational opportunities are some of the many forces that lead to intercultural interaction. It would be easy to be overcome by the complexities of the things that you do not know or understand about another culture, but regardless of who we are communicating with, one fact is important to remember: *the communication choices we make determine the personal, national, and international outcomes that follow.* When we communicate well, we create happy memories, satisfying relationships, and desired outcomes. When we communicate poorly, we can create conflict, bitterness or frustration. By studying intercultural communication, you can acquire knowledge and skills to boost your communication competence, while improving your quality of life.

Figure 1.1.1: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon meets with Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

This book is divided into three sections: **foundation, elements,** and **contexts**. Each section will have several smaller chapters that outline our exploration of intercultural communication. The foundation chapters include the basic principles that underlie the communication process and building blocks of culture. The element chapters explore the parts or elements that must be considered when understanding the bigger picture of intercultural communication. The context chapters show us how specific contexts or environments are impacted by the foundations and elements. As you encounter people from different cultures, an understanding of the foundations, elements, and contexts of intercultural communication studies will prove to be invaluable to your success and happiness when communicating cross-culturally.

What is your reason for studying intercultural communication? Maybe it was a requirement on the road to achieving your major, and you dutifully signed up without having given it much thought. Maybe you've spent time overseas or enjoyed spending time with an exchange student at your high school. Martin & Nakayama (2011) believe that all our varied reasons can fall into six categories that they call **imperatives.** For our purposes, an **imperative** *will be an important or compelling reason.* Martin & Nakayama (2011) identify the six **imperative** categories as peace, demographic, economic, technological, self-awareness, and ethical.

Human civilization is familiar with conflict. History is full of conflict over politics, religion, language, resources, and more. The bottom line for the **peace imperative** is a question. Can individuals of different races, ethnicities, language, and cultures co-exist on this planet? It would be naïve to assume that simply understanding intercultural communication issues would end war and conflict, but this question does underscore the need for all of us to learn more about cultural groups other than our own.

The term demographics means the **characteristics of a population**, *as classified by race, ethnicity, age, sex, income, and more.* U.S. demographics, as well as those around the world, are changing dramatically. According to the Population Reference Bureau (2019), which computes a "diversity index," the states in the US south, southwest, and west will see the biggest impact from immigration. Many of those immigrants will be economic refugees directly impacted by climate change. They will come searching for new ways to support themselves and their families. Others will be victims of violence and political instability.

The United States has an interesting history in relationship to its' immigrants. A commonly used metaphor called **the melting pot** assumes that immigrants and cultural minorities are assimilated into the US majority culture, losing their original cultures. Most researchers believe that **the melting pot** is a myth, and a better metaphor would be the **tossed salad** or rather the diversity of immigrants and minorities is still apparent, but part of a nourishing whole.

Vocabulary important to the **demographic imperative** are **heterogeneous** and **homogeneous.** If a population is considered **heterogeneous,** there are *differences in the group, culture, or population.* If a population is considered **homogeneous,** there are *similarities in the group, culture, or population.* **Diversity** is the *quality of being different.* A **nativistic** group is *extremely patriotic to the point of being anti-immigrant.*

The **demographic imperative** is not only about immigration though, it's also about an aging workforce, and economic pressure. Most families need two incomes to live what is consider a middle-class existence or to generate savings enough to retire on. As the demographics change, culture changes.

The recent trend toward **globalization** or *the creation of a world market in goods, services, labor, capital, and technology* is dramatic. To be effective in this new global market, we must understand how business is conducted in other countries and cultures because more and more of our domestic economic growth depends on global success. An accurate understanding of the economies around the world is also crucial to compete on the world stage. The bottom line when considering the **economic imperative** is the ultimate impact of globalization on the average person.

In 1967, a futurist named Marshall McLuhan coined the iconoclastic term, **global village,** which has become the vanguard for the **technology imperative.** The term *refers to a world in which communication technology unites people in remote parts of the world.* As you know, it was decades later before personal computing came into existence, but today new technology is introduced almost daily. Technology has made communication easier. Information is so easy to access and manipulate, that we are now confronted with the impact of **fake news** and purposeful **disinformation.**

Technology is not just about ease of use though, it's also about increasing contact with others. We can increase contact with people who are different than us, but we can also increase contact with people who are the same as us. In fact, research tells us that humans prefer to use technology to contact those who are **homogeneous. Diasporic groups,***ethnic and/or national groups that are geographically dispersed throughout the world*, are using technology to maintain contact as they disperse from refugee camps to host nations. Technology is also an **identity management** tool. Individuals use technology to make sense of their multiple images concerning their sense of self in different social contexts.

Communication technology has become so important and so intertwined with the economic imperative that the term, **digital divide,** has come into being. **Digital natives**, or *people who grew up using technology*, are often citizens of wealthy nations that live lives of privilege and have better economic prospects because of their technological access. People who grew up in poorer nations without technological skills and access, often have fewer economic opportunities. At the end of the last century, this idea was captured in the statement, "they live on the other side of the tracks." The other side of the train tracks referred to a less desirable location. In today's world, the "tracks" have been replaced by technology, and the **digital divide.**

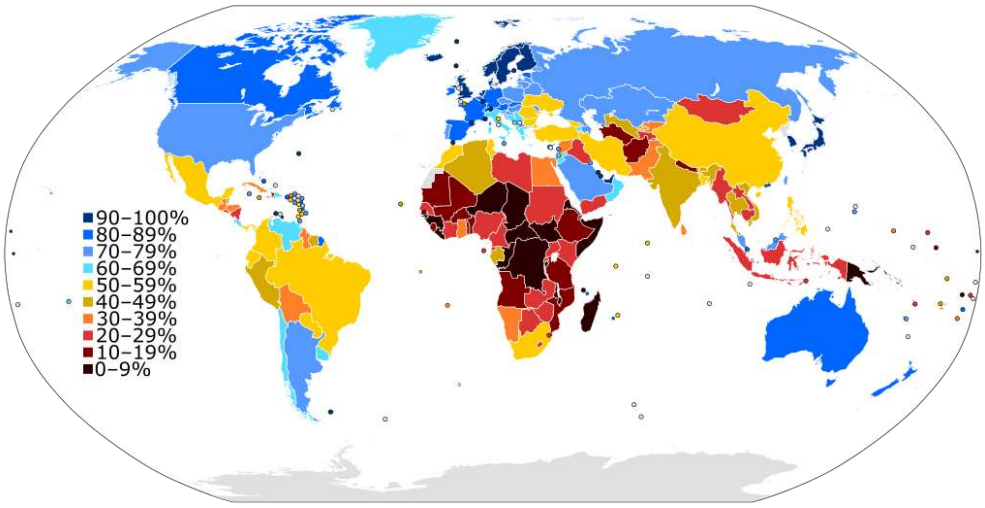

Figure 1.1.2: A world map colored to show the level of Internet penetration as of 2016

Does the digital divide lead you to ponder ethical issues of privilege and wealth? Ethics, *the principles of conduct that help govern behaviors of individuals and groups*, often create cultural questions that lead to our understanding of the **ethical imperative.** Ethical principles often arise from community consensus of what is good or bad, right or wrong, and what "ought" to be as opposed to what "is." Some ethical issues are **explicit** or clearly stated within a culture, while other are **implicit** or not clearly stated.

When pondering ethical situations and cultural mores, there are two ways humans view the situation, relativistically or universally**.** If you are a **relativist,** you believe that *no cultural pattern is inherently right or wrong, everything depends on perspective.* In other words, you might not make the same choice yourself, but are willing to understand why others would make that choice. If you are a **universalist,** you believe that *cultural differences are only superficial, and that fundamental notions of right and wrong are universal*. In other words, everyone should be making the same choices for the same reasons. Although **universalism** and **relativism** are thought of as an either/or choice (non-dualistic), realistically most people are a combination of both (dualistic). There are some issues you might hold strict opinions about while other issues you are willing to be more open about.

One of the most important reasons for studying intercultural communication is the awareness it raises of our own cultural identity and background. The **self-awareness imperative** helps us to gain insights into our own culture along with our intercultural experiences. All cultures are **ethnocentric** by their very natures. **Ethnocentrism** is a *tendency to think that our own culture is superior to other cultures.* Most of us don't even realize that we think this way, but we do. Sure, we might admit that our culture isn't perfect, yet we still think that we're doing better than that culture to the north or south of us. Ethnocentrism can lead to stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. It will be discussed in greater depth in coming chapters.

The opposite of ethnocentrism is **self-reflexivity** or the *process of learning to understand oneself and one's position in society.* Learning about others helps us to understand ourselves. Real people with real lives struggle with decisions just like you do. They have values, and beliefs that govern their choices. Listening to the voices of people who are different can lead to different ways of seeing the world. Developing self-awareness may also lead to an increased awareness of being caught up in the political, economic, and historical systems that are not associated with an individual's choice.

As you ponder your reasons for studying intercultural communication, it is hoped that you make a conscious effort to become more aware of the communication practices of yourself and others. Much of the communication principles and theories that you learn about in this book occur at a subconscious level. As you learn more, challenge yourself to develop observation skills so you can "see" more. As you learn more, become more flexible in your interpretation of the messages that you are receiving from others. As you learn more, begin to create meaning "with" others and avoid dictating "to" others. The study of intercultural communication is the study of the variation of your story within the human story. Let's get started.

Key Vocabulary

- Imperative
- Peace
- Demographics
- Economic
- Technological

- Ethical
- Self-Awareness
- Heterogeneous
- Homogeneous
- Diversity
- Melting Pot
- Tossed Salad
- Nativistic
- Global Village
- Diasporic groups
- Identity management
- Explicit
- Implicit
- Relativity
- Universality
- Ethnocentrism
- Self-reflexivity

References:

1. Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2011). *Experiencing intercultural communication* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

This page titled 1.1: Why Study Intercultural Communication? is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.2: Communication Principles and Process

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Understand how communication meets various needs.
- Be able to define communication.
- Have a foundational understanding of the communication process.
- Be able to explain how various contexts impact communication.

Taking this course will likely change how you view communication. Most of us admit that communication is important, but it's often in the back of our minds or viewed as something that "just happens." Putting communication at the front of your mind and becoming more aware of how you communicate can be informative and have many positive effects. When I first started studying communication as an undergraduate, I began seeing the concepts we learned in class in my everyday life. When I worked in groups, I was able to apply what I had learned about group communication to improve my performance and overall experience. I also noticed interpersonal concepts and theories as I communicated within various relationships. Whether I was analyzing mediated messages or considering the ethical implications of a decision before I made it, studying communication allowed me to see more of what was going on around me, which allowed me to more actively and competently participate in various communication contexts. In this section, as we learn the principles of communication, I encourage you to take note of aspects of communication that you haven't thought about before and begin to apply the principles of communication to various parts of your life.

Communication Meets Needs

As a student with years of education experience, you know that communication is far more than the transmission of information. The exchange of messages and information is important for many reasons, but it is not enough to meet the various needs we have as human beings. While the content of our communication may help us achieve certain physical and instrumental needs, it also feeds into our identities and relationships in ways that far exceed the content of what we say.

- **Physical needs** include needs that keep our bodies and minds functioning like air, food, water, and sleep. Communication, which we most often associate with our brain, mouth, eyes, and ears, actually has many more connections to and effects on our physical body and well-being. At the most basic level, communication can alert others that our physical needs are not being met. Even babies cry when they are hungry or sick to alert their caregiver of the need to satisfy physical needs. Current research indicates that social connection has a huge impact on longevity, our immune systems, and other aspects of physical health (Seppala, et al., 2014).
- **Instrumental needs** Include needs that help us get things done in our day-to-day lives and achieve short- and long-term goals. We all have short- and long-term goals that we work on every day. Fulfilling these goals is an ongoing communicative task, which means we spend much of our time communicating for instrumental needs. Some common instrumental needs include influencing others, getting information we need, or securing support (Burleson, Metts, & Kirch, 2000). An example could be when Jeon tries to persuade his roommate to turn down his music because he is studying. In this instance, Jeon is using communication to meet an instrumental need.
- **Relational needs** include needs that help us maintain social bonds and interpersonal relationships. Communicating to fill our instrumental needs helps us function on many levels, but communicating for relational needs helps us achieve the social relating that is an essential part of being human. Communication meets our relational needs by giving us a tool through which to develop, maintain, and end relationships.
- **Identity needs** include our need to present ourselves to others and be thought of in particular and desired ways. What adjectives would you use to describe yourself? Are you funny, smart, loyal, or quirky? Your answer isn't just based on who you think you are, since much of how we think of ourselves is based on our communication with other people. Our identity changes as we progress through life, but communication is the primary means of establishing our identity and fulfilling our identity needs.

Communication Is a Process

Communication can be defined as the process of understanding and sharing meaning (Pearson & Nelson, 2000. When we refer to communication as a process, we imply that it doesn't have a distinct beginning and end or follow a predetermined sequence of events. It can be difficult to trace the origin of a communication encounter, since communication doesn't always follow a neat and discernible format, which makes studying communication interactions or phenomena difficult. Any time we pull one part of the

process out for study or closer examination, we artificially “freeze” the process in order to examine it, which is not something that is possible when communicating in real life. But sometimes scholars want to isolate a particular stage in the process in order to gain insight by studying, for example, feedback or eye contact. Doing that changes the very process itself, and by the time you have examined a particular stage or component of the process, the entire process may have changed. However, these behavioral snapshots are useful for scholarly interrogation of the communication process, and they can also help us evaluate our own communication practices, troubleshoot a problematic encounter we had, or slow things down to account for various contexts before we engage in communication (Dance & Larson, 1976).

Communication Is Guided by Culture and Context

Context is a dynamic component of the communication process. Culture and context also influence how we perceive and define communication. Western culture tends to put more value on senders than receivers and on the content rather the context of a message whereas Eastern cultures tend to communicate with the listener in mind. These cultural values are reflected in our definitions and models of communication. As we will learn in later chapters, cultures vary in terms of having a more individualistic or more collectivistic cultural orientation. The United States is considered an individualistic culture, where emphasis is put on individual expression and success. Japan is considered a collectivistic culture, where emphasis is put on group cohesion and harmony. These are strong cultural values that are embedded in how we learn to communicate. In many collectivistic cultures, there is more emphasis placed on silence and nonverbal context. Whether in the United States, Japan, or another country, people are socialized from birth to communicate in culturally specific ways that vary by context.

Communication Is Learned

Most of us are born with the capacity and ability to communicate, but we all communicate differently. This is because communication is learned rather than innate. As we have already seen, communication patterns are relative to the context and culture in which one is communicating. Many cultures have distinct languages consisting of unique systems of symbols. A key principle of communication is that it is symbolic. Communication is symbolic in that the words that make up our language systems do not directly correspond to something in reality. Instead, they stand in for or symbolize something. Odgen and Richards (1923) believe that there is a triangle of meaning with “thought,” “symbol,” and “referent” in relationship.

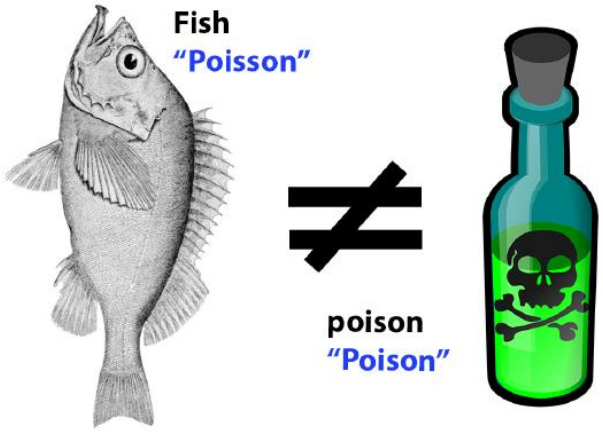

Figure 1.2.1: fg.1 The french word Poisson means fish, but poison refers to a toxic substance. [Long Description]

The fact that communication varies so much among people, contexts, and cultures illustrates the principle that meaning is not inherent in the words we use. For example, let’s say you go to France on vacation and see the word **poisson** on the menu. Unless you know how to read French, you will not know that the symbol is the same as the English symbol **fish**. Those two words don’t look the same at all, yet they symbolize the same object. If you went by how the word looks alone, you might think that the French word for fish is more like the English word *poison* and avoid choosing that for your dinner. Putting a picture of a fish on a menu would definitely help a foreign tourist understand what they are ordering, since the picture is an actual representation of the object rather than an arbitrary symbol for it.

All symbolic communication is learned, negotiated, and dynamic. We know that the letters *b-o-o-k* refer to a bound object with multiple written pages. We also know that the letters *t-r-u-c-k* refer to a vehicle with a bed in the back for hauling things. But if we learned in school that the letters *t-r-u-c-k* referred to a bound object with written pages and *b-o-o-k* referred to a vehicle with a bed in the back, then that would make just as much sense, because the letters don’t actually refer to the object and the word itself only

has the meaning that we assign to it. We will learn more, in the verbal communication chapter, about how language works, but communication is more than the words we use.

We are all socialized into different languages, but we also speak different "languages" based on the situation we are in. For example, in some cultures it is considered inappropriate to talk about family or health issues in public, but it wouldn't be odd to overhear people in a small town grocery store in the United States talking about their children or their upcoming surgery. There are some communication patterns shared by very large numbers of people and some that are particular to a specific relationship–best friends, for example, who have their own inside terminology and expressions that wouldn't make sense to anyone else. These examples aren't on the same scale as differing languages, but they still indicate that communication is learned. They also illustrate how rules and norms influence how we communicate. We will discuss rules and norms in communication in later chapters.

Communication Has Ethical Implications

Another culturally and situationally relative principle of communication is the fact that communication has ethical implications. **Communication ethics** deal with the process of negotiating and reflecting on our actions and communication regarding what we believe to be right and wrong. Aristotle, an important Greek philosopher and influencer of communication studies said, "In the arena of human life the honors and rewards fall to those who show their good qualities in action" (Pearson et al., 2006).

In communication ethics, we are more concerned with the decisions people make about what is right and wrong than the systems, philosophies, or religions that inform those decisions. Much of ethics is gray area. Although we talk about making decisions in terms of what is right and what is wrong, the choice is rarely that simple. Aristotle goes on to say that we should act "to the right extent, at the right time, with the right motive, and in the right way."

Communication has broad ethical implications. When dealing with communication ethics, it's difficult to state that something is 100 percent ethical or unethical. I tell my students that we all make choices daily that are more ethical or less ethical, and we may confidently make a decision only later to learn that it wasn't the most ethical option. In such cases, our ethics and goodwill are tested, since in any given situation multiple options may seem appropriate, but we can only choose one. If, in a situation, we make a decision and we reflect on it and realize we could have made a more ethical choice, does that make us a bad person?

While many behaviors can be more easily labeled as ethical or unethical, communication isn't always as clear. Murdering someone is generally thought of as unethical and illegal, but many instances of hurtful speech, or even what some would consider hate speech, have been protected as free speech. This shows the complicated relationship between protected speech, ethical speech, and the law. In some cases, people see it as their ethical duty to communicate information that they feel is in the public's best interest. The people behind WikiLeaks, for example, have released thousands of classified documents related to wars, intelligence gathering, and diplomatic communication. WikiLeaks claims that exposing this information keeps politicians and leaders accountable and keeps the public informed, but government officials claim the release of the information should be considered a criminal act because such exposure may threaten national security. Both parties consider the other's communication unethical and their own communication ethical. Who is right?

Communication Influences Your Thinking about Yourself and Others

We all share a fundamental drive to communicate. As previously stated, communication can be defined as the process of understanding and sharing meaning (Pearson & Nelson, 2000). . You share meaning in what you say and how you say it, both in oral and written forms. If you could not communicate, what would life be like? A series of never-ending frustrations? Not being able to ask for what you need, or even to understand the needs of others?

Being unable to communicate might even mean losing a part of yourself, for you communicate your **self-concept**—your sense of self and awareness of who you are—in many ways. Do you like to write? Do you find it easy to make a phone call to a stranger, or to speak to a room full of people? Do you like to work in teams and groups? Perhaps someone told you that you don't speak clearly, or your grammar needs improvement. Does that make you more or less likely to want to communicate? For some it may be a positive challenge, while for others it may be discouraging, but in all cases your ability to communicate is central to your self-concept.

Take a look at your clothes. What are the brands you are wearing? What do you think they say about you? Do you feel that certain styles of shoes, jewelry, tattoos, music, or even automobiles express who you are? Part of your self-concept may be that you express yourself through texting, or through writing longer documents like essays and research papers, or through the way you speak. Those labels and brands that you wear also in some ways communicate with your group or community. They are recognized,

and to some degree, are associated with you. Just as your words represent you in writing, how you present yourself with symbols and images influences how others perceive you.

On the other side of the coin, your communication skills help you to understand others—not just their words, but also their tone of voice, their nonverbal gestures, or the format of their written documents provide you with clues about who they are and what their values and priorities may be. Your success as a communicator hinges on your ability to actively listen and accurately interpret others' messages.

Communication Influences How You Learn

When you were an infant, you learned to talk over a period of many months. There was a group of caregivers around you that talked to each other, and sometimes you, and you caught on that you could get something when you used a word correctly. Before you knew it you were speaking in sentences, with words, in a language you learned from your family or those around you. When you got older, you didn't learn to ride a bike, drive a car, or even text a message on your cell phone in one brief moment. Learning works the same way with the continuous improvement of your communication skills.

You learn to speak in public by first having conversations, then by answering questions and expressing your opinions in class, and finally by preparing and delivering a "stand-up" speech. Similarly, you learn to write by first learning to read, then by writing and learning to think critically. Your speaking and writing are reflections of your thoughts, experience, and education, and part of that combination is your level of experience listening to other speakers, reading documents and styles of writing, and studying formats similar to what you aim to produce. Speaking and writing are both key communication skills that you will use in teams and groups.

As you study communication, you may receive suggestions for improvement and clarification from professionals more experienced than yourself. Take their suggestions as challenges to improve, don't give up when your first speech or first draft does not communicate the message you intend. Stick with it until you get it right. Your success in communicating is a skill that applies to almost every field of work, and it makes a difference in your relationships with others.

Remember, luck is simply a combination of preparation and timing. You want to be prepared to communicate well when given the opportunity. Each time you do a good job, your success will bring more success.

The Communication Process

Communication is a complex process, and it is difficult to determine where or with whom a communication encounter starts and ends. For example, when you finish your best friends' sentences before they can even get the words out, who is the sender, and who is the receiver? Models of communication simplify the process by providing a visual representation of the various aspects of a communication encounter. Models allow us to see specific concepts and steps within the process of communication, define communication, and apply communication concepts. When you become aware of how communication functions, you can think more deliberately through your communication encounters, which can help you better prepare for future communication and learn from your previous communication. The three models of communication we will discuss are the transmission, interaction, and transaction models.

Although the models differ, they all contain some common elements such as participants, messages, encoding, decoding, and channels. In communication models, the **participants** are the senders and/or receivers of messages in a communication encounter. The **message** is the verbal or nonverbal content being conveyed from sender to receiver. For example, when you say "Hello!" to your friend, you are sending a message of greeting that will be received by your friend.

The internal cognitive processes that allow participants to send, receive, and understand messages are the encoding process and decoding process. **Encoding** is the process of turning thoughts into communication. As we will learn later, the level of conscious thought that goes into encoding messages varies. **Decoding** is the process of turning communication into thoughts. For example, you may realize you're hungry and encode the following message to send to your roommate: "I'm hungry. Do you want to get pizza tonight?" As your roommate receives the message, he decodes what you are expressing to him and turns it back into thoughts in order to make meaning out of it. Of course, we don't just communicate verbally—we have various options, or channels for communication. Encoded messages are sent through a **channel**, or a sensory route on which a message travels, to the receiver for decoding. While communication can be sent and received using any sensory route (sight, smell, touch, taste, or sound), most communication occurs through visual (sight) and/or auditory (sound) channels. If your roommate has headphones on and is engrossed in a video game, you may need to get his attention by waving your hands before you can ask him about dinner.

Linear Model of Communication

The **linear model of communication** describes communication as a linear, one-way process in which a sender intentionally transmits a message to a receiver (Ellis & McClintock, 1990). This model focuses on the sender and message within a communication encounter. Although the receiver is included in the model, this role is viewed as more of a target or end point rather than part of an ongoing process. We are left to presume that the receiver either successfully receives and understands the message or does not. The scholars who designed this model extended on a linear model proposed by Aristotle centuries before that included a speaker, message, and hearer. They were also influenced by the advent and spread of new communication technologies of the time such as telegraphy and radio, and you can probably see these technical influences within the model (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). Think of how a radio message is sent from a person in the radio studio to you listening in your car. The sender is the radio announcer who encodes a verbal message that is transmitted by a radio tower through electromagnetic waves (the channel) and eventually reaches your (the receiver's) ears via an antenna and speakers in order to be decoded. The radio announcer doesn't really know if you receive his or her message or not, but if the equipment is working and the channel is free of static, then there is a good chance that the message was successfully received.

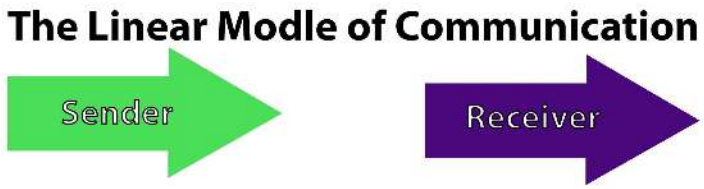

Figure 1.2.2: This graph illustrates the linear model of communication.

Although the linear model may seem simple or even underdeveloped to us today, the creation of this model allowed scholars to examine the communication process in new ways, which eventually led to more complex models and theories of communication that we will discuss more later. This model is not quite rich enough to capture dynamic face-to-face interactions, but there are instances in which communication is one-way and linear, especially computer-mediated communication (CMC). CMC is integrated into many aspects of our lives now and has opened up new ways of communicating and brought some new challenges. Think of text messaging for example. The linear model of communication is well suited for describing the act of text messaging since the sender isn't sure that the meaning was effectively conveyed or that the message was received at all.

Interactional Model of Communication

The **interactional model of communication** describes communication as a process in which participants alternate positions as sender and receiver and generate meaning by sending messages and receiving feedback within physical and psychological contexts (Schramm et al., 1997). Rather than illustrating communication as a linear, one- way process, the interaction model incorporates feedback, which makes communication a more interactive, two- way process. **Feedback** includes messages sent in response to other messages. For example, your instructor may respond to a point you raise during class discussion or you may point to the sofa when your roommate asks you where the remote control is. The inclusion of a feedback loop also leads to a more complex understanding of the roles of participants in a communication encounter. Rather than having one sender, one message, and one receiver, this model has two sender-receivers who exchange messages. Each participant alternates roles as sender and receiver in order to keep a communication encounter going. Although this seems like a perceptible and deliberate process, we alternate between the roles of sender and receiver very quickly and often without conscious thought.

Figure 1.2.3: This graph illustrates the interactional model of communication.

The interactional model is focused on both the message and interaction. While the linear model focused on transmitting a message, the interactional model is more concerned with the communication loop itself. Feedback and context help make the interactional model a more accurate illustration of the typical communication process, and is a powerful tool that helps us understand communication encounters.

Transactional Model of Communication

As the study of communication progressed, models expanded to account for more of the communication process. Many scholars view communication as more than a process that is used to carry on conversations and convey meaning. We don't send messages like computers, and we don't neatly alternate between the roles of sender and receiver as an interaction unfolds. We also can't consciously decide to stop communicating, because communication is more than sending and receiving messages. The transactional model differs from the linear and interactional models in significant ways, including the conceptualization of communication, the role of sender and receiver, and the role of context (Barnlund, 1970).

To review, each model incorporates a different understanding of what communication is and what communication does. The linear model views communication as a thing, like an information packet, that is sent from one place to another. From this view, communication is defined as sending and receiving messages. The interactional model views communication as an interaction in which a message is sent and then followed by a reaction (feedback), which is then followed by another reaction, and so on. From this view, communication is defined as producing conversations and interactions within physical and psychological contexts. The transactional model views communication as integrated into our social realities in such a way that it helps us not only understand them but also create and change them.

The **transactional model of communication** describes communication as a process in which communicators generate social realities within social, relational, and cultural contexts. In this model, we don't just communicate to exchange messages; we communicate to create relationships, form intercultural alliances, shape our self-concepts, and engage with others in dialogue to create communities. In short, we don't communicate about our realities; communication helps to construct our realities.

The roles of sender and receiver in the transactional model of communication differ significantly from the other models. Instead of labeling participants as senders and receivers, the people in a communication encounter are referred to as *communicators*. Unlike the interactional model, which suggests that participants alternate positions as sender and receiver, the transactional model suggests that we are simultaneously senders and receivers. For example, on a first date, as you send verbal messages about your interests and background, your date reacts nonverbally. You don't wait until you are done sending your verbal message to start receiving and decoding the nonverbal messages of your date. Instead, you are simultaneously sending your verbal message and receiving your date's nonverbal messages. This is an important addition to the model because it allows us to understand how we are able to adapt our communication—for example, a verbal message—in the middle of sending it based on the communication we are simultaneously receiving from our communication partner.

Figure 1.2.4: This Graph illustrates the transaction model of communication.

The transactional model also includes a more complex understanding of context. The interaction model portrays context as physical and psychological influences that enhance or impede communication. While these contexts are important, they focus on message transmission and reception. Since the transaction model of communication views communication as a force that shapes our realities before and after specific interactions occur, it must account for contextual influences outside of a single interaction. To do this, the transactional model considers how social, relational, cultural, and physical contexts frame and influence our communication encounters.

- **Social context** refers to the stated rules or unstated norms that guide communication. As we are socialized into our various communities, we learn rules and implicitly pick up on norms for communicating. Some common rules that influence social contexts include don't lie to people, don't interrupt people, don't pass people in line, greet people when they greet you, thank people when they pay you a compliment, and so on. Parents and teachers often explicitly convey these rules to their children or students. Rules may be stated over and over, and there may be punishment for not following them. Norms are social conventions that we pick up on through observation, practice, and trial and error. We may not even know we are breaking a social norm until we notice people looking at us strangely or someone corrects or teases us. For example, as a new employee you may over- or underdress for the company's holiday party because you don't know the norm for formality. Although there probably isn't a stated rule about how to dress at the holiday party, you will notice your error without someone having to point it out, and you will likely not deviate from the norm again in order to save yourself any potential embarrassment. Even though breaking social norms doesn't result in the formal punishment that might be a consequence of breaking a social rule, the social awkwardness we feel when we violate social norms is usually enough to teach us that these norms are powerful even though they aren't made explicit like rules. Norms even have the power to override social rules in some situations. To go back to the examples of common social rules mentioned before, we may break the rule about not lying if the lie is meant to save someone from feeling hurt. We often interrupt close friends when we're having an exciting conversation, but we wouldn't be as likely to interrupt a professor while they are lecturing. Since norms and rules vary among people and cultures, relational and cultural contexts are also included in the transaction model in order to help us understand the multiple contexts that influence our communication.
- **Relational context** includes the previous interpersonal history and type of relationship we have with a person. We communicate differently with someone we just met versus someone we've known for a long time. Initial interactions with people tend to be more highly scripted and governed by established norms and rules, but when we have an established relational context, we may be able to bend or break social norms and rules more easily. For example, you would likely follow social norms of politeness and attentiveness and might spend the whole day cleaning the house for the first time you invite your new neighbors to visit. Once the neighbors are in your house, you may also make them the center of your attention during their visit. If you end up becoming friends with your neighbors and establishing a relational context, you might not think as much about having everything cleaned and prepared or even giving them your whole attention during later visits. Since communication norms and rules also vary based on the type of relationship people have, relationship type is also included in relational context. For example, there are certain communication rules and norms that apply to a supervisor-supervisee relationship that don't apply to a brother-sister relationship and vice versa. Just as social norms and relational history influence how we communicate, so does culture.
- **Cultural context** includes various aspects of identities such as race, gender, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, and ability. We will learn more about these identities in other chapters, but for now it is important for us to understand that whether we are aware of it or not, we all have multiple cultural identities that influence our communication. Some people, especially those with identities that have been historically marginalized, are regularly aware of how their cultural identities influence their communication and influence how others communicate with them. Conversely, people with identities that are dominant or in the majority may rarely, if ever, think about the role their cultural identities play in their communication. When cultural context

comes to the forefront of a communication encounter, it can be difficult to manage. Since intercultural communication creates uncertainty, it can deter people from communicating across cultures or lead people to view intercultural communication as negative. But if you avoid communicating across cultural identities, you will likely not get more comfortable or competent as a communicator. “Difference,” isn’t a bad thing. In fact, intercultural communication has the potential to enrich various aspects of our lives. In order to communicate well within various cultural contexts, it is important to keep an open mind and avoid making assumptions about others’ cultural identities. While you may be able to identify some aspects of the cultural context within a communication encounter, there may also be cultural influences that you can’t see. A competent communicator shouldn’t assume to know all the cultural contexts a person brings to an encounter, since not all cultural identities are visible. As with the other contexts, it requires skill to adapt to shifting contexts, and the best way to develop these skills is through practice and reflection.

Key Vocabulary

- physical needs
- relational needs
- communication ethics
- instrumental needs
- identity needs
- self-concept
- participants
- message
- encoding
- decoding
- channel
- linear communication
- interactional communication
- transactional communication
- social context
- relational context
- cultural context

References

- Barnlund, D. C. (1970). A transactional model of communication. In K. K. Sereno & C. D. Mortenson (Eds.), *Foundations of Communication Theory*(pp. 83–92). New York, NY: Harper and
- Row.
- Burleson, B. R., Metts, S., & Kirch, M. W. (n.d.). Communication in Close Relationships. *Close Relationships: A Sourcebook*, 244–259. doi: 10.4135/9781452220437.n18
- Dance, F. E. X., & Larson, C. E. (1976). *The functions of human communication: a theoretical approach*. New York .: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Ellis, R., & Mcclintock, A. (1990). *If you take my meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Ogden, C. K., & Richards, I. A. (1923). *The meaning of meaning = a study of the influence of language upon thought and of the science of symbolism: C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards. Ed. and Intr. by W. Terrence Gordon*. London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press.
- Pearson, J. C., & Nelson, P. E. (2000). *Introduction to human communication: understandingand sharing*. Place of publication not identified: Mcgraw Hill.
- Pearson, J. C., Child, J. T., Mattern, J. L., & Kahl, D. H. (2006). What are Students Being Taught about Ethics in Public Speaking Textbooks? *Communication Quarterly*, *54*(4), 507–521. doi: 10.1080/01463370601036689
- Schramm, W., Chaffee, S. H., & Rogers, E. M. (1997). *The beginnings of communication study in America: a personal memoir*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Seppala, E. M., Hutcherson, C. A., Nguyen, D. T., Doty, J. R., & Gross, J. J. (2014). Loving-kindness meditation: a tool to improve healthcare provider compassion, resilience, and patient care. *Journal of Compassionate Health Care*, *1*(1). doi: 10.1186/s40639-014-0005-9
- Shannon, C. E., & Wearver, W. (1949). *The mathematical theory of communication*. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

This chapter contains material taken from Chapter 1 “The communication process”in Communication in the real world: An introduction to communication studies and is used under a CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0 International license.

This page titled 1.2: Communication Principles and Process is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.3: Cultural Characteristics and the Roots of Culture

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Explain what culture is and define it in several ways.
- Discuss the effect that culture has on communication.
- Describe the role of power in culture and communication.
- Discuss Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's Value Orientation Theory.
- Discuss Hofestede's Dimensions of National Culture Theory.
- Discuss Edward T. Hall's Theories.

What does the term "culture" mean to you? Is it the apex of knowledge and intellectual achievement? A particular nation, people or social group? Rituals, symbols and myths? The arbiter of what is right and wrong behavior?

It has become quite common to describe natural groupings that humans create as a "culture." Popular media has given us women's culture, men's culture, workplace cultures, specially-abled culture, pet culture, school culture, exercise culture, and the list goes on. But, are all these divisions really classified as culture? For the purposes of this textbook, the answer is no. Cultural communication researcher, Donal Carbaugh (1988) defines culture as "a system of symbols, premises, rules, forms, and the domains and dimensions of mutual meanings associated with these."

Carbaugh was expanding on the work of anthropologist Clifford Geertz, who believed that culture was a system based on symbols. Geertz said that people use symbols to define their world and express their emotions. As human beings, we all learn about the world around us, both consciously and unconsciously, starting at a very young age. What we internalize comes through observation, experience, interaction, and what we are taught. We manipulate symbols to create meaning and stories that dictate our behaviors, to organize our lives, and to interact with others. The meanings we attach to symbols are arbitrary. Looking someone in the eye means that you are direct and respectful in some countries, yet, in other cultural systems, looking away is a sign of respect.

Carbaugh also suggested that culture is "a learned set of shared interpretations and beliefs, values, and norms, which affect the behaviors of a relatively large group of people." Our course will combine Carbaugh's longer definitions into the statement that culture is a learned pattern of values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a large group of people. It is within this framework that we will explore what happens when people from different cultural backgrounds interact.

Culture is Learned

Although there is a debate as to whether babies are born into the world as *tabula rasa* (blank slate) or without knowing anything. We can say that they do not come with pre-programmed preferences like your personal computer or cell phone. And, although human beings do share some universal habits such as eating and sleeping, these habits are biologically and physiologically based, not culturally based. Culture is the unique way that we have learned to eat and sleep. Other members of our culture have taught us slowly and consciously (or even subconsciously) what it means to eat and sleep.

Values and Culture

Value systems are fundamental to understanding how culture expresses itself. Values are deeply felt and often serve as principles that guide people in their perceptions and behaviors. Using our values, certain ideas are judged to be right or wrong, good or bad, important or not important, desirable or not desirable. Common values include fairness, respect, integrity, compassion, happiness, kindness, creativity, curiosity, religion, wisdom, and more.

Ideally, our values should match up with what we say we will do, but sometimes our various values come into conflict, and a choice has to be made as to which one will be given preference over another. An example of this could be love of country and love of family. You might love both, but ultimate choose family over country when a crisis occurs.

Beliefs and Culture

Our values are supported by our assumptions of our world. Assumptions are ideas that we believe and hold to be true. Beliefs come about through repetition. This repetition becomes a habit we form and leads to habitual patterns of thinking and doing. We do not realize our assumptions because they are in-grained in us at an unconscious level. We become aware of our assumptions when we encounter a value or belief that is different from our own, and it makes us feel that we need to stand up for, or validate, our beliefs.

People from the United States strongly believe in independence. They consider themselves as separate individuals in control of their own lives. The Declaration of Independence states that all people—not groups, but individual people—are created equal. This sense of equality leads to the idea that all people are of the same standing or importance, and therefore, informality or lack of rigid social protocol is common. This leads to an informality of speech, dress, and manners that other cultures might find difficult to negotiate because of their own beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors.

Beliefs are part of every human life in all world cultures. They define for us, and give meaning to, objects, people, places, and things in our lives. Our assumptions about our world determine how we react emotionally and what actions we need to take. These assumptions about our *worldviews* guide our behaviors and shape our attitudes. Mary Clark (2005) defines **worldviews** as "beliefs and assumptions by which an individual makes sense of experiences that are hidden deep within the language and traditions of the surrounding society." *Worldviews* are the shared values and beliefs that form the customs, behaviors and foundations of any particular society. *Worldviews* "set the ground rules for shared cultural meaning" (Clark, 2005). *Worldviews* are the patterns developed through interactions within families, neighborhoods, schools, communities, churches, and so on. *Worldviews* can be resources for understanding and analyzing the fundamental differences between cultures.

Feelings and Culture

Our culture can give us a sense of familiarity and comfort in a variety of contexts. We embody a sense of ethnocentrism. **Ethnocentrism** is the belief that one's own culture is superior to all other's and is the standard by which all other cultures should be measured (Sumner, 1906). An example of this could be the farm-to-table movement that is currently popular in the United States. Different parts of the country, pride themselves in growing produce for local consumption touting the benefits of better food, enhanced economy, and carbon neutrality. Tasting menus are developed, awards are given, and consumers brag about the amazing, innovative benefits of living in the United States. What is often missed is the fact that for many people, in many cultures across the planet, the farm-to-table process has not changed for thousands of years. Being a locavore is the only way they know.

Geertz (1973) believed the meanings we attach to our cultural symbols can create chaos when we meet someone who believes in a different meaning or interpretation; it can give us culture shock. This shock can be disorientating, confusing, or surprising. It can bring on anxiety or nervousness, and, for some, a sense of losing control. Culture is always provoking a variety of feelings. **Culture shock** will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter.

Behavior and Culture

Our worldview influences our behaviors. Behaviors endure over time and are passed from person to person. Within a dominant or national culture, members can belong to many different groups. Dominant cultures may be made up of many subsets or co-cultures that exist within them. For example, your dominant or national culture may be the United States, but you are also a thirty-year-old woman from the Midwest who loves poodles. Because you are a thirty-year-old woman, you exist in the world very differently than a fifty-year-old man. A co-culture is a group whose values, beliefs or behaviors set it apart from the larger culture of which it is a part of and shares many similarities. (Orbe, 1996) Social psychologists may prefer the term micro-culture as opposed to co-culture.

Culture is Dynamic and Heterogeneous

In addition to exploring the components of the definition, it should be understood that culture is always changing. Cultural patterns are not rigid but slowly and constantly changing. The United States of the 1960s is not the United States of today. Nor if I know one person from the United States do I know them all. Within cultures there are struggles to negotiate relationships within a multitude of forces of change. Although the general nature of this book focuses on broad principles, by viewing any culture as diverse in character or content (**heterogeneous**), we are better equipped to understand the complexities of that culture and become more sensitive to how people in that culture live.

Describing Culture

Anyone who has had an intercultural encounter or participated in intercultural communication can tell you that they encountered differences between themselves and others. Acknowledging the differences isn't difficult. Rather, the difficulties come from describing the differences using terms that accurately convey the subtle meanings within cultures.

The study of cross-cultural analysis incorporates the fields of anthropology, sociology, psychology, and communication. Within cross-cultural analysis, several names dominate our understanding of culture—Florence Kluckhohn, Fred Strodtbeck, Geert Hofstede and Edward T. Hall. Although new ideas are continually being proposed, Hofstede remains the leading thinker on how we see cultures.

This section will review both the thinkers and the main components of how they define culture. These theories provide a comprehensive and enduring understanding of the key factors that shape a culture. By understanding the key concepts and theories, you should be able to formulate your own analysis of the different cultures.

Value Orientation Theory

The Kluckhohn-Strodtbeck Value Orientations theory represents one of the earliest efforts to develop a cross-cultural theory of values. According to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), every culture faces the same basic survival needs and must answer the same universal questions. It is out of this need that cultural values arise. The basic questions faced by people everywhere fall into five categories and reflect concerns about: 1) human nature, 2) the relationship between human beings and the natural world, 3) time, 4) human activity, and 5) social relations. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck hypothesized three possible responses or orientations to each of the concerns.

SUMMARY OF KLUCKHOHN-STRODTBECK VALUES ORIENTATION THEORY

Basic Concerns	Orientations		
Human nature	Evil	Mixed	Good
Relationship to natural world	Mastery	Harmony	Submission
Time	Past	Present	Future
Activity	Being	Becoming	Doing
Social relations	Collective	Collateral	Individual

What is the inherent nature of human beings?

According to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, this is a question that all societies ask, and there are generally three different responses. The people in some societies are inclined to believe that people are inherently evil and that the society must exercise strong measures to keep the evil impulses of people in check. On the other hand, other societies are more likely to see human beings as basically good and possessing an inherent tendency towards goodness. Between these two poles are societies that see human beings as possessing the potential to be either good or evil depending upon the influences that surround them. Societies also differ on whether human nature is immutable (*unchangeable*) or mutable (*changeable*).

What is the relationship between human beings and the natural world?

Some societies believe nature is a powerful force in the face of which human beings are essentially helpless. We could describe this as “nature over humans.” Other societies are more likely to believe that through intelligence and the application of knowledge, humans can control nature. In other words, they embrace a “humans over nature” position. Between these two extremes are the societies who believe humans are wise to strive to live in “harmony with nature.”

What is the best way to think about time?

Some societies are rooted in the past, believing that people should learn from history and strive to preserve the traditions of the past. Other societies place more value on the here and now, believing people should live fully in the present. Then there are societies that place the greatest value on the future, believing people should always delay immediate satisfactions while they plan and work hard to make a better future.

What is the proper mode of human activity?

In some societies, “being” is the most valued orientation. Striving for great things is not necessary or important. In other societies, “becoming” is what is most valued. Life is regarded as a process of continual unfolding. Our purpose on earth, the people might say, is to become fully human. Finally, there are societies that are primarily oriented to “doing.” In such societies, people are likely to think of the inactive life as a wasted life. People are more likely to express the view that we are here to work hard and that human worth is measured by the sum of accomplishments.

What is the ideal relationship between the individual and society?

Expressed another way, we can say the concern is about how a society is best organized. People in some societies think it most natural that a society be organized [by groups or collectives]. They hold to the view that some people should lead and others should follow. Leaders, they feel, should make all the important decisions [for the group]. Other societies are best described as valuing collateral relationships. In such societies, everyone has an important role to play in society; therefore, important decisions should be made by consensus. In still other societies, the individual is the primary unit of society. In societies that place great value on individualism, people are likely to believe that each person should have control over his/her own destiny. When groups convene to make decisions, they should follow the principle of “one person, one vote.”

As Hill (2002) has observed, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck did not consider the theory to be complete. In fact, they originally proposed a sixth value orientation—Space: here, there, or far away, which they could not quite figure out how to investigate at the time. Today, the Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck framework is just one among many attempts to study universal human values.

Hofstede’s Dimensions of National Culture Theory

Geert Hofstede, sometimes called the father of modern cross-cultural science and thinking, is a social psychologist who focused on a comparison of nations using a statistical analysis of two unique databases. The first and largest database composed of answers that matched employee samples from forty different countries to the same survey questions focused on attitudes and beliefs. The second consisted of answers to some of the same questions by Hofstede’s executive students who came from fifteen countries and from a variety of companies and industries. He developed a framework for understanding the systematic differences between nations in these two databases. This framework focused on value dimensions. Values, in this case, are *broad preferences for one state of affairs over others*, and they are mostly unconscious.

Most of us understand that values are our own culture’s or society’s ideas about what is good, bad, acceptable, or unacceptable. Hofstede developed a framework for understanding how these values underlie organizational behavior. Through his database research, he identified five key value dimensions (power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, & time) that analyze and interpret the behaviors, values, and attitudes of a national culture (Hofstede, 1980).

Power Distance

Power distance refers to how openly a society or culture accepts or does not accept differences between people, as in hierarchies in the workplace, in politics, and so on. For example, *high power distance* cultures openly accept that a boss is “higher” and as such deserves a more formal respect and authority. Examples of these cultures include Japan, Mexico, and the Philippines. In Japan or Mexico, the senior person is almost a father figure and is automatically given respect and usually loyalty without questions.

In Southern Europe, Latin America, and much of Asia, power is an integral part of the social equation. People tend to accept relationships of servitude. An individual’s status, age, and seniority command respect—they’re what make it all right for the lower-ranked person to take orders. Subordinates expect to be told what to do and won’t take initiative or speak their minds unless a manager explicitly asks for their opinion.

At the other end of the spectrum are **low power distance** cultures, in which superiors and subordinates are more likely to see each other as equal in power. Countries found at this end of the spectrum include Austria and Denmark. To be sure, not all cultures view power in the same ways. In Sweden, Norway, and Israel, for example, respect for equality is a warranty of freedom. Subordinates and managers alike often have carte blanche to speak their minds.

Interestingly enough, research indicates that the United States tilts toward low power distance but is more in the middle of the scale than Germany and the United Kingdom. The United States has a culture of promoting participation at the office while maintaining control in the hands of the manager. People in this type of culture tend to be relatively laid-back about status and social standing—but there’s a firm understanding of who has the power. What’s surprising for many people is that countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia actually rank lower on the power distance spectrum than the United States.

In a high power distance culture, you would probably be much less likely to challenge a decision, to provide an alternative, or to give input. If you are working with someone from a high power distance culture, you may need to take extra care to elicit feedback and involve them in the discussion because their cultural framework may preclude their participation. They may have learned that less powerful people must accept decisions without comment, even if they have a concern or know there is a significant problem.

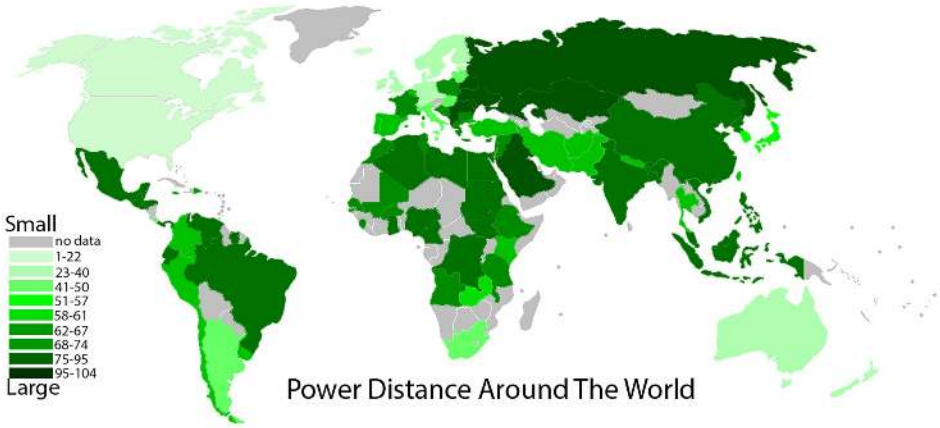

Figure 1.3.1: A map which shows the relative power distance of nations around the world

Individualism vs. collectivism

Individualism vs. **collectivism** anchor opposite ends of a continuum that describes how people define themselves and their relationships with others. Individualism is just what it sounds like. It refers to people's tendency to take care of themselves and their immediate circle of family and friends, perhaps at the expense of the overall society. In individualistic cultures, what counts most is self-realization. Initiating alone, sweating alone, achieving alone— not necessarily collective efforts—are what win applause. In individualistic cultures, competition is the fuel of success.

The United States and Northern European societies are often labeled as individualistic. In the United States, individualism is valued and promoted—from its political structure (individual rights and democracy) to entrepreneurial zeal (capitalism). Other examples of high-individualism cultures include Australia and the United Kingdom.

Communication is more direct in individualistic societies but more indirect in collectivistic societies. The U.S. ranks very high in individualism, and South Korea ranks quite low. Japan falls close to the middle.

When we talk about masculine or feminine cultures, we're not talking about diversity issues. It's about how a society views traits that are considered masculine or feminine. Each carries with it a set of cultural expectations and norms for gender behavior and gender roles across life.

Traditionally perceived "masculine" values are assertiveness, materialism, and less concern for others. In masculine-oriented cultures, gender roles are usually crisply defined. Men tend to be more focused on performance, ambition, and material success. They cut tough and independent personas, while women cultivate modesty and quality of life. Cultures in Japan and Latin American are examples of masculine-oriented cultures.

In contrast, feminine cultures are thought to emphasize "feminine" values: concern for all, an emphasis on the quality of life, and an emphasis on relationships. In feminine-oriented cultures, both genders swap roles, with the focus on quality of life, service, and independence. The Scandinavian cultures rank as feminine cultures, as do cultures in Switzerland and New Zealand. The United States is actually more moderate, and its score is ranked in the middle between masculine and feminine classifications. For all these factors, it's important to remember that cultures don't necessarily fall neatly into one camp or the other. The range of difference is one aspect of intercultural communication that requires significant attention when a communicator enters a new environment.

Uncertainty avoidance

When we meet each other for the first time, we often use what we have previously learned to understand our current context. We also do this to reduce our uncertainty. People who have high uncertainty avoidance generally prefer to steer clear of conflict and competition. They tend to appreciate very clear instructions. They dislike ambiguity. At the office, sharply defined rules and rituals are used to get tasks completed. Stability and what is known are preferred to instability and the unknown.

Some cultures, such as the U.S. and Britain, are highly tolerant of uncertainty, while others go to great lengths to reduce the element of surprise. Cultures in the Arab world, for example, are high in uncertainty avoidance; they tend to be resistant to change and reluctant to take risks. Whereas a U.S. business negotiator might enthusiastically agree to try a new procedure, the Egyptian counterpart would likely refuse to get involved until all the details are worked out.

Berger and Calabrese (1975) developed uncertainty reduction theory to examine this dynamic aspect of communication. Here are seven axioms of uncertainty:

1. There is a high level of uncertainty at first. As we get to know one another, our verbal communication increases and our uncertainty begins to decrease.
2. Following verbal communication, as nonverbal communication increases, uncertainty will continue to decrease, and we will express more nonverbal displays of affiliation, like nodding one's head to express agreement.
3. When experiencing high levels of uncertainty, we tend to increase our information-seeking behavior, perhaps asking questions to gain more insight. As our understanding increases, uncertainty decreases, as does the information-seeking behavior.
4. When experiencing high levels of uncertainty, the communication interaction is not as personal or intimate. As uncertainty is reduced, intimacy increases.
5. When experiencing high levels of uncertainty, communication will feature more reciprocity, or displays of respect. As uncertainty decreases, reciprocity may diminish.
6. Differences between people increase uncertainty, while similarities decrease it.
7. Higher levels of uncertainty are associated with a decrease in the indication of liking the other person, while reductions in uncertainty are associated with liking the other person more.

In educational settings, people from countries high in uncertainty avoidance expect their teachers to be experts with all of the answers. People from countries low in uncertainty avoidance don't mind it when a teacher says, "I don't know."

Long-term vs. short-term orientation

The fifth dimension is long-term orientation, which refers to whether a culture has a long-term or short-term orientation. This dimension was added by Hofstede after the original four you just read about. It resulted in the effort to understand the difference in thinking between the East and the West. Certain values are associated with each orientation. The long-term orientation values persistence, perseverance, thriftiness, and having a sense of shame. These are evident in traditional Eastern cultures. Long-term orientation is often marked by persistence, thrift and frugality, and an order to relationships based on age and status. A sense of shame, both personal and for the family and community, is also observed across generations. What an individual does reflects on the family, and is carried by immediate and extended family members.

The short-term orientation values tradition only to the extent of fulfilling social obligations or providing gifts or favors. While there may be a respect for tradition, there is also an emphasis on personal representation and honor, a reflection of identity and integrity. Personal stability and consistency are also valued in a short-term oriented culture, contributing to an overall sense of predictability and familiarity. These cultures are more likely to be focused on the immediate or short-term impact of an issue. Not surprisingly, the United Kingdom and the United States rank low on the long-term orientation.

CRITIQUE OF HOFSTEDE'S THEORY

Among the various attempts by social scientists to study human values from a cultural perspective, Hofstede's is certainly popular. In fact, it would be a rare culture text that did not pay special attention to Hofstede's theory. Value dimensions are all evolving as many people gain experience outside their home cultures and countries, therefore, in practice, these five dimensions do not occur as single values but are really woven together and interdependent, creating very complex cultural interactions. Even though these five values are constantly shifting and not static, they help us begin to understand how and why people from different cultures may think and act as they do.

However, Hofstede's cultural dimensions are not without critics. It has been faulted for promoting a largely static view of culture (Hamden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1997) and as Orr & Hauser (2008) have suggested, the world has changed in dramatic ways since Hofstede's research began.

Edward T. Hall

Edward T. Hall was a respected anthropologist who applied his field to the understanding of cultures and intercultural communications. Hall is best noted for three principal categories that analyze and interpret how communications and interactions between cultures differ: context, space, and time.

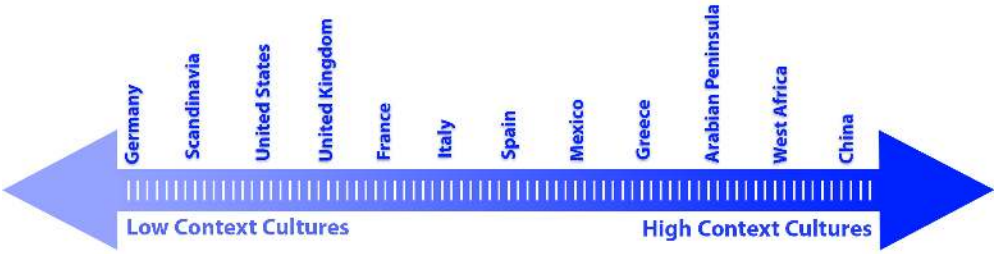

Figure 1.3.2: A graph which shows the level of context in various world cultures

High and low context refers to how a message is communicated. In high-context cultures, such as those found in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, the physical context of the message carries a great deal of importance. People tend to be more indirect and to expect the person they are communicating with to decode the implicit part of their message. While the person sending the message takes painstaking care in crafting the message, the person receiving the message is expected to read it within context. The message may lack the verbal directness you would expect in a low-context culture. In high-context cultures, body language is as important and sometimes more important than the actual words spoken.

In contrast, in low-context cultures such as the United States and most Northern European countries, people tend to be explicit and direct in their communication. Satisfying individual needs is important. You're probably familiar with some well-known low-context mottos: "Say what you mean" and "Don't beat around the bush." The guiding principle is to minimize the margins of misunderstanding or doubt. Low-context communication aspires to get straight to the point.

Communication between people from high-context and low-context cultures can be confusing. In business interactions, people from low-context cultures tend to listen primarily to the words spoken; they tend not to be as cognizant of nonverbal aspects. As a result, people often miss important clues that could tell them more about the specific issue.

Space

Space refers to the study of physical space and people. Hall called this the study of proxemics, which focuses on space and distance between people as they interact. *Space* refers to everything from how close people stand to one another to how people might mark their territory or boundaries in the workplace and in other settings. Stand too close to someone from the United States, which prefers a "safe" physical distance, and you are apt to make them uncomfortable. How close is too close depends on where you are from. Whether consciously or unconsciously, we all establish a comfort zone when interacting with others. Standing distances shrink and expand across cultures. Latins, Spaniards, and Filipinos (whose culture has been influenced by three centuries of Spanish colonization) stand rather close even in business encounters. In cultures that have a low need for territory, people not only tend to stand closer together but also are more willing to share their space—whether it be a workplace, an office, a seat on a train, or even ownership of a business project.

Attitudes toward Time: Polychronic versus Monochronic Cultures

Hall identified that time is another important concept greatly influenced by culture. In polychronic cultures—*polychronic* literally means "many times"—people can do several things at the same time. In monochronic cultures, or "one-time" cultures, people tend to do one task at a time.

This isn't to suggest that people in polychronic cultures are better at multitasking. Rather, people in monochronic cultures, such as Northern Europe and North America, tend to schedule one event at a time. For them, an appointment that starts at 8 a.m. is an appointment that starts at 8 a.m.—or 8:05 at the latest. People are expected to arrive on time, whether for a board meeting or a family picnic. Time is a means of imposing order. Often the meeting has a firm end time as well, and even if the agenda is not finished, it's not unusual to end the meeting and finish the agenda at another scheduled meeting.

In polychronic cultures, by contrast, time is nice, but people and relationships matter more. Finishing a task may also matter more. If you've ever been to Latin America, the Mediterranean, or the Middle East, you know all about living with relaxed timetables. People might attend to three things at once and think nothing of it. Or they may cluster informally, rather than arrange themselves in a queue. In polychronic cultures, it's not considered an insult to walk into a meeting or a party well past the appointed hour.

In polychronic cultures, people regard work as part of a larger interaction with a community. If an agenda is not complete, people in polychronic cultures are less likely to simply end the meeting and are more likely to continue to finish the business at hand.

Those who prefer monochronic order may find polychronic order frustrating and hard to manage effectively. Those raised with a polychronic sensibility, on the other hand, might resent the "tyranny of the clock" and prefer to be focused on completing the tasks at hand.

What Else Determines a Culture?

The three approaches to the study of cultural values (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, Hofstede, and Hall) presented in this chapter provide a framework for a comparative analysis between cultures. Additionally, there are other external factors that also constitute a culture—identities, language, manners, media, relationships, and conflict, to name a few. Coming chapters will help us to understand how more cultural traits are incorporated into daily life.

Key Vocabulary

- collectivism
- ethnocentrism
- heterogeneous
- individualism
- uncertainty avoidance
- uncertainty reduction theory
- space
- power distance
- high vs. low context
- femininity vs. masculinity
- short-term orientation vs.
- long-term orientation
- polychronic cultures
- monochronic cultures
- proxemics
- values
- worldviews
- assumption
- co-culture

References

1. Berger, C. R., & Calabrese, R. J. (1975). Some Explorations In Initial Interaction And Beyond: Toward A Developmental Theory Of Interpersonal Communication. *Human Communication Research*, *1*(2), 99–112. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2958.1975.tb00258.x
2. Clark, M. E. (2005). *In search of human nature*. London: Routledge.
3. Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of cultures*. London: Hutchinson.
4. Hall, E. (1976). *Beyond culture.* Garden City, NY: Anchor.
5. Hampden-Turner, C., & Trompenaars, F. (1997). Response to Geert Hofstede. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *21*(1), 149–159. doi: 10.1016/s0147-1767(96)00042-9
6. Hills, M. D. (2002). Kluckhohn and Strodtbecks Values Orientation Theory. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, *4*(4). doi: 10.9707/2307-0919.1040
7. Hofstede, G. (1980). Culture and Organizations. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, *10*(4), 15–41. doi: 10.1080/00208825.1980.11656300
8. Kluckhohn, F. R., & Strodtbeck, dF. L. (1961). *Variations in Value Orientations*. Evanston, IL: Row Peterson.
9. Orr, L. M., & Hauser, W. J. (2008). A Re-Inquiry of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions: A Call for 21st Century Cross-Cultural Research. *Marketing Management Journal*, *18*(2), 1–19.
10. Sumner, W. G. (1906). *Folkways: Sociological importance of usages, manners, customs, mores and morals. 1959 reprint*. Boston, MA: Ginn and Company.

This page titled 1.3: Cultural Characteristics and the Roots of Culture is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.4: Self and Identity

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Understand the three components that make up the “self”.
- Be able to explain how social comparison plays a role in self.
- Identify and define Co-cultural Communication Theory along with the role of in-groupers and out-groupers.
- Articulate what constitutes culture shock.
- Be able to discuss the various theories and models associated with culture shock.

To understand our communication interactions with others, we must first understand ourselves. Although each of us experiences ourselves as a singular individual, our sense of self is actually made up of three separate, yet integrated components: self-awareness, self-concept, and self-esteem.

- **Self Awareness** can be defined in many ways, including “conscious knowledge of one’s own character, feelings, motives, and desires.” (Google Dictionary 2/4/19) If the word “awareness” means consciously taking note of the world around us, then self-awareness should mean bringing an awareness to yourself. In other words, noticing your feelings, your reactions, your thoughts, your behaviors, and more. According to sociologist George Herbert Mead (1934), it helps if you have a strong sense of yourself because you monitor your own behaviors and form impressions of who you are through self-observation. As you are watching and observing your own actions, you are also engaging in **social comparison,** which is observing and assigning meaning to others’ behavior and then comparing it with our own. Social comparison has a particularly potent effect on self when we compare ourselves to those we wish to emulate.
- **Self-concept** is your overall perception of who you thing you are. Self-concept answer the question of who am I? Your self-concept is based on the beliefs, attitudes, and values that you have about yourself. Identity and self-concept are so intertwined that any lasting desired change or improvement becomes very difficult (Fishe & Taylor, 1991).
- **Self-esteem** is how we value and perceive ourselves. Whereas self-awareness prompts us to ask, “Who am I?” and self-concepts answers that question, self-esteem lets us know how we feel about the answer. If the feeling is negative, then we have low self-worth or self-esteem and if the feeling is positive, then we have high self-esteem. Whether positive or negative, your self-concept influences your performance and the expression of that essential ability: communication. In addition to gender, friends, and family, our culture is a powerful source of self (Vallacher, Nowak, Froehlich & Rockloff, 2002). *Culture* is an established, coherent set of beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices shared by a large group of people (Keesing, 1974). If this strikes you as similar to the definition of *self-concept* and *worldview*, you are correct; culture is like a collective sense of self that is shared by a large group of people.

Thinking about intercultural communication in terms of self and identity has some important implications. First, *identities are created through communication*. As messages are negotiated, co-created, reinforced, and challenged through communication, identities emerge. Different identities are emphasized depending on the topic of the conversation and the people you are communicating with. Second, *identities are created in spurts*. There are long time periods where we don’t think much about ourselves or our identities. Whereas other times, events cause us to focus on our identity issues and the insights gained modify our identities.

Third, *most individuals have developed multiple identities* because of membership in various groups and life events. Societal forces such as history, economics, politics, and communities influence identities. Fourth, *identities may be assigned by societies or they may be voluntarily assumed, but the forces that gave rise to particular identities are always changing.*

Lastly, it is important to remember that *identities are developed in different ways in different cultures.* Individualistic cultures encourage young people to be independent and self-reliant whereas collectivistic cultures may emphasize interdependency and the family or group.

There are many types of identities that humans can adopt or be assigned into. Identities can be organized around gender, sexual, age, race, ethnicity, physical ability, mental ability, religion, class, national, regional, and so on. Culture includes many types of large-group influences on identities. We learn our cultural beliefs, attitudes, and values from parents, teachers, religious leaders, peers, and the mass media (Gudykunst & Kim 2003).

At times, our various identities clash. When they do, we often have to choose the identity of which we value the most. In today's diverse world of interweaving cultures, it is an attractive notion to celebrate all one's identities by identifying as *multi-cultural*, but the reality still might be difficult to achieve.

Co-Cultures

As societies and nations become more culturally diverse, and awareness of how various cultures and the people within them interact, the more the idea of co-cultures takes root. Within any nation or society there will be a group or groups of people who have more power than other groups. Power generally comes from having control over governmental, economic, legal, or educational institutions. According to **Co-cultural Communication Theory**, the people who have more power within a nation or society, determine the *dominant culture*, because they get to determine the values and traditions of the nation or society (Orbe, 1998).

Members of a nation or society who do not conform to the dominant culture often form what are called *co-cultures* or cultures that *co-exist* within the dominant cultural perimeters (Orbe, 1998). By definition, co-cultures can range from slightly different to very different than the dominant culture, therefore, they develop communication practices that help them interact with people in the culturally dominant group (Ramirez-Sanchez, 2008). These practices can help co-cultures *assimilate* or attempt to become accepted into the dominant culture. The practices might also attempt to get the dominant culture to *accommodate* the co-culture, or *separate* from the dominant culture altogether. Examples of this might be using overly polite language with individuals from dominant cultures, attempting to look or talk like members of the dominant culture, or behaving in ways that shock or scare members of the dominant culture. Immigrants frequently form co-cultures in their new countries, which can lead to conflict between immigrant communities and the dominant culture.

Perception

Where did you start reading on this page? The top left corner. Why not the bottom right corner, or the top right one? In English we read left to right, from the top of the page to the bottom. But not everyone reads the same. If you read and write Arabic or Hebrew, you will proceed from right to left. Neither is right or wrong, simply different. You may find it hard to drive on the *other* side of the road while visiting England, but for people in the United Kingdom, it is normal and natural.

Your culture and identity strongly influences your perception. Whenever you interact with others, you interpret their communication by drawing on information from your stereotypes. Stereotyping is a term first coined by journalist Walter Lippmann (1922). When we stereotype others, we replace human complexities of personality with broad assumptions about character and worth based on social group affiliation. We stereotype people because it streamlines the perception process. Once we've categorized a person as a member of a particular group, you can categorize a person as a member of a particular group and form a quick impression of them (Macrae et al., 1999), which might be efficient for the communication process, but frequently leads us to form flawed impressions.

Although stereotyping is almost impossible to avoid, and most of us presume that our beliefs about other groups are valid, it's crucial to keep in mind that just because someone belongs to a certain group, it doesn't necessarily mean that all of the defining characteristics of that group apply to that person. Rigid stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination are detrimental to all aspects of the communication process and have no redeeming qualities within the human experience.

Communication patterns are filled with the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that you have learned in your own culture (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003), therefore, people raised in different cultures interpret one another's communication in very different ways. You may be from a culture that is collectivistic or values community and reads an advertisement that says: *Stand out from the crowd*. Given your cultural background, it may not be a very effective slogan because you do not want to stand out from the crowd.

Culture also effects whether you perceive others as similar or different from yourself. When you grow up within a certain culture, you naturally perceive those who are fundamentally similar to yourself as **ingroupers** and those who aren't perceived to be similar to yourself as **outgroupers** (Allport, 1954). You may consider individuals from a variety of co-cultures as your ingroupers as long as they share substantially similar points of culture with you, such as nationality, religious beliefs, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, or political views (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987).

Perceiving others as ingroupers or outgroupers is one of the most important perceptual distinctions that we make. We often feel strongly connected to our ingroups, especially when they are centrally tied to our identities and culture.

Culture Shock

When a person moves from to a cultural environment that is different than their own, they often experience personal disorientation called **culture shock.** It's common to experience culture shock when you are an immigrant, visit a new country, move between social environments, or simply become stressed by trying to deal with lots of new cultural information all at once. The impact intensifies due to the "need to operate" in unfamiliar and difficult contexts. Functioning without a clear understanding of how to succeed or avoid failure along with modifying your normal behavior tends to compound the problem. As symptoms of culture shock intensify, the ability to function declines making culture shock an intense version of frustration.

Common symptoms of culture shock include: homesickness, feelings of helplessness, disorientation, isolation, depression, irritability, sleeping and eating disturbances, loss of focus, and more. Although most people recover from culture shock fairly quickly, a few find it to be profoundly disorienting, and take much longer to recover, particularly if they are unaware of the sources of the problem, and have no idea of how to counteract it.

Many studies have been done on when culture shock occurs and how to work through the stages. There is the **U-Curve Model** by Lysgaard (1955) that introduced the honeymoon, shock, recovery and adjustment stages. Or the **W-Curve Model** adapted by Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) of honeymoon, culture shock, initial adjustment, mental isolation, and plus acceptance & integration. Adler (1975) proposed a "contact-disintegration-reintegration-autonomy-independence" model. Recently Ward, Bochner, & Furnham (2001), and Berado (2006) have proposed that the curve models do not reflect the universal reality. In *The Psychology of Culture Shock*, Ward, Bochner, & Furnham (2001) propose that learning new cultural specific skills in the affective, behavioral, and cognitive component areas will minimize the adverse effects of culture shock. Berado's (2006) cultural adjustment model identifies five key factors (routines, reactions, roles, relationships, and reflections) that are exposed when moving across cultural boundaries.

While the idea of culture shock remains a viable and useful explanatory term, some individuals never experiences symptoms while others encounter an amazing range of reactions. There appears to be no one-size-fits-all model. Some people skip certain stages, experience them in a different order, or have a longer or shorter adjustment period than others. What researchers do agree upon is that it is natural to feel some degree of culture shock.

Advice for dealing with culture shock varies as much the symptoms and is dependent upon individual traits. Helpful tips include:

1. Be flexible and try new things.
2. Get involved in the things that you already like.
3. Do not expect to adjust overnight.
4. Process your thoughts and feelings.
5. Use the resources available to help you handle the stress.

Vocabulary

- self awareness
- social comparison
- self-concept
- self-esteem
- Co-Cultural Communication Theory
- in-groupers
- out-groupers
- culture shock
- U-curve Model
- W-curve Model

References

1. Allport, G. W. (n.d.). *The nature of prejudice*. Perseus Book Publishers.
2. Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (1991). *Social cognition*(2nd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
3. (n.d.). self-awareness. *Google Dictionary*.
4. Gudykunst, W. B., & Kim, Y. Y. (2003). *Communicating with strangers: an approach to intercultural communication*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

5. Gullahorn, J. T., & Gullahorn, J. E. (1963). An Extension of the U-Curve Hypothesis. *Journal of Social Issues*, *19*(3), 33–47. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.1963.tb00447.x
6. Keesing, R. M. (1974). Theories of Culture. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *3*(1), 73–97. doi: 10.1146/annurev.an.03.100174.000445
7. Lippmann, W. (1922). *Public opinion*. London: Allen & Unwin.
8. (2019, January 20). LYSGAARD 1955 PDF. Retrieved from http://mati-pvk.ru/lysgaard-1955-72/
9. Macrae, C. N., Bodenhausen, G. V., Schloerscheidt, A. M., & Milne, A. B. (1999). Tales of the unexpected: Executive function and person perception. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *76*(2), 200–213. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.76.2.200
10. Mead. (1934). *Mind, self and society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
11. Orbe, M. (1998). Constructing Co-Cultural Theory: An Explication of Culture, Power, and Communication. doi: 10.4135/9781483345321
12. Ramírez-Sánchez, R. (2008). Marginalization from Within: Expanding Co-cultural Theory Through the Experience of theAfro Punk. *Howard Journal of Communications*, *19*(2), 89–104. doi: 10.1080/10646170801990896
13. (n.d.). The Transitional Experience: an Alternative View of Culture Shock, 1975. Retrieved from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10....16787501500403
14. (n.d.). THE USE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN THE TEACHING OF READING … Retrieved from http://www.readingmatrix.com/article...do/article.pdf
15. Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell. (1987). Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory. Retrieved from https://doi.apa.org/psycinfo/1987-98657-000
16. Vallacher, R. R., Nowak, A., Froehlich, M., & Rockloff, M. (2002). The Dynamics of Self-Evaluation. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *6*(4), 370–379. doi: 10.1207/s15327957pspr0604_11
17. Ward, C., Bochner, S., & Furnham, A. (2001). *The Psychology of Culture shock*. London: Routledge, an imprint of Taylor & Francis Books Ltd.

This page titled 1.4: Self and Identity is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.5: Verbal Communication

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Identify and define basic linguistic terminology used to describe language.
- Understand and explain variations in communication styles and context rules.
- Identify and define the differences between translation and interpretation.
- Discuss the role that language plays in culture.
- Articulate what constitutes competence in intercultural communication.

How do you communicate? How do you think? We use language as a system to create and exchange meaning with one another, and the types of words we use influence both our perceptions and others interpretation of our meanings. Language is one of the more conspicuous expressions of culture. Aside from the obvious differences, vocabularies are actually often built on the cultural experiences of the users.

There are approximately 6500 languages spoken in the world today, but about 2000 of those languages have fewer than 1000 speakers (www.linguisticsociety.org, 2/10/19). As of 2018, the top ten languages spoken by approximately half the world's population are Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, English, Arabic, Hindi, Bengali, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese, and Ladhna or Pundjabi (www.statista.com, 2/10/19)). Chinese and Tamil are among the oldest spoken languages in the world (taleninstuut.nl, 2/10/19).

It is estimated that at least half of the world's languages will become extinct within the next century. Of the 165 indigenous languages still spoken in North America, only 8 are spoken by as many as 10,000 people. About 75 are spoken by only a handful of older people, and are believed to be on their way to extinction (www.linguisticsociety.org, 2/10/19)). When a language dies, a culture can die with it. A community's connection to its past, its traditions, and the links tying people to specific knowledge are abandoned as the community becomes part of a different or larger economic and political order (www.linguisticsociety.org, 2/10/19).

The Study of Language

Linguistics is the study of language and its structure. Linguistics deals with the study of particular languages and the search for general properties common to all languages. It also includes explorations into language variations (i.e. dialects), how languages change over time, how language is stored and processed in the brain, and how children learn language. The study of linguistics is an important part of intercultural communication.

Areas of research for linguists include **phonetics** (the study of the production, acoustics, and hearing speech sounds), **phonology** (the patterning of sounds), **morphology** (the patterning of words), **syntax** (the structure of sentences), **semantics** (meaning), and **pragmatic**s (language in context).

When you study linguistics, you gain insight into one of the most fundamental parts of being human—the ability to communicate. You can understand how language works, how it is used, plus how it is developed and changes over time. Since language is universal to all human interactions, the knowledge attained through linguistics is fundamental to understanding cultures.

Principles of Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is based on several basic principles. In this section, we'll examine each principle and explore how it influences everyday communication. Whether it's a simple conversation or a formal presentation, these principles apply to all contexts of communication.

Language Is Arbitrary and Symbolic

Words, by themselves, do not have any inherent meaning. Humans give meaning to them, and their meanings change across time. For example, we negotiate the meaning of the word "home," and define it, through visual images or dialogue, in order to communicate with our audience.

Words have two types of meanings: *denotative* and *connotative*. Attention to both is necessary to reduce the possibility of misinterpretation. The denotative meaning is the common meaning, often found in the dictionary. The connotative meaning is often

not found in the dictionary but in the community of users itself. It can involve an emotional association with a word, positive or negative, and can be individual or collective, but is not universal. An example of this could be the term “rugged individualism” which comes from “rugged” or capable of withstanding rough handling and “individualism” or being independent and self-reliant. In the United States, describing someone in this way would have a positive connotation, but for people from a collectivistic orientation, it might be the opposite.

But what if we have to transfer meaning from one vocabulary to another? In such cases, language and culture can sometimes make for interesting twists. The *New York Times* Sterngold, J. (11/15/98) noted that the title of the 1998 film *There’s Something About Mary* proved difficult to translate when it was released in foreign markets. In Poland, where blonde jokes are popular and common, the film title (translated back to English for our use) was *For the Love of a Blonde.* In France, *Mary at All Costs* communicated the idea, while in Thailand *My True Love Will Stand All Outrageous Events* dropped the reference to Mary altogether. Capturing ideas with words is a challenge when the intended audience speaks the same language, but across languages and cultures, the challenge becomes intense.

Language Has Rules

Using language means following rules. **Constitutive rules** govern the meaning of words, and dictate which words represent which objects (Searle, 1964). **Regulative rules** govern how we arrange words into sentences and how we exchange words in oral conversations. If you don’t know the various rules, you will struggle to communicate clearly and accurately with others. Consequently, others will also struggle to find meaning in your communication.

Language Evolves

Many people view language as fixed, but in fact, language constantly changes. As time passes and technology changes, people add new words to their language, repurpose old ones, and discard archaic ones. New additions to American English in the last few decades include *blog*, *sexting*, and *selfie*. Repurposed additions to American English include *cyberbullying*, *tweet*, and *app* (from application). Whereas *affright*, *cannonade*, and *fain* are becoming extinct in modern American English.

Other times, speakers of a language borrow words and phrases from other languages and incorporate them into their own. *Wisconsin, Oregon, and Wyoming* were all borrowed from Native American languages. *Typhoon* is from Mandarin Chinese, and *influenza* is from Italian.

Language Shapes Our Thought

Members of a culture use language to communicate their thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and values with one another, thereby reinforcing their collective sense of cultural identity (Whorf, 1952). Consequently, the language you speak, and the words you choose, announce to others who you are.

What would your life be like if you had been raised in a country other than the one where you grew up? Or suppose you had been born male instead of female, or vice versa. You would have learned another set of customs, values, traditions, other language patterns, and ways of communicating. You would be a different person who communicated in different ways.

It’s not just the words themselves, or even how they are organized, that makes communication such a challenge. The idea that language shapes how we think about our world was first suggested by the research of Edward Sapir, who conducted an intensive study of Native American languages in the early 1900s. Sapir argues that because language is our primary means of sharing meaning with others, it powerfully effects how we perceive others and our relationships with them (Gumperz & Levinson, 1996). About 50 years later, Benjamin Lee Whorf expanded on Sapir’s ideas in what has become known as the **Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis** or what is known today as **linguistic determinism**. Whorf argued that we cannot conceive of that for which we lack a vocabulary or that language quite literally defines the boundaries of our thinking.

Contemporary scholars noted that linguistic determinism suggests that our ability to think is constrained by language (Gumperz & Levinson, 1996) and therefore not realistic. Yet, both Sapir and Whorf, along with contemporary scholars, recognize the dramatic impact that culture has on language. Because language influences our thoughts, and different people from different cultures use different languages, most communication scholars agree that people from different cultures would perceive and think about the world in very different ways. This effect is known as **linguistic relativity**. Your language itself, ever changing and growing, in many ways determines your reality.

Cultural Variations in Language

As has been established, language is not culture free. If your intercultural communication is to be effective, you cannot ignore the broader cultural context that gives words meaning. We've discussed the linguistic issues of language, but what about the cultural issues of language? Cultural competency is a kind of knowledge of all of the other systems of ideas and beliefs shared by members of a community and transmitted through language (Bentahila & Davies, 1989). Cultural knowledge can keep second language learners from producing perfectly grammatically correct language yet embarrassingly inappropriate sentences.

Cultural rules about when and how certain speech acts can be performed may differ greatly. Routine formulas such as greetings, leave-taking, thanking, apologizing and so on do not follow the same, or even similar rules, across cultures causing misunderstandings and confusion. How language is used in a particular culture is strongly related to the values a culture emphasizes, and how it believes that the relations between humans ought to be.

Attitudes Towards Speaking, Silence, and Writing

In some cultures, such as the United States, speech is highly valued, and it is important to be articulate and well-spoken in personal as well as public settings. People in these cultures tend to use language as a powerful tool to discover and express truth, as well as to extend themselves and have an impact on others. Such countries tend to take silence as a sign of indifference, indignation, objection, and even hostility. The silence confuses and confounds them since it is so different from expected behavior. Many are even embarrassed by silence, and feel compelled to fill the silence with words so they are no longer uncomfortable. Or if a question is not answered immediately, people are concerned that the speaker may think that they do not know the answer. Countries reflecting these attitudes would include the United States, Canada, Italy, and other Western European countries.

Silence in some Asian cultures can be a sign of respect. If a person asks a question, it is polite to demonstrate that you have reflected on the question before providing an answer. In differences of opinion, it is often thought that saying nothing is better than offending the other side, which would cause both parties to lose face. Sometimes words do not convey ideas, but instead become barriers. Silence can convey the real intention of the speakers and can be interpreted according to the expected possibilities for speech or have more profound meaning than words.

In hierarchical cultures, speaking is often the right of the most senior or oldest person so others are expected to remain silent or only speak when spoken to and asked to corroborate information. In listening cultures, silence is a way to keep exchanges calm and orderly. In collectivistic cultures, it is polite to remain silent when your opinion does not agree with that of the group. In some African and Native American cultures, silence is seen as a way of enjoying someone's company without a need to fill every moment with noise. Or silence could simply be a case of the person having to speak in another language, and taking their time to reply.

The act of writing also varies widely in value from culture to culture. In the United States written contracts are considered more powerful and binding than oral consent. A common question is "did you get that in writing?" The relationship between writing and speaking is an important reinforcement of commitment. Other cultures tend to value oral communication over written communication or even a handshake over words.

Variations in Communication Styles

Communication style refers to both verbal and nonverbal communication along with language. Problems sometimes arise when people from different cultures try to communicate, and they tend to "fail to recognize the conventionality of the communicative code of the other, instead taking the communicative behavior as representing what it means in their own native culture" (Loveday, 1986). An understanding of communication style differences helps listeners understand how to interpret verbal messages.

- **High Context** cultures, such as China, Japan, and South Korea, are those in which people assume that others within their culture will share their viewpoints and thus understand situations in much the same way. Consequently, people in such cultures often talk indirectly, using hints or suggestions to convey meaning with the thought that others will know what is being expressed. In *high context* cultures, what is not said is just as important, if not more important, than what is said. *High context* cultures are very often collectivistic as well.
- **Low context** cultures on the other hand are those in which people do NOT presume that others share their beliefs, values, and behaviors so they tend to be more verbally informative and direct in their communication (Hall & Hall, 1987). Many *low context* cultures are individualist so people openly express their views, and tend to make important information obvious to others.

- **Direct/Indirect** styles are closely related to *high/low context* communication, but not exactly the same. Context refers to the assumption that speakers are homogeneous enough to share or implicitly understand the meanings associated with contexts. Whereas, *direct/indirect* refers directly to verbal strategies.
- **Direct** styles are those in which verbal messages reveal the speaker's true intentions, needs, wants, and desires. The focus is on accomplishing a task. The message is clear, and to the point without hidden intentions or implied meanings. The communication tends to be impersonal. Conflict is discussed openly and people say what they think. In the United States, business correspondence is expected to be short and to the point. "What can I do for you?" is a common question when a business person receives a call from a stranger; it is an accepted way of asking the caller to state his or her business.
- **Indirect** styles are those in which communication is often designed to hide or minimize the speaker's true intentions, needs, wants, and desires. Communication tends to be personal and focuses on the relationship between the speakers. The language may be subtle, and the speaker may be looking for a "softer" way to communicate there is a problem by providing many contextual cues. A hidden meaning may be embedded into the message because harmony and "saving face" is more important than truth and confrontation. In indirect cultures, such as those in Latin America, business conversations may start with discussions of the weather, or family, or topics other than business as the partners gain a sense of each other, long before the topic of business is raised.
- **Elaborate and Understated** communication styles refer to the quantity of talk that a culture values and is related to attitudes towards speech and silence.
- **Elaborate** styles of communication refers to the use of rich and expressive language in everyday conversation. The French, Latin Americans, Africans, and Arabs tend to use exaggerated communication because in their cultures, simple statements may be interpreted to mean the exact opposite.
- **Understated** communication styles values simple understatement, simple assertions, and silence. People who speak sparingly tend to be trusted more than people who speak a lot. Prudent word choice allows an individual to be socially discreet, gain social acceptance, and avoid social penalty. In Japan, the pleasure of a conversation lies "not in discussion (a logical game), but in emotional exchange" (Nakane, 1970) with the purpose of social harmony (Barnlund, 1975).

Variations in Context Rules of Communication Styles

While there are differences in the preferred communication styles used by various cultures, it is important to remember that no particular culture will use the same communication style all the time. When a person either emphasizes or minimizes the differences between himself /herself and the other person in conversation, it is called **code-switching**. In other words, it's the practice of shifting the language that you use to better express yourself in conversations. According to **communication accommodation theory** (Auer, 1998) this can include, but is not limited to, language, accent, dialect, and vocalics or paralanguage.

There are many reasons why people may incorporate *code-switching* in their conversations. People, consciously and unconsciously, *code-switch* to better reflect the speech of those around them, such as picking up a southern accent when vacationing in Georgia. Sometimes people *code-switch* to ingratiate themselves to others. What teenager hasn't used the formal language of their parents when asking for a favor like borrowing the car or asking for money? *Code-switching* can also be used to express solidarity, gratitude, group identity, compliance gaining, or even to maintain the exact meaning of a word in a language that is not their own.

Language & Power

It has been said that all language is powerful and all power is rooted in language (Russell, 1938). Those who speak the same language not only can make themselves understood to one another, but the ability to make oneself understood promotes a feeling of belonging *together*. The identity-forming power of language is incredibly significant. Based on language, individuals will form small or large social groups that become societies, states, and nations. (Goethe-Institut, 2/11/19)

Co-cultural groups will be impacted differently by language and social position within a dominant culture or language group. One's social position influences how one interprets a communication context or how one is viewed by others within a dominant language group. *Co-cultural groups* are often expected to adopt or adapt to the dominant communication strategies.

Politics & Policies

Language management is going on all the time. Language policy is deeply embedded in beliefs people have about language, and centers around the question of who has the ability or the authority to make choices where language is concerned, and whose choices will ultimately prevail. This could manifest in official governmental recognition of a language, how language is used in official capacities, or protect the rights of how groups use and maintain languages.

Language policies are connected to the politics of class, culture, ethnicity, and economics. While some nations have one or more official language, the United States does not have an official legal language. Much debate has been raised about the issue, and twenty-seven states have passed Official English laws (USConstitution.net, 2/12/19). English is only the de facto national language. The European Union has 23 official languages, while recognizing over 60 indigenous languages.

Moving Between Languages – Translation & Interpretation

Because no one can learn every language, we rely on translators and interpreters. On the surface level, translation and interpretation seem to be much the same thing, with one skill relying on written texts and the other occurring orally. Both *translation* and *interpretation* enable communication across language boundaries from *source* to *target*. Both need deep cultural and linguistic understanding along with expert knowledge of the subject area and the ability to communicate clearly, but this is where the similarities end.

- **Translation** generally involves the process of producing a written text that refers to something written in another language. Traditionally, the *translator* would read the *source* in its original language, decipher its meaning, then write, rewrite, and proofread the content in the *target* language to ensure the original meaning, style and content are preserved. Some *translators* use computer-aided tools to convert the *source* into a file type for electronic translation, then proof-read each section of the text for quality of content, meaning, and style in the *target* language. **Translators** are often experts in their fields of knowledge as well as linguists fluent in two or more languages with excellent written communication skills.
- **Interpretation** is the process of orally expressing what is said or written in another language. Contrary to popular belief, *interpretation* isn't a word-for-word translation of a spoken message. If it was, it wouldn't make sense to the target audience. *Interpreters* need to transpose the *source* language within the given context, preserving its original meaning, but rephrasing idioms, colloquialisms, and other culturally-specific references in ways that the *target* audience can understand. They may have to do this in a simultaneous manner to the original speaker or by speaking only during the breaks provided by the original speaker. **Interpreters** are also often experts in fields of knowledge, cultures, and languages with excellent memories.

The roles of **translators** and **interpreters** are very complex. Not everyone who has levels of fluency in two languages makes a good *translator* or *interpreter*. Complex relationships between people, intercultural situations, and intercultural contexts involve more than just language fluency, but rather culture fluency.

Intercultural Communication Competence

Has learning about another culture changed or enhanced your impressions for the better? The gateway to such connections is **intercultural communication competence.** Another way to view *intercultural communication competence* is the ability to communicate and behave in appropriate ways with those who are culturally different. You are *interculturally competent* when you adapt to cultural difference by co-creating spaces, teams, and organizations that are inclusive, effective, innovative, and satisfying. You can strengthen your intercultural communication competence by becoming more world-minded, practicing attributional complexity, and understanding communication accommodation theory.

World-Mindedness

By possessing **world-mindedness,** you demonstrated acceptance and respect toward other cultures' beliefs, values, and customs or *worldviews* (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003; Merryfield, et al (2008). Practicing *world-mindedness* happens in three ways. First, you must accept others' expression of their culture or co-culture as a natural element of their communication patterns (Chen & Starosa, 2005). Second, you should avoid any temptation to judge others' *worldviews* as "better" or "worse" than your own. Third, treat people from all cultures with respect.

By practicing *world-mindedness*, you are more than just tolerating cultural differences that you find perplexing or problematic, you are preserving others' dignity. *World-mindedness* is the opposite of **ethnocentrism** or the belief that one's own cultural beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices are superior to others'. *Ethnocentrism* is not the same thing as patriotism or pride in your own cultural heritage. You can be patriotic and proud of your own heritage without being *ethnocentric*! **Ethnocentrism** is a comparative evaluation where people view their own culture or co-culture as the standard against which all other cultures should be judged (Sumner, 1906; Neulip & McCroskey, 1997). Consequently, such people tend to view themselves as competent communicators and people from other cultures as incompetent communicators.

Attributional Complexity

Practicing **attributional complexity** means that you acknowledge that other people's behaviors have complex causes. You have the ability to observe others' behavior and analyze the various forces that might be influencing it. For example, rather than deciding

that a reserved classmate is unfriendly, you might consider cultural theories about communication styles, and language usage before passing judgment.

In addition, you might check you might want to check your understanding of someone's words or behaviors. This is called **perception-checking,** and it's used to help us decode messages more accurately by avoiding assuming too much. *Perception-checking* is a three-part process that includes *description*, *interpretation*, and *clarification.* First, you should provide a description of the behavior that you noticed. For example, "you walked out of the room without saying anything." Second, you should provide one or two possible interpretations. Such as, "I didn't know if you were mad at me or if you were in a hurry." And thirdly, you should request clarification from the person about the behavior and your interpretation. As in, "could you help me understand this from your point of view?"

Perception-checking helps us try to see things from another perspective. It allows us to examine how people from other cultural backgrounds make decisions and allows us to make comparisons of their approaches to ours. And finally, it allows others to explain the reasons for their behavior and allows us to validate their explanations rather than challenging them.

Communication Accommodation

The last way to strive for *intercultural communication competence* is to embrace **communication accommodation theory** by meshing your communication with the behaviors of people from other cultures. People are especially motivated to adapt their communication when they see social approval, when they wish to establish relationships with others, and when they view the language use of others as appropriate (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). In contrast, when people wish to convey emotional distance and disassociate themselves from others, the accentuate the differences through communication.

So what does this mean for intercultural communicators? Try adapting to other people's communication preferences (Bianconi, 2002). Notice how long a turn people take when speaking, how quickly or slowly they speak, how direct or indirect they are, and how much they appear to want to talk compared to you. You may also need to learn and practice cultural norms for nonverbal behaviors, including eye contact, power distance, and touch. Use caution to avoid inappropriate imitation though. Mimicking could be considered disrespectful in some cultural contexts, whereas an honest desire to learn is often interpreted positively on the road to intercultural communication competence.

Vocabulary

- linguistics
- morphology
- phonetics
- phonology
- pragmatics
- semantics
- syntax
- constitutive rules
- regulative rules
- Sapir-Whorf hypothesis
- linguistic determinism
- linguistic relativity
- high-context
- low-context
- direct
- indirect
- elaborate
- understated
- translation
- interpretation
- intercultural communication competence
- world-mindedness
- attributional complexity
- perception-checking

- communication accommodation theory
- code-switching

References

1. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.linguisticsociety.org
2. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.statista.com
3. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.taleninstuut.nl
4. Auer, P. (2013). *Code-switching in conversation: language, interaction and identity*. London: Routledge.
5. Barnlund, D. C. (1975). *Communicative Styles in Two Cultures: Japan and the United States*. De Gruyter.
6. Bentahila, A., & Davies, E. (1989). Culture And Language Use: A Problem For Foreign Language Teaching. *IRAL – International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, *27*(2). doi: 10.1515/iral.1989.27.2.99
7. Bianconi, L. (2002). Culture and Identity: Issues of authenticity in another value system. In *XII Sietar-EU Conference*. Vienna, Austria.
8. Giles, H., Coupland, J., & Coupland, N. (1991). *Contexts of accommodation: developments in applied sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
9. Gumperz, J. J., & Levinson, S. C. (1997). *Rethinking linguistic relativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
10. Hall, E. T., & Hall, M. R. (1987). *Understanding Cultural Differences*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc.
11. Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *27*(4), 421–443. doi: 10.1016/s0147-1767(03)00032-4
12. (n.d.). Index Page – The U.S. Constitution Online. Retrieved from https://usconstitution.net/
13. (n.d.). Institut. Retrieved from https://www.goethe.de/en/index.html
14. Loveday, L. (1986). Explorations in Japanese Sociolinguistics. *Pragmatics & Beyond*. doi: 10.1075/pb.vii.1
15. Merryfield, M. M., Lo, J. T.-Y., Po, S. C., & Kasai, M. (2008). Worldmindedness: Taking Off the Blinders. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, *2*(1). doi: 10.3776/joci.2008.v2n1p6-20
16. Nakane, C. (1970). *Japanese Society a Practical Guide to Understanding the Japanese Mindset and Culture = Tateshakai no ningen kankei*. Tokyo: Tuttle Publishing.
17. Neuliep, J. W., & Mccroskey, J. C. (1997). The development of intercultural and interethnic communication apprehension scales. *Communication Research Reports*, *14*(2), 145–156. doi: 10.1080/08824099709388656
18. Searle, J. R. (1964). How to Derive “Ought” From “Is”. *The Philosophical Review*, *73*(1), 43. doi: 10.2307/2183201
19. Sterngold, J. (1998, November 15). *New York Times*.
20. Sumner, W. G. (1906). *Folkways: A Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals*. New York, NY: Ginn and Company.
21. Whorf, B. L. (1952). Language, Mind, and Reality. *A Review of General Semantics*, *9*(3), 167–188.

This page titled 1.5: Verbal Communication is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.6: Nonverbal Communication

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Define nonverbal communication, understanding the differences between verbal and nonverbal communication.
- Describe the messages that nonverbal behavior communicates.
- Explain various types of nonverbal behavior using appropriate terms.
- Understand and observe cultural differences in nonverbal behavior.
- Understand the potential for intercultural miscommunication due to nonverbal behavior.

You might have studied a second language for many years, and considered yourself fluent, but still find it difficult to communicate with others when you travel to a country where that second language is spoken. Most of us have to live within a culture before we learn the nonverbal communication aspects of culture. Learning nonverbal communication is important and challenging. It's important because much communication meaning is conveyed nonverbally, and challenging because nonverbal communication is often multi-channeled and culture-specific.

Human beings all have the capacity to make the same gestures and expressions, but not all of those gestures and expressions have the same meaning across cultural boundaries. Types of nonverbal communication vary considerably based on culture and country of origin. Every culture interprets posture, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, vocal noises, use of space, degree of territory, and time differently.

Principles of Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is those aspects of communication, such as gestures and facial expressions, that do not involve verbal communication, but which may include nonverbal aspects of speech itself such as accent, tone of voice, and speed of speaking (Dictionary.com 3/3/19). In other words, **nonverbal communication** is communication through means other than language. A famous study by Albert Mehrabian (1971) found that 93% of communication meaning comes from nonverbal communication. Mehrabian posited that 7% came from the words, 38% through vocal elements, and 55% from through other elements such as facial expressions, posture, gestures, etc. More recent studies have indicated that determining the impact of nonverbal elements on communication meaning is extremely difficult, and results can vary from 60-93%.

In the bigger picture, the exact results don't matter as much as the fact that nonverbal communication can contribute to well-over half of the emotional or relational meaning of any given message. However you look at it, nonverbal elements are crucial to the study of communication. When comparing verbal and nonverbal communication, it's important to remember that both are symbolic, and both communicate meaning, but other aspects differ greatly.

Figure 1.6.1: Two rock climbers who speak different languages communicate non-verbally.

Nonverbal Communication Uses Multiple Channels

When we use verbal communication, we use words, and we transmit through one channel at a time. We can speak words, read words, type words, or listen to words, but the channel is words. Nonverbally, when I talk to a friend, I listen to my friend's tone of voice, I watch my friend's facial expressions, use of eye contact, and gestures, and possibly touch them (multiple channels) all while trying to make sense of the words (one channel). Or to impress a possible romantic partner, I dress up in my most flattering clothes, put on cologne or perfume, fix my hair, and laugh at their jokes to indicate my interest in them.

Nonverbal Communication is More Ambiguous

Unlike most verbal communication, nonverbal communication and its meanings are primarily learned unconsciously. A smile can express friendliness, comfort, nervousness, and sarcasm, just as catching someone's eye can convey intimacy, humor, or a challenge, depending on the situation. This ambiguity can pose difficulties for the interpretation of messages—especially across cultural boundaries. Chances are you have had many experiences where words were misunderstood, or where the meaning of words was unclear. When it comes to nonverbal communication, meaning is even harder to discern. We can sometimes tell what people are communicating through their nonverbal communication, but there is no foolproof "dictionary" of how to interpret nonverbal messages.

Some nonverbal behaviors are learned as part of being socialized into a culture. In the United States, we often shake hands when meeting someone new in a formal situation. Words such as "hi, I'm Karen" along with a firm handshake are general expectations in business settings. Or, "it was so nice to meet you" and another firm handshake at parting.

Nonverbal Communication Has Fewer Rules

One reason that nonverbal communication is more ambiguous than verbal communication is because it is governed by fewer rules—and most of those will be informal norms. Verbal communication has literally thousands of rules governing grammar, spelling, pronunciation, usage, meaning, and more. Yes, your parents might tell you to "it's not polite to stare at people," but most of these declarations are considered models of good behavior and not something that dictates the meaning of a communication act.

Popular culture is filled with references to "body language" and promises that you can read your boss/lover/parent/friend like a book by the end of the article/tweet/video. Because nonverbal communication is ambiguous, has fewer rules, and co-creates meaning with verbal communication, it would be impossible to teach a universal shorthand for interpreting how individuals express attitudes and emotions through their bodies. There is not a universal code used that could be considered as a "language of the body" with conventionalized meanings which equate to the components that constitute spoken language (Haller & Peeters, retrieved 2/13/19).

Nonverbal Messages Communicate Emotions and Meaning

When we interact with others, we monitor many channels besides their words to determine meaning. Where does a wink start and a nod end? Nonverbal communication involves the entire body, the space it occupies and dominates, the time it interacts, and not only what is not said, but how it is not said. Nonverbal action flows almost seamlessly from one to the next, creating an intention of meaning in the mind of the receiver.

Nonverbal communication often gives our thoughts and feelings away before we are even aware of what we are thinking or how we feel. People may see and hear more than you ever anticipated. Your nonverbal communication includes both **intentional** and **unintentional** messages, but since it all happens so fast, the *unintentional* ones can contradict what you know you are supposed to say or how you are supposed to react.

Our reliance on nonverbal communication becomes even more intense when people display **mixed messages** or verbal and nonverbal behaviors that convey contradictory meanings (Burgoon & Hoobler, 2002). In such cases, we almost always trust the nonverbal message over the verbal one as nonverbal behavior is believed to operate at the unconscious level. Still, we often assign intentional motives to nonverbal communication when in fact their meaning is unintentional, and hard to interpret.

Nonverbal behavior also communicates status and power. Touch, posture, gestures, use of space and territory, are good indicators of how power is distributed in the relationship, and the perks that status brings. And although research indicates that deceptive behaviors are idiosyncratic to particular individual people, the interplay between verbal and nonverbal can help receivers determine deception.

Nonverbal Communication is Influenced by Culture

The close bond between culture and nonverbal communication makes true intercultural communication difficult to master. Yes, some cues can be learned, but because nonverbal is ambiguous and has fewer rules, it takes most people many years of immersion within a culture before they can fully understand the subtle meanings encompassed within that culture's nonverbal communication (Chen & Starosta, 2005).

In a 2009 meeting with the emperor of Japan, then president Barak Obama, bowed rather deeply in greeting. US conservative commentators called the bow 'treasonous' while former vice-president, Dick Cheney, believed that "there was no reason for an American president to bow to anyone" (Slate, retrieved 3/8/19). The Japanese press, on the other hand, acknowledged the bow as a sign of respect, but believed the 45 degree bend or 'seikeirei' bow to be much more exaggerated than it needed to be.

Nonverbal and Verbal Communication Work Together to Create Communication

Despite the differences between verbal and nonverbal forms of communication, and the importance of nonverbal noted by Mehrabian and others, both forms are essential. They both work together to create meaning (Jones & LeBaron, 2002). As communicators, we do not experience or express them separately, but rather jointly to create meaning (Birdwhistell, 1973). We need *both* to communicate competently. Nonverbal communication can reinforce, substitute for, and contradict verbal communication, but it can never be the words—and we need the words as that tip of the iceberg to have a focus for the meaning and feelings that are being displayed.

Types of Nonverbal Behaviors or Codes

One reason that nonverbal communication is so rich with information is that humans use so many different aspects of behavior, appearance, and environment to convey meaning. Scholars call the different means used for transmitting information **nonverbal communication codes** (Burgoon & Hoobler, 2002). The seven general codes for nonverbal communication are: kinesics, vocalics, proxemics, haptics, chronemics, physical appearance, artifacts, and environment.

The cultural patterns embedded in nonverbal codes should be used not as stereotypes for all members of particular cultures, but rather as tentative guidelines or examples to help you understand the great variation of nonverbal behavior in humans. Bodenhausen, Todd & Richeson (2009) remind us that prejudice is often based on certain aspects of nonverbal behavior such as appearance. Reread chapter XXX for a reminder how prejudice can hinder the communication process.

- **Kinesics** is thought by some to be the richest nonverbal code in terms of its power to communicate meaning, **kinesics** includes most of the behaviors we usually associate with nonverbal communication. The word *kinesics* comes from the Greek word, *kinesis*, meaning "movement," and includes facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, and posture.
- **Facial Expressions** communicate an endless stream of emotions, and we make judgements about what others are feeling by assessing their **faces**. Our use of emoticons to communicate attitudes and emotions in electronic media testifies to the importance of this type of kinesics. In fact, some scholars argue that *facial expressions* rank first among all forms of communication (Knapp & Hall, 2002). Cultural rules often regulate *facial expressions*. You might have been taught that smiles are universal, but that simply is not true. Most human beings can smile, but cultures value and interpret smiles in different ways. In other words, the meaning behind a smile is not universal. For example, in Russian, people do not smile because it implies that you are foolish, or possibly sneaky and manipulative. Even family photos, adults often appear with flat or scowling faces. Many Hispanic cultures prefer a proud and elegant facial appearance, which does not include smiling. In Japan, smiling is a way to show respect or to hide what you are actually feeling. In the United States, we smile to show a pleasant face to the people around us, to express happiness, gratitude, and even when we are nervous. We often tend to smile for the purposes of getting along with others (Solomon, 2017).
- **Eye contact**, *or Oculesics*, serves many purposes. We use our eyes to express emotions, regulate a conversation, indicate listening behavior, show interest in others, respect, status, hostility, and aggression (Burgoon, Buller & Woodall, 1996). Patterns of eye contact vary significantly by culture. Generally, **eye contact** is considered a good thing in the United States. It can mean that you are interested, confident, and bold (a good thing), but people often avoid **eye contact** in crowded, impersonal situations such as walking down a busy street or riding a crowded bus. In France, however, someone may feel free to watch someone interesting on the street and consciously make eye contact to indicate interest. In the Middle East, direct **eye contact** is less common and generally less appropriate, whereas lack of **eye contact** in Asia is often a sign of respect and considered polite.
- **Gestures** are arm and hand movements used for communication**.** There are at least four different kinds of gestures that we should consider: **emblems**, **illustrators**, **regulators**, and **adaptors**. The type of **gesture** known as **emblems** represent a specific

verbal meaning and can replace or reinforce words (Ekman, 1976). If you are driving down a busy highway in the United States, and another driver quickly changes lanes in front of your car, making you hit the brakes, you can flip them off to easily convey meaning without using any words at all. With **emblems,** gestures and its verbal meaning are interchangeable, but they are also very culturally specific. If the person who changed lanes abruptly is from another culture, they may have no idea what your **emblem** means.

- **Illustrators,** or **emblematic** nonverbal communications, are a nonverbal gesture used to communicate our message effectively and reinforce our point. Your grandfather may describe the fish he just caught and hold up his two hands 36 inches apart to **illustrate** exactly how big the fish was.
- **Regulators** are nonverbal messages which control, maintain or discourage interaction. (McLean, 2003). For example, if someone is telling you a message that is confusing or upsetting, you may hold up your hand, a commonly recognized regulator that asks the speaker to stop talking.
- **Adaptors** help us feel comfortable or indicate emotions or moods. An **adaptor** could involve you meeting your need for security, by playing with your hair for example, or hugging yourself for warmth.
- **Posture is t**he last item in our list of kinesics**.** Humans can stand up straight or slouch, lean forward or backward, round or slump our shoulders, and tilt our heads. Mehrabian (1972) believed that posture communicates **immediacy** and **power**. **Immediacy** is the degree to which you find someone interesting and attractive. Typically, when someone from the United States finds someone attractive, they face the person when talking, hold their head up, and lean in. Whereas a reaction to someone they don't like might have them look away and lean back. **Power** is the ability to influence people or events. In the United States, high-status communicators typically use relaxed postures (Burgoon et al., 1996), but in Japan, the opposite is true. Japanese display power through erect posture with feel planted firmly on the floor.

Vocalics

Vocal characteristics we use to communicate nonverbal messages are called **vocalics** or *paralanguage* (with-language)**.** *Vocalics* involves verbal and nonverbal aspects of speech that influence meaning, including rate, pitch, tone, volume, intensity, pausing, and even silence. As previously discussed, silence or vocal pauses can communicate hesitation, indicate the need to gather thought, or serve as a sign of respect. Sometimes we learn just as much, or even more, from what a person does not say as what they do say.

Proxemics

Coming from the Latin *proximus*, meaning "near," **proxemics** refers to communication through the use of physical distance or space. When we discuss space in a nonverbal context, we mean the space between objects and people. Space is often associated with social rank and is an important part of communication. Who gets the corner office? Who sits at the head of the table and why?

People from diverse cultures may have different normative space expectations. If you are from a large urban area, having people stand close to you may be normal. If you are from a culture where people expect more space, someone may be standing "too close" for comfort and not know it.

Edward T. Hall, serving in the European and South Pacific Regions in the Corps of Engineers during World War II, traveled around the globe. As he moved from one place to another, he noticed that people in different countries kept different distances from each other. In France, they stood closer to each other than they did in England. Hall (1963) wondered why that was and came up with a theory on spatial relations and boundaries.

The first aspect, Hall called "**territory**" and it is related to control. As a way of establishing control over your own room, maybe you painted it your favorite color, or put up posters that represent your interests or things you consider unique about yourself. Territory means the space you claim as your own, are responsible for, or are willing to defend.

The second aspect Hall highlights is **conversation distance**, or the "bubble" of space surrounding each individual. We recognize the basic need for personal space, but the normative expectations for space vary greatly by culture. In the United States, **intimate space** ranges from 0-18 inches. **Personal space** is the distance we occupy during encounters with friends and ranges from 18 inches to 4 feet. Many people use **social space** in social situations or with strangers, and ranges from 4 to 12 feet. In **public space**, the distance ranges from 12 feet and beyond. North American use of space tends to be much larger than most other cultures, especially people from Latin America and the Middle East where such vast use of personal space will make you seem aloof or distant.

Haptics

Touch in communication interaction is called **haptics**, from the ancient Greek word *"haptien."* Touch can vary based on its duration, the part of the body being touched, and the strength of the contact (Floyd, 1999).

Cultural norms have a strong impact on how people use and perceive touch. For example, Hispanic cultures tend to hug more than do Europeans. Researchers in a study at outdoor cafes in London, England and San Juan, Puerto Rico found that Puerto Ricans touched each other an average of 180 times per hour whereas the British average was zero (EPA, 2002).

Hall (1963) suggests that the use of *proxemics* and *haptics* merge within a culture to create what researchers now call *contact* and *noncontact* cultures. In **contactcultures**, people stand closer together while talking, make more direct eye contact, touch more frequently, and speak in louder voices. Some examples of *contact cultures* would be South America, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe with the Middle East being the highest contact.

In **noncontact cultures**, people stand farther apart while talking, maintain less eye contact, and touch less. Some examples of *noncontact cultures* would be Great Britain, the United States, and Japan.

Chronemics

Chronemics is the study of how we refer to and perceive time. Cultures vary widely in their *time orientation*, although context can also play a major role as well. "Time is money" is a common saying across cultures that display a high value for time. In social contexts, time often reveals social status and power. Who are you willing to wait for? A doctor for an office visit when you are sick? A potential employer for a job interview? Your significant other or children?

Some Mexican American friends may invite you to a barbecue at 8 p.m., but when you arrive you are the first guest, because it is understood that the gathering actually doesn't start until after 9 p.m. Similarly in France, an 8 p.m. party invitation would be understood to indicate you should arrive around 8:30, but in Sweden 8 p.m. means 8 p.m., and latecomers may not be welcome.

In the United States, we perceive time as linear, flowing along in a straight line. We did one task, we're doing another task now, and we are planning on doing something else later. In **monochronic** time orientation, time is a commodity. Being punctual, completing tasks, and keeping schedules is valued, and may be more important than building or maintaining personal relationships.

In **polychronic** time orientation, time is more holistic and circular. It is expected that many events happen at once, and things get done because of personal relationships, not in spite of personal relationships. The Euro Railways trains in Germany are famous for departing and arriving according to the schedule no matter what. In contrast, if you take the train in Argentina, you'll find that the schedule is more of an approximation of when the train will leave or arrive. Engineers, conductors, and even passengers influence the schedule, not a clock.

Physical Appearance

Visible attributes such as hair, clothing, body type, personal grooming, jewelry, glasses, backpacks, briefcases, and purses profoundly influence our communication encounters. In other words, how you look conveys as much about you as what you say. Across cultures, people credit individuals they find physically attractive with higher levels of intelligence, persuasiveness, poise, sociability, warmth, power, and employment success than they credit to unattractive individuals (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986). Communication researchers call this tendency to make a blanket judgement of a person based on one trait the **halo** (positive) or **horns** (negative) **effect.** As physical attractiveness is variable across cultures, and constantly being redefined, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Artifacts

Artifacts are the things we possess that influence how we see ourselves and that we use to express our identity to others. They can include rings and tattoos, but may also include brand names and logos. From clothes to cars, watches, briefcases, purses, and even eyeglasses, what we choose to surround ourselves with communicates something about our sense of self. They may project gender, role or position, class or status, personality, and group membership or affiliation.

Environment

A final way in which we communicate nonverbally is through our **environment**. The *environment* involves the physical aspects of our surroundings. More than the tables and chairs in an office, environment is an important part of the dynamic communication process. The perception of one's environment influences one's reaction to it. For example, Google is famous for its work

environment, with spaces created for physical activity and even in-house food service around the clock. The expense is no doubt considerable, but Google's actions speak volumes. The results produced in the environment, designed to facilitate creativity, interaction, and collaboration, are worth the effort.

Cultural Space

Although, the idea of *cultural space* doesn't fit neatly into the category of nonverbal behaviors, many intercultural communication researchers find significance in the idea as it merges *culture, environment* and *identity.* The seed originates in the writings of French philosopher and social theorist, Michel Foucault (1970). The argument is that culture is dynamic and redefines itself from one generation to the next so many scholars are now referring to this broad area of research by the metaphor of **cultural space.** *Cultural space* is the social and cultural contexts in which our identities are formed.

One of the earliest *cultural spaces* that humans experience is *home. Home* can be a tremendous source of identification. It often communicates social class and norms, as well as safety and security. *Home* is not the same as the physical location it occupies, but rather the feelings invoked. *Home* can be a specific address, cities, states, regions, and even nations.

A **neighborhood** is an area defined by its own cultural identity. This area can revolve around race and ethnicity, and certain cultural groups can define who gets to live where by dictating the rules by which other groups must live. Historical forces and power relations have led to different settlement patterns of cultural groups in the United States and around the world.

Many people identify strongly with particular regions. **Regionalism** is loyalty to an area that holds cultural meaning. This loyalty can be expressed symbolically by flying regional flags, wearing special clothing, celebrating regional holidays, and participating in other cultural activities. This loyalty can also be expressed through protests or armed conflict.

Social media has added a new dimension to cultural spaces by pushing definitions and boundaries. This notion of fluid cultural space is in contrast with previous notions of space which were rooted in landownership & occupation, along with borders, colonies, and territories. We will explore this idea more in our social media and popular culture chapter.

Cultural space influences how we think about ourselves and others therefore, changing **cultural space** is not easy to do. **Travel** raises important issues related to changing how we interact and communicate with others and is often associated with transformation of the traveler. **Migration** involves a more permanent kind of change than traveling, and is also an impetus of **cultural space** change.

Wrapping Up

People may not understand your words, but they will certainly interpret your nonverbal communication according to *their* accepted norms. Notice the word *their*. It is *their* perceptions that will count when you are trying to communicate, and it's important to understand that those perceptions will be based on the teachings and experiences of their culture—not yours.

The ideas and theories presented in the previous sections note how we look at the structures of cultures, values, and communication. They also provide a framework for talking about and comparing cultures, but it's always important to remember that cultures are heterogeneous, and constantly changing. One size does not fit all and nonverbal communication is ambiguous even in the best of times.

Key Vocabulary

- nonverbal messages
- mixed messages
- nonverbal communication codes
- kinesics
- facial expressions
- oculesics
- gestures
- posture
- gestures
- emblems
- illustrators
- regulators
- adaptors

- vocalics
- proxemics
- conversation distance
- intimate space
- social space
- personal space
- public space
- territory
- contact vs. noncontact
- monochronic cultures
- polychronic cultures
- halo vs. horn effect
- artifacts
- cultural space
- environment

References

1. Birdwhistell, R. L. (1973). *Kinesics and context: essays on body-motion communication*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
2. Bodenhausen, Todd, & Richeson. (2009). (PDF) Controlling prejudice and stereotyping: Antecedents … Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publica...s_and_contexts
3. Burgoon, J. K., Buller, D. B., & Woodall, W. G. (1996). *Nonverbal communication: the unspoken dialogue*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
4. Burgoon, J. K., & Hoobler, G. D. (2002). *Nonverbal signals*(3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
5. Chen, G. M., & Starosta, W. J. (2005). *Foundation of intercultural communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
6. Ekman, P. (1976). Movements with Precise Meanings. *Journal of Communication*, *26*(3), 14–26. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.1976.tb01898.x
7. Floyd, K. (1999). All touches are not created equal: Effects of form and duration on observer's interpretations of an embrace. *Journal of Nonverbal Behaviors*, *23*, 283–299.
8. Foucault, M. (1970). *The order of things an archaeology of the humain sciences*. London: Tavistock.
9. Hall, E. T. (1963). A System for the Notation of Proxemic Behavior. *American Anthropologist*, *65*(5), 1003–1026. doi: 10.1525/aa.1963.65.5.02a00020
10. Hatfield, E., & Sprecher, S. (1986). *Mirror, mirror …: the importance of looks in everyday life*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
11. Jones, S. E., & Lebaron, C. D. (2002). Research on the Relationship between Verbal and Nonverbal Communication: Emerging Integrations. *Journal of Communication*, *52*(3), 499–521. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2002.tb02559.x
12. Knapp, M. L., & Hall, J. A. (2002). *Nonverbal communication in human interaction*(5th ed.). Belmont, CA : Wadsworth/Thompson Learning.
13. Mehrabian, A. (1971). *Silent messages*. Belmont (Calif.): Wadsworth.
14. (n.d.). Nonverbal communication. Retrieved from https://www.dictionary.com/
15. (n.d.). Politics, Business, Technology, and the Arts. Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/

This page titled 1.6: Nonverbal Communication is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.7: Relationships

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Identify the benefits and challenges of intercultural relationships.
- Understand the foundations of intercultural relationships.
- Describe the different types of intercultural relationships.
- Identify cultural differences within the relationship context.
- Describe competent and incompetent relationships.

Establishing relationships with people from cultures different than your own can be challenging. How do you get to know them? Should you treat those relationships differently than same culture relationships? Does society influence these new relationships? Learning new customs and traditions can be fun and exciting, but also force us to identify what we think that we know about ourselves along with our prejudices and fears. This chapter will help you gain a better understanding of what to expect when interacting with people that are culturally different from yourself. We will explore the benefits and challenges of intercultural relationships, discuss the different kinds of intercultural relationships, and encourage you with strategies to build solid intercultural relationships.

We establish and maintain relationships through our communication with each other. Although the term “relationship” is often associated with romance, intercultural relationships can be as varied as the people within them. Colleagues performing a work-related task can develop a friendship. Marrying into a family creates strong familial ties. Eating at the same family-run restaurant each week builds loyalty. Good friends are always treasured.

Benefits of Intercultural Relationships

The benefits of **intercultural relationships** span differences in gender, age, ethnicity, race, class, nationality, religion, and much more. The moment you begin an intercultural relationship, is the moment you begin to learn more about the world. You will start experiencing new foods, listen to new music, learn a new game, practice a new sport, acquire new words or a new dialect, or read new literature that you might never had access to before. In some ways you gain a new “history” as you learn what it means to belong to a new cultural group. Hearing a friend or family member describing their lived experience or stories is often much more compelling or “real” than knowledge gained in school or on television.

The difficulties involved in intercultural relationships may help you acquire new skills. According to Docan-Morgan(2015), the skills we develop in all relationships are exaggerated in intercultural relationships. Our diverse friends and loved ones teach us much about the world that we have yet to explore. Docan-Morgan postulates that our newfound understanding of one culture will likely make it easier to relate and to feel close to people from many different walks of life. In other words, our intercultural relationships result in new insights and new ways of thinking that we can apply to every relationship.

Intercultural relationships also help us rethink stereotypes we might hold. Martin and Nakayama (2014) point out that the differences we perceive with our partners tend to be more noticeable in the early stages of the relationship. Because these differences can seem overwhelming, the challenge is to discover the things both partners and in common and build on those similarities to strengthen the relationship. The suffering that one or both partners have gone through at the hands of prejudice can be addressed, and a healing effect can grow and thrive as relational partners learn that their prejudices have little to do with the thriving relationship being built.

Challenges in Intercultural Relationships

While intercultural relationships can enrich our lives and provide life-changing benefits, they can also present several challenges. In order to build a relationship across cultural boundaries, there has to be **motivation**. Much about this relationship will be different than same culture relationships, and take time to explore. It’s much easier to build a relationship where you understand the rules, behaviors and worldviews of your partner. Intercultural relationships are characterized by **differences**. Differences occur in values, perceptions, and communication styles. These differences have been discussed in greater depth in the cultural foundation and verbal chapters, but once commonality is established, and the relationship develops, the differences won’t seem to be as insurmountable.

Another challenge is **negative stereotypes**. Stereotypes are powerful, and often take a conscious effort to detect. Pathstone Mental Health (2017) suggests seven important things we can do to reduce stereotyping and discrimination within relationships.

- Know the facts.
- Be aware of your attitudes and behavior.
- Choose your words carefully.
- Educate others.
- Focus on the positive.
- Support people.
- Include everyone.

Anxiety or fear about the possible negative consequences because of our actions or being uncertain how to act towards a person from a different culture is another challenge. Some form of anxiety always exists in the early stages of any relationship, but being worried about looking incompetent or offending someone is more pronounced in intercultural relationships. The level of anxiety may even be higher if people have previous negative experiences.

The fifth challenge is *affirming another person's cultural identity.* We need to recognize that the other person might have different values, beliefs, and behaviors which form both their individual and cultural identities. The principle of **ethnocentrism** encourages a tendency for members of the majority culture to view their own values, beliefs, and behaviors to be the norm and that the minority culture should adapt to them. Lastly, the **need for explanations** is a huge challenge. Intercultural relationships can be more work that intracultural relationships because of the need for explanations. One must explain values, beliefs and behaviors to ourselves, to each other, and to our communities. Every difference, and similarity, must be explored. What does a friendship look like? What are the expectations? What does a romantic relationship look like? Who must approve the relationship? Why would we want to be friends? What taboos exist within the culture? It's not impossible for an intercultural relationship to work out. All it requires is being open-minded, being interested, being respectful, realizing the similarities, avoiding making assumptions, and celebrating the differences. Intercultural relationships have real challenges, but if things work out, they can be amazing.

Foundations of Relationships

Every day you meet and interact with new people while going about your daily life, yet few of these people will make a lasting impression. Have you ever wondered what draws you to these special few? It is not a mystery. The factors include physical attractiveness, similarity, complementarity, proximity, reciprocal liking, and resources (Aron et al., 2008). It's not a secret that many people feel drawn those that they perceive as **physically attractive**, but we also need to remember that the idea of attractiveness is not always the most stunningly beautiful or stunningly handsome person in the area. Attractiveness can also be what is familiar to us. Most of us do find physical beauty attractive to us, but we tend to form long-term romantic relationships with people we judge as similar to ourselves in physical attractiveness (Feingold, 1988; White, 1980).

Undoubtedly you've heard the common saying, "birds of a feather flock together." This is the same for relationships. Scientific evidence suggests that we are attracted to those we perceive as *similar* to ourselves (Miller, 2014). One explanation for this is that people we view as *similar* to ourselves are less likely to cause uncertainty. They seem easier to predict, and we feel more comfortable with them (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). *Similarity* is more than physical attractiveness through, it means sharing personalities, values, and preferences (Markey & Markey, 2007).

Another common saying that you have probably heard is that "opposites attract." **Complementarity** has been debated for a long time, and so far the research is inconclusive. Based on the 1950s research of sociologist Robert Winch, we would say that we are naturally attracted to people who are different from ourselves, and therefore, somewhat exciting (www.personalitypage.com). It was believed to be a natural quest for completion. Unfortunately, more current research from Markey & Markey (2007) found the opposite. What is not in question is when it comes to work colleagues and friends. On the job or with friends, we are not particularly interested in dealing with people who are unlike ourselves. Generally, we are most interested in dealing with people who are like ourselves and don't display a lot of patience or motivation for dealing with our opposites (Ickes, 1999).

The simple fact of **proximity**, or often being around each other, exerts far more impact on relationships than generally acknowledged. The idea is that you are more likely to feel attracted to people with whom you have frequent contact with and are less attracted to those with whom you rarely interact. Another often overlooked determinant of attraction is *reciprocal liking* (Aron et al., 2008). The idea is quite simple, we tend to be attracted to people who are attracted to us. Studies examining stories about "falling in love" have found that reciprocal liking is the most commonly mentioned factor leading to love (Riela, Rodriguez, Aron, Xu, and Acevedo, 2010). mAnd lastly, the final attraction foundation is called **resources**. Resources include such qualities as sense

of humor, intelligence, kindness, supportiveness, and more (Felmlee et al., 2010). **Social exchange theory** proposed that you will feel drawn to people that you see as offering benefits (things that you want) with few associated costs (things demanded from you in return) (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). In other words, you're attracted to people who can give you what you want and who offer better rewards than others.

Common Types of Relationships

In this era of globalization, people are traveling across geographical, national, and cultural boundaries as never before. For many, establishing relationships with persons different from ourselves can be challenging and rewarding. Although each intercultural relationship will differ based on the cultures and people involved, the following brief exploration of relationship types will begin to help you understand the plethora of intercultural relationships.

Friendship

Friendship is a unique and important type of interpersonal relationship that constitutes a significant portion of a person's social life from early childhood all the way through to late adulthood (Rawlins, 1992). Friendship is distinguished from other types of relationships by its "voluntary" nature. In other words, friendship occurs when individuals are relatively free from obligatory ties, duties, and other expectations (Fischer (1975). One can begin or end a friendship as desired.

These different notions about friendship are a function of variations in values as well as individualism and collectivism. People who tend to be individualistic often view friendship as a voluntary decision that is more spontaneous and focused on individual goals that might be gained by befriending a particular person. Such goals might include practicing language skills or learning to cook culinary specialties. On the other hand, collectivists may have more obligatory views of friendship. They may see it as a long-term obligation that involves mutual gain such as help with gaining a visa or somewhere to stay during vacations (Wahl & Scholl, 2014).

The idea of what constitutes a friendship certainly varies from culture to culture. In the United States, the term "friend" is a fairly broad term that applies to many different kinds of relationships. In Eastern European countries, for example, the term "friend" is used in a much more narrow context. What many cultures in the world consider a "friend," an American would consider a "close friend" (Martin & Nakayama, 2014). Americans often form relationships quickly, and can come across as informal, forward, intrusive, and superficial (Triandis, 1995). Asian cultures place more emphasis on indirect communication patterns and more stress on maintaining social relationships, sincerity and spirituality (Barnlund, 1989; Yum, 1988).

Intercultural friendship can be difficult to initiate, develop, and maintain, but that is not to say that different cultures cannot have similar views on friendship. Various cultures can value the same things, such as honesty and trustworthiness, but simply prioritize them differently (Barnlund, 1989). Researchers have found a wide range of important friendship variables such as values, interest, personality traits, network patterns, communication styles, cultural knowledge, relational competence, and intergroup attitudes that impact intercultural friendship formation (Aberson, Shoemaker & Tomolillo, 2004; Collier & Mahoney, 1996; Gareis, 1995; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1979; Mcdermott, 1992; Olanrian, 1996; Yamaguchi & Wiseman, 2003; Zimmermann, 1995).

Intriguing research from Sias et al. (2008) indicate that cultural differences can enhance, rather than hinder, friendship development. Cultural differences enhanced friendship development because the participants found those differences interesting and exciting. Those who overcame the challenges of language differences were able to develop rich friendships often with a unique vocabulary that included words created from a mixture of both languages. An example of this could be "Spanglish" which is a mixture of Spanish and English or "Chinglish" which is a mixture of Chinese and English. This idiosyncratic language seemed to strengthen the bond between the friends (Sias et al., 2008; Casmir, 1999; Imahori & Cupach, 2005).

There are also similarities and differences between how **romantic relationships** are perceived in different cultures. When two various cultures come together, there may be significant challenges they have to face, but it is important to remember that like any relationship, intercultural romantic relationships are all different. In general, romantic relationships are "voluntary," and most cultures stress the importance of openness, mutual involvement, shared nonverbal meanings, and relationship assessment (Martin & Nakayama, 2014). Individualism and collectivism play a role in romantic relationships as well. In individualistic cultures such as the United States, togetherness is important as long as it doesn't interfere too much with one's individual autonomy. Physical attraction, passion, and love are often initiators of romantic relationships in individualistic cultures. Being open, talking things out, and retaining a sense of self are maintenance strategies.

Collectivistic cultures often value acceptance and "fitting in" as the most important values for romantic partners. Family approval can make or break a romantic relationship. Family members are expected to align with, and support, the dominant values, beliefs,

and behavioral expectations of the family hierarchy. Individual happiness is important, but thought only to be fully realized within the family system. Intercultural marriages and couplings are growing at an increasing rate. What once might have seemed unusual or exotic is becoming more accepted and common place. Finding an intercultural love relationship might be getting easier, but negotiating through the unique challenges inherent to these relationships can still be difficult.

Romano (2008) found **four distinct conflict styles** that reflect how intercultural couples negotiate their way through the differences. The **submission style** is the most common and involves one partner abdicating power to the other partner's culture or cultural preferences. Sometimes the submission is only seen as a display for the public, whereas the relationship may be more balance in private. Even though it is the most popular style, this approach rarely works because submission often involves denying certain aspect's of one's own culture. Although the **compromise style** might seem to be the most desirable, it really means that both people must sacrifice some aspect of their life. Each partner gives up some culturally bound habit or value to accommodate the other. Game theorists would call this a lose-lose or no-win situation.

Some couples will try the **obliteration style**. In this case, both partners try to erase or obliterate their original cultures, and create a new "culture" with new beliefs, values, and behaviors. This can be extremely difficult and create problems with other family members, but more likely if the couple lives in country that is "home" to neither of them. The ideal solution is the **consensus style**. As it is based on negotiation and mutual agreement, neither person has to assume that they must abandon their own culture. This style is related to compromise because of the give-and-take, but it is not a trade-off. Game theorists call this a win-win proposition.

In a survey on intercultural marriages (Prokopchak, 1994), couples were asked to respond about the positives and negatives of intercultural marriage. This survey resulted in four cautions to be considered during intercultural conflict. First, *know each other's culture.* Don't think that all families and all cultures operate in a certain way. Second, *be accountable.* There is a tendency not to listen to others. Weigh their concerns. Third, *know what both cultures value.* There is a tendency to value things, but people should be of primary concern. And last, *identify adaptation versus core value changes.* Be aware of the differences between behavior modification or adaptation and core value changes.

Gay & Lesbian Relationships

There has been much more research done on heterosexual or cisgender intercultural friendships and romantic relationships than gay or same-sex intercultural relationships. Although there are many similarities between gay and cisgender relationships, Martin and Nakayama (2014) believe that such relationships differ in at least four areas. These areas include the importance of close friendships, conflict management, intimacy, and the role of sexuality. Close relationships and friendships might be more important to gays and lesbians who often rely on these ties in the face of social stigma, family ostracism, and discrimination. Researchers Gottman and Levenson (2004) have found some positive differences in the area of conflict management for gay and lesbian couples. Gay relationships often start with sexual attraction, but often persist after sexual involvement has ceased (Martin & Nakayama, 2014).

Although homosexuality has existed throughout human history, cultures can have vast differences in how they support, accept, and categorize attraction and sexual relations between persons of the same gender. **Two-Spirit,** a pre-contact pan-Indian term, has been adopted by some modern indigenous North Americans to describe gender-variant individuals in their communities (Medicine, 2002; Enos, 2017). Not all tribes or nations have rigid gender roles, but among those that do, some consider there to be at least four genders: feminine woman, masculine woman, feminine man, and masculine man (Estrada, 2010). Many East and Southeast Asian languages, including Chinese, do not contain grammatical gender, and also have histories of cultural tolerance.

Communicating in Intercultural Relationships

Intercultural relationships and intracultural or same culture relationships may hold many similarities, but also many differences. All relationships take time to develop, but it is especially important to give intercultural relationships time to develop. As previously discussed, there are many challenges within intercultural relationships that take time to explain, negotiate, and work through. We need to be **involved** through interaction and shared friendship networks. There are often significant events, or **turning points**, that move the relationship forward or backward. Perceived similarities can help relationships to develop whereas perceived differences can lead to roadblocks or failure to thrive.

Relationships are hard work, and require constant upkeep to combat the challenges that threaten them. It's no exaggeration to say that we develop, and maintain relationships through communication. What you say and what you do becomes part of the relationship. Incorrect interpretations of messages can lead to misunderstanding, uncertainty, frustration, and conflict, but the

potential rewards include gaining new cultural knowledge, broadening one's worldview, and breaking stereotypes (Sias et al., 2008).

People who have developed good communication skills are often described as having **communication competence.** Communicating effectively, along with writing and critical thinking, is often considered one of the key skills of gaining a college education. A previous chapter has already defined communication, and to be competent at something means that you are good at it. To have **communication competence** means that "we have knowledge of effective and appropriate communication patterns and the ability to use and adapt that knowledge in various contexts" (Cooley & Roach, 1984). Researcher Owen Hargie (2011) proposed that there were four levels of competence based on competence and incompetent communication as well as conscious or unconscious communication.

Unconscious incompetence is the "be yourself" approach. This person may not have a strong knowledge of cultural differences and does not see any need to accommodate differences in communication styles or culture. They may not even be aware they are communicating in an incompetent manner. Once people learn more about culture and communication, they may become **conscious incompetent.** This is where they have the vocabulary to identify the concepts, and know what they should be doing, but realize they are not communicating as well as they could. Many of us have experiences the feeling that something isn't quite right, yet we can't quite figure out what went wrong. As communication skills increase, and the focus is on cultural concepts and communication styles, you become a **conscious competent** communicator. You know that you are communicating well in the moment, and you can add this memory to your growing bank of successful intercultural interactions. Reaching this level is important, but not the pinnacle of competent communication.

Unconscious competence is the level to achieve. Unconscious competence means that you can communicate successfully without straining to be competent. At this point all the knowledge and previous experiences have been put into practice, and you rarely have to intently focus on your intercultural interactions because it has become second nature. You have developed the skills needed to be competent.

The National Communication Association (NCA) has developed guidelines for what it means to be a competent communicator (1999). They include:

1. State ideas clearly.
2. Communicate ethically.
3. Recognize when it is appropriate to communicate.
4. Identify their communication goals.
5. Select the most appropriate and effective medium for communicating.
6. Demonstrate credibility.
7. Identify and manage misunderstandings.
8. Manage conflict.
9. Be open-minded about another's point of view.
10. Listen attentively.

Communication competence is an important component in developing positive intercultural relationships, but it is also important to consider the societies in which these relationships develop. **Contact hypothesis** or **Intergroup Contact Theory** should be applied to intercultural communication. The **contact hypothesis** (Allport, 1954) suggests that under appropriate conditions intergroup contact will lessen stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination leading to better intergroup contact. Although the complexities of **contact hypothesis** are still being heavily researched today, with new focus on electronic communication, the general idea is that intercultural relationships occur when the political and societal conditions of the communication encounter promote friendly interaction. When people meet and interact in a cooperative environment, enjoy equal status, and share common goals, all of humanity wins.

Key Vocabulary

- intercultural relationships
- motivation
- difference
- negative stereotypes
- anxiety
- ethnocentrism

- need for explanations
- similarity
- complementarity
- physically attractive
- proximity
- resources
- Social Exchange Theory
- friendship
- romantic relationships
- collectivist
- conflict styles
- submission
- compromise
- obliteration
- consensus
- two-spirit
- turning point
- unconscious incompetence
- conscious competence
- conscious incompetence
- unconscious competence
- Contact Hypothesis
- Intergroup Contact Theory

References

1. Aberson, C. L., Shoemaker, C., & Tomolillo, C. (2004). Implicit Bias and Contact: The Role of Interethnic Friendships. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *144*(3), 335–347. doi: 10.3200/socp.144.3.335-347
2. Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.
3. Aron, A., Fisher, H., Strong, G., Acevedo, B., Riela, S., & Tsapelas, I. (n.d.). Experiences of falling in love: Investigating culture … Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publica...nder_and_speed
4. Barnlund, D. C. (1989). *Communicative styles of Japanese and Americans: images and realities*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
5. Berger, C. R., & Calabrese, R. J. (1975). Some Explorations In Initial Interaction And Beyond: Toward A Developmental Theory Of Interpersonal Communication. *Human Communication Research*, *1*(2), 99–112. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2958.1975.tb00258.x
6. Casrnir, F. L. (1999). Foundations for the study of intercultural communication based on a third-culture building model. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *23*(1), 91–116. doi: 10.1016/s0147-1767(98)00027-3
7. Collier, D., & Mahoney, J. (1996). Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research. *World Politics*, *49*(1), 56–91. doi: 10.1353/wp.1996.0023
8. (2014). *Communication and Culture in Your Life*. Erscheinungsort nicht ermittelbar: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co, U.S.
9. Cooley, R. E., & Roach, D. A. (n.d.). Competence in communication : a multidisciplinary approach. Retrieved from https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/1587006
10. Docan-Morgan, S. (2015). Cultural Differences and Perceived Belonging During Korean Adoptees Reunions With Birth Families. *Adoption Quarterly*, *19*(2), 99–118. doi: 10.1080/10926755.2015.1088109
11. Enos, T. (2017, March 28). 8 Things You Should Know About Two Spirit People. Retrieved from https://newsmaven.io/indiancountryto...EGwJFOWEnbbZw/
12. Estrada, & S., G. (2010, November 30). ERIC – EJ960105 – “Two Spirits, Nadleeh,” and LGBTQ2 Navajo Gaze, American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 2011. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ960105
13. Feingold, A. (1988). Matching for attractiveness in romantic partners and same-sex friends: A meta-analysis and theoretical critique. *Psychological Bulletin*, *104*(2), 226–235. doi: 10.1037//0033-2909.104.2.226
14. Felmlee, D., Orzechowicz, D., & Fortes, C. (2010). Fairy Tales: Attraction and Stereotypes in Same-Gender Relationships. *Sex Roles*, *62*(3-4), 226–240. doi: 10.1007/s11199-009-9701-x

15. Fischer, C. S. (1975). *Toward a subcultural theory of urbanism*. Berkeley: Institute of Urban and Regional Development, University of California.
16. Gareis, E. (1995). *Intercultural friendship: a qualitative study*. Lanham: University Press of America.
17. Gottman, J. M., & Levenson, R. W. (2002). Generating Hypotheses After 14 Years of Marital Followup; Or, How Should One Speculate? A Reply to DeKay, Greeno, and Houck*. *Family Process*, *41*(1), 105–110. doi: 10.1111/j.1545-5300.2002.40102000105.x
18. Gudykunst, W. B., & Nishida, T. (1979). *Constructing a Theory of Intercultural Communication The Promise and Paradox*. S.l.: Distributed by ERIC Clearinghouse.
19. Hargie, O. (2011). *Skilled interpersonal communication: research, theory and practice*(5th ed.). London: Routledge.
20. Ickes, W. J. (1999). *Empathic accuracy*. New York: The Guilford Press.
21. Imahori, T. T., & Cupach, W. R. (2005). *Theorizing about intercultural communication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
22. Kelley, H. H., & Thibaut, J. W. (1978). *Interpersonal relations: a theory of interdependence*. New York: Wiley.
23. Markey, P. M., & Markey, C. N. (2007). Romantic ideals, romantic obtainment, and relationship experiences. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *24*(4), 517–533. doi: 10.1177/0265407507079241
24. Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2014). *Experiencing intercultural communication*. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
25. mcdermott. (n.d.). Social factors relating to alienation experienced by … Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publica..._United_States
26. (n.d.). National Communication Association. Retrieved from https://www.natcom.org/
27. Olaniran, B. A. (1996). Social skills acquisition: A closer look at foreign students on college campuses and factors influencing their level of social difficulty in social situations. *Communication Studies*, *47*(1-2), 72–88. doi: 10.1080/10510979609368465
28. Rawlins, W. K. (1992). *Friendship matters: communication, dialectics, and the life coursed William K. Rawlins*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
29. Riela, S., Rodriguez, G., Aron, A., Xu, X., & Acevedo. (n.d.). Experiences of falling in love: Investigating culture … Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publica...nder_and_speed
30. Romano, D. (2008). *Intercultural marriage promises and pitfalls*. Boston, MA: Intercultural Press.
31. Sias, P. M., Drzewiecka, J. A., Meares, M., Bent, R., Konomi, Y., Ortega, M., & White, C. (2008). Intercultural Friendship Development. *Communication Reports*, *21*(1), 1–13. doi: 10.1080/08934210701643750
32. (n.d.). The Personality Page. Retrieved from http://www.personalitypage.com/
33. (n.d.). Two Spirit: Health Resources. Retrieved from https://www.ihs.gov/lgbt/health/twospirit/
34. White, G. L. (1980). Physical attractiveness and courtship progress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *39*(4), 660–668. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.39.4.660
35. Yamaguchi, Y., & Wiseman, R. L. (2003). Locus of control, self-construals, intercultural communication effectiveness, and the psychological health of international students in the United States. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, *32*, 227–245.
36. Yum, J. O. (1988). The impact of Confucianism on interpersonal relationships and communication patterns in east Asia. *Communication Monographs*, *55*(4), 374–388. doi: 10.1080/03637758809376178

This page titled 1.7: Relationships is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.8: Conflict

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Identify and describe the five types of conflict.
- Identify and describe the style of conflict present in a given situation.
- Understand how and why individuals approach conflict in various ways.
- Understand how and why individuals manage conflict in various ways and be able to suggest more productive ways for handling intercultural conflict.
- Explain the four-skill approach to managing intercultural conflict.

Conflict is a part of all human relationships (Canary, 2003). Almost any issue can spark conflict—*money*, *time*, *religion*, *politics*, *culture*—and almost anyone can get into a conflict. Conflicts are happening all around the world at the personal, societal, political, and international levels. Conflict is not simple and it's not just a matter of disagreement. According to Wilmot & Hocker (2010), "**conflict** is an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scare resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals. (p. 11)" There are several aspects of conflict that we must consider when pondering this definition and its application to intercultural communication.

Expressed Struggle

Conflict is a communication process that is expressed verbally and nonverbally. Wilmot & Hocker assert that communication creates conflict, communication reflects conflict, and communication is the vehicle for the management of conflict (Wilmot & Hocker, 1998). Often, conflict is easily identified because one party openly and verbally disagrees with the other, but intrapersonal, or internal conflict, may exist for some time before being expressed. An example could be family members avoiding each other because both think, "I don't want to see them for awhile because of what they did." The **expression** of the struggle is often activated by a triggering event which brings the conflict to everyone's attention. In the case of family members, a triggering event could be going on vacation instead of attending a golden wedding anniversary party or other significant life event.

Interdependent

Parties engaged in **expressed struggle** do so because they are **interdependent**. "A person who is not dependent upon another—that is, who has no special interest in what the other does—has no conflict with that other person" (Braiker & Kelley, 1979). In other words, each parties' choices effect the other because conflict is a mutual activity. Each decision impacts the other.

Consider the teenager who chooses to wear an obnoxious or offensive t-shirt before catching the bus. People with no connections to the teen and notice the t-shirt are unlikely to engage in conflict. They have never seen the teen before, and probably won't again. The ill-advised decision to wear the t-shirt does not impact them, therefore the reason to engage in conflict does not exist.

The same scenario involving a teen and their parents would probably turn out differently. Because parents and teens are interdependent, the ill-advised decision to wear an offensive t-shirt could quickly escalate into a power struggle over individual autonomy that leads to harsh words and hurt feelings.

Perception

Parties in conflict have perceptions about their own position and the position of others. Each party may also have a different perception of any given situation. We can anticipate having such differences due to a number of factors that create **perceptual filters** or **cultural frames** that influence our responses to the situation. Such influences can be things like culture, race & ethnicity; gender & sexuality; knowledge; impressions of the messenger; and previous experience. These factors and more conspire to form the **perceptual filters** through which we experience conflict.

Clashes in Goals, Resources, and Behaviors

Conflict arises from differences. It occurs whenever parties disagree over their values, motivations, ideas, or desires. The perception might be that goals are mutually exclusive, or there's not enough resources to go around, or one party is sabotaging another. When conflict triggers strong feelings, a deep need is typically at the core of the problem. When the legitimacy of the conflicting needs is recognized, it opens pathways to problem-solving.

Conflict Types

Conflict can be difficult to analyze because it occurs in so many different settings. Knowing the various types of conflict that occur in interpersonal relationships helps us to identify appropriate strategies for managing conflict. Mark Cole (1996) states that there are five types of interpersonal conflict: affective, interest, value, cognitive, and goal.

- **Affective** conflict occurs when people become aware that their feelings and emotions are incompatible. For example, if a romantic couple wants to go out to eat, but one of the partners is a vegetarian while the other is on the Paleo diet, what do they do? The food choices that they have committed to may impact their feelings for each other causing them to question a future together. If the same romantic couple marries and begins to raise children, what will their diet consist of? Do they follow the Paleo diet or the vegetarian one? **Conflict of interest** arises when people disagree about a plan of action or when they have incompatible preferences for a course of action. A difference in ideologies or values between relational partners is called **value conflict.** Our romantic partners eating preferences may be the result of strongly held religious or political views. Remember the old saying, "Never talk about religion and politics." Many people engage in **value conflict** about religion and politics.
- **Cognitive conflict** is when people become aware that their thought processes or perceptions are in conflict. Our romantic partners may disagree about the meaning of a wink from a car salesman as they shopped for a new car. One of the partners believes that the wink was friendly and meant to build a relationship with the couple, but the other partner saw the wink as a sign that the couple would get a better deal if they looked seriously at a specific car.
- **Goal conflict** occurs when people disagree about a preferred outcome or end state. Our car-shopping romantic partners need transportation. For one, the cost of a new car reinforces the choice made to continue using public transportation to save the money not spent for a house. For the other, buying a new car means gaining access to the suburbs where they can afford to buy a new house now.

Rarely do the types of conflict stand alone. Most often, several types of conflict are found intertwined within each other and within the context itself. The actual situation in which the conflict happens can occur on the personal level, the societal level, and even the international level. How we choose to manage the conflict may depend on the types of conflict, the contexts that they occur within, and the particular situation.

Characteristics of Intercultural Conflict

Intercultural conflicts are often characterized by more ambiguity, language issues, and the clash of conflict styles than same culture conflict. Intercultural conflict characteristics rest on the principles discussed in greater depth in the foundation chapters. These principles stressed that culture is dynamic and heterogeneous, but learned. Values are manifest in beliefs and behaviors, which lead to the **worldviews** that guide our perception and navigation through life. Michelle LeBaron (2003) states that "cultures affect the ways we name, frame, blame, and attempt to tame conflicts (p. 3)."

Ambiguity, or the confusion about how to handle or define the conflict, is often present in intercultural conflict because of the multi-layered and heterogeneous nature of culture. What appears on the surface of the conflict may mask what is more deeply hidden below. Verbally indirect, high context cultures, may be reluctant to use words to explore issues of extreme importance that verbally direct, and low context cultures need to access the symbolic levels that are largely outside of their awareness. Yet, knowing the general norms of a group, does not predict the behavior of a specific member of a group. Dimensions of context, and individual differences can be crucial to understanding.

Language issues can also add to the confusion—or clarity—as we try to **name, frame, blame**, and tame the conflict. Not knowing each other's languages very well, could make conflict resolution difficult, and remaining silent could also provide a needed "cooling off" period with time to think. The Western approach to conflict resolution often means labeling and analyzing the smaller components parts of an issue (**name, frame, blame**), before a resolution (**tame**) can be proposed. The Eastern approach to conflict resolution often means reinforcing all aspects of the relationship (**tame**), before ever discussing the issue (**name, frame, blame**)–if at all. In the Eastern approach, language is more of a means of creating and maintaining identity than solving a problem.

Intercultural Conflict Management

Culture is always a factor in conflict, though it rarely causes it alone. When differences surface between people, organizations, and nations, culture is always present, shaping perceptions, attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes. Attitudes and behaviors shared with dominant or national cultures often seem to be *normal*, *natural*, or *the way things are done*. Our cultural background, and how we were raised, largely determines how we deal with conflict.

The term **facework** refers to the communication strategies that people "use to establish, sustain, or restore a preferred social identity to others during interaction" (Samp, 2015, p. ?). Goffman (1959) claims that everyone is concerned about how others perceive them. To lose **face** is to publicly suffer a diminished self-image, and saving **face** is to be liked, appreciated, and approved by others. Brown & Levinson (1987) use the concept of face to explain politeness, and to them politeness is universal, resulting from people's face needs.

Facework varies from culture to culture and influences conflict styles. For example, people from individualistic cultures tend to be more concerned with saving their own face rather than anyone else's face. This results in a tendency to use more direct conflict management styles. In contrast, people from collectivistic cultures tend to be more concerned with preserving group harmony and saving the other person's **face** during conflict. Making use of a less direct conversation style to protect the other or make them look good is considered the best way to manage **facework**.

Conflict Face-Negotiation Theory (Ting-Toomey, 2004) is based a number of assumptions about the extent to which **face** negotiated within a culture and what existing value patterns shape culture members' preferences for the process of negotiating face in conflict situations. The **Conflict Face-Negotiation Theory** is not only influenced by the individual and culture, but also the relationship and the situation of the people experiencing the conflict.

Two Approaches to Conflict

Ways of **naming** and **framing** vary across cultural boundaries. People generally deal with conflict in the way that they learned while growing up. For those accustomed to a calm and rational discussion, screaming and yelling may seem to be a dangerous conflict. Yet, conflicts are subject to different interpretations, based on cultural preference, context, and **facework** ideals.

- **Direct Approaches** is favored by cultures that think conflict is a good thing, and that conflict should be approached **directly,** because working through conflict results in more solid and stronger relationships. This approach emphasizes using precise language, and articulating issues carefully. The best solution is based on solving for set of criteria that has been agreed upon by both parties beforehand.
- **Indirect Approaches** on the other hand are favored by cultures that view conflict as destructive for relationships and prefer to deal with conflict **indirectly.** These cultures think that when people disagree, they should adapt to the consensus of the group rather that engage in conflict. Confrontations are seen as destructive and ineffective. Silence and avoidance are viewed as effective tools to manage conflict. Intermediaries or mediators are used when conflict negotiation is unavoidable, and people who undermine group harmony may face sanctions or ostracism.
- **Emotionally Expressive** people or cultures are those who value intense displays of emotion during disagreement. Outward displays of emotion are seen as indicating that one really cares and is committed to resolving the conflict. It is thought that it is better to show emotion through expressive nonverbal behavior and words than to keep feelings inside and hidden from the world. Trust is gained through the sharing of emotions, and that sharing is necessary for credibility.
- **Emotionally Restrained** People or cultures are those who think that disagreements are best discussed in an emotionally calm manner. Emotions are controlled through "internalization" and few, if any, verbal or nonverbal expressions will be displayed. A sensitivity to hurting feelings or protecting the **face** or honor of the other is paramount. Trust is earned through what is seen as emotional maturity, and that maturity is necessary to appear credible.

Conflict Styles

Miscommunication and misunderstanding between people within the same culture can feel overwhelming enough, but when this occurs with people of another culture or co-culture, we may feel a serious sense of stress. Frequently, all of the good intentions and patience we are able to use during lower-stress encounters can be forgotten, and sometimes we may find that our behavior can surprise even ourselves. Because of this, intercultural conflict experts have developed conflict style inventories that help us to understand our own personal tendencies toward dealing with conflict, and the tendencies others may have.

The **Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory** or **ICS** (Hammer, 2005), measures people's approaches to conflict along two different continuums: direct/indirect and expressive/restrained. Different individuals, but also people of different national cultures, approach conflict in different ways.

The **discussion style** combines *direct* and emotionally restrained dimensions. As it is a verbally direct approach, people who use this style are comfortable expressing disagreements. User perceived strengths of this approach are that it confronts problems, explores arguments, and maintains a calm atmosphere during the conflict. The weaknesses perceived by others is that it is difficult

to read “read between the lines,” it appears logical but unfeeling, and it can be uncomfortable with emotional arguments. **Discussion style** can often be found in Northern Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and various co-cultures in the United States.

The **engagement style** emphasizes a *verbally direct* and *emotionally expressive* approach to dealing with conflict. This style views intense verbal and nonverbal expressions of emotion as demonstrating a willingness to resolve the conflict. User perceived strengths to this approach are that it provides detailed explanations, instructions, and information. This style expresses opinions and shows feelings. The weaknesses perceived by others are the lack of concern with the views and feelings of others along with the potential for dominatingly rude behavior. Individual viewpoints are not separated from emotion. **Engagement style** is often used in Mediterranean Europe, Russia, Israel, Latin America, and various co-cultures in the United States.

The **accommodating style** combines the *indirect* and *emotionally restrained* approaches. People who use this approach may send ambiguous message because they believe that by doing so, the conflict will not get out of control. Silence and avoidance are also considered worthy tools. User perceived strengths to this approach are sensitivity to feelings of the other party, control of emotional outburst, and consideration to alternative meaning of ambiguous messages. Weaknesses as perceived by others are difficulty in voicing your own opinion, appearing to be uncommitted or dishonest, and difficulty in providing explanations.

Accommodators tend to avoid direct expression of feelings by using intermediaries, friends or relatives who informally act on their behalf when dealing with the conflict. Mediation tends to be used in more formal situations when one person believes that conflict will encourage growth in the relationship. **Accommodating style** is often used in East Asia, North America and South America.

The **dynamic style** uses indirect communication along with more emotional expressiveness. These people are comfortable with emotions, but tend to speak in metaphors and often use mediators. Their credibility is grounded in their degree of emotional expressiveness. User perceived strengths to this approach are using third parties to gather information and resolve conflicts, being skilled at observing nonverbal behaviors, and being comfortable with emotional displays. Weaknesses as perceived by others are appearing too emotional, unreasonable, and possibly devious, while rarely getting to the point. **Dynamic style** is often used in the Middle East, India, Sub-Saharan Africa, and various co-cultures in the United States.

It is important to recognize that people, and cultures, deal with conflict in a variety of ways for a variety of different reasons. Preferred styles are not static and rigid. People use different conflict styles with different partners. Gender, ethnicity, and religion may all influence how we handle conflict. Conflict may even occur over economic, political, and social issues.

Two Approaches to Managing Conflict

How people choose to deal with conflict in any given situation depends on the type of conflict and their relationship to the other person. Cognitive conflicts with close friends may be more discussion based in the United States, but more accommodating in Japan. Both are focused on preserving the harmony within the relationship. However, if the cognitive conflict takes place between acquaintances or strangers, where maintaining a relationship is not as important, the engagement or dynamic styles may come out.

Considering all the variations in how people choose to deal with conflict, it’s important to distinguish between productive and destructive conflict as well as cooperative and competitive conflict.

- **Destructive conflict** leads people to make sweeping generalizations about the problem. Groups or individuals escalate the issues with negative attitudes. The conflict starts to deviate from the original issues, and anything in the relationship is open for examination or re-visiting. Participants try to jockey for power while using threats, coercion, and deception as polarization occurs. Leaders display militant, single-minded traits to rally their followers.
- **Productive conflict** features skills that make it possible to manage conflict situations effectively and appropriately. First the participants narrow the conflict to the original issue so that the specific problem is easier to understand. Next, the leaders stress mutually satisfactory outcomes and direct all their efforts to cooperative problem-solving. Research from Alan Sillars and colleagues found that during disputes, individuals selectively remember information that supports themselves and contradicts their partners, view their own communication more positively than their partners’, and blame partners for failure to resolve the conflict (Sillars, Roberts, Leonard, & Dun, 2000). Sillars and colleagues also found that participant thoughts are often locked in simple, unqualified and negative views. Only in 2% of cases did respondents attribute cooperativeness to their partners and uncooperativeness to themselves (Sillars et al., 2000).
- **Competitive conflict** promotes escalation. When conflicts escalate and anger peaks, our minds are filled with negative thoughts of all the grievances and resentments we feel towards others (Sillars et al., 2000). Conflicted parties set up self-reinforcing and mutually confirming expectations. Coercion, deception, suspicion, rigidity, and poor communication are all hallmarks of a **competitive** atmosphere.

- **cooperative conflict** promotes perceived similarity, trust, flexibility, and open communication. If both parties are committed to the resolution process, there is a sense of joint ownership in reaching a conclusion.

Because it is very difficult to turn a **competitive conflict** relationship into a **cooperative conflict** relationship, a **cooperative** relationship must be encouraged from the very beginning before the conflict starts to escalate. A **cooperative conflict** atmosphere promotes perceived similarity, trust, flexibility, and open communication. If both parties are committed to the resolution process, there is a sense of joint ownership in reaching a conclusion.

Consequently, the most important thing you can do to enhance *cooperative and productive conflict* is to practice critical self-reflection. Business consultants in the United States offer various versions of the **seven-step conflict resolution model** that is a good place to start. The seven steps are:

- State the Problem. Ask each of the conflicting parties to state their view of the problem as simply and clearly as possible.
- Restate the Problem. Ask each party to restate the problem as they understand the other party to view it.
- Understand the Problem. Each party must agree that the other side understands both ways of looking at the problem.
- Pinpoint the Issue. Zero in on the objective facts.
- Ask for Suggestions. Ask how the problem should be solved.
- Make a Plan.
- Follow up.

A quick review of the previous seven steps betrays its western roots with the unspoken assumption that conflicting individuals will be **verbally direct** and *e***motionally restrained** or advocates of the **discussion style** of conflict.

Culture and Managing Conflict

The strongest cultural factor that influences your conflict approach is whether you belong to an individualistic or collectivistic culture (Ting-Toomey, 1997). People raised in collectivistic cultures often view direct communication regarding conflict as personal attacks (Nishiyama, 1971), and consequently are more likely to manage conflict through avoidance or accommodation. People from individualistic cultures feel comfortable agreeing to disagree, and don't particularly see such clashes as personal affronts (Ting-Toomey, 1985). They are more likely to compete, react, or collaborate.

Gudykunst & Kim (2003) suggest that if you are an individualist in a dispute with a collectivist, you should consider the following:

- Recognize that collectivist may prefer to have a third party mediate the conflict so that those in conflict can manage their disagreement without direct confrontation to preserve relational harmony.
- Use more indirect verbal messages.
- Let go of the situation if the other person does not recognize the conflict exists or does not want to deal with it.

If you are a collectivist and are conflicting with someone from an individualist culture, the following guidelines may help:

- Recognize that individualists often separate conflicts from people. It's not personal.
- Use an assertive style, filled with "I" messages, and be direct by candidly stating your opinions and feelings.
- Manage conflicts even if you'd rather avoid them.

Another thing to consider is replacing the **ethno-centric** "seven steps" with a more culturally friendly, or **ethno-relative**,**four skills approach** from **Conflict Face-Negotiation Theory** (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). These skills are:

- **Mindful Listening:** Pay special attention to the cultural and personal assumptions being expressed in the conflict interaction. Paraphrase verbal and nonverbal content and emotional meaning of the other party's message to check for accurate interpretation.
- **Mindful Reframing:** This is another face-honoring skill that requires the creation of alternative contexts to shape our understanding of the conflict behavior.
- **Collaborative Dialogue:** An exchange of dialogue that is oriented fully in the present moment and builds on Mindful Listening and Mindful Reframing to practice communicating with different linguistic or contextual resources.
- **Culture-based Conflict Resolution Steps** is a seven-step conflict resolution model that guides conflicting groups to identify the background of a problem, analyze the cultural assumptions and underlying values of a person in a conflict situation, and promotes ways to achieve harmony and share a common goal.
  - What is my cultural and personal assessment of the problem?
  - Why did I form this assessment and what is the source of this assessment?

- What are the underlying assumptions or values that drive my assessment?
- How do I know they are relative or valid in this conflict context?
- What reasons might I have for maintaining or changing my underlying conflict premise?
- How should I change my cultural or personal premises into the direction that promotes deeper intercultural understanding?
- How should I flex **adaptively** on both verbal and nonverbal conflict style levels in order to display **facework** sensitive behaviors and to facilitate a productive common-interest outcome?

(Ting-Toomey, 2012; Fisher-Yoshida, 2005; Mezirow, 2000)

Conclusion

Just as there is no consensus across cultures about what constitutes a conflict or how the conflicting events should be framed, there are also many different conflict response theories. LeBaron, Hammer, Sillars, Gudykunst, Kim, and Ting-Toomey are only a few of the many researchers who have explored the complexities of intercultural conflict. It is also a topic of interest for sociologists, psychologists, business managers, educators, and communities. Acquiring knowledge about personal and intercultural conflict styles can hopefully help us transform conflicts into meaningful dialogue, and become better communicators in the process.

Key Vocabulary

- affective conflict
- conflict of interest
- value conflict
- cognitive conflict
- goal conflict
- direct vs.indirect approach
- emotional expressiveness vs. restraint
- destructive vs. productive
- competitive vs. cooperative
- Conflict Face-Negotiation Theory
- mindful listening
- mindful reframing
- collaborative dialogue
- culture-based conflict resolution steps
- conflict
- face
- facework

References

1. Braiker, H. B., & Kelley, H. H. (1979). Conflict in the Development of Close Relationships. *Social Exchange in Developing Relationships*, 135–168. doi: 10.1016/b978-0-12-143550-9.50011-2
2. Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Some universals in language usage Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3. Canary, D. J. (2003). *Handbook of communication and social interaction skills*. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.
4. Cole, M. (1996). *Interpersonal conflict communication in Japanese cultural contexts*.
5. (2004). Face Negotiation Theory. Retrieved from https://sk.sagepub.com/reference/com...heory/n139.xml
6. Fisher-Yoshida, B. (n.d.). Reframing Conflict: Intercultural Conflict as Potential … Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile...68ed95213b.pdf
7. Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Doubleday.
8. Gudykunst, W. B., & Kim, Y. Y. (2003). *Communicating with strangers: an approach to intercultural communication*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
9. Hammer, M. R. (2005). The Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory: A conceptual framework and measure of intercultural conflict resolution approaches. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *29*(6), 675–695. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.08.010
10. LeBaron, M. (2003, July). Culture and Conflict: Beyond Intractability. Retrieved from https://www.beyondintractability.org...lture_conflict

11. Mezirow, J. E. (2000). *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory inProgress. the Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series*.
12. Nishiyama, K. (1971). Interpersonal persuasion in a vertical society-the case of Japan. *Speech Monographs*, *38*(2), 148–154. doi: 10.1080/03637757109375703
13. Samp, J. A. (2015, June 18). Facework – Samp – – Major Reference Works. Retrieved from onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/...40190.wbeic063
14. Sillars, A., Roberts, L. J., Leonard, K. E., & Dun, T. (n.d.). Cognition During Marital Conflict: The Relationship of Thought and Talk – Alan Sillars, Linda J. Roberts, Kenneth E. Leonard, Tim Dun, 2000. Retrieved from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs...65407500174002
15. Ting-Toomey, S. (n.d.). Toward a theory of conflict in culture. *Communication, Culture, and Organizational Processes*, 71–86.
16. Ting-Toomey, S. (1997). Intercultural conflict competence. *Competence in Interpersonal Conflict*, 120–147.
17. Ting-Toomey, S., & Oetzel, J. G. (2001). *Managing intercultural conflict effectively*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
18. Ting-Toomey, S. (2012). Understanding Intercultural Conflict Competence. *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication*, 279–295. doi: 10.4324/9780203805640.ch17
19. Wilmot, W. W., & Hocker, J. L. (2010). *Interpersonal conflict*. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

This page titled 1.8: Conflict is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.9: Pop Culture

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- Describe and define popular culture.
- List and explain various ways we consume popular culture.
- Describe the differences between folk, low, and high culture.
- Understand and explore the ways popular culture is created.
- Understand and explore the ways that popular culture influences culture.
- Describe the ways to resist popular culture.

How important do you think popular culture is within your life? Are you constantly listening to the newest music? Do you enjoy watching the most recent episode of something on Amazon Prime or Netflix? Or do you follow social influencers on YouTube? Look around your house. Have your purchases been influenced by the Disney Corporation, Game of Thrones, World of Warcraft, or Peppa the Pig? The most common forms of popular culture are movies, music, television, video games, sports, entertainment news, fashion, and various forms of technology. Some of us may be very selective in our consumption of popular culture, but it's difficult to find someone who has not been touched by popular culture at all. Even if the mere mention of popular culture makes you roll your eyes and sigh, most of us—no matter what nation you are a citizen of—have been impacted by the economic and social impact of popular culture.

According to Dictionary.com, **popular culture** or **low culture** as it is sometimes referred as, is comprised of the "cultural activities or commercial products reflecting, suited to, or aimed at the tastes of the general masses of people" (7/21/19). In other words, popular culture is accessible to the masses and has huge appeal. Traditionally, the term was associated with lower classes who were poorly educated, but after World War II, innovations in radio and television broadcasting or mass media led to significant cultural and social changes. Popular culture almost always relies on mass consumption of mass media by the masses of people on the planet. Popular culture is constantly evolving and is unique to the time and place in which it occurs. Societal influences and institutions merge and diverge to appeal to a broad cross-section of people within a culture. Some social scientists theorize that popular culture is a tool that elites use to control the people below them in society, but others stress that popular culture can also be used as a means of rebellion against the dominant culture. For our purposes, the characteristics of popular culture fulfill social functions within cultures and can be found everywhere.

High culture, on the other hand, isn't meant for mass consumption. It might not be easily available to everyone. Consumers might need training or education to fully appreciate the benefits of high culture. It's also possible that consumers of high culture might need to purchase costly equipment or memberships to participate in high cultural activities. Because of these limitations, high culture often belongs to social or economic elites, and does not often cross over into the realm of the masses. In the US, examples of high culture could be opera, ballet, classical music, an appreciation of fine wine, horse polo matches, or other items associated with "sophisticated" tastes.

If popular culture is for the masses, and high culture is for the elites, **folk culture** is a localized form of culture. Folk culture refers to the rituals and traditions that maintain a cultural group identity. According to Wikipedia, "folk culture is quite often imbued with a sense of place. If elements of folk culture are copied by, or moved to, a foreign locale, they will still carry strong connotations of their original place of creation" (7/21/19). Examples of US *folk culture* could be quilt-making, powwows, cakewalks, hula, Shaker furniture, corn dogs, and Creole cuisine.

Folk culture often informs pop culture and has even influenced high culture, but once folk cultural icons have become so internationalized that they have lost their original sense of place, they are no longer part of folk culture. An example of this could be the Seattle Seahawks football team emblem. The original 1975 emblem was derived from a picture of a Kwakwaka'wakw tribal mask found in an art book (http://wearefanatics.com/seattle-seahawks-logo, ret. 8/28/19). Most Seahawk fans will recognize the NFL logo instantly, but have little or no understanding that a "sea hawk" is the nickname for an osprey, and that the original sea hawk mask used as a basis for the team emblem was a "transformational" mask with a specific religious meaning (https://www.audubon.org/news/what-seahawk-anyway, ret. 8/28/19).

So why have a chapter on popular culture in an intercultural communication book? "Popular culture is intimately connected with education, mass communication, production, and a society's ability to access knowledge" (Campbell, Intellectbooks.com). From an

intercultural communication perspective, popular culture is usually our first exposure to other cultures. It is the place that we learn about those who are different than us. Martin & Nakayama believe that "popular culture is a lens for viewing other cultural groups" (2011, p. 202). Research tells us that people use popular culture to learn about other cultures, to re-affirm their own cultural identities, and to reinforce stereotypes. In other words, popular culture plays a powerful role in how we think about and understand ourselves as well as others.

If you are interested in how popular culture impacts your life, look around. Did you buy a lot of Vans because your really like them? How many of your friends own them? Next check your clothing. Are you buying things because you like them or because they are popular?

What about your entertainment choices? The 2019 DC Comics film, AQUAMAN, grossed over $1 billion dollars making it the highest-grossing DC Comics film. A former student and her husband looked forward to watching it because of its popularity, but was disappointed when they finally saw it. "We sat and watched the entire thing even though it was cheesy and not very well made. Why? Probably because we have watched many other superhero movies over the years that have taken over the movie scene" (Hein, 2019). According to CNBC.com, "more than 70% of the film's revenue came from countries outside the US" (https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/08/aqua...nal-sales.html, ret. 8/18/19).

According to Kathryn Sorrells (2013, pp. 142-144), there are several ways that we can become informed consumers of popular culture. First, we should increase awareness of what role media plays in forming views, normalizing ideas, and spreading stereotypes. Second, we need to understand that we have a choice in what we media we consume and what we don't. And third, we do not have to accept what mass media promotes. Kalle Lasn, author of *Cultural Jam* (2000), introduced the idea of **cultural jamming** which is a form of public activism that helps us to become better interpreters of media rather than simply consumers.

Globalization and Popular Culture

The economic prosperity of the United States at the beginning of last century created **cultural industries**. The term **cultural industry** was created by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1944; 1993) to mean the creation, production, and distribution of goods and services that are cultural in nature and usually protected by intellectual property rights. The globalizing forces of trade & international commerce, media & communication technology plus the arts & languages are behind the rise of US pop culture. In the 1920s, US media was exported to boost sales of US products. Among the major sponsors of such programming were Procter & Gamble, Colgate-Palmolive, and Lever Brothers, all US manufacturers of soap and cleaning products, thus the term **soap opera** came into being for the daytime dramas that also became popular exports by themselves.

The growth of the influence of US television has also impacted the international film industry. In 1987, US films captured 56% of the European film market. Less than a decade later, that statistic rose to 90% (Dager, n.d.). Recently, the market share across Western Europe has ranged from 60-75% (Hopewell, 2013). In such a lop-sided import/export market, concerns are often raised. "Not only do foreign nations worry about their own domestic entertainment industries from an economic standpoint, but they also worry about the effects on their culture" (Levin Institute, 2017).

For many countries the abundance of US media is not just another commodity, but rather **cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism** can be defined in many ways, but for our purposes, we will think of it as *domination through cultural products*. Imperialism is the "creation and maintenance of unequal power relationships between civilizations favoring a more powerful civilization" (Wikipedia, 7/25/19). Other related terms include **media imperialism** or the domination or control through the media, and **electronic colonialism** or domination or exploitation through using technological forms.

When culture becomes a commercial commodity, the fear of the homogenization of cultures rises. People from different parts of the world can learn to dress, eat, consume, and communicate in the same ways. Localized cultural diversity could become endangered as a dominant, globalized culture becomes the norm. As Martin & Nakayama (2011, p. 202) note "There is no easy way to measure the impact of popular culture, but we need to be sensitive to its influences on intercultural communication because, for so many of us, the world exists through popular culture." Global circulation of popular culture enables foreign companies to distribute materials from cultural industries as well. Not all popular culture comes from the United States. Manga, anime, K-pop, bairro dances, and British rock bands are all prime examples of wildly popular cultural influences originating from outside of the United States.

It's interesting to note that some forms of popular culture can be limited to particular cultures such as slang words, while other forms, such as music can be universally popular.Globalization also allows foreign companies to earn money selling US cultural products and making them more accessible worldwide as well. CNN now reaches over 200 million households in over 212 countries and territories. Such exposure could only be possible through the cooperation of international distributors.UK culture and

communication researcher, Mark Banks, believes that the heart of the pop culture discussion is always about power. His work focuses on how pop culture, economics and politics collide through use, social critique, and exploitation of cultural work.

Consuming and Resisting Pop Culture

People negotiate their relationship to pop culture in interesting and complex ways. To maintain or reshape our identities, we both resist popular culture, and actively consume it. If a social group participates in particular forms of pop culture, individuals often feel that they should participate as well. On the other hand, if a social group has concerns about pop culture, individuals will often refuse to engage with that particular form as well.

Facebook usage is a great example of this. According to Statista.com (ret. 7/25/19), seventy-nine percent of 18-49 year-olds in the United States used Facebook in February of 2019 while only forty percent of the 65 and older group did. According to the Pew Research Center (ret. 7/25/19), those in the 18-24 range embrace a variety of platforms (YouTube 94%, Snapchat 78%, Instagram 71%, and Twitter 45%) by visiting them multiple times (71%) a day. Interestingly enough, popular culture does not have to win over the majority of the people to be considered "popular." With usage by less than a quarter of the world's population, Facebook can be considered the ultimate **media imperialist.**

Wrapping it up…

According to Internet Live Stats (ret. 2/27/18) there are 3.5 billion Google searches per day. Some scholars have proposed that this usage indicates the intensity that US culture has permeated the planet through continual dependence.Whether you embrace it or resist it, popular culture serves important cultural functions. Those functions are connected to cultural identities, or our view of ourselves in relation to the cultures to which we belong. Those functions also embrace how we get information about, and understand, other cultural groups.

Key Vocabulary

- popular culture
- low culture
- high culture
- folk culture
- cultural jamming
- cultural industries
- soap opera
- cultural imperialism
- media imperialism
- electronic colonialism

References

1. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://wearefanatics.com/seattle-seahawks-logo
2. Adorno, T., & Horkenheimer, M. (1993). Home. Retrieved from https://adornohorkheimer-cultureindu...com/index.html
3. Campbell, J. (2017, April 16). Home Page. Retrieved from https://www.intellectbooks.com/
4. (n.d.). Dictionary.com. Retrieved from https://www.dictionary.com/
5. Hein, K. (n.d.). Eugene, OR.
6. (n.d.). Internet Live Stats – Internet Usage & Social Media Statistics. Retrieved from https://www.internetlivestats.com/
7. Lasn, K. (2000). *Culture jam how to reverse Americas suicidal consumer binge, and why we must*. New York: First Quill.
8. LEVIN Institute, S. U. N. Y. (n.d.). Globalization 101. Retrieved from http://www.globalization101.org/about-us/
9. (2019, August 19). Main Page. Retrieved from https://www.Wikipedia.org/
10. Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2011). *Experiencing intercultural communication*. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
11. Smith, A., & Anderson, M. (2019, April 17). Social Media Use 2018: Demographics and Statistics. Retrieved from https://www.pewinternet.org/2018/03/...a-use-in-2018/
12. Sorrells, K. (2013). *Intercultural communication: globalization and social justice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
13. (n.d.). Statistica. Retrieved from https://www.statista.com/
14. (2016, April 13). What Is a Seahawk, Anyway? Retrieved from https://www.audubon.org/news/what-seahawk-anyway

15. Whitten, S. (2019, January 14). ‘Aquaman’ tops billion-dollar benchmark thanks to international ticket sales. Retrieved from https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/08/aqua...nal-sales.html

This page titled 1.9: Pop Culture is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.

1.10: Tourism

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, readers should:

- List and define different types of tourism.
- Understand the ways that tourists and hosts interact and how that has an impact on tourism.
- List and define ways hosts regulate contact with tourists.
- Define culture shock and list ways to overcome it.
- Identify positive and negative ways that tourism can effect an economy.

The travel and tourism industry is one of the world's largest industries. Statista.com (ret. 7/26/19) estimates that the (direct, indirect, and induced) global economic contribution of tourism in 2016 was over 7.6 trillion US dollars. Amazing, considering the tourism industry has experienced growth almost every year. International border crossings increased from 528 million in 2005 to 1.19 billion in 2015 with a forecast of 1.8 billion by 2030. Each year, Europe receives the most international border crossings, but it also produces the most travelers with 607 million outbound in 2017. This constitutes a huge movement of people and a large transfer of resources.

International tourism is booming, but it's important to remember that many people travel within their own country. Approximately 25% of tourists actually cross national boundaries (Orion, 1982). The Great Recession of 2007-2010 popularized a relatively new form of tourism called the **staycation**. A *staycation* is an alternative to the traditional vacation and is influenced by such things as economic conditions, availability of discretionary income, and time. One might spend time in their home country visiting local and regional parks, museums, and attractions rather than going abroad. In the larger, more geographically isolated countries, such as the United States and Canada, local and regional travel has probably always been the norm, whereas travelers from the European nations probably expect to cross national boundaries on vacation. Of course, tourism in the sense of travel to distant lands is a very ancient tradition. The scale and economic reach of contemporary tourism is something new.

Economics aside, tourism provides rich opportunities for intercultural encounters. "**Tourism** is centered on the fundamental principles of exchange between peoples and is both an expression and experience of culture. It reaches into some deep conceptual territories relating to how we construct and understand ourselves, the world and the multilayered relationships between them" Dimitrova, et al., 2015, p. 225). Outside of our exposure to the various forms of popular culture, tourism is the next big way that we are exposed to cultures other than our own.

Communication Challenges with Tourism

Coping with tourists can be a complex process involving social, political, and economic contexts better addressed in courses other than a fundamentals of communication class. Valid questions exist about the ethics of resource consumption, power inequities, standard of living, and cost-benefit distribution along with the consequences of culture becoming public property. From a communication studies perspective, the challenges we are concerned with involve attitudes of hosts/tourists, characteristics of tourist/host encounters, language issues, social norms, and culture shock.

Tourism acts as a vehicle to provide direct encounters between people of diverse cultural backgrounds; therefore, tourism is a social activity in which the relationship between hosts and guests is fundamental to the experience. The various attitudes that hosts display towards tourists is crucial in understanding the communication process.

Attitudes of Hosts Toward Tourists

Traditionally, a **host** is a person who invites and receives visitors. In the tourist context, we refer to the people who live in the tourist region as hosts, taking note of the fact that many hosts have not invited the tourist, nor do they particularly welcome them. One attitude of hosts towards tourists is **retreatism**. *Retreatism* basically means that hosts actively avoid contact with tourists by looking for ways to hide their everyday lives. Tourists may not be aware of this attitude because the host economy may be dependent upon tourism. Such dependence could possibly force the host community to accommodate tourists with tolerance. Hawaii is a place that depends heavily on tourism and often uses various forms of *retreatism* to cope with the tourist invasion. Several students have mentioned that other than people who worked at restaurants or on tourist excursions, they didn't see many locals when vacationing in Hawaii.

Another attitude of hosts towards tourists is **resistance**. This attitude can be passive or aggressive. Passive resistance may include grumbling, gossiping about, or making fun of tourists behind their backs. Aggressive resistance often takes more active forms, such as pretending not to speak a language or giving incorrect information or directions. Deserved or not, the French have a reputation of tourist *resistance*. As Paris is the number one tourist destination in the world for many years in a row, and during the tourist season the population doubles or triples with visitors, it is not surprising that Parisians have developed a *resistant* attitude.

Boundary maintenance is a common way to regulate the interaction between hosts and tourists. This attitude is a common response by hosts who do not want a lot of interaction with tourists. The community may be dependent upon the economics of tourist interactions, but prefers to encounter tourists on a limited level–possibly in specific locations or only with specific people. Many Native American tribes and First Nations people prefer to have visitors start at a tribal welcome center or museum before wandering around their reservations or traditional lands. Horror stories exist of tourists walking into private homes in order to meet "real Indians" and see how they live.

Not all host attitudes are protective or negative. Some communities may capitalize on tourism and accept it as the social fabric of their community. Other communities actively invest money to draw tourists as a way to create economic. Other communities passively accept the community members who actively develop tourism opportunities to keep the community from dying. This attitude is called **revitalization.** Residents do not always share equally in the revitalization, but sometimes it does lead to pride in the re-discovery of community history and traditions. Dolly Parton's "Dollywood" located in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee was created as a way to revitalize a community that she loved much as "Disneyland" is a revitalizing force in Southern California.

Within the same community, hosts can have a variety of attitudes towards tourists. These differences can be major sources of conflict that cause on-going strife. It's important that tourists be aware of their own attitudes towards tourism and acknowledge the cultural differences between hosts and tourists.

Characteristics of Tourist and Host Encounters

Much has been written about the characteristics of tourist and host encounters in all the various shapes and forms it occurs. The newest research tends to focus on not the encounter itself, but rather the context in which the encounter occurs as a measure of success. In general, there are a few concepts that are basic to tourist/host encounters from an intercultural perspective.

First, most encounters are very predictable and ritualistic because they are business transactions and nothing more. If you are thirsty, you can buy something to drink from a vendor, market, or restaurant. You ask as politely as you know how, exchange money, and receive a product. Once you have learned the ritual, you use it repeatedly throughout your visit.

Most tourists don't have time for lengthy interactions, which leads to fewer opportunities to authentically engage with the hosts. Package tours are infamous for short time schedules, but free-range tourists often try to fit in as many local attractions as they can in one day before moving to the next location. Such commodification leads to great Instagram pictures, but little time to interact with the locals on a meaningful level.

Another characteristic of the tourist/host encounter is that tourists are often—but not always–more economically and socially privileged than their hosts. Traveling can be expensive so tourists are often looking for a good deal or places where their money can go farther than at home. Maybe they splurge on something normally inaccessible to them in daily life. Such actions are part of normal tourist expectations, but can lead to power imbalances between hosts and tourists.

Research indicates that contact between hosts and tourists is significantly more positive if tourists slow down and take an interest in the country they are visiting and the culture they are experiencing. It is also clear that when hosts have the time and space to treat tourists like guests, while taking pride in their own communities, hosts are most likely to welcome interaction with tourists.

Language Challenges

Not surprisingly, language is often a problem for both hosts and tourists. No one can learn all of the languages of the places they might visit or of the people who do visit. Perceptions of service, inability to interact, and the lack of language resources are all huge frustrations for both sides. Host cultures often have very different expectations of tourists regarding language usage as well. Some host cultures expect tourists to use the host language in interactions whereas other host cultures believe that they should provide language assistance for tourists. Language difficulties are often the basis for any culture shock experienced by both the host culture and the tourists.

Social Norms and Expectations

People do not behave randomly. Social norms and expectations regulate human behavior. For example, people visiting a tourist site may avoid littering because the site is clean, which suggests that others have been making an effort to be environmentally responsible. Whereas the community may support recycling programs at the site because they think that tourists are willing to pay extra for eco-friendly practices.

Norms that govern tourist/host behaviors are influenced by personal, societal, and cultural expectations. Some of the most impactful cultural norms to consider are expectations about public social behavior, shopping, and acceptable communication styles.

Social interaction in public ranges from informal to very formal. Most cultures have expectations for gender- and age-related interactions. Some accepted conventions may have speakers address status with a formal relational title such as “honored grandmother” or “small friend” whereas a more informal convention would be “Florence” and “Ryann.” Norms may also be related to religious beliefs, traditions, politeness, and more.

Norms for shopping vary from culture to culture. It might be expected that consumers touch the merchandise before buying it or touching might be forbidden until after the purchase. Bargaining might be the norm, and initial prices are given as higher than the expected purchase price or the price on the tag is the price you pay.

According to Howstuffworks.com (Curran, ret. 7/30/19) there are “10 Grocery Store Etiquette Rules” in the United States.

1. Don’t yell at the checker.
2. Bring a reusable tote instead of one-use bags provided by the store.
3. Children sometimes have a mind of their own, so parents are not always to blame.
4. If you break it, you buy it.
5. Ask for a mop if you make a mess.
6. Don’t judge the contents in the cart of someone else.
7. If using a check, pre-write as much as you can while waiting.
8. It’s okay to avoid people you know if you don’t have time to talk.
9. Don’t text and push a cart at the same time.
10. When you are done, park your cart in a safe place.

Shopping norms are significant, but even more importantly, communication styles (see the verbal chapter) do dictate how people act in public. Direct cultures will still ask questions that they want to know the answer for and expect to hear an answer. Indirect cultures will still avoid asking questions but strive to provide direction in the context of the situation. Some cultures value elaborate speakers and some value being concise. Conversation might involve grabbing a hand or arm to emphasize sincerity or you might want to avoid physical contact with others at all costs. Information about the appropriate behavior is all around you. Observe what the host/tourists usually do and act accordingly.

Culture Shock

Being in new cultural contexts can lead to **culture shock** and feelings of disorientation. Even the physical aspects of traveling (crossing time zones, changes in food, etc.) can be difficult for some tourists. One student mentioned experiencing culture shock as a naive 16-year-old in Mexico. She didn’t understand the language, and was freaked out by all the lizards in her room. Although culture shock has already been discussed in previous chapters, it’s important to remember that both hosts and tourists can experience culture shock. When host communities encounter new values and behaviors, they can reach a point of uncertainty. Researchers (Prokop, 1970; Furnham & Bochner, 1989) who examined culture shock experienced by host cultures noted higher incidence of alcoholism, depression, and minor psychiatric illness.

Not all tourists experience culture shock. Many variables, including purpose of the trip, power dynamics, mental & physical health, and types of contact influence the experience of culture shock. New research (Moufakkir, 2013), proposes that culture shock can be negotiated at home before the trip even begins. One thing to note is that when tourists do experience culture shock, they often take it out on the host community.

Culture Learning and Types of Tourism

Sharing food, holding a conversation, or participating in a meaningful cultural event are all ways that one can learn about a different culture before going on a trip. Be observant and more conscious of your own and others’ communication. Read books and articles written by people from other cultures from their own cultural perspective. Follow social media of people from, or

organizations that represent, other cultures. Learn another language. Enter into a cultural exchange. Visit museums and cultural centers. Ask questions (gcorr.org, ret. 7/30/2019). Be flexible and open to other ways of living. These are all great ways to negotiate culture shock before leaving home or before you find yourself hosting others.

Although we have a tendency to think that all tourist experiences are the same, in today's world, this is not the case. As the economy changes, and as tourists and hosts needs change, the idea of what travel can be has also changed. Below you will find a short list of things that travel agents book tours for.

Adventure travel, agritourism, alternative tourism, athletic tours, birth tourism, booze cruise, camping, culinary, cultural tourism, dental tourism, recreational drug tourism, ecotourism, experiential travel, extreme tourism, fashion tourism, garden tourism, genealogy tourism, geotourism, glamping, guest ranch, heritage trails, identity tourism, industrial tourism, international volunteering, justice tourism, LGBT tourism, literary tourism, medical tourism, military, music cruise, railroad attraction, religious tourism, river cruise, romance tours, safari, scenic route, senior, sex tourism, space tourism, sports tourism, virtual tours, walking tours, war tourism, water tourism, wellness tourism, and women's tours.

Tourism and New Media

Tourists and hosts are using new media as never before. Tourists are skipping the traditional ways of booking vacations and directly interacting with hosts and cultural organizations. Hosts are enticing, inviting, and advertising their experiences directly to the public. Free apps allow tourists and hosts to talk directly over the internet. Pre-departure information no longer is in the control of travel agents, airlines, and hotels.

Fascinating research is being done by Thurlow & Mroczek (2014) that explores the ways that the **micro-blogging** (web-based self-reporting of short messages) is changing the tourist experience. Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter use self-reporting to share what one is doing, thinking, and feeling at any moment. Viewers can not only experience the trip in real time, but also plan the same experiences with the contacts provided.

Another new media impact on tourism is **cyber tourism** and **virtual tourists**. *Cyber tourism* is the application of new technologies such as GIS or Google Earth to create realistic images. *Cyber tourism* can lead to actual physical tourism, but for those without the time and money, or have other restrictions to prevent travel, new technologies offer a viable alternative.

Back in 2001, Lonely Planet noticed a group of people who would buy travel books, but never travel. They called these people, *virtual tourists* (Champion, ret. 7/30/2109). Today's virtual tourist uses an enhanced virtual environment that can be seen through a headset. This augmented reality merge the real and virtual world together into virtual reality. Although a new and emerging experience, various organizations such as museums, cultural groups, and travel agencies are beginning to offer this interesting way to "travel."

E-Tourism is a non-governmental organizational (NGO) initiative from the United Nations with the aim of helping developing countries make the most of their tourism potential. The internet is packed with plans and discussion of tourism potential from such varied places as Afghanistan to Botswana.

Political and Environment Impact on Tourism

Tourists consider a multitude of factors when deciding where they should or should not go. One such factor is politics. A country's "visitor-friendly" policies are important. Does travel require a passport or visa? Are they easy to obtain? Are they costly? Does the ruling party encourage or discourage visitors?

Instability can have devastating consequences on tourism, but even the perception of political trouble can effect tourism. In recent times, Qatar tourism was largely impacted by a political decision. The UAE and other countries in the region banned travel to and from Qatar. As most tourists to Qatar were from neighboring states, tourist numbers dropped leading to an economic downturn.

Tourism can exacerbate political tensions through environmental disasters as well. Tourism can increase the price of housing, land, goods, and services thereby increasing the cost of living. Imported labor may be needed to support tourist demands unfulfilled through local populations. There might also be additional costs to support the infrastructure needed for tourism such as water, sewer, power, fuel, hospitals, roads, and transportation systems. Plus tourism uses resources and generates waste well in excess of local population needs. Without a planning and oversight system, tourism can add problems to an already strained political system.

To Wrap It Up

Tourism is one of the world's largest and most complex industries. Most of us have been a tourist, and have interacted with tourists. Much like our exposure to popular culture, our tourist experiences have formed and impacted our understanding of different cultures. There are intercultural communication challenges inherent in the tourist process. We must consider the attitudes towards tourists, tourist host encounters, language, cultural norms & expectations, and culture shock. In today's world, there are many ways to be a tourist, and all of them are being impacted by new media. Tourism is not without costs to political structures and the environment.

At its best, tourism is a useful tool to share, sustain, and improve cultural diversity. At its worst, tourism can destroy a community and a culture. The reality of tourism is much more complicated than just taking a vacation.

Key Vocabulary

- staycation
- tourism
- host
- retreatism
- resistance
- boundary maintenance
- revitalization
- culture shock
- micro-blogging
- cyber tourism
- virtual tourist
- E-tourism

References

1. Champion, E. M., & Unesco. (2019, May 15). Virtual reality adds to tourism through touch, smell and real people's experiences. Retrieved from http://theconversation.com/virtual-r...riences-101528
2. Curran. (n.d.). Learn How Everything Works! Retrieved from https://www.howstuffworks.com/
3. Dimitrova, Chakarova, & Sevdalina. (2016, April 4). Intercultural Communication in the Context of Tourism. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers....act_id=2755251
4. Furnham, A., & Bochner, S. (1989). *Culture shock: psychological reactions to unfamiliar environments*. London: Routledge.
5. (n.d.). General Commission on Religion and Race. Retrieved from http://www.gcorr.org/
6. Jaaskelainen, L. (n.d.). Topic: Global Travel and Tourism Industry. Retrieved from https://www.statista.com/topics/962/global-tourism/
7. Moufakkir, O. (2013). Culture shock, what culture shock? Conceptualizing culture unrest in intercultural tourism and assessing its effect on tourists perceptions and travel propensity. *Tourist Studies*, *13*(3), 322–340. doi: 10.1177/1468797613498166
8. Prokop, H. (n.d.). Psychiatric illness of foreigners vacationing in innsbruck.
9. (2019, August 19). staycation. Retrieved from https://www.Wikipedia.org/
10. Thurlow, C., & Mroczek, K. (2014, November 6). Digital Discourse: Language in the New Media. Retrieved from https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/vi...-9780199795437

This page titled 1.10: Tourism is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Karen Krumrey-Fulks.