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**THEORY OF COMMUNICATION:  
Interdisciplinary Approach**

**Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine  
State Institution  
“Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University”**

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# **THEORY OF COMMUNICATION: Interdisciplinary Approach**

*Manual for Master Students of Higher Educational Institutions*

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The manual is written in need to provide guidance in the theory of language and cross-cultural communication. It attempts to present an expanded overview of Communicative as well as Contact Linguistics in a synchronic perspective. The main purpose of the manual is to investigate the nature of language and culture as the basic means of interpersonal and intercultural communication. It is aimed at studying the interdependence of a human being and language as a complex mental and sociocultural construct, the various ways in which language is used among the representatives of different sociocultural communities.

The structure and content of the manual correspond to *Language and Cross-Cultural Communication* discipline syllabus designed for master students. The manual can also be used by English language teachers, researchers, post-graduate students of English, as well as by anyone researching language from communicative and intercultural perspective.

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МИГОВИЧ Ірина Вікторівна

# THEORY OF COMMUNICATION: Interdisciplinary Approach

*Навчальний посібник  
для здобувачів освіти другого (магістерського) рівня  
закладів вищої освіти*

АНГЛІЙСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ

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## - PREFACE-

The manual *Theory of Communication: Interdisciplinary Approach* is written in need to provide a guidance in theory of language and cross-cultural communication for advanced students of major “English”. It attempts an overview of Communicative as well as Contact Linguistics in a synchronic perspective. The main purpose of the manual – to investigate the nature of language and culture as the basic means of interpersonal and intercultural communication. It is also aimed at studying the interdependence of a human being and language as a complex mental and sociocultural construct, the various ways in which language is used among the representatives of different sociocultural communities.

The concept of communication belongs to the most complicated types of human interaction, which demands a high level of communicative competence. Communication serves the purpose of disseminating knowledge, persuading, educating and stimulating people to actions. Communication intertwines people’s lives, with the help of it individuals realize important social contacts with others. Every act of speech as an act of interaction between people has an addresser, object (content, theme), addressee, means, structure (particularly modality and style), place, time, aim and consequences. All these factors are directly or indirectly reflected in lexico-grammatical content of utterances and in such a way create their communicative force. Thus, communicative competence implies a clear understanding of the speech circumstances in which certain grammatical or lexical constructions may be or are to be used. In other words, we are speaking about the ability to use communicative patterns in proper conversational situations considering national peculiarities of speech and culture.

The topicality of these issues got rather sharp presently. Communicative and cultural studies that used to have a marginal status among other disciplines were singled out from history, philosophy and philology and finally became a separate subject. It is now clearly seen that the key to a successful communication lies in the awareness of the following points: language, verbal / non-verbal behavior (body language, space concepts), stereotypes and communicative etiquette behavior (face-saving, fate and responsibility).

The study of communication from cultural perspective may sometimes challenge commonly held assumptions. In this respect a multicultural education is important to help students from diverse cultural groups attain the academic skills needed to function in a knowledge society. A multicultural education is an education for life in a free and democratic society. It helps

students transcend their cultural boundaries and acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to communicate effectively with those who are different from themselves.

Thus, the final purpose of this manual is to help students develop basic communicative skills, increase effectiveness in individual or collective intercultural situations. It also focuses on studying the ways of overcoming psychological barriers occurring in intercultural interaction. A system of elementary trainings and tasks will serve as tools for achieving the aim.

**The topics covered in the book include:**

- the nature of interpersonal language communication;
- the impact of social factors on language communication;
- language contact and language change;
- the relationship of language to culture and thought;
- the reflection on cultural differences between the native and target cultures;
- the influence of culture on human behavior, world perception, value system, personal life and professional growth;
- the essence of four basic components of intercultural communication: culture, communication, context and power;
- factors that contribute to the dynamics of intercultural communication: identity, language and non-verbal codes;
- cross-cultural notions of identity (religious identity and multicultural identity);
- non-verbal codes and cultural spaces;
- intercultural transitions, stages of adaptation to new settings;
- international migration and its effects on intercultural communication;
- the nature of intercultural conflicts; cross-cultural differences in conflict orientations; mediation;
- motivation and the difficulties in achieving effective intercultural communication;
- components of intercultural competence; culture shock;
- application of knowledge about intercultural communication.

We should acknowledge that most of the employed scientific sources were retrieved from the stocks of Columbia University Library (New York, USA), SZTE Egyetemi Könyvtár (Szeged, Hungary), Central European University Library (Budapest, Hungary), Štátna vedecká knižnica (Košice, Slovakia). Revised notions expressed in the present work have been to a greater extent encouraged by our Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences Dissertation *“The Process of Internationalization and Its Impact on the*

*Transformation of National Higher Education Systems in Eastern Europe in the late XX – early XXI century*” defended in November 2020, as well as by our participation in the project “*Management of Internationalization 2020-2021 within 2020 German-Ukrainian Academic Cooperation*” supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. Thanks to the financial support from the *Fulbright Scholar Programme administered by the US Department of State, International Visegrad Fund Scholarship Programme, Slovak Academic Exchange Scholarship Programme, German Academic Exchange Service Programme (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst)* we could use the works of world leading communicative and cross-cultural theorists for our own research. Our international experience has enriched our understanding of intercultural communication theories and concepts. We hope that the manual ***Theory of Communication: Interdisciplinary Approach*** will become an essential reading for anyone researching language from communicative and intercultural perspective as well as for advanced students of English.

*Welcome to a new area of language study that will make you a more efficient and flexible linguist, researcher, and participant of intercultural encounters!*

**PART I.**

**Fundamentals  
of  
Language Communication**

# The Essence of Language Communication

A world community can exist only with world communication, which means something more than extensive short-wave facilities scattered about the globe. It means common understanding, a common tradition, common ideas, and common ideals (Robert M. Hutchins).

## Overview

The chapter creates the mainframe of the first part of the manual including methodology, related fields, significant works and main directions of research. It also introduces main object of upcoming analyses – language as an integral part of human communication.

Topics covered include: Notion of Communicative Linguistics; Subject and Methods of Communicative Linguistics; Interpersonal Language Communication; Main Functions of Communication; Typology of Communication; Models of Communication; Ethnography of Communication.

*Key words: Communicative Linguistics, Typology of Communication, Communicative Channel, Sender (Addresser), Receiver (Addressee), Feedback, Communicative Model, Ethnography in Communication.*

---

## 1.1 Communication Theory

Communication is deeply rooted in human behaviors and societies. It is difficult to think of social or behavioral events from which communication is absent. Indeed, communication applies to shared behaviors and properties of any collection of things, whether they are human or not.

The etymology of the word *communication* (from the Latin *communicare*) literally means “to put in common”, “to share”. The term originally meant sharing of tangible things; food, land, goods, and property. Today, it is often applied to knowledge and information processed by living things or computers [8, p. 126].

One might say that communication consists of transmitting information. In fact, many scholars of communication take this as a working definition, and use Lasswell's maxim ("who says what to whom") as a means of circumscribing the field of communication. Others stress the importance of clearly characterizing the historical, economic and social context. Thus, communication theory attempts to document types of communication, and to optimize communications for the benefit of all.

Communication may be studied empirically and critically at different levels of interaction. These levels, often described on a *micro-to-micro continuum* are *intra-personal* (how individuals process information), *inter-personal* (how two individuals interact to influence one another), *group* (how communication dynamics occurs among many individuals), *formal and informal organizations* (how communication occurs and functions in the context of organizations such as hospitals, schools, or public health agencies), and *community / society* (how communication builds or changes the agenda of important issues) [8, p. 127].

Empirical study means applying scientific methods to the study of communication; as in the study of behavior change resulting from exposure to a communication campaign. Critical study means applying methods of cultural, literary, or normative criticism to the study of communication; as in the analysis of how media content creates health-related meaning and influences behavioral norms through commercial advertising or entertainment.

But whatever way one studies communication one necessarily addresses the notion of communicative linguistics. *Communicative linguistics* – a recently developed branch of linguistics, which studies the processes of interpersonal communication with the emphasis upon the live natural language viewed as the unity of communicative components – physical, psychological, physiological, social, contextual, etc. *Subject of communicative linguistics* – study of language in the real processes of interpersonal communication [1, p. 95].

## 1.2 Methods & Main Lines of Research in Communicative Studies

### *Methods of Communicative Linguistics*

- 1) **semiotic analysis** – study of communication on the basis of sign (semiotic) nature of language: 1) connection between sign and object of reality (semantics); 2) interconnection of signs within the sign system (syntax); 3) connection between sign and a human being, as well as between a human being and objects of reality with the help of signs (pragmatics);

- 2) **pragmatic analysis** – helps to investigate the interconnection of human components of communication (psychological type of man, human mood, world-view, attitude towards speaker) and language structures. Human components of communication influence the process of communication, its tonality and atmosphere. The focus of attention here – strategies of communication, evaluative aspects of human interaction, laws of communication, communicative acts and conditions. Pragmatic analysis was elaborated in the 60 – 70s of the XX century in the USA by such linguists as John L. Austin (1962), John Searle (1965, 1969), Paul Grice (1970);
- 3) **structural analysis** – studies language as an entire functional system, elements and parts of which are strictly interconnected;
- 4) **discourse analysis** – studies social context of communication which stands by the oral or written speech; interconnection of language code in speaking and social, psychological, physical, cultural processes [7, p. 96].

The described methods of linguistic analysis applied in communicative studies directly relate to the general organization of communicative linguistics. Thus, George Gerbner describes three main branches of communication study. The first is *semiotics*, the study of signs and symbols and how they combine to convey meaning in different social contexts. This branch is mainly concerned with how verbal, non-verbal, visual, and aural signs and symbols combine to create messages [2, p. 34].

The second branch, related to pragmatic and structural analysis, is the study of behavior and interaction through exposure to messages. It emphasizes measuring, explaining, and predicting communication effects on knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and public opinion. It is strongly influenced by scientific methods from the fields of psychology and social psychology [8, p. 127].

The third branch, related to discourse analysis, is the study of the large-scale organization of communications through social institutions and systems (mass media, political organizations, government, advocacy groups), their history, regulation, and policy-making impact. It is strongly influenced by scientific methods from the field of sociology, but also by the methods of political science, history, and public affairs [3, p. 41].

Just as no single behavioral theory explains and predicts all human behavior, no communication theory explains and predicts all communication outcomes. Some view this as a *fragmentation* in understanding the role of a communication in human affairs [ibid., p. 3]. Others view this as a productive theoretical diversity, conducive to the understanding of human activity in

many complex dimensions [4, p. 166]. Communication researchers have increasingly sought to connect and to integrate effects across levels of analysis, from the micro to the macro. For example, health campaign planners may study the effects of a media campaign in generating interpersonal discussion. They might look at media story about a new drug or treatment to see if it causes patients to raise the issue with their health care providers.

### *Main Lines of Research in Communicative Studies*

- 1) investigation of the universal laws of human communication;
- 2) investigation of the peculiarities of interpersonal communication depending upon different conditions (social, cultural, etc.);
- 3) investigation of the structure of language as a complex mental and sociocultural concept in the process of interpersonal communication;
- 4) investigation of the laws governing the interconnection of intra- and extra-linguistic means of interpersonal communication;
- 5) investigation of the communicative failures;
- 6) investigation of the methods of language study in the process of interpersonal communication [5, p. 120].

## **1.3 Defining Communication**

**Communication** – one of the objects of investigation for communicative linguistics. It is a meaningful and substantial aspect of social interaction as well as the process of information exchange within the boundaries of human interaction during which information is imparted from a sender to a receiver with the help of a medium [8, p. 128]. “To communicate” means to let one’s ideas, views, opinions or simply just a message, action or touch flow as information through a channel to a targeted listener. Communication is the process of information flow by which living creatures can convey and acquire information related to their surroundings; to carry out the daily life activities. Communication is thus an information related behavior.

**Interpersonal Communication** – communication that occurs between two persons who have a relationship between them. It occurs every time when you send or receive messages and when you assign meaning to such messages [9, p. 28].

Whenever we speak about the process of interpersonal language communication we begin operating such terms as: **sender (addresser)** – the one who encodes information as a **message** which is sent via a **channel** (e-mail, letter, report, lecture, piece of news, etc.) to a **receiver (addressee)**

who decodes the information. Interpersonal language communication is always distorted by “noise”, occurs within a context, and involves some opportunity for feedback. Channel of communication can also be called *medium* – 1) *verbal or auditory means*, such as speaking, singing, tone of voice; 2) *non-verbal, physical means*, such as body language, sign language, paralanguage, touch, eye contact, or the use of writing [13, p. 128].

Another important term for adequate understanding of interpersonal language communication is *feedback* [14, p. 4]. Feedback is a special type of message. When we send a spoken or written message to another person, we get feedback from our own message: we hear what we say, we feel the way we move, we see what we write. On the basis of this information we may correct ourselves, rephrase something, or perhaps smile at a clever turn of phrase. This is self-feedback.

We also get feedback from others. The person with whom we are communicating is constantly sending us messages that indicate on how he or she is receiving and responding to our messages. Nods of agreement, smiles, puzzled looks, questions, asking for clarification are all examples of feedback.

Interpersonal communicators are conscious of one another and of their connection with one another. They are interdependent: what one person thinks and says impacts on what the other thinks and says.

#### *Main Functions of Interpersonal Language Communication:*

- contact function – readiness to transmit and perceive the message;
- informative function – exchange of information;
- stimulating function – making partner, audience or oneself perform certain physical, physiological, intellectual, spiritual or other activities;
- cognitive function – adequate perception and understanding of the content of message, as well as understanding of intentions, frames, settings, moods, feelings of those who participate in the act of communication;
- emotive function – emotional exchange, evoking feelings, psychological states, etc.;
- coordinative function – mutual orientation and co-ordination of actions of those who participate in the act of communication;
- establishing of relationships – understanding, accepting and fixation of one’s place in the system of role, state, business and interpersonal relationships;
- influencing function – influence the change of state, behavior, motivation of speaker: intentions, views, thoughts, decisions,

impressions, needs, tastes, norms of behavior, evaluative criteria, etc.) [15, p. 129].

## 1.4 Typology of Communication

Communication can be differentiated according to [6, p. 29]:

- 1) **the usage / non-usage of language (language code):** verbal / non-verbal (mimics, gestures, posture, type of clothes, hair do, etc.);
- 2) **forms of realization of language code:** oral – speed, fast reactions of those who participate in the process of communication; written – formal; interrupted in time and space, anonymous; printed – embraces the features of both – oral and written form;
- 3) **topic of communication:** political, scientific, everyday, religious, philosophical, educative, etc.;
- 4) **aim of communication:** business, entertainment, educative, everyday;
- 5) **degree of officiality:** official: formal communicative situations (boss – subordinate, seller – buyer, colleague – colleague); unofficial: informal communicative situations (friends, lovers, parents, etc.);
- 6) **degree of control:** formal – official situations which are controlled (business); informal – friendly talk, small talk;
- 7) **amount of participants:** inner communication (with oneself); interpersonal communication (2 people); communication within small communicative groups (3 – 5 people); public communication (20 – 30 people); mass communication (1000 and more participants); intercultural communication (among representatives of different socio-cultural communities);
- 8) **social factors:** personally oriented – aimed at establishing personal relationships, mainly spiritual or friendly; socially oriented – aimed at establishing role, hierarchical relationships;
- 9) **form of communication:** closed communication – content of communication serves as a background; to the front comes the process of communication itself – its form and rules = small talks); opened communication: business talk, friendly talk, lovers talk – one’s point of view is important; mixed communication: student – teacher, doctor – patient;
- 10) **liberty of partner choice:** initiated communication – speakers may freely choose their communicative partners and avoid undesirable communication; forced communication – does not depend upon one’s wishes and desires (talk with boss);
- 11) **duration factor:** constant communication – among family members,

colleagues, etc.; periodical communication – meeting with doctor; short-time communication – in a queue, in transport; long-time communication – with friends, etc.

## 1.5 Models of Communication

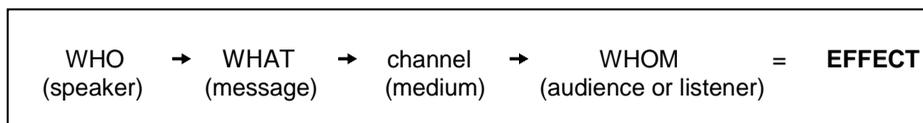
Models of communication have been elaborated in order to explain the process of communication from different points of view and with the emphasis upon different components or constituent parts of the process of communication.

### *Linear Model (Mathematical Model)*

Early theories saw the communication process as linear. In this linear view of communication the speaker spoke and the listener listened; after the speaker finished speaking, the listener would speak. Communication was seen as proceeding in a relatively straight line. Speaking and listening were seen as taking place at different times – when you spoke, you didn’t listen; and when you listened – you didn’t speak [15, p. 114]. Thus, communication is viewed as a one-way process – from sender (addresser) to receiver (addressee): sender (addresser) forms the message with the help of means of language code (=encodes); then the message through the communicative channel goes to the receiver (addressee) who decodes it. In such a way message helps addresser to establish contact with addressee within definite context.

This model can sometimes be also called **Lasswell's Model of Communication** (See 1.5.1 (a)). Harold Lasswell a political scientist in 1948 proposed a model, which explains the communication process as *who says what to whom in what channel with what effect* [12, p. 39]. Lasswell’s model focuses primarily on verbal communication. The model is a simple description of one-way communication process, which comprises of a speaker who communicates a message to a receiver by making use of any of the media like print, radio, television, etc to finally convey the information.

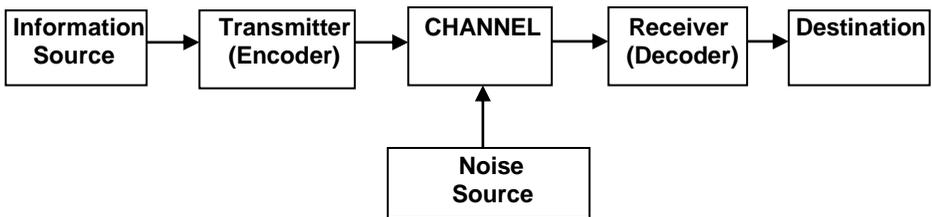
**Table 1.5.1** Lasswell's Model of Communication



**Shannon & Weaver’s Model of Communication** (See 1.5.2) consists of an information source, which selects a desired message out of a set of possible messages, and the selected message may consist of written or spoken

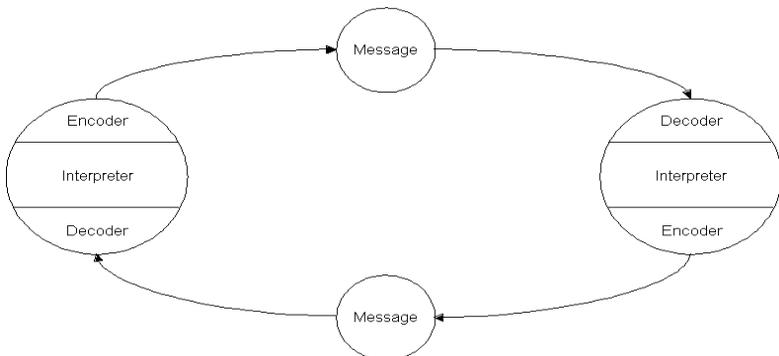
words, or of pictures, music, etc. It has a transmitter that converts the message into a signal, which is sent over the communication channel from the transmitter to the receiver. During signal transmission through the channel, receiver may come across noises, which are any mental or physical distraction that interferes with the transmission of a signal from the source to the destination. “Correction channels” are introduced which overcomes the problems created by noise and the information in form of the signal finally reaches the receiver [15, p. 114].

**Table 1.5.2** Shannon & Weaver’s Model of Communication



Wilbur Schramm was one of the first to alter the model of Shannon and Weaver. He conceived of decoding and encoding as activities maintained simultaneously by sender and receiver; he also made provisions for a two-way interchange of messages. Notice also the inclusion of an “interpreter” as an abstract representation of the problem of meaning [14, p. 14]. Thus, communication became viewed as a reciprocal, two-way, even though the feedback may be delayed.

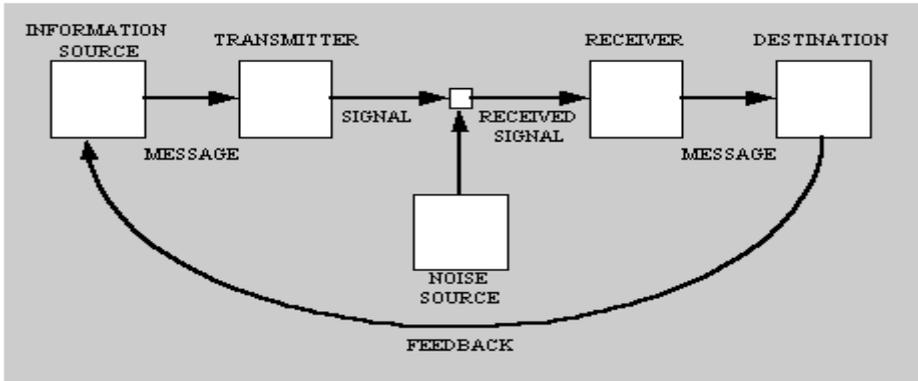
**Table 1.5.3**  
Schramm's Model of Communication, 1954



## *Interactive Model of Communication*

The linear model was soon replaced with an interactional view in which the speaker and the listener were seen as exchanging turns at speaking and listening. This model presupposes active participation of all who take part in the act of communication. It means that feedback becomes one of the compulsory elements of communication. Communication is viewed as a series of discrete (broken) acts, which have the beginning and the end. In these acts sender (addresser) greatly determines the actions of those who receive the message [15, p. 115]. In this model speaking and listening were still viewed as separate acts that did not overlap and that were not performed at the same time by the same person.

**Table 1.5.4**      Interactive Model of Communication



## *Transactional Model of Communication*

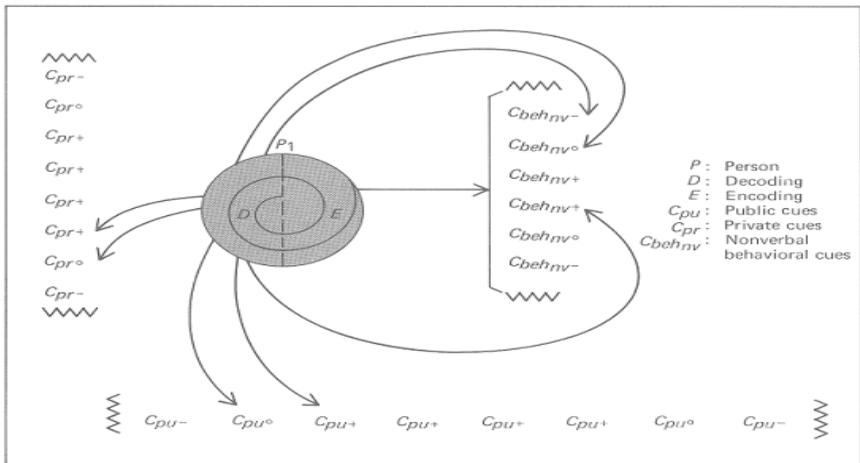
Communication is viewed as transactional process in which each person serves simultaneously as speaker and listener; it is the process of simultaneous sending and receiving of messages by communicators who depend on one another as the creators of the communicative act [ibid., p. 116]. According to the transactional view, at the same time that you send messages, you are also receiving messages from your own communications and from the reactions of the other person. And at the same time that you are listening, you are also sending messages. Communication is here not only a process of sending / receiving the message, but a process in which people create relationships, interact with each other. Each person is seen as both speaker and listener, as simultaneously communicating and receiving messages.

Also in a transactional view the elements of communication are seen as *interdependent* (never *independent*). Each exists in relation to the others. A

change in any one element of this process produces changes in the other elements. For example, suppose you are talking with a group of your friends and your mother enters the group, this change in “audience” will lead to other changes; perhaps you will change what you say or how you say it. Regardless of what change is introduced, other changes will be produced as a result.

The most striking feature of this model is the absence of any simple or linear directionality between self and the physical world. The spiral lines connect the functions of encoding and decoding and give graphic representation to the continuous, unrepeatable, and irreversible relationships. Any one of three signs or cues may elicit a sense of meaning. **Public Cues (Cpu)** derive from the environment. They are either natural, that is, part of the physical world, or artificial and man-made. **Private objects of orientation (Cpr)** are a second set of cues which go beyond public inspection or awareness. Examples include the cues gained from sunglasses, earphones, or the sensory cues of taste and touch. Both public and private cues may be verbal or non-verbal in nature. They are outside the direct and deliberate control of the interlocutors. The third set of cues are deliberate; they are the **behavioral and non-verbal (Cbeh)** cues that a person initiates and controls himself. Thus, the arrows connecting behavioral cues stand both for the act of producing them technically a form of encoding and for the interpretation that is given to an act of others (decoding). The jagged lines (VVVV) at each end of these sets of cues illustrate the fact that the number of available cues is probably without limit. Note also the valence signs (+, 0, or -) that have been attached to public, private, and behavioral cues. They indicate the potency or degree of attractiveness associated with the cues.

**Table 1.5.5** Transactional Model of Communication



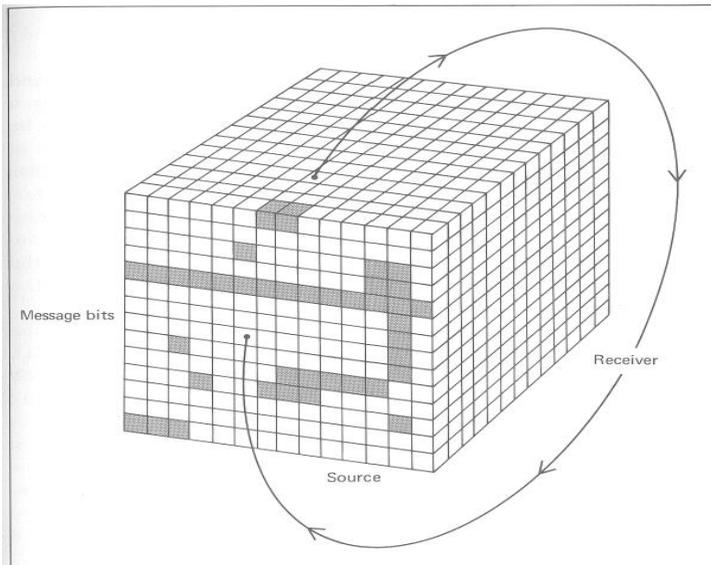
Thus, communication is viewed as transactions in which communicators attribute meaning to events in ways that are dynamic, continuous, circular, unrepeatable, irreversible, and complex.

*Becker's Mosaic Model of Communication*

Becker assumes that most communicative acts link message elements from more than one social situation. In the tracing of various elements of a message, it is clear that the items may result in part from a talk with an associate, from an obscure quotation read years before, from a recent TV commercial, and from numerous other dissimilar situations – moments of introspection, public debate, coffee-shop banter, daydreaming, and so on. In short, the elements that make up a message ordinarily occur in bits and pieces. Some items are separated by gaps in time; others by gaps in modes of presentation, in social situations, or in the number of persons present.

Becker likens complex communicative events to the activity of a receiver who moves through a constantly changing cube or mosaic of information. The layers of the cube correspond to layers of information. Each section of the cube represents a potential source of information; note that some are blocked out in recognition that at any given point some bits of information are not available for use. Other layers correspond to potentially relevant sets of information.

**Table 1.5.6** Becker's Mosaic Model of Communication



The model depicts the complexity of communication as influenced by a constantly changing milieu. It also accounts for variations in exposure to messages. In some circumstances receivers may be flooded by relevant information; in others they may encounter only a few isolated items. Individual differences also influence level of exposure; some people seem to be attuned to a large range of information, while others miss or dismiss much as extraneous.

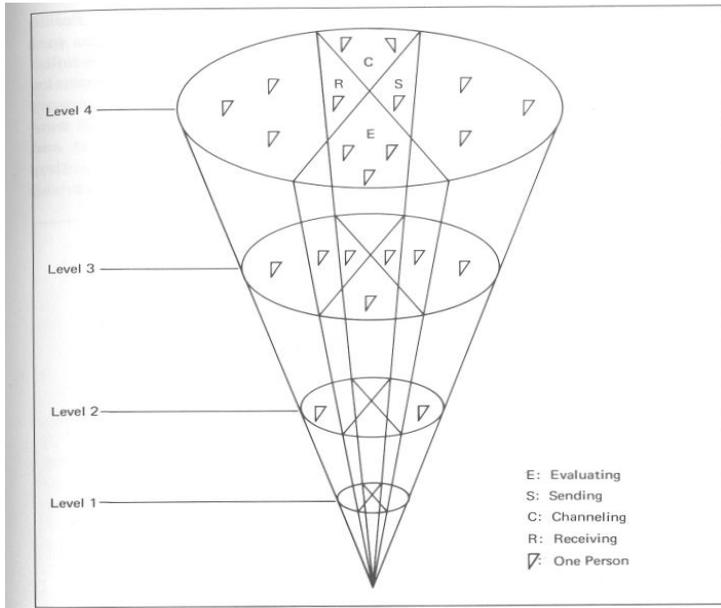
Different kinds of relationships between people and messages cut through the many levels of exposure. Some relationships are confined to isolated situations, others to recurrent events. Moreover, some relationships center on a particular message, while others focus on more diffuse units; that is, they entail a complex set of relationships between a given message and the larger backdrop of information against which it is interpreted.

It may be useful to conceive of an interaction between two mosaics. One comprises the information in a given social milieu, as depicted in the model; the other includes the private mosaic of information that is internal to the receiver. The internal mosaic is every bit as complex as the one shown in the model, but a person constructs it for himself.

#### *Ruesch and Bateson Functional Model of Communication*

Ruesch and Bateson conceived of communication as functioning simultaneously at four levels of analysis. One is the basic intrapersonal process (level 1). The next (level 2) is interpersonal and focuses on the overlapping fields of experience of two interlocutors. Group interaction (level 3) comprises many people. And finally a cultural level (level 4) links large groups of people [15, p. 125]. Moreover, each level of activity consists of four communicative functions: evaluating, sending, receiving, and channeling. Notice how the model focuses less on the structural attributes of communication—source, message, receiver, etc.—and more upon the actual determinants of the process. A similar concern with communicative functions can be traced through the models of Carroll (1955), Fearing (1953), Mysak (1970), Osgood (1954), and Peterson (1958). Peterson's model is one of the few to integrate the physiological and psychological functions at work in all interpersonal events.

**Table 1.5.7** Ruesch and Bateson Functional Model



Thus, models are a fundamental building block of theory. They are also a fundamental tool of instruction. Each provides the basis for considerable bodies of communication theory and research. Each model also provides teachers with a powerful pedagogical tool for teaching students to understand that communication is a complex process in which many things can, and frequently do, go wrong; for teaching students the ways in which they can perfect different skills at different points in the communication process to become more effective communicators.

## 1.6 Ethnography of Communication

The term *Ethnography of Communication* was introduced by Dell Hymes in 1972 and in the broad sense meant “the object of linguistic inquiry” or “communicative competence” [11, p. 175]. Hymes's definition of the term consisted of 4 elements:

- whether and to what degree something is grammatical (linguistic competence);
- whether and to what degree something is appropriate (social appropriateness);
- whether and to what degree something is feasible (psycholinguistic limitations);

- whether and to what degree something is done (observing actual language use).

This far broader conceptualization of language made the object of linguistic inquiry not only the structure of isolated sentences, but rules of speaking within a community [10, p. 35]. Consequently, the sentence was replaced as a basic unit of analysis with a three-fold classification of speech communication, according to which speech communication can be of the following types:

- **speech situations**, such as ceremonies, evenings out, sports events, bus trips – they are not purely communicative (not only governed by the rules of speaking), but provide a wider context for speaking.
- **speech events** are activities which are communicative and at the same time governed by the rules of speaking: conversations, lectures, political debates. These are activities in which speech plays a crucial role in the definition of what is going on – that is, if we eliminate speech, the activity cannot take place.
- **speech acts** are the smallest units of speech communication: orders, jokes, greetings, compliments, etc.; a speech act may involve more than one move from only one person, e.g. greeting usually involve a sequence of two 'moves'.

Hymes's model was based on a set of components of speech events, which provided a descriptive framework for ethnography of communication [11, p. 180]. These components were arranged in the following way:

- 1) situation (physical, temporal psychological setting defining the speech event);
- 2) participants (speaker, addressee, audience);
- 3) ends (outcomes and goals);
- 4) act sequence (form and content);
- 5) key (manner or spirit of speaking: mock, serious, perfunctory, painstaking);
- 6) instrumentalities (channels (spoken / written) and forms of speech (dialects, codes, varieties and registers);
- 7) norms of interaction – organization of turn-taking and norm of interpretation;
- 8) genres – casual speech, commercial messages, poems, myths, proverbs [10, p. 36].

## SUMMARY

- The chapter explores the nature of Communicative Linguistics, looks

at interpersonal communication as a primary concept for Communicative Linguistics's investigation, presents overview of the main communicative models and last gives basic information on ethnography of communication.

- Communication is a process of human interaction with the emphasis upon language. It is a process, which determines the life of a human being in a certain social setting.
- Essential to an understanding of interpersonal communication are the following elements: sender – receiver, encoding – decoding, messages, feedback, channel (medium) of communication.
- The basic aim of communication is a convergence of human beings towards mutual understanding. As such *communication* is defined as a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding. Such view leads to a relational perspective of human communication. When information is shared with individuals or groups taking part in the communication process, it may lead collective action towards mutual agreement and mutual understanding. Before this, the information is understood, interpreted and perceived by individuals. Such approach to communication emphasizes information exchange and networks that exist between individuals.
- Communication is: 1) a package of signals that usually reinforce but may also contradict one another; 2) a process of adjustment by which we adjust to a specialized communication system of other people; 3) inevitable (communication will occur whether we want it or not), irreversible (once something is received it remains communicated and cannot be erased from a listener's memory), unrepeatable (no communication act can ever be repeated exactly); 4) purposeful – through interpersonal communication we learn, relate, influence, play and help.

## PRACTICE

### ➤ **Language of Interpersonal Communication: Vocabulary Quiz**

Match the items of interpersonal communication with their definitions

- \_\_\_\_\_ interpersonal communication
- \_\_\_\_\_ encoding
- \_\_\_\_\_ feedback
- \_\_\_\_\_ semantic noise
- \_\_\_\_\_ feedforward
- \_\_\_\_\_ relationship messages

- \_\_\_\_\_ sender – receiver
- \_\_\_\_\_ signal-to-noise ratio
- \_\_\_\_\_ communication as a transactional process
- \_\_\_\_\_ cultural context

- 1) messages sent back to the source in response to the source's messages;
- 2) each person in the interpersonal communication act;
- 3) information about messages that are yet to be sent;
- 4) interference that occurs when the receiver does not understand the meanings intended by the sender;
- 5) the rules and norms, beliefs and attitudes of the people communicating;
- 6) communication as an ongoing process in which each part depends on each other part;
- 7) communication that takes place between two persons who have a relationship between them;
- 8) messages referring to the connection between the two people in communication;
- 9) a measure of meaningful message compared to interference;
- 10) the process of sending messages, for example, in speaking or writing.

➤ **Give Effective Feedback**

How would you give feedback in these various situations? Think about one or two sentences for each of them.

- a) a friend – whom you like but don't have romantic feelings for – asks you for a date;
- b) your lecturer asks you to evaluate the course;
- c) a bank manager asks if you want a credit card;
- d) a homeless person smiles at you on the street;
- e) a colleague at work tells a homophobic joke (*homophobia – feeling of hatred against homosexual people*).

➤ **Think Critically about the Following Questions**

- 1) What are the most important interpersonal skills for success in business?
- 2) Are women more sensitive to relationship messages than men?
- 3) Does communication accommodation take place on the Internet as it does in face-to-face communication?

➤ **Study the Following Pieces of Communicative Acts and Categorize Them According to the Setting, Types and Functions of Communication**

**1a**

A: *It's a worry isn't it?*

B: *What?*

A: *Your money (yes) organizing your money affairs.*

B: *tis ... A big worry.*

C: *Mmm*

B: *I've got to manage my money to look after myself in my old age.*

A: *You're in it.*

B: *What?*

A: *You're in it - you're in your old age.*

B: *I might live for another ten years. Be ...*

C: *Be a bloody miracle [laughter].*

B: *What? What did she say?*

A: *Be a miracle - after the life you've led. If you'd led a nice sedentary existence and hadn't drunk or smoked you might've been able to look forward to a telegram from the Queen*

C: *Be a thrill!*

A: *A big thrill.*

**1b**

A: *Where do you keep your detergents and stuff?*

B: *Next aisle - middle row of shelves.*

A: *Oh, yeah, got it. Is this the smallest you've got?*

B: *Yeah, what'd you ...*

A: *... it's a bit*

B: *Mmm - the Down Earth brand's on special.*

A: *OK, right ... Mmm three fifty-nine - still not cheap.*

B: *Well, that's the smallest they made I'm afraid.*

**1c**

*This is Dr Graham Lowe. We are closed for the weekend, but if you want to contact me after hours, you will need to do two things. Firstly, after the beep at the end of my message, leave your full name and telephone number. Then, you'll need to hang up and then dial my pager activating number which is 017331923 which will make my pager beep. That's 017331923. I will then ring through as soon as possible to get your message, and then I'll ring you. We 'll be open as usual on Monday morning at 8.45 am. Beep!*

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## Language as the Medium of Human Communication

Language is the development of the basic form of communication between human beings in a society. We cannot communicate in any real sense without language, other than through gestures; we do communicate through some non-verbal forms like the visual arts – painting, sculpture, dance, but the culmination of true, articulate, communication is through language (Bhaskar Ghose).

### Overview

The chapter explores how the two very different media of language communication – speech and writing – construct social structure of any communicative act. It also investigates the social matrix of language as it is used in verbal exchanges. We look in particular at how the social structure of a discourse community is reflected, constructed, and perpetuated by the way its members use language to define their position, to save each other's social face, and in general to “language” their experience in a style appropriate to the conventions of the group.

Topics covered include: Language from the Standpoint of Culture and Cognition; Spoken versus Written Language; Social Matrix of Language; Lexical Density; Social Deixis; Conversational Style versus Narrative Style.

*Key words: Language, Culture, Thought, Social Deixis, Footing, Conversational Style, Narrative Style.*

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### 2.1 Language from the Standpoint of Culture and Cognition

As Edward Sapir says: “Most of us would readily admit, I believe, that the community of language between Great Britain and the United States is far from arguing a like community of culture. A common language cannot indefinitely set the seal on a common culture when the geographical, political and economic determinants of the culture are no longer the same throughout the area” [10, p. 12].

Historically speaking, it seems to be the case that when two groups of what was a single cultural community lose physical, economic and political contact with each other they begin to diverge. It may be that they start to differ culturally more quickly than linguistically. But this may well be a superficial view.

On the other hand, when two culturally different communities come into contact and develop common economic and political systems there appear to be several different things that can happen. They may eventually merge, they may remain culturally distinct whilst being politically and economically a unit. Their languages may coalesce, one may supersede the other, or they may both continue side by side suffering some degree of mutual influence [13, p. 15]. Bilingualism, diglossia, superposed variety, are all terms that have been used to describe the various possible outcomes.

Quoting Sapir again: “Language, race and culture are not necessarily related. This does not mean that they never were” [10, p. 215]. The difficulty of interpreting this statement is that of knowing what is meant by “language” in this context. We can say, however, that there is a necessary connection between a community possessing a distinct culture on the one hand and the nature of its language, that is its dialect, on the other. This is a powerful reason for regarding dialects as functionally more important than languages. It is also a reason for regarding the concept of language as too vague to be useful for most practical purposes. The unitary nature of a language may be much more apparent and superficial than is generally supposed.

Thus, whatever linguists may say, they do not, in fact, describe languages, they describe dialects [3, p. 19]. The descriptions of what we call English are, in fact, descriptions of what we have called the *standard dialect*, that which has the widest distribution and highest social prestige. As J. R. Firth said: *Unity is the last concept that should be applied to language. Unity of language is the most figurative of all unities, whether it be historical, geographical, national or personal. There is no such thing as UNE LANGUE UNE and there never has been* [5, p. 12].

In fact, we may see our distinction between “language” and “dialect” as due to the influence of Greek culture, since the distinction was developed in Greek because of the existence of a number of clearly distinct written varieties in use in Classical Greece, each associated with a different area and used for a different kind of literature. Thus, the meanings of the Greek terms, which were translated as “language” and “dialect” were in fact quite different from the meanings these words have in English now. Their equivalents in French are perhaps more similar, since the French word *dialecte* refers only to regional varieties which are written and have a literature, in contrast with

regional varieties which are not written, which are called *patois* [3, p. 20]. The point is that there is nothing absolute about the distinction, which English happens to make between “languages” and “dialects”.

What then is the difference between a language and a dialect? There are two separate ways of distinguishing them. On the one hand, there is a **difference of size**, because **a language is larger than a dialect**. That is, a variety called a language contains more items than one called a dialect. That is the sense in which we may refer to English as a language, containing the sum total of all the items in all its dialects, with “Standard English” as one dialect among many others (Yorkshire English, Indian English, etc.).

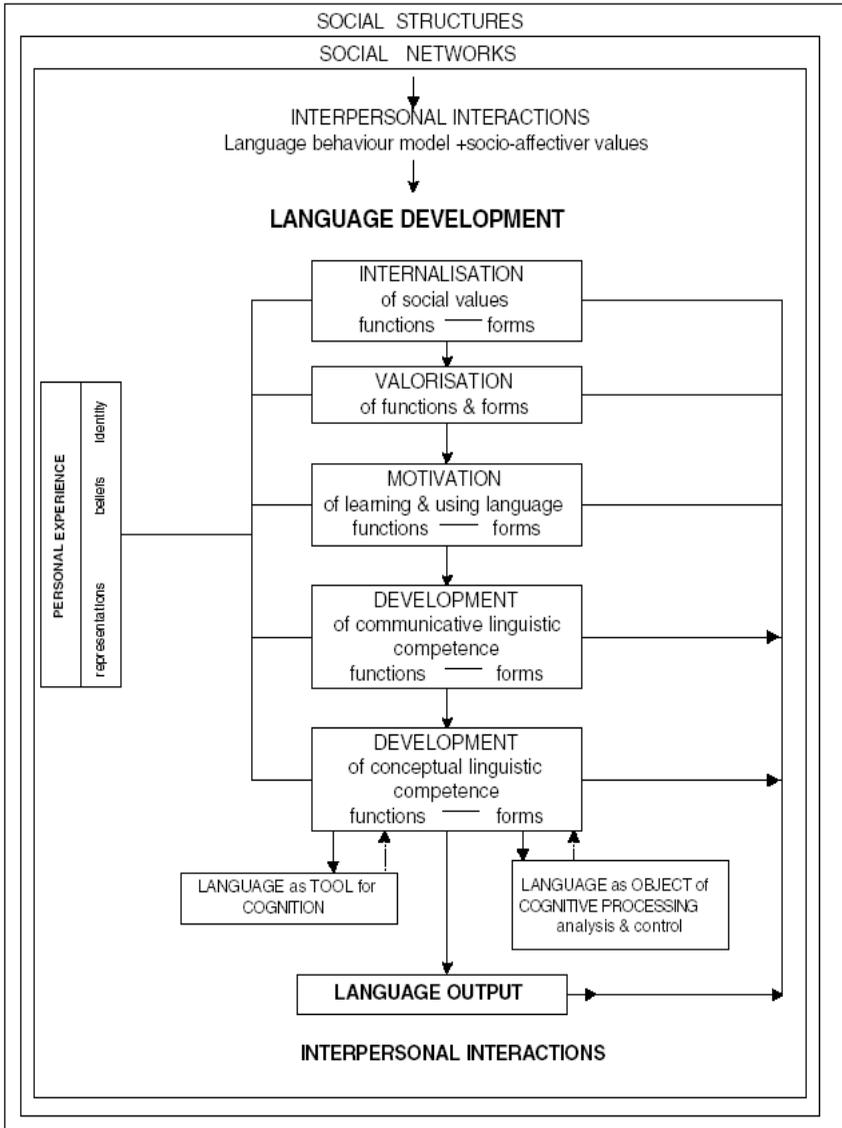
The other contrast between “language” and “dialect” is a **question of prestige** – a language having prestige, which a dialect lacks. Whether some variety is called a language or a dialect depends on how much prestige one thinks it has, and for most people this is a clear-cut matter, which depends on whether it is used in formal writing. Accordingly, people in Britain habitually refer to languages, which are unwritten as dialects irrespective of whether there is a language to which they are related.

However, the term “language” as well as the term “dialect” both related to so called linguistic items are concepts. In whichever way we understand the notion “linguistic items”, we can see them as the categories, which we use to analyse our experience, i.e. as **concepts**. Moreover, it is increasingly clear that many (if not all) linguistic items are defined in terms of **prototypes**, just like non-linguistic concepts, which is why it is often impossible to draw a hard and fast distinction between “good” and “bad” sentences. We may assume that people categorise speakers and circumstances in terms of concepts based, as usual, on prototypes. Speakers locate themselves in a multi-dimensional space in relation to the rest of their society, and locate each act of speaking in a multi-dimensional space relative to the rest of their social lives. We can now suggest that each “dimension” is defined by a particular concept of a typical speaker or typical situation. This view allows us to predict many phenomena, which are in fact found in communicative linguistics, such as ***metaphorical code-switching*** and the different degrees to which people's speech identifies them with particular groups.

To simplify somewhat, we may conclude that what is stored as a language system is a set of remembered concepts, which are the items of language, together with the concepts which define their social distribution. When we speak or listen to we make use of the concepts we already know in order to infer propositions (the meanings of sentences), and also to infer social categories, defined in terms of concepts.

The following map represents a complex set of interrelations between

language, meaning, thought and social component of language.



**Table 2.1** Social-Cognitive Model of Language

As for the relation between language and culture, most of language is contained within culture, so it would not be far from the truth to say that “a society's language is an aspect of its culture” [7, p. 301]. The area of overlap

between language and culture consists of all those parts of language which are learned from other people. However, we must allow some aspects not to be learned in this way, just as some concepts are clearly not learned from others. At least some of the concepts attached to words as their meanings are presumably of this kind (for instance a baby is likely to understand the concept “vertical” before he learns the name for it), and there may be other aspects of language which a child does not need to *learn*, such as the inventory of phonetic features or the concepts “noun” and “verb”. To the extent that there are aspects of language which are not learnt from other people, language is not wholly contained within culture.

We now turn to the *question of linguistic determinism*. To what extent, and in what ways, does language determine thought? This question is normally answered with reference to the ***Whorfian Hypothesis***, according to which language determines thought to a very great extent and in many ways. However, there are several other points of contact between language or speech and thought.

The first connection to be established is between language and other aspects of culture. To the extent that linguistic items are learned from other people, they are one part of the culture as a whole and as such are likely to be closely associated with other aspects of the culture that are learned from the same people. We might therefore expect that if a particular person learns two different linguistic items from different groups of people, each might be associated with a different set of cultural beliefs and values. Furthermore, it would not be surprising if each item activates a different set of such beliefs and values as it is used, and to that extent we could say that ***language (in this case, the choice of one linguistic variety rather than another) was determining thought.***

There is some evidence that this can indeed happen, as was shown by the behaviour of a number of women born in Japan who moved to the United States as wives of American ex-servicemen and learned English there. These women took part in an experiment organised by Susan Ervin-Tripp, a pioneer in the psychological and sociological study of language [4]. Each woman was interviewed once in English and once in Japanese and asked to perform various tasks that involved the creative use of language. One was to complete, in the language appropriate to the interview, a number of sentence-fragments, e.g. *I like to read ...* (or its Japanese translation). In a typical Japanese interview this might be completed by *... about sociology*, reflecting a Japanese set of values, whereas in her English interview the same woman might produce *I like to read comics once in a while because they sort of relax my mind*, reflecting, presumably, the values which she had learned in America.

Similar differences emerged from another of the tasks, in which the women were asked to say what was happening in a picture showing a farm, with a farmer ploughing in the background, a woman leaning against a tree, and a girl in the foreground carrying book on her arm. In the Japanese interview, a typical description was as follows:

*A student feels in conflict about being sent to college. Her mother is sick and the father works hard without much financial reward. Nevertheless, he continues to work diligently, without saying anything, praying for the daughter's success. Also he is a husband who never complains to his wife.*

When the interview was in English, on the other hand, the same woman might give the following description: *A sociology student observing farmers at work is struck by the difficulty of farm life.*

It would be unwise to base too many conclusions on this rather small and in some ways unsatisfactory piece of research. For instance, it is not clear how many of the women involved showed such considerable changes in attitude from one language to another, or how many tasks produced such changes; and in any case it is always dangerous to generalise from what people do in formal experimental interview situations. However, the findings are at least compatible with what we predicted on the basis of the connections between language and the rest of culture, so it is quite plausible to suggest that we make use of different value and belief systems according to which linguistic varieties we happen to be using at the time.

## 2.2 Spoken versus Written Language

The spoken medium is directly linked to the time of its production and to the perception by those present during the short-time verbal event. By contrast, writing is viewed as the translation of spoken language into more permanent, visible signs on a page. According to M. A. Halliday [8, p. 81], writing emerged in societies as a result of cultural changes which created new communicative needs. These needs could not be readily met by the spoken language. In particular, with the emergence of cultures based on agriculture rather than hunting and gathering, people needed permanent records which could be referred to over and over again. This led to the emergence of a new form of language – writing.

Written language performs a similar range of functions to those performed by spoken language – that is, it is used **to get things done, to provide information and to entertain**. However, the contexts for using written language are different from those in which spoken language is used. In the case of information, written language is used to communicate with others

who are removed in time and space.

Halliday [8] suggests that written language is used **for action** (for example, *public signs, product labels, television and radio guides, bills, menus, computer manuals*); **for information** (for example, *newspapers, current affairs magazines, advertisements, political pamphlets*); and **for entertainment** (for example, *comic strips, fiction books, poetry and drama, newspaper features, film subtitles*). These differences can be observed within the sentence at the level of grammar, and beyond the sentence at the level of text structure.

Generally speaking scholars have identified the following seven characteristics of spoken / written languages [9, p. 35]:

- ∞ ***Speech is transient (short-time, temporary, occasional), rather than permanent.*** Because of physical constraints, interlocutors may not speak at the same time, or else they cannot hear what the others say. They are bound by the non-reversible distribution of turns at talk. ***Written language, by contrast, can be stored, retrieved, and recollected, and responses can be delayed.*** Because it cannot be immediately challenged as in oral communication, written language carries more weight and more prestige. Moreover, the permanence of writing as a medium can easily lead people to suppose that what it expresses is permanent too.
- ∞ ***Speech is additive or “rhapsodic”.*** Because of the dialogic nature of oral interaction, speakers 'rhapsodize', i.e. stitch together elements from previous turns-at-talk, they add language as they go along (*and ... and, then ... and then ...*). By contrast, ***the information conveyed in writing is hierarchically ordered within the clause structure***, and is linearly arranged on the page, from left to right, or top to bottom, according to the cultural convention. Since it is likely to be read by distant, unknown, or yet-to-be-born audiences, it has developed an information structure characterized by a high level of cohesion.
- ∞ ***Speech is aggregative***, i.e. it makes use of verbal aggregates or formulaic expressions, ready-made chunks of speech that maintain the contact between interlocutors, also called ***phatic communion***. By contrast, in the absence of such direct contact and for the sake of economy of information over long distances or long periods of time, and because it can be read and re-read at will, ***writing has come to be viewed as the medium that fosters analysis, logical reasoning and abstract categorization.***
- ∞ ***Speech is redundant or “copious”.*** Because speakers are never quite

sure whether their listener is listening, paying attention, comprehending and remembering what they are saying or not, they tend to make frequent use of repetition, paraphrase, and restatement. By contrast, written language tends to avoid redundancy.

☞ *Speech is loosely structured grammatically and is lexically sparse (scanty); writing, by contrast, is grammatically compact and lexically dense.* What does this mean? Speakers have to attend to many aspects of the situation while they concentrate on what they are saying, and while they monitor the way they are saying it. Thus, their speech is characterized by false starts, filled and unfilled pauses, hesitations, parenthetical remarks, unfinished sentences. They create their utterances as they are speaking them. Writers, by contrast, have time to pack as much information in the clause as they can, using all the complex syntactic resources the language can give them; they can condense large quantities of information in a tighter space by using, for example, dense nominalised phrases.

The contrast is shown in the examples below:

<i>WRITTEN</i>	<i>SPOKEN</i>
Every previous visit had left me with a sense of the futility of further action on my part.	“Whenever I’d visited there before, I’d ended up feeling that it would be futile if I tried to do anything more”.
Improvements in technology have reduced the risks and high costs associated with simultaneous installation.	“Because the technology has improved, it’s less risky than it used to be when you install them at the same time, and it doesn’t cost so much either”.

**Table 2.2** Spoken and Written Language

☞ *Speech tends to be people-centered; writing tends to be topic-centered.* Because of the presence of an audience and the need to keep the conversation going, speakers not only focus on their topic, but try to engage their listeners as well, and appeal to their senses and emotions. In writing, by contrast, the topic or message and its transferability from one context to the other is the main concern. Writers try to make their message as clear, unambiguous, coherent, and trustworthy as possible since they will not always be there to explain and defend it. Of course, a lot of written texts can appeal to the readers’ emotions, and display many features characteristic of speech.

☞ *Speech, being close to the situation at hand, is context dependent; writing, being received far from its original context of production, is context-reduced.* Because of the dialogic character of oral exchanges, truth in the oral mode is jointly constructed and based on common sense experience. Truth in the literate mode is based on the logic and the coherence of the argument being made.

We must always remember that the differences between spoken and written languages are not absolute and the characteristics that we tend to associate with written language can sometimes occur in spoken language and vice versa. A scribbled memo, an e-mail, an informal letter, like a conversation or a homily (moralizing discourse which is used in a church by a priest), are written in the oral mode; an academic lecture, a scientific presentation, a scholarly article, are spoken in the literate mode.

**GRAMMAR:** written language has certain features that are generally not shared by the spoken language. Linguistically, written language tends to consist of clauses that are internally complex, whereas with spoken language the complexity exists in the ways in which clauses are joined together.

### 2.3 Lexical Density

The question of lexical density is closely connected with the question of grammar in written and spoken languages. Spoken and written languages also differ in the ratio of content words to grammatical or function words. Content or lexical words include nouns and verbs, while grammatical words include prepositions, pronouns and articles. The number of lexical or content words per clause is referred to as *lexical density* [9, p. 41].

In the following example there are 12 content words in a single clause, which gives the text the lexical density of 12. A spoken version is given to the right.

<i>WRITTEN</i>	<i>SPOKEN</i>
The use of this method of control unquestionably leads to safer and faster trains running in the most adverse weather conditions.	You can control the trains this way and if you do that you can be quite sure that they'll be able to run more safely and more quickly than they would otherwise no matter how bad the weather gets.

In the spoken version there are 10 content words (*control, trains, way, sure, run, safely, quickly, bad, weather, gets*) distributed between 5 clauses, which gives the text the lexical density of two.

The density of written language is also reinforced by the tendency to

create nouns from verbs. Examples of this process are as follows:

<i><b>SPOKEN</b></i>	<i><b>WRITTEN</b></i>
Good writers <u>reflect</u> on what they write.	<u>Reflection</u> is a characteristic of good writers.

Halliday [8] calls this process of turning verbs into nouns *grammatical metaphor*. In other words, processes or functions which in the grammatical system of English would normally be represented as verbs have been transformed into “things” and represented as nouns. It is this transformation which led Halliday to use the term “metaphor”.

These linguistic differences between spoken and written language are not absolutes. As it has already been pointed out, some written texts share many of the characteristics of spoken texts, and vice versa.

## 2.4 Indicating Status

Aim, function of communicative act (to entertain, to make somebody do something, to provide information), position of interlocutors in time and space – all this influences our choice of language form – whether written or spoken language. Another important factor for the choice of language is social one. In verbal encounters, what people say to each other, for example, “*Bill, why don't you meet me here tomorrow?*” – information they enclose in their messages, is anchored in the mind of speaker A, as evidenced by the words ‘*you*’, ‘*me*’, ‘*here*’, ‘*tomorrow*’. These words which we use in a communicative act to anchor some kind of info in the mind of our interlocutor are called *deictics*.

**Deictic** – element of speech that points in a certain direction as viewed from the perspective of the speaker, f.e., *here, there, today, coming, going*.  
**Deixis** – process by which language indexes the physical, temporal, and social location of the speaker at the moment of utterance [9, p. 45].

Markers of *social deixis* give an indication not only of where the speaker stands in time and place – *in a 'today' in the 'here' of speaking* – but also of his / her status within the social structure, and of the status the speaker gives the addressee. For example, the use of **Sie** or **du** in German can index either power or solidarity, distance or closeness. English used to have ‘**you**’ for distance, ‘**thou**’ for closeness; now English has only retained the ‘**you**’, but social deixis in English expresses social position by other forms of address like ‘**Bill**’, ‘**Bill X**’, ‘**Mister X**’, ‘**Professor X**’ and the like [2, p. 266].

These forms of address index:

- social class (upper-class German families where **Sie** is used in conversation between parents and parents and children);

- generational culture, as the currently prevalent use of reciprocal **Du** among students or young people in Germany;
- a culture that wants itself to be egalitarian and democratic as in the informal forms of address used in the United States ('**dear friend**', '**call me Bill**').

The police's use of a non-reciprocal **tu** to address North African youth in France expresses an explicit display of power; being addressed with **tu** indexes the subordinate or marginal place occupied by these youths in French society today [9].

## 2.5 Footing

The use of social deictics like pronouns, forms of address, or names, is one way speakers align themselves to the cultural context as they understand it [1, p. 12]. Changes in intonation and pronunciation can also indicate changes in our perception of our role as a participant in an interaction, and in our alignment to others. Goffman called such a *positioning footing*, i.e. the stance we take up to ourselves and to the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of utterances [6, p. 127].

A change in footing is usually marked by a change in register, tone of voice or bodily orientation. For example, it is frequently the case in the United States that a Northerner talking to a Southerner instinctively aligns his / her way of talking on that of the Southerner, as a sign of conversational cooperation; similarly, a native speaker who starts adopting a style of speaking called “foreigner talk” when talking to a foreigner, shows a convergence that can be interpreted either as cultural solidarity or as the display of cultural power. We can see this same phenomenon occurring in classrooms. A teacher talks differently to her pupils when she addresses them as a class or as individual children:

*1. Now listen everybody!*

*2. At ten o'clock we'll have assembly. We'll all go out together and go to the auditorium and sit in the first two rows. Mr. Dock, the principal, is going to speak to us. When he comes in, sit quietly and listen carefully.*

*3. Don't wiggle your legs. Pay attention to what I'm saying [ibid., p. 127].*

The switch in tone and in the use of pronouns from '**everybody**' to '**we**' to '**you**' and '**I**' sets the utterances 1, 2, and 3 apart from one another. Three different footings are involved here: the first statement is a claim on the children's immediate behavior, the second is a review of experiences to come, and the third a side remark to a particular child. The teacher, as a speaker, switches roles from being a principal (in the legalistic sense), i.e. representing

the institutional voice of the school, to being an animator or class teacher who animates her students' voices through the (euphemistic) use of 'we', to becoming an author or private adult demanding to be listened to.

The switch in register indexes a switch in cultural alignment, from marking the teacher's membership in the institutional culture of the school to her identity as an individual speaker, albeit endowed with the authority of an adult. Both switches, in tone and in register, index a distinct change in footing.

Defining one's footing can also be achieved through *code-switching* – verbal strategy by which bilingual or bidialectal speakers change linguistic code within the same speech event as a sign of cultural solidarity or distance [9, p. 51].

Changes in footing correspond to a change in the way we perceive events. A change in footing is connected with a change in our frame for events. *Framing*, or the ability to apply a frame of interpretation to an utterance or speech event through a contextualization cue (in this case the switch in social deictic and in code), is our way of linking the speech event to other similar speech events we have experienced, and to anticipate future events. It is by sharing frames of interpretation that people know that they share the same culture.

## 2.6 Protecting Face

The ultimate aim of negotiating frames and footings in conversation is to protect one's own and other participants' *face* at all times. Members of a cultural group need to feel respected and not impinged upon in their autonomy, pride, and self-sufficiency (*negative face*). They also need to be reinforced in their view of themselves as polite, considerate, respectful members of their culture (*positive face*).

These two contradictory needs require delicate face-work, since it is in the interest of all participants in a verbal exchange that everyone maintain both his/her negative and positive face, so that the exchange can continue. For Japanese group, the one who speaks first is the one who runs the greatest risk of face loss, because he / she has to take the floor without knowing where the others stand. The turn-taking order is thus indirectly arranged so that juniors and inferiors take earlier turns, perhaps because their face is considered less important, while seniors/superiors take later turns (*In Japanese culture first women speak, then junior male members, then senior males*).

The negotiation of frames and footings and the facework accomplished in verbal encounters among members of a given social group gives rise to group-specific discourse styles. In particular, what distinguish people from

different cultures is different ways they use orate and literate discourse styles in various speech genres for various social purposes.

## 2.7 Conversational Style

In face-to-face verbal exchanges, the choice of orate features of speech can give the participants a feeling of joint interpersonal involvement rather than the sense of detachment or objectivity that comes with the mere transmission of factual information. Different contexts of situation and different contexts of culture call for different conversational styles.

Compare for example an interview, in which the purpose is to elicit information, and a conversation among friends, where the purpose is to share past experiences.

***Interview between a journalist and a young apprentice in Germany:***

*A: and where do you work?*

*B: I work in the metal industry*

*A: uhuh ... why did you choose that particular job? in the metal industry?*

*B: well ... it was ... so to speak ... the job of my dreams. I wanted to work, but not particularly an intellectual job, but a more physical one*

*A: so ... you can say that you chose that job yourself?*

*B: I chose that job myself [9, p. 52].*

From the controlled, non-overlapping sequence of turns, the interviewer's attempt at professional, detached, objectivity, the cautious responses of the young apprentice desirous to be forthcoming with the required information, we recognize the typical style of a speech event called 'interview'.

This literate journalistic style is quite different from the orate style one may find in a conversation among friends.

***Conversation between Peter and Deborah, both from a New York Jewish cultural background:***

*Peter: What I've been doing is cutting down on my sleep*

*Deborah: OY! [sighs] And I've been ... and I ... I do that too but it's ... painful.*

*Peter: Yeah. Five, six hours a night, ... and ...*

*Deborah: Oh God how can you do it. You survive? [11, p. 82].*

Here Peter and Deborah's common cultural background is enacted through a distinctive orate conversational style, where paralinguistic signals like sighs and interjections ('oy!') signal empathy, the heavy use of personal pronouns ('I', 'you') indexes both ego involvement and involvement with the listener, and where frequent interruptions and overlaps index a high degree of

conversational co-operation.

Note, however, that this is how Deborah herself interprets these phenomena. Interlocutors from another culture with a more literate conversational style, marked by brevity, conciseness, and a concern for exactitude, might interpret the overlaps, the frequent backchannel signals and the interjections not as co-operation, but on the contrary as so many violations of their conversational space. They might perceive Deborah and Peter as being intolerable blabberers and might in turn be perceived by them as being standoffish and unsociable.

The orate-literate continuum gets realized differently in different cultural genres, like interviews and friendly conversations, but also in different cultural traditions within one genre, such as classroom talk. For example, Indian children from the Warm Springs reservation in Oregon, who are used to learning by silently listening to and watching adults in their family, and by participating in social events within the community as a whole, have a notably different interactional behaviour in the classroom than their Anglo-American peers and the teacher, even though all speak English. They mostly remain silent, do not respond to direct solicitations to display their knowledge in public, do not vie for the attention of the teacher, and seem more interested in working together with their peers.

No doubt people are able to display a variety of conversational styles in various situations, and one should avoid equating one person or one culture with one discourse style. For example, Deborah and Peter are perfectly capable of adopting a literate discourse style in interview situations, and Warm Spring Indian children can be very lively conversationalists when among peers outside the classroom. However, **by temperament and upbringing, people do tend to prefer one or the other style in a given situation.** This style, in turn, forms part of their cultural identity and sense of self.

## 2.8 Narrative Style

The influence of culture on discourse style also becomes apparent in the differential distribution of orate and literate features of speech in story telling. For example, using the short “pear narrative” film by William Chafe, Tannen asked native speakers from Anglo-American and Greek background to retell the film in their own words. Here is how Tannen tells the film:

*It showed a man picking pears from a tree, then descending and dumping them into one of three baskets on the ground. A boy comes by on a bicycle and steals a basket of pears. As he's riding away, he passes a girl on a bike, his hat flies off his head, and the bike overturns. Three*

*boys appear and help him gather his pears. They find his hat and return it to him and he gives them pears. The boys then pass the farmer who has just come down from the tree and discovered that his basket of pears is missing. He watches them walk by eating pears [12, p. 21].*

In comparing the narratives told by American women in English and Greek women in Greek, Tannen reports that each group had a distinctive narrative style. The Greeks told “better stories”, by often interweaving judgements about the character's behaviour (for example, the boy should not have stolen the pears or should have thanked his helpers sooner), or about the film's message (for example, that it showed a slice of agricultural life, or that little children help each other).

In contrast, the Americans reportedly gave a “better recollection” of the original sequence of events, and gave all the details they could remember. They used their judgment to comment on the filmmaker's technique (for example, that the costumes were unconvincing or the soundtrack out of proportion).

The Greeks seemed to draw upon an interactive experience which was focused more on interpersonal involvement: telling the story in ways that would interest the interviewer, interpreting the film's human message.

The Americans seemed to draw on their willingness to approach a school task for its own demands. They were focusing on the content of the film, treating it as a cinematic object, with critical objectivity.

Each group made differential use of orate and literate features according to the expectations their culture had prepared them to have of the task at hand.

The only conclusion one can draw from examples such as this one is that, **given the same situation and the same task, people from different cultures will interpret the situation and the demands of the task differently and thus behave in different ways.**

## SUMMARY

- The chapter has tried to address issues concerning the interconnection of language and interpersonal communication. The ways in which language means, both as sign and as action, differ according to the medium used. The spoken medium bears the marks of orality, literacy, as measured against the characteristic features of conversational-spoken vs. essayist-written language.
- Cultures themselves are orate or literate according to the uses their members make of the spoken and the written language in various contexts. Through the social organization of talk, culture is

constructed across day-to-day dialogues, through the choice of frames and footings that speakers adopt *vis-a-vis* their own and others' discourse, and through the way they collaborate in the necessary facework within a variety of discourse types. Culture puts its imprint on the conversational and narrative styles of the members of a social group. These styles are generally considered to form part of people's cultural identities.

- However, the advent of writing and the invention of the printing press have radically changed the relation of language and culture. There have always been two ways of looking at written language: as a fixed and stable product (text), or as an interactive, highly inferential process between a text and its readers (discourse). Through their educational system, their media, and their political institutions, discourse communities play an important role in establishing the parameters of socially acceptable literacy events, in defining the appropriate genres within their boundaries, and in seeing to it that these genres are respected by their members.

## PRACTICE

### ➤ Read the Following Texts, Answer the Questions

#### TEXT 1

*The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity* / Robert Brown, Alan Gilman // *Language and Social Context*. – London : Penguin, 1972. – P. 266, 269 – 270.

*One of the major social deictic devices is the reciprocal or non-reciprocal use of personal pronouns and other forms of address. The reciprocal use of French 'tu' or 'vous' (German 'du' or 'Sie', Spanish 'tu' or 'usted') indicates symmetry in power relations among interlocutors. Non-reciprocal use of personal forms of address, such as when one speaker addresses the other with 'tu' but is addressed with 'vous', indicates a difference in power and status among interlocutors. The use of such forms varies historically and culturally.*

A historical study of the pronouns of address reveals a set of semantic and social psychological correspondence. The non-reciprocal power semantic is associated with a relatively static society in which power is distributed by birthright and is not subject to much redistribution. The power semantic was closely tied with the feudal and manorial systems ... The static social structure was accompanied by the Church's teaching that each man had his

properly appointed place and ought not to wish to rise above it. The reciprocal solidarity semantic has grown with social mobility and an equalitarian ideology ... In France the non-reciprocal power semantic was dominant until the Revolution when the Committee for the Public Safety condemned the use of V as a feudal remnant and ordered a universal reciprocal T ... In England, before the Norman Conquest, 'ye' was the second person plural and 'thou' the singular. 'You' was originally the accusative of 'ye' but in time it also became the nominative plural and ultimately ousted 'thou' as the usual singular.

We believe ... that the development of open societies with an equalitarian ideology acted against the non-reciprocal power semantic and in favor of solidarity. It is our suggestion that the larger social changes created a distaste for the face-to-face expression of different power ... Award of the doctoral degree, for instance, transforms a student into a colleague and, among American academics, the familiar first name is normal. The fledgling academic may find it difficult to call his former teachers by their first names. Although these teachers may be young and affable, they have had a very real power over him for several years and it will feel presumptuous to deny this all at once with a new mode of address. However, the 'tyranny of democratic manners' does not allow him to continue comfortably with the polite 'Professor X'. He would not like to be thought unduly conscious of status, unprepared for faculty rank, a born lickspittle. Happily, English allows him a respite. He can avoid any *term* of address, staying with the uncommitted 'you', until he and his addressees have got used to the new state of things. The linguistic RITE DE PASSAGE has, for English speakers, a waiting room in which to screw up courage.

- *How do you think power differences are expressed in societies where there is no choice between second person pronoun forms (for example, 'tu' / 'vous') in the language itself?*
- *In your view, how would 'an equalitarian ideology' affect the use of these pronouns, or other forms of address, in the languages you are familiar with?*

## **TEXT 2**

***Footing in Forms of Talk*** / Erving Goffman. – University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981. – P. 124 – 125.

*Power relations are expressed among speakers not only through social deictics but also through subtle changes in alignments of speaker to hearers, as the following example given by Goffman illustrates. The White House incident occurred during the small talk phase that usually follows more serious business, and that generally*

*involves a change of tone and an alteration of the symmetrical power relationship between the President and representatives of the Press.*

WASHINGTON [UPI] – President Nixon, a gentleman of the old school, teased a newspaper woman yesterday about wearing slacks to the White House and made it clear that he prefers dresses on women. After a bill-signing ceremony in the Oval Office, the President stood up from his desk and in a teasing voice said to UPI's Helen Thomas: "Helen, are you still wearing slacks? Do you prefer them actually? Every time I see girls in slacks it reminds me of China". Miss Thomas, somewhat abashed, told the President that Chinese women were moving toward Western dress.

"This is not said in an uncomplimentary way, but slacks can do something for some people and some it can't". He hastened to add, "but I think you do very well. Turn around".

As Nixon, Attorney General Elliott L. Richardson, FBI Director Clarence Kelley and other high-ranking law enforcement officials smiling, Miss Thomas did a pirouette for the President. She was wearing white pants, a navy blue jersey shirt, long white beads and navy blue patent leather shoes with red trim.

Nixon asked Miss Thomas how her husband, Douglas Cornell, liked her wearing pants outfits.

"He doesn't mind", she replied.

"Do they cost less than gowns?"

"No", said Miss Thomas.

"Then change", commanded the President with a wide grin as other reporters and cameramen roared with laughter.

This incident paints to the power of the president to force an individual who is female from her occupational capacity into a sexual, domestic one during an occasion in which she might well be very concerned that she be given her full professional due. Behind this fact is something much more significant: the contemporary social definition that women must always be ready to receive comments on their "appearance" not interpretable as sarcasm. Implied, structurally, is that a woman must ever be ready to change ground, or, rather, have the ground changed for her, by virtue of being subject to becoming momentarily an object of approving attention, not a participant in it.

- *In the incident as it is reported here, what do you think are the verbal and non-verbal aspects of the change of footing that Goffman talks about?*
- *This change in footing corresponds to a change in the frame that the President imposes on the events and that Helen Thomas is forced to accept. How would you characterize this change in frame?*

### TEXT 3

*Politeness* / Penelope Brown, Stephen C. Levinson. – Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1978. – P. 13.

*The incident related in Text 2 illustrates the public facework that even a president has to do in order to put down a professional woman with impunity in a democratic society. Such facework is part of an elaborate system of politeness that has universal validity, even though its realization varies from culture to culture.*

#### **Cultural notions of “face”**

Central to our model is a highly abstract notion of “face” which consists of two specific kinds of desires (“face-wants”) attributed by interlocutors to one another: the desire to be unimpeded in one’s actions (**negative face**), and the desire (in some respects) to be approved of (**positive face**). This is the bare bones of a notion of face which is universal, but which in any particular society is the subject of much cultural elaboration. On the one hand, this core concept is subject to cultural specifications of many sorts – what kinds of acts threaten face, what sorts of persons have special rights to face-protection, what kinds of personal style (in terms of things like graciousness, ease of social relations, etc.) are especially appreciated ... On the other hand notions of face naturally link up to some of the most fundamental cultural ideas about the nature of the social persona, honour and virtue, shame and redemption and thus to religious concepts.

- *Analyze the incident related in Text 2 in terms of face. How does Nixon’s behavior manage to both satisfy and threaten Helen Thomas’ positive and negative face?*

➤ **Look at the following abstracts. Identify types of texts and analyse them from the point of view of grammatical complexity. Present the second text as a piece of written language, making all the necessary changes.**

1. Like Vincent d’Indy, a disciple of Cesar Frank, Chausson shares with them a dreamy, even idle poetry, sumptuous but precise orchestration, and an energy that is intimate rather than powerful, ascetic rather than importunate.
2. This morning Associate Professor Dean Wolfe will talk about the science of music at half-past eleven, and we’ll hear some fascinating things such as musicians playing music backwards – but most of it will be played forwards!

- Study the following written text (Deborah Tannen, 1984: 82). Identify the ways in which its linguistic features are determined by the context and purpose for which it was produced.

What is discourse analysis?

11

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## Conversational Communication and Types of Communicative Messages: Verbal, Non-Verbal

You must know how to use words to do things and also exactly what words you can use in certain circumstances. And you must be able to supplement and reinforce what you choose to say with other appropriate behaviours: your movements, gestures, posture, gaze, and so on (Ronald Wardhaugh).

### Overview

The chapter discusses the process of conversation, what it is, how it is managed, and how it can be made more effective. It presents the view that conversation is a complex and perplexing activity, which embodies rules and etiquette and requires participants to possess skills that are improved with practice. The chapter also presents different techniques of effective conversation management, which could be of great help for those who seem incapable of listening to others, ignore the verbal and visual clues that enable a conversation to flow, etc. Thus, it can be useful for those individuals who learn how to listen and participate in dialogue and conversation.

Topics covered include: Process of Conversation; Managing Conversation; Maintaining Conversation; Conversational Turns; Closing Conversation; Nature of Verbal Messages.

*Key words: Conversation, Phatic Communication, Altercast, Disclaimer, "Opening Line", Conversational Turns.*

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### 3.1 The Process of Conversation

As we have already specified in the previous chapter language can exist in two basic forms – spoken and written. These two forms specify the general line according to which human conversation can be managed – verbal and non-verbal. Generally speaking, *conversation* can be defined as relatively informal social interaction in which the roles of speaker and hearer are

exchanged in a non-automatic fashion under the collaborative management of all parties [6, p. 12].

Most often conversation takes place face-to-face. And this is the type of interaction that probably comes in mind when one thinks of conversation. But today much conversation also takes place online. Online communication is becoming a part of people's experience worldwide. Such communications are important personally, socially, and professionally.

With the understanding that conversation can take place in a wide variety of channels, let's look at the way conversation works. Conversation takes place in 5 steps: opening, feedforward, business, feedback, and closing [3, p. 234 – 238].

### **Step One. Opening**

The first step is to open the conversation, usually with some verbal or non-verbal greeting: *"Hi"*. *"How are you?"* *"Hello, this is Joe"*, a smile, or a wave.

You can accomplish a great deal in your opening. First, your greeting can tell others that you are accessible, that you are available to them for conversation. You can also reveal important information about the relationship between yourself and the other person. For example, a big smile and a warm *"Hi, it's been a long time"* may signal that your relationship is still a friendly one. Your greeting also helps maintain the relationship. You can see this function served between workers who pass each other frequently. This greeting-in-passing assures both people that even though they do not stop and talk for an extended period, they still have access to each other.

In normal conversation, your greeting is returned by the other person with a greeting that is similar in its formality and intensity. When it is not – when the other person turns away or responds coldly to your friendly *"Good morning"* – you know that something is wrong. Similarly, openings are generally consistent in tone with the main part of the conversation: you would not normally follow a cheery *"How ya doing today, big guy?"* with news of a family death.

### **Step Two. Feedforward**

At the second step there is usually some kind of feedforward. Feedforward is information about messages before you send them. Opening comments, such as *"Wait until you hear this"* or *"I'm not sure of this, but ..."* or *"Don't get me wrong, but ..."* are examples of feedforward. These messages tell the listener something about the messages to come or about the way you'd like the listener to respond. Non-verbally, you give feedforward by, for example, your facial expressions, eye contact and physical posture: with these non-verbal messages you tell the other person something about the

messages you'll be sending. A smile may signal a pleasant message; eye avoidance may signal that the message to come is difficult and perhaps uncomfortable to express.

Another words, you give the other person a general idea of what the conversation will focus on: *"I got to tell you about Jack," "Did you hear what happened in class yesterday?"* etc.

As with the greeting, you can accomplish a great deal with feedforward, for example, you can (1) open the channel of communication, (2) preview the message, (3) altercast and (4) disclaim. Let us look at each in more detail.

### *Open the Channels of Communication*

**Phatic communication** (messages that open the channels of communication) is a perfect example of feedforward. Phatic communication tells us that the normal, expected, and accepted rules of interaction will be in effect. It's information that tells us another person is willing to communicate.

Feedforward messages frequently preview other messages. Feedforward may, for example, preview the content (*"I'm afraid I have bad news for you"*), the importance (*"Listen to this before you make a move"*), the form or style (*"I'll tell you all the gory details"*), and the positive or negative quality (*"You're not going to like this, but here's what I heard"*) of subsequent messages.

**Altercast.** Feedforward is often used to place the receiver in a specific role and to request that the receiver respond to you in terms of this assumed role. This process asks the receiver to approach your message from a particular perspective or even as someone else. For example, you might ask a friend, *"As an advertising executive, what would you think of corrective advertising?"* This question casts your friend in the role of advertising executive (rather than that of parent, Democrat, or Baptist, for example). It asks your friend to answer from a particular point of view.

**Disclaimer.** The **disclaimer** is a statement that aims to ensure that your message will be understood and will not reflect negatively on you. It is a statement that asks the listener to receive what you are saying in a positive light. Suppose, for example, that your listeners will think your comment is inappropriate, or that they may rush to judge you without hearing your full account, or that they may think you are not in full possession of your faculties. In such cases you may use some form of disclaimer and say, for example, *"This may not be the place to say this, but ..."* or *"Just hear me out before you hang up"*.

### **Step Three: Business**

Business is the substance or focus of the conversation. The business is

conducted through exchanges of speaker and listener roles. Usually, brief (rather than long) speaking turns characterize most satisfying conversations.

Business is a good word to use for this stage, because the term emphasizes that most conversations are goal-directed. You converse to fulfil one or several of the purposes of interpersonal language communication: to learn, relate, influence, play, help. The term is also general enough to include all kinds of interactions. During the business stage you talk about Jack, what happened in class. This is obviously the longest part of the conversation and the reason for both the opening and the feedforward.

Not surprisingly, each culture has its own conversational taboos – topics or language that should be avoided, especially by visitors from other cultures (See Table 3.1.).

*The Table lists several examples of topics Roger Axtell [1, p. 86] recommends that visitors from the USA avoid when in other countries. These examples rather should serve as a reminder that each culture defines what is and what is not an appropriate topic of conversation. Can you think of other examples?*

COUNTRY	CONVERSATIONAL TABOO
Belgium	Politics, language differences between French and Flemish, religion
Norway	Salaries, social status
Spain	Family, religion, jobs, negative comments on bullfighting
Nigeria	Religion
Iraq	Religion, Middle Eastern Politics
Japan	World War II
Philippines	Politics, religion, corruption, foreign aid
South Korea	Internal politics, socialism or communism, criticism of the government
Colombia	Politics, criticism of bullfighting
Mexico	Mexican-American War, illegal aliens
Caribbean nations	Race, local politics, religion

**Table 3.1** Conversational Taboos

**Step Four: Feedback**

The Feedback step is the reverse of the feedforward step. Here you reflect back on the conversation to signal that the business is completed: "So, you may want to send Jack a get-well card," "Wasn't that the craziest class you ever heard of?"

In another sense, as discussed in Chapter 1, feedback takes place

throughout the interpersonal communication process. Speakers and listeners constantly exchange feedback-messages sent back to the speaker concerning reactions to what is said. Feedback tells the speaker what effect he or she is having on listeners. On the basis of this feedback, the speaker may adjust, modify, strengthen, deemphasize, or change the content or form of the message.

Feedback can take many forms. A frown or a smile, a yea or a nay, a pat on the back or a punch in the mouth are all types of feedback. We can think about feedback in terms of five important dimensions: positive – negative, person focused – message focused, immediate – delayed, low monitoring – high monitoring, supportive – critical [4, p. 102].

**Positive feedback** (applause, smiles, head nods signifying approval) tells the speaker that his or her message is being well received and that essentially the speaker should continue speaking in the same general mode.

**Negative feedback** (boos, frowns and puzzled looks, gestures signifying disapproval) tells the speaker that something is wrong and that some adjustment needs to be made.

Feedback may be **person-focused** ("*You're sweet,*" "*You have a great smile*") or **message-focused** ("*Can you repeat that phone number?*" "*Your argument is a good one*"). Especially when you are giving criticism, it's important to make clear that your feedback relates to, say, the organization of the budget report and not the person himself or herself.

Feedback can be **immediate** or **delayed**. Generally, the most effective feedback is that which is immediate. In interpersonal situations feedback is most often sent immediately after the message is received. Feedback, like reinforcement, loses its effectiveness with time. The longer you wait to praise or punish, for example, the less effect it will have. In other communication situations, however, the feedback may be delayed. Instructor evaluation questionnaires completed at the end of the course provide feedback long after the class is over. In interview situations the feedback may come weeks afterwards.

Feedback varies from the spontaneous and totally honest reaction (**low-monitored feedback**) to the carefully constructed response designed to serve a specific purpose (**high-monitored feedback**). In most interpersonal situations you probably give feedback spontaneously; you allow your responses to show without any monitoring. At other times, however, you may be more guarded, as when your boss asks you how you like your job or when your grandfather asks what you think of his new motorcycle outfit.

Feedback is supportive when you console another or when you simply encourage the other to talk or when you affirm another's self-definition.

Critical feedback, on the other hand, is evaluative. When you give critical feedback, you judge another's performance – as in, for example, evaluating a speech or coaching someone who is learning a new skill.

### **Step Five. Closing**

Most obviously, this step signals the end of accessibility. Just as the opening signalled access, the closing signals the end of access. The closing may also signal some degree of supportiveness: for example, you might express your pleasure in interacting through a comment such as *“Well, it was good talking with you”*.

In some conversations the closing summarizes the interaction. Like the opening, the closing may be verbal or non-verbal but is usually a combination of both. Examples of verbal closing include expressions of appreciation (*“Well, I appreciate the time you've given me”*), concern for the other's welfare (*“Do take care of yourself”*), or reinforcement (*“It was great seeing you again”*) as well as leave-taking phrases (*“Goodbye”*, *“So long”*).

Non-verbal closings include breaking eye contact, positioning your legs or feet toward the door and away from the person you're talking with, leaning forward and placing your hands or your knees or legs (often accompanied by forward leaning) to signal the intention to stand up. As with openings, usually the verbal and the non-verbal are combined: for example, you might say *“It was good seeing you again”* while leaning forward with hands on your knees.

Not all conversations will be neatly divided into these five steps. Often the opening and the feedforward are combined. In a similar way, the feedback and the closing might be combined: *“Look, I've got to think more about this, okay?”*

As already noted, the business is the longest part of the conversation. The opening and the closing are usually about the same length, and the feedforward and feedback are usually about equal in length. When these relative lengths are severely distorted, you may feel that something is wrong. For example, when someone uses a too-short opening or a long feedforward, you may suspect that what is to follow is extremely serious.

## **3.2 Managing Conversation**

### **Opening Conversations Techniques or “The Opening Line”**

- **Cute-flippant openers** – humorous, indirect and ambiguous about whether the person opening the conversation really wants an extended encounter. Examples: *“Is that really your hair?”* *“Bet I can outdrink you!”*
- **Innocuous openers** – are highly ambiguous as to whether they are simple comments that might be made to just anyone or openers

designed to initiate an extended encounter. Examples: “*I haven’t been here before. What’s good on the menu?*” “*Could you show me how to work this machine?*”

- **Direct openers** – show the speaker’s interest in meeting the other person. Examples: “*Would you like to have a drink after dinner?*”

### 3.3 Maintaining Conversation

The defining feature of conversation is that the roles of speaker and listener are exchanged throughout the interaction. We use a wide variety of verbal and non-verbal cues to signal conversational turns – the changing (or maintaining) of the speaker or listener role during the conversation [6, p. 101]. Let us examine conversational turns in terms of speaker cues and listener cues.

#### *Speaker Cues*

As a speaker you regulate the conversation through two major types of cues. **Turn-maintaining cues** enable you to maintain the role of speaker. You communicate these cues by, for example, audibly inhaling breath to show that you have more to say, continuing a gesture to show that your thought is not yet complete, avoiding eye contact with the listener so as not to indicate that you are passing the speaking turn on to the listener or vocalizing pauses (“er”, “umm”) to prevent the listener from speaking and to show that you’re still talking. **Turn-yielding cues** tell the listener that you’re finished and wish to exchange the role of speaker for the role of listener. You may communicate these cues by dropping your intonation, by a prolonged silence, by making direct eye contact with a listener, by asking a question, or by nodding in the direction of a particular listener.

#### *Listener Cues*

As a listener you can regulate the conversation by using three types of cues. First, **turn-requesting cues** tell the speaker that you would like to take a turn as speaker; you might transmit these cues by using some vocalized “er” or “umm” that tells the speaker that you would now like to speak, by opening your eyes and mouth as if to say something, by beginning to gesture with a hand, or by leaning forward.

Second, through **turn-denying cues** you indicate your reluctance to assume the role of speaker by, for example, intoning a slurred “I don’t know”; giving the speaker some brief grunt that signals you have nothing to say; avoiding eye contact with the speaker who wishes you now to take all the role of speaker; or engaging in some behaviour that is incompatible with speaking:

For example, coughing or blowing your nose.

Third, through *back-channeling cues* you communicate various meanings back to the speaker – but without assuming the role of the speaker. For example, you can indicate your agreement or disagreement with the speaker through smiles or frowns, nods of approval or disapproval; brief comments such as “right”, “exactly” or “never”; or vocalizations such as “uh-huh” or “uh-uh”.

You convey your involvement or boredom with the speaker through attentive posture, forward leaning, and focused eye contact, which tell the speaker that you are involved in the conversation – or through an inattentive posture, backward leaning, and avoidance of eye contact, which communicate your lack of involvement.

You can also request that the speaker *pace* the conversation differently, perhaps asking the speaker to slow down by raising your hand near your ear and leaning forward, or to speed up by continually nodding your head. Or you can signal the speaker to give you *clarification*; a puzzled facial expression, perhaps coupled with a forward lean will probably tell most speakers that you need something clarified.

### 3.4 The Nature of Verbal / Non-Verbal Messages

In communication people basically use two major signal systems – the verbal and the non-verbal. The verbal system studies how spoken and written language serves as a system for communicating meaning, how it can be used effectively, and how it creates problems when it is not.

To begin with, verbal messages may vary in directness being direct and indirect. Indirect messages allow to express a thought without insulting or offending anyone; they allow to observe the rules of polite interaction. The notion of directness / indirectness is also closely connected with gender / cultural differences. A popular stereotype in much of the United States holds that women are indirect in making requests and in giving orders - and that this indirectness communicates powerlessness, a discomfort with authority. Men, the stereotype continues, are direct, sometimes to the point of being blunt or rude. This directness communicates men's power and comfort with their own authority.

Deborah Tannen [8] provides an interesting perspective on these stereotypes. Women are, it seems, more indirect in giving orders; they are more likely to say, for example, “It would be great if these letters could go out today” rather than “Have these letters out by three”. But Tannen [ibid., p. 34] argues that “issuing orders indirectly can be the prerogative of those in power” and in no way shows powerlessness. Power, to Tannen, is the ability

to choose your own style of communication.

Men, however, are also indirect but in different situations [7, p. 431]. According to Tannen men are more likely to use indirectness when they express weakness, reveal a problem, or admit an error. Men are more likely to speak indirectly in expressing emotions other than anger. Men are also more indirect when they shrink from expressions of increased romantic intimacy. Men are thus indirect, the theory goes, when they are saying something that goes against the masculine stereotype.

Many Asian and Latin American cultures stress the values of indirectness, largely because indirectness enables a person to avoid appearing criticized or contradicted and thereby losing face. An example of a somewhat different kind of indirectness is the greater use of intermediaries to resolve conflict among the Chinese than among North Americans [5, p. 269 – 278].

As for non-verbal communication, it is usually understood as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless messages. Non-verbal can be communicated through gestures and touch (***haptic communication***), by body language or posture, by facial expression and eye contact. Speech contains non-verbal elements known as paralanguage, including voice quality, emotion and speaking style, as well as prosodic features such as rhythm, intonation and stress.

***Proxemics*** is the study of how people use and perceive the physical space around them. The space between the sender and the receiver of a message influences the way the message is interpreted. The perception and use of space varies significantly across cultures and different settings within cultures. Space in non-verbal communication may be divided into four main categories: intimate, social, personal, and public space.

The term ***territoriality*** is still used in the study of proxemics to explain human behavior regarding personal space. Joseph DeVito [2, p. 178] identifies four such territories:

- 1) ***primary territory*** – refers to an area that is associated with someone who has exclusive use of it. For example, a house that others cannot enter without the owner's permission;
- 2) ***secondary territory*** – unlike the previous type, there is no “right” to occupancy, but people may still feel some degree of ownership of a particular space. For example, someone may sit in the same seat on train every day and feel aggrieved if someone else sits there;
- 3) ***public territory*** – refers to an area that is available to all, but only for a set period, such as a parking space or a seat in a library. Although people have only a limited claim over that space, they often exceed that claim. For example, it was found that people take

longer to leave a parking space when someone is waiting to take that space;

- 4) **interaction territory** – space created by others when they are interacting. For example, when a group is talking to each other on a footpath, others will walk around the group rather than disturb it.

**Posture** can be used to determine a participant's degree of attention or involvement, the difference in status between communicators, and the level of fondness a person has for the other communicator. Studies investigating the impact of posture on interpersonal relationships suggest that mirror-image congruent postures, where one person's left side is parallel to the other's right side, leads to favorable perception of communicators and positive speech; a person who displays a forward lean or a decrease in a backwards lean also signify positive sentiment during communication [6, p. 204]. Posture is understood through such indicators as direction of lean, body orientation, arm position, and body openness.

**Gesture** is a non-vocal bodily movement intended to express meaning [ibid., p. 275]. They may be articulated with the hands, arms or body, and also include movements of the head, face and eyes, such as winking, nodding, or rolling ones' eyes. The boundary between language and gesture, or verbal and non-verbal communication, can be hard to identify. Although the study of gesture is still in its infancy, some broad categories of gestures have been identified by researchers. The most familiar are the so-called emblems or quotable gestures. These are conventional, culture-specific gestures that can be used as replacement for words, such as the handwave used in the US for "hello" and "goodbye". A single emblematic gesture can have very different significance in different cultural contexts, ranging from complimentary to highly offensive. Another broad category of gestures comprises those gestures used spontaneously when we speak. These gestures are closely coordinated with speech. The so-called beat gestures are used in conjunction with speech and keep time with the rhythm of speech to emphasize certain words or phrases. These types of gestures are integrally connected to speech and thought processes. Other spontaneous gestures used when we speak are more contentful and may echo or elaborate the meaning of the co-occurring speech. For example, a gesture that depicts the act of throwing may be synchronous with the utterance, "He threw the ball right into the window". Gestural languages such as American Sign Language and its regional siblings operate as complete natural languages that are gestural in modality. They should not be confused with finger spelling, in which a set of emblematic gestures are used to represent a written alphabet. Gestures can also be categorised as either speech-independent or speech-related. Speech-independent gestures are

dependent upon culturally accepted interpretation and have a direct verbal translation. A wave hello or a peace sign are examples of speech-independent gestures. Speech related gestures are used in parallel with verbal speech; this form of non-verbal communication is used to emphasize the message that is being communicated. Speech related gestures are intended to provide supplemental information to a verbal message such as pointing to an object of discussion.

**Paralanguage** (sometimes called *vocalics*) is the study of non-verbal cues of the voice. Various acoustic properties of speech such as tone, pitch and accent, collectively known as prosody, can all give off non-verbal cues. Paralanguage may change the meaning of words. The linguist George L. Trager developed a classification system, which consists of the voice set, voice qualities, and vocalization [9, p. 17 – 21]. The *voice set* is the context in which the speaker is speaking. This can include the situation, gender, mood, age and a person's culture. The *voice qualities* are volume, pitch, tempo, rhythm, articulation, resonance, nasality, and accent. They give each individual a unique “voice print”. *Vocalization* consists of three subsections: characterizers, qualifiers and segregates. Characterizers are emotions expressed while speaking, such as laughing, crying, and yawning. A voice qualifier is the style of delivering a message – for example, yelling “Hey stop that!”, as opposed to whispering “Hey stop that”. Vocal segregates such as “uh-huh” notify the speaker that the listener is listening.

### **3.5 The Relative Importance of Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication**

An interesting question is: When two people are communicating face-to-face, how much of the meaning is communicated verbally, and how much is communicated non-verbally? This was investigated by Albert Mehrabian and reported in two papers. The latter paper concluded: “It is suggested that the combined effect of simultaneous verbal, vocal, and facial attitude communications is a weighted sum of their independent effects – with coefficients of .07, .38, and .55, respectively”. This rule that clues from spoken words, from the voice tone, and from the facial expression, contribute 7%, 38%, and 55% respectively to the total meaning, is widely cited. In reality, however, it is extremely weakly founded. First, it is based on the judgment of the meaning of single taperecorded words, i.e. a very artificial context. Second, the figures are obtained by combining results from two different studies, which maybe cannot be combined. Third, it relates only to the communication of positive versus negative emotions. Fourth, it relates only to women, as men did not participate in the study [6, p. 365].

Since then, other studies have analysed the relative contribution of verbal and non-verbal signals under more naturalistic situations. Argyle, using video tapes shown to the subjects, analysed the communication of submissive / dominant attitude and found that non-verbal cues had 4.3 times the effect of verbal cues. The most important effect was that body posture communicated superior status in a very efficient way. Thus, the relative importance of spoken words and facial expressions may be very different in studies using different set-ups.

When communicating, non-verbal messages can interact with verbal messages in six ways: repeating, conflicting, complementing, substituting, regulating and accenting / moderating [6, p. 75]. **Repeating** consists of using gestures to strengthen a verbal message, such as pointing to the object of discussion.

Verbal and non-verbal messages within the same interaction can sometimes send opposing or **conflicting messages**. A person verbally expressing a statement of truth while simultaneously fidgeting or avoiding eye contact may convey a mixed message to the receiver in the interaction. Conflicting messages may occur for a variety of reasons often stemming from feelings of uncertainty, ambivalence, or frustration. When mixed messages occur, non-verbal communication becomes the primary tool people use to attain additional information to clarify the situation; great attention is placed on bodily movements and positioning when people perceive mixed messages during interactions.

**Complementing** – accurate interpretation of messages is made easier when non-verbal and verbal communication complement each other. Non-verbal cues can be used to elaborate on verbal messages to reinforce the information sent when trying to achieve communicative goals; messages have been shown to be remembered better when non-verbal signals affirm the verbal exchange.

**Substituting:** non-verbal behavior is sometimes used as the sole channel for communication of a message. People learn to identify facial expressions, body movements, and body positioning as corresponding with specific feelings and intentions. Non-verbal signals can be used without verbal communication to convey messages; when non-verbal behavior does not effectively communicate a message verbal methods are used to enhance understanding.

Non-verbal behavior also **regulates** our conversations. For example, touching someone's arm can signal that you want to talk next or interrupt.

**Accenting / Moderating:** non-verbal signals are used to alter the interpretation of verbal messages. Touch, voice pitch, and gestures are some

of the tools people use to accent or amplify the message that is sent; non-verbal behavior can also be used to moderate or tone down aspects of verbal messages as well. For example, a person who is verbally expressing anger may accent the verbal message by shaking a fist.

### SUMMARY

- In this chapter we looked at conversation and identified five stages that are especially important. We looked at conversational management (issues involved in initiating, maintaining and closing conversations) and at the skills of conversational effectiveness;
- conversation consists of five general stages: opening, feedforward, business, feedback and closing;
- people maintain conversations by taking turns at speaking and listening. Turn-maintaining and turn-yielding cues are used by the speaker; turn-requesting, turn-denying and backchanneling cues are used by the listener;
- you can close a conversation using a variety of methods. For example: reflect back on conversation as in summarizing, directly state your desire to end the conversation, refer to future interaction, ask for closure, and / or state your pleasure with the interaction.

### PRACTICE

#### ➤ Summary of Conversational Skills

Check your ability to apply the following skills. You will gain most from this brief exercise if you think carefully about each skill and try to identify instances from your recent communication experiences in which you did or did not act on the basis of the specified skill. Use a rating scale such as the following: 1 = almost always; 2 = often; 3 = sometimes; 4 = rarely; 5 = almost never.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) follow the basic structure of conversations but deviate with good reason;
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) regulate feedback in terms of positiveness, person and message focus, immediacy, self-monitoring, supportiveness as appropriate to the situation;
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) initiate conversations with a variety of people with comfort and relative ease;
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) maintain conversations by smoothly passing the speaker turn back and forth;

- \_\_\_\_\_ e) recognize when conversational repair is necessary and make the appropriate repairs in a timely fashion;
- \_\_\_\_\_ f) close conversations with comfort and relative ease;
- \_\_\_\_\_ g) apply the specific skills of interpersonal communication mindfully, flexibly and with cultural sensitivity, and metacommunicate as appropriate;
- \_\_\_\_\_ h) use the skills of conversational effectiveness (openness, empathy, positiveness, immediacy, interaction management, expressiveness, other-orientation).

➤ **The Language of Conversation**

Match the terms listed here with their definitions. Record the number of the definition next to the term.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **excuse**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **disclaimer**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **business**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **turn-yielding cues**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **feedforward**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **backchanneling cues**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **altercasting**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **conversation**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **immediacy**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **phatic communication**

- 1) an interaction in which speaker and listener exchange their roles nonautomatically;
- 2) a form of conversation repair;
- 3) information that tells the listener about the messages that will follow;
- 4) a statement that aims to ensure that your message will be understood and will not reflect negatively on you;
- 5) a conversation stage during which the major purpose of the interaction is accomplished;
- 6) cues that tell the listener that the speaker has finished and wishes to exchange the role of speaker for the role of listener;
- 7) a kind of feedforward in which you place the listener in a specific role;
- 8) cues through which the listener communicates information back to the speaker without assuming the role of speaker;

- 9) messages that open the channels of communication;
- 10) the joining of speaker and listener.

➤ **Think Critically about the Following Questions:**

1. Consider your typical everyday conversation, does it always take place in the 5 steps mentioned above? Recall some examples from your everyday communication.
2. Is it possible to change our ways of communicating? If yes, then in what way? If no, then why?
3. Can you give an example of a situation in which you experimented with ways of communicating different from your usual?
4. Are interpersonal conversation skills related to relationship success – to success as a friend, lover, parent, etc.? If yes, then in what way?
5. How is effective teaching related to the use of feedback and feedforward?

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## Pragmatic Aspect of Language Communication

Language is as much, if not more, a mode of action as it is a means of conveying information (John L. Austin).

All linguistic communication involves linguistic acts. The unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word, or sentence, or even the token of the symbol, word, or sentence, but rather the production or issuance of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of a speech act (John Searle).

### Overview

The chapter is aimed at evoking general understanding of the core assumptions, concepts, and issues typically covered in the field of pragmatics. After dealing with the material readers must be able to analyze presuppositions, implicatures, deixis and speech acts; learn how meaning and communication are related to texts and contexts; learn about the relationship between language form and meaning and how they (separately and together) are related to communicative and contextual meaning; become aware of the challenge of relating the philosophical bases of pragmatics to linguistic theories, and the related challenge of assessing theories through empirical modes of inquiry.

Topics covered include: Pragmatics as a Separate Branch of Linguistics; Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics; Cooperation; Implicature; Cooperative Principle; Speech Acts and Events; Felicity Conditions; Speech Act Classification.

*Key words: Pragmatics, Cooperation, Implicature, Maxims of Pragmatics, Communicative (Speech) Acts and Events.*

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### 4.1 Defining Pragmatics

Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). It has,

consequently, more to do with the analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves [7, p. 12]. *Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning.*

This type of study necessarily involves the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said. It requires a consideration of how speakers organize what they want to say in accordance with who they're talking to, where, when, and under what circumstances [ibid., p. 12]. *Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning.*

This approach also explores how a great deal of what is unsaid is recognized as part of what is communicated [ibid., p. 13]. We might say that it is the investigation of invisible meaning. *Pragmatics is the study of how more gets communicated than is said.*

As the result we have got the question of what determines the choice between the said and the unsaid. The basic answer is tied to the notion of distance. Closeness (physical, social, conceptual) implies shared experience. On the assumption of how close or distant the listener is, speakers determine how much needs to be said [ibid., p. 14]. *Pragmatics is the study of the expression of relative distance.*

These are the four areas that pragmatics is concerned with. To understand how it has got to be that way, we have to briefly review its relationship with other areas of linguistic analysis.

One traditional distinction in language analysis contrasts pragmatics with syntax and semantics [8, p. 23]. *Syntax* is the study of the relationships between linguistic forms, how they are arranged in sequence, and which sequences are well-formed. This type of study generally takes place without considering any world of reference or any user of the forms. *Semantics* is the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and entities in the world; that is, how words literally connect to things. Semantic analysis also attempts to establish the relationships between verbal descriptions and states of affairs in the world as accurate (true) or not, regardless of who produces that description [4, p. 213 – 223]. *Pragmatics* is the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms. In this three-part distinction, only pragmatics allows humans into the analysis.

The **advantage** of studying language via pragmatics is that one can talk about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions (for example, requests) that they are performing when they speak. The big **disadvantage** is that all these human concepts are difficult to analyze in a consistent and objective way.

Example (1) is just such a problematic case. We understand what the speakers say, but we have no idea what is actually communicated:

- (1) *Her: So – did you?*  
*Him: Hey – who wouldn't?*

Thus, pragmatics is appealing because it is about how people make sense of each other linguistically, but it can be a frustrating area of study because it requires us to make sense of people and what they have in mind.

## 4.2 Cooperation and Implicature

In much of the preceding discussion, we have assumed that speakers and listeners involved in conversation are generally cooperating with each other. Let us think in terms of a prototypical conversation. Such a conversation is not a random succession of unrelated utterances produced in turn by participants of communicative act: a prototypical conversation has a general purpose, and the contributions of the participants are related both to one another and to the overall aim of the conversation [6, p. 11]. By participating in a conversation, a speaker implicitly signals that he or she agrees to cooperate in the joint activity and agrees to follow the rules of conduct, which are called *Cooperative Principle*. It sounds as following: *make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose of the talk exchange in which you are engaged* [9, p. 53].

This principle is elaborated by means of a set of maxims, which express what it means to cooperate in a conversational way [10]:

- *maxim of quality* is concerned with truth-telling and has two parts:  
a) do not say what you believe to be false; b) do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence;
- *maxim of quantity* is concerned with the amount of information an utterance conveys: a) make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange in which you are engaged; b) do not make your contribution more informative than is required. Imagine a conversation between a mother and a daughter:  
*M: What did you have for lunch today? – D: Baked beans on toast // Food // I had 87 warmed-up baked beans served on a slice of toast 12 cm by 10 cm.* The first answer is normal, 2<sup>nd</sup> gives too little information thus violating the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the maxim, 3d gives too much information, and violates the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the maxim;
- *maxim of relation* – be relevant. The point of this maxim is that it is not sufficient for a statement to be true for it to contribute in a successful conversation: *A: Have you seen Mary today? - B: ??? I'm breathing;*
- *maxim of manner* has 4 components: a) avoid obscurity; b) avoid

ambiguity; c) avoid unnecessary prolixity (too many tedious words);  
d) be orderly (recount events in the order that they occur).

Another notion related to the pragmatic aspect of human communication is called *Implicature* – additional conveyed meaning of an utterance [5, p. 269 – 282]. Consider the following example: A: *I've run out of petrol* – B: *There's a garage just round the corner*. Implication here is that the garage sells petrol and is open. Implicatures are primary examples of more being communicated than is said, but in order for them to be interpreted, cooperative principle must be assumed.

Following the cooperative principle and the maxims, we assume that people are normally going to provide an appropriate amount of information; we assume that they are telling the truth, being relevant, and trying to be as clear as they can. Because these principles are assumed in normal interaction, speakers rarely mention them.

However, there are certain kinds of expressions speakers use to mark that they may be in danger of *not* fully adhering to the principles. These kinds of expressions are called *hedges* [3, p. 56].

### 4.3 Hedges

The importance of the maxim of quality for cooperative interaction in English may be best measured by the number of expressions we use to indicate that what we are saying may not be totally accurate. The initial phrases in (3 a. – c.) and the final phrase in (3d.) are notes to the listener regarding the accuracy of the main statement:

- (3) a. *As far as I know, they're married.*  
b. *I may be mistaken, but I thought I saw a wedding ring on her finger.*  
c. *I'm not sure if this is right, but I heard it was a secret ceremony in Hawaii.*  
d. *He couldn't live without her, I guess.*

Cautious notes, or *hedges*, of this type can also be used to show that the speaker is conscious of the quantity maxim, as in the initial phrases in (4a. – c.) produced in the course of a speaker's account of her recent vacation:

- (4) a. *As you probably know, I am terrified of bugs.*  
b. *So, to cut a long story short, we grabbed our stuff and ran.*  
c. *I won't bore you with all the details, but it was an exciting trip.*

Markers tied to the expectation of relevance (from the maxim of relation) can be found in the middle of speakers' talk when they say things like *'Oh, by the way'* and go on to mention some potentially unconnected information during a conversation. Speakers also seem to use expressions like

'*anyway*', '*well, anyway*', to indicate that they may have drifted into a discussion of some possibly non-relevant material and want to stop. Some expressions, which may act as hedges on the expectation of relevance are shown as the initial phrases in (5a. – c.) from an office meeting:

- (5) a. *I don't know if this is important, but some of the files are missing.*  
b. *This may sound like a dumb question, but whose hand writing is this?*  
c. *Not to change the subject, but is this related to the budget?*

The awareness of the expectations of manner may also lead speakers to produce hedges of the type shown in the initial phrases in (6a. – c.) heard during an account of a crash:

- (6) a. *This may be a bit confused, but I remember being in a car.*  
b. *I'm not sure if this makes sense, but the car had no lights.*  
c. *I don't know if this is clear at all, but I think the other car was reversing.*

All of these examples of hedges are good indications that the speakers are not only aware of the maxims, but that they want to show that they are trying to observe them. Perhaps such forms also communicate the speakers' concern that their listeners judge them to be cooperative conversational partners.

There are, however, some circumstances where speakers may not follow the expectations of the cooperative principle. In courtrooms and classrooms, witnesses and students are often called upon to tell people things, which are already well-known to those people (thereby violating the quantity maxim). Such specialized institutional talk is clearly different from conversation.

#### 4.4 Speech Acts and Events

In attempting to express themselves people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, they perform actions via those utterances [2, p. 8]. By producing utterances people not only share certain information, but also perform particular kinds of actions, such as stating, promising, or warning which have to be called *speech acts* [6, p. 405].

It is, however, important to distinguish between three sorts of thing that one is doing in the course of producing an utterance. These are usually distinguished by the terms *locutionary acts*, *perlocutionary acts*, *illocutionary acts* [1, p. 15].

There is first a *locutionary act*, which is the basic act of utterance, or producing a meaningful linguistic expression [12, p. 76]. If you have difficulty with actually forming the sounds and words to create a meaningful

utterance in a language (for example, because it is foreign or you are tongue-tied), then you might fail to produce a locutionary act. Producing ‘*Aha mokofa*’ in English will not normally count as a locutionary act, whereas (7) will:

(7) *I've just made some coffee.*

Mostly we do not just produce well-formed utterances with no purpose. We form an utterance with some kind of function in mind. This is the second dimension, or the **illocutionary act** [12, p. 77]. The illocutionary act is performed via the communicative force of an utterance [1, p. 16]. We might utter (7) to make a statement, an offer, an explanation, or for some other communicative purpose. This is also generally known as the **illocutionary force** of the utterance.

We do not, of course, simply create an utterance with a function without intending it to have an effect. This is the third dimension, the **perlocutionary act** [12, p. 79]. Depending on the circumstances, you will utter (7) on the assumption that the effect you intended (for example, to account for a wonderful smell, or to get the hearer to drink some coffee). This is also generally known as the **perlocutionary effect**.

Of these three dimensions, the most discussed is illocutionary force. The illocutionary force of an utterance is what it counts as. The same locutionary act, as shown in (8a.), can count as a *prediction* (8b.), a *promise* (8c.), or a *warning* (8d.). These different analyses (8b. – d.) of the utterance in (8a.) represent different illocutionary forces:

- (8) a. *I'll see you later.* (= A)  
b. *[I predict that] A.*  
c. *[I promise you that] A.*  
d. *[I warn you that] A.*

These descriptive terms for different kinds of speech acts apply to the speaker's communicative intention in producing an utterance. The speaker normally expects that his or her communicative intention will be recognized by the hearer. Both speaker and hearer are usually helped in this process by the circumstances surrounding the utterance. These circumstances, including other utterances, are called the **speech event** [ibid., p. 84; 15, p. 91].

In many ways, it is the nature of the speech event that determines the interpretation of an utterance as performing a particular speech act. On a wintry day the speaker reaches for a cup of tea, believing that it has been freshly made, takes a sip, and produces the utterance in (9). It is likely to be interpreted as a *complaint*:

(9) *This tea is really cold!*

Changing the circumstances to a really hot summer day with the

speaker being given a glass of iced tea by the hearer, taking a sip and producing the utterance in (9), it is likely to be interpreted as **praise**. If the same utterance can be interpreted as two different kinds of speech act, then obviously no simple one utterance to one action correspondence will be possible.

#### 4.5 Conditions for the Performance of Speech Acts

There are certain expected or appropriate circumstances, known as *felicity conditions*, for the successful performance of a speech act [11, p. 97]: the fact that speaker and hearer understand each other, can hear one another, that they are not play-acting.

Then there are *content conditions*. For example, for both a promise and a warning, the content of the utterance must be about a future event. A further content condition for a promise requires that the future event will be a future act of the speaker [10].

The *preparatory conditions* [ibid.] for a promise are significantly different from those for a warning. When we promise to do something, there are two preparatory conditions: first, the event will not happen by itself, and second, the event will have a beneficial effect. When we utter a warning, there are the following preparatory conditions: it is not clear that the hearer knows the event will occur, the speaker does think the event will occur, and the event will not have a beneficial effect.

Related to these conditions is the *sincerity condition* [ibid.] that, for a promise, the speaker genuinely intends to carry out the future action, and, for a warning, the speaker genuinely believes that the future event will not have a beneficial effect.

Finally, there is the *essential condition* [ibid.], which covers the fact that by the act of uttering a promise, *I thereby intend to create an obligation to carry out the action as promised*. In other words, the utterance changes one's state from non-obligation to obligation. Similarly, with a warning, under the essential condition, the utterance changes one's state from non-informing of a bad future event to informing. This essential condition thus combines with a specification of what must be in the utterance content, the context, and the speaker's intentions, in order for a specific speech act to be appropriately (feliculously) performed.

There are also some more general classifications of types of speech acts. One general classification system lists five types of general functions performed by speech acts: *declarations, representatives, expressives, directives, and commissives* [13, p. 85].

*Declarations* are those kinds of speech acts that change the world via

their utterance [14, p. 75]. As the examples in (10) illustrate, the speaker has to have a special institutional role, in a specific context, in order to perform a declaration appropriately:

- (10) a. *Priest: I now pronounce you husband and wife.*  
b. *Referee: You're out!*  
c. *Jury Foreman: We find the defendant guilty.*

In using a declaration, the speaker changes the world via words.

**Representatives** are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker believes to be the case or not [ibid., p. 77]. Statements of fact, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions, as illustrated in (11), are all examples of the speaker representing the world as he or she believes it is:

- (11) a. *The earth is flat.*  
b. *Chomsky didn't write about peanuts.*  
c. *It was a warm sunny day.*

In using a representative, the speaker makes words fit the world (of belief).

**Expressives** are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker feels [ibid., p. 80]. They express psychological states and can be statements of pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy, or sorrow. As illustrated in (12), they can be caused by something the speaker does or the hearer does, but they are about the speaker's experience:

- (12) a. *I'm really sorry!*  
b. *Congratulations!*  
c. *Oh, yes, great, mmmm, ssahh!*

In using an expressive, the speaker makes words fit the world (of feeling).

**Directives** are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to get someone else to do something [ibid., p. 82]. They express what the speaker wants. They are commands, orders, requests, suggestions, and, as illustrated in (13), they can be positive or negative:

- (13) a. *Gimme a cup of coffee. Make it black.*  
b. *Could you lend me a pen, please?*  
c. *Don't touch that.*

In using a directive, the speaker attempts to make the world fit the words (via the hearer).

**Commissives** are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some future action [ibid., p. 85]. They express what the speaker intends. They are promises, threats, refusals, pledges, and, as shown in (14), they can be performed by the speaker alone, or by the speaker as a member of a group:

- (14) a. *I'll lie back.*  
 b. *I'm going to get it right next time.*  
 c. *We will not do that.*

In using a commissive, the speaker undertakes to make the world fit the words (via the speaker).

#### 4.6 Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

A different approach to distinguishing types of speech acts can be made on the basis of structure. A fairly simple structural distinction between three general types of speech acts is provided, in English, by the three basic sentence types [12, p. 58]. As shown in (15), there is an easily recognized relationship between the three structural forms (declarative, interrogative, imperative) and the three general communicative functions (statement, question, command / request):

- (15) a. *You wear a seat belt.* (declarative)  
 b. *Do you wear a seat belt?* (interrogative)  
 c. *Wear a seat belt!* (imperative)

Speech act type	Direction of fit	S = speaker; X = situation
Declarations	words change the world	S causes X
Representatives	make words fit the world	S believes X
Expressives	make words fit the world	S feels X
Directives	make the world fit words	S wants X
Commissives	make the world fit words	S intends X

**Table 4.6** General functions of speech acts (following Searle, 1979)

Whenever there is a direct relationship between a structure and a function, we have a *direct speech act*. Whenever there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function, we have an *indirect speech act*. Thus, a declarative used to make a statement is a direct speech act, but a declarative used to make a request is an indirect speech act.

As illustrated in (16), the utterance in (16a.) is a declarative. When it is used to make a statement, as paraphrased in (16b.), it is functioning as a direct speech act. When it is used to make a command / request, as paraphrased in (16c.), it is functioning as an indirect speech act:

- (16) a. *It's cold outside.*  
b. *I hereby tell you about the weather.*  
c. *I hereby request of you that you close the door.*

One of the most common types of indirect speech act in English, as shown in (17), has the form of an interrogative, but is not typically used to ask a question (i.e. we do not expect action). The examples in (17) are normally understood as requests:

- (17) a. *Would you pass the salt?*  
b. *Would you open this?*

Indeed, there is a typical pattern in English whereby asking a question about the hearer's assumed ability ('*Can you?*', '*Could you?*') or future likelihood with regard to doing something ('*Will you?*', '*Would you?*') normally counts as a request to actually do something.

Indirect speech acts are generally associated with greater politeness in English than direct speech acts. In order to understand why, we have to look at a bigger picture than just a single utterance performing a single speech act.

## SUMMARY

- The chapter has tried to address some issues concerning the implicit relation, which can be easily observed between the process of communication and pragmatic aspect of it. Pragmatics can be defined as a branch of linguistics (namely semiotics) that studies the relation of signs to interpreters, in contrast with semantics, which studies the relation of signs to designata. Pragmatics deals with any aspect of utterance meaning beyond the scope of existing semantic machinery, as in the slogan *Pragmatics = meaning minus truth conditions* [3, p. 21].
- Theory of Pragmatics is based on the concept of cooperative principle and on a set of maxims. Attempts to reduce the maxims or provide alternative sources for implicatures have been undertaken. Deliberate, blatant maxim-violation could result in implicatures, in the case of metaphor and irony in particular. This claim has been challenged, and alternative accounts of metaphor and irony developed, in which no maxim-violation takes place.
- Pragmatic principles have been found to make a substantial contribution to explicit communication, not only in disambiguation and reference assignment, but in enriching the linguistically encoded meaning in various ways. This raises the question of where the borderline between explicit and implicit communication should be drawn. It has even been argued that many of Grice's best-known cases

of generalized conversational implicature might be better analyzed as pragmatically determined aspects.

### PRACTICE

➤ **The following sentences make certain implications. What are they?** (*The first one has been done for you*)

1. *The police ordered the minors to stop drinking.*

**Implicature:** *The minors were drinking.*

2. Please take me out to the ball game again.

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. Valerie regretted not receiving a new T-bird for Labor Day.

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

4. That her pet turtle ran away made Emily very sad.

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. The administration forgot that the professors support the students. (Cf. "The administration believes that the professors support the students," in which there is no such presupposition)

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

6. It is strange that the United States invaded Cambodia in 1970.

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

7. Isn't it strange that the United States invaded Cambodia in 1970?

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

8. Disa wants more popcorn.

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

9. Why don't pigs have wings?

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

10. Who discovered America in 1492?

**Implicature:** \_\_\_\_\_

➤ **Answer the Following Questions:**

1. What is the structure and word order of the following sentences?

*How many times do I have to tell you to clean your room?*

A. Declarative

B. Interrogative

C. Imperative

*Who is that man over there?*

A. Declarative

- B. Interrogative
  - C. Imperative
- Could you lift 200 pounds?***
- A. Declarative
  - B. Interrogative
  - C. Imperative
2. What types of speech act are the following sentences?
- How many times do I have to tell you to clean your room?***
- A. Assertion
  - B. Question
  - C. Directive
- Who is that man over there?***
- A. Assertion
  - B. Question
  - C. Directive
- Could you lift 200 pounds?***
- A. Assertion
  - B. Question
  - C. Directive
3. Classify the sentences: sentence type, speech act, direct or indirect (only choose three answers).
- The water is too cold in the swimming pool [Friend says to friend in a public swimming pool].***
- A. Declarative
  - B. Interrogative
  - C. Imperative
  - D. Assertion
  - E. Question
  - F. Directive
  - G. Indirect
  - H. Direct
- It is too cold in this house [Husband says to wife].***
- A. Declarative
  - B. Interrogative
  - C. Imperative
  - D. Assertion
  - E. Question
  - F. Directive
  - G. Indirect
  - H. Direct

*Jane says to her mother: "I wonder why Frank (her brother) didn't come home today".*

- A. Declarative
- B. Interrogative
- C. Imperative
- D. Assertion
- E. Question
- F. Directive
- G. Indirect
- H. Direct

*Can you pass the salt?*

- A. Declarative
- B. Interrogative
- C. Imperative
- D. Assertion
- E. Question
- F. Directive
- G. Indirect
- H. Direct

*I noticed that the car hasn't been washed yet [Father says to son].*

- A. Declarative
- B. Interrogative
- C. Imperative
- D. Assertion
- E. Question
- F. Directive
- G. Indirect
- H. Direct

*It sure is a beautiful day.*

- A. Declarative
- B. Interrogative
- C. Imperative
- D. Assertion
- E. Question
- F. Directive
- G. Indirect
- H. Direct

4. Which maxim is violated, thus resulting in an implicature?

*Woman: Did you bring enough food for the party?*

*Man: I'd say that you made just the right amount – if a couple of*

***hundred people show up.***

- A. Maxim of Quality
- B. Grice's Maxim of Relation
- C. Grice's Maxim of Quantity

***Susan: Are you coming to the movies tonight?***

***Elizabeth: Do I look like I have any free time?***

- A. Maxim of Quality
- B. Grice's Maxim of Relation
- C. Grice's Maxim of Quantity

***Corey: Do you think Mary is pretty?***

***Jeff: Let's just say that I wouldn't vote for her in the local beauty contest.***

- A. Maxim of Quality
- B. Grice's Maxim of Relation
- C. Grice's Maxim of Quantity

***Laura: I don't believe any men are coming to visit today, Mother.***

***Amanda: What? Not one? You must be joking! Not one man? It can't be true! There must be a flood! There must have been a tornado!***

- A. Maxim of Quality
- B. Grice's Maxim of Relation
- C. Grice's Maxim of Quantity

***A: How are you today?***

***B: Well, my car is not working too good right now and to tell you the truth, I don't have very much money. In fact, I don't know how I'm going to pay my bills this month.***

- A. Maxim of Quality
- B. Grice's Maxim of Relation
- C. Grice's Maxim of Quantity

***James: Do I look fat?***

***Leslie: Have you thought about working out or joining a health spa?***

- A. Maxim of Quality
- B. Grice's Maxim of Relation
- C. Grice's Maxim of Quantity

- ***For each sentence, label its intent and its grammatical form. Then use that information to decide if it is direct or indirect and if it is***

*literal or nonliteral*

	<b>Direct sentences:</b> inform + declarative seek information + interrogative change behavior + imperative	<b>Intent:</b> to <u>inform</u> , to <u>seek</u> <u>information</u> , or to <u>change</u> <u>behavior</u>	<b>Grammatical form:</b> <u>declarative</u> , <u>interrogative</u> , or <u>imperative</u>	<u>Direct</u> or <u>Indirect</u>	<u>Literal</u> or <u>Nonliteral</u>
1.	Speed limit is 55. (highway sign)				
2.	Do not exceed 55.				
3.	Don't even think of speeding.				
4.	You walk into your friend's apartment and it is dark. To get your friend to turn on some lights, you say, "Are you raising mushrooms in here?"				
5.	A proud mother says to her friend, "Do you know that my son Marvin won the spelling bee at his grade school?"				
6.	Janet Jackson receives frequent unwanted phone calls from Justin Timberlake, who has a mad crush on her. Janet, who wants Justin to stop bothering her, says the following to him:				
	a) Go jump in the Pacific, Justin.				
	b) I hate being pestered by a man I can never respect.				
	c) Do you think I enjoy being harassed every moment of my life by a leech?				
	d) Mr. T, your calls are a source of annoyance to me.				
	e) Do not ever, ever call me again.				
7.	Lynn Cheney wants to inform her husband Dick that he has ketchup stains on his tie and says the following:				

	a) You spilled something on your tie.				
	b) Are you aware there are ketchup spots on your tie?				
	c) Take a look at what happened to your tie.				
	d) The new polka dots on your tie are ever so becoming.				
8.	Francine wants to find out from Jolene the name of Jolene's date and says the following:				
	a) You haven't told me your date's name, Jolene.				
	b) Why, Jolene, who is this heavenly creature?				
	c) I haven't had the pleasure of meeting your escort.				
	d) By any chance, has lover boy here got a name?				
	e) What's your boyfriend's name, Jolene?				

➤ **Think Critically About:**

**1. What is implicated by the sentence or discourse in italics? What maxims are involved? Are maxims being obeyed, violated or flouted?**

- (1) **A:** In a few years. I will be rich and famous!  
**B:** Yes, and I will be *the secretary-general of the United Nations.*
- (2) **A:** Did Manchester United win from Roda JC, yesterday?  
**B:** *Is the pope catholic?*

- (3) **Quiz master:** The Louvre is located in which European capital?  
**Contestant:** (silence)  
**Quiz master, after a while:** *It starts with a 'P'.*
- (4) **A:** What would you like for your birthday?  
**B:** Well, *my camera is not working.*
- (5) **A:** Who are those two people?  
**B:** That's my mother and *her husband.*
- (6) **A:** Of the three friends you invited to your party, who turned up?  
**B:** *John did.*
- (7) **A:** Where can I buy a newspaper?  
**B:** *There's a news agent around the corner.*
- (8) **[in a testimonial about a pupil who is a candidate for a philosophy job]** Dear Sir, Mr. X's command of English is excellent and his attendance at tutorials has been *regular*. Yours etc.

**2. For each of the following tropes (figures of speech) determine: 1) what the implicature might be? 2) What maxims are flouted?**

- **Irony:** X, with whom A has been on close terms until now, has betrayed a secret of A. A says: X is fine friend.
- **Metaphor:** You are the cream in my coffee.
- **Irony + Metaphor:** You are the cream in my coffee.
- **Hyberbole (Exageration):** These books weigh a ton.
- **Meiosis (Understatement):** Of a man known to have broken up all the furniture: He was a little intoxicated.
- **Litotes (Denying the opposite):** She was not unpleased by his efforts.
- **Rhetorical question:** After Cain killed his brother Abel. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know", he replied. Am I my brother's keeper?
- **Tautology (in the non-logical sense):** The child cried and wept.
- **Pleonasm:** white snow.
- **Metonymy:** He lost his tongue.

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## Language Contact as an Outcome of Language Communication

Language contact takes place between speakers of different languages in contact situations. In order for communication to take place, speakers must arrive at a certain degree of comprehension of the other language and must acquire a degree of facility in producing utterances that will be comprehensible (Ilse Lehiste).

### Overview

The chapter represents major achievements in Contact Linguistics, which is considered to be a closely related sub-branch of Communicative Linguistics. It lays theoretical groundwork to provide a starting point for the detailed discussion to follow. It also reviews some theoretical and empirical claims that have been made about the results of language contact, gives a framework of analysis that includes a variety of components, provides a broad overview of types of contact situation, their outcomes, and the social settings in which they emerge.

Topics covered include: Subject Matter of Contact Linguistics; History of Research on Language Contact; Types of Contact Situation; Borrowing; Structural Convergence; Code-Switching; Language Shift; Social Context of Language Contact; Speech Communities and Language Contact.

*Key words: Contact Linguistics, Contact Situation, Borrowing, Structural Convergence, Code-Switching, Language Shift, Pidgin, Creole, Speech Community.*

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### 5.1 The Subject Matter of Contact Linguistics

In offering his account of Caló, the mixture of Spanish and Romani used as an in-group language by Roma (Gypsies) in Spain, Rosensweig referred to it, in the very title of his book, as *Gutter Spanish*. A flyer from a West Sussex bookseller advertising publications on “dialect and folk speech, pidgins and creoles”, describes these forms of language, in boldface capitals,

as “vulgar and debased English” [5, p. 158]. Language mixture has always prompted strong emotional reaction, often in the form of ridicule, condemnation, or outright rejection. Language purists have proscribed it as an aberration of the “correct” language, and their attitude is reflected in a lay perception of mixed languages as deviant, corrupt, and even without status as true languages. Thus, Ambrose Gonzales, self-proclaimed student of the Gullah language, a “creole” language of mixed English and African ancestry spoken on islands off the South Carolina coast, explained its origins in this way: “Slovenly and careless of speech, these Gullahs seized upon the peasant English used by some of the early settlers and by the white servants of the wealthier colonists, wrapped their clumsy tongues about it as well as they could, and, enriched with certain expressive African words, it issued through their flat noses and thick lips as so workable a form of speech that it was gradually adopted by the other slaves and became in time the accepted Negro speech of the lower districts of South Carolina and Georgia” [25, p. 1].

A lot of people would probably accept the notion that languages like Gullah are the result of ineffective learning. The truth, however, is that these languages are testaments to the creativity of humans faced with the need to break down language barriers and create a common medium of communication. Far from being deviant, language mixture is a creative, rule-governed process that affects all languages in one way or another, though to varying degrees. The kinds of mixture that characterize languages like Caló and Gullah may be extreme, but they are by no means unusual, and have played a role in the development of just about every human language, including some that are regarded as models of correctness or purity. Whenever people speaking different languages come into contact, there is a natural tendency for them to seek ways of bypassing the communicative barriers facing them by seeking compromise between their forms of speech.

Such contact can have a wide variety of linguistic outcomes. In some cases, it may result in only slight borrowing of vocabulary, while other contact situations may lead to the creation of entirely new languages. Between these two extremes lies a wide range of possible outcomes involving varying degrees of influence by one language on the other. More accurately, it is the people speaking the respective languages who have contact with each other and who resort to varying forms of mixture of elements from the languages involved. The possible results of such contact differ according to two broad categories of factors – internal (linguistic) and external (social and psychological). Among the relevant linguistic factors is the nature of the relationship between the languages in contact, specifically the degree of typological similarity between them. There is also a variety of other linguistic

constraints which operate in such situations, some of them specific to particular areas of linguistic structure (e.g., the lexicon, phonology, morphology, etc.), others of a more general, perhaps universal nature. Relevant social factors include the length and intensity of contact between the groups, their respective sizes, the power or prestige relationships and patterns of interaction between them, and the functions, which are served by intergroup communication. Sociopolitical factors, which operate at both individual and group level, such as attitudes toward the languages, motivations to use one or the other, and so on, are also important [25, p. 2].

Most, if not all, languages have been influenced at one time or another by contact with others. In some cases, externally induced changes do not even require speakers of the different languages to have actual social contact [9]. For instance, lexical borrowing can be accomplished through book learning by teachers, writers, lexicographers, and the like who pass on the new vocabulary to others via literature, religious texts, dictionaries, and so on. In other cases, prolonged social interaction between members of different speech communities may result in varying degrees of mixture and structural change in one or the other of the languages involved. In extreme cases, pervasive contact may result in new creations distinct from their original source languages. The following examples illustrate some of the contact-induced changes that have affected English in various contact settings, leading to very different outcomes in each case. We might well ask whether these varieties are indeed forms of English, and if so, in what sense we can say they belong to the family of English dialects.

Sample (1) is an example of the form of pidgin English used as a lingua franca among ethnic groups of different linguistic background (English, Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, and Portuguese, among others) on the plantations of Hawaii during the XIX century. This particular extract is from a recording of an older male Japanese immigrant [ibid., p. 3]. Like all pidgins, this one shows evidence of loss of inflectional morphology, absence of grammatical categories such as tense and aspect, and overall simplification or reduction of grammatical apparatus as well as vocabulary:

(1) *Samtaim gud rod get, samtaim, olsem ben get, enguru get, no? enikain seim.*

*Sometimes good road get, sometimes like bend get, no? everything same.*

*Olsem hyuman laif, olsem. Gud rodu get, enguru get, mauntin get, no? awl, enikain.*

*Like human life, all-same. Good road get, angle get, mountain get, no? all, any kind.*

*Stawmu get, nais dey get – olsem. Enibadi, mi olsem, smawl taim.*

*Storm get, nice day get – all-same. Anybody, me too, small time.*

*Sometimes there's a good road, sometimes there's, like, bends, corners, right? Everything's like that. Human life's just like that. There's good roads, there's sharp corners, there's mountains, right? All sorts of things, there's storms, nice days – it's like that for everybody, it was for me too, when I was young [1, p. 71].*

Sample (2) comes from Singapore colloquial English, one of the so-called New Englishes, which arose in former British colonies, in many cases becoming the everyday vernacular of the community. These “indigenized” varieties are the result of “imperfect” (creative) second language learning, and are characterized by varying degrees of influence from the first languages of the groups who created them. For instance, features such as the use of sentence-final discourse marker *lah* and existential *get* parallel similar features in Cantonese, one of the native languages involved in the contact. Here a taxi driver talks about his job:

- (2) *Passenger(s) depen(d) lah – good one(s) also go(t), bad one(s) also go(t). Some ah taxi driver(s) they wan(t) to go to this tourist area(s) like hotel(s) ah. They par(k) there, y'know. Then if the touris(ts) want to go an buy things, buy anything ah, they brough(t) the passengers go and buy thing(s) already. Then the shop(s) ah give commission to the taxi driver(s) lah.*

*With passengers, it depends, you know. There are good ones and bad ones. Some taxi drivers like to go to tourist areas such as hotels, yeah. They park there, you know. Then if the tourists want to go and buy things, they take them to the shops and straightaway they are buying things. Then the shops give a commission to the taxi drivers, yeah [19, p. 65].*

Finally, extract (3) is from Anglo-Romani, a well-known example of a bilingual mixed or “intertwined” language. Its grammar is English, but much of its lexicon derives from the Romani dialects brought by Roma (Gypsies) to England:

- (3) *Once apré a chairus a Rommany chal chored a r'ni chillico Once upon a time a Gypsy stole a turkey (lit. lady bird) and then j''lled atut a prastraméngro 'pré the drum and then met (went on) a policeman on the road.*

*Where did tute chore adovo r'ni? putchered the prastraméngro. Where did you steal that turkey? asked the policeman.*

*It's kek r'ni; it's a pauno r'ni that I kinned 'drée the It's no turkey; it's a goose (lit. white lady) that I bought in the gav to del tute. –*

*Tácho, penned the prastraméngro, it's the kushtiest village to give you. – Really, said the policeman, it's the finest pauno r'ni mandy ever dickdus. Ki did tute kin it? goose I ever saw. Where did you buy it?* [25, p. 5].

Examples such as these can be multiplied. Indeed, there are in principle no limits (except those imposed by Universal Grammar) to what speakers of different languages will adopt and adapt from one another, given the right opportunity. How can we explain such phenomena? What combinations of social and linguistic influences conspire to produce them? What kinds of situation promote one type of outcome rather than another? Questions like these are all part of the subject matter of contact linguistics.

Its objective is to study the varied situations of contact between languages, the phenomena that result, and the interaction of linguistic and external ecological factors in shaping these outcomes [ibid., p. 5]. The diverse kinds of mixture, change, adaptation, and restructuring that result from interaction between (the users of) different languages have long been of interest to linguists. At the same time, scholars in the social sciences have devoted much attention to the social aspects of contact between different linguistic groups. For instance, they have investigated the nature of group relationships and group loyalty and how they are reflected in processes of accommodation in some circumstances, and by divergence and conflict in others.

These two broad lines of research have converged significantly over the last few decades, resulting in a new cross-disciplinary approach to language contact that attempts to integrate the social and the linguistic in a unified framework. To understand how this approach evolved, it is useful to survey briefly the history of research on language contact.

## **5.2 History of Research on Language Contact**

The study of the effects of language contact has been a focal point of interest to linguists ever since the earliest period of scientific study of language in the nineteenth century. In fact, interest in the topic among students of language dates back much earlier than this. For instance, Schuchardt [4, p. 52] mentions G. Lucio's discussion in 1666 of the mixture of Croatian and Romance dialects in Dalmatia based on Dalmatian records of the fourteenth century. During the heyday of historical linguistic scholarship in the nineteenth century, research on language contact became an integral part of the field and played a vital role in debate over the nature of language change. As Michael Clyne [6, p. 53] reminds us, it was a topic to which such great linguists as Müller (1875), Paul (1886), Johannes Schmidt (1872), and

Schuchardt (1884), among others, devoted a great deal of their attention. It continued to be a central topic well into the twentieth century, and was addressed by Edward Sapir, Leonard Bloomfield, and other early pioneers of structuralism. In the heyday of structuralism during the 1940s to the 1960s, it became rather less central, though not completely marginalized [25, p. 6].

The major impetus for the concern with language contact among historical linguists arose from disagreement about the part played by contact-induced change in the history of languages. There was intense debate among XIX-century scholars as to whether the conventional *Stammbaum* or *family tree* model of genetic relationships among languages was compromised in any way by the growing evidence that many languages contained a mixture of elements from different source languages.

The field split into two camps: on the one hand there were those who maintained that language mixture – especially mixture in grammar – was rare if not non-existent and that each language evolved from a single parent as a result of purely internal developments over time. For instance, Müller (1875) claimed that languages with mixed grammar did not exist, and this belief in the impenetrability of grammatical systems was echoed later by scholars like Meillet (1921) and more recently by Oksaar (1972) [21, p. 2]. On the other hand there were many scholars who were equally convinced that language mixture was not only possible, but clearly evidenced by actual cases of contact [25].

The evidence of mixture provided by these and other scholars posed a serious challenge to *Stammbaum* theory with its insistence on a single-parent source for every language and its belief that practically all language change resulted from internal causes. From another angle, the work of scholars like Johannes Schmidt (1872) also provided evidence that changes could enter languages as the result of diffusion from external sources – a process, which his “wave” model of change attempted to capture. The issue of how contact affects “genetic” affiliation is still a highly controversial one today. On the one hand, “traditional” historical linguists argue that a distinction should be made between “normal” and “abnormal” transmission [21].

The former would apply to languages whose components can for the most part be traced back to a single source language, even if they might have been subject to some external influence in the past [25, p. 7]. Such languages lend themselves to reconstruction via the traditional comparative historical model of single-parent genetic affiliation and gradual internal change. The label “abnormal transmission” would then apply to mixed languages whose various subsystems cannot all be traced back to a single parent language. They result from “broken transmission” and therefore have no genetic links to

other languages in the standard sense of the term [21]. Such cases include *pidgins*, *creoles*, and *bilingual mixed languages*, the three major types of contact language referred to earlier. However, many scholars have challenged this approach. They point, for instance, to the fact that all languages are mixed to some extent, and that the processes of change found in highly mixed languages such as creoles can be found in varying degrees in the cases of so-called “normal” transmission [15; 22]. From this standpoint, it is perhaps unfortunate that contact-induced change and its outcomes are still viewed by many as secondary, even marginal, to the central pursuits of historical-comparative linguistics.

Despite (or perhaps because of) the disagreement in the field, there developed during the XIX to mid XX centuries a strong tradition of research in contact-induced change, both within Historical Linguistics, and in other disciplines. In addition to the theoretical issues referred to above, research within the former field focused on specific geographic areas of contact; linguistic processes and types of contact-induced change; specific instances of mixture such as *bilingual code-switching* or processes of pidgin and creole formation; and the possible constraints on contact-induced change. Most of the current topics in the field were already the object of serious enquiry as early as the nineteenth century. Troubetzkoy (1928) provided the first definition of a *Sprachbund* (“union of languages” or “linguistic area”), and since then there have been numerous studies of linguistic areas around the world. Other topics such as lexical borrowing and the role of substratum influence in language change were investigated. And of course much attention was paid to pidgins and creoles, as classic examples of “new” mixed languages.

This line of more linguistically oriented research was complemented by other approaches concerned more with the social context of language contact. For instance, some scholars devoted their attention to the problems of longestablished ethnic minorities faced with the strong influence of a majority national language [2; 3; 6]. Systematic study of language maintenance began with Kloss (1927). Other scholars became interested in the fate of immigrant languages in North America and elsewhere (Herzog, 1941; Reed, 1948; Pap, 1949). Studies like these established the foundation for the discipline known as the sociology of language, focusing on language maintenance and shift [25, p. 8]. It provided important insights into the social and psychological factors that determine the outcomes of language contact.

Closely associated with this tradition is the growing body of research on the social psychology of language choice as exemplified, for instance, by the approach known as *Speech Accommodation Theory*, developed by

Howard Giles and his associates [20]. Within the historical linguistics tradition too, many scholars stressed the importance of social factors in language contact. They included Whitney and Schuchardt, who was in many ways far ahead of his time. Much of Schuchardt's discussion of the linguistic aspects of language contact is accompanied by details of the social context, the groups in contact, and other relevant sociocultural data.

New vigor was injected into the field by the important work of Uriel Weinreich [24] and Einar Haugen [10; 11]. Working within the structural paradigm, they both emphasized the importance of studying language contact from both a linguistic and a sociocultural perspective. Michael Clyne [4] suggests that their work can be considered the beginning of American sociolinguistics. If so, it is also true that their work established the ground for the re-emergence of language contact as a topic of central importance and as a subdiscipline of linguistics in its own right.

All of these various lines of approach, some primarily linguistic, others primarily sociological or anthropological, contributed to the emergence of the new field of contact linguistics. According to Peter Nelde [17, p. 287], the term was introduced at the *First World Congress on Language Contact and Conflict*, held in Brussels in June 1979. As noted earlier, the major turning point in the discipline was the work of Haugen and Weinreich, particularly the latter. As Michael Clyne [4, p. 56] notes, despite all the previous research, "there was, before Weinreich, no systematized theory of language contact". Both Weinreich and Haugen attempted to integrate linguistic analysis with social and psychological explanations to account for language contact and its consequences.

Their major contribution to this enterprise was undoubtedly their formulation of a comprehensive framework for the study of language contact in its social setting. Perhaps the strongest recent impetus to research in this area came from Thomason and Kaufman's [21] book-length study of a wide variety of contact phenomena, and their attempt to lay the foundations for both a typology of contact outcomes and an empirical/theoretical framework for analyzing such outcomes. Their work constitutes a major contribution to historical linguistic scholarship, in attempting to resolve the old controversy over the role of external linguistic influence as distinct from internal motivations and mechanisms in language development. Like earlier researchers, they emphasized the need for an interdisciplinary approach and refined several aspects of the terminology and descriptive framework employed in previous studies. The emerging field of contact linguistics owes its existence primarily to the work of all these pioneers.

### 5.3 The Field of Contact Linguistics

The study of language contact is a fairly well-defined field of study, with its own subject matter and objectives. It employs an eclectic methodology that draws on various approaches, including the comparative-historical method, and various areas of sociolinguistics. It is this very interdisciplinary approach that defines it and gives it its strength. One of the clearest statements of the goals of this subdiscipline is the following, from Weinreich [24, p. 86]: “To predict typical forms of interference from the sociolinguistic description of a bilingual community and a structural description of its languages is the ultimate goal of interference studies”.

Though Weinreich focuses specifically on the phenomenon of bilingualism, his statement can apply equally well to the study of all contact situations. Moreover, the field of contact linguistics is not limited to just the study of “interference”, but covers all the linguistic consequences of contact, including phenomena such as simplification and various other kinds of restructuring that characterize the outcomes of contact. In particular, he emphasizes that the components of an explanatory framework must include “purely structural considerations ... psychological reasons ... and socio-cultural factors” [ibid., p. 44]. The need to explore the latter two types of factor arises from the fact that, first, contact situations, which appear quite similar in terms of the linguistic inputs present can and do result in quite different linguistic outcomes. Moreover, for any given contact situation, predictions of contact-induced changes based solely on structural factors fail miserably. Weinreich’s outline of the main concerns of “interference” studies is worth quoting in full.

He notes:

*In linguistic interference, the problem of major interest is the interplay of structural and non-structural factors that promote or impede such interference. The structural factors are those, which stem from the organization of linguistic forms into a definite system, different for every language and to a considerable degree independent of non-linguistic experience and behavior. The nonstructural factors are derived from the contact of the system with the outer world, from given individuals’ familiarity with the system, and from the symbolic value which the system as a whole is capable of acquiring and the emotions it can evoke [ibid., p. 5].*

It follows, first, that we need to distinguish among the various social contexts of language contact if we are to understand the nature and direction of contact-induced change. Second, it is necessary to examine, where possible, the actual speech behavior of persons in each contact situation in

order to uncover the factors that motivate them to change their language in one way or another. Scholars have long been aware that differences in the social setting lead to differences in the outcomes of contact. For instance, Wackernagel [25, p. 10] distinguished three kinds of contact situation – when a conquered group adopts the language of its conquerors, when the reverse occurs, and when there is mutual influence leading to a “mixed language”. Every outcome of language contact has associated with it a particular kind of social setting and circumstances that shape its unique character. The goal of contact linguistics is to uncover the various factors, both linguistic and sociocultural, that contribute to the linguistic consequences of contact between speakers of different language varieties.

#### 5.4 Types of Contact Situation

We can in general distinguish three broad kinds of contact situation: those involving *language maintenance*, those involving *language shift*, and those that lead to the *creation of new contact languages* [ibid., p. 11]. Most cases of language contact can be assigned clearly to one or another of these categories. However, as we will see, there are many situations that cannot be classified so readily. Some are characterized by interplay between maintenance and shift, like the “fuzzy” cases found in *Sprachbünde* or linguistic areas such as the Balkans. Others involve types of interaction and mutual accommodation which make it difficult to place them in a single category, for instance the kinds of extreme structural convergence found in Northwest New Britain, where languages of the Austronesian and non-Austronesian families have become structurally isomorphic. Similar difficulties arise in the case of the so-called “new” contact languages, pidgins, creoles, and bilingual mixed languages. These are cases neither of maintenance nor of shift in the strict sense, though they share characteristics with the latter situations. Each of them presents its own problems of definition and classification.

##### *Language maintenance*

##### *Borrowing situations*

*Language maintenance* refers simply to the preservation by a speech community of its native language from generation to generation [ibid., p. 11]. Preservation implies that the language changes only by small degrees in the short run owing to internal developments and/or (limited) contact with other languages. Hence, the various subsystems of the language – the phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and core lexicon – remain relatively intact.

Cases of maintenance may involve varying degrees of influence on the lexicon and structure of a group's native language from the external language with which it is in contact. This kind of influence is referred to as "borrowing". Since this term has been used in a variety of senses, it is necessary to emphasize that it is used here, following Thomason and Kaufman [21, p. 37], to refer to "the incorporation of foreign features into a group's native language by speakers of that language". This makes it clear, first, that the borrowing language is maintained, though changed in various ways by the borrowed features, and that the agents of change are its native speakers. As van Coetsem [23, p. 3] points out, borrowing involves recipient language agentivity, and this crucially distinguishes it from the other major type of cross-linguistic influence that involves source language agentivity in cases of second language learning. The borrowing language may be referred to as the recipient language, and the foreign language as the source language. Both of these terms may also be used in a wider sense, to refer respectively to (a) any language that incorporates features from another and (b) any language that provides the relevant input.

Borrowing is also sometimes referred to as "borrowing interference" (as opposed to "interference via shift"), reflecting a tendency within the field to use the term "interference" as a cover term for all kinds of contact-induced change [21]. Since the term "interference" has been used in a variety of conflicting senses, some general, some rather narrow (for instance, Weinreich, defines it as "deviations from the norm of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language" [24, p. 56]), the term will be avoided as far as possible here. Instead, we will use terms like "contact-induced changes" and "cross-linguistic influence" as general labels to cover all kinds of influence by one language on another.

Borrowing may vary in degree and kind from casual to heavy lexical borrowing, and from slight to more or less significant incorporation of structural features as well. As already noted, situations involving primarily lexical borrowing, that is, borrowing of content morphemes like nouns, verbs, etc., are extremely common, and most, if not all, languages have been subject to this kind of influence at some time or another. Sometimes, as we shall see later, significant lexical borrowing may have effects on the lexical semantics as well as other aspects of a language's structure. Situations involving structural borrowing, that is, borrowing of features in phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, are somewhat rarer, though examples can be found.

## *Situations of Structural Convergence*

Structural diffusion often occurs where languages are spoken in close geographical proximity, for example in border areas, or in communities characterized by a high degree of multilingualism [25, p. 14]. Examples of the former type of situation are *Sprachbünde* or linguistic areas. Perhaps the best-known of these is the *Balkan Sprachbund*, where long-standing contact between languages like Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, and others led to significant diffusion of structural features. In cases involving bi- or multi-lingualism within the same speech community, the results of language contact are often manifested in increasing structural convergence between the languages involved. A well-known case in point is the village of Kupwar in India. Here, a long history of interaction between speakers of Marathi, Kannada, and Hindi-Urdu led to a surprising degree of isomorphism in structure, to the point where it has been claimed that simple replacement of lexical items from each language within the same structural frame is often possible. Long-term pressure on the language of a minority group surrounded by a larger dominant group can sometimes lead to significant structural and lexical diffusion from the latter to the former.

This can in some cases lead to a radically altered version of the recipient language. Cases in point include Asia Minor Greek, which incorporated many features from Turkish, and Wutun, a Chinese language heavily influenced by Tibetan.

Sometimes, diffusion of features across languages may be so widespread that the boundaries between the languages become blurred, even for the speakers themselves. Thurston [22] describes situations like this in Northwest New Britain, an island that forms part of Papua New Guinea. Here, as in Kupwar, convergence has led to structural isomorphism among the languages involved, with lexicon serving as the primary means of distinguishing one from the other. Thus, though they belong to quite distinct language families (Austronesian versus non-Austronesian), or to different subgroups within these families, all languages use practically the same syntactic strategies. For example, requests for items follow the same pattern: first the requested item is named, followed by a third person form of the verb come; then there is a first person verb expressing what the speaker will do with the desired item. The following examples illustrate. Anêm is non-Austronesian. Mouk and Lusi belong to the Bibling and Bariai subgroups of Austronesian respectively. Amara is an Austronesian isolate:

- (5) *Anêm: uas gox o-mên da-t*  
*Mouk: uas silaI max Ia-Ian*  
*Lusi: uasi eta i-nama Ia-ani*

*Amara: aguas kapso i-me e-kenen tobacco some 3s-come 1s-eat  
Hand me some tobacco to smoke [22, p. 69].*

In cases like these, it is often difficult to identify the agents of change, whether they may be native speakers of language A who maintain it while borrowing, or speakers of language B who shift to A and introduce features of B, which native speakers of A eventually adopt.

### *Code-Switching Situations*

Language maintenance situations also include more or less stable bilingual speech communities in which bilingual mixture of various types is usual, leading to the phenomena known collectively as code-switching. This involves the alternate use of two languages (or dialects) within the same stretch of speech, often within the same sentence. For example, Puerto Ricans in New York City switch between Spanish and English with great facility, as illustrated in the following example from Blanca, a 9-year-old girl living in Spanish Harlem, New York:

- (6) *Hey Lolita, but the Skylab, the Skylab no se cayó pa(-ra) que se acabe el mundo. It falls in pieces. Si se cae completo, yeah. The Skylab es una cosa que (e-)stá rodeando el moon taking pictures of it. Tiene tubos en el medio. Tiene tubos en el medio. It's like a rocket. It's like a rocket. (Hey Lolita, but the Skylab, the Skylab ("didn't fall for the world to end"). It falls in pieces. ("If it falls whole"), yeah. The Skylab ("is something that's going around the") moon taking pictures of it. ("It has tubes in the middle") [repeated]. It's like a rocket [repeated] [25, p. 17].*

Notice how Blanca switches languages from clause to clause, but also mixes items from the two languages within the same clause. These are examples of inter- and intra-sentential switching, which reflect somewhat different kinds of bilingual competence, as we shall see. In many bi- or multi-lingual communities, the choice of one code or another is dependent on the situation or domain of use, so that the codes tend to be used in mutually exclusive functions. Such situations are referred to as cases of diglossia, or (where more than two languages are involved) polyglossia. An example of the former is Spanish / Guaraní bilingualism in Paraguay, while the latter is exemplified by the situations in Singapore and Malaysia, where speakers alternate between English, Malay, and other ethnic languages like Mandarin depending on the interlocutor and the situation [19]. Situations like these, of course, also allow for a certain degree of code alternation and code mixture within a single interaction.

## *Language Shift*

In other situations, contact between different linguistic groups can lead to language shift, the partial or total abandonment of a group's native language in favor of another [25, p. 17]. In some cases, the shift results in successful acquisition of the target language (TL), with little or no influence from the native language (L1) of the shifting group. For instance, by the third generation, most immigrant groups in the United States succeed in achieving native proficiency in American English. In many cases, however, shift is accompanied by varying degrees of influence from the group's L1 on the TL. Such situations fall into two broad categories. First, there are cases involving immigrant or other minority groups that shift either partially or completely to the language of the dominant majority, but carry over features of their L1 into their version of the TL. Sometimes, the shifting group is eventually absorbed into the TL community and the innovations that they introduced are imitated by the TL community as a whole, thus becoming permanently established in the language. This happened, for instance, when speakers of Norman French shifted to English in the late Middle English period, leading to significant lexical and some structural (especially phonological) influence from French on English. In other cases, a minority group may preserve its L1 for certain functions, while acquiring the dominant language for other uses. Such situations typically result in significant L1 influence on the TL, as for example in the second language varieties of German used by "guestworkers" in Germany from the late 1950s on. Such influence tends to be confined to the minority group and does not usually spread into the language of the host community as a whole.

The second category of situation where shift leads to L1 influence on a recipient language involves languages that become targets of shift after being introduced into new communities by invaders or colonizers [18, p. 11]. The indigenous community then adopts the foreign language either as a replacement for its original native language(s), or as a second language to be used in addition to the latter. Such "indigenized" varieties of a foreign language are especially common in areas that were formerly colonized by external powers. Indian English and Irish (Hiberno-) English are two examples. Second language versions of target languages such as these, which result from untutored learning in "natural" community settings, are clearly similar in certain ways to the varieties of second or foreign languages acquired in formal settings such as the classroom.

"Interlanguage" phenomena in classroom second language acquisition (SLA) often arise from the same kinds of L1 influence that characterize "untutored" SLA, that is, targeted language shift. Moreover, both types of

learning may be subject to other principles and constraints, such as the universal tendency toward simplification of target structures, at least in the early stages of learning [13, p. 12]. There is therefore much to be gained from a close comparison of all these types of language acquisition.

Language shift obviously implies the gradual or complete abandonment of a previous native language in favor of the TL. Such situations provide interesting insight into the phenomenon of *language death*, the slow attrition and decay of the language previously used by the shifting group [25, p. 18].

As noted above, many of the changes in a TL, which accompany shift are the result of influence from the shifting group's L1. Such changes have been referred to by various names, including "interference through shift," "transfer," "substratum influence," and "imposition." Some of these labels are problematic in one way or another. We have already seen that "interference" is used in several conflicting senses. The same is true of "transfer," which is used by some as a cover term for all kinds of contact-induced change (hence "borrowing transfer" versus "substratum transfer"), and by others to refer only to L1 influence on an L2. Van Coetsem [23, p. 3] introduced the term "imposition" to refer to this kind of contact-induced change. Though this term has failed to gain currency, his description of the change itself is quite insightful. As he notes, it involves the agentivity of source language speakers who "impose" their L1 habits on the recipient or target language.

The term *substratum influence* is popular among creolists, who use it to refer to much the same phenomena that SLA researchers describe as (L1) transfer – hence the growing rapport between these fields [25, p. 19]. Creolists use the term in a somewhat different sense from historical linguists. The latter generally use it to refer to influence from the language of a subordinate group, distinguishing it from "superstratum" and "adstratum" influence from the languages of dominant and equal groups respectively. Creolists on the other hand use it to refer specifically to influence from a subordinate group's language on pidgin and creole formation.

In addition, we may want to distinguish between *individual and group shifts*. Thomason and Kaufman note that group shifts promote substratum influence in a TL [21, p. 28]. But we can gain much insight into this type of crosslinguistic influence by investigating the strategies employed by individual learners in both "natural" and "tutored" contexts. As Mufwene [15, p. 2] notes, "interference" from an L1 at the individual level is the first stage in the establishment of substrate influence in the language of the group. When the same types of change are replicated by various individuals and are adopted by many others, they become conventionalized as part of the community's linguistic system and at this point they can be described as substratum

features.

Substratum or L1 influence, like borrowing, may be found at all levels of linguistic structure. But, in general, borrowing begins with vocabulary, and the incorporation of structural features into a maintained language comes only after substantial importation of loanwords. By contrast, substratum influence begins with sounds and syntactic patterns and sometimes also morphology, and is therefore characterized by more structural than lexical influence from the L1 on the TL.

## 5.5 Language Creation: New Contact Languages

In addition to maintenance and shift situations, there are other kinds of contact setting which have yielded rather special outcomes: the contact languages referred to as pidgins, creoles, and bilingual mixed languages. These outcomes involve such extreme restructuring and / or such pervasive mixture of elements from more than one language that they cannot be considered cases of either maintenance or shift in the strict senses of those terms. It is also difficult at times to decide which outcomes of contact should be included in each of the above categories of contact language. The labels “pidgin” and “creole” have each been applied to a very heterogeneous group of languages.

### *Bilingual Mixed Languages*

Bilingual mixed or intertwined languages arose in settings involving long-term contact between two ethnic groups leading to bilingualism and increasing mixture of the languages [25, p. 20]. In these cases, that mixture became conventionalized as a community norm, resulting in the creation of hybrid languages whose components could clearly be traced to one or the other source language. We saw one example of a bilingual mixed language, *Anglo-Romani*, earlier in this chapter. Another example is the *Media Lengua* of Ecuador, a language which incorporates Spanish lexicon into a virtually unchanged Quechua grammatical framework. The latter preserves intact not just the syntactic rules of Quechua, but also its highly complex morphology.

Other somewhat similar examples are *Michif*, a language in which Cree VP structure is wedded to French NP structure, and *Mednyj Aleut*, in which Russian finite verb morphology and other structural features have been fused with Aleut grammatical systems. In general, it is fair to say that these vernaculars fuse the grammar of one source with the lexicon (at least the phonological representations of the lexical items) of another. However, this picture is simplistic, since it ignores many respects in which a bilingual mixed language may differ from either of its source languages. Moreover, no single

formula can be applied to describe or predict the mixture, even though there are many similarities in design among them.

### *Pidgins*

Trading contacts between groups speaking different languages have often led to various types of linguistic compromise to facilitate communication. Such compromises often result in pidgins, highly reduced languages with minimal vocabulary and grammar whose functions are restricted primarily to barter and exchange [25, p. 21]. Pidgins are a rather mixed variety of languages. Some involve more lexical mixture than others. For instance, *Russenorsk* used in trade between Russians and Norwegians up to XIX century employed vocabulary from both groups' languages. Other pidgins, like *Eskimo Trade Pidgin* and *Chinese Pidgin English*, derive their vocabulary primarily from one source, Eskimo in the former, English in the latter. The primary source language in these cases tends to be the language of the group that has control of the trade or its location. Pidgins have also arisen in contexts other than trade, for instance in cases of military occupation (*Pidgin English* in Japan during the post-war period) or in domestic settings for communication between employers and servants of different language backgrounds (*Indian Butler English*) or on plantations (*Hawai'i Pidgin English*).

The cases mentioned so far are all examples of prototypical pidgins. There is a great deal of controversy over the scope of reference of the term *pidgin*. The reason is that the degree of reduction in structure as well as range of functions may differ significantly from one case to another. Prototypical pidgins are severely restricted in terms of their social functions, and clearly reduced in form and structure, containing a minimal lexicon and a rudimentary grammar. Bickerton [1] describes them as lacking inflectional morphology, tense / mood / aspect systems, movement rules, embedding strategies, and other structural characteristics associated with fully developed natural languages.

By contrast, other languages to which the term *pidgin* has been applied, for example, *Tok Pisin*, *Nigerian Pidgin*, etc., are far more elaborate in terms of social function and structure, and hardly meet the criteria for inclusion in this class. These more elaborate contact languages may be placed in two broad categories: *extended pidgins* and *simplified languages*, though once more, the boundaries between these two are not always clear. So-called extended pidgins apparently began as highly reduced (prototypical) pidgins, which then underwent varying degrees of elaboration in both vocabulary and grammar when their range of functions extended beyond the confines of their

original contexts of use. In such cases, there is usually incorporation of features from both the lexifier (superstrate) language and the native (substrate) languages of indigenous groups. Contact vernaculars like these can achieve such a degree of elaboration in this way that they become indistinguishable from other fully developed natural languages. Examples include *Tok Pisin* and *Bislama*, official languages of Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu respectively, both descended from an earlier plantation pidgin, in turn rooted in early Pacific Trade Pidgin. These contact languages have much more in common, both functionally and structurally, with creoles than with prototypical pidgins [25, p. 21].

There are other contact vernaculars to which the label “pidgin” has been applied, which do not appear to involve the degree of structural reduction characteristic of prototypical pidgins. For instance, languages like *Trade Motu* or *Pidgin Yimas* appear to be somewhat simplified forms of *Motu* and *Yimas* respectively, only partially reduced so as to facilitate their use by non-native speakers in trading and other contacts with native speakers. Their degree of reduction is not nearly as extensive as that found in, say, *Russenorsk*. Hence, they should arguably be referred to as simplified languages, rather than pidgins.

### *Creoles*

European colonial expansion during XV to XIX centuries led in many cases to the creation of new communities peopled primarily by groups transplanted from distant regions of the world. In the plantations of the New World, where huge numbers of slaves were transplanted from West Africa, contact between the latter and European settlers led to the emergence of creole languages, so called because they were used by the creole or locally born descendants of slaves (as well as Europeans and other freemen) in the colonies.

A typical example is *Sranan Tongo*, a brief sample of which was provided earlier in this chapter. Other well-known Caribbean creoles include *Jamaican* and *Guyanese creole* (English lexicon); *Haitian creole* (French lexicon); *Papiamentu*, a creole used in the former Dutch islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and *Curacao* (Spanish / Portuguese lexicon) and *Berbice Dutch*, once spoken in the interior of modern Guyana (Dutch lexicon).

Similar languages emerged in the Indian Ocean and other areas where European colonies were established. For instance, there is *Isle de France creole*, a French-lexicon creole with varieties spoken in Mauritius and the Seychelles. In South East Asia, we find creoles such as *Daman Creole Portuguese*, spoken in India, and *Papia Kristang*, spoken in Malaysia and

Singapore. There are also several other creole languages spoken in West Africa, including *Krio* (English lexicon), spoken in Sierra Leone, and *Guinea Kriyol* (Portuguese lexicon), spoken in Guinea-Bissau. Some of the earliest creoles known arose on plantation settings on islands off the West African coast. Well-known examples include *Cape Verde Crioulo* and other Portuguese-lexicon creoles spoken on São Tomé, Príncipe, and other islands in the Gulf of Guinea [25, p. 22].

The formation of these languages involved varying degrees of input from the superstrate languages of the colonizers and the native languages of the subjected peoples. Creoles, like other contact vernaculars, differ significantly in the nature and extent of the respective inputs. Just about every aspect of these languages, their origins and sources, their typological characteristics, their classification, etc., remains a matter of controversy.

As with pidgins, there are substantial differences among creoles in terms of both their processes of formation and their structural make-up. Essentially, such differences have to do with the nature and extent of the substratum contribution to the creole's formation. On the one hand, there are radical creoles like Sranan and its Surinamese relative Saramaccan, and varieties of the Eastern Maroon Creole, a substantial part of whose grammar can be traced to West African (especially Gbe) sources. For this reason, it is difficult to accept Thomason and Kaufman's characterization of them as cases of shift "whose structure can be accounted for under a hypothesis of extreme unsuccessful acquisition of a TL" [21, p. 48]. One might just as well argue that they are akin to cases of maintenance, though, as usual, the truth lies somewhere between these two extremes.

By sharp contrast, the so-called intermediate creoles of the Caribbean, such as *Bajan*, *urban Guyanese*, or *Trinidadian creole*, are arguably cases of shift and far more akin to products of "unsuccessful" acquisition of a TL such as *Hiberno-English*, *Singapore English*, *Taiwanese Mandarin*, etc. than they are to radical creoles. Once more, between these poles lie many other points on a continuum that includes contact vernaculars in the Caribbean, Pacific, Indian Ocean, and elsewhere to which the label "creole" has traditionally been applied.

## 5.6 The Social Contexts of Language Contact

Precisely what factors determine the varied outcomes of the contact situations we have just surveyed? We have already emphasized the complementary roles of external and internal factors in shaping such outcomes. Early scholars such as Müller and Jakobson argued that structural (linguistic) constraints were the primary determinants of contact-induced

change [25, p. 24]. But the wide body of evidence available to us now shows that practically any linguistic feature can be transferred from one language to another, if the circumstances are right. The reason is that extralinguistic factors – the social ecology of the contact situation itself – can override any purely structural resistance to change. Moreover, it is such factors that explain one of the key problems of language contact studies – why all potential forms of contact-induced change may not actually materialize in a given situation. This does not mean, of course, that explanations in terms of purely linguistic constraints are not possible or relevant. It is of prime importance for us to seek explanations as far as possible in linguistic structure. But ultimately, as Weinreich [24, p. 3] stated: “A full account of interference in a language contact situation, including the diffusion, persistence and evanescence of a particular interference phenomenon, is possible only if the extra-linguistic factors are considered”.

### *Language Contact in its Social Settings*

It bears repeating that the broad distinctions we have made between situations involving language maintenance, language shift, and the creation of new contact languages are crucial to explaining the linguistic outcomes of contact. Without a clear understanding of the history and social dynamics of the contact situation, we are in no position to explain anything. Not just the mechanisms of change but also its directionality and agentivity vary according to the type of situation involved. It follows that the constraints on the changes that can occur will vary from one case to another as well. In general, however, the same set of sociocultural factors is present in every contact situation, though the particular mix varies from case to case, with consequent variation in the results. These sociocultural factors include the types of community settings, the demographics of the populations in contact, the codes and patterns of social interaction among them, and the ideologies and attitudes that govern their linguistic choices [25, p. 25].

Other factors that play a role include the degree of bilingualism among the individuals and groups in contact, the history and length of contact, the power relationships between the groups, and so on. Obviously, it is no easy task to integrate all the relevant factors into a comprehensive and coherent picture of the social ecology of a given contact situation. For the moment, let us just attempt a broad outline of some types of setting.

## **5.7 Speech Communities and Language Contact**

The unit of analysis for investigating the social ecology of language contact is the speech community. The concept has sometimes been difficult to

pin down but it has proven useful and revealing in the study of language in its social and cultural setting. Speech communities can be defined at different levels of generalization, from communities of practice to the local neighborhood to the nation state [25, p. 26]. They can also be identified in terms of social criteria such as ethnicity, social class, gender, and so on. What unites each of these social constructs is the fact that its members share certain linguistic repertoires and rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech. Essentially, it is social interaction within and across speech communities that leads to diffusion of linguistic and other cultural practices. So, in order to understand the products of language contact, we have to understand the speech economies of the communities in contact, and the dynamics of their patterns of interaction.

It would be useful to design a comprehensive classification of all the community settings within which language contact takes place. But this would be a daunting and immensely complex task, one that is well beyond the reach of the present chapter. By way of illustration, however, we can at least attempt a broad overview of some types of community setting. For instance, Leo Loveday [14, p. 16] has suggested that communities might be categorized according to the degree of bi- or multi-lingualism within them. He suggests that there are six “archetypal contact settings”, each characterized by different arrays of contact phenomena.

At one end of the spectrum we find relatively homogeneous communities of monolinguals most of whom have little or no direct contact with speakers of other languages. Still, foreign influence may be introduced into the language by individuals who travel, or by the mass media, or through language teaching in schools, churches, etc. Such “distant” contact typically results in lexical borrowing alone. Examples include Japanese, Russian, and other languages that have borrowed words from English.

In the middle of the spectrum we find a variety of situations involving varying degrees of bi- or multilingualism within the community. One such setting involves contact between linguistic minorities and a dominant host group. In some cases, the minority group may be relatively isolated or socially distant from the majority group. Some examples include Gaelic speakers in Scotland, Basques in southern France, and the Pennsylvania “Dutch” of the midwestern US. Such groups may preserve their language(s) for a long time, though shift to the dominant language may eventually take place. Other bilingual situations are characterized by higher levels of individual bilingualism.

There are cases where minority groups become bilingual in the host community’s language, for example, Hispanics in the US. There are also cases

where different ethnic groups vie for equal status in the same territory, each preserving its own language, but also learning the other. Examples include French and English in Montréal, and Flemish and French in Brussels. We can also find communities that typically employ two or more languages in everyday interaction, and treat them as relatively equal or at least appropriate in their respective domains of use. These communities are characterized by “diglossia,” a situation in which two languages, one High (H) and the other Low (L), fulfill complementary functions in the community. Examples include the use of Spanish and Guaraní in Paraguay, and Standard German and Schwyzertütsch in Switzerland.

When stable bilingualism collapses, through either the erosion of ethnolinguistic boundaries or the resolution of diglossia or some other cause, the result is language shift [16, p. 13]. This is a common outcome of situations involving bilingualism among minority groups subject to strong cultural pressure from a dominant group. A classic example is the community of Oberwart in Austria, which has undergone shift from Hungarian to German [7]. Many immigrant groups in the United States have lost their ancestral languages and shifted to English.

Some situations involve bilingualism in an ancestral language as well as a superposed (usually colonial) official language. This can lead to the emergence of new vernaculars, which draw on the resources of both the H and L languages, as witness the “New Englishes” in India, Singapore, and various African countries [25, p. 27].

Finally, at the other extreme of the continuum, we find highly heterogeneous communities characterized by high degrees of individual multilingualism, such as the village of Kupwar in India, described by Gumperz and Wilson [8]. There are also situations where different speech communities engage in constant interaction, and the fluidity of their social boundaries is matched by the fluidity of their linguistic practices. The Aboriginal groups of Arnhem Land, Australia [12], and the villages of Northwest New Britain in Papua New Guinea [22] are examples of this type.

All of these multilingual communities offer a rich range of possibilities for contact-induced changes of one type or another. There may be borrowing across languages, code-switching behaviors, substratum influence on varieties acquired as second languages, various types of convergence, and so on. The particular outcomes, as usual, have to do with a range of social factors, some favoring the preservation of language boundaries, others favoring different degrees of language mixture, switching, and convergence, yet others promoting language shift. It is simply impossible to list here all the factors that may be relevant to the nature and outcome of the contact.

It should also be obvious that there is no clear or consistent correspondence between the type of community and the pattern of contact-induced change within it [25, p. 28]. Bilingual communities, for instance, may be characterized by stable maintenance in some cases, by language shift in others, or by both. Long-term stability can translate into rapid shift, given the right circumstances.

Finally, it bears repeating that this overview of contact settings is far from complete. For instance, it does not include the social contexts that lead to the formation of pidgins, creoles, or bilingual mixed languages. These contact outcomes and their social settings will be discussed more fully in the subsequent chapters.

### SUMMARY

- The chapter has tried to address issues concerning the notion of Contact linguistics and its interconnection with interpersonal human communication. Contact linguistics is considered to be a newly developed branch of linguistics which studies languages in contact – how they influence each other and under what condition they develop, how new languages (new varieties) appear, and how these varieties differ from standardly accepted languages.
- The material of the chapter showed that the development of languages and their cross-influence has long been the subject of investigation and research for a great many of scholars. However, the topics mentioned are still under huge consideration. Particularly, such directions of investigation as creole and pidgin functioning in bilingual societies are still in need to be precisely studied.

### PRACTICE

- Discuss the ways in which each one of samples (1) – (3) differs from Standard English, and list the features that characterize each. **In what sense would you say these are varieties or dialects of English?**
- Rayfield (1970) predicts that in situations of second language learning, lexical borrowing from the L2 will be much more frequent than structural borrowing in the L1 of the learners, while structural changes due to L1 influence will be more frequent in the learner's version of the L2. **Investigate the use of English or any other language as a second language by international students at your university. Does Rayfield's prediction hold true as far as their**

**usage is concerned?**

➤ **The following are some questions you might want to ask of a particular contact situation, in order to understand the outcomes of the contact:**

1. What is the nature of the community setting in which the contact takes place?
2. What are the demographics of the groups in contact?
3. Is the situation one of language maintenance or shift?
4. What languages are spoken by the groups in contact?
5. What is the direction of influence?

**Suggest other questions you might want to ask about the social setting of the contact, the linguistic inputs, and the processes of change that may occur.**

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## Language Contact and Linguistic Variation: Style, Social Class, Sex, Gender, Ethnicity

Linguists have usually treated language as an abstract object, which can be accounted for without references to social concerns of any kind. Sociologists, for their part, have tended to treat society as if it could be constituted without language. However, we must try to bring together the perspectives of linguists and sociologists to bear on issues concerning the place of language in society (Suzanne Romaine).

### Overview

The chapter aims to clarify the difference between sex, gender and linguistic gender; to see how male speech has been taken as a language norm; to explore sex differentiation in language variation; to become aware of researcher sex-stereotypes; and to consider links to language change, prestige and social class. The chapter also provides factual information on and interpretation of the notion of style and its connection to language, social class, sex, gender and ethnicity. Thus, the chapter serves as a condensed survey of existing information on the mentioned phenomena.

Topics covered include: Language and Social Class; Style; Principles of Language Style; Style as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Dimension of Language Variation; Language and Gender; Sex-Linked Patterns in Linguistic Variation; Language and Ethnicity.

*Key words: Regional Dialect, Social Dialect, Linguistic Style, Men-Made Language, Ethnicity, Ethnolect.*

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### 6.1 Language and Social Class

It has been known for some time that differences in language are tied to social class. In the 1950s it was suggested that certain lexical and phonological differences in English could be classified as **U (upper class)** or **non-U (lower class)**, e.g. *serviette* versus *table-napkin*, to take what was then

one of the best-known of all linguistic class-indicators of England [16, p. 67]. Previously most studies of variability were concerned with regional variation or dialectology.

From the 1960s onwards linguists have turned their attention to the language of cities, where an increasing proportion of the world's population lives in modern times. Urbanization tends to promote linguistic diversity as well as uniformity [ibid., p. 68]. Towns have typically attracted migrants from many rural areas, who speak different languages and regional dialects. London, for instance, provided a point of origin for the diffusion of Standard English, but now it has become an increasingly diverse city through the influx of overseas migrants from the Caribbean and Asia. As many as fifty different languages may be spoken in parts of the city. Similarly, Melbourne, once primarily a monolingual town, now has the largest concentration of Greek speakers in the world. In urban centers languages of wider communication and standard languages serve to unify a diverse population. Furthermore, the rise of urbanization is connected with an increase in social stratification, which is reflected in linguistic variation.

A study conducted in New York City in the 1960s was the first to introduce a systematic methodology for investigating social dialects and the first large-scale linguistic survey of an urban community [9; 10]. Unlike previous dialectological studies, which generally chose one person as representative of a particular area, this survey was based on tape-recorded interviews with 103 informants who had been chosen by random sample as being representative of the various social classes, ages, ethnic groups, etc. to be found in New York City. This approach solved the problem of how anyone person's speech could be thought of as representing a large urban area.

Early investigations had concluded that the speech of New Yorkers appeared to vary in a random and unpredictable manner. Sometimes they pronounced the names *Ian* and *Ann* alike and sometimes they pronounced post-vocalic /r/ (i.e. r following a vowel) in words such as *car*, while at other times they did not. This fluctuation was termed *free variation* because there did not seem to be any explanation for it [16, p. 68]. The New York study and subsequent ones modelled after it, however, showed that when such free variation in the speech of and between individuals was viewed against the background of the community as a whole, it was not free, but rather conditioned by social factors such as social class, age, sex, and style in predictable ways. Thus, while *idiolects* (or the speech of individuals) considered in isolation might seem random, the speech community as a whole behaved regularly. Using these methods, one could predict that a person of a particular social class, age, sex, etc. would not pronounce postvocalic /r/ a

certain percentage of the time in certain situations. Through the introduction of these new methods for investigating social dialects by correlating sociolinguistic variables with social factors, linguists have been able to build up a comprehensive picture of social dialect differentiation in the United States and Britain in particular, and other places, where these studies have since been replicated.

In order to demonstrate a regular relationship between social and linguistic factors, one has to be able to measure them in a reliable way. The principal social dimensions linguists have been concerned with are: social class, age, sex, and style. Of these, social class has been the most researched. Many linguistic studies have started by grouping individuals into social classes on the basis of factors such as education, occupation, income, etc., and then looked to see how certain linguistic features were used by each group [3 – 5; 9; 10]. The method used in New York City to study the linguistic features was to select items, which could be easily quantified, in particular, phonological variables such as postvocalic /r/, which was either present or absent. This was one of the first features to be studied in detail by linguists. Varieties of English can be divided into two groups with respect to their treatment of this variable: those that are r-pronouncing (*rhotic*) and those that are not r-pronouncing (*non-rhotic*) [9; 10]. Today in Britain accents that have lost post-vocalic /r/ as a result of linguistic change generally have more prestige than those, like Scottish English, that preserve it. In many parts of the United States the reverse is true, although this has not always been the case. Table 6.1 (a) compares the pronunciation of post-vocalic /r/ in New York City with that of Reading, England. The results show that in New York City the lower one's social status, as measured in terms of factors such as occupation, education, and income, the fewer post-vocalic /r/s one uses, while in Reading the reverse is true.

New York City	Reading	Social Class
32	0	upper middle class
20	28	lower middle class
12	44	upper working class
0	49	lower working class

**Table 6.1 (a)** Percentage of post-vocalic /r/s pronounced in New York City and Reading (following Suzanne Romaine, 1994)

Like many features investigated by linguists, the pronunciation of post-vocalic /r/ shows a geographically as well as a socially significant distribution. This difference among dialects of English is the result of a linguistic change involving the loss of /r/ preceding a consonant, but not a vowel, which began

centuries ago in south-east England and spread north and west. The distribution of post-vocalic /r/ in the United States reflects the history of settlement patterns of colonists from different parts of Britain and Ireland [16, p. 70]. Because the relevant linguistic factor for this change was the presence or absence of a consonant in the immediately following word (cf. e.g. *car engine* versus *car key*), a so-called **linking/r** appears in non-rhotic accents before words beginning with a vowel. Subsequently, this pattern seems to have been restructured and generalized so that /r/ is inserted in many contexts before a vowel where historically it was never present, e.g. *the idea of it* becomes *the idear of it* and *Shah of Iran* becomes *Shar of Iran*. This phenomenon is known as **intrusive r**.

Just as the diffusion of linguistic features may be halted by natural geographical barriers, it may also be impeded by social class stratification. Similarly, the boundaries between social dialects tend for the most part not to be absolute. The pattern of variation for post-vocalic /r/ shows **fine stratification** or continuous variation along a linguistic dimension (in this case a phonetic one) as well as an extralinguistic one (in this case social class). The indices go up or down in relation to social class, and there are no sharp breaks between groups. A major finding of urban linguistic work is that differences among social dialects are quantitative and not qualitative.

There are many other variables in English, which show similar linguistically significant distributions, such as those studied in Norwich in the 1970s in an urban dialect study modelled after the New York research [18; 19]. Three consonantal variables, which varied with social class were investigated. Table 6.1 (b) shows the results for (ing), (t), and (h). The numbers show the percentage of non-RP (Received Pronunciation) forms used by different class groups. The variable (ing) refers to alternation between alveolar /n/ and a velar nasal /ng/ in words with -ing endings such as *reading*, *singing*, etc. These are technical phonetic labels, which describe the variation between forms, which are pronounced with the final 'g' sounded, and those which are pronounced as if they were written *readin'*, *singin'*, etc. Speakers who use the latter forms are popularly said to be *dropping their g's*. This variation is a well-known marker of social status (and style) over most of the English speaking world. Table 6.1 (b) shows that the lower a person's social status, the more likely he / she is to use a higher percentage of alveolar rather than velar nasal endings.

The variable (h) refers to alternation between /h/ and lack of /h/ in words beginning with /h/, such as *heart*, *hand*, etc. Unlike RP, most urban accents in England do not have initial /h/ or are variable in their usage of it. For these speakers who *drop their h's*, *art* and *heart* are pronounced the same.

Again, the lower a person's social status, the more likely he/she is to drop h's. Speakers in the north of England, Scotland, and Ireland retain /h/, as do speakers of American English.

The variable (t) refers to the use of glottal stops instead of /t/, as in words such as *bottle*, which are sometimes stereotypically spelled as *bot'le* to represent the glottalized pronunciation of the medial /t/. Most speakers of English glottalize final /t/ in words such as *pat*, and no social significance is attached to it. In many urban dialects of British English, however, glottal stops are more widely used, particularly by younger working-class speakers in London, Glasgow, etc.

Social class	(ing)	(t)	(h)
Middle middle class	31	41	6
Lower middle class	42	62	14
Upper working class	87	89	40
Middle working class	95	92	59
Lower working class	100	94	61

**Table 6.1 (b)** Percentage of non-RP forms in Norwich  
(following Peter Trudgill, 1974)

By comparing the results for the use of glottal stops in Norwich with those for (ing) and (h), some interesting conclusions can be drawn about the way language and social class are related in this English city. Looking first at frequency, even the middle class in Norwich use glottal stops very frequently, i.e. almost 50 per cent of the time, but this is not true of (h). There is of course no reason to assume that every instance of variation in language will correlate with social structure in the same way or to the same extent. Most sociolinguistic variables have a complicated history. Some variables will serve to stratify the population more finely than others; and some cases of variation do not seem to correlate with any external variables, e.g. the variation in pronunciation of the first vowel of *economic* is probably one such instance. Some people pronounce this vowel like the vowel in *bee* and others like the vowel in *bed*. Phonological variables tend to show fine stratification and there is more socially significant variation in the pronunciation of English vowels than in consonants. In the case of glottal stop usage, what is socially significant is how frequently a person uses glottal stops in particular linguistic and social contexts. The use of glottal stops is socially stigmatized particularly in medial position, e.g. *bottle*, *butter*. A hierarchy of linguistic environments can be set up which seems to apply to all speakers. The likelihood of

occurrence of glottal stops varies according to the following environments:

most frequent	word-final + consonant	e.g. <i>that cat</i>
	before syllabic nasal	e.g. <i>button</i>
	word-final + vowel	e.g. <i>that apple</i>
	before syllabic /l/	e.g. <i>bottle</i>
least frequent	word-medially	e.g. <i>butter</i>

Although all speakers are affected by the same internal constraints in the same way, they apply at different frequency levels, depending on social class membership and other external factors [16, p. 72 – 73].

The view of language, which emerges from the linguistic study of urban dialects is that of a structured but variable system, whose use is conditioned by both internal and external factors. The use of other variables, however, can be more sharply stratifying socially. That is, a large social barrier between the middle class and the working class may be reflected in the usage of some linguistic feature. In English such features are more likely to be grammatical or syntactic, such as the use of multiple negation (e.g. *'I don't want no trouble'*), than pronunciation variables [ibid., p. 73].

There is a close relationship between regional and social dialect in both the United States and Britain. More specifically, it appears that working-class varieties are more localized. This is especially true in Britain, where those who are at the top of the social scale speak **RP (Received Pronunciation)**, an accent which does not betray the local origin of the speaker, only his / her social status [ibid., p. 74]. There is nothing like RP in the United States, where regional standards exist in different parts of the country. It is quite possible for highly educated speakers to have marked local accents, as can be seen, for instance, in the fact that former President John F. Kennedy spoke with a recognizable east-coast New England variety, and President Jimmy Carter with a non-coastal Southern one. Of course, educated speakers in both countries would tend not to use non-standard grammatical features.

The nature of the relationship between social and regional varieties needs further investigation since it is likely that it varies considerably in non-Western societies, where differences in social status may be organized quite differently. For instance, in India we might expect sharp stratification of linguistic features to correlate with caste differences since the castes are named groups, highly stable and rigidly separated from one another. There is little mobility because membership in a particular caste group is hereditary.

## 6.2 Style

Not only do some of the same linguistic features figure in patterns of

both regional and social dialect differentiation, but they also display correlations with other social factors. The intersection of social and stylistic continua is one of the most important findings of nowadays linguistics: namely, if a feature occurs more frequently in working-class speech, then it will occur more frequently in the informal speech of all speakers [16, p. 75]. The behaviour of each social class group varies according to whether its style is casual or formal. Style can range from formal to informal depending on social context, relationship of the participants, social class, sex, age, physical environment and topic. Although each class has different average scores in each style, all groups style-shift in the same direction in their more formal speech style, that is, in the direction of the standard language [6, p. 11]. This similar behaviour can also be taken as an indication of membership in a speech community. All groups recognize the overt greater prestige of standard speech and shift towards it in more formal styles. In this particular aspect the notion of formality is defined primarily in terms of the amount of attention speakers pay to their speech.

Style refers to ways of speaking – how speakers use the resource of language variation to make meaning in social encounters. Style therefore refers to the wide range of strategic actions and performances that speakers engage in, to construct themselves and their social lives [16, p. 76].

Stylistic differences can be reflected in vocabulary, as in “*The teacher distributed the new books*” versus “*The teacher gave out the new books*”; syntax, as in an increased use of the passive voice (in English) in formal speech (“*The meeting was cancelled by the president*” versus “*The president called off the meeting*”); and pronunciation (colloquial pronunciation such as “*readin*”, “*singin*” versus more formal ones such as “*reading*”, “*singing*”).

### ***Principles of Linguistic Style stated by William Labov***

1. ***Principle of Style-Shifting:*** There are no single-style speakers.
2. ***Principle of Formality:*** Any systematic observation defines a formal context in which more than the minimal attention is paid to speech.
3. ***Vernacular Principle:*** The vernacular, in which minimal attention is paid to speech, is the most regular in its structure and in its relation to the history of the language.
4. ***Principle of Attention:*** Styles may be ordered along a single dimension, measured by the amount of attention paid to speech.
5. ***Principle of Subordinate Shift:*** Speakers of subordinate dialects who are asked direct questions on language shift their speech irregularly towards or away from the superordinate dialect [9; 10].

Linguists generally define notions of language style and register primarily as sets of linguistic features with a particular social distribution. Notice that is not very different from how we define language, dialect or variety – the distinction is a bit vague. In Chambers [3, p. 5] this notion is implicit – he actually does not refer to sets of features directly or attempt to define style. He says style has “a simple social correlate, viz. formality”. Confusingly, he also uses the term to refer to this social dimension, which underlies the variation – but obviously, that should be kept separate from the linguistic elements. Allan Bell [2, p. 240] is somewhat clearer in emphasizing the linguistic elements: style is “the range of variation within the speech of an individual speaker”. Note that this does not do much to cut down the field either, e.g. it appears to include code-switching between two completely different languages as *style-shifting*. Walt Wolfram & Natalie Schilling-Estes [21, p. 214] define language style quite similarly, as “variation in the speech of individual speakers”. Mac A. K. Halliday’s systemic-functionalist approach distinguishes two kinds of linguistic variation: 1) “*according to the user*” (what we normally think of as *social dialect* variation, where people speak differently because of some relatively permanent aspect of their identity as group members, such as ethnicity, region of origin, or social class); 2) “*according to the use*”. He calls the second type of variation ‘register’ and includes in it what variationist sociolinguists mean by style [8, p. 14].

But most linguists have two kinds of variation by use in mind. They distinguish style from register, and mean something *narrower* by the latter – something characterized by less permanent aspects of people’s identities, such as their occupations (*lawyers* as in *legalese*, or *firefighters*, as in the lexicon of *smoke-jumpers*), or temporary roles (an adult interacting with a child, as in *baby-talk*).

To Suzanne Romaine, for example, registers are distinguished by differences in vocabulary, while also being typically “concerned with variation in language conditioned by uses rather than users and involving consideration of the situation or context of use” [16, p. 20]. It is notable that style is rarely explicitly defined [8 – 10; 16] and often only very broadly when it is [1; 2].

### 6.3 Style as the Second Main Dimension of Linguistic Variation

All of the above efforts are clearly trying to maintain a two-dimensional model, with *group social characteristics* (or variables) conditioning variation in a general fashion, on the one hand, and simultaneously *individual identities and circumstances* conditioning it in a very specific manner [15]. Obviously the two cross-cut each other in any single instance. This basic conception,

which is widely shared, creates both a methodological and a theoretical problem.

The **theoretical problem** is to understand how the two dimensions are related to each other. The **methodological problem** is parallel to the one of controlling for population differences – there, sampling is the answer, and allows you to compare how different groups talk. In the case of style, the problem is how to control for the circumstances that affect variation. This problem was first understood and methods created by William Labov in his NYC study, and despite many advances in methods and criticisms of his theoretical model of style, many people still use his approach today.

One can get a lot of mileage out of this two-dimensional approach to variation and the role it casts for style. This is an instance of a general phenomenon in theory-building which one can think of as the Elsewhere or Garbage-Can phenomenon. Attention focuses around a dominant theoretical domain as giving the most desirable sorts of explanation – e.g. generative syntax in the 1960s and early 1970s – while things which cannot be well explained by it are relegated to other, theoretically underdeveloped and politically marginalized, domains which function for practitioners of the dominant paradigm as Garbage Cans – e.g., at that time, pragmatics [14]. Also, typically, problems which ought to be solved by the marginalized domain are treated in the dominant one, just because it is dominant.

Eventually, such problems come to be recognized as numerous and important. The theory and practice of the marginalized domain become more developed; it is seen as complementary to the dominant domain, rather than a threat, and it is given academic prominence. This is obviously related to Th. Kuhn's ideas on scientific revolutions. Another relevant example in linguistics: free variation and the idiolect.

We can see in Bell's and Wolfram & Schilling-Estes's accounts that the emphasis on the individual is the most powerful influence on style research today, and this is partly because of the growth of discourse studies, where groups are downplayed and individuals come to the fore (for all sorts of reasons).

There are problems created, too, by looking at style as the second major dimension. One is that it is almost impossible to get a good definition. Here we want to get a handle on what sociolinguists actually do with style, aside from what they say. In practice, we can treat style as consisting of: 1) co-varying sets of optional features, whether phonological, morphological, or syntactic (e.g., *the English sociolinguistic variables (TH), (ING), or the get-passive*); 2) ...or lexical – though the latter case overlaps a common definition of 'register' with a specific social distribution, i.e. located in a particular

speech community [13, p. 41 – 56].

These sets are ranged on a social continuum – most commonly, one of formality – which presumably also applies to other areas of socially-evaluated behavior (dress, bearing). This one-dimensionality has been identified as problematic, and it is, but it is certainly not a necessary feature of all definitions, as we will see below.

William Labov’s [10, p. 53]: “By *style* we mean to include any consistent... [set of] linguistic forms used by a speaker, qualitative or quantitative, that can be associated with a... [set of] topics, participants, channel, or the broader social context”. He is interested in characterizing a set of linguistic forms, and in relating them to some social factors beyond the individual. His discussion is also very practical and focused on the target of eliciting vernacular speech, a style, which is privileged in Labovian work. Partly because of that, we are going to use Labov’s model for coding style on our data, though we need not subscribe to his early theory of style as attention paid to speech.

#### 6.4 Function versus Structure

This sociolinguistic tradition of investigating style as an aspect of symbolic speech variation differs from that of anthropological linguistics or *ethnography of communication*, which primarily focuses on *ways of speaking* – including styles and registers – as expressing particular social functions, events, or relationships (though it also includes careful linguistic description) [17].

An important movement in sociolinguistics in recent years has been the merging of variationist analysis with such an ethnographic conception. In the case of style, a group led by Penelope Eckert (the California Style Collective) at Stanford led the way with a paper in 1993. They discard a purely-linguistic definition or identification procedure for style, and instead crucially emphasize the role of social function and practices. This is also linked with a focus on style as collective and dialectic, rather than stressing its individual, intra-speaker and static nature [6].

We can see a movement towards *functional* definition in Wolfram’s and Schilling-Estes’s [21] discussion, right away. They include not only the formal-informal axis of variation, but also treat shifting from one dialect into another as style-shifting – whether or not the second dialect is native to the speaker (if not, this use of an out-group dialect has been called *crossing*) – as well as shifting registers, in the sense we described above. Looked at in this light, it is hard to see why shifting from one language into another quite distinct one (*code-switching*) would not also be style-shifting.

This shows quite clearly that they are not limiting their definition by linguistic structure – since the notion of register they use, and dialect, and language, all seem to be distinguished by structural criteria, at least partly. The same is true of Allan Bell’s definition: if an individual speaker controls different dialects, or languages, they are styles for him [2].

## 6.5 Overview of Approaches to Style

Now we have had an overview of the theoretical bases of different approaches, let us look briefly at some of the specific ones and their advantages and problems, following the discussions in Bell [ibid.] and Wolfram & Schilling-Estes [21].

- There are many types of style-shifting, at least including formality-based, cross-dialectal and cross-linguistic, register shift, hyper-correction, and performance speech.
- Style operates on all linguistic levels: phonology, grammar, lexicon and semantics, but also pragmatics and discourse (irony, address forms, conversational overlap).
- Style also may be influenced by a wide range of social factors and contexts (audience, topic, channel, mode, genre, situation and setting, etc.).
- A shift on one dimension or axis (e.g. to more formal speech) may also involve a shift on another (e.g. to another register, dialect or language).
- However, research in the Labovian paradigm has found that social class distinctions are generally preserved across style shifts on the formality dimension, i.e. different social classes style-shift in the same direction for the same variable, in proportional amounts.
- The major exception to this is (quantitative) hyper-correction – in fact, it’s *defined* by not preserving class relations. Consequently, it requires a separate explanation from whatever explains the tendency of style-shifting to reflect social class ordering.
- Performance speech is another exceptional type: when a register exists to display a variety (either one that is native to your community, or one that is not, e.g. crossing or inaccurate dialect imitation). This type of performance speech also occurs in a variety of contexts, including conversation and the sociolinguistic interview.
- It’s one thing to correlate style with contextual social factors – but it is another thing to explain why style-shifting occurs as it does, and not some other way.

*William Labov's Approach: Style as Attention Paid to Speech*

1. The goal is to record and analyze the vernacular, i.e. the most casual speech, because it is the earliest acquired, is more regular, and is the most relevant to linguistic change.
2. The more closely speakers monitor their speech itself, the more they shift into formal styles and the more they change their speech to accommodate the outside observer.
3. "Any systematic observation... defines a formal context where more than the minimal attention is paid to speech" [10, p. 29]. Thus, casual speech won't easily appear in interviews.
4. "Styles may be ordered along a single dimension, measured by the amount of attention paid to speech" [ibid., p. 29]. Labov grants this is not the same thing as an ethnographic analysis of style – but maintains that such ordering can be usefully accomplished.
5. Casual speech may be recorded in contexts such as extended or emotional narratives, conversation among peers in pre-existing groups, recollection of childhood games and events, speech aimed not at the observer but at others present (family, neighbours) or, e.g., on the phone; and topics the interviewee introduces and regards as important.
6. Common formal contexts include responses to interview questions, discussions where language is thematized as a topic (no matter who introduces it), and *soap-box speech*.
7. Field experiments also may be highly formal in nature: word-lists, minimal-pair tests, commutation tests, linguistic insecurity tests, self-report & subjective-reaction tests, etc.
8. Tests / tasks which rely on reading produce speech that is closer to the formal extreme of the style continuum, because reading is associated with more formal occasions than speaking.
9. Channel cues – paralinguistic elements such as laughter, increased tempo, raised pitch, heavier breathing – may be used to identify casual speech.

*Findings by William Labov Related to Style*

- Social class distinctions tend to be preserved in each speech style; conversely, the slope of style-shifting tends to be identical across social classes.
- Linguistic variables can be characterized in terms of their salience, or of speakers' awareness, and consequently of the patterns of style-

shifting they produce:

- variables which show social stratification but not style-shifting are called (social) **INDICATORS**;
  - if speakers show both stratification and style-shifting, but do not comment overtly upon a feature, the variable is known as a **MARKER**; and
  - if speakers do remark upon a socially-diagnostic variable, it's a **STEREOTYPE**.
- The degree of variation along the style axis, from one extreme to another, is almost always less than the degree of social class differentiation. This has been used to argue that style variation is derived from social variation (Bell, 1984; Preston, 1991).
- Patterns of variation in casual, vernacular speech give a truer picture of linguistic changes in progress than formal speech does; formal speech tends to be conservative or distorted.

#### *Problems with William Labov's Model of Style*

- Channel cues turn out to be unreliable and ambiguous in use.
- One-dimensional models are found insufficient to represent the repertoire of stylistic options available to most speakers.
- Reading and speaking, e.g., are not necessarily part of the same dimension in all communities, and not necessarily ordered as in Labov's NYC data; reading may produce a citation register, which is different in kind from speech.
- The experimental results used to argue for the attention model prove on closer inspection to be contradictory.
- There are cases easily found in which greater attention to speech does not result in a higher level of formality, e.g. switching into a non-standard dialect by a native standard speaker who is not fully fluent in it, or dialect performance speech.

#### *Allan Bell's Audience-Design Model of Style Shifting*

This is a variationist version of speech accommodation theory; quantitative study of linguistic variables according to Labovian principles is taken as the norm. The model assumes that speakers adjust their speech primarily towards that of their audience in order to express solidarity or intimacy with them, or conversely away from their audience's speech in order to express distance.

The model elaborates a *taxonomy of audience members* [2]:

- addressees are those who are directly addressed, ratified participants;

- auditors are not directly addressed, but are ratified participants;
  - overhearers are non-ratified listeners of whom the speaker is aware;
  - eavesdroppers are non-ratified listeners of whom the speaker is unaware;
  - referees are non-present groups with whom speakers attempt to identify while they are speaking to addressees, etc.
- Other features of the model include:
- The primary engine of style-shifting is the speaker's urge to gain the audience's approval.
  - Style-shifts are thus mainly responses to features of the context (including the audience).
  - Social evaluation of particular features of a group's speech precedes, and is the reason for, use of those features by other individuals in style-shifting. Styles are normally associated with certain groups or situations, and carry the flavour of those associations.
  - Not all audience members are equally important; their importance is proportional to the degree to which the speaker recognizes and ratifies them.
  - Speakers typically make subtle adjustments of style for a range of different addressees, and to a lesser degree for other types of audience members.

Besides the types of style-shifting covered by the principal modes above, there are also other types which Bell sees as secondary and tries to integrate with the above [2]:

- Style may be shifted according to topic or setting, but in reality it is the association of a topic or setting with a particular type of audience, which gives the shift its social meaning.
- Speakers may shift styles not in response to their environment, but in order to alter the existing situation themselves through language use; this is initiative style-shifting.
- Initiative style-shifts are explained as cases of referee design, i.e. the use of features associated with a referee group by a speaker who wants to identify with that group.

#### *Problems with the Audience-Design Model*

- It is still one-dimensional, and tries to repackage apparently different reasons for style-shifts (topic, setting) as sub-cases of its major dimension (audience).
- It is hard to tell which features of an audience a speaker is responding to, and hard to investigate this since it is a matter of divining

- speakers' intentions (a validity problem).
- It is focused on audience attributes rather than linguistic features, so has difficulty explaining why some variables appear to be more salient for style-shifting than others.
  - Though it focuses on speakers' desire to achieve solidarity with audience members, it overlooks the fact that this can be done by a variety of linguistic means – including speech that is not convergent, but rather divergent.
  - It tends to assume a consensus model of the speech community, i.e. agreement on the social value of speech varieties, instead of recognizing that great diversity may exist across groups – and conflict exist within them – on the evaluation of speech forms.
  - Initiative style-shifting, though an add-on to the original model, seems to be pervasive and important. In fact, it's possible to see all style shifting as initiative rather than responsive: speakers are projecting their own identity, not just responding to how others view them.

### *Speaker Design Style Shifting*

A new emphasis, called speaker design, works to break down the original dichotomy between social and stylistic variation, since the projection of identity includes both its permanent aspects and also fleeting ones [21, p. 46]. It has the following features:

- Identity is dynamic: speakers project different roles in different circumstances. The interaction of the desire to project identity with the recognition that audiences differ means that we don't see it as purely an individual phenomenon, but rather a relational one: role relations, and speaker choice, are the focus.
- This allows explanation of some previously puzzling cases, eg. dialect-performance speech events, or other instances where divergent speech is adopted but solidarity seems to be intended. The speaker is adopting a role towards which she, and the audience, may be expected to have a positive orientation (even though the speech produced is not like either the speaker's or the audience's everyday conversation).
- Even the cases of convergence for which audience design and accommodation theory were invented can be better seen as pro-active – a choice to conform to existing norms.
- From this it is a small step to the idea that all speech is performance, all shifts involve adopting roles. This would contradict approaches, which privilege particular styles, e.g. the idea that the vernacular is the most "natural" and does not require speakers to put on roles.

## *Problems with Speaker Design Approach to Style*

As a new approach to style, then, this is designed to solve some of the problems of previous ones, but equally some of its own characteristics and weaknesses are not yet clear. We might ask questions of it, such as:

- How can we generalize from the motivations of one speaker, with a complex range of roles, to the behavior of groups? (or should we try?)
- Speaker motivation is not observable, and we can't trust self-reports – there is a validity problem: How to refute (or support) the interpretations of other analysts?
- What is the repertoire of styles/identities available to speakers? how to define it?
- If the basis of style-shifting is so individualistic, how do others recognize and respond?

### **6.6 Language and Gender / Sex**

Much of what passes as linguistics now seeks to show a systematic relationship between language use and social structure. One scope of this relationship is analysis of the connection between language, gender, society and culture, the connection, which has attracted considerable attention of linguists in recent years. Studies in gender theory have focused on a wide range of topics starting from different syntactical, phonological or lexical uses of language to aspects of conversation analysis, such as topic nomination and control, interruptions and other interactional features. While early research on gender focused only on the description of these features, more recent works have sought to show how they reflect and reproduce social identities.

Robin Lakoff's (1975) pioneering work in gender studies suggested that women's speech typically used a range of linguistic features, such as tag questions, which made women seem as if they were tentative, hesitant, lacking in authority, and trivial; marked their speech as inferior and weak [16, p. 101]. Let us take, for example, the use of tag questions such as, *He's a nice boy, isn't he?* When a tag question is added onto a sentence, it may have a number of meanings. A speaker can make an assertion without appearing to be dogmatic leaving open the possibility that others may not agree. It can also be used to check whether one's ideas are accepted, or to put forward a suggestion without making it sound like a command. Some linguists thus claimed that women used more tag questions because they were characteristic of the greater hesitancy of women, who were afraid to assert things without qualification. Another feature, which has been associated with women is the use of high rising tone at the end of an utterance, especially

when making statements, which makes it sound as if a question is being asked. This too was seen as an indication of women's tentativeness and lack of confidence in putting forward their views.

However, according to Suzanne Romaine, such arguments are circular: women were labelled as lacking in confidence because they used more tag questions and tag questions were thought to indicate lack of confidence because they were used by women. When empirical studies were actually conducted to test some of these claims, some found that men actually used more tag questions than women. Nevertheless, this discovery was not accompanied by any suggestion that men might be lacking in confidence [16, p. 100].

This shows that if men's speech is analysed for comparison, then women's speech becomes secondary or a deviation, which has to be explained. Similarly, because monolingualism has been taken as a societal norm, bilingualism is seen as problematic and in need of explanation. Thus, women and their speech have been measured against male standards and found to be deficient and deviant.

Women occupy what might be called a problematic or negative semantic space. They are seen as derivative of men and in all fields of research their differences from men and masculine norms are seen as standing in need of some explanation. Because women are devalued, so is their language [ibid., p. 102]. But how much of what is believed to be characteristic of women's speech actually is? Some of the features thought to be part of "women's language" can be found in use by males when those males are in a subordinate position. Thus, women typically use the speech style they do because they are in less powerful positions in relation to men. Nevertheless, many feminists now argue that languages such as English have been literally "man made" and are still primarily under male control [11]. Sexism in language can be demonstrated with many different kinds of evidence. Words for women have negative connotations, even where the corresponding male terms designate the same state or condition for men. Thus, *spinster* and *bachelor* both designate unmarried adults, but the female term has negative overtones to it. A spinster is beyond the expected marrying age and therefore seen as rejected and undesirable. These are cultural stereotypes.

The bias is far-reaching and applies also to associations of the words *man* versus *woman*. No insult is implied if you call a woman an "old man", but to call a man an "old woman" is a decided insult. Because the word *woman* does not share equal status with *man*, terms referring to women have undergone pejoration. If we examine pairs of gender-marked terms such as *lord* / *lady*, *baronet* / *dame*, *Sir* / *Madam*, *master* / *mistress*, *king* / *queen*,

*wizard* / *witch*, etc., we can see how the female terms may start out on an equal footing, but they become devalued over time. *Lord*, for instance, preserved its original meaning, while *lady* is no longer used exclusively for women of high rank. *Baronet* still retains its original meaning, but *dame* is used derogatorily, esp. in American usage. *Sir* is still used as a title and a form of respect, while a *madam* is one who owns a brothel. Likewise, *master* has not lost its original meaning, but *mistress* has come to have sexual connotations and no longer refers to the woman who has control over a household. *King* has also kept its meaning, while *queen* has developed sexual connotations. *Wizard* has actually undergone semantic amelioration, or upgrading: to call a man a wizard is a compliment, but not so for the woman who is branded as a witch. The research on language and gender has also shown how men nominated topics more, interrupted more often, held the floor for longer, and so on. The chief focus of such approach was to show how patterns of interaction between men and women reflect the dominant position of men in society.

Other studies, however, have taken a different approach by looking at same-sex groups rather than mixed-sex groups. In a typical study of this type, Maltz and Borker [16] developed lists of what they described as men's and women's features of language. They found that these norms of interaction were acquired in same-sex groups rather than mixed-sex groups and argued that the issue in mixed-sex groups is therefore one of cultural difference rather than social inequality. In such a way the existence of a gender-based subculture rests on the claim that the sex varieties of language reflect contrasting socialisation patterns, intra-sex interactional patterns and separate speech and behavioural norms which derive from the existence of feminine identities and gender roles. It also claims that different types of interaction associated with the respective sexes lead to different ways of speaking, implying that culture derives from behaviour learnt through interaction while still seeking to retain a distinction between social and cultural behaviour. The claim is that socialization teaches men and women to do different things with words and conversations. According to Williams, Malz and Borker appear to be arguing that role separation associated with sexual separation of activities is reflected in speech patterns [20].

Quite different patterns of verbal interaction in all-male and all-female groups begin in early years when children play in same-sex peer groups [16, p. 117]. Boys tend to have a larger network than girls, who usually have one or two girlfriends with whom they play regularly. To some extent the size of these groups may be determined by the different types of activities they engage in. It takes only three girls to skip rope or two to play house, while

more boys are needed for team sports such as football. Extensive interaction in single-sex peer groups is probably a crucial source of the gender differentiation patterns found by sociolinguistics.

Thus, girls use language to create and maintain cohesiveness, and their activities are generally cooperative and non-competitive. Differentiation between girls is not made in terms of power. When conflicts arise, the group breaks up. Bossiness tends not to be tolerated, and girls use forms such as “let’s”, “we’re gonna”, “we could” to get others to do things, instead of appealing to their personal power. When they argue, girls tend to phrase their arguments in terms of group needs rather than in personal terms.

Boys, on the other hand, tend to have more hieratically organized groups than girls, and status in the hierarchy is paramount. In boys’ groups speech is used to assert dominance, to attract and maintain an audience when others have the floor. They issue commands to other boys rather than suggest what should be done. Certain kinds of stylized speech events, such as joking and story-telling, are valued in boys’ groups [16, p. 117].

There is some continuity between adolescent ways of speaking and the management of social interaction later in life. Linguists find common elements in the speech styles of boys and men, such as story-telling, verbal posturing, and arguing. Men tend to challenge one another. Women, on the other hand, do not value aggressiveness and their conversations tend to be more interactional and aim at seeking cooperation. They send out and look for signs of agreement and link what they say to the speech of others. In all female groups women often discuss one topic for more than a half-hour. They share feelings about themselves and talk about relationships. Men, however, jump from topic to topic, vying to tell anecdotes about their achievements. They rarely talk about their feeling or their personal problems [7; 11; 17; 19].

There are also differences in how conversations are managed. Women are careful to respect each other’s turns and tend to apologize for talking too much. They dislike anyone dominating the conversation. Men compete for dominance, with some men talking a lot more than others. They do not feel a need to link their own contributions to others. Instead, they are more likely to ignore what has been said before and to stress their own point of view [16, p. 124]. Clearly, there is scope here for a deal more research that looks at culturally-acquired differences between male and female speech in the context of relationships of social inequality and dominance.

A number of linguistic studies have also found that women tend to use higher-status variants more frequently than men. Women of each social class group use the more standard variants more often than men of equal status. The variable is more sharply stratifying for women than for men, and the biggest

gaps occur in the lower middle class and lower working class. Women tend to hypercorrect more than men, especially in the lower middle class. Some researchers have argued that, in the case of spoken English at least, men's and women's speech are two distinct varieties of language. Studies have shown differences in phonological features, intonation patterns, choice of vocabulary (certain adjectives and intensifiers appear more frequently in women's speech), use of tag questions (addition of a question – such as “isn't it?” – to a statement in order to get agreement or affirmation, something women are said to do more than men), and other features [16, p. 124 – 125].

## 6.7 Simple Sex-Linked Patterns in Linguistic Variation

### *Simple Patterns*

Holding constant other variables such as age and social class (i.e., all things being equal), women generally appeared to use forms which closely resemble those of a standard or prestigious speech variety more frequently than men, or in preference to the vernacular, non-standard or stigmatized forms which men appeared to favour. A less theoretical way of putting this, which corresponds with many public attitudes, is that women tend to use forms which are generally considered ‘better’, ‘nicer’, or ‘correct’ more often than men use them. It is important to remember that these findings fit what Wolfram & Schilling-Estes [21] call *group-preferential distributions* – in which speakers from two groups both use a set of forms, but one group uses them more often – rather than group-exclusive patterns, in which speakers from one group use a form, while speakers from another group do not. We can then call the kinds of patterns observed above *sex-preferential* rather than *sex-exclusive*: the differences observed are a matter of degree.

### *Status-Based Explanations for Sex-Linked Differences*

How have such sex-linked differences (the simple pattern) been explained? The most prominent explanations until the late 1980s (associated with William Labov and Peter Trudgill) crucially involved the notions of prestige and status-consciousness. Labov suggested that women are more prestige-conscious than men; therefore, they avoid using forms which are stigmatized in their speech community. Women in the socially-mobile interior classes (e.g., in NYC, the lower-middle class; in Norwich, the upper-working class) are most likely to avoid stigmatized forms because the potential for social mobility in their group is greater than for members of exterior classes (i.e., near the lower and upper extremes of society). Women are seen as especially intent on increasing their social status. Such an explanation

assumes a view of society, which has been called the *consensus view*, as opposed to a *conflict approach* to social class.

### *Trudgill & Labov Status-Conscious Approach*

Peter Trudgill carries this idea further. Based on sociologists' findings, he suggests reasons why women might be generally more status-conscious than men [18; 19]:

- a. Women are more closely involved with child-rearing and the transmission of culture (socialization) – thus more aware of the importance, for their children, of acquiring prestige norms.
- b. Women have a less secure social position than men. They may use linguistic means more crucially to secure and signal their social status; for this reason, they may be more aware of the importance of speech (compare the insecurity of the interior social classes: this effect might then be compounded for their female members).
- c. Men have traditionally been evaluated on their occupation and their earning power – ‘what they do’. Women have been discriminated against in occupational choice and earnings – they may be rated, instead, on ‘how they appear’. Again, other signals of status, including speech, would be more important for women, who would be critically aware of the social significance of linguistic variables.
- d. Both Labov and Trudgill also suggest that working-class speech has associations with masculinity – with a ‘roughness and toughness’ that is characteristic of working-class life. These are generally not desirable, feminine attributes for women – and, correspondingly, they *are* desirable, masculine attributes for men. (Discussions of these explanations, both pro and con, are numerous in the literature on language and gender; see especially Eckert, 1989; Labov, 1990; Romaine, 1994).

### *Supporting Data: Self-Evaluation of Speech in Norwich*

Support for differing preferences of men and women with respect to overt & covert prestige can be found in Trudgill's self-evaluation data for Norwich [ibid.]:

- we assume that speakers usually report themselves as using the forms which have positive connotations for them: the ones they are aiming to produce (at any rate, when they are directing attention to their speech, i.e. in more formal styles);
- women reported themselves as using prestige variants (the yod /j/ in ‘tune’-words) more often than they actually did – presumably

- because they wish they did so, or think they ought to do so;
- men, on the other hand, significantly under-reported their use of the prestige form ([**IK**]) for /**iyɹ**/-words like ‘ear’, as opposed to vernacular forms (like [**E:**]);
- Peter Trudgill concludes that women aim at a publicly-legitimised (i.e. *overt*) prestige norm; men aim at a norm with *covert* prestige;
- speakers using more prestige forms and those preferring vernacular forms are differently evaluated – though both are positively evaluated in some ways;
- Elyan (in Trudgill, 1988) performed an experiment contrasting RP speakers with speakers of British vernacular Englishes. RP speakers were rated higher on intelligence, fluency and self-confidence; vernacular speakers were seen as more charming, humorous and good-natured. To the extent that these stereo-types are shared by both sexes, men and women on the whole may be aiming for different images.

### *Problems & Criticisms*

The prestige-based and status-consciousness explanations have been criticised on a number of grounds:

- The concept of prestige itself is poorly-defined and possibly circular.
- This view assumes that gender is an independent variable, and less important than status.
- This view emphasizes male behaviour as the norm, and treats female behaviour as deviant and needing to be explained.
- In emphasizing prestige and consensus models, it downplays the power differential between men and women [6] and the insights of conflict models.
- This view takes behaviour as sex-linked in an uncomplicated fashion instead of seeing gender as socially constructed, involving roles, norms and expectations, and potentially differing *within* sex-groups, as well as *between* them.
- There is no reason to expect simple, general or constant relations between gender (or sex) and sociolinguistic variation.
- This view ignores differences of gendered behaviour for variables that are stable, or at various stages of linguistic change in progress.
- Methodological flaws are common in older studies: e.g. in the ways that women are assigned socioeconomic or occupational status; lack of awareness of gender dynamics in collecting speech data; and

analysis of gender as involving a simple binary variable (=sex).

- Finally, the data *themselves* turn out to be more complex: there are many cases where women have been found to use vernacular forms as often as men, or more often; both men and women have been found to lead in some sound changes; etc. Such cases suggest that a more sophisticated view of gendered variation is required.

## 6.8 Language and Ethnicity

Words like *ethnic groups*, *ethnicity* and *ethnic conflict* have become common terms in the English language, and they keep cropping up in the press, in TV news, in political programmes and in casual conversations. Though, the meaning of these terms frequently seems ambiguous and vague.

In social anthropology, ethnicity has been a main preoccupation since the late 1960s, and it remains a central focus for research in the 1990s. Through its dependence on long-term fieldwork, anthropology has the advantage of generating first-hand knowledge of social life at the level of everyday interaction. To a great extent, this is the locus where ethnicity is created and re-created.

Ethnicity emerges and is made relevant through ongoing social situations and encounters, and through people's ways of coping with the demands and challenges of life. From its vantage-point right at the centre of local life, social anthropology is in a unique position to investigate these processes. Anthropological approaches also enable us to explore the ways in which ethnic relations are being defined and perceived by people; how they talk and think about their own group as well as other groups, and how particular world-views are being maintained or contested. The significance of ethnic membership to people can best be investigated through that detailed on-the-ground research which is the hallmark of anthropology. Finally, social anthropology, being a comparative discipline, studies both differences and similarities between ethnic phenomena. It thereby provides a nuanced and complex vision of ethnicity in the contemporary world [12, p. 1215 – 1230].

Ethnicity seems to be a new term: the term's earliest dictionary entry appearance is in the Oxford English Dictionary in 1972. Its first usage is attributed to the American sociologist David Riesman in 1953. The word *ethnic*, however, is much older. The word is derived from the Greek *ethnos* (which in turn derived from the word *ethnikos*), which originally meant “heathen” or “pagan” [20, p. 119]. It was used in this sense in English from the mid-14th century until the mid-19th century, when it gradually began to refer to “racial” characteristics. In the United States, “ethnics” came to be used around the Second World War as a polite term referring to Jews, Italians, Irish

and other people considered inferior to the dominant group of largely British descent. None of the founding fathers of sociology and social anthropology – with the partial exception of Max Weber – granted ethnicity much attention.

Since the 1960s, *ethnic groups* and *ethnicity* have become household words in social anthropology, although, few of those who use the terms bother to define them. Anyway, all of the approaches to ethnicity agree that it has something to do with the classification of people and group relationships.

In everyday language, the word *ethnicity* still has a ring of minority issues and race relations, but in social anthropology, it refers to aspects of relationships between groups, which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive. Although it is true that the discourse concerning ethnicity tends to concern itself with subnational units or minorities of some kind or another, majorities and dominant people are no less "ethnic" than minorities.

### *Ethnicity, Race and Nation*

A few words must be said initially about the relationship between ethnicity and race. The term *race* has deliberately been placed within inverted commas in order to stress that it has dubious descriptive value. Whereas it was for some time common to divide humanity into four main races, modern genetics tends not to speak of races, and this has two main reasons. First, there has always been so much interbreeding between human populations that it would be meaningless to talk of fixed boundaries between races. Secondly, the distribution of hereditary physical traits does not follow clear boundaries. In other words, there is often greater variation within a "racial" group than there is systematic variation between two groups.

Concepts of race can nevertheless be important to the extent that they inform people's actions; at this level, race exists as a cultural construct, whether it has a biological reality or not. Racism, obviously, builds on the assumption that personality is somehow linked with hereditary characteristics, which differ systematically between races, and in this way race may assume sociological importance even if it has no objective existence. Social scientists who study race relations in Great Britain and the United States need not themselves believe in the existence of race, since their object of study is the social and cultural relevance of the notion that race exists. If influential people in a society had developed a similar theory about the hereditary personality traits of redhaired people, and if that theory gained social and cultural significance, "redhead studies" would for similar reasons have become a field of academic research, even if the researchers themselves did not agree that redheads were different from others in a relevant way. In societies where they

are important, ideas of race may therefore be studied as part of local discourses on ethnicity [12, p. 1215 – 1230].

The relationship between the terms *ethnicity* and *nationality* is nearly as complex as that between *ethnicity* and *race*. Like the words *ethnic* and *race*, the word *nation* has a long history [20], and has been used in a variety of different meanings in English. We shall refrain from discussing these meanings here, and will concentrate on the sense in which nation and nationalism are used analytically in academic discourse. Like ethnic ideologies, nationalism stresses the cultural similarity of its adherents, and by implication, it draws boundaries vis-a-vis others, who thereby become outsiders. The distinguishing mark of nationalism is by definition its relationship to the state. A nationalist holds that political boundaries should be coterminous with cultural boundaries, whereas many ethnic groups do not demand command over a state. When the political leaders of an ethnic movement place demands to this effect, the ethnic movement therefore by definition becomes a nationalist movement.

### *Ethnicity and Class*

The term *ethnicity* refers to relationships between groups whose members consider themselves distinctive, and these groups may be ranked hierarchically within a society [12, p. 1215]. It is therefore necessary to distinguish clearly between ethnicity and social class.

Theories of social class always refer to systems of social ranking and distribution of power. Ethnicity, on the contrary, does not necessarily refer to rank; ethnic relations may well be egalitarian in this regard. Still, many poly-ethnic societies are ranked according to ethnic membership. The criteria for such ranking are nevertheless different from class ranking: they refer to imputed cultural differences or races, not to property or achieved statuses.

There may be a high correlation between ethnicity and class, which means that there is a high likelihood that persons belonging to specific ethnic groups also belong to specific social classes. There can be a significant interrelationship between class and ethnicity, both class and ethnicity can be criteria for rank, and ethnic membership can be an important factor for class membership. Both class differences and ethnic differences can be pervasive features of societies, but they are not one and the same thing and must be distinguished from one another analytically.

Thus, when we talk of ethnicity, we indicate that groups and identities have developed in mutual contact rather than in isolation. But what is the nature of such groups?

When A. Kroeber and F. Kluckholm investigated the various meanings

of culture in the early 1950, they found about three hundred different definitions. Most of those who write on ethnicity do not bother to define the term, though the extant number of definitions is already high – and it is growing. Instead of going through the various definitions of ethnicity here, we will point out significant differences between theoretical perspectives as we go along. As a starting-point, let us examine the recent development of the term as it is being used by social anthropologists.

The word combination *ethnic group* has come to mean “people”. But what is “people”? In a study of ethnic relations in Thailand, Michael Moerman [12, p. 1215 – 1230] asks himself: “Who are the Lue?” The Lue were the ethnic group his research focused on, but when he tried to describe who they were – in which ways they were distinctive from other ethnic groups – he quickly ran into trouble. His problem, a very common one in contemporary social anthropology, concerned the boundaries of the group. After listing a number of criteria commonly used by anthropologists to demarcate cultural groups, such as language, political organisation and territorial contiguity, he states: “Since language, culture, political organization, etc., do not correlate completely, the units delimited by one criterion do not coincide with the units delimited by another” [ibid.]. When he asked individual Lue what were their typical characteristics, they would mention cultural traits, which they in fact shared with other, neighbouring groups. They lived in close interaction with other groups in the area; they had no exclusive livelihood, no exclusive language, no exclusive customs, no exclusive religion. Why was it appropriate to describe them as an ethnic group? After posing these problems, Moerman was forced to conclude that “[s]omeone is Lue by virtue of believing and calling himself Lue and of acting in ways that validate his Lueness” [ibid., p. 1219]. Being unable to argue that this *Lueness* can be defined with reference to objective cultural features or clear-cut boundaries, Moerman defines it as an emic category of ascription. This way of delineating ethnic groups has become very influential in social anthropology.

Ethnicity is an aspect of social relationship between agents who consider themselves as being culturally distinctive from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction. It can thus also be defined as a social identity (based on a contrast vis-a-vis others) characterised by metaphoric or fictive kinship. When cultural differences regularly make a difference in interaction between members of groups, the social relationship has an ethnic element. Ethnicity refers both to aspects of gain and loss in interaction, and to aspects of meaning in the creation of identity. In this way, it has a political, organisational aspect as well as a

symbolic one. Ethnic groups tend to have myths of common origin, and they nearly always have ideologies encouraging endogamy, which may nevertheless be of highly varying practical importance.

### *Kinds of Ethnic Relations*

(a) **Urban Ethnic Minorities.** This category would include, among others, non-European immigrants in European cities and Hispanics in the United States, as well as migrants to industrial towns in Africa and elsewhere. Research on immigrants has focused on problems of adaptation, on ethnic discrimination from the host society, racism, and issues relating to identity management and cultural change. Anthropologists who have investigated urbanisation in Africa have focused on change and continuity in political organisation and social identity following migration to totally new settings. Although they have political interests, these ethnic groups rarely demand political independence or statehood, and they are as a rule integrated into a capitalist system of production and consumption [12, p. 1216].

(b) **Indigenous People.** This word is a blanket term for aboriginal inhabitants of a territory, who are politically relatively powerless and who are only partially integrated into the dominant nation-state. Indigenous peoples are associated with a non-industrial mode of production and a stateless political system [ibid.]. The Basques of the Bay of Biscay and the Welsh of Great Britain are not considered indigenous populations, although they are certainly as indigenous, technically speaking, as the Sami of northern Scandinavia or the Jivaro of the Amazon basin. The concept "indigenous people" is thus not an accurate analytical one, but rather one drawing on broad family resemblances and contemporary political issues.

(c) **Proto-Nations (*Ethnonationalist Movements*).** These groups, the most famous of ethnic groups in the news media of the 1990s, include Kurds, Sikhs, Palestinians and Sri Lankan Tamils, and their number is growing. By definition, these groups have political leaders who claim that they are entitled to their own nation-state and should not be ruled by others. These groups, short of having a nation-state, may be said to have more substantial characteristics in common with nations than with either urban minorities or indigenous peoples. They are always territorially based; they are differentiated according to class and educational achievement, and they are large groups. In accordance with common terminology, these groups may be described as *nations without a state*. Anthropologists have studied such movements in a number of societies, including Euzkadi or Basque Country (Heiberg, 1989), Brittany (McDonald, 1989) and Québec (Handler, 1988).

(d) **Ethnic Groups in *Plural Societies*.** The term *plural society* usually

designates colonially created states with culturally heterogeneous populations (Furnivall, 1948; Smith, 1965). Typical plural societies would be Kenya, Indonesia and Jamaica. The groups that make up the plural society, although they are compelled to participate in uniform political and economic systems, are regarded as (and regard themselves as) highly distinctive in other matters. In plural societies, secessionism is usually not an option, and ethnicity tends to be articulated as group competition.

### SUMMARY

- The chapter explored the link between the notions of style, gender, ethnicity and language as the basic means of human communication. Broadly speaking, the study of language and gender / ethnicity has included two very different things: (1) how language reveals, embodies and sustains attitudes to gender / ethnicity; (2) how language users speak or write in (different and distinctive) ways that reflect their sex.
- The first of these is partly historic and bound up with the study of the position of men and women in society. It includes such things as the claim that language is used to control, dominate or patronize. This may be an objective study insofar as it measures or records what happens. But it may also be subjective in that such things as patronizing are determined by the feelings of the supposed victim of such behaviour.
- The second area of study recalls many discussions of the relative influence of nature and nurture, or of heredity and environment. Of this we can note two things immediately: (1) education or social conditioning can influence gender attitudes in speaking and writing (for example, to make speech more or less politically correct), but (2) there are objective differences between the language of men and that of women (considered in the mass), and no education or social conditioning can wholly erase these differences.

### PRACTICE

- **Study the examples of Stylistic Choice** (degree of formality / technicality). **Give 5 – 7 examples of your own.**

Vocabulary: “*gave out*” vs “*distributed*”

Syntax: increased use of the passive with increased formality

Pronunciation: *house* vs ‘*ouse*; *swimming* versus *swimmin*’

- **Explain what you understand by the term “sexist language”. How far do you think this term is still applicable to ways in which people use language in society today? In your answer you should refer both to examples and to relevant research.**
- **Describe some of the differences between the language used by male and by female speakers in social interaction. Explain why these differences might occur.**
- **Gender Spotting:  
Here are extracts from six texts published in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Can you identify the sex of the writer in each case? Prove your choice.**

*Text A*

I deny not, but that it is of greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors. For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book. Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. 'Tis true, no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse.

I think the author is a woman

I think the author is a man

*Text B*

From this time my head ran upon strange things, and I may truly say I was not myself; to have such a gentleman talk to me of being in love with me, and of my being such a charming creature, as he told me I was; these were things I knew not how to bear, my vanity was

elevated to the last degree. It is true I had my head full of pride, but, knowing nothing of the wickedness of the times, I had not one thought of my own safety or of my virtue about me; and had my young master offered it at first sight, he might have taken any liberty he thought fit with me; but he did not see his advantage, which was my happiness for that time. After this attack it was not long but he found an opportunity to catch me again, and almost in the same posture; indeed, it had more of design in it on his part, though not on my part. It was thus: the young ladies were all gone a-visiting with their mother; his brother was out of town; and as for his father, he had been in London for a week before. He had so well watched me that he knew where I was, though I did not so much as know that he was in the house; and he briskly comes up the stairs and, seeing me at work, comes into the room to me directly, and began just as he did before, with taking me in his arms, and kissing me for almost a quarter of an hour together.

I think the author is a man

I think the author is a woman

### *Text C*

Dun Buy, which in Erse is said to signify the Yellow Rock, is a double protuberance of stone, open to the main sea on one side, and parted from the land by a very narrow channel on the other. It has its name and its colour from the dung of innumerable sea-fowls, which in the Spring chuse this place as convenient for incubation, and have their eggs and their young taken in great abundance. One of the birds that frequent this rock has, as we were told, its body not larger than a duck's, and yet lays eggs as large as those of a goose. This bird is by the inhabitants named a Coot. That which is called Coot in England, is here a Cooter.

Upon these rocks there was nothing that could long detain attention, and we soon turned our eyes to the Buller, or Bouilloir of Buchan, which no man can see with indifference, who has either sense of danger or delight in rarity. It is a rock perpendicularly tubulated, united on one side with a high shore, and on the other rising steep to a great height, above the main sea. The top is open, from which may be seen a dark gulf of water which flows into the cavity, through a breach made in the lower part of the inclosing rock. It has the appearance of a vast well bordered with a wall. The edge of the Buller is not wide, and to those that walk round, appears very narrow. He that ventures to look downward sees, that if his foot should slip, he must fall from his dreadful elevation upon stones on one side, or into water on the other.

We however went round, and were glad when the circuit was completed. When we came down to the sea, we saw some boats, and rowers, and resolved to explore the Buller at the bottom. We entered the arch, which the water had made, and found ourselves in a place, which, though we could not think ourselves in danger, we could scarcely survey without some recoil of the mind. The bason in which we floated was nearly circular, perhaps thirty yards in diameter. We were inclosed by a natural wall, rising steep on every side to a height which produced the idea of insurmountable confinement. The interception of all lateral light caused a dismal gloom. Round us was a perpendicular rock, above us the distant sky, and below an unknown profundity of water. If I had any malice against a walking spirit, instead of laying him in the Red-sea, I would condemn him to reside in the Buller of Buchan.

I think the author is a woman

I think the author is a man

***Text D***

The great advantages which naturally result from storing the mind with knowledge, are obvious from the following considerations. The association of our ideas is either habitual or instantaneous; and the latter mode seems rather to depend on the original temperature of the mind than on the will. When the ideas, and matters of fact, are once taken in, they lie by for use, till some fortuitous circumstance makes the information dart into the mind with illustrative force, that has been received at very different periods of our lives. Like the lightning's flash are many recollections; one idea assimilating and explaining another, with astonishing rapidity. I do not now allude to that quick perception of truth, which is so intuitive that it baffles research, and makes us at a loss to determine whether it is reminiscence or ratiocination, lost sight of in its celerity, that opens the dark cloud. Over those instantaneous associations we have little power; for when the mind is once enlarged by excursive flights, or profound reflection, the raw materials, will, in some degree, arrange themselves. The understanding, it is true, may keep us from going out of drawing when we group our thoughts, or transcribe from the imagination the warm sketches of fancy; but the animal spirits, the individual character give the colouring. Over this subtile electric fluid, how little power do we possess, and over it how little power can reason obtain! These fine intractable spirits appear to be the essence of genius, and beaming in its eagle eye, produce in the most eminent degree the happy energy of associating thoughts that

surprise, delight, and instruct. These are the glowing minds that concentrate pictures for their fellow-creatures; forcing them to view with interest the objects reflected from the impassioned imagination, which they passed over in nature.

I think the author is a woman

I think the author is a man

***Text E***

'Above all, my dear Emily,' said he, 'do not indulge in the pride of fine feeling, the romantic error of amiable minds. Those, who really possess sensibility, ought early to be taught, that it is a dangerous quality, which is continually extracting the excess of misery, or delight, from every surrounding circumstance. And, since, in our passage through this world, painful circumstances occur more frequently than pleasing ones, and since our sense of evil is, I fear, more acute than our sense of good, we become the victims of our feelings, unless we can in some degree command them. I know you will say, (for you are young, my Emily) I know you will say, that you are contented sometimes to suffer, rather than to give up your refined sense of happiness, at others; but, when your mind has been long harassed by vicissitude, you will be content to rest, and you will then recover from your delusion. You see, my dear, that, though I would guard you against the dangers of sensibility, I am not an advocate for apathy. At your age I should have said THAT is a vice more hateful than all the errors of sensibility, and I say so still. I call it a VICE, because it leads to positive evil; in this, however, it does no more than an ill-governed sensibility, which, by such a rule, might also be called a vice; but the evil of the former is of more general consequence. I have exhausted myself,' said St. Aubert, feebly, 'and have wearied you, my Emily; but, on a subject so important to your future comfort, I am anxious to be perfectly understood.'

I think the author is a man

I think the author is a woman

***Text F***

The progress of Catherine's unhappiness from the events of the evening was as follows. It appeared first in a general dissatisfaction with everybody about her, while she remained in the rooms, which speedily brought on considerable weariness and a violent desire to go home. This, on arriving in Pulteney Street, took the direction of extraordinary hunger, and when that was appeased, changed into an earnest longing to be in bed; such was the extreme point of her distress;

for when there she immediately fell into a sound sleep which lasted nine hours, and from which she awoke perfectly revived, in excellent spirits, with fresh hopes and fresh schemes. The first wish of her heart was to improve her acquaintance with Miss Tilney, and almost her first resolution, to seek her for that purpose, in the pump-room at noon. Her plan for the morning thus settled, she sat quietly down to her book after breakfast, resolving to remain in the same place and the same employment till the clock struck one; and from habitude very little incommoded by the remarks and ejaculations of Mrs. Allen, whose vacancy of mind and incapacity for thinking were such, that as she never talked a great deal, so she could never be entirely silent; and, therefore, while she sat at her work, if she lost her needle or broke her thread, if she heard a carriage in the street, or saw a speck upon her gown, she must observe it aloud, whether there were anyone at leisure to answer her or not. At about half past twelve, a remarkably loud rap drew her in haste to the window, and scarcely had she time to inform Catherine of there being two open carriages at the door, in the first only a servant, her brother driving Miss Thorpe in the second, before John Thorpe came running upstairs, calling out, "Well, Miss Morland, here I am. Have you been waiting long? We could not come before; the old devil of a coachmaker was such an eternity finding out a thing fit to be got into, and now it is ten thousand to one but they break down before we are out of the street. How do you do, Mrs. Allen? A famous bag last night, was not it? Come, Miss Morland, be quick, for the others are in a confounded hurry to be off. They want to get their tumble over."

"What do you mean?" said Catherine. "Where are you all going to?" "Going to? Why, you have not forgot our engagement! Did not we agree together to take a drive this morning? What a head you have! We are going up Claverton Down."

"Something was said about it, I remember," said Catherine, looking at Mrs. Allen for her opinion; "but really I did not expect you."

"Not expect me! That's a good one! And what a dust you would have made, if I had not come."

I think the author is a woman

I think the author is a man

➤ **Writing for Women:**

**Below is an extract from a story, published in the weekly magazine *Woman's Own* (June, 1999). Read the extract and answer the following questions:**

1. What details of language in the story appear to reflect the

- writer's expectations about the reader, in your view?
2. Which language features reflect attitudes to male or female gender?
  3. Comment on interesting lexis by category: nouns, verbs, qualifiers and so on.
  4. Comment on features of punctuation.
  5. Comment on sentence structures (syntax).
  6. Comment on stylistic features in the extract.

*It had been so different three years ago, the night she'd met Stefan de Vaux. There'd been a party. Bella always threw a party when she'd sold a picture because poverty, she'd explained, was a great inspiration. She'd been wearing a brilliant blue caftan, her fair hair twisted on the top of her head, the severity of it accenting her high cheekbones, the little jade Buddha gleaming on its silver chain round her neck.*

*Claire, pale from England and the illness that had allowed her to come to Tangier to recuperate, had been passed from guest to guest - "Ah, you're Bella's cousin" - like a plate of canapés, she thought ruefully, attractive but unexciting. Until Stefan de Vaux had taken her out onto the balcony and kissed her.*

*"Well?" he'd said softly, in his lightly accented voice, letting her go at last, and she had just stood there, staring at him, at his lean, outrageously handsome face, his laughing mouth, amber brown eyes. "Angry? Pleased? Shocked?" And she'd blushed furiously, feeling all three.*

➤ **Occupational Lexis:**

Look at nouns that denote workers in a given occupation. In some cases (*teacher, social-worker*) they may seem gender-neutral. Others may have gender-neutral denotation (*doctor, lawyer, nurse*) but not gender-neutral connotation for all speakers and listeners. Speakers will show this in forms such as "*woman doctor*" or "*male nurse*". Listeners may not show it but you can test their expectations by statements or short narratives that allow for contradiction of assumptions. You can try it out with this example story.

*A man was driving with his son, when the car was struck by another vehicle. The man was killed instantly, but his son, injured, was rushed to hospital. The surgeon came into the*

*operating theatre, gasped and said: "But this is my son".*

Some listeners may not notice anything odd. If they are truthful some may admit to taking a little while to understand the story, and some may continue to find it puzzling until it is explained. You could vary the noun from "surgeon" to "doctor", "consultant" or "anaesthetist" and so on, to see if this changes the responses. You could also rework the story thus:

*A woman was driving with her son, when the car was struck by another vehicle. The woman was killed instantly, but her son, injured, was rushed to hospital. The theatre nurse looked at the surgeon, gasped and said: "But this is my son".*

Consider forms that differentiate by gender, in adding diminutive (belittling) affixes: *actress*, *stewardess*, *waitress*, *majorette*, *usherette*, and so on.

*My son reports that at his school, 6th form students (many of them young men) are now employed as lunchtime supervisors for younger students. And what do they call themselves? "Dinner-ladies".*

➤ **Semantic Non-Equivalences:**

These are pairs of terms that historically differentiated by sex alone, but which, over time, have gained different connotations (e.g. of status or value) and in some cases different denotations. Examples include:

- Mrs, Ms / Mr;
- Miss / Master, Mr;
- Mistress / master;
- Governess / governor;
- Spinster / bachelor;
- Lady / Lord;
- Lady / gentleman;
- Dame / knight;
- Bride / (bride)groom;
- Madam / sir;
- Queen / king;
- Husband / wife;
- Author / authoress;
- Dog / bitch.

**Explain these distinctions (and others that you can find for yourself) using English language dictionaries and thesauri.** Howard Jackson and Peter Stockwell, in *An Introduction to the Nature and Functions of Language* do this quite entertainingly:

*A **master** is in control, but a **mistress** is kept for sex. Compare “old master” and “old mistress”. A **bachelor** is an approving term, but a **spinster** is a sad thing to be. Compare “bachelor pad” and “spinster pad”. A **patron** is a business client, but a **matron** is an old nurse. If a man has a **client**, he is a **businessman**; if a woman has a **client**, she is a **prostitute**. If a man is a **prof[essional]**, he is **competent**; if a woman is a **prof[essional]**, she is a **prostitute**. If a man is a **tramp**, he is a **homeless scruff**; if a woman, a **prostitute**.*

- **Think Critically About: The following texts are examples of conversations produced by male and female speakers. To what extent are these conversations representative of the way men and women talk with each other?** In your answer you should refer to any relevant research and also make use of some of the following frameworks, where appropriate:

- lexis;
- grammar;
- semantics;
- pragmatics;
- discourse structure.

**Text 1:** comes from a posting on a message board, found on the men's portal MenWeb at [www.vix.com/menmag](http://www.vix.com/menmag), listing reasons “**Why It's Good to Be a Man**”.

- People never glance at your chest when you're talking to them.
- New shoes don't cut, blister, or mangle your feet.
- One mood, ALL the damn time.
- Phone conversations are over in 30 seconds.
- A five-day vacation requires only 1 suitcase.
- You can open all your own jars.
- You get extra credit for the slightest act of thoughtfulness.
- Your underwear is \$10 for a three-pack.
- If you are 34 and single, nobody notices.
- You can quietly enjoy a car ride from the passenger's seat.

- Three pairs of shoes are more than enough.
- You can quietly watch a game with your buddy, for hours without ever thinking "He must be mad at me."
- No maxi-pads.
- If another guy shows up at the party in the same outfit, you just might become lifelong friends.
- You are not expected to know the names of more than five colors.
- You don't have to stop and think of which way to turn a nut on a bolt.
- You are unable to see wrinkles in clothes.
- The same hairstyle lasts for years, maybe decades.
- Your belly usually hides your big hips.
- One wallet and one pair of shoes, one color, all seasons.
- You can "do" your nails with a pocketknife.
- Christmas shopping can be accomplished for 25 relatives, on December 24th, in minutes.

**Text 2** is part of a discussion thread on a forum for women which concerns computing. People's user names are shown as XXXX to preserve their anonymity:

**HTML - can somebody please explain (2 Replies)**

Posted by: XXXX on 15/01/03 at 08:00 PM

what this is?

ThanksXXXX

Yes you're looking at it! (0 Replies)

Posted by: YYYY on 15/01/03 at 08:09 PM

HTML - HyperText Markup language is the code that most web pages are made of.

to give you an idea (0 Replies)

Posted by: ZZZZ on 15/01/03 at 09:16 PM

At the top of the browser choose "View" from the menu - then click "source". The window that comes up is the HTML source code for the page you are looking at. This is what gets sent over the net - your browser (internet explorer, netscape etc.) then interprets this text and shows you it in an understandable form (usually..).Hammy

**Text 3** is part of a posting on a message board for men. The non-standard grammar and spelling are preserved.

I've told my wife that if she didn't sign our divorce decree, as is, by Friday morning, that I would kill the goose that lays golden eggs by quitting my job.

This women is extremely greedy. She will end up with about \$30K cash in the first year, while I will assume about the same amount as debt. She has interfered with my phone calls and emails to my 2 beautiful girls.

She is acting totaly bonkers right now - I'm sure some of you know what I mean. No logic, all emotion, attack, attack, attack. The thing is, she left me! I gave her no reason to do so, she just decided that since her best friend moved away that she wanted to leave me and be with her friends and family at the other end of the country.

She is making me pay her large sums of money, and then using it to fight me with a lawyer. I've spent \$5K for my lawyer, and I have to pay for hers too!

**Text 4** is advice on how to solve Fashion Dilemmas from a UK-based Web site at [www.femail.co.uk](http://www.femail.co.uk).

Dear X,

As jeans seem to be the lynchpin of your wardrobe I suggest you find clothes to work with them.

An easy daytime look could comprise slimming dark indigo jeans which can be dressed up with white cotton shirts, blazers and heeled ankle boots or down with a crewneck top and suede trainers. Mix in a chunky leather belt to add polish to your look and keep a pair of jeans in a lighter wash for bombing around in at weekends.

The chunky cardigans that are still in the shops make a good alternative to a jacket when the weather warms up. Also try one of those cotton canvas military-styled jackets for something a bit more fashionable - one in khaki or stone will co-ordinate with your jeans.

Keep your colour palette simple with black, white, camel and blue, mixing in khaki and a brighter colour, for example red or orange to flatter your hair colour, as hi-lights.

The best way to disguise your stomach and deal with your high waist at the same time is to find a pair of low-waisted jeans (or trousers) that sit on your hips rather than your natural waistline. Gap, Topshop, Diesel, and French Connection are best for these jeans. The low waist will lengthen your torso while also sitting below the bulge - then wear a shirt or top over (not skin tight mind) and hey presto, tummy is disguised.

Last summer's gypsy tops were the perfect stomach cover-up and for spring it looks like there will be more of the same on the rails. Also look out for wrap tops and kimono-sleeved tops as they too will look great with your jeans.

Evening wear follows the same rules - fitted blouses (not tucked in) and wrap tops with dark jeans or black trousers but in more luxurious fabrics such as silk and satin. Throw in a bit of glitz with a sequinned bag and shoes and you're away.

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# Language Contact and Linguistic Convergence

## Overview

The chapter is aimed at clarifying the connection between contact-induced structural language changes in cases of language maintenance and linguistic convergence. The later is viewed as a process, which leads to greater structural similarity between the languages involved in the process. Thus in the following sections various instances of structural convergence will be explored as well as structural factors which brought about the diffusion of linguistic features.

Topics covered include: Sprachbund; Linguistic Convergence; Substratum, Superstratum, Adstratum; Language Contact and Phonological Change; Suprasegmental System of Language (on the base of Estonian).

*Key words: Sprachbund, Language Convergence Area, Genetic Heterogeneity, Typological Homogeneity, Structural / Linguistic Convergence.*

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## 7.1 Sprachbund: Contact Across Contiguous Speech Communities

The observation has frequently been made in different parts of the world that some languages spoken in the same geographical area share typological features, even though they may be related only remotely or not at all. This kind of setting leading to structural diffusion is characterized as prolonged contact across geographically contiguous language communities [1, p. 11]. The groups involved may develop close links and patterns of interaction for purposes of trade, or because of cultural practices such as exogamy, or because they are subsumed through conquest within a larger political conglomerate. Anyway, the languages they speak are said to constitute a *Sprachbund*, a language convergence area and the languages spoken within that area, in which genetic heterogeneity is gradually replaced by typological homogeneity. The German term *Sprachbund* was coined by Trubetzkoy [20], who apparently saw it as a counterpart to the notion of *language family*. It has been translated roughly as *language association*,

*language league, union of languages*. Other terms that have been used include *convergence area, diffusion area*. But the term ***Sprachbund*** is now the generally accepted choice.

The concept itself was elaborated in an influential article by Jakobson [12; 13], in which he described phonological *linguistic alliances* in eastern Asia, northern Europe, and the wide territory comprising eastern Europe and western Asia that he referred to as Eurasia. Later Jakobson added the important notion of linguistic affinity, claiming that under conditions of language contact only those elements of structure are accepted by a language from another language that correspond to its own tendencies of development.

Linguistic convergence in a *Sprachbund* presupposes a situation in which speakers of different languages live in close proximity for centuries and maintain their own language for communication with members of their own group yet also frequently have to communicate with speakers of other languages who reside in the same geographical area [6, p. 158; 7, p. 91]. Before discussing some typical cases, let us consider two kinds of situations in which language shift rather than language maintenance is the result.

One way in which languages can come into contact is the arrival of a substantial group of newcomers to a formerly linguistically homogeneous territory. One possible outcome is that both groups continue to speak their own language: this may ultimately lead to a linguistic alliance – *Sprachbund*. The newcomers may be assimilated into the indigenous population and assume their language, or the newcomers' language may prevail and the original inhabitants may adopt it. Which outcome emerges as a result of the contact situation depends on a large number of extralinguistic factors such as the size of the respective groups, their level of material and nonmaterial culture and their military strength [5, p. 43]. Usually a period of widespread bilingualism precedes the language shift.

## 7.2 Substratum, Superstratum, Adstratum

When the original inhabitants adopt the language of the newcomers, we may assume that during the period of bilingualism they speak the new language with a certain degree of interference from their primary language. If after the shift these elements from the primary language are transmitted to later generations of speakers of the prevailing language, they constitute the ***substratum*** of that language [9, p. 75]. Typically, the substratum affects the phonology of the adopted language, but other kinds of interference may likewise be found; in general the effects of a substratum are comparable to the influence of a bilingual speaker's mother tongue on his secondary language.

When the newcomers are linguistically absorbed into the indigenous population, the influence of their language, the *superstratum*, is comparable to the influence of a bilingual's secondary language upon his primary language. Superstratum influences are usually found in the lexicon, but they may affect other aspects of the language as well [10, p. 3].

In the literature the terms *substratum* and *superstratum* are frequently applied to languages occupying the Low and High ends of the prestige scale in multilingual diglossia [2; 8; 11]. This is understandable, since in many cases the newcomers have been military conquerors and therefore have been in a dominant position, whereas the conquered indigenous populations have been in a subordinate position. In the present discussion the terms will be used to refer to language contact situations in which a language shift has taken place without implications of inferiority or superiority. The choice of the term is simply determined by the direction of the shift. If the indigenous population speaks language A and the newcomers speak language B, and if speakers of A shift to B, then A constitutes the substratum of B. If, on the other hand, speakers of B shift to A, then B constitutes the superstratum for A.

In a *Sprachbund* situation the languages entering into the linguistic alliance are said to stand in *adstratum* relationship to each other. Adstratum presupposes language maintenance for a substantial period of time [5, p. 18].

A widely studied language convergence area is found on the Balkan peninsula. The languages participating in the Balkan Sprachbund belong to several more or less closely related families. Three Slavic languages are members of the Sprachbund: Bulgarian, Macedonian and the southeastern dialects of Serbocroatian. The other main languages of the Sprachbund are likewise Indo-European: Albanian, Modern Greek, Romanian. Historically, the now extinct Indo-European languages Illyrian and Thracian as well as Latin and Ancient Greek may be assumed to have played a role. Later the non-Indo-European languages of several waves of conquering invaders – Avars, Bulgars, Hungarians, Turks – entered into the picture [22]. The complex history of the Balkans has seen developments in which the language of one set of invaders constitutes the dominant language until the other invasion, when it becomes the subordinate language, ultimately emerging victorious when the invaders have been absorbed. Substratum, superstratum and adstratum influences have to be taken into consideration in attempting to explain the causes of Balkan linguistic convergence.

### **7.3 Balkanisms as an Example of Language Convergence (Balkan Sprachbund)**

The Balkan Sprachbund is perhaps the best-known and most widely researched convergence situation in the field of areal linguistics, its study

dating back to the XIX century. The primary languages of the Sprachbund include Albanian, Greek, Romanian (a Romance language), and the Slavic languages Bulgarian, Macedonian and Serbo-Croatian. Other languages more marginally involved include Judezmo (also known as Ladino or Judeo-Espagnol), Romany and Turkish.

The sociohistorical background to this situation involved prolonged contact among the above language groups during the period from AD 800 to 1700. Contact was due to a variety of causes, including war and conquest, trade, animal herding, etc. Invasions by different groups (Southern Slavs, Bulgars, etc.) led to a long period of migration across language boundaries, leading to the emergence of multilingual communities. One important factor in the areal diffusion of linguistic features appears to have been the widespread use of Greek as a High language across these communities. This was related to the spread of Byzantine civilization and in particular the unifying role played by the Greek Orthodox church. Hence Greek seems to have been the source of, or the vehicle for, many of the diffused features. However, Greek was also the recipient in some cases, so the picture is not that clear [3].

The full details of this contact situation are still unknown. However, the linguistic consequences can be seen in various types of convergence at all linguistic levels. In phonology the Balkan languages share the absence of suprasegmental features such as length and nasalization in vowel articulation, as well as the presence of a mid-to-high central vowel /i/ or /ə/ (not present in Greek or Standard Macedonian, though it occurs in some Macedonian dialects). Scholars also pointed out that the vowels systems of the languages had merged to some extent, all having at least the vowels *i, e, a, o, u* [22].

The structural features shared by the majority of contemporary Balkan languages (*Balkanisms*) include the following:

**1) Decay of Nominal and Pronominal Inflection.** All six of the main languages of the Balkan *Sprachbund* have experienced a reduction of the case system. Usually a construction with a preposition is employed instead. The following examples are from Bulgarian, in which the decay of the nominal inflection has gone farthest. In these examples the preposition *na*, originally with locative meaning, is used to introduce nominal attributes, indirect objects, and direct objects.

Attribute: *knigata na bašta mi* 'my father's book'

Indirect object: *toj kaza na majka* 'he says to the mother'

Direct object: *palento na ogъn zabraneno* 'lighting fire is forbidden'

Locative: *na koja ulica živeete* 'on which street do you live'.

2) **Pleonastic Use of Personal Pronouns.** This feature is likewise found in all six of the main Balkan languages. A Modern Greek example would be *emena me fainetai* 'it seems to me'; compare Macedonian *jas nego go poznavam* 'I know him' (literally, 'I him him know'), Albanian *mua më kanë sjellë këtu* 'they brought me here'.

3) **Loss of the Infinitive and Its Replacement by a Personal Construction.** This is again one of the common features. Compare Bulgarian *daj mi da pija* 'give me to drink' (literally, 'give me that I drink'), Modern Greek *dos mou na pio* 'give me to drink', Albanian *a-më të pi* 'give me to drink'.

4) **Use of Postpositive Article.** This feature is shared by five of the six languages (the Modern Greek article precedes its noun). It should be noted that each language has used linguistic material present in the language itself for the development of the postpositive article: we are dealing not with the borrowing of morphemes but with the spread of a pattern. Compare Romanian *elev, elevul* 'pupil, the pupil', *floare, floarea* 'flower, the flower'; Macedonian *zgrada, zgradata* 'building, the building', *utro, utroto* 'morning, the morning' [3, p. 123].

A number of additional Balkanisms are shared by different subsets of the six main Balkan languages. For example, the analytic formation of comparatives is shared by the Šopluk dialects of Serbocroatian, Bulgarian, and Modern Greek: 'pretty' and 'prettier' appear as *ubav – po-ubav* in the Šopluk dialects, as *xubav – po-xubav* in Bulgarian, and as *kalos – pio kalos* in Modern Greek. The numbers 11 through 19 are formed with the translation equivalents of 'one on ten' in the three Slavic languages, in Romanian, and Albanian: compare *jedanaest* (\*jedan + na + deset) in Serbocroatian, *unsprezece* (un + spre + zece) in Romanian, and *njëmbëdhjetë* (një + mbë + dhjetë) in Albanian for 'eleven' [ibid., p. 124].

In addition, the core Balkan languages share many phonological features, such as reduction of unstressed vowels (especially in southeastern Serbocroatian dialects, Macedonian, and Bulgarian); loss of tone and quantity and development of an expiratory accent (particularly noticeable in southeastern Serbocroatian dialects as compared to the standard language and those dialects that are not part of the Sprachbund); development of a central vowel (Bulgarian and Romanian); and development of a special intonation pattern for yes-no questions (Serbocroatian, Romanian, and Albanian). There is also a large collection of shared vocabulary, particularly loanwords from Greek and Turkish, and shared loan translations. The impression of similarity is enhanced by an abundance of habitual sayings, phrases, and idioms that follow the same pattern; for example, 'at a good time' appears in Serbocroatian

as *u dobri čas*, in Bulgarian as *dobър čas*, in Greek as *hora kale*, in Romanian as *ceas bun*, and in Albanian as *orë e mbarë* [3, p. 124].

Albanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Romanian share the largest number of Balkanisms. Modern Greek and Serbocroatian lack several of the features characteristic of the Balkan Sprachbund; in Serbocroatian frequently only the Torlak and Šopluk dialects appear to be involved in the linguistic alliance.

In trying to establish the causes of the observed linguistic convergence, scholars have attempted to identify one of the languages spoken in the Balkans as the source of the Balkanisms. Substratum and superstratum languages are fairly well known, with the exception of some of the ancient Indo-European languages (Thracian, Illyrian) spoken in the interior of the peninsula while Greek and Latin spread outward from the cities and along the coast. There exists, however, no single language that contains all the features characteristic of the Balkan Sprachbund; attempts to explain them on the basis of a particular substratum or superstratum have been unsuccessful.

The adstratum theory is relatively more plausible. By the fourth century A.D. Latin was spoken extensively in the northern half of the peninsula, and Greek was spoken in the southern half; both languages continued to be spoken and were available as adstratum. The invasions of the ancestors of southern Slavs in the fifth and sixth centuries created the preconditions for the development of linguistic convergence [ibid., p. 125].

The appearance of the various Balkanisms in the Balkan languages can be followed in written records that were continuous in Greek and began at a relatively early date in Bulgarian. Greek provides the earliest examples: the avoidance of the infinitive is already attested in New Testament Greek, and the analytical comparison of adjectives can be found in eighth- and ninth-century manuscripts. This feature is found in Bulgarian in the twelfth century. The merger of the dative and genitive appears in Greek in the tenth century: the use of prepositions to indicate syntactic relationships seems to have begun in Bulgarian in the twelfth century. Greek had always had a definite article; Bulgarian begins to show the development of the article in the eleventh century, and its use becomes regular in the seventeenth century. Because of the lack of written records, Balkanisms cannot be dated any earlier than the XVI centuries in Albanian and Romanian. The Balkan Sprachbund appears to have been established by the XVII century [18].

Even the adstratum theory cannot fully explain the shared features of the Balkan Sprachbund, and for the same reason that the superstratum and substratum theories were found wanting: there exists no language that contains all the features that characterize the Sprachbund. Civ'jan [4] has

suggested that the Balkanisms can be explained not by reconstructing an earlier stage but by constructing a future stage in the development of the Balkan languages. To represent this future stage toward which the Balkan languages are converging, Civ'jan sets up a syntactic model for sentences in the various languages. The sentence model consists of the same syntactic slots for all languages; the syntactic slots may be filled by lexical items drawn from any one of the languages constituting the Sprachbund. According to this theory, the defining characteristics of the Balkan Sprachbund are similarities in syntax.

#### 7.4 Language Contact and Phonological Change

The southern and southeastern shores of the Baltic are (or have been previously) the home of Baltic peoples, whose languages preserve the Indo-European polytonicity, albeit in modified form. The German and Polish speakers of that territory have not developed tone; however, there is some evidence that language contact has influenced Polish sentence intonation in the variety of Polish that is in contact with Lithuanian [16].

The prosodic system of Lithuanian appears not to have been essentially modified as a result of its contacts with neighboring languages. The Latvian system, on the other hand, shows considerable influence from Finno-Ugric languages spoken in the same territory and to the north of the area in which Latvian is presently spoken [23].

The prosodic system of Latvian differs from that of Lithuanian in two basic respects: in contrast to the free accent of Lithuanian, accent in Latvian is fixed on the first syllable, and Latvian has developed a third tone in addition to the two inherited tones that it shares with Lithuanian. It is generally accepted that these two differences from Lithuanian are due to contact with Livonian, a Finno-Ugric language with stress on the first syllable.

The Latvian third tone, manifested as a glottal modification, is phonetically very similar to the Danish stød. It arose in Latvian in connection with the retraction of word stress to a first syllable that carried an original acute accent (the term is used to refer to the pitch pattern that appears in Lithuanian as a long falling tone and in Latvian as a long even tone). In words that were already accented on the first syllable, the acute continues in Latvian as the long even tone that Endzelin [3, p. 126] refers to as *Dehnton*. In words in which the word stress was retracted to an originally unstressed first syllable with the acute, the first syllable now carries the third tone often referred to as *broken tone*; the German term is *Stosston*. In classical threeaccent areas the sole historical source of the third tone is this reflex of Baltic and Slavic acute. In a number of other dialects, the broken tone goes back both to one of the

reflexes of Baltic and Slavic acute and to all reflexes of Baltic and Slavic circumflex; thus, the third tone may also appear in unaccented syllables such as affixes and endings.

Evidence for the claim that the development of the third tone is due to language contact is to be found in a closer study of Latvian dialects [14]. Latvian is often classified into two main dialects: Low Latvian and High Latvian. Low Latvian, in turn, is divided into the Central dialect and the so-called Tamian or Livonian dialects. Here the term *Livonian* is used to refer to the dialects of Latvian rather than to the Finno-Ugric language of the Livonians. The Tamian dialects are spoken in territories that according to historical and archeological evidence were formerly inhabited by Livonians. In some of the areas Livonian became extinct by the middle of the nineteenth century; it survives in Kurzeme, on the coast, in the speech of a few hundred Latvian-Livonian bilinguals. Now the Tamian dialects exhibit a number of characteristics that are clearly Finno-Ugric in origin. Some of these characteristics have strongly influenced standard Latvian. Among the latter are a great number of Livonian loanwords: Zeps [23] counted about 80 that are current in the Latvian standard language and stated that approximately 400 Finnic loans are attested in Latvian, even though it is impossible in many cases to decide whether the words came into Latvian from Livonian or from Southern Estonian. Grammatical loans include the development of some characteristic features that are absent in Lithuanian, such as the syntactic model for expressing possession.

The Tamian dialects show a large number of additional typically Finno-Ugric features that are likewise found in Livonian. For example, there are some phonemic subsystems in Tamian dialects in which the old Indo-European voiced-voiceless opposition has been reevaluated as tense versus lax, so that voicing has ceased to constitute a distinctive opposition [ibid.]. There is even evidence of a breakdown of the grammatical gender system: Livonian, as a Finno-Ugric language, has no grammatical gender. The influence of Livonian upon the development of the Latvian prosodic system thus may be taken as extremely probable, if not certain.

Livonian survives in Kurzeme, albeit precariously, and thus is available for investigation. It can be shown that during the centuries of adstratum relationship, Livonian has, in turn, been influenced by Latvian. The most dramatic parallel between Latvian and Livonian is the presence of tonal oppositions in Livonian. No other Finno-Ugric language has phonemic tone. Livonian has been variously described as having three tones that are identical with those of Latvian, having a phonemic opposition between presence and absence of stød [ibid.], and as having an accentual system involving five types

of stressed syllables of which four are marked each by a specific syllable accent carrying labels like acute, grave, drop, and broken [22]. Even if one were to adopt the simplest solution – that Livonian has acquired a phonemic opposition between presence and absence of *stød* – it still remains necessary to account for the presence of *stød* in Livonian.

Posti (1942) considers the rise of *stød* in Livonian to be due to internal factors. Decsy (1965) assumes that *stød* was borrowed from Latvian relatively late – during the nineteenth century. Interestingly, the presence of *stød* in Livonian was first recognized by a Dane, Vilhelm Thomsen, in 1890; it is of course no accident that Thomsen himself spoke a language characterized by the presence of *stød*.

Livonian exhibits many other features, both phonological and grammatical, that can best be explained through extensive borrowing from Latvian. For example, it has borrowed all eleven Latvian verbal prefixes; Livonian, as a Baltic-Finnic language, started out without either verbal prefixes or prepositions [3].

Taking all factors into consideration, it appears reasonable to assume that the development of tonal oppositions in Livonian is due to language contact and thus can be attributed to the incorporation of Livonian into the Sprachbund around the Baltic Sea.

## **7.5 Suprasegmental System of Language (on the base of Estonian)**

The suprasegmental system of Estonian is the subject of much ongoing research and discussion [15; 17; 19; 21]. A survey of the various experimental studies dealing with pitch and duration in Estonian published before 1977 has been compiled by Eek (1977). Among the more interesting results are those of Rimmel [17] and Lippus and Rimmel [15]. Rimmel found that in overlong quantity the falling fundamental frequency contour may contain a period during which intensity is considerably reduced. This reduction in intensity is especially noticeable when the overlong quantity appears as a diphthong. Rimmel identified the intensity drop near the middle of the syllable nucleus with the Danish *stød* and the Latvian and Livonian broken tone. Rimmel has also found a two-peaked tonal contour associated with the illative case. In Estonian many words are in quantity 2 (long) in the genitive and in quantity 3 (overlong) in the partitive and the short illative, the segmental structure remaining constant. Rimmel found systematic differences between the tonal contours of overlong vowels in the partitive and the short illative: the falling phase of the tonal contour was longer in the short illative, and it contained a second peak. Lippus and Rimmel suggested cautiously that the quantity system of Estonian is in the process of transition and that the development of

a distinctive tonal component in Estonian is at least a strong possibility. They did not go so far as to claim the presence of phonemic tone in contemporary Estonian. It should be emphasized here that the tonal features found by Lippus and Rimmel are claimed to distinguish between two kinds of overlong words rather than between long and overlong words as had been claimed by Polivanov and Trubetzkoy [20].

Some support for the argument that Estonian may be in the process of developing tonal distinctions is provided by a study by Lehiste and Danforth (1977). This study offers a statistical interpretation of the results of certain listening tests performed with synthesized Estonian disyllables. Three factors contribute to the identification of suprasegmental patterns on disyllabic words: the duration of the first syllable, the duration of the second syllable, and the pitch contour applied to the whole word. Statistical analysis demonstrates that in a perceptual hierarchy pitch contour ranks higher than the duration of the second syllable.

In many instances overlength in Estonian is the result of the loss of a vowel after a long syllable. Disyllabic sequences without overlength on the first syllable have a step-down pitch contour distributed over the two syllables. It may well be that the loss of the vowel of the second syllable resulted in transferring the tonal contour of the whole disyllabic sequence to the lengthened first syllable, which thus acquired its distinctive falling pattern.

This argument would support spontaneous tonogenesis in Estonian, without any necessary influence from neighboring languages. Nevertheless, some areal factors may be noted that could conceivably argue for linguistic convergence. These include the presence of tone in Lithuanian and Latvian and its spread northward into Livonian (in the direction toward Estonia); the development of the long-overlong opposition, with its associated pitch differences, in Estonian, but not (yet?) in Finnish; and the most recent findings of *stød*-like phonetic features in overlong syllable nuclei in the illative. Some scholars have claimed that the illative represents a fourth durational category. Some scholars consider it more likely that if a new distinction has to arise in words with overlength, that distinction will be based not on duration but on some other parameter that can be independently controlled. The presence of *stød* in Livonian and its embryonic emergence in Estonian are at least suggestive of linguistic convergence, even if they cannot be taken as conclusive proof [15; 17; 19; 21].

Another language that participated in the Sprachbund around the Baltic Sea for some time is Baltic German. There is no evidence that Baltic German developed polytonicity, but it appears quite clear that its quantity system differed from that of other German dialects in interesting ways. Hentrich

(1925) studied the quantity system of Baltic German experimentally. He measured the duration of plosives following short and long vowels in test words and sentences produced by approximately 25 Baltic German informants. He found that the average duration of the intervocalic plosive in such words as *Nacken* 'neck' was considerably longer than that of the intervocalic plosive in such words as *Haken* 'hook'. In a parallel investigation using speakers of Low German as subjects, Hentrich found that average durations of consonants in the same two types of words were identical. Consonant quantity is phonemic in Latvian as well as in Livonian and Estonian. Two conclusions are possible: either that Baltic German introduced the length opposition in consonants on the basis of contacts with Latvian and Estonian, or that the adstratum relationship between these languages contributed toward the preservation of an older quantity system of German that was restructured elsewhere in German-speaking territory [15; 17; 19; 21]. The accumulated evidence appears to support the observation that there exists a Sprachbund around the Baltic Sea; but defining it strictly in tonal terms does not do justice to the facts. What seems to emerge is a picture of suprasegmental systems that utilize both quantity and tone. Quantity oppositions are present in all non-Slavic languages around the Baltic Sea, whereas tonal oppositions seem to have receded from Kashubian and from Finland-Swedish.

On the other hand, new tonal systems have arisen in Latvian and Livonian. The tonal system of Latvian appears to have been restructured and even enriched as a result of contact with Livonian; Livonian has acquired contrastive tone; and Estonian, as well as some Finnish dialects, appears to be developing a tonal component. Polytonicity thus seems to be moving northward along the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. After the passing of five centuries polytonicity is only beginning to acquire a potentially distinctive function in Estonian. But the recent discoveries of potential tonal features in Finnish make it seem not at all impossible that one day the Jakobsonian circle around the Baltic Sea may be closed [ibid.].

## SUMMARY

- In this chapter we considered a continuum of contact situations ranging from those in which relatively little structural diffusion has occurred to cases involving extreme spread of both lexical and structural features. We found that there was not always a consistent relationship between degree of lexical diffusion and degree of structural diffusion. In stable bilingual situations, lexical borrowing can act as a conduit for structural innovations in the minority

language, especially in derivational morphology and some aspects of morpho-syntax. But the affected language remains highly resistant to foreign structural interference.

- In situations of unstable bilingualism, ongoing shift appears to lead to somewhat more structural innovation in an ancestral language under threat from a dominant external language. These innovations are apparently introduced by highly proficient bilinguals, especially those who use the dominant language as their primary means of communication. Some of these situations may involve high degrees of lexical diffusion, but this may not be matched by equal spread of structure.
- Finally, there are situations that have led to high degrees of structural convergence across languages, to the point where they become isomorphic in structure, while still preserving lexical differences. These cases seem to involve prolonged shift, with mutual accommodation leading to a shared grammar. The selection of one of the languages in contact as a *lingua franca* may promote this kind of extreme convergence.
- Most of these instances of structural diffusion cannot adequately be explained by the metaphor of borrowing, which implies a uni-directional process initiated by RL speakers. Rather, structural convergence seems to involve a bi-directional process of language mixing under conditions of ongoing shift. The greater the degree of shift from an ancestral language to a dominant external language, the higher the degree of structural diffusion from the latter to the former. In short, high degrees of bilingualism, ongoing shift, and mutual accommodation all appear to be factors involved in heavy structural diffusion. The mechanisms involved include those associated with both borrowing and substratum influence, each feeding the other.
- It is not easy to pinpoint the particular structural and social factors that regulate the outcomes in these situations. Structural constraints differ according to whether the situation is one of stable bilingualism involving mostly borrowing, or one of shift involving substratum influence. With regard to social factors, it appears that the degree of intimacy of contact, for example, through intermarriage, frequent interaction, etc., determines the degree of structural diffusion. As usual, it is a complex interaction of linguistic, social, and attitudinal factors that determines the outcome in each case.

## PRACTICE

### ➤ Think Critically About:

Do languages import structure from external sources and if so, under what conditions?

What kinds of agency are involved in the diffusion of structural features?

What limits are there on it?

➤ Examine and compare at least two contact situations, one involving stable bilingualism (e.g., French-Flemish contact in Brussels) and the other unstable bilingualism (e.g., French-English contact in Prince Edward Island). What differences do you find in the social settings and patterns of use? To what extent are these reflected in differences between the types of contact-induced changes in the minority language?

➤ A number of principles has been proposed to regulate processes of leveling and simplification in dialect convergence. These include the following:

1) majority forms found in the mix win out;

2) marked forms are disfavored;

3) phonologically and lexically simple features are more often adopted than complex ones.

How are such principles related to the structural constraints on convergence discussed in this chapter?

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## The Results of Language Contact: Pidgins and Creoles

The human mind is the same in every clime; and accordingly we find nearly the same process adopted in the formation of language in every country. The Negroes have been proved to be in no degree inferior to other nations in solidity of judgement, or fertility of imagination (W. Greenfield).

### Overview

The chapter is aimed at clarifying the notions of pidgins and creoles; the difference between them and the way they are looked upon by different schools of linguistics. It also considers the characteristics and present status of pidgins and creoles and explores the conditions under which such languages come into being. The topics mentioned serve as the basis for a number of issues being hotly debated today, such as the role of substrate influence versus universals in pidgin and creole formation, the relationship between creoles and first or second language acquisition, and the implications of these languages for theories of language change.

Topics covered include: Social Contexts of Pidgin Formation; Common Traits among Pidgins; Pidgin Development; History of Creole Functioning; Classification of Creoles; Substrate and Superstrate in Creole Theory; Creole Genesis; Theories Focusing on Non-European Input in Creole Formation.

*Key Words: Pidgin, Pidginization, Foreign Talk, Contact Vernacular, Linguistic Diversity, Communicative Strategy, Creole.*

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### 8.1 Defining Pidgin

Like other labels used to describe the outcomes of contact, the term *pidgin* is fairly recent. The types of contact vernaculars it refers to existed long before linguists attempted to attach any label to them. To take one of the best-known examples, the Mediterranean Lingua Franca is believed to have been in existence since the Middle Ages, and texts of this contact variety survive from the XVI century [5, p. 512]. There is also evidence of the

existence of numerous pidgins in pre-colonial Africa, Asia, and North America. No doubt many others emerged even earlier, whenever the need arose. Such languages arose to facilitate communication between groups of different linguistic backgrounds in restricted contexts such as trade, forced labour, and other kinds of marginal contact. Because of such restrictions in the scope of their use, these contact varieties were highly reduced and simplified, fashioned solely for the limited purposes they served. By definition, then, pidgins are adult creations, involving processes of learning and selective adaptation of linguistic resources that are reminiscent of those found in adult Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

It is now generally accepted that the term *pidgin* derives from the English word *business*, reflecting the most commonplace function of these languages as vehicles for trading transactions. The label seems to have been first applied to Chinese Pidgin English, which served as a lingua franca between speakers of Chinese and English (as well as others) on the southern China coast from roughly 1715 on. The first texts in this pidgin appeared in 1743. The label was popularized in a Chinese Pidgin English phrase book used in the early 1900s. Eventually the term became a generic label for all contact varieties of this type. Before that, terms like *jargon* and *lingua franca* were used to refer to pidgins. This is why we find, for instance, names like *Chinook Jargon* and *Mobilian Jargon* being applied to two well-known pidgins that emerged in early colonial or perhaps even pre-colonial America [16, p. 267].

All of the labels mentioned so far were first used by lay people or non-specialists before they were adapted as technical labels by linguists. Non-specialists, of course, tend to use such terms in rather loose and derogatory senses, to refer to forms of speech that they perceive as defective or corrupt in some way. One thing that all specialists agree on, however, is that pidgins and other contact vernaculars are not corruptions or ungrammatical versions of their source language(s), but rather legitimate languages with a grammar of their own, which can be learnt like other languages.

Notwithstanding this, there still remains a great deal of indeterminacy and confusion in the use of the term *pidgin*, even among linguists. It is necessary to sort things out before proceeding any further. In the first place, there is the problem of distinguishing pidgins from jargons, cases of "imperfect" L2 learning, and *foreigner talk* – the simplified version of a language that its own native speakers sometimes use in communicating with outsiders [16, p. 268]. The differences among these kinds of simplified language are by no means absolute, since similar processes of change apply to all.

Terms like *jargon* and its French counterpart *baragouin* (also spell *barogoin*) date back to the colonial period, when they were used by Europeans to refer in derogatory terms to second language varieties of their languages used by indigenous peoples trying to communicate with them. Since we can refer to such varieties more appropriately as unconventionalized or idiosyncratic forms of interlanguage, the term *jargon* serves no useful purpose here. By the same token, its use in reference to pidgins is redundant as well as inappropriate, given its associations of "corrupt" or "debased" language in its original lay usage. For that reason we will henceforth break with established practice and, following Donald Winford, refer to so-called *Chinook Jargon*, *Mobilian Jargon*, etc. as *Chinook Pidgin*, *Mobilian Pidgin*, and so on.

We can further distinguish pidgins from early interlanguage varieties ("imperfect learning") and *foreigner talk* by noting that pidgins, unlike the other two, are conventionalized systems of communication that serve as targets of learning in their own right. Foreigner talk is further distinguished from early interlanguage and pidgins by not being subject to substratal influence or admixture [16, p. 268].

The second problem that faces us is how to delimit the scope of reference of the term *pidgin* in a realistic way. The reason is that the label now encompasses a wide variety of contact vernaculars with varying degrees of complexity in structure and use. It can refer to *rudimentary languages* like *Russenorsk* or *Delaware Pidgin*, as well as to *full-fledged languages* like *Hiri Motu*, which serves as a lingua franca in Papua, the southern half of Papua New Guinea. The problem, as usual, revolves around the criteria of definition one applies. If one emphasizes criteria such as *lack of native speakers*, or *restricted use as a lingua franca*, then any language that fits this profile could be regarded as a pidgin. If, on the other hand, we try to use structural criteria in our definition, we are faced with the problem that the relevant outcomes of contact lie on a continuum, with considerable overlap among them. Precisely where do we draw the boundaries between true pidgins and other contact varieties, particularly extended pidgins and creoles?

One solution is to distinguish prototypical pidgins from other contact varieties that depart in varying degrees from the prototype [14, p. 76]. The concept of *prototypical pidgin* is in fact quite close to the traditional wisdom on what constitutes a pidgin. It is a concept based on both structural and sociocultural criteria, captured well by Hymes [7, p. 84]: "Pidginization is that complex process of sociolinguistic change comprising reduction in inner form, with convergence, in the context of restriction in use. A pidgin is the result of such a process that has achieved autonomy as a norm". Other

definitions have appealed variously either to structural characteristics or to second language status or to restriction in use as criteria for pidgin status. But it is a combination of all these properties that best characterizes true pidgins.

Henceforth, then, our use of the term *pidgin* as a classificatory label will refer only to those contact vernaculars characterized by highly reduced vocabulary and structure, which are native to no one, and serve as lingua francas for certain restricted communicative functions such as trade. Other contact varieties that have been referred to as "pidgins" but fail to meet the criteria just outlined will be classified in different ways. As we shall see, they include *extended pidgins* (e.g., varieties of Melanesian Pidgin) which bear striking similarities to creoles, as well as *simplified languages* (e.g., *Hiri Motu* and *Kituba*) which closely resemble cases of group SLA. The reasons for these classifications will be discussed later.

## 8.2 Social Contexts of Pidgin Formation

Pidgins have arisen in a variety of social situations involving limited contact between groups, where neither group has the opportunity or the real need to learn the other's language. Some have emerged in domestic settings for use in employer – servant interactions, for instance *Indian Butler English* [16, p. 270 – 271]. Others have been formed in situations involving military invasion or occupation, for instance American, French, and British military activity in various parts of Asia and the Pacific in the twentieth century. Varieties such as *Japanese Pidgin English* and *Vietnamese Pidgin French* or *Tily Boi* arose in this way. It is claimed that some pidgins have emerged as vehicles for interaction with tourists, for example the *Turkish-derived pidgin* described by Hinnenkamp. However, it is not clear how stable or conventionalized such varieties are.

The two most common as well as most important types of pidgin are those that have arisen either in contexts of mass migrant labor, or in trading situations. Well-known examples of the former include *Pidgin Hawaiian* and (earlier) *Hawaii Pidgin English*, both employed on the plantations of Hawaii in the XIX century. Varieties of early *Pacific Pidgin English*, which arose for purposes of trade were later adopted for use on plantations in Queensland (Australia) and Samoa. Plantation and other labor pidgins may not always conform strictly to the criteria associated with *prototypical pidgins*. They tend to be somewhat more elaborate than the latter because labor settings permit of more continuous contact between groups. In such cases, extension of the functions of these pidgins beyond the restricted context of labor led to the emergence of more complex contact vernaculars. Examples include the extended pidgins of the Pacific and (later) *Hawai'i Pidgin English*, which

eventually became *Hawai'i Creole English*, (though its speakers still call it *pidgin*). For this reason, plantation pidgins pose more problems both in terms of the degree to which they diverge from the prototype, and with regard to determining the boundaries between their stages of development and expansion [16, p. 271].

The most commonly found pidgins are those that have arisen in contexts of trade. Such contact varieties have been documented in a great many areas throughout the world and throughout recorded history. Most of them no longer survive, and the only record we have of many is brief mention in historical documents – for instance, *Pidgin Macassarese* in northern Australia, *Arabic-Chinese pidgin* of Canton, *Pidgin Siassi* of New Guinea, etc. There were, no doubt, many others in prehistory about whose existence we will never know.

Fortunately, records in the form of texts and commentaries survive for many others that are no longer in use, and for some that are. Among these are indigenous American pidgins such as *Chinook Pidgin* (also known as *Cinuk Wawa*, or simply *Wawa speech*), *Mobilian Pidgin*, *Delaware Pidgin*, and varieties of *Eskimo Pidgin*. The first three of these may well have arisen in pre-colonial times as lingua francas for use among different Native American groups, but were eventually also adopted for use between Indians and Europeans. Varieties of *Eskimo Pidgin*, on the other hand, seem to have emerged from about the XVII century specifically for trade between the Inuit (used here to refer to Eskimo-speaking people in general) and Europeans, whom the Inuit referred to as *Qallunaat* [ibid., p. 271].

The circumstances in which these pidgins arose and were used are representative of those typical of trade pidgins in general. The best-known of them, *Chinook Pidgin*, probably originated in pre-European times for use in slave trading and shell-money commerce in the Northwest Pacific area. The earliest records of this pidgin date back to 1778, the year when Captain James Cook first explored Nootka sound. Use of the pidgin extended from Southern Alaska to Northern California and from the Pacific coast to Western Montana. It was used by speakers of perhaps a hundred or more mutually unintelligible Native American languages belonging to different language families (*Athapascan*, *Penutian*, *Salishan*, *Wakashan*) as well as between American Indians and non-American Indians (English, French, Russian, Hawaiian, and others). This pidgin was highly mixed in lexicon, but seems to have drawn materials primarily from *Lower Chinook* or some other closely related language. *Chinook Pidgin* was unique among indigenous American pidgins in being adopted as a primary language by children of intertribal and interethnic families in the late XIX to early XX centuries. It has been suggested that the

pidgin was in fact “creolized” by such children at the Grande Ronde reservation in Northwestern Oregon [16].

Further details of the origins and use of *Chinook Pidgin* and other indigenous pidgins of the US can be found in Drechsel (1981; 1996) according to whom they all shared a number of sociolinguistic characteristics. All (except perhaps *Eskimo Pidgin*) were used in a variety of communicative functions, both among American Indians of diverse linguistic backgrounds, and later between American Indians and non-American Indians. Their primary contexts of use included trading, hunting, and similar activities, as well as political associations and alliances. They were also used in gatherings between kin, and across communities linked by intermarriage. All existed in situations of great linguistic diversity involving much bi- and multilingualism. In post-Columbian times, they functioned as lingua francas not only in trade with Europeans, but also in European exploration and missionary work among the American Indians, and in European employment (or enslavement) of Native Americans. At least two of them, *Chinook Pidgin* and *Mobilian Pidgin* were also used in narration, song, and other kinds of entertainment. These pidgins were also characterized by heavy use of gesture and other kinds of body language, to a much greater extent than in their source languages. Many of these sociolinguistic characteristics can also be found in other indigenous pidgins, such as those of Papua New Guinea [ibid., p. 272 – 273].

Other trade pidgins, such as *Russenorsk*, *Chinese Pidgin*, and *Eskimo Pidgin*, arose primarily in contact between indigenous and foreign groups, and were more restricted to trading activity, though some, for example, *Chinese Pidgin English*, later developed more general uses and hence more elaborate structure.

Thus, a *pidgin* is a simplified language that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups that do not have a language in common, in situations such as trade. Pidgins are not the native language of any speech community, but are instead learned as second languages. Pidgins usually have low prestige with respect to other languages [8, p. 614].

### 8.3 Structural Characteristics of Pidgins

Some scholars argue that pidgins have a grammar drawn from one source, and a vocabulary from another [1 – 3; 6]; others claim that pidgins are compromises between grammars in contact [10; 12; 13]. Still others insist that excessive lexical variation rules out pidgin status. None of these stipulations offers a definitive basis on which to identify pidgins. The simple way to resolve this would be to recognize that there is in fact a great deal of diversity among pidgins in the way they put their source materials together, and that

they do not all fit into a single mold. What unites them as a distinct typological class of contact vernaculars is a set of shared structural and non-structural characteristics.

### *Pidgin Morphology and Syntax*

Perhaps the most definitive structural characteristics of pidgins are to be found in morphology and syntax. Among these are the following, as suggested in Bickerton (1981) and Drechsel (1996) [16, p. 276]:

#### *Morphology:*

- Absence of morphological apparatus such as affixation and inflection; hence no morphological expression of categories like number, person, agreement, etc.
- Absence of other functional categories such as tense and aspect, with limited expression of deontic modality (e.g., desire).
- Minimal inventory of function morphemes such as articles, quantifiers, prepositions, conjunctions, complementizers, etc.
- Restricted number of question words and pronouns. Most pidgins have only three pronouns: first, second and third person, undifferentiated for gender or number.
- Use of one universal negative marker.

#### *Syntax:*

- Analytic structures, with word order as the primary means of determining grammatical functions such as Subject, Object, etc.
- A reduced number of sentence patterns, due to lack of rules for changing word order to create derived structures, for example, movement rules for topicalization, passivization, inversion in questions, etc.
- A lack of derivational depth, due to absence of any mechanisms for subordination or embedding (e.g., of relative or complement clauses).

Pidgins also share certain core characteristics in their lexicon and phonology, though both of these components allow for some variation both across and within pidgins.

### *Pidgin Lexicon*

All pidgins have very restricted lexical inventories. Estimates range from 150 – 200 words in the case of *Russenorsk* [ibid., p. 276] to about 500 in the case of *Chinook Pidgin*. These numbers refer to words most commonly

used. The count may be higher if we include words whose use was restricted, or confined to specific places. The general character of pidgin lexicons is well summed up by Drechsel's (1996) remarks about the three best-documented Native American Pidgins (*Chinook, Delaware, Mobilian pidgins*). He notes that all three had "parsimonious vocabularies consisting of generic lexical entries that were often semantically and grammatically ambiguous, as well as polysemous. The lexicon could be expanded via compounding, metaphorical extension or simple borrowing of words from the speaker's L1 or a foreign language" [16, p. 276]. These properties are shared across all pidgins, despite differences in the degree of diversity in the sources of their vocabulary.

Most pidgins in fact draw their vocabulary primarily from one source language. For example, *Delaware Pidgin* has its lexical (and grammatical) base mostly in *Unami*, a dialect of Delaware [ibid., p. 277]. But as with pidgins generally, other languages in the contact situation contributed to the lexicon as well. In some cases this resulted in a high degree of mixture and variation, as we saw in the case of *Russenorsk. Ndjuka-Trio pidgin* also draws its vocabulary from both of its source languages, Ndjuka and Trio, though Trio contributed the smaller share, consisting mostly of nouns.

There is even greater mixture in the lexicon of *Chinook and Mobilian Pidgins*, reflecting the greater linguistic diversity of the groups who used them. Thus, while words from *Lower / Upper Chinook* constitute the majority of the core lexicon of *Chinook Pidgin*, there were also significant contributions from other American Indian languages as well as from French and English. For instance, *Nootka* provided about two dozen words and several others came from *Salishan, Sahaptuan*, and other language families [ibid., p. 277]. English and French provided a substantial portion of words, expressing various objects or concepts associated with European trade, religion, etc. Even the basic lexicon of *Chinook Pidgin* is quite mixed, with several words from French and English, though Chinook words are most frequent. The diversity in the vocabulary is directly related to the gradual spread of the pidgin from its original locale in the coastal areas, where Chinook was spoken, to various parts of the Pacific Northwest [ibid., p. 277].

### *Pidgin phonology*

The shared characteristics of pidgin phonology include a reduced inventory of phonemes as well as phonological contrasts and processes, by comparison to those of the major lexifier language. This reduction is primarily due to the elimination of sounds that are not shared across the languages in contact, particularly those of the major lexifier language that are marked in relation to those of the learners' L Is. For example, *Ndjuka-Trio Pidgin*

preserves only the five vowels Ndjuka shares with Trio, which has seven. Also, it lacks contrasts of nasalization, vowel length, tone, and voicing of stops, which are characteristic of Ndjuka but not of Trio [16, p. 277]. Note that a pidgin may retain marked sounds in cases where they are shared across the languages in contact. For instance, Native American speakers kept such features as glottalization and a distinction between velar and uvular obstruents. European speakers of *Chinook Pidgin* could not reproduce such features, but tended to replace the difficult sounds with the closest equivalents from their own languages. But some loss of marked features occurred even in the speech of American Indians. In general, “highly marked sounds converged with less marked counterparts across language boundaries, forming systems of phonological common denominators” [ibid., p. 278].

Apart from this common core, however, some pidgins display substantial variation in phonology, due to influence from speakers' L1s. This is especially true of pidgins like *Chinook* and *Mobilian pidgins*, which were used by a wide variety of linguistic groups. This diversity and variation in pidgin lexicon and phonology contrast sharply with the uniformity of their reduced morphological and syntactic components.

#### 8.4 Processes of Pidgin Formation

Traditionally, the processes involved in pidgin formation have been referred to collectively as *pidginization*, a term which is not unproblematic, but which we will use for convenience. Dell Hymes [7, p. 70] suggests that pidginization is “a complex process, comprising the concurrence of several component processes”. For Hymes, these include three linguistic processes: simplification, reduction of inner form and admixture. Also involved are social processes such as restriction in scope of use, and use between groups with different languages. We focus here on the linguistic processes.

Peter Trudgill [15, p. 5] echoes Hymes, providing explanations of each process. Reduction involves impoverishment, as reflected in a small vocabulary, limited syntactic structures, a narrower range of styles, etc. Simplification is defined as involving “regularization of irregularities, loss of redundancy, and .... an increase in analytic structures and transparent forms” [ibid., p. 6]. Admixture is equated with “interference – the transfer of [structural] features from the native language to the new language, an obvious feature of adult SLA” [ibid., p. 5].

Both of these accounts leave out a crucial component of pidgin formation, that is, the internally motivated processes of restructuring that lead to innovations not found in the source languages. Taking this into account, we find that pidgin formation shares the following linguistic processes with early

SLA [16, p. 280]:

- simplification – used to include both reduction and regularization of structures;
- L1 influence – retentions from the native languages of those creating, and later learning, the pidgin;
- internal developments – innovations due to creative restructuring using internal resources.

As in the case of early IL creation, these processes are manifestations of communication strategies (avoidance, compensation) that all learners employ in their first attempts to communicate in a foreign language.

Thus, the creation of pidgin usually requires:

- prolonged, regular contact between the different language communities;
- a need to communicate between them;
- an absence of (or absence of widespread proficiency in) a widespread, accessible interlanguage.

It is often posited that pidgins become creole languages when a generation whose parents speak pidgin to each other teach it to their children as their first language. Creoles can then replace the existing mix of languages to become the native language of a community (such as *Krio* in Sierra Leone and *Tok Pisin* in Papua New Guinea). However, not all pidgins become creole languages; a pidgin may die out before this phase would occur.

Other scholars (Mufwene, 1998) argue that pidgins and creoles arise independently under different circumstances, and that a pidgin does not always need to precede a creole, nor a creole evolves from a pidgin. Pidgins, according to Mufwene, emerged among trade colonies among users who preserved their native vernaculars for their day-to-day interactions. Creoles, meanwhile, developed in settlement colonies in which speakers of a European language, often indentured servants whose language would be far from the standard in the first place, interacted heavily with non-European slaves, absorbing certain words and features from the slaves' non-European native languages, resulting in a heavily basilectalized version of the original language. These servants and slaves would come to use the creole as an everyday vernacular, rather than merely in situations in which contact with a speaker of the superstrate was necessary.

## 8.5 Common Traits among Pidgins

Since pidgin strives to be a simple and effective form of communication, the grammar, phonology, etc, are as simple as possible, and usually consist of:

- a Subject-Verb-Object word order in a sentence;

- uncomplicated clausal structure (i.e., no embedded clauses, etc);
- reduction or elimination of syllable codas;
- reduction of consonant clusters or breaking them with epenthesis;
- basic vowels, such as /a/ /e/ /i/ /o/ /u/;
- no tones, such as those found in West African and Asian languages;
- use of separate words to indicate tense, usually preceding the verb;
- use of reduplication to represent plurals, superlatives, and other parts of speech that represent the concept being increased;
- a lack of morphophonemic variation [16, p. 280].

## 8.6 Creole Language

A Creole language, or simply a Creole, is a stable language that originates seemingly as a nativized pidgin. While it is arguable that creoles share more grammatical similarities with each other than with the languages they phylogenetically derive from, no theory for explaining Creole phenomena has been universally accepted. The relationship between pidgins and creoles and their similarities means that the distinction is not clear-cut and the variety of phenomena that arise to create pidgins and creoles are not well understood. Likewise, efforts to articulate grammatical features (or sets of features) that are exclusive to creoles have been unsuccessful thus far.

The term *creole* comes from French *créole*, from Spanish *criollo*, and from Portuguese *crioulo*, stemming from the verb *criar* ('to breed') from the Portuguese, or *creare* from Latin ('to produce, create'). The term was coined in the XVI century during the great expansion in European maritime power and trade and the establishment of European colonies in the Americas, Africa, and along the coast of South and Southeast Asia up to the Philippines, Indonesia, China, India, and in Oceania [4; 5].

The term *creole* was originally applied to people born in the colonies to distinguish them from the upper-class European-born immigrants. Originally, therefore, Creole language meant the speech of those Creole people.

As a consequence of colonial European trade patterns, many creole languages are found in the equatorial belt around the world and in areas with access to the oceans, including the Caribbean as well as the north and east coasts of South America, western Africa and in the Indian Ocean. Atlantic Creole languages are based on European languages with substrate elements from Africa, Indian Ocean Creoles languages are based on European languages with substrate elements from Malagasy, whereas creoles such as *Sango* are African-based with African substrate elements from other African languages. There is a heated dispute over the extent to which substrate features are significant in the genesis or the description of creole languages.

According to their external history, four types of creoles have been distinguished: *plantation creoles*, *fort creoles*, *maroon creoles*, and *creolized pidgins*. As to their internal history, there are two preconceived assumptions: a) creoles exhibit more internal variability than other languages; b) creoles are simpler than other languages [16, p. 280].

Because of the generally low status of the Creole people in the eyes of European colonial powers, creole languages have generally been regarded as degenerate or at best as rudimentary dialects of one of their parent languages [8]. This is the reason why creole has come to be used in opposition to language rather than a qualifier for it. Prejudice of this kind was compounded by the inherent instability of the colonial system, leading to the disappearance of creole languages, mainly due to dispersion or assimilation of their speech communities. Another factor that may have contributed to the relative neglect of creole languages in linguistics is that they comfort critics of the XIX century neogrammarian *tree model* for the evolution of languages. This controversy of the late XIX century shaped modern approaches to the comparative method in historical linguistics and in creolistics. Since then, linguists have promulgated the idea that creole languages are in no way inferior to other languages and use the term *creole* (creole language) for any language suspected to have undergone creolization, without geographic restrictions or ethnic prejudice.

As a consequence of these social, political, and academic changes, creole languages have experienced a revival in recent decades. They are increasingly and more openly being used in literature and in media, and their community prestige has improved. They are studied by linguists as languages on their own. Many have already been standardized, and are now taught in local schools and universities abroad.

## 8.7 Creole Formation & Classification

By the very nature of the subject, the creoleness of a particular creole usually is a matter of dispute. The parent tongues may themselves be creoles or pidgins that have disappeared before they could be documented. For these reasons, the issue of which language is the parent of a creole – that is, whether a language should be classified as a *Portuguese creole* or *English creole*, etc. – often has no definitive answer, and can become the topic of long-lasting controversies, where social prejudices and political considerations may interfere with scientific discussion.

The terms *substratum* and *superstratum* are often used to label the source and the target languages of a creole or in the context of second language acquisition. However, the meaning of these terms is reasonably

well-defined only in language replacement events, when the native speakers of a certain language (the substrate) are somehow compelled to abandon that language for another language (the superstrate). The outcome of such an event will be that erstwhile speakers of the substrate will be speaking a version of the superstrate, at least in more formal contexts. The substrate may survive as a second language for informal conversation (as in the case of *Venetian* and many other European non-official languages). Its influence on the official speech, if detectable at all, is usually limited to pronunciation and a modest number of loanwords [9]. The substrate might even disappear altogether without leaving any trace.

However, these terms are not very meaningful where the emerging language is distilled from multiple substrata and a homogeneous superstratum. The substratum-superstratum continuum becomes awkward when multiple superstrata must be assumed (such as in *Papiamentu*), when the substratum cannot be identified, or when the presence or the survival of substratal evidence is inferred from mere typological analogies [11]. However, facts surrounding the substratum-superstratum opposition cannot be set aside where the substratum as the receding or already replaced source language and the superstratum as the replacing dominant target language can be clearly identified and where the respective contributions to the resulting compromise language can be weighed in a scientifically meaningful way; and this is so whether the replacement leads to creole genesis or not.

A post-creole continuum is said to come about in a context of decreolization where a creole is subject to pressure from its superstrate language. Speakers of the creole feel compelled to conform their language to superstrate usage introducing large scale variation and hypercorrection. Comparing the different creoles in any theory-orientated perspective, whether phylogenetic or purely typological in nature, leads to widely divergent results. The score of similarities will be higher when the comparison is restricted to European-based creoles and excluding non-European-based creoles such as *Nubi* and *Sango*. French creoles show closer affinities with *Koiné French* than with other European-based creoles.

Particularly troubling is the evidence that definite articles are predominantly prenominal in English-based creole languages and English whereas they are predominantly postnominal in French creoles and French koinés [16]. Moreover, as already noted by Whorf (1956), the European languages, which gave rise to the colonial creole languages all belong to the same subgroup of Western Indo-European and have highly convergent systems of grammar to the point where they form a homogeneous group of languages Whorf called Standard Average European (SAE) to distinguish

them from languages of other grammatical types. French and English are particularly close since English, through extensive borrowing, is typologically closer to French than to other Germanic languages. According to Vennemann (2003), most European languages themselves might even share a common substratum as well as a common superstratum.

There are a variety of theories on the origin of creole languages, all of which attempt to explain the similarities among them. Arends, Muysken & Smith (1995) outline a fourfold classification of explanations regarding creole genesis [16, p. 306]: 1) theories focusing on European input; 2) theories focusing on non-European input; 3) gradualist and developmental hypotheses; 4) universalist approaches.

### *The Monogenetic Theory of Pidgins and Creoles*

The monogenetic theory of pidgins and creoles hypothesizes a single origin for these languages, deriving them through relexification from a West African Pidgin Portuguese of the XVII century and ultimately from the Lingua franca of the Mediterranean. This theory was originally formulated by Hugo Schuchardt in the late XIX century and popularized in the late 1950s and early 1960s by Douglas Taylor, as well as in Whinnom (1965), Thompson (1961) and Stewart (1962). This hypothesis is no longer actively investigated.

### *The Domestic Origin Hypothesis*

Proposed by Hancock (1985) for the development of a local form of English in West Africa, the Domestic Origin Hypothesis argues that, towards the end of the XVI century, English-speaking traders began to settle in the Gambia and Sierra Leone rivers as well as in neighboring areas such as the Bullom and Sherbro coasts. These settlers intermarried with the local population leading to mixed populations and as a result of this intermarriage, an English pidgin was created, which in turn was learned by slaves in slave depots, who later on took it to the West Indies and formed one component of the emerging English creoles.

### *The European Dialect Origin Hypothesis*

The French creoles are the foremost candidates to being the outcome of normal linguistic change and their creoleness to be sociohistoric in nature and relative to their colonial origin. Within this theoretical framework, a French creole is a language phylogenetically based on the French language, more specifically on a XVII century koiné French extent in Paris, the French atlantic harbors, and the nascent French colonies. Descendants of the non-creole colonial koiné are still spoken in Canada (mostly in Québec), the

Prairies, Louisiana, Saint-Barthélemy (leeward portion of the island) and as isolates in other parts of the Americas. Approaches under this hypothesis are compatible with gradualism in change and models of imperfect language transmission in *koiné genesis*.

### *Foreigner Talk and Baby Talk*

The *foreigner talk hypothesis (FT)* argues that a pidgin or creole language forms when native speakers attempt to simplify their language in order to address speakers who do not know their language at all. Because of the similarities found in this type of speech and the speech, which is usually directed at children, it is also sometimes called *baby talk*.

Arends, Muysken & Smith (1995) suggest that four different processes are involved in creating Foreigner Talk: a) accommodation; b) imitation; c) telegraphic condensation; d) conventions. This could explain why creole languages have much in common, while avoiding a monogenetic model.

While the simplification of input was supposed to account for creoles' simple grammar, there are a number of problems with this explanation:

- there are too many grammatical similarities amongst pidgins and creoles despite having very different lexifier languages;
- grammatical simplification can be explained by other processes (i.e. the innate grammar of Bickerton's language bioprogram theory);
- speakers of a creole's lexifier language often fail to understand, without learning the language, the grammar of a pidgin or creole;
- pidgins are more often used amongst speakers of different substrate languages than between such speakers and those of the lexifier language.

Another problem with the FT explanation is its potential circularity. Leonard Bloomfield points out that FT is often based on the imitation of the incorrect speech of the non-natives – that is the pidgin. Therefore, one may be mistaken in assuming that the former gave rise to the latter.

### *Theories Focusing on Non-European Input*

Theories focusing on the substrate, or non-European, languages attribute similarities amongst creoles to the similarities of African substrate languages. These features are often assumed to be transferred from the substrate language to the creole or to be preserved invariant from the substrate language in the creole through a process of relexification: the substrate language replaces the native lexical items with lexical material from the superstrate language while retaining the native grammatical categories. The problem with this explanation is that the postulated substrate languages differ

amongst themselves and with creoles in meaningful ways. Derek Bickerton (1981) argues that the number and diversity of African languages and the paucity of a historical record on creole genesis makes determining lexical correspondences a matter of chance. Dillard (1970) coined the term *cafeteria principle* to refer to the practice of arbitrarily attributing features of creoles to the influence of substrate African languages or assorted substandard dialects of European languages.

Because of the sociohistoric similarities amongst many (but by no means all) of the creoles, the Atlantic slave trade and the plantation system of the European colonies have been emphasized as factors by linguists. However, in the absence of homogeneous substrata in the phylogenetic history of the European-based creoles on one hand, and Singler's homogeneous substrate constraint to pylogenetic computing on the other, non-European input theories are the less likely ones to gain wide acceptance among future generations of scholars.

### *Gradualist and Developmental Hypotheses*

One class of creoles might start as pidgins, rudimentary second languages improvised for use between speakers of two or more non-intelligible native languages. The lexicon of a pidgin is usually small and drawn from the vocabularies of its speakers, in varying proportions. Morphological details like word inflections, which usually take years to learn, are omitted; the syntax is kept very simple, usually based on strict word order. In this initial stage, all aspects of the speech – syntax, lexicon, and pronunciation – tend to be quite variable, especially with regard to the speaker's background.

If a pidgin manages to be learned by the children of a community as a native language, it may become fixed and acquire a more complex grammar, with fixed phonology, syntax, morphology, and syntactic embedding. Pidgins can become full languages in only a single generation. "Creolization" is this second stage where the pidgin language develops into a fully developed native language. The vocabulary, too, will develop to contain more and more items according to a rational of lexical enrichment.

### *Universalist Approaches*

Universalist models stress the intervention of specific general processes during the transmission of language from generation to generation and from speaker to speaker. The process invoked varies: a general tendency towards semantic transparency, first language learning driven by universal process, or general process of discourse organization. The main source for the

universalist approach is still Bickerton's work (1981). His language bioprogram theory claims that creoles are inventions of the children growing up on newly founded plantations. Around them, they only heard pidgins spoken, without enough structure to function as natural languages; and the children used their own innate linguistic capacities to transform the pidgin input into a full-fledged language.

## 8.8 The Creole Prototype

If creole languages form a group, which is different from other languages, they should have a set of features, which clearly distinguishes them from other languages. Some features have been proposed (by Bickerton for example), but no uncontested unique creole features has been put forth so far. Features that are said to be true of all (or most) creole languages are in fact true of all isolating languages. Such features are then necessary but not sufficient to single out creole languages from non-creole languages.

John McWhorter has proposed the following list of features to indicate a Creole Prototype: 1) no inflectional morphology (or no more than two or three inflectional affixes); 2) no tone on monosyllabics; 3) no semantically opaque word formation [16, p. 180]. The hypothesis is that every language with these three features is a creole, and every creole must have these three features.

The creole prototype hypothesis has been attacked from two different perspectives: Henri Wittmann (1999) and Gil (2001) argue that languages such as *Manding*, *Sooninke*, *Magoua French* and *Riau Indonesian* have all these three features, but are natural languages like any other. These languages show none of the sociohistoric traits of creole languages. Many other linguists (overview in Appel and Muysken [1]) have adduced one or the other creole language, which responds positively to one of the three features mentioned above (for example, inflectional morphology in *Berbice Dutch Creole*, tone in *Papiamentu*).

The lack of progress made in defining creoles morphosyntactically has led some scholars to question the value of Creole as a typological class. Robert Chaudenson, Mufwene and Wittmann have argued that Creole languages are structurally no different from any other language, and that Creole is in fact a sociohistoric concept (and not a linguistic one), encompassing displaced population and slavery [16].

Thomason & Kaufman [14] spell out the idea of creole exceptionalism, claiming that creole languages are an instance of non-genetic language change due to the language shift without normal transmission. Gradualists question the abnormal transmission of languages in a creole setting and argue that the

processes which lead to today's creole languages are in no way different from the universal patterns of language change.

Given that the concept of creoleness is disputed on both morphosyntactic and evolutionary grounds, the idea of creoles being exceptional in any meaningful way is increasingly questioned, giving rise to publications entitled *Against Creole Exceptionalism* or *Deconstructing Creole*. Salikoko Mufwene (1998) argues that it is only history that prevents us from considering some Romance languages as potential creoles.

## SUMMARY

- The chapter has tried to address issues concerning the classification, origins, and development of various kinds of contact languages to which the terms *pidgin* / *creole* have been applied. Our approach identifies a class of prototypical pidgins distinguished from other contact languages by a well-defined set of structural and sociolinguistic attributes. The former include a highly reduced vocabulary and grammar, while the latter include severe restrictions in range of functions and use as a marginal second language between groups of different language background.
- This characterization still allows for some degree of diversity among prototypical pidgins. There may be differences in degree of input from one or another source language to the pidgin's lexicon or grammar. Some pidgins may draw on one primary source language for both components, while others may draw their lexicon from one primary source and model their grammar on another. Many prototypical pidgins have arisen in multilanguage contact situations through a process of *tertiary hybridization*, that is, through use as a medium of interethnic communication among groups speaking different substrate languages. But others (*Russenorsk*, *Chinese Pidgin English*, etc.) have arisen in two-language contact situations, and display the characteristics associated with any prototypical pidgin. In short, there is no single formula for pidgin formation, and no fixed or invariant blueprint for pidgin structure.
- Changes in the social ecology of a language can result in quite significant change in the language itself; longitudinal studies of such contact vernaculars as *Chinese Pidgin English*, *Melanesian Pidgin*, and others reveal that they go through phases of stability interspersed with periods of fluctuation and sometimes drastic breaks. Changes in the social circumstances of their use also led to drastic elaborative change in all varieties of pidgins, when they became the primary

media of interethnic communication in their home territories. Today, languages like *Bislama* and *Tok Pisin* are recognized as official languages in Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea respectively. They continue to expand their resources in response to the growing demands placed on them. They demonstrate, in all stages of their history, the ways in which social factors can shape the very character of a language.

## PRACTICE

➤ **Think Critically About the Following Questions:**

- 1) What is the difference between pidgin and creole?
- 2) A pidgin language becomes a creole when it is: a) nativized; b) memorized; c) expanded; d) grammaticized.

➤ **Short Essay:** Tell the life story of African American Vernacular English from the Creolists' view point beginning with its "birth" (resulting from contact between speakers of different languages) and continuing through its history until today. Explain as much as possible what happened and why. Concepts such as "pidgin", "creole", "decreolization", and "post-creole continuum" may be helpful.

➤ **Essay Questions: Based on the Questions 1 – 5 you are supposed to write a short essay covering main directions introduced by the topic.**

*Questions (1 – 3) below focus on the issue of Creoleness for a particular variety or varieties. There is also scope to widen comparisons – e.g., though the Bajan question does not specifically request it, one might make comparisons with another typical Caribbean English Creole, such as Jamaican or Guyanese.*

*Questions (4 – 5) are more general in scope, and answers are expected to range over more than one pidgin / creole variety for supporting evidence. Each question identifies several directions you might take the selected essay in – but you need not go in all of these directions in one essay.*

- 1) Barbadian Creole English (Bajan): Is Bajan a Creole? How did it develop? Identify and discuss the major issues in this debate.
- 2) Is Gullah a Creole, and why (or why not)? How different is

Gullah from African American Vernacular English (AAVE), and why is it so different? What are the social and historical conditions that led to its status? Is it changing today towards AAVE, or towards Standard English, and why? (Note: do **not** do extensive description of AAVE as part of this question).

- 3) Is Tok Pisin a Pidgin or a Creole, and why (or why not)? (a) Summarise briefly the circumstances of its origin, development and current use. (b) Describe the development of one linguistic feature in some detail as an illustration of your thesis. (c) Discuss the use of the standard distinction between Pidgin and Creole in this context: Is it a useful one in the analysis of Tok Pisin? Are intermediate terms such as “extended pidgin” helpful – in describing Tok Pisin? to the field generally?
- 4) What has the field of pidgin / creole studies contributed to the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA)? What has SLA contributed to P/C studies? Identify and trace some of the major themes and issues as they developed, and discuss two.
- 5) Evaluate arguments for and against the relevance of grammaticalization processes in the development of pidgins / creoles. Discuss the concept in a general fashion; analyse evidence from at least one pidgin and one creole, and consider alternative explanations and processes for the features described.

➤ **Research Paper – General Suggestions:**

- 1) ***Based on Speech Data:*** Working from recorded or transcribed materials, you may select a linguistic feature for empirical analysis. Eg, optimality theory (OT) analysis of phonological elements; minimalist/etc. formal analysis of syntactic constructions; discourse analysis of conversational features or discourse markers; instrumental phonetic analysis of vowels, consonants or pitch patterns; variationist analysis of distribution of a linguistic variable, and so on. Important here is to establish early the availability of suitable data, and to be sure you have chosen a type of analysis that you are competent to perform (some types of analysis, of course, may rely on written rather than spoken data).

- 2) ***Papers Which Produce New Data:*** may be correspondingly shorter on analysis. You may record data yourself, if you're equipped to do so; or work with material from the mass media. A typical paper of this sort would describe the context for the data and the methods used, provide a transcript and key, and then have a section commenting on selected linguistic features and offering analysis of patterns observed.
- 3) ***Based on Written or Historical Data:*** Some non-contemporary or non-mechanically-recorded historical materials exist which can be the subject of, e.g., variationist, discourse or syntactic analyses, or evaluations of historical development. Most such data have their own problems of interpretation, a frequent theme in the literature, and a valid subject for a paper (or part of one) in itself.
- 4) ***Applied Issues:*** Topics including literacy (orthography, reading), education, language testing, access to institutional resources (healthcare, employment, language rights), language attitudes, etc. are very welcome subjects for a paper. Such a paper may be data-based, but is just as likely to be synthetic, drawing on the literature.

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## **Part II.**

# **FUNDAMENTALS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

# **INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: The Basics**

## **Overview**

The chapter creates the mainframe of the second part of the manual including methodology, related fields, significant works and main directions of research. It also introduces main object of upcoming analyses – intercultural human communication.

Topics covered include: Intercultural Communication; Technological Reason; Demographic Reason; Economic Reason; Self-Awareness Reason; Ethical Reason.

*Key words: Dialogical Approach, Diversity, Ethics, Ethnocentrism, Global Village, Heterogeneity, Identity Management, Identity Tourism, Immigrants, Intercultural Communication, Mobility, Multinational Corporations, Multiphrenia, Self-Reflexivity.*

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## **1.1 Why to Study Intercultural Communication?**

We live in rapidly changing times. Although no one can foresee the future, we believe that changes are increasing the imperative for intercultural learning. Learning about intercultural communication is not about learning a finite set of skills, terms and theories. It is about learning to think about cultural realities in multiple ways. We have to recognize that in many instances people do not want to communicate interculturally. Sometimes people see those who are culturally different as threatening, as forcing them to change. Because of this dynamic, many people have had negative intercultural experience that influences subsequent intercultural interactions. Negative experience can range from simple misunderstandings to physical violence.

The study of communication is both a science and an art. Because communication does not happen in a vacuum but is integral to the many dynamics that make it possible – economics, politics, technology. The ever changing character of the world means that it is essential to develop sensitivity and flexibility to change. It also means that you can never stop learning about intercultural communication.

Through intercultural relationships, we can learn a tremendous amount

about other people and their cultures, and about ourselves and our own cultural background. At the same time, there are many challenges. Intercultural communication can also involve barriers like stereotyping and discrimination. And these relationships take place in complex historical and political contexts. An important goal of this book is to increase one's understanding of the dynamics at studies and work in intercultural interaction.

Cross-cultural communication has always been interdisciplinary; the field is now informed by three identifiable and competing paradigms, or ways of thinking. In this part of the manual we attempt to integrate three different research approaches: 1) *the traditional social-psychological approach*, which emphasizes cultural differences and the ways in which these differences influence communication; 2) *the interpretive approach*, which focuses on communication in context; 3) *the critical approach*, which underscores the importance of power and historical context in understanding intercultural communication.

We believe that each of these approaches has important contributions to make to the understanding of intercultural communication and that they operate in interconnected and sometimes contradictory ways. Throughout this manual, we acknowledge that there are no easy solutions to the difficult challenges of intercultural communication. Sometimes our discussions raise more questions than they answer – which we believe is perfectly reasonable at this point in time. Not only is the field of intercultural communication changing, but the relationship between culture and communication is – and probably always will be – complex and dynamic. We live in a rapidly changing world in which intercultural contact will continue to increase, creating a heightened potential for both conflict and cooperation. There are many ways to think about intercultural interactions. One way to learn more about intercultural experiences is to engage in dialogue with others on this topic.

Students usually come to the field of intercultural communication with some knowledge about many different cultural groups, including their own. Their understanding is often based on observations via television, movies, the Internet, books, personal experiences, news media, and more. But many students have difficult time assimilating information that does not readily fit into their preexisting knowledge base. In this book, we move students gradually to the notion of a dialectical framework for thinking about cultural issues. That is, we show that knowledge can be acquired in many different ways – through social scientific studies, personal experience, media reports, and so on – but these differing forms of knowledge need to be seen dynamically and in relation to each other.

Why is it important to focus on intercultural communication and to strive to become better at this complex pattern of interaction? In Chapter 1, you will learn more about some of these changes and their influence on intercultural communication. We can think of at least five reasons. You can possibly add more.

### 1.1.1 *The Technological Reason*

Today, with the explosion of computers and other communication technologies, we truly live in the global village envisioned by Marshal McLuhan. Communication technology links us to events from the most remote parts of the world and connects us to persons we may never meet face-to-face from around the world. Perhaps the most revolutionary advancement has been the Internet.

***Technology and Human Communication.*** In past centuries, social relationships were limited by physical factors such as geographical distance and lack of mobility, but they evolved with each technological advance, such as the railroad, the automobile, the telephone, the radio, TV, and movies. These relationships have now multiplied exponentially. The extent to which the Internet has expanded our interpersonal networks is revealed in a story told by New York Times political writer Thomas Friedman. His 79-year-old mother called him up one day, sounding upset. When he asked what was wrong, she said, *Well, I've been playing bridge on the Internet with three Frenchmen and they keep speaking French to each other and I can't understand.* When Friedman chuckled a little at the thought of his mother playing bridge with three Frenchmen on the Net, she said, *do not laugh, I was playing bridge with someone in Siberia the other day* [7, p. xvi].

Consider these trends:

- as of February 2002, there are approximately 445.9 million Internet users worldwide, including 33.7 million users in China and 16.7 million in South Korea (Business Asia, February 2002);
- Internet access is available in all 54 countries and territories of Africa, mostly in the capital cities. The number of dial-up Internet subscribers there now stands at over 1.3 million;
- in just seven Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela), an estimated 16 million people have Internet access;
- in Scandinavia, 63% of Norwegians use the Internet, as do 62% of Danes. Norwegians use the Web primarily to gather product information (Internet Business News, July 9, 2001);
- women spend less time on the Internet than men. They use the

Internet for shopping, travel, banking, and sending e-greeting cards, whereas men use it for browsing, reading content, and downloading software (Internet Business News, March 22, 2002);

- in the United States, 66.9% of Americans use the Internet, 54.6% use e-mail, 51.7% of Internet users purchase products on-line, 78.7% of adults say that children in their household spend an appropriate amount of time on-line, 70% of adults say that the grades of children who use the Internet stay the same, and 75% of adults say that they do not feel ignored by relatives and friends as a result of chat room activity (Camping Magazine, January 2001, [www.findarticles.com](http://www.findarticles.com)).

The advent of the Internet and other communication technologies has tremendous implications for intercultural communication. We will focus on five aspects of culture and technology: 1) increased information about peoples and cultures; 2) increased contact with people who are different from us; 3) increased contact with people who are similar to us who can provide communities of support; 4) identity, culture, and technology; 5) differential access to communication technology.

***Increase in Information.*** The Internet provides access to information about other cultures and other peoples. We can now instantaneously find out almost anything about any group in the world simply by searching the Internet. This should give us a better understanding of our global neighbors, and perhaps some motivation to coexist peacefully in our global village; however, the evidence seems to be to the contrary. Apparently, knowledge about others does not necessarily lead to better communication or heightened understanding. We will tackle issues like this in later chapters.

***Increased Contact with People from Different Cultures.*** Communication technology brings us in contact with people we might never have the opportunity to know otherwise. And many of these people are from different cultural backgrounds, as was the case with Friedman's mother's bridge partners. The Internet / e-mail allows us to have "pen pals" from different cultures and to carry on discussions with these people in virtual chat rooms and on discussion boards.

However, such mediated communication across cultures does present unique challenges. Unlike face-to-face communication, mediated communication filters out important non-verbal cues. When we are talking to individuals face-to-face, we use non-verbal information to help us interpret what they are really saying – tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures, and so on. The absence of these cues in mediated contexts (e.g., e-mail, chat rooms) makes communication more difficult and can lead to

misunderstandings. And these misunderstandings can be compounded when communicating across cultures. For example, an American professor from Columbia University in New York shared her experience of communicating through electronic mail. She stated that she was offended when the e-mails she received from colleagues overseas seemed too brief and to the point. She has since discovered that her colleagues overseas are charged computer time by the minute and so have learned to be very concise in their e-mail messages. What she interpreted as rudeness had more to do with the economic context in which the interaction took place than with the communicators themselves. If she had been able to observe their non-verbal cues while communicating, she probably would have known that they were not being rude. The described experience demonstrates only some challenges of intercultural communication in the virtual space.

***Increased Contact with People who are Similar.*** Communication technology also allows us to have more contact with people who are very similar to ourselves. There are chat rooms and discussion boards for people with similar interests, such as those stemming from membership in the same ethnic or cultural groups. It is important to remember that communication technologies are neither good nor bad in themselves; what matters is how people use them.

***Identity, Culture, Technology.*** Advances in communication technology lead us to think differently about ourselves and our identity management. In *The Saturated Self* psychologist Kenneth Gergen describes the changes that occur as technology alters our patterns of communication. Gergen suggests that with the removal of traditional barriers to forming relationships – time and space – these technological advancements lead to ***multiphrenia***, a splitting of the individual into many different selves. We are available for communication, via answering machine, fax, and e-mail, even when we are not physically present. Gergen writes: “The relatively coherent and unified sense of self inherent in a traditional culture gives way to manifold and competing potentials. A ***multiphrenic*** condition emerges in which one swims in ever-shifting, concatenating, and contentious currents of being. One bears the burden of an increasing array of thoughts, of self-doubts and irrationalities” [4, p. 80].

Identity on the Internet not only is potentially fragmented but also involves more choice and management issues than in face-to-face interaction. As noted previously, many of the identity cues individuals use to figure out how to communicate with others – such as age, gender, and ethnicity – are filtered out on the Internet. For instance, when you send an e-mail, you can choose whether to reveal certain aspects of your identity. The recipients will

not know if you are male or female, young or old, and so on – unless you tell them. The same is true for chat room participation. You can choose which aspects, if any, of your identity you want to reveal. In fact, you can even give false information about your identity.

This capability has resulted in the opportunity for *identity tourism* – taking on the identities of other races, gender, classes, or sexual orientations for recreational purposes [7, p. 8]. And some on-line contexts (e.g., virtual games like *Dungeons and Dragons*) require users to take on new identities. How is this related to intercultural communication? One of the oft-touted skills of intercultural communication is empathy, the ability to understand what it is like to “walk in someone's shoes”. Communication technology now affords an opportunity to do this – virtually. Thus, for instance, by taking on the virtual identity of a male, by participating in male-only on-line discussions, females might come to understand better what it feels like to be a male [3, p. 140]. The same might be true for other identities as well.

Although identity tourism provides intriguing possibilities for improving intercultural understanding, it also raises some important ethical questions. In one celebrated example, a male psychiatrist participated in on-line discussions as a disabled female. He did so because he wanted to understand something of what it felt like to be a woman and to be disabled. The project backfired, however, as other chat room participants responded to him as a woman and, over time, even fell in love with him. Ultimately, many of the women suffered severe psychological problems as a result of their experiences with him [10, p. 79].

The implications for intercultural communication are enormous. How do people relate to each other when one is information-technology rich and the other is not? When there is increasing use of English on the Internet, what happens to those who do not speak English?

***Mobility and Its Effect on Communication.*** We come in contact with more people these days not only electronically but also physically. Mobility changes the nature of our society and affects the individuals involved. Although some families move while the children are growing up, most moves are made by young adults, and some generations move more than others. Many families move because of divorce. Only about half of American teenagers live with both birth mother and birth father. The rest live with single parents or in step families or extended families (such as grandparents) or are shuttled back and forth between their parents' houses.

Families also relocate for economic reasons. A U.S. company might relocate to Mexico and transfer the corporate personnel with the company. Many Mexican workers, for their part, cross the border to look for work in the

United States. Similarly, Germans from the eastern part of the country move to the western sections seeking improved social and economic opportunities. Increasing technology and mobility mean that we can no longer be culturally illiterate in this shrinking world.

### 1.1.2 *The Demographic Reason*

***Changing Immigration Patterns.*** Today, immigration has changed the social landscape significantly. One in five Americans either was born abroad or born of parents who were born abroad. Prior to the 1970s, most of the immigrants to the United States came from Europe, but this changed in the 1980s and 1990s. As of 1999, over half (51%) the foreign-born population came from Latin America, 27% from Asia, and only 16% from Europe. Of the one million immigrants who now enter the United States every year, 90% are from Latin America or Asia. These shifts in patterns of immigration have resulted in a much more racially and ethnically diverse population. In 1890, only 1.4% of the foreign-born population was non-White; by 1970, 27% were non-White, and by 1999, 75% were non-White. It is not hard to see that the United States is becoming more heterogeneous. This heterogeneity presents many opportunities and challenges for students of intercultural communication. We should also note the potential opportunities in a culturally diverse society. Diversity can expand our conceptions of what is possible – linguistically, politically, socially – as various lifestyles and ways of thinking converge.

***Religious Diversity.*** Immigration also contributes to religious diversity, bringing increasing numbers of Muslims, Buddhists, Confucians, Catholics to almost any European state. Religious beliefs and practices often play an important role in everyday cultural life. Different worldviews can sometimes lead to prejudices and stereotypes. For example, stereotypes about Islam are widespread in U.S. popular culture. Political scientist Ali Muzrui describes Islam as the “ultimate negative Other to the Christian tradition” and laments the rising tide of ***Islamophobia*** (fear of Islam and the hostility toward it). He lists the contrasting stereotypes: “Whereas Christianity is supposed to be peace-loving, Islam is portrayed as fostering holy war (Jihad). Whereas Christianity liberates women, Islam enslaves them. Whereas Christianity is modern, Islam is medieval. Whereas Christianity is forward looking, Islam is backward looking. Whereas Christians prefer nonviolence, Muslims easily resort to terrorism” [9, p. 110].

Muzrui goes on to present evidence to debunk each of these stereotypes. Religious diversity is part of the demographic imperative that challenges us to learn more about intercultural communication. These

increasingly diverse ethnic, racial, economic, and religious groups come into contact mostly during the day in schools, businesses, and other settings, bringing to the encounters different languages, histories, and economic statuses. This presents great challenges for us as a society and as individuals. The main challenge is to look beyond the stereotypes and biases, to recognize the disparities and differences, and to try to apply what we know about intercultural communication.

In any case, the United States are hardly a model of diversity; many countries are far more diverse ethnically. For example, Nigeria has some 200 ethnic groups, and Indonesia has a similar number. Nigeria was colonized by the British, and artificially drawn boundaries forced many different groups into one nation-state, which caused many conflicts. The diverse groups in Indonesia, in contrast, have largely coexisted amiably for many years. Diversity, therefore, does not lead to intercultural conflicts [7, p. 22].

### *1.1.3 The Economic Reason*

The recent trend toward globalization has resulted, essentially, in one world market. Cross-cultural trainers in the United States say that Japanese and other business personnel often spend years in the United States studying English and learning about the country before they decide to establish operations here or invest money. In contrast, many American companies provide little or no training before sending their workers overseas and expect to close business deals quickly, with little regard for cultural idiosyncrasies.

Many management experts have examined other countries' practices for ways to increase U.S. productivity. One such idea was *quality circles*, borrowed from the Japanese and now popular in the United States. Another Japanese strength is the belief in effort for its own sake. Japanese employees work longer hours and sometimes produce better products simply as a result of persistence. This trait also pays off in schools: Japanese students score higher on standardized exams than do American students.

It will also behoove Americans to research how to do business in the huge emerging market that is XXI-century China. As two experienced business people describe it, China is the largest and most difficult market a business can enter. The last two decades are full of tales of firms that thought they had a lucrative business deal in China sewn up, only for the whole thing to evaporate almost before the wheels of their planes had touched the ground back home [2, p. 28].

Why do so many business people have difficulty succeeding in Chinese and other Asian markets? The reasons involve both differences in business practices and cultural differences between East and West. Ambler and Witzel

explain that business dealings in China, as in many Eastern countries, are relationship-oriented, that businesses cannot succeed without respect and harmony. Specifically, in China, three concepts are crucial:

- **QINGMIAN** (human feelings), which involves respect for the feelings of others;
- **HE** (harmony), which emphasizes the smooth functioning of a group or society;
- **QUANXI** (relationship or connection), which underscores the importance of relationships in Chinese business.

The high value placed on these concepts highlights other differences as well. For example, contract law is practiced very differently in China. Whereas in the West the law is the essential set of rules of conduct, the “rules of conduct” in China are the ethics and standards of behavior required in a Confucian society. This means that social pressures rather than legal instruments are used to ensure compliance. Thus, what we might conceptualize as a legal issue may be seen in China as a relationship issue.

Cultural differences in business practices have implications not only when people from different companies do business with each other but also when people from different cultures work on the same team. One effect of globalization is increasing numbers of international teams – sometimes working as virtual teams and rarely meeting face-to-face. These teams present large challenges in intercultural communication. Elizabeth Marx recently analyzed the difficulties of a British-American team and found that problems stemmed from (1) excessive stereotyping, (2) lack of openness and communication, and (3) the “culture factor” as an overused excuse for not getting things done. As she worked with the two cultural groups, she found that the Americans were viewed by the British as “too directive, too aggressive, too fast and as thinking on the possible and not thinking about obstacles”. The British, in contrast, were viewed by the Americans as “too consensus driven, too defensive, quality rather than quantity oriented, negative-thinking, bureaucratic and taking too many holidays” [8, p. 101].

Understanding cultural differences involves not only working with diverse employees but also recognizing new business markets, developing new products, and so on. From this perspective, diversity is a potentially powerful economic resource if organizations view the challenge as an opportunity. In this sense, then, business can capitalize on diversity.

#### *1.1.4 The Self-Awareness Reason*

One of the most important reasons for studying intercultural communication is the awareness it raises of our own cultural identity and

background. This is also one of the least obvious reasons. Peter Adler, a noted social psychologist, observes that the study of intercultural communication begins as a journey into another culture and reality and ends as a journey into one's own culture [1, p. 19].

However, it is also important to realize that intercultural journeys are not simply about personal growth and personal insights. They are also about learning about the amazing peoples on the planet we inhabit. Living in an increasingly diverse world, we can take the opportunity to learn more about our own cultural backgrounds and identities and about our similarities to and differences from the people with whom we interact.

### 1.1.5 *The Ethical Reason*

Living in an intercultural world presents ethical challenges as well. Ethics may be thought of as principles of conduct that help govern the behavior of individuals and groups. These principles often arise from communities' consensus on what is good and bad behavior. Cultural values tell us what is “good” and what “ought” to be good. Ethical judgments focus more on the degrees of rightness and wrongness in human behavior than do cultural values.

The study of intercultural communication not only provides insights into cultural patterns but also helps us address the ethical issues involved in intercultural interaction. Specifically we should be able to (1) judge what is ethical and unethical behavior given variations in cultural priorities, (2) identify guidelines for ethical behavior in intercultural contexts in which ethics clash.

***Developing Self-Reflexivity.*** In studying intercultural communication, it is vital to develop self-reflexivity – to understand ourselves and our position in society. In learning about other cultures and cultural practices, we often learn much about ourselves. Immigrants often comment that they never felt so much like someone of their own nationality until they left their homeland. Think about it: Many cultural attitudes and ideas are instilled in you, but these can be difficult to unravel and identify. Knowing who you are is never simple; rather, it is an ongoing process that can never fully capture the ever-emerging person.

***Learning about Others.*** It is important to remember that the study of cultures is actually the study of other people. Never lose sight of the humanity at the core of the topic. Try not to observe people as if they are zoo animals. Communication scholar Bradford Hall cautions against using the ***zoo approach*** to studying culture: “When using such an approach we view the study of culture as if we were walking through a zoo admiring, gasping and

chuckling at the various exotic animals we observe. One may discover amazing, interesting and valuable information by using such a perspective and even develop a real fondness for these exotic people, but miss the point that we are as *culturally caged* as others and that they are culturally as *free* as we are” [5, p. 14].

Everett Kleinjans, an international educator, stresses that intercultural education differs from some other kinds of education. Although all education may be potentially transformative, learning as a result of intercultural contact is particularly so in that it deals with fundamental aspects of human behavior. Learning about intercultural communication sometimes calls into question the core of our basic assumptions about ourselves, our culture, and our worldviews, and challenges existing and preferred beliefs, values, and patterns of behavior [6, p. 23].

## SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have identified five reasons for studying intercultural communication: the technological, the demographic, the economic, the self-awareness, and the ethical. Perhaps you can think of some other reasons. We have stressed that the situations in which intercultural communication takes place are complex and challenging. Unfortunately, there are no easy answers. We have also raised some issues that will be addressed in the following chapters as we continue our study of communication and culture.

## PRACTICE

### ➤ **Answer the Following Questions:**

- 1) How do electronic means of communication (e-mail, the Internet, fax, and so on) differ from face-to-face interactions?
- 2) How does the increased mobility of our society affect us as individuals?
- 3) How does it affect the way we form relationships?
- 4) What are some of the potential challenges organizations face as they become more diverse?
- 5) How might organizations benefit from increased diversity in the work place?
- 6) How might individuals benefit?
- 7) How do economic situations affect intergroup relations?

- **Intercultural Encounter.** Describe and analyze a recent intercultural encounter. This may mean talking with someone of a

different age, ethnicity, race, religion and so on.

- Describe the encounter. What made it “intercultural”?
- Explain how you initially felt about the communication?
- Describe how you felt after the encounter, and explain why you think you felt as you did.
- Describe any challenges in trying to communicate. If there were no challenges, explain why you think it was so easy.
- Based on this experience, identify some characteristics that may be important for successful intercultural communication.

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# CULTURE, COMMUNICATION, CONTEXT, AND POWER

## Overview

In this chapter, we continue our discussion of the dialectical approach and identify four interrelated components or building blocks in understanding intercultural communication: culture, communication, context, and power. Culture and communication are the foreground, and context and power form the backdrop against which we can understand intercultural communication. First, we define and describe culture and communication. Then we examine how these two components interact with issues of context and power to enhance our understanding of intercultural communication.

Topics covered include: High Culture and Low Culture; Culture as a Contested Zone; Culture and Communication; Value Orientations and Cultural Conflict; Communication and Context; Communication and Power.

*Key words: Cultural Values, Cultural Time, Monochrone Time Orientation, Polychrone Time Orientation, High Culture, Long-Term vs Short-Term Orientation, Low Culture, Masculinity-Femininity Value, Popular Culture, Power Distance, Symbolic Significance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Values.*

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## 2.1 What is Culture?

Culture is often considered the core concept in intercultural communication. One characteristic of culture is that it functions largely at a subconscious level. In this sense, trying to understand our own culture is like trying to explain to a fish that it lives in water. Therefore, we often cannot identify our own cultural backgrounds and assumptions until we encounter assumptions that differ from our own.

Culture has been defined in many ways – from a pattern of perceptions that influence communication to a site of contestation and conflict. Because there are many acceptable definitions of culture, and because it is a complex concept, it is important to reflect on the centrality of culture in our own interactions. The late British writer Raymond Williams wrote that culture “is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language” [19,

p. 89]. And this very complexity indicates the many ways in which it influences intercultural communication. Culture is more than merely one aspect of the practice of intercultural communication. How we think about culture frames our ideas and perceptions. For example, if we think that culture is defined by nation-states, then communication between a Japanese and an Italian would be intercultural communication because Japan and Italy are different nation-states. However, according to this definition, an encounter between an Asian American from North Carolina and an African American from California would not be intercultural because North Carolina and California are not different nation-states.

In the following essay, communication scholar Wen Shu Lee identifies different common uses of the term culture and then describes how each definition serves particular interests. She also defends her preferred choice, the sixth definition.

- Culture – unique human efforts (as different from nature and biology). For example, *Culture is the bulwark against the ravages of nature.*
- Culture – refinement, mannerism (as different from things that are crude, vulgar, and unrefined). For example, *Look at the way in which he chows down his food. He has no culture at all!*
- Culture – civilization (as different from backward barbaric people). For example, *In countries where darkness reigns and people are wanting in culture, it is our mandate to civilize and Christianize those poor souls.*
- Culture – shared language, beliefs, values (as different from language beliefs and values that are not shared; dissenting voices; and voices of the Other). For example, *We come from the same culture, we speak the same language, and we share the same tradition.*
- Culture – dominant or hegemonic culture (as different from marginal cultures). For example, *It is the culture of the ruling class that determines what is moral and what is deviant* [This definition is a more charged version of definitions 2, 3, and 4 through the addition of power consciousness].
- Culture – the shifting tensions between the shared and the unshared (as different from shared or unshared things). For example, American culture has changed from master / slave, to white only / black only, to anti-war and black power, to affirmative action / multiculturalism and political correctness, to transnational capital and antisweatshop campaigns [15, p. 76].

Each of these definitions privileges certain interests. Definition 2 privileges high culture and leaves out popular culture. Definition 3 privileges

nations that are / were imperialistic, colonizing. Definition 4 privileges a universal and representative view of a society, but such a view often represents only a specific powerful group and silences other groups that do not readily share this view. Definition 5 privileges the interaction of the culture authorized by the dominant group / sector / nation – more politically explicit than definitions 2, 3, and 4. Definition 6 is more of a meta view of cultures. It focuses on the links between “the shared” and the “little shared”. But the sharedness, the unsharedness, and their links remain not only situated but also unstable, shifting, and contested.

Any of the mentioned definitions is too restrictive. A dialectical approach suggests that different definitions offer more flexibility in approaching the topic. We believe that the best approach to understanding the complexities of intercultural communication is to view the concept of culture from many perspectives.

By and large, social science researchers focus not on culture *per se* but on the influence of culture on communication. In other words, such researchers concern themselves with communication differences that result from culture. They pay little attention to how we conceptualize culture or how we see its functions. In contrast, interpretive researchers focus more on how cultural contexts influence communication. Critical researchers, for their part, often view communication – and the power to communicate – as instrumental in reshaping culture. They see culture as the way that people participate in or resist society’s structure.

### 2.1.1 *High Culture and Low Culture*

The XIX-century essayist and poet Matthew Arnold, who expressed concern with protecting civilization, defined culture as “the best that has been thought and said in the world” – a definition that emphasizes quality. In this context, many Western societies distinguish *high culture* from *low culture*.

*High culture* refers to those cultural activities that are often the domain of the elite or the well-to-do: ballet, symphony, opera, great literature and fine art. These activities sometimes are framed as international because supposedly they can be appreciated by audiences in other places, from other cultures, in different time periods. Their cultural value is seen as transcendent and timeless. To protect these cultural treasures, social groups build museums, symphony halls, and theaters. In fact, universities devote courses, programs, and even entire departments to the study of aspects of high culture.

In opposition to high culture is *low culture*, which refers to the activities of the non-elite: music videos, game shows, professional wrestling, stock car racing, graffiti art, TV talk shows, and so on. Traditionally, low-

culture activities have been seen as unworthy of serious study – and so of little interest to museums or universities. The cultural values embedded in these activities were considered neither transcendent nor timeless.

The *elitism* reflected in the distinction between high and low culture points to the tensions in Western social systems. In recent decades, however, this distinction has begun to break down. Rapid social changes propelled universities to alter their policies and also have affected how we study intercultural communication. For example, the turbulent 1960s brought to higher educational establishments a powerful new interest in ethnic studies, including African American studies and women's and gay and lesbian issues. These areas of study did not rely on the earlier distinctions between high and low culture. Rather, they contributed to a new conceptual framework by arguing for the legitimacy of other cultural forms that traditionally would have been categorized as low culture but were now framed as popular culture.

Although the distinction between high and low cultures has broken down, it has not disappeared. What we study and how we study it have significant implications for how we think about the world. The biases of high culture prevail: in most academic settings, some works are favored and others are shunned. Although this practice is less pervasive than it once was, it continues to reinforce a predominantly European-elitist view of the world.

### *2.1.2 Shared and Learned Patterns of Belief and Perception*

***Anthropological Definitions of Culture.*** Traditional intercultural communication studies have been influenced mostly by definitions of culture proposed by anthropologists and psychologists. Of the two disciplines, anthropology is more concerned with definitions. Even so, the definitions proposed are numerous and varied. In 1952, anthropologists Arthur Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn categorized and integrated approximately 150 definitions of culture. Some emphasized culture as a set of patterns of thought and beliefs; others viewed culture in terms of a set of behaviors; still others focused on the nonmaterial aspects of human life or on the material aspects of societies. The proliferation of definitions has not diminished [1; 11].

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz's definition of culture, traditionally the most widely accepted one in his field, also has been adopted in communication studies. According to Geertz, culture denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life [6, p. 89].

The traditional concept of culture continues to involve learned, shared

patterns of belief. According to a more recent definition, reflecting Geertz's influence, culture is 1) that set of capacities, which distinguishes *Homo sapiens* as a species and which is fundamental to its mode of adaptation; 2) the learned, cumulative product of all social life; 3) the distinctive patterns of thought, action, and value that characterize the members of a society or social group [20, p. 80].

***Psychological Definitions of Culture.*** Geert Hofstede, a noted social psychologist, defines culture similarly, as the “programming of the mind” and the “interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment” [9, p. 21]. The social psychological definition of culture is centered in the mind of the individual. Hofstede explains his notion of culture in terms of a computer program: “Every person carries within him or herself patterns of thinking, feeling, and potential acting which were learned throughout [his or her] lifetime. Much of [these patterns are] acquired in early childhood, because at that time a person is most susceptible to learning and assimilating” [ibid., p. 24].

Hofstede goes on to describe how these patterns are developed through interactions in the social environment and with various groups of individuals – first the family and neighborhood, then at school and in youth groups, then at college, and so on. Culture becomes a collective experience because it is shared with people who live in and experience the same social environments.

To understand this notion of the collective programming of the mind, Hofstede and other scholars studied organizational behavior at various locations of a multinational corporation. Both the anthropological and the psychological approaches to understanding culture have been influential in the social science perspective on intercultural communication. Social scientists also have emphasized the role of perception in cultural patterns. They contend that cultural patterns of thought and meaning influence our perceptual processes, which, in turn, influence our behavior: “Culture is defined as a pattern of learned, group-related perception-including both verbal and non-verbal language attitudes, values, belief system, disbelief systems, and behavior” [18, p. 34].

Communication theorist Gerry Philipsen extends Carbaugh's notion of culture by emphasizing that these patterns must endure over time, passed along from person to person. Philipsen wrote: “Culture refers to a socially constructed and historically transmitted pattern of symbols, meaning, premises, and rules. A cultural code of speaking, then, consists of a socially constructed and historically transmitted system of symbols and meanings pertaining to communication – for instance, symbols *Lithuanian* or

*communication* and their attendant definitions; beliefs about spoken actions (that a man who uses speech to discipline boys is not a real man); and rules for using speech (that a father should not interrupt his daughter at the dinner table" [17, p. 7 – 8].

These definitions of culture suggested by Philipsen are influenced by communication ethnographer Dell Hymes's framework for studying naturally occurring speech in depth and in context. The framework comprises eight elements: *scene, participant, end, act sequence, key, instrumentality, norm, genre*. In this sequence, the terms form the acronym SPEAKING. *Scene* is the setting of the communication event. *Participants* are the people who perform or enact the event. *End* is the goal of the participants in conversation. *Act Sequence* is the order of phrases during the enactment. *Key* is the tone of the conversation. The channel of communication is *instrumentality*. *Norms*, as you know, are the rules that people follow. *Genre* is the type or category of talk. By analyzing speech using this descriptive framework, we can gain a comprehensive understanding of the rules and patterns followed in any given speech community. Later in this chapter, we will provide an example of how the framework can be used to explore cultural communication in context.

Although this notion of culture as shared, learned group patterns has long been the standard in a variety of disciplines, more and more people are beginning to question its utility. One colleague reports that in a class discussion about the definition of culture in which most students were giving the usual definitions. "One student almost indignantly jumped into our discussion and said, *Do we really have a common culture?*" She then followed with the question "Whose version of a shared and common culture are we talking about?" [10, p. 68]. Indeed, these are important questions, and so the next section describes an alternative approach to defining culture.

### 2.1.3 *Culture as a Contested Zone*

The emergence in the 1960s of British cultural studies, which held a critical perspective, brought profound changes to how we think about culture and study communication. Originally motivated largely by the establishment of the *Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies* at the University of Birmingham, cultural studies was fiercely multidisciplinary and committed to social change.

Proponents believed that divisions between disciplines were arbitrary and ideological and that no single discipline embraced all of the methods and theories needed to generate rich understandings of cultural phenomena. Stuart Hall (not related to Edward Hall), an early and enduring figure in British cultural studies, envisioned the group's task as drawing on intellectual

resources to help understand everyday life and its supposed antihumaneness.

This desire to make academic work relevant to everyday life resonated in other fields. Most people, in fact, want to find the connections between what they learn in the classroom and what is occurring in contemporary society. In any case, this movement led to the reconfiguration of the role of the university in society.

Cultural studies soon spread from Britain to Australia, Latin America, and other parts of the world. Due to differing cultural and political situations, the specific construction of cultural studies differs from place to place. In the United States, for instance, cultural studies developed mainly within departments of communication [7, p. 93].

The influence of cultural studies in the field of communication has been profound. In many ways, it has far surpassed that of ethnic studies. The cultural studies movement presents a significant challenge to the distinction between high culture and low culture. In fact, proponents argue that low culture is far more significant because it captures the contemporary and dynamic everyday representations of cultural struggles. As a result of this hierarchy inversion, formerly overlooked cultural phenomena such as soap operas and music videos have become important areas of study.

You may sense that the concept of culture that emerged from this area of inquiry differs markedly from the concept expressed in social science or even interpretive research. However, it is in agreement with concepts found in recent work in anthropology. Many anthropologists have criticized research that categorizes people and characterizes cultural patterns as set, unchanging, and unconnected to issues of gender, class, and history [12, p. 101]. Recent anthropological research sees cultural processes as dynamic and fluid organizations of diversity that extend across national and regional borders within contexts of history and power [8, p. 85].

## **2.2 The Relationship between Culture and Communication**

Now we will focus on the relationship between culture and communication, which is complex. A dialectical perspective assumes that culture and communication are interrelated and reciprocal. That is, culture influences communication, and vice versa. Thus, cultural groups influence the process by which the perception of reality is created and maintained: “All communities in all places at all times manifest their own view of reality in what they do. The entire culture reflects the contemporary model of reality” [3, p. 11]. However, we might also say that communication helps create the cultural reality of a community. Let us see how these reciprocal relationships work.

### 2.2.1 *How Culture Influences Communication*

Values are the most deeply felt beliefs shared by a cultural group; they reflect a shared perception of what ought to be, and not what is. Equality, for example, is a value shared by many people in the United States. It refers to the belief that all humans are created equal, even though we must acknowledge that, in reality, there are many disparities, such as in talent, intelligence, or access to material goods.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck suggested that members of all cultural groups must answer the following important questions:

- What is human nature?
- What is the relationship between humans and nature?
- What is the relationship between humans?
- What is the preferred personality?
- What is the orientation toward time?

According to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, there are three possible responses to each question as they relate to shared values (See Table 2.2.1.). Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck believed that, although all responses are possible in all societies, each society has one, or possibly two, preferred responses to each question that reflect the predominant values of that society. Religious beliefs, for example, may reinforce certain cultural values. The questions and their responses become a framework for understanding broad differences in values among various cultural groups. Although the framework was applied originally to ethnic groups, we one can extend it to cultural groups based on gender, class, nationality, and so on [13, p. 61].

**Table 2.2.1** Value Orientations

<b>Range of values</b>			
<b>Human Nature</b>	<b>Basically good</b>	<b>Mixture of good and evil</b>	<b>Basically evil</b>
Relationships between Humans and Nature	Humans dominate	Harmony exists between the two	Nature dominates
Relationships between Humans	Individual	Group-oriented	Collateral
Preferred Personality	“Doing”: Stress on action	“Growing”: stress on spiritual growth	"Being": stress on who you are

Time Orientation	Future-oriented	Present-oriented	Past-oriented
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### Point of View

This student talks about the religious and cultural values that have shaped his attitude toward other people and the world and about the importance of understanding others' values.

*The family cultural element that has probably shaped my life the most has been my religion and heritage. I was raised in an actively religious family; Mormon values and morals are very strict compared to many religions; some even think they could be considered radical. Mormon values are a higher standard of living. It is taking the golden rule a little further. It is living in service to your fellow man, and turning the other cheek to those who have wronged you. I was also raised in rural areas and small towns throughout my younger years. I have been instilled with those "small town values" and know little of living in major cities of the world. By small town values I simply mean that you would go out of your way to help a neighbor, as opposed to ignoring those around you who need help like most people that live in cities do. ... I am very close with my immediate family. I hold them very dear to me as the most important people and part of my life. I also have a big extended family as you might guess...*

*Being from America, it is very easy for me to interact with others born and raised for generations in this country, but it is of no help when communicating with someone from other places. I think that the more I can travel and read about circumstances of others, the better chance I have of understanding why people are as they are. If I know what has shaped their views and their lives, I will know what motivates their actions and words. – Josiah.*

**Orientation to Time.** Most U.S. cultural communities – particularly European American and middle class – seem to emphasize the future. Consider the practices of depositing money in retirement accounts or keeping appointment books that reach years into the future. Other societies – for example, in Spain or Greece – seem to emphasize the importance of the present, a recognition of the value of living fully in and realizing the potential of the present moment.

Many European and Asian societies strongly emphasize the past, believing that knowledge and awareness of history has something to contribute to an understanding of contemporary life. For example, the Leaning Tower of Pisa was closed for 10 years while Italian workers repaired structural damage on this historic building!

Time is another communication channel with great cultural differences. Two types of cultural time are especially important in non-verbal communication: formal and informal. In U.S. culture, formal time is divided into seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, and years. Other cultures may use seasons or phases of the moon to delineate time periods. In some colleges courses are divided into 50- or 75-minute periods that meet two or three times a week for 14-week periods called semesters; eight semesters of 15 or 16 50-minute periods per week equal a college education. Other colleges use quarters or trimesters. As these examples illustrate, formal time units are arbitrary. The culture establishes them for convenience.

Informal time terms are more general – for example, expressions such as *forever*, *immediately*, *soon*, *right away*, *as soon as possible*. Informal time creates the most communication problems, because the terms have different meanings for different people.

We are expected to structure time in certain ways to ensure that our activities and tasks are accomplished efficiently. American businesspeople, for instance, seek the greatest return on their “time investment”. In other countries, however, time is treated differently in varying degrees. In some cultures, people are accustomed to waiting several hours for a meeting to begin. In others, the meeting begins whenever the second party arrives. The following is an example of how the concept of structuring time is culturally determined:

A Chinese official matter-of-factly informed an ARCO manager that China would one day be the number one nation in the world. The American said he did not doubt that, considering the size of the country and its population, and the tremendous technological progress that will be made, but he asked, “When do you think that China will be number one?” The Chinese

responded, “Oh, in four or five hundred years”.

Even within the United States people structure time differently. People from the northeast, for example, usually walk and talk more quickly; provide change more quickly in shops; and are more likely to wear a watch than people from other parts of the country. The authors come from two different regions of the country, and it has taken years of married life for them to adjust to each other’s “internal clock” (one of them can start and nearly complete a task before the other manages to be seated). The phrase a long time can mean one thing to one person and something completely different to another.

Attitudes toward time vary from one culture to another. One study, for example, measured the accuracy of clocks in six cultures – Japan, Indonesia, Italy, England, Taiwan, and the United States. Japan had the most accurate clocks, Indonesia the least accurate. And a measure of the speed at which people in these six cultures walked found that the Japanese walked the fastest, the Indonesians the slowest [14].

Another interesting aspect of cultural time is one’s *social clock* [2, p. 101]. A person’s culture, as well as his more specific society, maintains a schedule for the right time to do a variety of important things; for example, the right time to start dating, to finish college, to buy your own home, to have a child. And you no doubt learned about this “clock” as you were growing up.

American practitioners of cross-cultural studies Philip Harris and Robert Moran in their book *Managing Cultural Differences* singled out ten aspects of culture which influence some basic cultural norms and values. A wide range of observations of how those aspects are realized in the mainstream American culture contrasted to other cultures let them come to the following conclusions (See Table 2.2.2.).

**Table 2.2.2** Aspects of Culture Which Influence Basic Cultural Norms and Values

No.	Aspects of Culture	Mainstream American Culture	Other Cultures
1.	Sense of self and space	Informal: handshake	Formal: hugs, bows, handshakes
2.	Communication and language	Explicit, direct communication Emphasis on content – meaning found in words	Implicit, indirect communication Emphasis on context – meaning found around words

3.	Dress and appearance	“Dress for success” ideal Wide range in accepted dress	Dress seen as a sign of position, wealth, prestige Religious rules
4.	Food and eating habits	Eating as a necessity – fast food	Dining as a social experience Religious rules
5.	Time and time consciousness	Linear and exact time consciousness Value on promptness – time=money	Elastic and relative time consciousness Time spent on enjoyment of relationships
6.	Relationships, family, friends	Focus on nuclear family Responsibility for self Value on promptness – time=money	Focus on extended family Loyalty and responsibility to family Age given status and respect
7.	Values and norms	Individual orientation Preference for direct confrontation of conflict	Group orientation Conformity Preference for harmony
8.	Beliefs and attitudes	Egalitarian Challenging of authority Individuals control their destiny Gender equity	Hierarchical Respect for authority and social order Individuals accept their destiny Different roles for men and women
9.	Mental processes and learning style	Linear, logical, sequential Problem-solving focus	Lateral, holistic, simultaneous Accepting of life’s difficulties
10.	Work habits and practices	Emphasis on task Reward based on individual achievement Work has intrinsic value	Emphasis on relationships Rewards based on seniority, relationships Work is a necessity of life

### 2.2.2 Value Orientations and Cultural Conflict

Of course, not everyone in a society holds the dominant value. Instead, representation follows a normal distribution pattern, with most people clustered near the mean but with a few others spread at various distances around the mean. The range-of-values framework highlighted in Table 2.2.1. provides a way to map and contrast broad cultural differences between various groups. It can also serve as a way to analyze cultural differences. However, we must avoid reducing people to stereotypes based on these value orientations. After all, not all Amish or all Japanese are group-oriented, and although people in small rural communities may be more *collectivistic* (more willing to help their neighbors), we cannot say that all city dwellers ignore those around them.

Intercultural conflicts are often due to differences in value orientations. For example, some people feel strongly that it is important to consider how things were done in the past. For them, history and tradition help provide guidance. Values often conflict among participants in international assistance projects in which future-oriented individuals show a lack of respect for traditional ways of doing things. And conflicts may be exacerbated by power differentials, with some values privileged over others. Organizational communication scholars have pointed out that many U.S. workplaces reward extremely individualistic relationships and “doing” behaviors at the expense of more collaborative (and equally productive) work [4, p. 350].

Geert Hofstede proposed a similar framework based on an extensive cross-cultural study of personnel working in IBM subsidiaries in 53 countries [9, p. 97]. Whereas Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck based their framework on cultural patterns of ethnic communities within the United States [13, p. 129], Hofstede examined value differences among national societies. He identified five areas of common problems [9, p. 72]. Although the problems were shared by different cultural groups, solutions varied from culture to culture. The problem types are identified as follows:

***Power distance: social inequality, including the relationship with authority.***

- Individualism versus collectivism: orientation toward the individual or toward groups.
- Femininity versus masculinity: the social implications of having been born male or female.
- Ways of dealing with uncertainty, controlling aggression, and expressing emotions.

*Long-term versus short-term orientation to life.* Hofstede then investigated how these various cultural values influenced corporate behavior in various countries. One problem type, individualism vs collectivism, appeared in the Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck framework. Let us examine the other problem types more closely.

Power distance refers to the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country distribution of power. Denmark, Israel, and New Zealand, for example, value small power distance. Most people there believe that less hierarchy is better and that power should be used only for legitimate purposes. Therefore, the best corporate leaders in those countries are those who minimize power differences. In societies that value large power distance – for example, Mexico, the Philippines, or India – the decision-making process and the relationships between managers and subordinates are more formalized. In addition, people may be uncomfortable in settings in which hierarchy is unclear or ambiguous.

The masculinity-femininity value is two-dimensional. It refers to (1) the degree to which gender-specific roles are valued and (2) the degree to which cultural groups value so-called masculine values (achievement, ambition, acquisition of material goods) or so-called feminine values (quality of life, service to others, nurturance, support for the unfortunate). IBM employees in Japan, Austria, and Mexico scored high on the masculine values orientation, expressing a general preference for gender-specific roles, with some roles (e.g., main wage earner) better filled by men and other roles (e.g., homemaker, teacher) by women. In contrast, employees in northern Europe (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands) tended to rank higher in feminine values orientation, reflecting more gender equality and a stronger belief in the importance of quality of life for all.

Uncertainty avoidance concerns the degree to which people who feel threatened by ambiguous situations respond by avoiding them or trying to establish more structure to compensate for the uncertainty. Societies that have a weak uncertainty avoidance orientation (Great Britain, Sweden, Hong Kong, and the United States) prefer to limit rules, accept dissent, and take risks. In contrast, those with a strong uncertainty avoidance orientation (Greece, Portugal, and Japan) usually prefer more extensive rules and regulations in organizational settings and seek consensus about goals.

Hofstede's original framework contained only four problem types and was criticized for its predominantly western European bias. In response, a group of Chinese researchers developed and administered a similar, but more Asian-oriented, questionnaire to people in 22 countries around the world

(Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). Their questionnaire included ideas related to Confucian-based thinking. In comparing their framework to Hofstede's, they concluded that there was, in fact, a great deal of overlap. Indeed, the three dimensions of individualism-collectivism, power distance, and masculinity-femininity seem to be universal. However, uncertainty avoidance seems to be more relevant to Western societies. A fifth dimension that emerged from the Asian study and that seems to apply to both Eastern and Western societies is the long-term versus short-term orientation, which reflects a society's search for virtue or truth [9, p. 74].

Those with a short-term orientation are concerned with possessing the truth (reflected in the Western religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), focus on quick results in endeavors, and recognize social pressure to conform. Those with a long-term orientation tend to respect the demands of virtue (reflected in Eastern religions such as Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Shintoism); to focus more on thrift, perseverance, and tenacity in whatever they attempt; and to be willing to subordinate themselves to a larger purpose.

The differences-similarities dialectic reminds us that, although people may differ with respect to specific value orientations, they also may hold other value orientations in common. For example, people may have different views on the importance of individual or group loyalty but share a belief in the essential goodness of human nature and find similarity in religious faith and practice. Finally, a static-dynamic dialectic reminds us that, although group-related values tend to be relatively consistent, people are dynamic, and their behavior varies contextually. Thus, they may be more or less individualistic or group-oriented depending on the context.

### *2.2.3 How Communication Influences Culture*

Culture not only influences communication but also is enacted through, and so is influenced by, communication. Scholars of cultural communication describe how various aspects of culture are enacted in speech communities in situ, that is, in contexts. They seek to understand communication patterns that are situated socially and give voice to cultural identity. Specifically, they examine how the cultural forms and frames (terms, rituals, myths, and social dramas) are enacted through structuring norms of conversation and interaction. The patterns are not connected in a deterministic way to any cultural group [7, p. 41].

Interpretive approach to cultural studies sometimes uses cultural values

as a way to explain cultural patterns. Kristine Fitch conducted a cross-cultural study comparing how people in Bogota, Colombia, and Boulder, Colorado, got others to do what they wanted, a sociolinguistic form known as a directive. Fitch found that directives were seen as a problem in both societies, but as different kinds of problems that reflected and reinforced different value orientations. Individuals in Boulder seemed to think that telling someone what to do should be approached carefully so as not to infringe on that person's autonomy – reflecting a value of individualism. In Bogota, where collectivistic values reign, directives must be negotiated within relationships; there must be enough *confianza* (respect) or authority that one person is required by the social hierarchy to do the other's bidding [5, p. 191]. As you can see, cultural values can be used to show how culture influences communication or to explain how communication reinforces cultural values.

### **2.3 The Relationship between Communication and Context**

Context typically is created by the physical or social aspects of the situation in which communication occurs. For example, communication may occur in a classroom, a bar, or a church; in each case, the physical characteristics of the setting influence the communication. People communicate differently depending on the context. Context is neither static nor objective, and it can be multilayered. Context may consist of the social, political, and historical structures in which the communication occurs. Not surprisingly, the social context is determined on the societal level. It includes those forces that attempt to change or retain existing social structures and relations. For example, to understand the acts of protesters who throw blood or red paint on people who wear fur coats, we must consider the political context. In this case, the political context would be the ongoing informal debates about animal rights and cruelty to animals farmed for their pelts. In other locales or other eras, the protesters' communicative acts would not make sense or would be interpreted in other ways.

We also need to examine the historical context of communication. For example, the meaning of a college degree depends in part on the particular school's reputation. Why does a degree from Harvard communicate a different meaning than a degree from an obscure state university? Harvard's reputation relies on history – the large endowments given over the years, the important persons who have attended and graduated, and so forth.

## 2.4 The Relationship between Communication and Power

Power is pervasive in communication interactions, although it is not always evident or obvious how power influences communication or what kinds of meaning are constructed. We often think of communication between individuals as being between equals, but this is rarely the case. As communication scholar Mark Orbe describes it, “In every society a social hierarchy exists that privileges some groups over others. Those groups that function at the top of the social hierarchy determine to a great extent the communication system of the entire society” [16, p. 8].

Orbe goes on to describe how those people in power, consciously or unconsciously, create and maintain communication systems that reflect, reinforce, and promote their own ways of clunking and communicating. There are two levels of group-related power: 1) the primary dimensions – age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities, race, and sexual orientation – which are more permanent in nature; 2) the secondary dimensions – educational background, geographic location, marital status, and socioeconomic status – which are more changeable. The point is that the dominant communication systems ultimately impede those who do not share the systems. The communication style most valued in college classrooms, for example, emphasizes public speaking and competition (because the first person who raises his or her hand gets to speak). Not all students are comfortable with this style, but those who take to it naturally are more likely to succeed.

Power also comes from social institutions and the roles individuals occupy in those institutions. For example, in the classroom, there is temporary inequality, with instructors having more power. After all, they set the course requirements, give grades, determine who speaks, and so on. In this case, the power rests not with the individual instructor but with the role that he or she is enacting.

Power is dynamic. It is not a simple one-way proposition. For example, students may leave a classroom at any time during a class period, or they may carry on a conversation while the professor is speaking – thus weakening the professor’s power over them. They may also refuse to accept a grade and file a grievance with the university administration to have the grade changed. Further, the typical power relationship between instructor and student often is not perpetuated beyond the classroom. However, some issues of power play out in a broader social context. For example, in contemporary society, cosmetic companies have a vested interest in a particular image of female beauty that involves purchasing and using makeup. Advertisements encourage

women to feel compelled to participate in this cultural definition. Resistance can be expressed by a refusal to go along with the dominant cultural standards of beauty.

Dominant cultural groups attempt to perpetuate their positions of privilege in many ways. However, subordinate groups can resist this domination in many ways too. Cultural groups can use political and legal means to maintain or resist domination, but these are not the only means of invoking power relations. Groups can negotiate their various relations to culture through economic boycotts, strikes, and sit-ins. Individuals can subscribe (or not subscribe) to specific magazines or newspapers, change TV channels, write letters to government officials, or take action in other ways to change the influence of power.

Power is complex, especially in relation to institutions or the social structure. Some inequities, such as in gender, class, or race, are more rigid than those created by temporary roles such as student or teacher. The power relations between student and teacher, for example, are more complex if the teacher is a female challenged by male students. We really can not understand intercultural communication without considering the power dynamics in the interaction. A dialectical perspective looks at the dynamic and interrelated ways in which culture, communication, context, and power intersect in intercultural communication interactions.

From a communication perspective, it might not be at all clear that an intercultural struggle had taken place. None of the traditional signals of conflict were manifested: no raised voices, no harsh words, no curtness. Indeed, the exchange seemed polite and courteous. From a cultural perspective, however, with various contexts and power differentials in mind, a different view of this intercultural interaction emerges. Belgium is a nation largely divided by two cultures, Flemish and Walloon, although there is a small German-speaking minority in the far eastern part of the country. Belgium is officially trilingual (Dutch, French, German); that is, each language is the official language in its territory. Dutch is the official language in Flanders, and French is the official language in Wallonia, except in the eastern part, where German is the official language. The only part of Belgium that is officially bilingual is the "Brussels-Capital Region". There are many historical contexts to consider here. For example, Brussels is historically a Flemish city, located in Flanders (but near the border with Wallonia). Also, the French language dominated in Belgium from the time it gained independence from the Netherlands in 1830 until the early XX century when Flemish gained parity.

There are social and economic contexts to consider as well. Since the 1960s, Flanders has been more economically powerful than Wallonia. The Brussels-Capital Region, despite being in Flanders, has become increasingly French-speaking; some estimates place the current percentage of francophones at 85 – 90%. And nearly 30% of Brussels residents are foreigners, most of whom are francophones. The increasing migration of city dwellers to the suburbs has also caused tensions, because a number of communes located in Flanders now have a francophone majority. Although the Brussels-Capital Region is officially bilingual, this is the site of a number of struggles between French and Dutch.

## SUMMARY

In this chapter, we considered the four building blocks of intercultural communication: culture, communication, context, and power. Culture can be viewed as deep-seated patterns of learned, shared beliefs and perception; as deeply felt, commonly intelligible, and widely accessible patterns of symbolic meaning; and / or as contested zones of meaning. Communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed. The relationship between culture and communication is complex. Culture influences communication and is enacted through communication; in turn, communication is a way of contesting and resisting the dominant culture. The context – the physical and social setting in which communication occurs, or the larger political, social, and historical environment – affects that communication. Finally, power is pervasive and plays an enormous, though often hidden, role in intercultural communication interactions. Power relationships, determined largely by social institutions and roles, influence communication.

## PRACTICE

- **Answer the Following Questions:**
1. How have notions of high and low culture influenced people's perspectives on culture?
  2. How do the values of a cultural group influence communication with members of other cultural groups?
  3. What techniques do people use to assert power in communication interactions?
  4. How is culture a contested site?

➤ **Critical Thinking Work:**

1) *Cultural Values*. Look for advertisements in newspapers and popular magazines. Analyze the ads to see if you can identify the social values to which they appeal.

2) *Culture: Deeply Felt or Contested Zone?* Analyze the lyrics of songs you listen to and try to identify patterns in the songs. Then think about your own cultural position and discuss which framework – the one proposed by cultural ethnographies (culture as deeply felt) or the one proposed by cultural studies (culture as a contested zone) – more adequately articulates the connection between culture and communication.

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# IDENTITY AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

## Overview

Identity serves as a bridge between culture and communication. We communicate our identity to others, and we learn who we are through communication. It is through communication – with our family, friends, and others – that we come to understand ourselves and form our identity. Issues of identity are particularly important in intercultural interactions. Conflicts can arise, however, when there are sharp differences between who we think we are and who others think we are. In this chapter, we describe a dialectical approach to understanding identity, one that includes perspectives from psychology and communication. We then turn to the development of specific aspects of our social and cultural identity including those related to gender, race or ethnicity, class, religion, and nationality. We describe how these identities are often related to problematic communication – stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. We also examine how various identities develop, including an increasingly important identity of multicultural individuals. Finally, we discuss the relationship among identity, language, and communication.

Topics covered include: Dialectical Approach to Identity; Social and Cultural Identities; Identity, Stereotypes and Prejudice; Identity Development; Identity and Language; Identity and Communication.

*Key words: Age vs Class Identity, Culture Brokers, Discrimination, Ethnic vs Gender Identity, Global Nomads, Majority / Minority / Model / National / Personal / Racial / Regional / Religious / Spiritual Identity, Stereotypes.*

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### 3.1 A Dialectical Approach to Understanding Identity

How do we come to understand who we are? What are the characteristics of identity? In this chapter, we employ both the static-dynamic and the personal-contextual dialectic in answering these questions. There are three main contemporary perspectives on identity (See Table 3.1.1.). The

social psychological perspective views the self in a static fashion, in relation to the community to which a person belongs – including comparative studies of identity. The communication perspective is more dynamic and recognizes the role of interaction with others as a factor in the development of the self. Finally, the critical perspective views identity even more dynamically – as the result of contexts quite distant from the individual [13, p. 327]. As you read this chapter, keep in mind that the relationship between identity and intercultural interaction involves both static and dynamic, and both personal and contextual, elements.

**Table 3.1.1** Three Perspectives on Identity and Communication

<b>Social Psychological</b>	<b>Communicational</b>	<b>Critical</b>
Identity created by self (by relating to groups)	Identity formed through communication with others	Identity shaped through social, historical forces
Emphasizes individualized, familial, and spiritual self (cross-cultural perspective)	Emphasizes avowal and ascribed dimensions	Emphasizes contexts and resisting ascribed identity

### *3.1.1 A Social Psychological Perspective*

The social psychological perspective emphasizes that identity is created in part by the self and in part in relation to group membership. According to this perspective, the self is composed of multiple identities, and these notions of identity are culture bound. How, then, do we come to understand who we are? That depends very much on our cultural background. According to Western psychologists like Erik Erikson, our identities are self-created, formed through identity conflicts and crises, through identity diffusion and confusion [14, p. 149]. Occasionally, we may need a moratorium, a time-out, in the process. Our identities are created not in one smooth, orderly process but in spurts, with some events providing insights into who we are and long periods intervening during which we may not think much about ourselves or our identities.

***Cross-Cultural Perspectives.*** In the United States, young people are often encouraged to develop a strong sense of identity, to “know who they are”, to be independent and self-reliant, which reflects an emphasis on the cultural value of individualism. However, this is not the case in many other

countries, in which there is a more collectivistic orientation. Cross-cultural psychologist Alan Roland has identified three universal aspects of identity present in all individuals: 1) an individualized identity; 2) a familial identity; 3) a spiritual identity. Cultural groups usually emphasize one or two of these dimensions and downplay the other(s). Let us see how this works. The *individualized identity* is the sense of an independent “I”, with sharp distinctions between the self and others. It is emphasized by most groups in the United States, where young people are encouraged to be independent and self-reliant at a fairly early age – by adolescence. In contrast, the *familial identity*, evident in many collectivistic cultures, stresses the importance of emotional connectedness to and interdependence with others. It also involves a strong identification with the reputation and honor of others in hierarchical groups. For example, in many African and Asian societies, and in some cultural groups in the United States, children are encouraged and expected to form strong, interdependent bonds, first with the family and later with other groups.

Communication scholar Ge Gao contrasts the Western idea of the independent self with the Chinese notion, of the interdependent self: “In the Western world, an “individual” signifies an independent entity with free will, emotions and personality. An individual, however, is not conceptualized in this way in the Chinese culture... The incomplete nature of the self is supported by both Taoism and Confucianism even though they differ in many fundamental ways. Taoism defines self as part of nature, Self and nature together complete a harmonious relationship. Self in the Confucian sense is defined by a person’s surrounding relations, which often are derived from kinship networks and supported by cultural values such as filial piety, loyalty, dignity, mid integrity” [7, p. 83 – 84].

In these societies educational, occupational and even marital choices are made by individuals with extensive family guidance. The goal of the developed identity is not to become independent from others, but rather to gain an understanding of and cultivate one’s place in the complex web of interdependence with others: “The other-orientation thus is key to an interdependent self Congruous with the notion of an interdependent self, the Chinese self also needs to be recognized, defined, and completed by others. The self’s orientation to others’ needs, wishes, and expectations is essential to the development of the Chinese self” [ibid., p. 84].

In addition, the understanding of the familial self may be more connected to others and situation bound. According to studies comparing North Americans’ and East Asians’ senses of identity, when asked to describe

themselves, the North Americans give more abstract, situation-free descriptions (“I am kind”, “I am outgoing”, “I am quiet in the morning”), whereas East Asians tend to describe their memberships and relationships to others rather than themselves (“I am a mother”, “I am the youngest child in my family”, “I am a member of tennis club”) [14, p. 150].

The third dimension is the *spiritual identity*, the inner spiritual reality that is realized and experienced to varying extents by people through a number of outlets. For example, the spiritual self in India is expressed through a structure of gods and goddess and through rituals and mediation. In Japan, the realization of the spiritual self tends more toward aesthetic modes, such as the tea ceremony and flower arranging.

Clearly, identity development does not occur in the same way in every society. The notion of identity in India, Japan, and some Latino / and Asian American groups emphasizes the integration of the familial and the spiritual self, but very little of the more individualized self. Groups play an important part in the development of all these dimensions of self. As we are growing up, we identify with many groups, based on gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, religion, and nationality. And depending on our cultural background, we may develop tight or looser bonds with these groups. By comparing ourselves and others with members of these groups, we come to understand who we are.

### 3.1.2 *A Communication Perspective*

The communication perspective builds on the notions of identity formation discussed previously but takes a more dynamic turn. That is, it emphasizes that identities are negotiated, co-created, reinforced, and challenged through communication with others; they emerge when messages are exchanged between persons [11, p. 5]. This means that presenting our identities is not a simple process. Does everyone see you as you see yourself? Probably not. To understand how these images may conflict, the concepts of avowal and ascription are useful.

Avowal is the process by which individuals portray themselves, whereas ascription is the process by which others attribute identities to them. Sometimes these processes are congruent. Different identities are emphasized depending on the individuals we are communicating with and the topics of conversation. For example, in a social conversation with someone we are attracted to, our gender or sexual orientation identity is probably more important to us than other identities (ethnicity, nationality). And our

communication is probably most successful when the person we are talking with confirms the identity we think is most important at the moment. In this sense, competent intercultural communication affirms the identity that is most salient in any conversation. For example, if you are talking with a professor about a research project, the conversation will be most competent if the interaction confirms the salient identities (professor and student) rather than other identities (e.g., those based on gender, religion, or ethnicity).

Central to the communication perspective is the idea that our identities are expressed communicatively – in core symbols, labels, and norms. Core symbols (or cultural values) tell us about the fundamental beliefs and the central concepts that define a particular identity. Communication scholar Michael Hecht and his colleagues have identified the contrasting core symbols associated with various ethnic identities [11]. For example, core symbols of African American identity may be *positivity, sharing, uniqueness, realism, and assertiveness*. Individualism is often cited as a core symbol of European American identity. Core symbols are not only expressed but also created and shaped through communication. Labels are a category of core symbols; they are the terms we use to refer to particular aspects of our own and others' identities.

As far as such values as individualism / collectivism concerned, private interests have always been above the community ones. Ukrainians regard themselves as individualists, which caused a common belief about their individualistic character. Every Ukrainian could not do without his individual estate (a house, farm and a big piece of fertile land) where he worked most part of the day. Thus, individualism is one of the oldest key archetypes of Ukrainian culture, which evidently refers it to the European cultural mode.

Finally, some norms of behavior are associated with particular identities. For example, women may express their gender identity by being more concerned about safety than men. They may take more precautions when they go out at night, such as walking in groups. People might express their religious identity by participating in activities such as going to church or Bible study meetings.

### 3.1.3 A Critical Perspective

**Contextual Identity Formation.** The driving force behind a critical approach is the attempt to understand identity formation within the contexts of history, economics, politics, and discourse. To grasp this notion, ask yourself: How and why do people identify with particular groups and not others? What

choices are available to them? We are all subject to being put into identity categories, or contexts, even before we are born. Many parents ponder a name for their unborn child, who is already part of society through his or her relationship to the parents. Some children have a good start at being, say, Jewish or Chicana before they are even born. We cannot ignore the ethnic, socioeconomic, or racial positions from which we start our identity journeys.

To illustrate, French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan offers the example of two children on a train that stops at a station. Each child looks out a window and identifies the location: one says that they are in front of the door for the ladies' bathroom; the other says they are in front of the gentlemen's. Both children see and use labels from their seating position to describe where they are; they are on the same train, but they describe their locations differently. Just as we are never "out" of position, we are never "outside" of language and its system that helps to define us. And, like the two children, where we are positioned – by language and by society – influences how and what we see and, most importantly, what it means. Although the labels seem to refer to the same group of people, the political and cultural identities of those so labeled are different. Indeed, the contexts in which the terms developed and were used vary considerably.

## **3.2 Social and Cultural Identities**

People can identify with a multitude of groups. This chapter describes some of the major types of groups.

### *3.2.1 Gender Identity*

We often begin life with gendered identities. When newborns arrive in our culture, they may be greeted with clothes and blankets in either blue for boys or pink for girls. To establish a gender identity for the newborn, visitors may ask if the baby is a boy or a girl. But gender is not the same as biological sex. This distinction is important in understanding how our views on biological sex influence gender identities.

What it means to be a man or a woman in our society is heavily influenced by cultural notions. For example, some activities are considered more masculine or more feminine. Thus, whether people hunt or sew or fight or read poetry can transform the ways that others view them. Similarly, the programs that people watch on TV – soap operas, football games, and so on – affect how they socialize with others, contributing to gendered contexts. As culture changes, so does the notion of what we idealize as masculine or

feminine. Cultural historian Gail Bederman observes: “Even the popular imagery of a perfect male body changed. In the 1860s, the middle class had seen the ideal male body as lean and wiry. By the 1890s, however, an ideal male body required physical bulk and well-defined muscles” [2, p. 15].

In this sense, the male body, as well as the female body, can be understood not in its “natural” state but in relation to idealized notions of masculinity and femininity. To know that this man or that woman is particularly good-looking requires an understanding of the gendered notions of attractiveness in a culture. Our notions of masculinity and femininity change continually, driven by commercial interests and other cultural forces. For example, there is a major push now to market cosmetics to men. However, advertisers acknowledge that this requires sensitivity to men’s ideas about makeup. Unlike women, most men do not want to talk about makeup, do not want to go out in public to shop for makeup and do not know how to use makeup. The first barrier is getting men to department stores or specialty shops to buy products.

Our expression of gender not only communicates who we think we are but also constructs a sense of who we want to be. Initially, we learn what masculinity and femininity mean in our culture. Then, through various media, we monitor how these notions sift and negotiate to communicate our gendered selves to others. Consider, for example, the contemporary trend in the whole Europe for women to have very full lips. If one’s lips are not naturally full, there is always the option of getting collagen injections or having other body fat surgically inserted into the lips. In contrast, full lips are not considered at all attractive in Japan. The dynamic character of gender reflects its close connection to culture. Society has many images of masculinity and femininity; we do not all seek to look and act according to a single ideal. At the same time, we do seek to communicate our gendered identities as part of who we are.

Gender identity is also demonstrated by communication style. Women’s and men’s different communication styles sometimes lead to misunderstanding and conflict. For instance, sometimes women make sympathetic noise in response to what a friend says, whereas men say nothing out of respect for the other person’s independence. And women may interpret men’s silence as not caring. Another difference arises in storytelling. Men tend to be more linear in telling stories; women tend to give more details and offer tangential information which men interpret as an inability to get to the point. Men and women also often misinterpret relationship talk. Women may express more interest in the relationship process and may feel better simply

discussing it. Men who are problem-solving oriented may see little point in discussing something if nothing is identified as needing fixing [14, p. 53].

### 3.2.2 *Age Identity*

As we age, we also play into cultural notions of how individuals of our age should act, look, behave; that is we develop an age identity [13, p. 303]. As we grow older, we sometimes look at the clothes displayed in store windows or advertised in newspapers and magazines and feel that we are either too old or too young for that “look”. These feelings stem from an understanding of what age means and how we identify with people of that age. Some people feel old at 30; others feel young at 40 or 50. There is nothing inherent in age that tells us we are young or old. Rather our notions of age and youth are all based on cultural conventions. These same cultural conventions also suggest that it is inappropriate to engage in a romantic relationship with someone who is too old or too young.

Our notions of age often change as we grow older ourselves. When we are quite young, someone at a university seems old to us; when we go to university, we do not feel so old. Yet the relative nature of age is only one part of the identity process. Social constructions of age also play a role. Different generations often have different philosophies, values and ways of speaking. Generational differences can lead to conflict in the workplace. For example, young people who entered the job market during the “dot com” years have little corporate loyalty and think nothing of changing jobs when a better opportunity comes along. This can irritate *Baby Boomer workers*, who emphasize the importance of demonstrating corporate loyalty, of “paying one’s dues” to the establishment while gradually working one’s way “up the corporate ladder” [ibid.]. Although not all people in any generation are alike, the attempt to find trends across generations reflects our interest in understanding age identity.

### 3.2.3 *Racial and Ethnic Identities*

***Racial Identity.*** Race consciousness, or racial identity, is largely a modern phenomenon. In the United States today, the issue of race is both controversial and pervasive. It is the topic of many public discussions, from television talk shows to talk radio. Yet many people feel uncomfortable talking about it or think it should not be an issue in daily life. Racial categories are based to some extent on physical characteristics, but they are also constructed in fluid social contexts. It probably makes more sense to talk

about racial formation than racial categories, thereby casting race as a complex of social meanings rather than as a fixed and objective concept. How people construct these meanings and think about race influences the ways in which they communicate.

***Ethnic Identity.*** In contrast to racial identity, ethnic identity may be seen as a set of ideas about one's own ethnic group membership. It typically includes several dimensions: 1) self-identification; 2) knowledge about the ethnic culture (traditions, customs, values, and behaviors); 3) feelings about belonging to a particular ethnic group. Ethnic identity often involves a shared sense of origin and history, which may link ethnic groups to distant cultures in Asia, Europe, Latin America, or other locations [14, p. 160]. Having an ethnic identity means experiencing a sense of belonging to a particular group and knowing something about the shared experience of group members. For some U.S. residents, ethnicity is a specific and relevant concept. They see themselves as connected to an origin outside the United States – as Mexican American, Japanese American, Welsh American, and so on – or to some region prior to its being absorbed into the United States – Navajo, Hopi, and so on. As most African American students say, “I have always known my history and the history of my people in this country. I will always be first African American and then American. Who I am is based on my heritage”. For others, ethnicity is a vague concept. They see themselves as “American” and reject the notion of hyphenated Americans [ibid.].

***Racial vs Ethnic Identity.*** Scholars dispute whether racial and ethnic identities are similar or different. Some suggest that ethnic identity is constructed by both selves and others but that racial identity is constructed solely by others. They stress as well that race overrides ethnicity in the way people classify others [4, p. 63]. The *American Anthropological Association* has suggested that the U.S. government phase out the use of the term *race* in the collection of federal data because the concept has no scientific validity or utility. On the one hand, discussions about ethnicity tend to assume a “melting pot” perspective on U.S. society. On the other hand, discussions about race as shaped by U.S. history allow us to talk about racism. If we never talk about race, but only about ethnicity, can we consider the effects and influences of racism?

***Bounded vs Dominant Identities.*** One way to sort out the relationship between ethnicity and race is to differentiate between bounded and dominant (or normative) identities [6, p. 24]. Bounded cultures are characterized by groups that are specific but not dominant. For most White people, it is easy to comprehend the sense of belonging in a bounded group (e.g., an ethnic

group). Clearly, for example, being Amish means following the *Ordnung* (community rules). However, what it means to belong to the dominant, or normative, culture is more elusive. Normative means “setting the norm for a society”. In the U.S. Whites clearly are the normative group in that they set the standards for appropriate and effective behavior. Although it can be difficult for White people to define what a normative White identity is, this does not deny its existence or importance.

Our sense of racial or ethnic identity develops over time, in stages, and through communication with others. These stages seem to reflect our growing understanding of who we are and depend to some extent on the groups we belong to. Many ethnic or racial groups share the experience of oppression. In response, they may generate attitudes and behaviors consistent with a natural internal struggle to develop a strong sense of group identity and self-identity. For many cultural groups, these strong identities ensure their survival.

### 3.2.4 *Religious Identity*

Religious identity can be an important dimension of many people’s identities, as well as an important site of intercultural conflict. Often, religious identity is conflated with racial or ethnic identity, which makes it difficult to view religious identity simply in terms of belonging to a particular religion. For example, when someone says, “I am Jewish”, does it mean that he practices Judaism? That he views Jewish identity as an ethnic identity? Or when someone says, “She has a Jewish last name”, is it a statement that recognizes religious identity? With a historical view, we can see Jews as a racial group, an ethnic group, and a religious group.

Drawing distinctions between various identities – racial, ethnic, class, national, and regional – can be problematic. For example, Italians and Irish are often viewed as Catholics, and Episcopalians are frequently seen as belonging to the upper classes. Issues of religion and ethnicity have come to the forefront in the war against Al-Queda and other militant groups. Although those who carried out the attacks against the Pentagon and the World Trade Center were Muslims and Arabs, it is hardly true that all Muslims are Arabs or that all Arabs are Muslims [2, p. 48].

Religious differences have been at the root of contemporary conflicts from the Middle East to Northern Ireland, and from India and Pakistan to Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the United States, religious conflicts caused the Mormons to flee the Midwest for Utah in the mid-XIX century. And, more recently, religious conflicts have become very real for some Arab Americans

as the U.S. government presses the war against terrorism, with many of those people subject to suspicion if not persecution. And militant Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere see their struggle against the U.S. as a very serious endeavor and are willing to die for their religious beliefs.

Conflicts arise, however, when the religious beliefs of some individuals are imposed on others who may not share those beliefs. For example, some Jews see the predominance of Christmas trees and Christian crosses as an affront to their religious beliefs.

People in some religions communicate and mark their religious differences by their clothing. For example, Hassidic Jews wear traditional, somber clothing, and Muslim women are often veiled according to the Muslim guideline of female modesty. Of course, most religions are not identified by clothing. For example, you may not know if someone is Buddhist, Catholic, Lutheran, or atheist based upon the way he or she dresses. Because religious identities are less salient, everyday interactions may not invoke religious identity.

### 3.2.5 *Class Identity*

We do not often think about socioeconomic class as an important part of our identity. Yet scholars have shown that class often plays an important role in shaping our reactions to and interpretations of culture. For example, French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu studied the various responses to art, sports, and other cultural activities of people in different French social classes. According to Bourdieu, working-class people prefer to watch soccer whereas upper-class individuals like tennis, and middle-class people prefer photographic art whereas upper-class individuals favor less representational art. As these findings reveal, class distinctions are real and can be linked to actual behavioral practices and preferences.

English professor Paul Fussell shows how similar signs of class identity operate in U.S. society. According to Fussell, the magazines we read, the food we eat, and the words we use often reflect our social class position. At some level, we recognize these class distinctions, but we consider it impolite to ask directly about a person's class background. Therefore, we may use communication strategies to place others in a class hierarchy. Unfortunately, these strategies do not always yield accurate information. For example, people may try to guess your class background by the food you eat. Some food is seen as "rich folk's food" – for instance, lamb, white asparagus, artichokes, goose, and caviar. Another strategy that people may use to guess a person's

class background is to ask which University that person went.

The majority of people or normative class (the middle class) tend not to think about class, whereas those in the working class are often reminded that their communication styles and lifestyle choices are not the norm. In this respect, class is like race. For example, terms like *trailer trash* or *white trash* show the negative connotations associated with people who are not middle class [14, p. 72].

A central assumption of the *American Dream* is that, with hard work and persistence, individuals can improve their class standing, even in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. For example, census data show that the disparity between top and bottom income levels is actually increasing. In 1970, households in the top 20% of the income distribution earned about 44% of all income; by 1998, this figure had increased to 50%. The share of total income received by households in every other income group declined over the same period (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1999). Scholar Donna Lanston explains: “In the myth of the classless society, ambition and intelligence alone are responsible for success. The myth conceals the existence of a class society, which serves many functions. One of the main ways it keeps the working-class and poor locked into a class-based system in a position of servitude is by cruelly creating false hope ... that they can have different opportunities in life” [12, p. 101]. Lanston goes on to suggest that another outcome of this myth is that, when poverty persists, the poor are blamed. They are poor because of something they did or did not do – for example, they were lazy or did not try hard enough, or they were unlucky. It is a classic case of blaming the victim. And the media often reinforce these notions. As Leonardo DiCaprio’s character in the movie *Titanic* shows us, upward mobility is easy enough – merely a matter of being opportunistic, charming and a little bit lucky.

The point is that, although class identity is not as readily apparent as, say, gender identity, it still influences our perceptions of and communication with others. Race, class, and sometimes gender identity are interrelated. For example, statistically speaking, being born African American, poor, and female increases one’s chances of remaining in poverty. But, of course, race and class are not synonymous. There are many poor Whites, and there are increasing numbers of wealthy African Americans [14, p. 164]. In this sense, these multiple identities are interrelated but not identical.

### 3.2.6 *National Identity*

Among many identities, we also have a national identity, which should not be confused with racial or ethnic identity. Nationality, unlike racial or ethnic identity, refers to one's legal status in relation to a nation.

Contemporary nationhood struggles are being played out as Quebec attempts to separate from Canada and as Corsica and Tahiti attempt to separate from France. Sometimes nations disappear from the political map but persist in the social imagination and eventually reemerge, such as Ukraine, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. Other times national identity may shift in significant ways, as in Ukraine after gaining its independence in August 1991, when ideas about national identity seemed to incorporate increased expressions of patriotism.

In sum, people have various ways of thinking about nationality, and they sometimes confuse nationality and ethnicity. Thus, we have overheard students asking minority students, "What is your nationality?" when they actually meant, "What is your ethnicity?" This confusion can lead to – and perhaps reflects – a lack of understanding about differences between, say, Armenian Ukrainians (ethnic group in Ukraine) and Armenians (nationality group). It can also tend to alienate Armenian Ukrainians and others who have been in Ukraine for several generations but are still perceived as foreigners.

### 3.2.7 *Regional Identity*

Closely related to nationality is the notion of regional identity. Many regions of the world have separate but vital and important cultural identities. The Scottish Highlands is a region of northern Scotland that is distinctly different from the Lowlands, and regional identity remains strong in the Highlands. Here in Ukraine, regional identities remain important, but perhaps less so as the nation moves toward homogeneity. For instance, Galician identity in the West of Ukraine is very strong, it is one of the strongest regional identities in Ukraine and it is deeply rooted in the general Ukrainian identity. Hence, in Galicia to be a Galician and Ukrainian is almost the same. Whereas to be a Donbas person does not necessarily belong to Ukrainian, Russian or some other nation. Although some regional identities can fuel national independence movements, they more often reflect cultural identities that affirm distinctive cuisines, dress, manners, and language. These identities may become important in intercultural communication situations. For example, suppose you meet someone who is Chinese. Whether the person is from Beijing, Hong Kong, or elsewhere in China may raise important

communication issues. After all, Mandarin is not understood by Cantonese speakers, although both are dialects of the Chinese language. Indeed, there are many dialects in China, and they certainly are not understood by all other Chinese speakers.

What are the implications for identity and intercultural communication? It could mean that people in these areas have more opportunities for understanding and practicing intercultural communication, and so benefit from the diversity. Or they may withdraw into their own groups and protect their racial and ethnic “borders”.

### 3.2.8 *Personal Identity*

Many issues of identity are closely tied to our notions of self. Each of us has a personal identity, but it may not be unified or coherent. A dialectical perspective allows us to see identity in a more complex way. We are who we think we are; at the same time, however, contextual and external forces constrain and influence our self-perceptions. We have many identities and they can conflict. For example, according to the American communication scholar Victoria Chen, some Chinese American women feel caught between the traditional values of their parents’ culture and their own desire to be Americanized. From the parents’ point of view, the daughters are never Chinese enough. From the perspective of many people within the dominant culture, though, it is difficult to relate to these Chinese American women simply as “American women, born and reared in this society” [14, p. 231]. The dialectical tension related to issues of identity for these women reveals the strain between feeling obligated to behave in traditional ways at home and yet holding a Western notion of gender equality. Our personal identities are important to us, and we try to communicate them to others. We are more or less successful depending on how others respond to us. We use the various ways that identity is constructed to portray ourselves as we want others to see us.

## 3.3 **Identity, Stereotypes, and Prejudice**

The identity characteristics described previously sometimes form the basis for stereotypes, prejudice, and racism. The origins of these have both individual and contextual elements. To make sense out of the overwhelming amount of information we receive, we necessarily categorize and generalize, sometimes relying on stereotypes – widely held beliefs about some group. Stereotypes help us know what to expect from others. They may be positive or

negative. Even positive stereotypes can be damaging in that they create unrealistic expectations for individuals. Simply because someone is Jewish Ukrainian (or pretty, or smart) does not mean that he or she will excel in school or be outgoing and charming. Stereotypes become particularly detrimental when they are negative and are held rigidly. Research has shown that, once adopted, stereotypes are difficult to discard. In fact, people tend to remember information that supports a stereotype but may not retain information that contradicts it [9, p. 40].

We pick up stereotypes in many ways, including from the media. As an American expert in cross-cultural studies admits, in TV shows and movies, older people often are portrayed as needing help, and Asian Americans, African Americans, or Latino / as rarely play leading, assertive roles [14, p. 168]. Communication scholar Bishetta Merritt analyzes portrayals of African American women on television shows and decries the lack of multidimensional roles. She identifies the kinds of roles that perpetuate stereotypes: “Portrayals that receive little or no attention today are the background characters that merely serve as scenery on television programs. These characters include the homeless person on the street, the hotel lobby prostitute, or the drug user making a buy from her dealer. They may not be named in the credits or have recurring roles, but their mere appearance can have an impact on the consciousness of the viewer and, as a result, an impact on the imagery of the African American women” [16, p. 52].

Stereotypes can also develop out of negative experiences. If we have unpleasant encounters with people, we may generalize that unpleasantness to include all members of that group, whatever group characteristic we focus on (e.g., race, gender, or sexual orientation). This was demonstrated repeatedly after the attacks of September 11, 2001. Many people of Middle Eastern descent became victims of stereotyping, particularly when traveling.

Because stereotypes often operate at an unconscious level and so are persistent, people have to work consciously to reject them. First, they must recognize the stereotype, and then they must obtain information to counteract it. This is not easy because, as noted previously, we tend to “see” behavior that fits our stereotypes and to ignore that which doesn’t. For example, if you think that most women are bad drivers, you will tend to notice when a female motorist makes a mistake but to ignore bad male driving. To undo this stereotype, you have to be very vigilant and do something that is not “natural” – to be very conscious of how you “see” and categorize bad driving, and to note bad driving by both males and females.

*Prejudice* is a negative attitude toward a cultural group based on little

or no experience. It is a prejudgment of sorts. Whereas stereotypes tell us what a group is like, prejudice tells us how we are likely to feel about that group. Scholars disagree somewhat on the origins of prejudice and its relationship to stereotyping. Prejudice may arise from personal needs to feel positive about our own groups and negative about others, or it may arise from perceived or real threats. The English scholar H. Tajfel has shown that tension between cultural groups and negative previous contact, along with status inequalities and perceived threats, can lead to prejudice.

Why do people hold prejudices? Psychologist Richard Brislin suggests that, just as stereotyping arises from normal cognitive functioning, holding prejudices may serve understandable functions. These functions may not excuse prejudice, but they do help us to understand why prejudice is so widespread. He identifies four such functions:

- **utilitarian function:** people hold certain prejudices because they can lead to rewards. For example, if your friends or family hold prejudices toward certain groups, it will be easier for you simply to share those attitudes, rather than risk rejection by contradicting their attitudes;
- **ego-defensive function:** people hold certain prejudices because they do not want to believe unpleasant things about themselves. For example, if either of us (*Tetiana or Irina*) is not a very good teacher, it will be useful for us to hold negative stereotypes about students, such as that they are lazy and do not work hard. In this way, we can avoid confronting the real problem – our lack of teaching skills. The same kind of thing happens in the workplace. It is easier for people to stereotype women and minorities as unfit for jobs than to confront their own lack of skill or qualifications for a job;
- **value-expressive function:** people hold certain prejudices because they serve to reinforce aspects of life that are highly valued. Religious attitudes often function in this way. Some people are prejudiced against certain religious groups because they see themselves as holding beliefs in the one true God, and part of their doctrine is the belief that others are wrong;
- **knowledge function:** people hold certain prejudices because such attitudes allow them to organize and structure their world in a way that makes sense to them – in the same way that stereotypes help us organize our world. For example, if you believe that members of a certain group are irresponsible, then you do not have to think very much when meeting someone from that group in a work situation.

You already know what they are like and so can react to them more automatically [14, p.170 – 171].

Prejudices can serve several of these functions over the life span. Thus, children may develop a certain prejudice to please their parents (utilitarian) and continue to hold the prejudice because it helps define who they are (value-expressive). Brislin points out that many remedial programs addressing the problem of prejudice fail because of a lack of recognition of the important functions that prejudice fill in our lives. Presenting people with factual information about groups addresses only one function (knowledge) and ignores the more complex reasons that we hold prejudices [3, p. 27 – 32].

The behaviors that result from stereotyping or prejudice – overt actions to exclude, avoid, or distance – are called **discrimination**. Discrimination may be based on race (racism), gender (sexism), or any of the other identities discussed in this chapter. It may range from subtle non-verbal behavior such as lack of eye contact or exclusion from a conversation, to verbal insults and exclusion from jobs or other economic opportunities, to physical violence and systematic exclusion. Discrimination may be interpersonal, collective, or institutional. In recent years, interpersonal racism has become not only more subtle and indirect but also more persistent. Equally persistent is institutionalized or collective discrimination whereby individuals are systematically denied equal participation in society or equal access to rights in informal and formal ways. Researcher John Lambeth has investigated the systematic discrimination against African Americans on the American highways. In several rigorous controlled studies in numerous states, he has shown that Blacks are much more likely to be stopped by police officers than are non-Blacks (e.g., 4.85 times as likely on the New Jersey Turnpike). As J. Martin and J. Widgren state, this is in spite of evidence from the National Institute of Drug Abuse indicating that African Americans are no more likely than Whites to possess or traffic in drugs.

### **Point of View**

This essay describes how one group, a basketball team with several Native American players, resists an ascribed identity and a stereotype they feel is offensive.

*Unable to persuade a local school to change a mascot name that offends them, a group of American Indian students at the University of Northern Colorado named their intramural basketball team "The Fighting Whities".*

*The team chose a white man as its mascot to raise awareness of*

*stereotypes that some cultures endure. “The message is, let us do something that will let people see the other side of what it’s like to be a mascot” said Solomon Little Owl, a member of the team and director of Native American Student Services at the university. The team, made of American Indians, Hispanics and Anglos, wears jerseys that say “Everything’s going to be all white”.*

*The students are upset with Eaton High School for using an American Indian caricature on the team logo. The team is called the Reds. “It is not meant to be vicious, it is meant to be humorous”, said Ray White, a Mohawk American Indian on the team. “It puts people in our shoes”.*

*Eaton School District superintendent John Nuspl said the schools logo is not derogatory and called the group’s criticism insulting. “There’s no mockery of Native Americans with this”, he said [5].*

### **3.4 Identity Development Issues**

#### *3.4.1 Minority Identity Development*

Social psychologists have identified four stages in minority identity development. Although these stages center on racial and ethnic identities, they may also apply to other identities such as class, gender, or sexual orientation. It is also important to remember that, as with any model, this one represents the experiences of many people, but it is not set in stone. That is, not everyone experiences these phases in exactly the same way. Some people spend more time in one phase than do others; individuals may experience the phases in different ways; and not everyone reaches the final phase.

**Stage 1. Unexamined Identity** is characterized by the lack of exploration of ethnicity. At this stage, ideas about identity may come from parents or friends. Minority group members may initially accept the values and attitudes of the majority culture, including negative views of their own group. They may have a strong desire to assimilate into the dominant culture, and they may express positive attitudes toward the dominant group. Or they may simply lack interest in the issue of ethnicity. As one woman in the African American community put it, “Why do I need to learn about who was the first black woman to do this or that? I’m just not too interested”.

**Stage 2. Conformity** is characterized by the internalization of the values and norms of the dominant group and a strong desire to assimilate into the dominant culture. Individuals in this phase may have negative, self-deprecating attitudes toward both themselves and their group. Individuals who criticize members of their own group may be given negative labels, which

condemn attitudes and behaviors that support the dominant culture. This stage often continues until they encounter a situation that causes them to question predominant culture attitudes, which initiates the movement to the next stage – an ethnic identity search.

**Stage 3. Resistance and Separatism.** Many kinds of events can trigger the move to the third stage, including negative ones such as encountering discrimination or name-calling. A period of dissonance, or a growing awareness that not all dominant group values are beneficial to minorities, may also precede this stage. Sometimes the move to the next phase happens because individuals who have been denying their racial heritage meet someone from that racial group who exhibits strong cultural connections. This encounter may result in a concern to clarify the personal implications of their heritage. One member of an ethnic group explained the rationale behind attending ethnic fairs: “*Going to festivals and cultural events helps me to learn more about my own culture and about myself*”. Another person explained: “*I think people should know what black people had to go through to get to where we are now*”.

**Stage 4. Integration.** According to this model, the ideal outcome of the identity development process is the final stage – an achieved identity. Individuals who have reached this stage have a strong sense of their own group identity (based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and so on) and an appreciation of other cultural groups. In this stage, they come to realize that racism and other forms of oppression occur, but they try to redirect any anger from the previous stage in more positive ways. The end result is individuals with a confident and secure identity" characterized by a desire to eliminate all forms of injustice, and not merely oppression aimed at their own group [14, p. 72 – 73].

### 3.4.2 Majority Identity Development

Rita Hardiman, an American educator in antiracism training, presents a model of majority identity development to members of the dominant group that has some similarities to the model for minority group members. She outlines five stages.

**Stage 1. Unexamined Identity** is the same as for minority individuals. In this case, individuals may be aware of some physical and cultural differences, but they do not fear other racial or ethnic groups or feel a sense of superiority.

**Stage 2. Acceptance** represents the internalization, conscious or

unconscious, of a racist (or otherwise biased) ideology. This may involve passive or active acceptance. The key point is that individuals are not aware that they have been programmed to accept this worldview. In the passive acceptance stage, individuals have no conscious identification with being White. However, some assumptions, based on an acceptance of inequities in the larger society, are subtly racist. Consider the following assumptions:

- minority groups are culturally deprived and need help to assimilate;
- affirmative action is reverse discrimination because people of color are being given opportunities that Whites do not have;
- white culture – music, art, and literature – is “classical”; works of art by people of color are folk art or “crafts”;
- people of color are culturally different, whereas Whites have no group identity or culture or shared experience of racial privilege.

Individuals in this stage usually take one of two positions with respect to racial issues and interactions with minorities: (1) they avoid contact with minority group members, or (2) they adopt a patronizing stance toward them. Both positions are possible at the same time. In contrast, Whites in the active acceptance stage are conscious of their whiteness and may express their feelings of superiority collectively (e.g., join the White Student Union). Some people never move beyond this phase – whether it is characterized by passive or active acceptance. And if they do, it is usually a result of a number of cumulative events.

**Stage 3. Resistance** represents a major paradigm shift. It involves a move from blaming minority members for their condition to naming and blaming their own dominant group as a source of racial or ethnic problems. This resistance may take the form of passive resistance, with little behavioral change, or active resistance – an ownership of racism. These individuals may feel embarrassed, try to distance themselves from other Whites, or gravitate toward people of color.

**Stage 4. Redefinition.** In the fourth stage, people begin to refocus or redirect their energy toward redefining whiteness in non-racist terms. They realize they do not have to accept the definition of White that society has instilled in them. They can move beyond the connection to racism to see positive aspects of being European American and to feel more comfortable being White. Hardiman states: “One of the greatest challenges in all this is to identify what White culture is. Because Whiteness is the norm in the United States society, it is difficult to see. Like fish, whose environment is water, we are surrounded by Whiteness and it is easy to think that what we experience is reality rather than recognizing it as the particular culture of a particular group.

And like fish who are not aware of water until they are out of it, White people sometimes become aware of their culture only when they get to know, or interact with, the cultures of people of color. Difficult as this process is, it is necessary to “see the water” before it can be possible to identify ways in which the culture of Whites needs to be redefined beyond racism” [10, p. 130 – 131].

**Stage 5. Integration.** As in the final stage of minority identity development, majority group individuals now are able to integrate their whiteness into all other facets of their identity. They not only recognize their identity as White but also appreciate other groups. This integration affects other aspects of social and personal identity, including religion and gender.

According to a 2001 survey, 34% of Whites, as compared with only 9% of Blacks, think they have overcome the major problems facing racial minorities in the United States. Something about being White and something about being African American influence how we view the world and, ultimately, how we communicate with others. Other results of the survey bear this out (See Table 3.4.1.). The researchers concluded that, whether out of hostility, indifference or simple lack of knowledge, large numbers of white Americans incorrectly believe that blacks are as well off as whites in terms of their jobs, incomes, schooling and health care. These results defy conventional wisdom. They indicate that many whites do not broadly view blacks as particularly disadvantaged or beset by problems that demand immediate attention. Instead, these whites believe exactly the opposite – that African Americans already have achieved economic and social parity.

In another study, a number of White women has been interviewed, some of whom reported that they viewed being White as less than positive – as artificial, dominant, bland, homogeneous, and sterile. These respondents also saw White culture as less interesting and less rich than non-White culture. In contrast, other women viewed being White as positive, representing what was “civilized”, as in classical music and fine art.

**Table 3.4.1** Viewpoints of Middle-Class Blacks and Whites

Viewpoint	Percentage of Black Respondents Agreeing	Percentage of White Respondents Agreeing
“During the last ten years, tensions between racial and ethnic groups have decreased”	23	30

“African Americans have about the same opportunities as whites”	23	58
“African Americans are just about as well off as the average white person – in income”	15	38
“There is only a little or no discrimination against African Americans in our society today”	11	26

### 3.4.3 *Multiracial and Multicultural People*

**Multicultural people** are those who grow up “on the borders” of two or more cultures. They often struggle to reconcile two very different sets of values, norms, and lifestyles. Some are multicultural as a result of being born to parents from different cultures or adopted into families that are racially different from their own family of origin. Others are multicultural because their parents lived overseas and they grew up in cultures different from their own, or because they spent extended time in another culture as an adult or married someone from another cultural background. let us start with those who are born into biracial or multiracial families.

According to the most recent census, the United States has almost seven million multiracial people – that is, people whose ancestry includes two or more races. The 2000 census was the first one in which people were given the option of selecting several categories to indicate their racial identities. This rapidly growing segment of American population must be understood in its historical context. The United States has a long history of forbidding miscegenation (the mixing of two races). The law sought not to prevent any interracial marriage but to protect “whiteness”; interracial marriage between people of color was rarely prohibited or regulated. Thus, in 1957, the state of Virginia ruled the marriage of Mildred Jeter (African American and Native American heritage) and Peter Loving (White) illegal. The couple fought to have their marriage legalized for almost ten years. Finally, in 1967, the Supreme Court ruled in their favor, in *Loving v. Virginia*, overturning 200 years of antimiscegenation legislation.

The development of racial identity for the children of parents like the Lovings is a fluid process of complex transactions between the child and the broader social environment. Whereas majority and minority identities seem to develop in a fairly linear fashion, biracial children may cycle through three stages: 1) awareness of differentness and resulting dissonance; 2) struggle for

acceptance; 3) self-acceptance and -assertion. And as they mature, they may experience the same three phases with greater intensity and awareness [14, p. 182].

In the first stage, multiracial children realize that they are different from other children – they may feel that they do not fit in anywhere. At the next stage, struggle for acceptance, multiracial adolescents may feel that they have to choose one race or the other. After being torn between the two (or more) races, multiracial individuals may reach the third stage, of self-acceptance and self-assertion. In addition to growing up in biracial or multiracial homes, individuals develop multicultural identities for other reasons. For example, global nomads grow up in many different cultural contexts because their parents moved around a lot (e.g., missionaries, international business employees, or military families). Children of foreign-born immigrants may also develop multicultural identities.

A final category of multicultural people includes those who have intense intercultural experiences as adults – for example, people who maintain long-term romantic relationships with members of another ethnic or racial group or who spend extensive time living in other cultures. All multicultural people may feel as if they live in cultural margins, struggling with two sets of cultural realities: not completely part of the dominant culture but not an outsider, either.

Social psychologist Peter Adler describes the multicultural person as someone who comes to grips with a multiplicity of realities [1, p. 32]. This individual's identity is not defined by a sense of belonging; rather, it is a new psycho-cultural form of consciousness. Milton Bennett describes how individuals can develop an *ethnorelative perspective* based on their attitudes toward cultural difference. The first, and most ethnocentric, stage involves the denial or ignoring of difference. The next stage occurs when people recognize difference but attach negative meaning to it. A third stage occurs when people minimize the effects of difference – for example, with statements like “We’re really all the same under the skin” and “After all, we’re all God’s children”. Bennett recognizes that minority and majority individuals may experience these phases differently. In addition, minority individuals usually skip the first phase. They do not have the option to deny difference; they are often reminded by others that they are different.

The remainder of the stages represents a major shift in thinking – a paradigm shift – because positive meanings are associated with difference. In the fourth phase (acceptance), people accept the notion of cultural difference; in the fifth phase (adaptation), they may change their own behavior to adapt to

others. The final phase (integration) is similar to Peter Adler's notion of a *multicultural person*.

According to Adler, multicultural individuals may become *culture brokers* – people who facilitate cross-cultural interaction and reduce conflict. And, indeed, there are many challenges and opportunities today for multicultural people, who can reach a level of insight and cultural functioning not experienced by others. However, Adler also identifies potential stresses and tensions associated with multicultural individuals:

- they may confuse the profound with the insignificant, not sure what is really important;
- they may feel multiphrenic, fragmented;
- they may suffer a loss of their own authenticity and feel reduced to a variety of roles;
- they may retreat into existential absurdity [1, p. 35].

Communication scholar Janet Bennett provides insight into how being multicultural can be at once rewarding and challenging. She describes two types of multicultural individuals: 1) encapsulated marginals, who become trapped by their own marginality; 2) constructive marginals, who thrive in their marginality.

Encapsulated marginals have difficulty making decisions, are troubled by ambiguity, and feel pressure from both groups. They try to assimilate but never feel comfortable, never feel at home. In contrast, constructive marginal people thrive in their marginal existence and, at the same time, recognize the tremendous challenges. They see themselves (rather than others) as choice makers. They recognize the significance of being “in between”, and they are able to make commitments within the relativistic framework. Even so, this identity is constantly being negotiated and explored; it is never easy, given society's penchant for superficial categories. Writer Ruben Martinez describes the experience of a constructive marginal: “And so I can celebrate what I feel to be my cultural success. I have taken the far-flung pieces of myself and fashioned an identity beyond that ridiculous, fraying old border between the United States and Mexico. But my success is still marked by anxiety, a white noise that disturbs whatever raceless Utopia I might imagine. I feel an uneasy tension between all the colors, hating and loving them all, perceiving and speaking from one and many perspectives simultaneously. The key word here is *tension*: nothing, as yet, has been resolved. My body is both real and unreal, its color both confining and liberating” [15, p. 260].

### **3.5 Identity and Language**

The labels that refer to particular identities are an important part of intercultural communication. These labels do not exist outside of their relational meanings. It is the relationships – not only interpersonal but social – that help us understand the importance of the labels. Communication scholar Dolores Tanno describes her own multiple identities reflected in the various labels applied to her. For instance, the label “Spanish” was applied by her family and designates an ancestral origin in Spain. The label “Mexican American” reflects two important cultures that contribute to her identity. “Latina” reflects cultural and historical connectedness with others of Spanish descent (e.g., Puerto Ricans and South Americans), and “Chicana” promotes political and cultural assertiveness in representing her identity [14, p. 45]. She stresses that she is all of these, that each one reveals a different facet of her identity: symbolic, historical, cultural, and political.

In emphasizing the fluidity and relational nature of labels Edward Hall notes that, “at different times in my thirty years in England, I have been bailed or interrelated as “coloured”, “West-Indian”, “Negro”, “black”, “immigrant”. Sometimes in the street, sometimes at street corners, sometimes abusively, sometimes in a friendly manner, sometimes ambiguously” [8, p. 108]. Hall underscores the dynamic and dialectic nature of identity and the self as he continues: “In fact I am not one or another of these ways of representing me, though I have been all of them at different times and still am some of them to some degree. But, there is no essential, unitary 4 – only the fragmentary, contradictory subject I become” [ibid., p. 108 – 109].

These and other labels construct relational meanings in communication situations. The interpersonal relationships between Hall and the other speakers are important, but also equally important are the social meanings of such labels.

### **3.6 Identity and Communication**

Identity has a profound influence on intercultural communication processes. We can employ some of the dialectics identified in earlier chapters to illuminate this relationship. First, we can use the individual-cultural dynamic to examine the issues that arise when we encounter people whose identities we do not know. In intercultural communication interactions, mistaken identities are often exacerbated and can create communication problems.

Sometimes we assume knowledge about another person’s identity

based on his or her membership in a particular cultural group. When we do so, we are ignoring the individual aspect. Taking a dialectical perspective can help us recognize and balance both the individual and the cultural aspects of another's identity. This perspective can guide the ways that we communicate with that person (and conceivably with others). "The question here is one of identity: Who am I perceived to be when I communicate with others? My identity is very much tied to the ways in which others speak to me and the ways in which society represents my interests" [9, p. 14].

Now let us turn to the static-dynamic dialectic. The problem of erroneous assumptions has increased during the information age, due to the torrent of information about the world and the dynamic nature of the world in which we live. We are bombarded daily with information from around the globe about places and people. This glut of information and intercultural contacts has heightened the importance of developing a more complex view of identity.

Given the many identities that we all negotiate for ourselves in our everyday interactions, it becomes clear how our identities and those of others make intercultural communication problematic. We need to think of these identities as both static and dynamic. We live in an era of information overload, and the wide array of communication media only serve to increase the identities we must negotiate. Consider the relationships that develop via e-mail, for example. Some people even create new identities as a result of on-line interactions. We change who we are depending on the people we communicate with and the manner of our communication. Yet we also expect some static characteristics from the people with whom we communicate. We expect others to express certain fixed qualities; these help account for why we tend to like or dislike them and how we can establish particular communication patterns with them. The tensions that we feel as we change identities from e-mail to telephone to mail to fax and other communication media demonstrate the dynamic and static characters of identities.

Finally, we can focus on the personal – contextual dialectic of identity and communication. Although some dimensions of our identities are personal and remain fairly consistent, we cannot overlook the contextual constraints on our identity.

## **SUMMARY**

- In this chapter, we explored some of the facets of identity and the ways in which identities can be problematic in intercultural

communication. We used several dialectics to frame our discussion. Identities are both static (as described by social psychologists) and dynamic (as described by communication and critical scholars). They are created by the self and by others in relation to group membership. They may be created for us by existing contexts and structures. When these created identities are incongruent with our sense of our own identity, we need to challenge and renegotiate them.

- Identities are multiple and reflect gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, religion, class, nationality, and other aspects of our lives. Identities also develop in relation to minority and majority group membership. The development of such identities may follow several stages for individuals of either group.
- Identity is expressed through language and labels. Keeping in mind the many dynamics in people’s lives can help minimize faulty assumptions about their identities. It is important to remind ourselves that identities are complex and subject to negotiation.

## PRACTICE

### ➤ **Answer the Following Questions:**

- 1) How do our perceptions of our own cultural identity influence our communication with others?
- 2) What are some ways in which we express our identities?
- 3) What are the roles of avowal and ascription in the process of identity formation?
- 4) What are some of the ways in which members of minority cultures and members of majority cultures develop their cultural identities.

➤ **Stereotypes in Your Life.** List some of the stereotypes you have heard about Ukrainians. Then answer the following questions: (a) How do you think these stereotypes developed? (b) How do they influence communication between Ukrainians and people from other countries?

➤ **Stereotypes in Prime-Time TV.** Watch four hours of television during the next week, preferably during evening hours when there are more commercials. Record the number of representatives of different identity groups (ethnic, racial, gender, age, class, and so on) that appear in the commercials; also record the role that each

person plays. Answer the following questions: (a) How many different groups were represented? (b) What groups were most represented? Why do you think this is so? (c) What groups were least represented? Why do you think this is so? (d) What differences (if any) were there in the roles that members of the various groups played? Did one group play more sophisticated or more glamorous roles than others? (e) In how many cases were people depicted in stereotypical roles – for example, men as politicians, or women as homemakers? (f) What stereotypes were reinforced in the commercials? (g) What do your findings suggest about the power of the media and their effect on identity formation and intercultural communication? (Think about avowal, ascription, and interpellation).

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# LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

## Overview

One study compared perception of color variations in U.S. English speakers and the Dani of western New Guinea, who classify colors into roughly two groups, light and dark. The researchers showed a paint chip to an individual, removed the paint chip, showed the person the same chip along with others, and then asked her or him to identify the original paint chip. There was little difference in the responses of the U.S. English speakers and the Dani, who were able to identify the original paint chip even though their language may not contain a word for that color. Consider a more familiar example. Many men in Ukraine might identify someone's shirt as "red", whereas women viewing the same shirt might call it "raspberry" or "cherry" or "scarlet". Both the men and women recognize the color distinctions, but men tend to use fewer words than women to distinguish colors. Another example of cross-cultural research involves variations in verb forms. The Chinese language has no counterfactual verb form (illustrated by "If I had known, I would have gone, but I did not"). Researchers constructed stories using the counterfactual form and found that the Chinese respondents understood the concept of counterfactual and could answer questions appropriately even though this structure is not present in Chinese. Thus, the chapter explores cultural variations in language – how language influences culture and how culture influences language.

Topics covered include: Cultural Variations in Language; Language and Identity; Code-Switching; Language Politics and Policies; Language and Globalization.

*Key words: Direct Communication Style, Formality, High-Context Communication, Indirect Communication Style, Informality, Interlanguage, Low-Context Communication, Metamessage, Multilingual, Social Positions.*

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## 4.1 Cultural Variations in Language

Language is powerful and can have tremendous implications for

people's lives. For example, uttering the words "I do" can influence lives dramatically. Being called names can be hurtful and painful, despite the old adage "Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me".

The particular language we use predisposes us to think in particular ways and not in others. For example, the fact that English speakers do not distinguish between a formal and an informal you (as in German, with *du* and *Sie*, or in Spanish, with *tu* and *usted*) may mean that English speakers think about formality and informality differently than do German or Spanish speakers. In other languages, the deliberate use of non-formal ways of speaking in more formal contexts can be insulting to another person. For example, French speakers may use the *tu form* when speaking to their dog or cat, but it can be insulting to use *tu* in a more formal setting when speaking to relative strangers. Yet it may be permissible to use *tu* in more social settings with relative strangers, such as at parties or in bars. Here, pragmatics becomes important. That is, we need to think about what else might be communicated by others and whether they shift to more informal ways of speaking.

#### 4.1.1 Variations in Communication Style

Communication style combines both language and non-verbal communication. It is the tonal coloring, the metamessage, that contextualizes how listeners are expected to receive and interpret verbal messages. A primary way in which cultural groups differ in communication style is in a preference for high- versus low-context communication. A high-context communication style is one in which "most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message" [7, p. 79]. This style of communication emphasizes understanding messages without direct verbal communication. People in long-term relationships often communicate in this style. For example, one person may send a meaningful glance across the room at a party, and his or her partner will know from the non-verbal clue that it is time to go home.

In contrast, in low-context communication, the majority of meaning and information is in the verbal code. This style of communication, which emphasizes explicit verbal messages, is highly valued in many settings in the United States [8, p. 204]. Interpersonal communication textbooks often stress that one should not rely on non-verbal, contextual information. It is better, they say, to be explicit and to the point, and not to leave things ambiguous. However, many cultural groups around the world value high-context

communication. They encourage children and adolescents to pay close attention to contextual cues (body language, environmental cues), and not simply the words spoken in a conversation [5, p. 23].

William Gudykunst and Stella Ting-Toomey identify two major dimensions of communication styles: direct versus indirect and elaborate versus understated.

***Direct vs Indirect Styles.*** This dimension refers to the extent to which speakers reveal their intentions through explicit verbal communication and emphasizes low-context communication. A direct communication style is one in which verbal messages reveal the speaker's true intentions, needs, wants, and desires. An indirect style is one in which the verbal message is often designed to camouflage the speaker's true intentions, needs, wants, and desires. Most of the time, individuals and groups are more or less direct depending on the context [6, p. 94]. Many English speakers favor the direct speech style as the most appropriate in most contexts. This is revealed in statements like "do not beat around the bush", "Get to the point" and "What exactly are you trying to say?" Although "white lies" may be permitted in some contexts, the direct style emphasizes honesty, openness, forthrightness, and individualism. With regard to Ukrainian speakers, they can be characterized as easy going in making connections and straight forward in communication. They are treated as friendly, sociable, open-minded and hospitable by other nations.

However, some cultural groups prefer a more indirect style, with the emphasis on high-context communication. Preserving the harmony of relationships has a higher priority than being totally honest. Thus, a speaker might look for a "soft" way to communicate that there is a problem in the relationship, perhaps by providing contextual cues. Some languages have many words and gestures that convey the idea of "maybe". For example, three Ukrainians studying in the United States were invited by their advisor to participate in a cross-cultural training workshop. They did not want to participate, nor did they have the time. In terms of values of the American society with its notions of egalitarianism and self-discipline, it is acceptable not to come if only a student reports about that to a professor. But this is not the case for the Ukrainian society where post-Soviet values in education still weight. Neither did they want to offend their professor, whom they held in high regard. Therefore, rather than tell him they could not attend, they simply did not return his calls and did not show up to the workshop. Different communication styles are responsible for many problems that arise between men and women and between persons from different ethnic groups. These

problems may be caused by different priorities for truth, honesty, harmony, and conflict avoidance in relationships.

***Elaborate vs Understated Styles.*** This dimension of communication styles refers to the degree to which talk is used. The elaborate style involves the use of rich, expressive language in everyday talk. For example, the Arabic language has many metaphorical expressions used in everyday speech. In this style, a simple assertive statement means little; the listener will believe the opposite.

In contrast, the understated style values succinct, simple assertions, and silence. Amish people often use this style of communication. A common refrain is, “If you do not have anything nice to say, do not say anything at all”. Free self-expression is not encouraged. Silence is especially appropriate in ambiguous situations; if one is unsure of what is going on, it is better to remain silent [6]. The exact style falls between the elaborate and the understated, as expressed in the maxim “Verbal contributions should be no more or less information than is required” [4, p. 22]. The exact style emphasizes cooperative communication and sincerity as a basis for interaction.

Taking a dialectical perspective, though, should help us avoid stereotyping national groups (such as Russian, Arabic or English speakers) in terms of communication style. We should not expect any group to use a particular communication style all the time. Instead, we might recognize that style operates dynamically and is related to context, historical forces, and so on. Furthermore, we might consider how tolerant we are when we encounter others who communicate in very different ways and how willing or able we are to alter our own style to communicate better.

#### *4.1.2 Variations in Contextual Rules*

Understanding some of the cultural variations in communication style is useful. A dialectical perspective reminds us that the particular style we use may vary from context to context. Think of the many contexts in which you communicate during the day – classroom, family, work, and so on – and about how you alter your communication to suit these contexts. You may be more direct with your family and less direct in classroom settings. Similarly, you may be more instrumental in task situations and more affective when socializing with your friends. Many research studies have examined the rules for the use of socially situated language in specific contexts. They attempt to identify contexts and then discover the rules that apply in these contexts for a

given speech community. Researchers Jack Daniel and Geneva Smitherman studied the communication dynamics in Black churches. They first identified the priorities among congregation members: unity between the spiritual and the material, the centrality of religion, the harmony of nature and the universe, and the participatory, interrelatedness of life. They then described a basic communication format, the call-response, in both the traditional religious context and secular life contexts. In church, the speaker and audience interact, with sermons alternating with music. In secular life, call-response takes the form of banter between the rapper (rhetor) and others in the social group [3, p. 129].

#### 4.1.3 Co-Cultural Communication

The co-cultural communication theory, proposed by communication scholar Mark Orbe, describes how language works between dominant and non-dominant groups – or co-cultural groups. Groups that have the most power (Whites, men, heterosexuals) consciously or unconsciously formulate a communication system that supports their perception of the world. This means that co-cultural group members (ethnic minorities, women, gays) must function in communication systems that often do not represent their experiences. Non-dominant groups thus find themselves in dialectical struggles: Do they try to adapt to the dominant communication style, or do they maintain their own styles? Women in large, male-dominated corporations often struggle with these issues.

In studying how communication operates with many different dominant and co-cultural groups, Orbe has identified three general orientations: **non-assertive**, **assertive**, **aggressive**. Within each of these orientations, co-cultural individuals may emphasize *assimilation*, *accommodation*, or *separation* in relation to the dominant group. These two sets of orientations result in nine types of strategies (Table 4.1.3.). The strategy chosen depends on many things, including preferred outcome, perceived costs and rewards, and context. These nine types of strategies vary from non-assertive assimilation, in which co-cultural individuals emphasize commonalities and avert controversy, to non-assertive separation, in which they avoid or maintain interpersonal barriers. Assertive assimilation strategies include manipulating stereotypes; assertive accommodation strategies include educating others, using liaisons, and communicating self. Aggressive assimilation involves strategies like ridiculing self and mirroring; aggressive accommodating involves confronting others; and aggressive separation involves attacking or

sabotaging others [10, p. 82].

**Table 4.1.3** Co-cultural Communication Orientations

<b>Separation</b>		<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>Assimilation</b>
<i>Non-assertive</i>	<i>Avoiding</i>	<i>Increasing</i>	<i>Emphasizing</i>
Maintaining interpersonal barriers		visibility Dispelling stereotypes	Commonalities Developing positive face
Censoring self			Averting controversy
Assertive self		Communication self	Extensive preparation Overcompensating
Intragroup networking		Intragroup networking	Manipulating Stereotypes
Exemplifying strengths		Using liaisons Educating others	Bargaining
Embracing stereotypes			
<i>Aggressive</i>	<i>Attacking</i>	<i>Confronting</i>	<i>Dissociating</i>
Sabotaging others		Gaining advantage	Mirroring Strategic distancing Ridiculing self

Obviously, man is a general signifier that does not refer to any particular individual. The relationship between this signifier and the sign (the meaning) depends on how the signifier is used (e.g., as in the sentence *There is a man sitting in the first chair on the left*) or on our general sense of what man means. Here, the difference between the signifier and the sign rests on the difference between the word man and the meaning of that word. At its most basic level, man means an adult human male, but the semiotic process does not end there, because man carries many other layers of meaning. Barthes calls these layers myths. The expression *Man is the measure of all things*, for example, has many levels of meaning, including the centering of male experience as the norm [1, p. 62]. Man may or may not refer to any particular adult male, but it provides a concept we can use to construct particular meanings based on the way the sign man functions. What does man mean when someone says, *Act like a real man!*

Intercultural communication is not concerned solely with the cultural differences in verbal systems, although that is certainly a central interest. Semiotics can be useful in unraveling the ways that the cultural codes regulate verbal and non-verbal communication systems, as we will see in the next chapter. That is, semiotics allows us one way to “crack the codes” of other cultural frameworks. The goal is to establish entire systems of semiosis and the means by which those systems create meaning. We are not so much interested in the discrete, individual signifiers, as in the ways that signifiers are combined and configured.

The use of these semiotic systems relies on many codes taken from a variety of sources: economics, history, politics, religion, and so on. For example, when Nazi swastikas were spray-painted on Jewish graves in Lyon, France, in 1992, the message they communicated relied on semiotic systems from the past. The history of the Nazi persecution of Jews during World War II is well known: The power behind the signifier, the swastika, comes from that historical knowledge and the codes of anti-Semitism that it invokes to communicate its message [6, p. 211]. Relations from the past influence the construction and maintenance of intercultural relations in the present.

It is wise to be sensitive to the many levels of cultural context that are regulated by different semiotic systems. In other words, it is a good idea to avoid framing the cultural context simply in terms of a nation. Nation-states have other cultural contexts within their borders – for example, commercial and financial districts, residential areas, and bars, which are all regulated by their own semiotic systems. Consider the clothes that people might wear to a bar; wearing the same clothes in a business setting would not communicate the same message.

#### 4.1.4 *Translation and Interpretation*

Because no one can learn all of the languages in the world, we must rely on translation and interpretation – two distinct but important means of communicating across language differences. The European Union (EU), for example, has a strict policy of recognizing all of the languages of its constituent members. Hence, many translators and interpreters are hired by the EU to help bridge the linguistic gaps.

**Translation** generally refers to the process of producing a written text that refers to something said or written in another language. The original language text of a translation is called the source text; the text into which it is translated is the target text. **Interpretation** refers to the process of verbally

expressing what is said or written in another language. Interpretation can either be simultaneous, with the interpreter speaking at the same time as the original speaker, or consecutive, with the interpreter speaking only during the breaks provided by the original speaker [8, p. 218].

As we know from language theories, languages are entire systems of meaning and consciousness that are not easily rendered into another language in a word-for-word equivalence. The ways in which different languages convey views of the world are not equivalent, as we noted previously. Consider the difficulty involved simply in translating names of colors. The English word *brown* might be translated as any of these French words, depending on how the word is used: *roux*, *brun*, *bistre*, *bis*, *matron*, *jaune*, *gris*.

*Issues of Equivalency and Accuracy.* Some languages have tremendous flexibility in expression; others have a limited range of words. The reverse may be true, however, for some topics. This slippage between languages is both aggravating and thrilling for translators and interpreters. Translation studies traditionally have tended to emphasize issues of equivalency and accuracy. That is, the focus largely from linguistics has been on comparing the translated meaning with the original meaning. However, for those interested in the intercultural communication process, the emphasis is not so much on equivalence as on the bridges that people construct to cross from one language to another [8, p. 218].

Many U.S. police departments are now hiring officers who are bilingual, as they must work with a multilingual public. In Arizona, like many other states, Spanish is a particularly important language. Let us look at a specific case in which a police detective for the Scottsdale (Arizona) Police Department explained an unusual phrase: *Detective Ron Bayne has heard his share of Spanish phrases while on the job. But he recently stumped a roomful of Spanish-speaking police officers with an unusual expression. A suspect said, “Me llevaron a tocar el piano [They took me to play the piano]”. “I knew it couldn’t mean that”, said Bayne, a translator for the Scottsdale Police Department. “But I had no idea what it really meant” [ibid.]*

This slang term, popular with undocumented aliens, highlights the differences between “street” Spanish and classroom Spanish. It also points to the importance of context in understanding meaning. In this context, we know that the police did not take a suspect to play a piano. Instead, this suspect was saying that the police had fingerprinted him. The varieties of expression in Spanish reflect social class and other differences that are not always communicated through translation or interpretation.

The changing context for intelligence work has changed the context for translators and interpreters as well, to say nothing of the languages that are highly valued. These issues, while beyond the scope of equivalency and accuracy, are an important part of the dynamic of intercultural communication.

***The Role of the Translator or Interpreter.*** We often assume that translators and interpreters are “invisible”, that they simply render into the target language whatever they hear or read. The roles that they play as intermediaries, however, often regulate how they render the original. We believe that it is not always appropriate to translate everything that one speaker is saying to another, in exactly the same way, because the potential for misunderstanding due to cultural differences might be too great. Translation is more than merely switching languages; it also involves negotiating cultures. Writer Elisabeth Marx explains: “It is not sufficient to be able to translate – you have to comprehend the subtleties and connotations of the language. Walter Hasselkus, the German chief executive of Rover, gave a good example of this when he remarked: “When the British say that they have a “slight” problem, I know that it has to be taken seriously”. There are numerous examples of misunderstandings between American English and British English, even though they are, at root, the same language” [9, p. 95]. It might be helpful to think of translators and interpreters as cultural brokers who must be highly sensitive to the contexts of intercultural communication.

We often assume that anyone who knows two languages can be a translator or an interpreter. Research has shown, however, that high levels of fluency in two languages do not necessarily make someone a good translator or interpreter. The task obviously requires the knowledge of two languages. But that is not enough. Think about all of the people you know who are native English speakers. What might account for why some of them are better writers than others? Knowing English, for example, is a prerequisite for writing in English, but this knowledge does not necessarily make a person a good writer. Because of the complex relationships between people, particularly in intercultural situations, translation and interpretation involve far more than linguistic equivalence, which traditionally has been the focus [8, p. 220].

According to observations of many contemporary linguists the 1990s might be characterized as experiencing “a boom” in translation theory. In part, this boom was fueled by a recognition that the traditional focus in translation studies is too limiting to explain the wide variety of ways that meanings might be communicated. The field of translation studies is rapidly becoming more

central to academic inquiry, as it moves from the fringes to an area of inquiry with far-reaching consequences for many disciplines. These developments will have a tremendous impact on how academics approach intercultural communication. Perhaps intercultural communication scholars will begin to play a larger role in the developments of translation studies.

Translation can create amusing and interesting intercultural barriers. Consider the following translation experiences.

- A Canadian importer of Turkish shirts destined for Quebec used a dictionary to help him translate into French the label *Made in Turkey*. His final translation: *Fabrique en Dinde*. True, “dinde” means “turkey”. But it refers to the bird, not the country, which in French is *Turquie*.
- Japan’s Olfa Corp. sold knives in the United States with the warning *Caution: Blade extremely sharp. Keep out of children*.
- In one country, the popular Frank Perdue Co. slogan, *It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken*, read in local language something akin to *It takes a sexually excited man to make a chicken affectionate*.
- One company in Taiwan, trying to sell diet goods to expatriates living there, urged consumers to buy its product to add *roughage* to their systems. The instructions claimed that a person should consume enough roughage until *your tool floats*. Someone dropped the “s” from “stool”.
- How about the Hong Kong dentist who advertised *Teeth extracted by the latest Methodists*.
- General Motors Corp.’s promotion in Belgium for its car that had a *body by Fisher* turned out to be in the Flemish translation, *corpse by Fisher* [8].

## 4.2 Language and Identity

In the previous chapter, we discussed cultural identity and its complexities. One part of our cultural identity is tied to the language(s) that we speak. As Ukrainians, we are expected to speak Ukrainian. When we travel around the world, we expect Russians to speak Russian, Koreans to speak Korean, and Georgians to speak Georgian. But things get more involved when we consider why Brazilians speak Portuguese, Congolese speak French, Australians speak English and many Ukrainians speak Russian. The relationship between language and culture becomes more complicated when we look at the complexity of cultural identities at home and abroad. The

ability to speak another language can be important in how people view their group membership.

#### 4.2.1 Code-Switching

Code-switching is a technical term in communication that refers to the phenomenon of changing languages, dialects, or even accents. People code-switch for several reasons: 1) to accommodate the other speakers; 2) to avoid accommodating others; 3) to express another aspect of their cultural identity.

Linguistics professor Jean-Louis Sauvage studied the complexity of code-switching in Belgium, which involves not only dialects but languages as well. He explains the practical side of code-switching: “For example, my house was built by a contractor who sometimes resorted to Flemish subcontractors. One of these subcontractors was the electrician. I spoke Dutch to him but had to use French words when I referred to technical notions that I did not completely understand even in French. This was not a problem, for the electrician, who knew these terms in Dutch as well as in French but would have been unable to explain them to me in French” [2, p. 15].

Given the complex language policies and politics in Belgium, code-switching takes on particularly important political meaning. Who code-switches and who does not is a frequent source of contestation.

In her work on code-switching, communication scholar Karla Scott discusses how the use of different ways of communicating creates different cultural contexts and different relationships between the conversants. Based on a series of interviews with Black women, she notes “the women’s shared recognition that in markedly different cultural worlds their language use is connected to identity” [13, p. 246]. She focuses on the use of the words *girl* and *look* as they relate to communicative practices in different contexts. She identifies three areas in which code switching occurs with *girl*: 1) in discourse about differences between Black and White women’s language use; 2) in discourse about being with other Black women; 3) in uses of *girl* as a marker in discourse among participants during the interview [ibid., p. 241]. The use of *look* in code-switching occurs in three contexts as well: 1) in discussions and descriptions of talking like a Black woman versus White women’s talk; 2) in the women’s reports of interactions with Whites, both male and female; 3) in the women’s reports of interactions with Black men [ibid., p. 243]. *Girl* creates a sense of solidarity and shared identity among Black women, whereas *look* is particularly important in White-dominated contexts, as it asserts a different identity. Thus, code switching between these two words reflects

different ways of communicating and different identities and relationships among those communicating.

### 4.3 Language Politics and Policies

Some nations have multiple official languages. For instance, Canada has declared English and French to be the official languages. There is no official national language in the United States, although English is the *de facto* national language. Yet the state of Hawaii has two official languages, English and Hawaiian. Laws or customs that determine which language is spoken where and when are referred to as language policies. These policies often emerge from the politics of language use. As mentioned previously, the court of Catherine the Great of the Russian empire used not Russian but French, which was closely tied to the politics of social and economic class. The history of colonialism also influences language policies. Thus, Portuguese is the official national language of Mozambique, and English and French are the official national languages of Cameroon.

Language policies are embedded in the politics of class, culture, ethnicity, and economics. They do not develop as a result of any supposed quality of the language itself [8, p. 225]. Belgium provides an excellent example. Attitudes toward language – and those who speak that language – are influenced by economic and social contexts and by the power of various linguistic groups. After gaining its independence from the Netherlands in 1830, Belgium chose French as its national language. Some historians see this choice as a reaction against the rule of the Dutch. However, following protests by the Flemings, Dutch was added as a national language in 1898 and Belgium became bilingual. In 1962, a linguistic border was drawn across the country to mark the new language policies, demarcating which language would be the official language of each region. As a consequence, Belgium's oldest university, the Catholic University of Leuven – located in Flanders, bilingual at the time – found itself at the center of a linguistic conflict. In 1968, the *Walen Buiten (Walloons Out) Movement* demanded that the French-speaking part of the university leave Flanders. As a consequence, the government split the university and built a new city and a new campus for the French-speaking part across the linguistic border in a city now called Louvain-la-Neuve (New Leuven). In 1980, Belgians divided their country into three communities (Dutch, French, and German) and three regions (Brussels, Flanders, and Wallonia). As a result of these language politics, Dutch is the official language in Flanders and French is the language of Wallonia (except

in the eastern cantons, where German is spoken).

Although many Belgians may speak Dutch and French, the decision to speak one language or the other in particular contexts communicates more than linguistic ability. For some Belgians, it is rude not to speak the official language of the region they are in at the moment; for others, it is more important to be accommodating, to try to speak the language of the other person. Other Belgians insist on speaking “their” language. Each of these communication decisions in a multilingual context reflects a range of political and social commitments.

Although some people predict the end of the Belgian state as a result of these linguistic differences, others do not see these differences as divisive. Along the linguistic border, feelings about the language politics range from embracing bilingualism to embracing monolingualism. In any case, the Belgian example is only one. Not all multilingual nations are discussing dissolution, not all multilingual nations create language territories. Yet we can view the language politics and policies of Belgium in dialectical tension with the history of the language groups, economic relations, and political power. The majority of Belgians are Flemings (Dutch speaking), and Flanders is currently doing better economically; in the past, however, the French-speaking region, Wallonia, has been stronger economically and has been more populous. These shifting trends demonstrate the problems of intercultural communication and drive the need for language policies.

#### **4.4 Language and Globalization**

In a world in which people, products and ideas can move easily around the globe, rapid changes are being made in the languages spoken and learned. Globalization has sparked increased interest in some languages while leaving others to disappear.

The dream of a common international language has long marked Western ways of thinking. Ancient Greeks viewed the world as filled with Greek speakers or those who were *barbaroi* (barbarians). The Romans attempted to establish Latin and Greek, which led to the subsequent establishment of Latin as the learned language of Europe. Latin was eventually replaced by French, which was spoken, as we have noted, throughout the elite European communities and became *lingua franca* of Europe. More recently, Esperanto was created as an international language, and although there are Esperanto speakers, it has not attained wide international acceptance. Today, Ancient Greek and Latin, as well as French,

still retain some of their elite status, but “English is the *de facto* language of international communication today” [14, p. 153].

Many native English speakers are happy with the contemporary status of the language. They feel much more able to travel around the world, without the burden of having to learn other ways of communicating, given that many people around the world speak English. Having a common language also facilitates intercultural communication, but it can also create animosity among those who must learn the other’s language. Learning a foreign language is never easy, of course, but the dominance of English as *lingua franca* raises important issues for intercultural communication.

What is the relationship between our four key categories and this contemporary linguistic situation? That is, how do culture, communication, power, and context play out in the domination of English? First, the intimate connections between language and culture mean that the diffusion of English is tied to the spread of U.S. American culture around the world. Is this a new form of colonialism? If we consider issues of power, what role does the United States play in the domination of English on the world scene? How does this marginalize or disempower those who are not fluent in English in intercultural communication?

### **Point of View**

*English is the world’s 900-pound gorilla. The most widely used language worldwide, it is becoming the lingua franca of industry, commerce, and finance. It happened independently, in the pragmatic world of commerce and competition. And it isn’t stuffy, old-British English people want to learn. it is American English. But let us not gloat.*

*Sure, it is wonderful to grow up speaking a language whose devilish “/” before “e” except after “c” intricacies could scare a matador. And it is a privilege to be born into the lap of world economic eminence.*

*So feel good.*

*Feel lucky.*

*But do not feel too smug.*

*After all those people struggling with the power of the silent “e” will soon be able to call themselves fluent in a foreign language. Most of the Americans who can say that are recent immigrants [11, p. 88].*

### **Point of View**

*Harumi Befu, emeritus professor at Stanford University, discusses the consequences of English domination for monolingual Americans.*

*Instead of language enslavement and intellectual imperialism, however, one more often is told of the benefit of learning a second language, such as English. For example, non-native English speakers can relativize their own language and appreciate each language on its own terms. It was Goethe who said that one who does not know a foreign language does not know his / her own language.*

*Thanks to the global dominance of their country, American intellectuals have acquired the “habitus” of superiority, whereby they exercise the license of expressing their thoughts in English wherever they go instead of showing respect to locals through expending efforts to learn their language. This privileged position, however, spells poverty of the mind.*

*For their minds are imprisoned in a single language; they are unable to liberate their minds through relativizing English. In short, other things, being equal, monolingual Americans (not all Americans are monolingual) are the most provincial and least cosmopolitan among those who traffic in the global interlinguistic community – a price they pay for the strength of the country backing them [2, p. 1].*

## SUMMARY

- In this chapter, we explored many dimensions of language and discourse in intercultural communication. Languages exhibit many cultural variations, both in communication style and in the rules of context. Cultural groups may emphasize the importance of verbal (low-context) or non-verbal (high-context) communication. Two important types of communication styles are the direct / indirect and the elaborate / succinct. The context in which the communication occurs is a significant part of the meaning.
- Understanding the role of power in language use is important. Dominant groups, consciously or unconsciously, develop communication systems that require non-dominant groups (or co-cultural groups) to use communication that doesn't fit their experiences. The effects of power are also revealed in the use of labels, with the more powerful people in a society labeling the less powerful. Individuals who occupy powerful positions in a society often do not think about the ways in which their positions are revealed in their communication.
- Another language issue is that of multilingualism. Individuals learn

languages for different reasons, and the process is often a rewarding one. The complexity of moving between languages is facilitated by interpretation and translation, in which issues of equivalency and accuracy are crucial. Being a good translator or interpreter requires more than merely fluency in two languages.

- Some nations have multiple official languages, and others have no official national language. Language use is often tied to the politics of class, culture, ethnicity, and economics. The issue of what language should be spoken, when, to whom, and why becomes quite complex.
- Through globalization, English has become the new international language. But there are both positive and negative implications of English as the lingua franca.

## PRACTICE

### ➤ *Answer the Following Questions:*

- What is the relationship between our language and the way we perceive reality?
- What are some cross-cultural variations in language use and communication style?
- What aspects of context influence the choice of communication style?
- What does a translator or an interpreter need to know to be effective?
- Why is it important to know the social positions of individuals and groups involved in intercultural communication?
- Why do some people say that we should not use labels to refer to people but should treat everybody as individuals? Do you agree?
- Why do people have such strong reactions to language policies, as in the “English-only” movement?

➤ ***Regional Language Variations.*** Meet in small groups with other class members and discuss variations in language use in different regions of Ukraine or another country which you nationally associate with (accent, vocabulary, and so on). Identify perceptions that are associated with these variations.

➤ ***Values and Language.*** Although computer-driven translations have improved dramatically over earlier attempts, translation is

still intensely cultural. Communication always involves many layers of meaning, and when you move between languages, there are many more opportunities for misunderstanding. Try to express some important values that you have (e.g., freedom of the press) on this Web site, and see how they are retranslated in five different languages: <http://www.tashian.com/multibabel>.

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## NON-VERBAL CODES AND CULTURAL SPACE

### Overview

Non-verbal elements of cultural communication are highly dynamic and play an important role in understanding intercultural communication. Reading non-verbal communication within various cultural spaces can be a key to survival, depending upon the situation. The first part of this chapter focuses on the importance of understanding non-verbal aspects of intercultural communication. We can examine non-verbal communication in terms of the personal-contextual and the static-dynamic dialectics. Although non-verbal communication can be highly dynamic, personal space, gestures, and facial expressions are fairly static patterns of specific non-verbal communication codes. These patterns are the focus of the second part of this chapter. Finally, we investigate the concept of *cultural space* and the ways in which cultural identity is shaped and negotiated by the cultural spaces (home, neighborhood, and so on) that people occupy.

Topics covered include: Non-Verbal Communication; Universality of Non-Verbal Behavior; Cultural Space; Cultural Identity and Cultural Space; Changing Cultural Space; Postmodern Cultural Spaces.

*Key words: Chronemics, Contact Cultures, Cultural Space, Deception, Eye Contact, Facial Expressions, Monochromic, Noncontact Cultures, Polychromic, Postmodern Cultural Spaces, Regionalism, Relational Messages, Status.*

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### 5.1 Defining Non-Verbal Communication: Thinking Dialectically

In this chapter, we discuss two forms of communication beyond speech. The first includes facial expression, personal space, eye contact, use of time, and conversational silence (what is not said is often as important as what is spoken). The second includes the cultural spaces that we occupy and negotiate. Cultural spaces are the social and cultural contexts in which our identity forms – where we grow up and where we live (not necessarily the physical homes and neighborhoods, but the cultural meanings created in these

places) [10, p. 236]. In thinking dialectically, we need to consider the relationship between the non-verbal behavior and the cultural spaces in which the behavior occurs, and between the non-verbal behavior and the verbal message. Although there are patterns to non-verbal behaviors, they are not always culturally appropriate in all cultural spaces. Remember, too, that some non-verbal behaviors are cultural, whereas others are idiosyncratic, that is, peculiar to individuals.

### 5.1.1 *Comparing Verbal and Non-verbal Communication*

**Recognizing Non-Verbal Behavior.** Both verbal and non-verbal communication is symbolic, communicate meaning, and are patterned – that is, are governed by contextually determined rules. Societies have different non-verbal languages, just as they have different spoken languages. However, some differences between non-verbal and verbal communication codes have important implications for intercultural interaction. Let us look at the example of these differences.

Two U.S. students attending school in France were hitchhiking to the university in Grenoble for the first day of classes. A French motorist picked them up and immediately started speaking English to them. They wondered how he knew they spoke English. Later, when they took a train to Germany, the conductor walked into their compartment and berated them in English for putting their feet on the opposite seat. Again, they wondered how he had known that they spoke English. As these examples suggest, non-verbal communication entails more than gestures – even our appearance can communicate loudly. The students' appearance alone probably was a sufficient clue to their national identity. One of our students explains: “When I studied abroad in Europe, London more specifically, our clothing as a non-verbal expression was a dead giveaway that we were from America. We dressed much more casual, wore more colors, and had words written on our T-shirts and sweatshirts. This alone said enough; we didn't even have to speak to reveal that we were Americans” [ibid., p. 237].

As these examples also show, non-verbal behavior operates at a subconscious level. We rarely think about how we stand, what gestures we use, and so on. Occasionally, someone points out such behaviors, which brings them to the conscious level. Consider one more example from an American student Suzanne: *I was in Macedonia and I was traveling in a car, so I immediately put on my seat belt. My host family was very offended by this because buckling my seat belt meant I didn't trust the driver. After that I rode*

*without a seat belt.*

When misunderstandings arise, we are more likely to question our verbal communication than our non-verbal communication. We can search for different ways to explain verbally what we mean. We can also look up words in a dictionary or ask someone to explain unfamiliar words. In contrast, it is more difficult to identify non-verbal miscommunication or misperceptions.

***Learning Non-Verbal Behavior.*** Whereas we learn rules and meanings for language behavior in grammar and language arts lessons, we learn non-verbal meanings and behaviors by more implicit socialization. No one explains, “When you talk with someone you like, lean forward, smile, and touch the person frequently, because that will communicate that you really care about him or her”. In many contexts in the United States, such behaviors communicate immediacy and positive meanings [1, p. 33]. But how is it interpreted if someone does not display these behaviors?

*I have a couple of good friends who are deaf, and it is evident that body language, eye contact, and visual communication are far more important in our conversations than between two hearing people. I found that both of my friends, who lived very close to me, would much rather stop by my house than call me on the relay. I can see the cultural implications of space and distance. We keep in touch mostly by using e-mail. It's funny because the e-mails that I get from those guys have more commonly used slang words than most of my hearing friends use. The question is: Do my friends understand the slang, make it a part of their language, and create a sign for it, or do they know the words through somewhat of a verbal exchange with the hearing? – Andrea.*

Sometimes, though, we learn strategies for non-verbal communication. Have you ever been told to shake hands firmly when you meet someone? You may have learned that a limp handshake indicates a weak person. Likewise, many young women learn to cross their legs at the ankles and to keep their legs together when they sit. These strategies combine socialization and the teaching of non-verbal codes.

***Coordinating Non-Verbal and Verbal Behaviors.*** Non-verbal behaviors can reinforce, substitute for, or contradict verbal behaviors. For example, when we shake our heads and say “no”, we are reinforcing verbal behavior. When we point instead of saying “over there”, we are substituting non-verbal behavior for verbal communication. If we tell a friend, “I can’t wait to see you”, and then do not show up at the friend’s house, our non-verbal behavior is contradicting the verbal message. Because non-verbal communication operates at a less conscious level, we tend to think that people have less control over their non-verbal behavior. Therefore, we often think of

non-verbal behaviors as conveying the real messages.

### *5.1.2 What Non-Verbal Behavior Communicates*

Although language is an effective and efficient means of communicating explicit information, non-verbal communication conveys relational messages – how we really feel about other people. Non-verbal behavior also communicates status and power. For example, a boss may be able to touch subordinates, but it is usually unacceptable for subordinates to touch a boss. Broad, expansive gestures are associated with high status; conversely, holding the body in a tight, closed position communicates low status. In addition, non-verbal behavior communicates deception. Early researchers believed that some non-verbal behaviors (e.g., avoiding eye contact or touching or rubbing the face) indicated lying.

However, as more recent research has shown, deception is communicated by fairly idiosyncratic behavior and seems to be revealed more by inconsistency in non-verbal communication than by specific non-verbal behaviors [4, p. 113]. Most non-verbal communication about affect, status, and deception happens at an unconscious level. For this reason, it plays an important role in intercultural interactions. Both pervasive and unconscious, it communicates how we feel about each other and about our cultural groups.

## **5.2 The Universality of Non-Verbal Behavior**

Most traditional research in intercultural communication focuses on identifying cross-cultural differences in non-verbal behavior. How do culture, ethnicity, and gender influence non-verbal communication patterns? How universal is found in most non-verbal communication?

As we have observed in previous chapters, it is neither beneficial nor accurate to try to reduce individuals to one element of their identity (gender, ethnicity, nationality, and so on). Attempts to place people in discrete categories tend to reduce their complexities and to lead to major misunderstandings. However, we often classify people according to various categories to help us find universalities. For example, although we may know that not all Germans are alike, we may seek information about Germans in general to help us communicate better with individual Germans. In this section, we explore the extent to which non-verbal communication codes are universally shared. We also look for possible cultural variations in these codes that may serve as tentative guidelines to help us communicate better with others.

### 5.2.1 *Recent Research Findings*

Research investigating the universality of non-verbal communication has focused on three areas: 1) the relationship of human behavior to that of primates (particularly chimpanzees); 2) non-verbal communication of sensory-deprived children who are blind or deaf; 3) on facial expressions. Researcher Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt conducted studies that compared the facial expressions of children who were blind with those of sighted children and found many similarities. Even though the children who were blind could not see the facial expressions of others to mimic them, they still made the same expressions. This suggests some innate, genetic basis for these behaviors [3, p. 115].

Indeed, many cross-cultural studies support the notion of some universality in non-verbal communication, particularly in facial expressions. Several facial gestures seem to be universal, including the eyebrow flash just described, the nose wrinkle (indicating slight social distancing), and the “disgust face” (a strong sign of social repulsion). It is also possible that grooming behavior is universal (as it is in animals), although it seems to be somewhat suppressed in Western societies [ibid., p. 117]. Recent findings indicate that at least six basic emotions – including happiness, sadness, disgust, fear, anger, and surprise – are communicated by similar facial expressions in most societies. Expressions for these emotions are recognized by most cultural groups as having the same meaning.

Although research may indicate universalities in non-verbal communication, some variations exist. The evoking stimuli (i.e., what causes the non-verbal behavior) may vary from one culture to another. Smiling, for example, is universal, but what prompts a person to smile may be culture specific. Similarly, there are variations in the rules for non-verbal behavior and the contexts in which non-verbal communication takes place. For example, people kiss in most cultures, but there is variation in who kisses whom and in what contexts. When French friends greet each other, they often kiss on both cheeks but never on the mouth. Friends in the United States usually kiss on greeting only after long absence, with the kiss usually accompanied by a hug. The rules for kissing also vary along gender lines.

Finally, it is important to look for larger cultural patterns in the non-verbal behavior, rather than trying simply to identify all of the cultural differences. Researcher David Matsumoto suggests that, although cultural differences in non-verbal patterns are interesting, noting these differences is not sufficient. Studying and cataloging every variation in every aspect of non-

verbal behavior would be an overwhelming task. Instead, he recommends studying non-verbal communication patterns that vary with other cultural patterns, such as values.

For example, Matsumoto links cultural patterns in facial expressions with cultural values of power distance and individualism versus collectivism. Hypothetically, cultural groups that emphasize status differences will tend to express emotions that preserve these status differences. Matsumoto also suggests that within individualistic cultures the degree of difference in emotional display between in-groups and out-groups is greater than the degree of difference between the same groups in collectivistic societies [11, p. 129]. If these theoretical relationships hold true, we can generalize about the non-verbal behavior of many different cultural groups.

### 5.2.2 *Non-Verbal Codes*

*Proxemics* is the study of how people use personal space, or the “bubble” around us that marks the territory between ourselves and others. Edward Hall observed cultural variations in how much distance individuals place between themselves and others. He distinguished contact cultures from non-contact cultures. Hall described contact cultures as those societies in which people stand closer together while talking, engage in more direct eye contact, use face-to-face body orientations more often while talking, touch more frequently, and speak in louder voices [7, p. 75]. He suggested that societies in South America and southern Europe are contact cultures, whereas those in northern Europe, the United States, and the Far East are non-contact cultures – in which people tend to stand farther apart when conversing, maintain less eye contact, and touch less often. Since Hall’s research does not consider the peculiarities of a non-verbal culture of Ukraine, we may assume that it possesses characteristics of a contact culture. Ukrainians in the process of interaction keep a close distance, speak in a loud voice, maintain a direct eye contact, and might touch an interlocutor.

Of course, many other factors besides regional culture determine how far we stand from someone. Gender, age, ethnicity, context, and topic all influence the use of personal space. In fact, some studies have shown that regional culture is perhaps the least important factor. For example, in Algeria, gender might be the overriding factor, as unmarried young women and men rarely stand close together, touch each other, or maintain direct eye contact [10, p. 241].

***Eye Contact.*** Eye contact often is included in proxemics because it

regulates interpersonal distance. Direct eye contact shortens the distance between two people, whereas less eye contact increases the distance. Eye contact communicates meanings about respect and status and often regulates turn-taking. Patterns of eye contact vary from culture to culture. In many societies, avoiding eye contact communicates respect and deference, although this may vary from context to context. For many Ukrainians maintaining eye contact communicates that one is paying attention and showing respect.

***Facial Expressions.*** American Psychologists Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen conducted extensive and systematic research in non-verbal communication. They showed pictures of U.S. Americans' facial expressions reflecting six emotions thought to be universal to people in various cultural groups. They found that people in these various cultures consistently identified the same emotions reflected in the facial expressions in the photographs. Later studies improved on this research. Researchers took many photographs, not always posed, of facial expressions of members from many different cultural groups; then they asked the subjects to identify the emotion expressed by the facial expression. They showed these photographs to many different individuals in many different countries, including some without exposure to media. Their conclusion supports the notion of universality of facial expressions. Specifically, basic human emotions are expressed in a fairly finite number of facial expressions, and these expressions can be recognized and identified universally.

***Chronemics.*** Chronemics concerns concepts of time and the rules that govern its use. There are many cultural variations regarding how people understand and use time. Edward Hall distinguished between monochronic and polychronic time orientation. People who have a monochronic concept of time regard it as a commodity: Time can be gained, lost, spent, wasted, or saved. In this orientation, time is linear, with one event happening at a time. In general, monochronic cultures value being punctual, completing tasks, and keeping to schedules. Most university staff and faculty in the U.S. maintain a monochronic time orientation. Classes, meetings and office appointments start as scheduled; faculty members see one student at a time, hold one meeting at a time, and keep appointments except in the case of emergency. Family problems are considered poor reasons for not fulfilling academic obligations – for both faculty and students. Monochronic cultures are the United States, Germany, Scandinavia and Switzerland. In these countries time is compartmentalized; there is a time for everything, and everything has its own time.

In contrast, in a polychronic orientation, time is more holistic, and

perhaps circular: Several events can happen at once. Latin Americans, Mediterranean people, and Arabs are good examples of polychronic cultures. They schedule multiple things at the same time. Eating, conducting business with several different people, and taking care of family matters may all be conducted at the same time. No culture is entirely monochronic or polychronic; rather, these are general tendencies that are found across a large part of the culture. Ukrainian culture combines both time orientations.

Most people describe a basic style or an overriding tendency to function within either a *monochronic* or *polychronic cognitive style*; it would be something like a preferred approach all things being equal. As many scholars note, most people are monochronic or polychronic depending on certain situations. University students, particularly, function polychronically because of role demands and having numerous studies demands bombarding simultaneously.

*Monochronic tendencies* can become dysfunctional in situations that demand polychronic performance. Some organizational cultures, groups, systems, and families think, schedule, and operate in a monochronic fashion. Thus, a polychronic person can feel rather stressful, even depressed, in such a group. *Polychronics* may experience high degrees of information overload. That is, they are trying to process many things at once that they feel frustrated. They may also experience procrastination. They seem to struggle harder to articulate abstractions without visualization. In fact, they seem to be very visually oriented people. They may in further research be found to correlate with the theories of left- and right-brain orientations, where it is asserted that right-brain-dominant people think creatively, visually, and artistically, while left-brain-dominant people think mathematically and linearly [6, p. 95]. In any case, how we process time seems both cultural and personal, and this monochronic-polychronic continuum has an important influence on communication behavior.

*Silence.* Cultural groups may vary in the degree of emphasis placed on silence which can be as meaningful as language. In most European context, silence is not highly valued. Particularly in developing relationships, silence communicates awkwardness and can make people feel uncomfortable. According to scholar William Gudykunst's *Uncertainty Reduction Theory*, the main reason for communicating verbally in initial interactions is to reduce uncertainty. In U.S. American contexts, people employ active uncertainty reduction strategies, such as asking questions. However, in many other cultural contexts, people reduce uncertainty using more passive strategies – for example, remaining silent, observing, or perhaps asking a third party about

someone's behavior.

In a classic study on the rules for silence among the western Apache in Arizona, researcher Keith Basso identified five contexts in which silence is appropriate: 1) meeting strangers; 2) courting someone; 3) seeing friends after a long absence; 4) getting cussed out; 5) being with people who are grieving. Verbal reticence with strangers is directly related to the conviction that the establishment of social relationships is a serious matter that calls for caution, careful judgment, and plenty of time.

The western Apaches also believe that silence is an appropriate response to an individual who becomes enraged and starts insulting and criticizing others. The silence represents acknowledgment that the angry person is not really him or herself – that the person has temporarily taken leave of his or her senses, is not responsible for his or her behavior, and therefore may be dangerous [10, p. 244]. In this instance, silence seems the safest course of action. Being with people who are sad or bereaved also calls for silence, for several reasons. First, talking is unnecessary because everyone knows how it feels to be sad. Second, intense grief, like intense rage, results in personality changes and personal instability.

Basso hypothesized that the underlying commonality in these social situations is that participants perceive their relationships *vis-a-vis* one another to be ambiguous and / or unpredictable and that silence is an appropriate response to uncertainty and unpredictability. He also suggested that this same contextual rule may apply to other cultural groups.

### 5.2.3 *Cultural Variation or Stereotype?*

As noted previously, one of the problems with identifying cultural variations in non-verbal codes is that it is tempting to overgeneralize these variations and stereotype people. For example, psychologist Helmut Morsbach cautions us about comparing Japanese and Western attitudes toward silence. Based on his research and extensive experience in Japan, he identifies some of the subtleties of cultural patterns of silence. For instance, the television is on continuously in many Japanese homes, and tape-recorded comments about beauty are transmitted at Zen gardens. So, although many scholars suggest that silence might be a cultural ideal, things maybe different in practice. In very specific situations (such as in mother-daughter relationships or in the hiding of true feelings), there may be more emphasis on silence in Japan than in comparable U.S. situations. Also, when communicating with strangers, the Japanese view silence as more negative

than it is in the United States [8, p. 675].

In any case, we would be wise to heed Morsbach's warning about generalizations. Cultural variations are tentative guidelines that we can use in intercultural interaction. They should serve as examples, to help us understand that there is a great deal of variation in non-verbal behavior. Even if we can not anticipate how other people's behavior may differ from our own, we can be flexible when we do encounter differences in how close someone stands or how she or he uses eye contact or conceptualizes time.

Prejudice is often based on non-verbal aspects of behavior. That is, the negative prejudgment is triggered by physical appearances or behavior. In many kinds of experiences with prejudice, victims develop imaginary "maps" that tell them where they belong and where they are likely to be rejected. They may even start to avoid places and situations in which they do not feel welcome [9, p. 298].

#### 5.2.4 *Semiotics and Non-Verbal Communication*

Semiotics is the study of the signs and symbols of communication and their meanings. Semiotics is a useful tool for examining the various ways that meaning is created in advertisements, clothing, tattoos, and other cultural artifacts. Semioticians have been attentive to the context in which the signifiers (words and symbols) are placed in order to understand which meanings are being communicated. For example, wearing certain kinds of clothes in specific cultural contexts may communicate unwanted messages.

Yet cultural contexts are not fixed and rigid. Rather, they are dynamic and fleeting, as Marcel Proust noted in writing about Paris in *Remembrance of Things Past*: "The reality that I had known no longer existed. It sufficed that Mme Swann did not appear, in the same attire and at the same moment, for the whole avenue to be altered. The places we have known do not belong only to the world of space and time which we map them for our own convenience. None of them was ever more than a thin slice, held between the contiguous impressions that composed our life at that time; the memory of a particular image is but regret for a particular moment: and houses, roads, avenues are as fugitive, alas, as the years" [13, p. 462].

As this excerpt shows, there is no "real" Paris. The city has different meanings at different times for different people, and for different reasons. For example executives of multinational corporations moving into Paris see the city quite differently from immigrants arriving in Paris for personal reasons. Therefore, to about cultural contexts as dynamic means that we must often

think about how they change and in whose interests they change.

### 5.3 Defining Cultural Space

Our individual histories are important in understanding our identities. As the writer John Preston explains, “Where we come from is important to who we are” [12, p. xi]. Each region in every country has its own history and ways of life that help us understand who we are. Our decision to tell you where we come from was meant to communicate something about who we think we are. So, although we can identify precisely the borders that mark out these spaces and make them real, or material, the spaces also are cultural in the ways that we imagine them to be.

What is the communicative (discursive) relationship between cultural spaces and intercultural communication? Judith Martin and Tomas Nakayama define cultural space as “the particular configuration of the communication (discourse) that constructs meanings of various places” [10, p. 247]. This may seem like an unwieldy definition, but it underscores the complexity of cultural spaces. A cultural space is not simply a particular location that has culturally constructed meanings. It can also be a metaphorical place from which we communicate. We can speak from a number of social locations, marked on the “map of society”, that gives an added meaning to our communication. Thus, we may speak as parents, children, colleagues, siblings, customers, and a myriad of other “places”. All of these are cultural spaces.

#### 5.3.1 *Cultural Identity and Cultural Space*

**Home.** Cultural spaces influence how we think about ourselves and others. One of the earliest cultural spaces we experience is our home. As noted previously, non-verbal communication often involves issues of status. The home is no exception. As English professor Paul Fussell notes, “Approaching any house, one is bombarded with class signals” [5, p. 82]. Fussell highlights the semiotic system of social class in the American home – from the way the lawn is maintained, to the kind of furniture within the home, to the way the television is situated.

Even if our home does not reflect the social class to which we aspire, it may be a place of identification [10, p. 248]. We often model our own lives on the patterns from our childhood homes. Although this is not always the case, the home can be a place of safety and security. Home, of course, is not the same as the physical location it occupies or the building (the house) at that location. Home is variously defined in terms of specific addresses, cities,

regions, and even nations. Although we might have historical ties to a particular place, not everyone has the same relationship between those places and their own identities. Indeed, the relationship between place and cultural identity varies.

The relationship between identity, power and cultural space are quite complex. Power relations influence who (or what) gets to claim who (or what), and under what conditions. Some subcultures are accepted and promoted within a particular cultural space, others are tolerated, and still others may be unacceptable. Identifying with various cultural spaces is a negotiated process that is difficult (and sometimes impossible) to predict and control [ibid., p. 250]. The key to understanding the relationships among culture, power, people, and cultural spaces is to think dialectically.

### 5.3.2 *Changing Cultural Space*

**Travel.** We often change cultural spaces when we travel. Traveling is frequently viewed as an unimportant leisure activity, but it is more than that. In terms of intercultural communication, traveling changes cultural spaces in ways that often transform the traveler. Changing cultural spaces means changing who you are and how you interact with others [10, p. 252]. Perhaps the old saying *When in Rome, do as the Romans do* holds true today as we cross cultural spaces more frequently than ever.

Do you alter your communication style when you encounter travelers who are not in their traditional cultural space? Do you assume that they should interact in the ways prescribed by your cultural space? These are some of the issues that travel raises.

**Migration.** People also change cultural spaces when they relocate. Moving, of course, involves a different kind of change in cultural spaces than traveling. In traveling, the change is fleeting, temporary, and usually desirable; it is something that travelers seek out. However, people who migrate do not always seek out this change. Many immigrants leave their homelands simply so they can survive. But they often find it difficult to adjust to the change, especially if the language and customs of the new cultural space are unfamiliar.

### 5.3.3 *Postmodern Cultural Spaces*

Space has become increasingly important in the negotiation of cultural and social identities, and so to culture more generally. As Leah Vande Berg explains, scholars in many areas “have noted that identity and knowledge are

profoundly spatial (as well as temporal), and that this condition structures meaningful embodiment and experience” [14, p. 249]. Postmodern cultural spaces are places that are defined by cultural practices – languages spoken, identities enacted, rituals performed – and they often change as new people move in and out of these spaces. Imagine being in a small restaurant when a large group of people arrives, all of whom are speaking another language. How has this space changed? Whose space is it? As different people move in and out of this space, how does the cultural character change?

Postmodern cultural spaces are both tenuous and dynamic. They are created within existing places, without following any particular guide. There is no marking off of territory, no sense of permanence or official recognition. The postmodern cultural space exists only while it is used [ibid., p. 256]. Thus, the ideology of fixed spaces and categories is currently being challenged by postmodernist notions of space and location.

Cultural spaces can also be metaphorical, with historically defined places serving as sources of contemporary identity negotiation in new spaces. In her study of academia, Olga Idriss Davis turns to the historical role of the kitchen in African American women’s lives and uses the kitchen legacy as a way to rethink the university. She notes that “the relationship between the kitchen and the Academy [university] informs African American women’s experience and historically interconnects their struggles for identity” [2, p. 370]. In this sense, the kitchen is a metaphorical cultural space that is invoked in an entirely new place, the university. This postmodern cultural space is not material but metaphoric, and it allows people to negotiate their identities in new places.

## SUMMARY

- In this chapter, we examined both non-verbal communication principles and cultural spaces. Non-verbal communication operates at a subconscious level. It is learned implicitly and can reinforce, substitute for, or contradict verbal behaviors.
- Non-verbal behaviors can communicate relational meaning, status, and deception. Non-verbal codes are influenced by culture, although many cultures share some non-verbal behaviors. Non-verbal codes include proxemics, eye contact, facial expressions, chronemics and silence. Sometimes cultural differences in non-verbal behaviors can lead to stereotyping of other cultures. Semiotics is one approach to studying non-verbal communication, including cultural practices

related to clothing styles and advertising. Cultural space influences cultural identity. Cultural spaces such as homes, neighborhoods, regions, and nations relate to issues of power and intercultural communication. Two ways of changing cultural spaces are travel and migration. Postmodern cultural spaces are tenuous and dynamic, accommodating people with different cultural identities.

## PRACTICE

- ***Answer the Following Questions:***
  - How does non-verbal communication differ from verbal communication?
  - What are some of the messages that we communicate through our non-verbal behavior?
  - Which non-verbal behavior, if any, is universal?
  - How do our cultural spaces affect our identities?
  - What role does power play in determining our cultural spaces?
  - What is the importance of cultural spaces to intercultural communication?
  - How do postmodern cultural spaces differ from modernist notions of cultural space?
  
- ***Cultural Spaces.*** Think about the different cultural spaces in which you participate (clubs, communities, public organizations and so on). Select one of these spaces, describe when and how you enter and leave it. As a group, discuss the answers to the following questions: (a) which cultural spaces do many students share? Which are not shared by many students? (b) which cultural spaces, if any, are denied to some people? (c) what factors determine whether a person has access to a specific cultural space?
  
- ***Non-Verbal Rules.*** Choose a cultural space that you are interested in studying. Visit this space on four occasions to observe how people interact there. Focus on one aspect of non-verbal communication (e.g., eye contact or proximity). List some rules that seem to govern this aspect of non-verbal communication. For example, if you are focusing on proximity,

you might describe among other things, how far apart people tend to stand when conversing. Based on your observations, list some prescriptions about expected) non-verbal behavior in this cultural space. Share your conclusions with the class. To what extent do other students share your conclusions? Can we generalize about non-verbal rules in cultural spaces? What factors influence whether an individual follows unspoken rules of behavior?

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## **UNDERSTANDING INTERCULTURAL TRANSITIONS**

### **Overview**

In this chapter we will look more specifically at how we move between cultural contexts. People travel across cultural boundaries for many reasons: for work, study, or adventure, or in response to political or other events. The pattern of migration has tremendous implications for intercultural communication. Migration is changing the makeup of population everywhere – and migration does not have to be defined in terms of crossing national borders. For example, China has the largest rural-to-urban migration, and Asia in general has substantial intraregional migrations (e.g., Thais migrating to Taiwan for jobs). Singapore has a million foreign workers among its 2.1 million workers. Thailand also has substantial numbers of foreign workers. The same thing is happening in Europe: Britain and France each have 7% foreign-born population immigrants now constitute nearly 10% of Germany's population. 17% of residents in Canada are foreign-born [12, p. 264].

The oil-exporting Middle East countries have huge numbers of foreign workers (e.g., 70% of the labor force in Saudi Arabia in 2000), but they also have 45% of the world's refugees [ibid.]. In contrast, some regions are losing more people than they are gaining – many African and Caribbean nations have more emigration than immigration. Reductions in a region's population also have implications for intercultural communication. For example, the “brain drain” from Africa has resulted in many young Africans seeking education abroad and then settling there, depriving their home countries of needed educational and technological expertise [ibid.].

We begin this chapter by discussing characteristics of three groups of travelers (migrants). We will define culture shock and examine how migrants resist or adapt to new cultural contexts. Using a dialectical framework, we will also identify four ways in which migrants and hosts can relate. Then we will turn our attention to the individual experience of dealing with cultural transitions. We will identify four models of individual adaptation: 1) the anxiety and uncertainty management model; 2) the U-curve model; 3) the transition model; 4) the communication system model. Finally, we will

explore the relationship between identity, context, and adaptation, and examine the contexts of intercultural transitions.

Topics covered include: Types of Migrant Groups; Culture Shock; Migrant-Host Relationships; Cultural Adaptation; Identity and Adaptation; Intercultural Transitions.

*Key words: Assimilation, Cultural Adaptation, Culture Shock, Explanatory Uncertainty, Integration, Intercultural Identity, Marginalization, Multicultural Identity, Predictive Uncertainty, Segregation, Separation, Transnationalism, U-Curve Theory, W-Curve Theory.*

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## 6.1 Types of Migrant Groups

To understand cultural transitions, we must simultaneously consider both the individual migrant groups and the contexts in which they travel. Migration may be long-term or short-term and voluntary or involuntary. A migrant is an individual who leaves the primary cultural contexts in which he or she was raised and moves to a new cultural context for an extended period [1, p. 17]. For instance, exchange students, sojourns are relatively short-term and voluntary, and these transitions occur within a structured sociopolitical context. Cultural transitions may vary in length and in degree of voluntariness.

### 6.1.1 Voluntary Migrants

According to Thomas Nakayama and Judith Martin, there are two groups of voluntary travelers: sojourners and immigrants [12, p. 261]. *Sojourners* are those travelers who move into new cultural contexts for a limited time and a specific purpose. They are often people who have freedom and the means to travel. This includes international students who go abroad to study and technical assistance workers, corporate personnel who go abroad to work for a specific period. Some domestic sojourners move from one region to another within their own country for a limited time to attend school or work.

Another type of voluntary traveler is the *immigrant*. Families that voluntarily leave one country to settle in another exemplify this type of migrant. There is often a fluid and interdependent relationship between the countries that send and those that receive immigrants. Countries like the United States and Germany welcome working immigrants, even issuing special visas and developing programs during times of economic prosperity.

Currently, there are only five major countries that officially welcome international migrants as permanent residents: the United States, Canada, Australia, Israel and New Zealand. Altogether, these countries accept 1.2 million immigrants a year, a small percentage of the estimated annual global immigration – and these countries can quickly restrict immigration during economic downturns [3]. However, most migrants who move to another country are not accepted as official immigrants. And due to shifts in economic and political policy, family members of migrants may be trapped in the home country, unable to join the rest of the family in the new home country.

International migration is a global fact of life in the XXI century. According to the Population Reference Bureau, at least 160 million people were living outside their country of birth or citizenship in 2000, an increase of about 25% since 1990. Most of this international migration occurs not from developing countries to industrialized countries but from one developing country to another. The voluntariness of immigration is more variable than absolute. Some migrants feel that they have a choice in moving whereas others may not. The decision to migrate usually is made while other factors intervene. The three main reasons that people migrate are asylum seeking, family reunification, and economics [4, p. 3].

### 6.1.2 *Involuntary Migrants*

There are two types of migrants who move involuntarily: *long-term refugees* and *short-term refugees* [12, p. 262]. According to one estimate, 14 million people have left their home countries since 1979 because of superpower struggles (e.g., in the USSR, Afghanistan, Angola, and Cambodia) and, more recently, because of internal ethnic strife (e.g., in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda) [4, p. 5]. Long-term refugees are those forced to relocate permanently because of war, famine, and oppression. Long-term refugees include those who left Rwanda during the war in 1993, and the war in the former Yugoslavia in the mid-1990s.

The following article describes the experience of one group of short-term refugees – the thousands of Native American youths who were taken from their homes and sent to “boarding schools” from the 1880s through the 1960s. Richard Pratt, a zealous army officer, spearheaded this movement, believing that removing these children from their culture would force their assimilation into mainstream society:

*Whether toddlers or teens, they were taken from home and shipped thousands of miles to dreary barracks. Their hair was cut, they were given*

*new names, and each was assigned a number. The United States government began their brutal attempt at social engineering in 1879. Breaking rebellious Indians by indoctrinating their children in Anglo ways was considered a cost-effective alternative to war. But the personal cost to native Americans was incalculable.*

*They were literally kidnapped, loaded on wagons or trains, and all of them thought at any moment they were going to die. When the children arrived at the schools, it was the first time they'd been away from home.*

*Contagious diseases often swept through the schools, and exposure to the elements took the lives of many runaways. For decades, there was little criticism of this abusive program, from a nation steeped in dime novels about "the savage Indian". Instead, magazines such as **Harper's Weekly** praised the schools. Vocational training was central to the boarding-school mission. Indian teens worked at various tasks – girls setting tables and cooking meals, boys repairing shoes or pushing wheelbarrows.*

*Pratt's misguided vision was never fully realized, as most children eventually returned to their families and old ways of life. By the 1960s, tribes wrestled control of the schools away from the federal government. Today, only four boarding schools remain, and attendance is voluntary [12, p. 14].*

## 6.2 Culture Shock

Individuals face many challenges of transition in new cultural contexts. **Culture shock** is a relatively short-term feeling of disorientation, of discomfort due to the unfamiliarity of surroundings and the lack of familiar cues in the environment. Kalvero Oberg, the anthropologist who coined the term, suggests that it is like a disease, complete with symptoms (excessive hand washing, irritability, and so on). If it is treated properly (that is, if the migrant learns the language, makes friends, and so on), the migrant can "recover", or adapt to the new cultural situation and feel at home [15, p. 180].

Although most individuals experience culture shock during the period of transition to a new culture, they are less likely to experience it if they maintain separateness because culture shock presumes cultural contact. Almost all migrants who cross cultural boundaries, whether voluntarily or not, experience culture shock. They then face a long-term process of more or less adapting to the new culture. However, for many individuals, the long-term adaptation is not easy. Some people actively resist assimilation in the short term. For example, many students from Muslim countries, especially females, often continue to wear traditional clothing while living in other countries, thus

actively resisting participating in a host popular culture. Others resist assimilation in the long term, as is the case with some religious groups; like the buddhists or hinduists in foreign countries. Some would like to assimilate but are not welcome in the new culture, as is the case with many immigrants to the United States from Latin America. And some people adapt to some aspects of the new culture but not to others. In sum, the relationship between host society and migrants is complicated. Continuing with the theme of the personal-contextual dialectic, let us look at how hosts and migrants can relate.

The majority of individuals and families that emigrate from other countries have the ability to positively confront the obstacles of a new environment. Dr. Carmen Guanipa, a psychologist, suggests specific ways to combat stress produced by culture shock:

- develop a hobby;
- learn to include a regular form of physical activity in your routine. This will help combat the sadness and loneliness in a constructive manner;
- practice relaxation and meditation. These are proven to be very positive for people who are passing through periods of stress;
- maintain contact with your ethnic group. This will give you a feeling of belonging and will reduce your feelings of loneliness and alienation;
- maintain contact with the new culture. Learn the language. Volunteer in community activities that allow you to practice the language you are learning. This will help you feel less stress about language and useful at the same time;
- allow yourself to feel sad about the things that you have left behind; your family, your friends, etc;
- recognize the sorrow of leaving your old country. Accept the new country. Focus your power on getting through the transition;
- pay attention to relationships with your family and at work. They will serve as support for you in difficult times;
- find ways to live with the things that do not satisfy you 100%;
- if you feel stressed, look for help. There is always someone or some service available to help you [5].

### **6.3 Migrant – Host Relationships**

There are four ways in which migrants may relate to their new cultures: they can assimilate, remain separate, integrate or become marginalized.

### 6.3.1 *Assimilation*

In an assimilation mode, the individual does not want to maintain an isolated cultural identity but wants to maintain relationships with other groups in the new culture. The migrant is more or less welcomed by the new cultural hosts. When this course is freely chosen by everyone, it creates the archetypal “melting pot”. The central focus in assimilation is not on retaining one’s cultural heritage. Many immigrant groups, particularly those from Europe, follow this mode of adapting in North America. For them, assimilating may not require adjusting to new customs. The same religions dominate, eating practices (the use of forks, knives, and spoons) are the same, and many other cultural practices, originated in Europe are already familiar. However, when the dominant group forces assimilation, especially on immigrants whose customs are different from those of the host society, it creates a “pressure cooker” [13, p. 273]. This mode of relating often entails giving up or losing many aspects of the original culture, including language.

As Ukraine is not exposed to significant emigration, again we have to look at other countries’ experience in dealing assimilation process of numerous incoming ethnic groups. A recent study of African Americans and Hispanic Americans showed the effects of society’s pressure on groups to assimilate. According to the study, the more experiences people had with ethnic or racial discrimination (on the job, in public settings, in housing, and in dealings with police), the less importance they assigned to maintaining their own cultural heritage. This suggests that heavy doses of discrimination can discourage retention of immigrants’ original cultural practices.

### 6.3.2 *Separation*

There are two forms of separation. The first is when migrants choose to retain their original culture and avoid interaction with other groups. This is the mode followed by groups like the Amish, who came to the United States from Europe in the XVIII century. They maintain their own way of life and identity and avoid prolonged contact with other groups. Many strict religious groups actively resist the influence of the dominant society. The Amish, for example, do not participate in U.S. popular culture; they do not have television or radio, do not go to movies or read mainstream newspapers or books. An important point here is that these groups choose separation, and the dominant society respects their choice [11, p. 273].

However, if such separation is initiated and enforced by the dominant society, the condition constitutes a second type of separation, segregation.

Many cities and states in the United States historically had quite restrictive codes that dictated where members of various racial and ethnic groups could and could not live. For example, Oregon passed legislation in 1849 excluding Blacks from the state; it was not repealed until 1926 [7, p. 74]. Some people, realizing that they have been excluded from the immigrant advancement version of the melting pot by legal or informal discriminatory practices, in turn promote a separate mode of relating to the host culture. They may demand group rights and recognition but not assimilation.

### *6.3.3 Integration*

Integration occurs when migrants have an interest both in maintaining their original culture and language and in having daily interactions with other groups. This differs from assimilation in that it involves a greater interest in maintaining one's own cultural identity. Immigrants can resist assimilation in many ways – for example, by insisting on speaking their own language in their home.

Migrant communities can actively resist assimilation in many ways. They may refuse to consume popular culture products (TV, radio, movies) or the fashions of the host society, often for many generations. In any case, integration depends on the openness and willingness of those in the dominant society to accept the cultures of others.

### *6.3.4 Marginalization*

Marginalization occurs when individuals or groups express little interest in maintaining cultural ties with either the dominant culture or the migrant culture. This situation of being out of touch with both cultures may be the result of actions by the dominant society – for example, when the U.S. government forced Native Americans to live apart from other members of their nations. However, the term marginalization has come to describe, more generally, individuals who live on the margin of a culture, not able to participate fully in its political and social life as a result of cultural differences.

### *6.3.5 Combined Modes of Relating*

Immigrants and their families often combine these four different modes of relating to the host society – for example, integrating in some areas of life and assimilating in others. They may desire economic assimilation (via employment), linguistic integration (bilingualism), and social separation

(marrying someone from the same group and socializing only with members of their own group). In some families, individual members choose different paths of relating to the larger culture. This can cause tensions when children want to assimilate and parents prefer a more integrative mode. This was true of the high school students in Falls Church, Virginia, referred to at the beginning of the chapter. When asked what they thought about the cultural rules that their parents tried to enforce, the Sikh students said they rebelled when their parents would not let them cut their hair. Some of the Muslim girls argued with their parents about what kinds of dresses they could wear. Some of the Asian students rejected their parents' decree that they marry another Asian.

As these experiences indicate, one of the more difficult aspects of adaptation involves religion. How do immigrants pass on their religious beliefs to their children in a host country with very different religious traditions? Or should they? Aporva Dave, an honors student at Brown University, was curious about this question and conducted (along with another student) a study as an honors thesis. He interviewed members of South Asian Indian families that, like his own, had immigrated to the United States. He was curious about how strictly the parents followed the Hindu religion, how strongly they wanted their children to practice Hinduism in the future, and how the children felt about following the religious practices of their parents. In general, as expected, the children had a tendency to move away from the traditional practices of Hinduism, placing more emphasis on Hindu values than on Hindu practices (e.g., prayer). Although many of the parents themselves prayed daily, most were more concerned that their children adopt the morals and values of Hinduism. The parents seemed to understand that assimilation requires a move away from strict Hindu practices. Most viewed Hinduism as a progressing, "living" religion that would change but not be lost. And many spoke of Hinduism as becoming more attractive as a religion of the future generation [12, p. 277].

However, the study also revealed that children raised in the same house could have very different attitudes toward adaptation and religion. For example, two sisters who participated in the study were raised with "moderately" religious parents who worship weekly, read religious articles, and spend much time thinking about God. One sister followed the traditions of the parents: she prays every day, spends time reading religious scriptures, and is committed to marrying a Hindi. The other sister does not practice Hinduism and places emphasis on love in making a marriage decision [ibid.]. These kinds of differences can sometimes make communication difficult

during the adaptation process.

As individuals encounter new cultural contexts, they have to adapt to some extent. This adaptation process occurs in context, varies with each individual, and is circumscribed by relations of dominance and power in so-called host cultures. Let us look more closely at this process.

## 6.4 Cultural Adaptation

Cultural adaptation is a long-term process of adjusting to and finally feeling comfortable in a new environment [9, p. 46]. Immigrants who enter a culture more or less voluntarily and who at some point decide to – or feel the need to – adapt to the new cultural context experience cultural adaptation in a positive way. This section describes specific models of cultural adaptation, the contexts that enable or hamper adaptation, and the outcomes of adaptation.

### 6.4.1 *Models of Cultural Adaptation*

***The Anxiety and Uncertainty Management Model.*** Communication theorist William Gudykunst stresses that the primary characteristic of relationships in intercultural adaptation is ambiguity. The goal of effective intercultural communication can be reached by reducing anxiety and seeking information, a process known as uncertainty reduction. According to W. Gudykunst, there are several kinds of uncertainty. Predictive uncertainty is the inability to predict what someone will say or do. We all know how important it is to be relatively sure how people will respond to us. Explanatory uncertainty is the inability to explain why people behave as they do [6, p. 101]. In any interaction, it is important not only to predict how someone will behave but also to explain why the person behaves in a particular way. How do we do this? Usually, we have prior knowledge about someone, or we gather more information about the person.

Migrants also may need to reduce the anxiety that is present in intercultural contexts. Some level of anxiety is optimal during an interaction. Too little anxiety may convey that we do not care about the person, and too much causes us to focus only on the anxiety and not on the interaction.

This model assumes that to communicate effectively we will gather information to help us reduce uncertainty and anxiety. How do we do this? Though the theory is complicated, some general suggestions for increasing effectiveness are useful. The theory predicts that the most effective communicators (those who are best able to manage anxiety and predict and explain others' behaviors) 1) have a solid self-concept and self-esteem;

2) have flexible attitudes (a tolerance for ambiguity, empathy) and behaviors and 3) are complex and flexible in their categorization of others (e.g., able to identify similarities and differences and avoid stereotypes). The situation in which communication occurs is important in this model. The most conducive environments are informal, with support from and equal representation of different groups. Finally, this model requires that people be open to new information and recognize alternative ways to interpret information.

Of course, these principles may operate differently according to the cultural context; the theory predicts cultural variability. For example, people with more individualistic orientations may stress independence in self-concepts and communities; self-esteem may become more important in interactions. Individualists also may seek similarities more in categorizing.

**The U-Curve Model.** Many theories describe how people adapt to new cultural environments. The pattern of adaptation varies depending on the circumstances and the migrant, but some commonalities exist. The most common theory is the U-curve theory of adaptation. This theory is based on research conducted by a Norwegian sociologist, Sverre Lysgaard, who interviewed Norwegian students studying in the United States [10, p. 46]. This model has been applied to many different migrant groups.

The main idea is that migrants go through fairly predictable phases in adapting to a new cultural situation. They first experience excitement and anticipation, followed by a period of shock and disorientation (the bottom of the U-curve); then they gradually adapt to the new cultural context. Although this framework is simplistic and does not represent every migrant's experience, most migrants experience these general phases at one time or another.

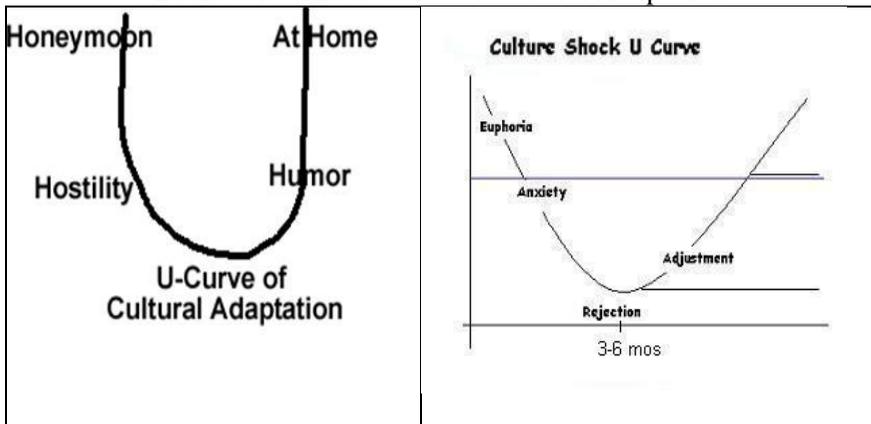
The first phase is the anticipation or excitement phase. When a migrant first enters a new cultural context, he or she may be excited to be in the new situation and only a little apprehensive. The second phase, culture shock, happens to almost everyone in intercultural transitions. And for Helga Maria, it happened pretty quickly: *The first few weeks, I really liked the hot weather, to never have to worry about being cold when outside, and to be able to go to the beach often. But then after a few weeks, when my school started, it became rather tiring. I could hardly be outside for more than five minutes without looking like I just came out of the shower. The bus, or what the students called the "cheese wagon", was the same way, with nice warm leather seats and no air conditioning. I walked around from class to class feeling almost invisible. Thankfully, I could understand some of what people were saying, but not communicate back to them* [12, p. 280].

Not everyone experiences culture shock when they move to a new place. For example, migrants who remain isolated from the new cultural context may experience minimal culture shock. For instance, military personnel, as well as diplomatic personnel, often live in compounds overseas where they associate mainly with other military personnel or diplomats. Thus, they have little contact with the indigenous cultures. Their spouses may experience more culture shock though, because they often have more contact with the host culture: placing children in schools, setting up a household, shopping, and so on.

During the culture shock phase, migrants like Helga Maria and her family may experience disorientation and a crisis of identity. Because identities are shaped and maintained by cultural contexts, experiences in new cultural contexts often raise questions about identities. For example, Judy, an exchange teacher in Morocco, thought of herself as a nice person. Being nice was part of her identity. But when she experienced a lot of discipline problems with her students, she began to question the authenticity of her identity [ibid., p. 282]. When change occurs to the cultural context of an identity, the conditions of that identity also change.

The third phase in Lisgaard’s model is adaptation, in which migrants learn the rules and customs of the new cultural context. Many migrants learn a new language, and they figure out how much of themselves to change in response to the new context [10, p. 49].

**Table 6.4** The U-Curve of Cultural Adaptation



Although the U-curve seems to represent the experiences of many short-term sojourners, it may be too simplistic for other types of migrants. A more accurate model represents long-term adaptation as a series of U-curves.

Migrants alternate between feeling relatively adjusted and experiencing culture shock; over the long term, the sense of culture shock diminishes.

***The Transition Model.*** Recently, culture shock and adaptation have been viewed as a normal part of human experience, as a subcategory of transition shock. Janet Bennett, a communication scholar, suggests that culture shock and adaptation are just like any other “adult transition”. Adult transitions include going away to college for the first time, getting married, and moving from one part of the country to another. These experiences share common characteristics and provoke the same kinds of responses [2, p. 23].

All transition experiences involve change, including some loss and some gain, for individuals. For example, when people marry, they may lose some independence, but they gain companionship and intimacy. When a student goes to a foreign country to study, he / she leaves his / her friends and customs behind but finds new friends and new ways of doing things.

Cultural adaptation depends in part on the individual. Each person has a preferred way of dealing with new situations. Psychologists have found that most individuals prefer either a “flight” or a “fight” approach to unfamiliar situations. Each of these approaches may be more or less productive depending on the context. Migrants who prefer a flight approach when faced with new situations tend to hang back, get the lay of the land, and see how things work before taking the plunge and joining in. Migrants who take this approach may hesitate to speak a language until they feel they can get it right, which is not necessarily a bad thing. Taking time out from the stresses of intercultural interaction (by speaking and reading in one’s native language, socializing with friends of similar background, and so on) may be appropriate. Small periods of “flight” allow migrants some needed rest from the challenges of cultural adaptation. However, getting stuck in the “flight” mode can be unproductive. For example, some U.S. students abroad spend all of their time with other American students and have little opportunity for intercultural learning.

A second method, the “fight” approach, involves jumping in and participating. Migrants who take this approach use the trial-and-error method. They try to speak the new language, do not mind if they make mistakes, jump on a bus even when they are not sure it is the right one, and often make cultural gaffes. Getting stuck in the “fight” mode can also be unproductive. Migrants who take this approach to the extreme tend to act on their surroundings with little flexibility and are likely to criticize the way things are done in the new culture.

Neither of these preferences for dealing with new situations is

inherently right or wrong. Individual preference is a result of family, social, and cultural influences. For example, some parents encourage their children to be assertive, and others encourage their children to wait and watch in new situations. Society may encourage individuals toward one preference or the other. A third alternative is the “flex” approach, in which migrants use a combination of productive “fight” or “flight” behaviors. The idea is to “go with the flow” while keeping in mind the contextual elements. Hostile contexts (such as racism or prejudice) may encourage extreme responses, but a supportive environment (tolerance) may encourage more productive responses.

***The Communication System Model.*** The three approaches discussed so far concentrate on the psychological feelings of migrants, on how comfortable they feel. What role does communication play in the adaptation process? For an answer, we turn to a model of adaptation developed by communication scholar Young Yun Kim. Kim suggests that adaptation is a process of stress, adjustment, and growth. As individuals experience the stress of not fitting in with the environment, the natural response is to seek to adjust. This process of adjustment represents a psychic breakdown of previously held attitudes and behaviors – ones that worked in original cultural contexts. This model fits very well with our dialectical approach in its emphasis on the interconnectedness of individual and context in the adaptation process [9, p. 65].

Adaptation occurs through communication. That is, the migrant communicates with individuals in the new environment and gradually develops new ways of thinking and behaving. In the process, the migrant achieves a new level of functioning and acquires an intercultural identity. Of course, not everyone grows in the migrant experience. Some individuals have difficulty adapting to new ways. According to the cognitive dissonance theorists of the 1950s, individuals typically have three options when confronting ideas or behaviors that do not fit with previously held attitudes: They can 1) reject the new ideas; 2) try to fit them into their existing frameworks or 3) change their frameworks [2].

Communication may have a double edge in adaptation. Migrants who communicate frequently in their new culture adapt better but also experience more culture shock. Beulah Rohrllich and Judith Martin conducted a series of studies of U.S. American students living abroad in various places in Europe. They discovered that those students who communicated the most with host culture members experienced the most culture shock. These were students who spent lots of time with their host families and friends in many different

communication situations (having meals together, working on projects together, socializing, and so on). However, these same students also adapted better and felt more satisfied with their overseas experience than the students who communicated less.

Dan Kealey, who worked for many years with the *Canadian International Development Agency*, conducted studies of overseas technical assistance workers in many different countries. Kealey and his colleagues tried to understand what characterized effective workers and less effective workers. They interviewed the Canadian workers, their spouses, and their host country coworkers. They discovered that the most important characteristics in adaptation were the interpersonal communication competencies of the workers [8, p. 400].

Specifically, how does communication help migrants adapt? There seem to be three stages in this process of adaptation: 1) taking things for granted; 2) making sense of new patterns; 3) coming to understand new information. As migrants begin to make sense of their experiences and interactions in new cultural contexts, they come to understand them in a more holistic way [12, p. 286]. This enables them to fit the new information into a pattern of cultural understanding. Again, this happens through communication with members of the host country and others who implicitly or explicitly explain the new cultural patterns.

Mass media also play a role in helping sojourners and immigrants adapt. Radio, television, movies, and so on are powerful transmitters of cultural values, readily accessible as sources of socialization for newcomers. The mass media may play an especially important role in the beginning stages of adaptation. When sojourners or immigrants first arrive, they may have limited language ability and limited social networks. Listening to the radio or watching TV may be the primary source of contact at this stage, one that avoids negative consequences of not knowing the language.

As we can see, for both students and workers seeking better opportunities overseas, communication and adaptation seem to be a case of “no pain, no gain”. Intercultural interaction may be difficult and stressful but ultimately can be highly rewarding.

#### 6.4.2 *Individual Influences on Adaptation*

Many individual characteristics – including age, gender, preparation level, and expectations can influence how well migrants adapt. But there is contradictory evidence concerning the effects of age and adaptation. On the

one hand, younger people may have an easier time adapting because they are less fixed in their ideas, beliefs, and identities. Because they adapt more completely, though, they may have more trouble when they return home. On the other hand, older people may have more trouble adapting because they are less flexible. However, for that very reason, they may not change as much and so have less trouble when they move back home [9, p. 65].

Level of preparation for the experience may influence how migrants adapt, and this may be related to expectations. Many U.S. sojourners experience more culture shock in England than in other European countries, because they expect little difference between life there and life here in the United States. In contrast, sojourners traveling to cultures that are very different expect to experience culture shock. The research seems to show that overly positive and overly negative expectations lead to more difficulty in adaptation; apparently, positive but realistic or slightly negative expectations prior to the sojourn are best.

### *6.4.3 Outcomes of Adaptation*

Much of the early research on cultural adaptation concentrated on a single dimension. More recent research emphasizes a multidimensional view of adaptation and applies best to voluntary transitions. There are at least three aspects, or dimensions, of adaptation: 1) psychological health; 2) functional fitness; 3) intercultural identity [9, p. 65]. Again, we must note that these specific aspects are dialectically related to the contexts to which individuals adapt.

Part of adapting involves feeling comfortable in new cultural contexts. Psychological health is the most common definition of adaptation, one that concentrates on the emotional state of the individual migrant. Obviously, the newcomer's psychological well-being will depend somewhat on members of the host society. As mentioned previously, if migrants are made to feel welcome, they will feel more comfortable faster. But if the host society sends messages that migrants do not really belong, psychological adjustment becomes much more difficult.

Achieving psychological health generally occurs more quickly than the second outcome, functional fitness, which involves being able to function in daily life in many different contexts. Some psychologists see adaptation mainly as the process of learning new ways of living and behaving. That is, they view the acquisition of skills as more important than psychological well-being. They have tried to identify areas of skills that are most important for

newly arrived members of a society to acquire. Specifically, newcomers to a society should learn the local rules for politeness (e.g., honesty), the rules of verbal communication style (e.g., direct, elaborate), and typical use of non-verbal communication (e.g., proxemic behavior, gestures, eye gaze, facial expressions).

Obviously, the outcome of becoming functionally fit takes quite long and also depends on the cooperation of the host society. Newcomers will become functionally fit more quickly if host members are willing to communicate and interact with them. Even so, it takes most migrants a long time to function at an optimal level in the new society.

Another potential outcome of adaptation is the development of an intercultural identity, a complex concept. Social psychologist Peter Adler writes that the multicultural individual is significantly different from the person who is more culturally restricted [1, p. 30]. The multicultural person is neither a part of nor apart from the host culture. Rather, this person acts situation ally. But the multicultural life is fraught with pitfalls and difficulty. Multicultural people run the risk of not knowing what to believe or how to develop ethics or values. They face life with little grounding and lack the basic personal, social, and cultural guidelines that cultural identities provide.

## **6.5 Identity and Adaptation**

How individual migrants develop multicultural identities depends on three issues. One is the extent to which migrants want to maintain their own identity, language, and way of life compared to how much they want to become part of the larger new society. Recall that the immigrant-host culture relationship can be played out in several ways.

The second issue that affects how migrants develop multicultural identities is the extent to which they have day-to-day interactions with others in the new prejudices that they experience and so retreat to their own cultural groups.

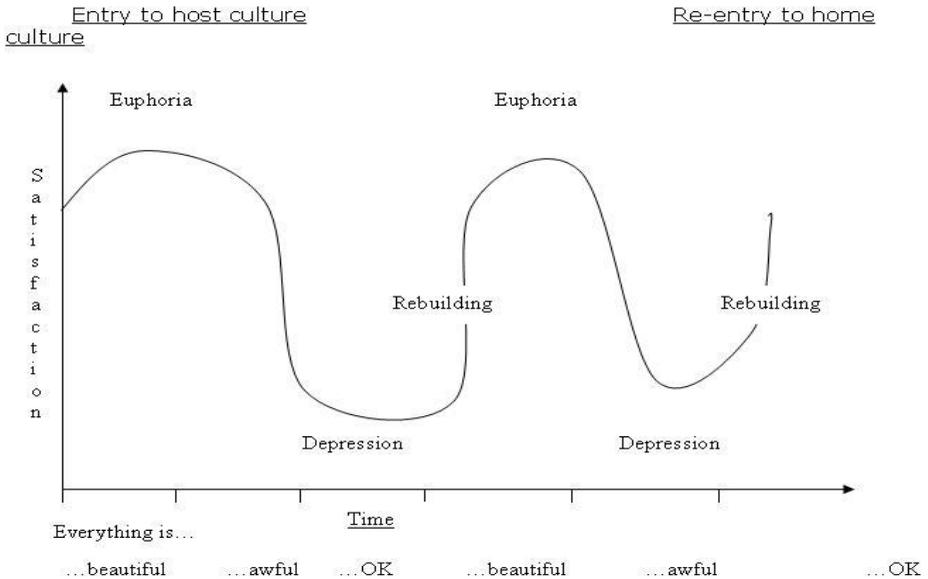
The third issue that affects how migrants relate to their new society involves the ownership of political power. In some societies, the dominant group virtually dictates how non-dominant groups may act; in other societies, non-dominant: groups are largely free to select their own course. Looking at how migrants deal with these identity issues in host culture contexts can help us understand different patterns of contact.

### 6.5.1 Adapting on Re-Entry

When migrants return home to their original cultural contexts, the same process of adaptation occurs and may again involve culture, or reentry, shock. Sometimes this adaptation is even more difficult because it is so unexpected. Coming home, we might think, should be easy. However, students who return home from college, business people who return to corporate headquarters after working abroad all notice the difficulty of readjusting [14, p. 324]. Scholars refer to this process as the W-curve theory of adaptation, because sojourners seem to experience another U-curve: the anticipation of returning home, culture shock in finding that it is not exactly as expected, and then gradual adaptation.

The following diagram shows the stages of culture shock (the W-curve):

**Table 6.5.1** Stages of Culture Shock



There are two fundamental differences between the first and second U-curves, related to issues of personal change and expectations. In the initial curve or phase the sojourner is fundamentally unchanged and is experiencing new cultural contexts. In the reentry phase, the sojourner has changed through the adaptation process and has become a different individual [14, p. 310]. The person who returns home is not the same person who left home. The customs,

attitudes, habits, and values appear different to him. Returnees also recognize that their friends and families expect them to be a little different (more educated) but basically the same as before they went off to school. This lack of interest on the part of friends and family can be especially detrimental for corporations that send employees overseas. The home corporation often does not take advantage of the knowledge and skills that returnees have acquired during their overseas assignments. Rather, employees in the home office often expect the returnees to fit back in, as if the overseas assignment had never happened.

### 6.5.2 *Living on the Border*

As international migration increases and more and more people travel back and forth among different cultures, the lines between adaptation and reentry become less clear. More and more people are living on the border physically, making frequent trips between countries, or living on the border psychologically between bicultural identities. The trend calls for a new view of cultural boundaries and adaptation “as new immigrant populations continuously interact across borders and between the home country and the host society, constructing ... a transnational sociocultural system. Shaping new identities, lives ...” [16, p. 88].

The transnationalism calls into question comforting notions like nation-states, national languages, and coherent cultural communities. People who move back and forth between cultural worlds often develop a multicultural identity [12, p. 295]. Technological developments have made global travel much easier, and we can change cultural contexts as never before. Yet the movement between cultures is never as simple as getting on a plane. Often, in adapting to new cultural contexts, people may find themselves challenged to be cultural-competent by behaving in ways that may be contradictory to their personal identities. For example, a Muslim woman may feel that she can not wear her chador in certain foreign contexts and thus can not express her religious identity. The dialectic calls for a balance between the individual and contextual demands.

#### **Point of View**

##### **A Clash of Cultures**

White Teeth tells the story of three families, one Indian, one white, and one of mixed race, in North London and Oxford from World War II to the present day. In this extract, Samad Iqbal, a Bangladeshi immigrant to London, is asking his son Magid why he wants to take part in his school’s

Harvest Festival, a Christian celebration.

Samad growled, "I told you already. I don't want you participating in that nonsense. It has nothing to do with us, Magid. Why are you always trying to be somebody you are not?"

There was a mutual, silent anger as each acknowledged the painful incident that was being referred to. A few months earlier, on Magid's ninth birthday, a group of very nice-looking white boys with meticulous manners had turned up on the doorstep and asked for Mark Smith.

"Mark? No Mark Smith here", Alsana had said, bending down to their level with a genial smile, "Only the family Iqbal here. You have the wrong house". But before she had finished the sentence, Magid had dashes to the door, ushering his mother out of view.

"Hi, guys"

"Hi, Mark".

"Off to the chess club, Mum".

"Yes, M-M-Mark", said Alsana, close to tears at this final snub, the replacement of "Mum" for "Amma". "Do not be late, now".

"I GIVE YOU A GLORIOUS NAME LIKE MAID MAHFOOZ MURSHED MUBTASIMIQBAL!" Samad had yelled after Magid when he returned home that evening and whipped up the stairs like a bullet to hide in his room. "AND YOU WANT TO BE CALLED MARK SMITH!"

But this was just a symptom of a far deeper malaise. Magid really wanted to be in some other family. He wanted to own cats and not cockroaches, he wanted his mother to make the music of the cello, not the sound of the sewing machine; he wanted to have a trellis of flowers growing up one side of the house instead of the ever growing pile of other people's rubbish; he wanted a piano in the hallway in place of the broken door off cousin Kurshed's car; he wanted to go on hiking holidays to France, not day trips to Blackpool to visit aunties; he wanted the floor of his room to be shiny wood, not the orange and green swirled carpet left over from the restaurant; he wanted his father to be a doctor, not a one-handed waiter; and this month Magid had converted all these desires into a wish to join in with the Harvest Festival like Mark Smith would. Like everybody else would [12, p. 83 – 84].

## SUMMARY

- In this chapter, we highlighted the main issues in moving from one culture to another. We stressed the importance of a dialectical

perspective in examining the migration needs at both an individual level and a sociopolitical level. Migrant groups vary in the length of the migration and the degree of voluntariness. Given these two criteria, there are four types of migrants: sojourners (short-term voluntary), immigrants (long-term voluntary), and refugees (long-term or short-term involuntary). With regard to short-term culture shock and longer-term cultural adaptation, some migrant groups resist rather than adapt to the host culture. There are four modes of relationships between migrants and host cultures: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization.

- Four models can be used to explain adaptation issues: the anxiety and uncertainty management model, the U-curve model, the transition model, and the communication system model. Communication plays a crucial role in migration. Individual characteristics such as age, gender, preparation level, and expectations influence how well people adapt to new cultures. They can affect the personal outcomes of adaptation, which include good psychological health, functional fitness, and an intercultural identity. Cultural adaptation and identity are interrelated in many ways. Migrants who return to their original homes also face readjustment, or cultural reentry. Those who make frequent or multiple border crossings often develop multicultural identities.

## PRACTICE

### ➤ *Answer the Following Questions:*

- Why does culture shock occur to people who make cultural transitions?
  - Why are adaptations to cultures difficult for some people and easier for others?
  - What is the role of communication in the cultural adaptation process?
  - How do relations of power and dominance affect adaptation?
  - What factors affect migration patterns?
- ***Clash of Cultures.*** Read the excerpt from the novel “White Teeth” by Zadie Smith and answer the following questions: (a) How is this text representative of the immigrant experience? (b) What problems can immigrants experience in terms of clashes between their native culture and the culture of the country they live in? (c)

Do you think that the older and younger generations of immigrants in Ukraine have the same disagreements as Samad and Magid?

- **Culture Shock.** Meet with other students in your class in small groups and explore your own experiences of cultural adaptation. Find out how many students experienced culture shock when traveling or studying abroad? How about reentry shock? If there are differences in students' experience, explore why these differences exist. Are they due to differences in individual experience? In contexts?

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## **CULTURE, COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT**

### **Overview**

The need to understand intercultural conflict seems more important now than ever. One thing we can be sure of is that conflict is inevitable. Conflicts are happening all around the world, as they always have, and at many different levels: interpersonal social, national, and international. For example, at the interpersonal level, friends or romantic partners may disagree about their relationship among themselves or with friends and family. At the social level, cultural differences of opinion regarding the importance of preserving the environment compared with the importance of developing industry may fuel conflict between environmentalists and business interests.

There are three significant approaches to understanding conflict. One is the interpersonal approach, which focuses on how cultural differences cause conflict and influence the management of the conflict. The other two approaches – the interpretive and the critical – focus more on intergroup relationships and on cultural, historical, and structural elements as the primary sources of conflict. These three approaches emphasize different aspects of the individual-contextual dialectic [14, p. 372].

Understanding intercultural conflict is especially important because of the relationship between culture and conflict. That is, cultural differences can cause conflict, and once conflict occurs, cultural backgrounds and experiences influence how individuals deal with it. Culture shapes what people consider valuable and worth fighting over; it influences official positions taken and interpretations of others' actions. We should say up front that little is known about how to deal effectively with intercultural conflict. Most research applies almost exclusively to majority culture members. Our challenge is to review this body of research, take what can be applied in intercultural contexts, and perhaps suggest some new ways to think about conflict.

In this chapter we identify characteristics of intercultural conflict, extending our dialectical perspective, and outline two broad orientations to conflict. We examine intercultural conflict in interpersonal contexts, incorporating more interpretive and critical theories into our understanding of conflict. We also examine how cultural background can influence conflict

management. Finally, we discuss guidelines for viewing and engaging in conflict across cultural borders.

Topics covered include: Intercultural Conflict; Interpersonal Approach to Conflict; Types of Conflict; Strategies and Tactics for Dealing with Conflict; Gender, Ethnicity, and Conflict; Value Differences and Conflict Styles; Interpretive and Critical Approaches to Social Conflict; Managing Intercultural Conflict; Productive vs Destructive Conflict; Competition vs Cooperation; Conflict Mediation.

*Key words: Conflict, Confrontation, Dialogue, Intercultural Conflict, Intermediary, International Conflict, Mediation, Obliging Style, Pacifism, Social Conflict, Social Movements.*

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## **7.1 Characteristics of Intercultural Conflict**

One way to think about intercultural conflict is from a dialectical perspective. Let us see an example taken from a course book *Intercultural Communication in Contexts*. The principal of a junior high school in France refused to let three Muslim girls wear their chadors – the scarves traditionally worn by Muslim women to cover their hair in public. In response, the family called in representatives of two Islamic fundamentalist organizations to talk to the principal. The principal defended his action on the grounds of separation of church and state. A high-ranking government official said that, if the school could not persuade the family to change its mind, the girls' education came first, and they should not be expelled. This recommendation did not satisfy anyone, and the dispute quickly became part of a broader national discourse on immigration, integration, and religious and human rights. The issue was never satisfactorily resolved on the national level; it only faded from view after media coverage decreased and the nation turned its attention elsewhere.

The key point is that disputes often are more complicated than they first appear. For example, the dispute can be seen as rooted in personal actions taken by the principal and three students. But at the same time, the context in which the dispute occurred is important – a school setting in a town characterized by tension between emigrants from North Africa and native-born French. Similarly, the individual-cultural dialectic can be invoked. That is, the conflict occurred among several individuals – the principal and the three students, as well as family members, clerics, and government officials. But the conflict was also cultural, with the backgrounds of the disputants (French and North African) reflecting different values and religious beliefs

and practices. Also, the history-present dialectic helps us understand the conflict. The details of the dispute itself were important, but the history of negative feelings toward immigrants fed the dispute and helped push it onto the national stage. For many years, tensions have been high between North African immigrants (France's largest minority) and native-born French. The French often see the North Africans as showing little interest in integrating, while the North Africans bemoan consistent discrimination in jobs, housing, social services, and social interaction. In this historical context, right-wing politicians used the dispute to point out the supposed evils of immigration and the problems created by foreigners.

Another important historical point was the belief of educators in France that the important role of secular education in promoting democratic values had been increasingly eroded. These teachers, already feeling their authority threatened, linked the scarf incident to other examples of Muslim students refusing to attend gym classes or objecting to biology, music, and even art classes on religious grounds [15, p. 324].

Intercultural conflict may be characterized by ambiguity, which causes us to resort quickly to our default style – the style that we learned growing up – in handling it. If your preferred way of handling conflict is to deal with it immediately and you are in a conflict situation with someone who prefers to avoid it, the conflict may become exacerbated as you both retreat to your preferred style. As the confronting person becomes increasingly confrontational, the avoider simply retreats further.

Issues surrounding language may be important to intercultural conflict. When individuals do not know the language well, it is very difficult to handle conflict effectively. At the same time, silence is not always a bad thing. Sometimes it provides a “cooling off” period, allowing things to settle down. Depending on the cultural context, silence can be very appropriate.

Intercultural conflict also may be characterized by a combination of orientations to conflict and conflict management styles. Communication scholar Sheryl Lindsley interviewed managers in *maquiladoras* – sorting or assembly plants along the Mexican-U.S. border – and found many examples of conflict. For example, Mexican managers thought that U.S. managers were often rude and impolite in their dealings with each other and the workers. The biggest difference between U.S. Americans and Mexicans was in the way that U.S. Americans expressed disagreement at management meetings. One Mexican manager explained:

When we are in a meeting together, the U.S. American will tell another manager, “I do not like what you did”. Mexicans interpret this as a personal

insult. They have a difficult time understanding that U.S. Americans can insult each other in this way and then go off and play golf together. Mexicans would be polite, perhaps tell the person in private, or make a suggestion, rather than confronting [12, p. 158]. As Lindsley points out, the conflict between the Mexican and U.S. American managers in their business meetings needs to be understood as a dialectical and “layered” process in which individual, societal, and historical forces are recognized [ibid.].

## 7.2 Two Orientations to Conflict

It is not always easy to figure out the best way to deal with conflict. And what does culture have to do with it? To answer some of these questions, we first describe two very different ways of thinking about conflict. Then we outline some of the ways in which culture and conflict are related.

### 7.2.1 *Conflict as Opportunity*

The *opportunity orientation to conflict* is the one most commonly represented in U.S. interpersonal communication texts. Conflict is usually defined as involving a perceived or real incompatibility of goals, values, expectations, processes, or outcomes between two or more interdependent individuals or groups [1]. According to theologian and mediator David Augsburg, this approach to conflict is based on four assumptions:

- conflict is a normal, useful process;
- all issues are subject to change through negotiation;
- direct confrontation and conciliation are valued;
- conflict is a necessary renegotiation of an implied contract – a redistribution of opportunity, release of tensions, and renewal of relationships [2, p. 74].

Let us examine these assumptions more fully. Conflict may be a difficult process, but it ultimately offers an opportunity for strengthening relationships. Although this orientation to conflict recognizes that many people do not enjoy conflict, it emphasizes the potentially positive aspects. The main idea is that working through conflict constructively results in stronger, healthier, and more satisfying relationships. From this perspective, there are additional benefits for groups working through conflict: they can gain new information about other people or groups, diffuse more serious conflict, and increase cohesiveness [8, p. 66].

Consider the second and third assumptions. Individuals should be encouraged to think of creative and even far-reaching solutions to conflict.

Furthermore, the most desirable response to conflict is to recognize it and work through it in an open, productive way. In fact, many people consider conflict-free relationships to be unhealthy. In relationships without conflict, they suggest, partners are ignoring issues that need to be dealt with [4, p. 37]. Finally, because conflict represents a renegotiation of a contract, it is worthy of celebration. This Western-based approach to conflict suggests a neutral-to-positive orientation, but it is not shared by all cultural groups. Let us look at another orientation.

### 7.2.2 *Conflict as a Destructive Force*

Many cultural groups view conflict as ultimately unproductive for relationships, a perspective that may be rooted in spiritual or cultural values. Although we must be cautious about generalizing, this viewpoint is generally shared by many Asian cultures (reflecting the influence of Confucianism and Taoism) and in the United States by some religious groups, such as Quakers and the Amish. According to Augsburg, four assumptions underlie this perspective:

- conflict is a destructive disturbance of the peace;
- the social system should not be adjusted to meet the needs of members; rather, members should adapt to established values;
- confrontations are destructive and ineffective;
- disputants should be disciplined [2, p. 76].

An American psychologist David Kraybill examines these assumptions. He considers that most Amish, for example, think of conflict not as an opportunity to promote personal growth but as almost certain to destroy the fabric of interpersonal and community harmony. When conflict does arise, the strong spiritual value of pacifism dictates a nonresistant response, such as avoidance or silence. The second assumption says that members of society should adapt to existing values. Among the Amish, the nonresistant stance of *yieldedness*, forbids the use of force in human relations. Thus, the Amish avoid legal and personal confrontation whenever possible [11, p. 231]. This avoidance of conflict extends to a refusal to participate in military activities. For instance, during World War II the federal government granted alternatives to military service for young Amish men. As a result, most Amish conscientious objectors received agricultural deferments, allowing them to work on their farms or on other agricultural projects. Amish children are instructed to turn the other cheek in any conflict situation, even if it means getting beaten up by the neighborhood bully. This emphasis extends to

personal and business relationships; that is, the Amish would prefer to lose face or money than to escalate conflict. Similarly, cultural groups influenced by Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian, and Shinto traditions share a common tendency toward avoidance of confrontation and verbal aggression and absence of direct expression of feelings.

Cultural groups that see conflict as a destructive force often avoid low-level conflict. However, another appropriate response is to seek intervention from a third party or intermediary. On an informal level, a friend or colleague may be asked to intervene. Intermediaries are also used by those who think that interpersonal conflict provides opportunities, mainly in formal settings. For example, people hire lawyers to mediate disputes or negotiate commercial transactions, or they engage counselors or therapists to resolve or manage relational conflicts. Whereas confronting conflict is ultimately desirable, intervention is a less desirable option.

Finally, David Kraybill considers the fourth assumption, that disputants should be disciplined. Discipline is a means of censuring conflict. After all, communities celebrate their success in regaining harmony; they do not celebrate members' contribution to community change and growth through conflict.

This emphasis on non-violence and pacifism may contrast with mainstream Western as well as European values, but as noted previously, many cultural groups practice a nonviolent approach to human and group relations. As Hocker and Wilmot point out, our language makes it difficult even to talk about this approach. Words and phrases like passive resistance and pacifism sound lofty and self-righteous [10, p. 81]. Actually, nonviolence is not the absence of conflict, and it is not a simple refusal to fight. Rather, it is a difficult (and sometimes risky) orientation to interpersonal relationships. The *peacemaking approach* 1) strongly values other people and encourages their growth; 2) attempts to deescalate conflicts or keep them from escalating once they start; 3) favors creative negotiations to resolve conflicts when they arise [ibid.].

Researcher Stella Ting-Toomey describes how these two orientations – conflict as opportunity and conflict as a destructive force – are based on different underlying cultural values involving identity and face-saving. In the more individualistic approach, espoused by most interpersonal communication textbooks, the concern is how individuals can save their own dignity. The more communal approach espoused by both Amish and Japanese cultures and by other collectivistic groups is more concerned with maintaining interpersonal harmony and saving the dignity of others. For example, in

classic Chinese thought, social harmony is the goal of human society – in personal virtue, marriage, family, village, and nation. Writer John Wu explains: “If one is entangled in conflict, the only salvation lies in being so clear-headed and inwardly strong that he is always ready to come to terms by meeting the opponent halfway. To carry the conflict to the bitter end has evil effects even when one is in the right, because the enmity is then perpetuated” [17, p. 227].

### 7.2.3 *Cultural Differences in Conflict Views*

Anthropologists have long been interested in how various cultures differ in the amount of conflict tolerated and the strategies for dealing with conflict. They have concluded that some cultures more prone to conflicts whereas others have a low incidence of conflict. Anthropologist Marc Howard Ross spent many years investigating this question, studying views and norms regarding conflicts in small preindustrial cultures and in modern industrialized nations. According to him, in some cultures conflict tends to be minimized and dealt with constructively; in other cultures, conflicts abound.

As Marc Ross believes, the reasons for this variation seem to lie in both structural and individual and interpersonal characteristics. Take two examples, Northern Ireland and Norway. Northern Ireland has been the scene of conflict for many years between two divided religious groups, Catholic and Protestant, with incompatible interests. These groups live in segregated communities, and members hold powerful stereotypes. In addition to a powerful class and socioeconomic hierarchy, there is a history of discrimination against Catholics in housing and jobs. Reasons for this conflict may also originate from a more personal level, such as male gender identity conflict, the absence of affection and warmth, a lack of social trust, and emotional distance between fathers and children – none of the predispositions useful in dealing with political differences in a democratic society.

In contrast, Norway traditionally has a low incidence of internal conflict, though Norwegians have fought with outsiders in the past. Certainly, social homogeneity is a structural plus (although there are some strong regional differences). There are also extensive *moralnets* – people who provide support to individuals in times of need, such as extended family, friends, and neighbors. Involvement in voluntary associations (characterized by attachments that are more instrumental than emotional) and overlapping social networks make it difficult for communities to divide into permanent factions. A strong collective sense of responsibility is expressed in a variety of

ways, including an emphasis on equality and status leveling, attentiveness to community norms, and conformity and participation, with or without personal commitment.

On a more personal level, Norwegians are socialized to avoid conflict. There are high levels of maternal nurturance and supervision, as well as high levels of paternal involvement, and little is demanded of young children. Norwegians learn early in life that overt aggression or even indirect confrontation of others is unacceptable. Emotional self-control over negative feelings is important. And there are few aggressive models in the popular culture – newspapers do not sensationalize crime, television features little violence and no boxing, and films are controlled.

Low-conflict societies share several characteristics. These include interpersonal practices that build security and trust: a strong linkage between individual and community interests, and high identification with the community so that individuals and groups in conflict trust that its interests are their own; a preference for joint problem solving, which leaves ultimate control over decisions in the hands of the disputants; available third parties, sometimes in the form of the entire community, to facilitate conflict management; an emphasis on the restoration of social harmony that is often at least as strong as the concern with the substantive issues in a dispute; the possibility of exit as a viable option; and strategies of conflict avoidance.

### **7.3 The Interpersonal Approach to Conflict**

Perhaps if everyone agreed on the best way to view conflict, there would be less of it. But the reality is that different orientations to conflict may result in more conflict. In this section, which takes an interpersonal approach, we identify five different types of conflict and some strategies for responding to conflict.

#### *7.3.1 Types of Conflict*

There are many different types of conflict, and we may manage these types in different ways. Communication scholar Mark Cole conducted interviews with Japanese students about their views on conflict and found most of the same general categories as those identified in the United States. These categories include the following: affective conflict; conflict of interest; value conflict; cognitive conflict; goal conflict [5, p. 68 – 69].

*Affective conflict* occurs when individuals become aware that their feelings and emotions are incompatible. For example, suppose someone finds

that his or her romantic love for a close friend is not reciprocated. The disagreement over their different levels of affection causes conflict.

**A conflict of interest** describes a situation in which people have incompatible preferences for a course of action or plan to pursue. The example of this type of conflict is when parents disagree on the appropriate curfew time for their children.

**Value conflict**, a more serious type, occurs when people differ in ideologies on specific issues. For example, suppose Mario and Melinda have been dating for several months and are starting to argue frequently about their religious views, particularly as related to abortion. Melinda is pro-choice and has volunteered to do counseling in an abortion clinic. Mario, a devout Catholic, is opposed to abortion under any circumstances and is very unhappy about Melinda's volunteer work. This situation illustrates value conflict [14, p. 382]

**Cognitive conflict** describes a situation in which two or more people become aware that their thought processes or perceptions are incongruent. For example, suppose Mary and Victor argue frequently about whether Mary's friend Eugene is paying too much attention to her; Derek suspects that Jamal wants to have a sexual encounter with Marissa. Their different perceptions of the situation constitute cognitive conflict.

**Goal conflict** occurs when people disagree about a preferred outcome or end state. For example, suppose Victor and Mary, who have been in a relationship for ten years, have just bought a house. Victor wants to furnish the house slowly, making sure that money goes into the savings account for retirement, whereas Mary wants to furnish the house immediately, using money from their savings, Victor and Mary's individual goals are in conflict with each other.

Conflicts arise for many reasons. Religion is a common cause of conflict in intercultural relationships. Note how this student dealt with religious differences in her marriage: *I just recently got married. I am Caucasian and my husband is Hispanic. He comes from a large, traditional family. My family background does not include many specific traditions. His family is very religious, and I grew up virtually without religion. When I became pregnant, his family told me that the baby would be baptized Catholic and raised Catholic. They also told me that they did not view our marriage as being legitimate (because we were not "married in God's eyes", that is, the Catholic Church). This was hard for me to deal with at first. I felt that I was being pressured to become someone I wasn't. But I agreed to go to church and learn Catholicism [ibid.].*

### 7.3.2 *Strategies and Tactics for Dealing with Conflict*

The ways in which people respond to conflict may be influenced by their cultural backgrounds. Most people deal with conflict the way they learned to while growing up and watching those around them deal with contentious situations. Conflict strategies usually reflect how people manage themselves in relational settings. For example, they may prefer to preserve their own self-esteem rather than help the other person save face [17]. Although individuals have a general predisposition to deal with conflict in particular ways, they may choose different tactics in different situations. People are not necessarily locked into a particular strategy. There are at least five specific styles of managing conflicts: ***dominating, integrating, compromising, obliging, avoiding*** [14; 15].

***Dominating style*** reflects high concern for the self and low concern for the other person. It has been identified with having a win-lose orientation and with forcing behavior to win one's position. The behaviors associated with this style include loud and forceful verbalization, which may be counterproductive to conflict resolution. However, this view may indicate a Eurocentric bias, because members of some cultural groups (including African Americans) see these behaviors as appropriate in many contexts.

***Integrating style*** reflects high concern for both the self and the other person and involves an open and direct exchange of information in an attempt to reach a solution acceptable to both parties. This style is seen as effective in most conflicts because it attempts to be fair and equitable. It assumes collaboration, empathy, objectivity, creativity, and recognition of feelings. However, it requires a lot of time and energy.

***Compromising style*** reflects a moderate degree of concern for both the self and the other person. This style involves sharing and exchanging information in such a way that both individuals give up something to find a mutually acceptable solution. Sometimes this style is less effective than the integrating approach because people feel forced to give up something they value and so have less commitment to the solution.

***Obliging style*** describes a situation in which one person in the conflict plays down the differences and incompatibilities and emphasizes commonalities that satisfy the concerns of the other person. Obliging may be most appropriate when one individual is more concerned with the relationship itself than with specific issues. This is often true of hierarchical relationships in which one person has more status or power than the other. However, as Folger, Poole and Stutmanstate, a pattern of obliging can result in

psuedosolutions, especially if one person or the other resents the constant accommodation, so the strategy can eventually backfire [9, p. 19].

Finally, *avoiding style* reflects, supposedly, a low concern for both the self and the other person. For instance, in the American cultural context, a person who uses this style is often viewed negatively, as attempting to withdraw, sidestep, deny, or bypass the conflict. However, in some cultural contexts, this is an appropriate strategy that, if used by both parties, may result in more harmonious relationships. For example, avoidance can allow individuals to think of some other response, especially if they have trouble “thinking on their feet” [15, p. 320]. Avoidance may also be appropriate if the issue is trivial, if the relationship itself is unimportant to one person, or if others can better manage the conflict.

There are many reasons that we tend to favor a particular conflict style in our interactions. A primary influence is family background; some families prefer a certain conflict style, and children come to accept this style as normal. For instance, the family may have settled conflict in a dominating way, with the person having the strongest argument (or muscle) getting his or her way.

Sometimes people try to reject the conflict styles they saw their parents using. Consider the following examples. One student, Bill, remembers hearing his parents argue long and loud, and his father often used a dominating style of conflict management. He vowed that he would never deal with conflict this way in his own family, and he has tried very hard to keep his vow.

It is important to recognize that people deal with conflict in a variety of ways, for a variety of reasons. A word of caution is in order about conflict management styles. Conflict specialists William Wilmot and Joyce Hocker warn that we should not think of preferred styles as static and set in stone. Rather, they suggest that purely individual styles really do not exist, because we are each influenced by others in interaction. Therefore, our conflict management styles are not static across settings and relationships. For example, people may use dominating styles at work and avoid conflict at home: or they may use avoiding styles at work and compromise at home. And they may use different styles with different partners. For instance, with coworkers, individuals may tend to collaborate and work through conflict issues; with the boss, they may tend to employ more avoiding strategies. In addition, our styles often change over the course of a conflict and over the life span. For example, individuals who tend to avoid conflict may learn the benefits of engaging and working through conflicts.

### 7.3.3 *Gender, Ethnicity and Conflict*

The relationship between gender and conflict management styles is not clear. Some studies show some gender differences, and others do not. For example, in some studies investigating gender differences among American young people, women report that they are more collaborative in their styles than do men, who report themselves as being more competitive. However, in studies of older adults investigating conflict management styles in the workplace, these gender differences disappear.

The relationship between ethnicity, gender, and conflict management is even more complex. The question is whether males and females of different ethnic backgrounds prefer different ways of dealing with conflict. A researcher Mary Jane Collier investigated this issue in a study in which she asked African American, White American, and Mexican American students to describe conflicts they had with close friends and the ways they dealt with the conflicts. She also asked them what they should (and should not) have said and whether they thought that males and females handle conflict differently.

Collier found that male and female ethnic friends differed in their ideas about the best ways to deal with conflict. African American males and females offered generally similar descriptions of a problem-solving approach (integration style) as appropriate behavior in conflict management (one friend said, "I told him to stay in school and that I would help him study". Another explained, "We decided together how to solve the problem") [6, p. 147]. The males tended to emphasize that appropriate arguments should be given, information should be offered, and opinions should be credible, whereas the females generally emphasized appropriate assertiveness without criticism. Some of these findings seem to contradict earlier studies comparing African American and White communication styles. These contradictions might be due to differences among the groups studied (e.g., comparing working-class African Americans and middle-class Whites). Furthermore, because these studies are based on very small samples, we should interpret their findings tentatively.

White males and females generally seemed to focus on the importance of accepting responsibility for their behavior. Males in particular mentioned the importance of being direct (they used expressions like "getting things in the open" and "say right up front") [ibid., p. 145]. Females talked about the importance of concern for the other person and the relationship, and for situational flexibility (one woman explained, "She showed respect for my position and I showed respect for hers" [ibid., p. 146]. Females described

several kinds of appropriate reinforcement of the relationship. In general, males and females in all groups described females as more compassionate and concerned with feelings, and males as more concerned with winning the conflict and being right.

It is important to remember that, whereas ethnicity and gender may be related to ways of dealing with conflict, it is inappropriate (and inaccurate) to assume that any person will behave in a particular way because of his or her ethnicity or gender. We often do not know which cultural attitudes are important to others until we do something that violates those expectations. As this example shows, jokes are not always simply jokes, but indicators of more deeply held cultural attitudes.

*My intercultural conflict was between my family, being Roman Catholic, and that of my ex-boyfriend of two years, who was Jewish. My family is one of those Catholic families that only really consider practicing at Christmas and Easter. I never thought that religion was a big deal until I started dating someone who was not even Christian, I had remembered overhearing my parents talk about interreligious relationships. They used to joke around with me (or so I thought) about bringing home Jewish boys from college. So at first when I started to date Shaun, I didn't tell my parents he was Jewish until about three months into the relationship. My mother, being the outspoken one in the family, had a fit, saying that if I married a Jewish man that I would be excommunicated from the Catholic Church and basically go to hell! My dad, who isn't much of a talker, didn't say much, except that he never asked about Shaun, when in previous relationships he usually gave me the third degree – Dana.*

#### 7.3.4 Value Differences and Conflict Styles

Another way to understand cultural variations in intercultural conflict resolution is to look at how cultural values influence conflict management. Cultural values in individualistic societies differ from those in collectivistic societies. Individualistic societies place greater importance on the individual than on groups like the family or the work group. Individualism is often cited as the most important of European American values, as reflected in the autonomy and independence encouraged in children. For example, children in the United States are often encouraged to leave home after age 18, and older parents generally prefer to live on their own rather than with their children. In contrast, collectivistic societies often place greater importance on extended families and loyalty to groups.

Although these values have been related to national differences, they also may be true for other groups. For example, European Americans may value individualism more than do Latinos/as, and women may value collectivism more than do men.

These contrasting values may influence communication patterns. Several studies have established that people from individualistic societies tend to be more concerned with saving their own self-esteem during conflict, to be more direct in their communication, and to use more controlling, confrontational, and solution-oriented conflict management styles. In contrast, people from collectivistic societies tend to be more concerned with preserving group harmony and with saving the other person's dignity during conflict. They may use a less direct conversational style and may use avoiding and obliging conflict styles instead [21, p. 140]. However, there is some evidence that not all collectivistic societies prefer indirect ways of dealing with conflict. How someone chooses to deal with conflict in any situation depends on the type of conflict and the relationship she or he has with the other person [3, p. 70].

A recent study found that Japanese college students tended to use the avoiding style more often with acquaintances than with best friends in some types of conflicts (conflicts of values and opinions). In contrast, they used the integrating style more with best friends than with acquaintances. In interest conflicts, they used a dominating style more with acquaintances than with best friends [5, p. 101]. This suggests that with out-group members, as with acquaintances, for whom harmony is not as important, the Japanese use dominating or avoiding styles (depending on the conflict type). However, with in-group members like best friends, the way to maintain harmony is to work through the conflict with an integrating style.

#### **7.4 Interpretive and Critical Approaches to Social Conflict**

Both the interpretive and the critical approaches tend to emphasize the social and cultural aspects of conflict. In these perspectives, conflict is far more complex than the ways that interpersonal conflict is enacted. It is deeply rooted in cultural differences in the social, economic, and historical contexts.

Social conflict arises from unequal or unjust social relationships between groups. In social movements, individuals work together to bring about social change. They often use confrontation as a strategy to highlight the injustices of the present system. Thus, for example, when African American students in Greensboro, North Carolina, sat down at White-only

lunch counters in the 1960s, they were pointing out the injustices of segregation. Although the students were nonviolent, their actions drew a violent reaction that, for many people, legitimized the claims of injustice [15].

Historical and political contexts also are sources of conflict. Many international conflicts have arisen over border disputes. For example, Argentina and the United Kingdom both claimed the *Islas Malvinas* (or Falkland Islands) in the south Atlantic, which led to a short war in 1982. Disputes between France and Germany over the Alsace-Lorraine region lasted much longer – from about 1871 to 1945. Similar disputes have arisen between Japan and Russia over islands north of Japan. The historical reasons for such conflicts help us understand the claims of both sides. Contextualizing intercultural conflict can help us understand why the conflict occurs and identify ways to resolve those conflicts.

#### *7.4.1 Social Contexts*

How we manage conflict may depend on the particular context or situation. For example, we may choose to use an avoiding style if we are arguing with a close friend about serious relational issues in a movie theater. In contrast, we may feel freer to use a more confrontational style at a social movement rally.

Nikki, a student working part-time at a restaurant, recalls an incident involving a large group of German tourists. The tourists thought she had added a 15% tip to the bill because they were tourists; they had not realized that it was the company policy when serving large groups. Nikki explains that she was much more conciliatory when dealing with this group in the restaurant than she would have been in a more social context. She thought the tourists were rude, but she practiced good listening skills and took more of a problem-solving approach than she would have otherwise.

Judith Martin gives the following example of a conflict influenced by a special social context. Jacqueline, from Singapore, is annoyed by Americans who comment on how well she speaks English, because English is her first language even though she is ethnically Chinese. She used to say nothing in response; now sometimes she retorts, “So is yours”, reflecting her struggle against the stereotype that Asians cannot speak English. In this context, the social movement against racism gives meaning to the conflict that arises for Jacqueline.

There is, of course, no comprehensive list of existing social movements. They arise and dissipate, depending on the opposition they

provoke, the attention they attract, and the strategies they use. As part of social change, social movements need confrontation to highlight the perceived injustice. To understand communication practices such as these, it is important to study their social contexts. Social movements highlight many issues relevant to intercultural interaction.

#### 7.4.2 *Economic Contexts*

Many conflicts are fueled by economic problems, which may be expressed in cultural differences. Many people find it easier to explain economic troubles by pointing to cultural differences or by assigning blame. For example, in the United States, there are many arguments about limiting immigration, with attention focusing largely on non-European immigrants. Concerns about illegal immigrants from Mexico far overshadow concerns about illegal immigrants from, say, Ireland. Discussions about the contributions to society made by different immigrant groups tend to favor European immigrants. Americans of a French and Dutch ancestries earn less (and therefore contribute less) than U.S. Americans who trace their ancestry to the Philippines, India, Lebanon, China, Thailand, Greece, Italy, Poland, and many other countries [14, p. 390]. And yet we do not hear calls for halting immigration from France or the Netherlands. In what ways is the economic argument really hiding a racist argument?

As the economic contexts change, we see more cultural conflict taking place. The former East Germany, for example, now has many more racially motivated attacks as the region attempts to rebuild its economy. Prejudice and stereotyping that lead to conflict are often due to perceived economic threats and competition. In this sense, economics fuels scapegoating and intercultural conflict and is an important context for understanding intercultural conflict.

#### 7.4.3 *Historical and Political Context*

There is an English saying *Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me*. In fact, we know that derogatory words can be a powerful source of conflict. The force that many derogatory words carry comes from their historical usage and the history of oppression to which they refer. Much of our identity comes from history. It is only through understanding the past that we can understand what it means to be members of particular cultural groups.

Sometimes identities are constructed in opposition to or in conflict with other identities. When people identify themselves as members of particular

cultural groups, they are marking their difference from others. These differences, when infused with historical antagonism, can lead to conflicts. Consider, for example, the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. These did not emerge from interpersonal conflicts among the current inhabitants but rather, in large part, reflect centuries-old antagonisms between cultural groups. The contemporary participants are caught in a historical web that has pitted cultural identities against one another.

These dynamics are at work all around the world. Historical antagonisms become part of cultural identities and practices that place people in positions of conflict. Whether in the Middle East, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, Uganda, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, East Timor, Kosovo, or Chechnya, these historical antagonisms lead to various forms of conflict.

When people witness conflict, they often assume that it is caused by personal issues between individuals. By reducing conflict to the level of interpersonal interaction, we lose sight of the larger social and political forces that contextualize these conflicts. People are in conflict for reasons that extend far beyond personal communication styles.

## 7.5 Managing Intercultural Conflict

### 7.5.1 *Productive vs Destructive Conflict*

One way to think about conflict across cultures is in terms of what is more or less successful conflict management or resolution. Given all of the variations in how people deal with conflict, what happens when there is conflict in intercultural relationships? Scholar David Augsburger suggests that ***productive intercultural conflict*** is different from ***destructive conflict*** in four ways. First, in productive conflict, individuals or groups narrow the conflict in terms of definition, focus, and issues. In destructive conflict, they escalate the issues or negative attitudes. For example, if a partner says, “You never do the dishes” or “You always put me down in front of my friends”, the conflict is likely to escalate. Instead, the partner could focus on a specific instance of being put down.

Second, in productive conflict, individuals or groups limit conflict to the original issue. In destructive conflict, they escalate the conflict from the original issues, with any aspect of the relationship open for re-examination. For example, guests on talk shows about extramarital affairs might initially refer to a specific affair and then expand the conflict to include numerous prior arguments.

Third, in productive conflict, individuals or groups direct the conflict

toward cooperative problem solving. For example, a partner may ask, “How can we work this out?” In contrast, in destructive conflict, strategies involve the use of power, threats, coercion, and deception. For example, an individual might threaten his or her partner: “Either you do what I want, or else”. Finally, in productive conflict, individuals or groups trust leadership that stresses mutually satisfactory outcomes. In destructive conflict, they polarize behind single-minded and militant leadership [2, p. 69].

### 7.5.2 *Competition vs Cooperation*

As you can see, the general theme in destructive conflict is competitive escalation, often into long-term negativity. The conflicting parties have set up a self-perpetuating, mutually confirming expectation. “Each is treating the other badly because it feels that the other deserves to be treated badly because the other treats it badly and so on” [7, p. 41].

The researcher further questions how can individuals and groups promote cooperative processes in conflict situations. The general atmosphere of a relationship will promote specific processes and acts [ibid.]. For instance, a competitive atmosphere will promote coercion, deception, suspicion, and rigidity, and lead to poor communication. In contrast, a cooperative atmosphere will promote perceived similarity, trust, and flexibility, and lead to open communication. The key is to establish a positive, cooperative atmosphere in the beginning stages of the relationship or group interaction. It is much more difficult to turn a competitive relationship into a cooperative one once the conflict has started to escalate.

Essential to setting a cooperative atmosphere is exploration. Whereas competition often relies on argumentation, cooperation relies on exploration. Exploration may be done in various ways in different cultures, but it has several basic steps. The parties must first put the issue of conflict on hold and then explore other options or delegate the problem to a third party. Blaming is suspended, so it is possible to generate new ideas or positions. “If all conflicting parties are committed to the process, there is a sense of joint ownership of the recommended solution. Moving toward enemies as if they were friends exerts a paradoxical force on them and can bring transcendence” [10, p. 59].

However, exploration does not have to be logically consistent or rational. As Augsburgers points out, “Exploration can be provocative, speculative, and emotional” [2, p. 61]. It should encourage individuals to think of innovative and interesting solutions to the conflict at hand.

### 7.5.3 *Dealing with Conflict*

There are no easy answers in dealing with intercultural conflict. Sometimes, we can apply the principles of dialectics; other times, we may need to step back and show self-restraint. Occasionally, though, it may be more appropriate to assert ourselves and not be afraid of strong emotion. Here, David Augsburger offers seven suggestions for dealing with conflict [2]:

- stay centered and do not polarize;
- maintain contact;
- recognize the existence of different styles;
- identify your preferred style;
- be creative and expand your style repertoire;
- recognize the importance of conflict context;
- be willing to forgive.

Let us look at these guidelines in more detail.

***Stay Centered and Do Not Polarize.*** It is important to move beyond traditional stereotypes and *either-or thinking*. David Augsburger elaborates on this approach to dealing with conflict: “Immediately challenge the intrusion of either-or thinking, traditional stereotypes, and reductionists explanations of the other’s motives as simple while seeing your own as complex. Sustain the conflicting images of reality, one from the antagonist and one of your own, in parallel co-existence within your mind. Be open to a third, centered perspective that may bring a new synthesis into view” [2, p. 66]. The parties involved must practice self-restraint. It is okay to get angry, but it is important to move past the anger and to refrain from acting out feelings.

***Maintain Contact.*** This does not mean that the parties have to stay in the conflict situation – sometimes it is necessary to step away for a while. However, the parties should not cut off the relationship. They should attempt a dialogue rather than isolate themselves from each other or engage in fighting. Dialogue differs from normal conversation in that it is slow, careful, full of feelings respectful and attentive. This movement toward an apparently opposing viewpoint must be learned; few develop this approach to others without a deep sense of the importance of each human being, and a belief in collaboratively searching for new solutions that honor each person.

Dialogue is possible only between two persons or two groups whose power relationship is more or less in balance. Dialogue offers an important opportunity to come to a richer understanding of intercultural conflicts and experiences.

John, a student of American college, experienced an intercultural conflict in an accounting class in which his maintaining contact paid off. He was placed in a group with three Japanese students who were all friends. He recalls: *Right from the beginning things were quite awkward; their mathematics abilities far exceeded mine. After only two days, they had met twice without me and completed part of the assignment. I had been left out of the decision-making process.*

Rather than avoiding the problem, however, he decided to invite them all over to his house to talk about the project. Everyone was able to loosen up and discuss what had gone wrong, and the conflict was handled productively: *Although I was unhappy with the way things went during the earlier parts of the project, the end result was three new acquaintances and an A in accounting'.*

**Recognize the Existence of Different Styles.** Conflict is often exacerbated because of the unwillingness of partners to recognize management style differences. Communication scholar Barbara Speicher analyzes a conflict that occurred between two student leaders on the same committee: the chair, Peter, an African American male, and Kathy, a European American female who was president of the organization. The two had a history of interpersonal antagonism. They disagreed on how meetings should be run and how data should be collected in a particular project they were working on. They interviewed the other participants afterwards and learned that most thought the conflict was related mainly to the interpersonal history of the two and to the issue at hand, but not to either race or gender.

Part of the problem is due to differences in perceptions of **rationalism** and **emotionalism**. In Western thought, these two behaviors often are seen as mutually exclusive. But this is not so in Afrocentric thinking. Peter believed that he was being rational, giving solid evidence for each of his claims, and also being emotional. To his Eurocentric colleagues, his high affect seemed to communicate that he was taking something personally, that his vehemence precluded rationality or resolution. Speicher suggests that perhaps we need to rethink the way we define conflict competence. From an Afrocentric point of view, one can be emotional and rational and still be deemed competent.

In this particular case failure to recognize cultural differences led to a negative evaluation of an individual. The problems that emerged in this exchange were attributed almost exclusively to Peter's behavior. The evaluation was compounded by the certainty on the part of the European Americans, as expressed in the interviews, that their interpretation was the correct one, a notion reinforced by the Eurocentric literature on conflict.

In the opinion of Pike and Sillars, this particular combination of differing but complementary styles often results in damaged relationships and frozen agendas – the rational / avoiding – emotional / confronting “dance”. For example, two people with assertive emotional styles may understand each other and know how to work through the conflict. Likewise, things can work for if both people avoid open conflict, particularly in long-term committed relationships [16]. Jointly, avoiding conflict does not necessarily mean that it goes away, but it may give people time to think about how to deal with the conflict and talk about it.

***Identify Your Preferred Style.*** Although people may change their way of dealing with conflict based on the situation and the type of conflict, most tend to use the same style in most situations. For example, Susan and George both prefer an avoiding style. If they are pushed into conflict or feel strongly that they need to resolve a particular issue, they can speak up for themselves. However, they both prefer more indirect means of dealing with current and potential conflicts. They often choose to work things out on a more personal, indirect level. It is also important to recognize which conflict styles “push your conflict button”. Some styles are more or less compatible. It is important to know which styles are congruent with your own.

***Be Creative and Expand Your Style Repertoire.*** If a particular way of dealing with conflict is not working, be willing to try a different style. Of course, this is easier said than done. As conflict specialists William Wilmot and Joyce Hocker explain, people often seem to get “frozen” into a conflict style. For example, some people consistently deny any problems in a relationship, whereas others consistently escalate small conflicts into large ones.

There are many reasons for getting stuck in a conflict management style, according to Wilmot and Hocker. The style may have developed during a time when the person felt good about him- or herself – when the particular conflict management style worked well. Consider, for example, the high school athlete who develops an aggressive style on and off the playing field – a style that people seem to respect. A limited repertoire may be related to gender differences. Some women get stuck in an avoiding style, whereas some men get stuck in a confronting style. A limited repertoire also may come from cultural background – a culture that encourages confronting conflict or a culture that rewards avoiding conflict. A combination of these reasons is the likely cause of getting stuck in the use of one conflict management style.

In most aspects of intercultural communication, adaptability and flexibility serve us well – and conflict communication is no exception. This

means that there is no so-called objective way to deal with conflict. Many times, as in other aspects of relationships, it is best simply to listen and not say anything. One strategy that mediators use is to allow one person to talk for an extended time while the other person listens.

***Recognize the Importance of Conflict Context.*** As noted earlier in this chapter, it is important to understand the larger social, economic, political, and historical contexts that give meaning to many types of conflict. Conflict arises for many reasons, and it is misleading to think that all conflict can be understood within the interpersonal context alone. People often act in ways that cause conflict. However, it is important to let the context explain the behavior as much as possible. Otherwise, the behavior may not make sense. Once you understand the contexts that frame the conflict, whether cultural, social, historical, or political, you will be in a better position to understand and conceive of the possibilities for resolution.

***Be Willing to Forgive.*** A final suggestion for facilitating conflict, particularly in long-term relationships, is to consider forgiveness. This means letting go of – not forgetting – feelings of revenge [13, p. 279]. This maybe particularly useful in intercultural conflict.

Teaching forgiveness between estranged individuals is as old as recorded history; it is present in every culture and is part of the human condition. Forgiveness can be a healthy reaction. Psychologists point out that blaming others and feeling resentment lead to a victim mentality. And a lack of forgiveness may actually lead to stress, burnout, and physical problems [ibid.].

There are several models of forgiveness. Most include the acknowledgement of feelings of hurt and anger and a need for healing. In a forgiveness loop, forgiveness is seen as socially constructed and based in communication. If someone is in a stressed relationship, he or she can create actions and behaviors that make forgiveness seem real; then he or she can communicate this to the other person, enabling the relationship to move forward.

Forgiveness may take a long time. It is important to distinguish between what is forgiveness and what is not, because false forgiveness can be self-righteous and obtrusive; it almost nurtures past transgression. As writer Roxane Luofs explains, "... forgiveness is not simply forgetting that something happened. It does not deny anger. It does not put us in a position of superiority. It is not a declaration of the end of all conflict, of ever risking again with the other person (or anybody else). It is not one way. We do not forgive in order to be martyrs to the relationship. We forgive because it is

better for us and better for the other person. We forgive because we want to act freely again, not react out of past pain. It is the final stage of conflict and is the one thing that is most likely to prevent repetitive, destructive cycles of conflict” [13, p. 283 – 284].

Conflict specialist David Augsburg identifies six key Western assumptions – conflict myths – and notes their inadequacies in intercultural settings:

- people and problems can be separated cleanly: interests and positions can be distinguished sharply. In most cultures of the world, equal attention must be given to both person and problem, to relationship and goals and to private interests as well as public positions if a creative resolution is to be reached.
- Open self-disclosure is a positive value in negotiations. An open process of public data shared in candid style is assumed necessary for trust. “Open covenants, openly arrived at”, Woodrow Wilson insisted, as did Harry Truman, were the basis for setting up the United Nations. However, when constituents can hear what is being sacrificed in reaching an agreement, then compromise becomes improbable and often impossible precisely because of that openness. The real negotiation is done in corridors or behind closed doors, and is announced publicly when agreements have been reached. Virtually nothing of any substance is agreed on in the official public UN debates.
- Immediacy, directness, decisiveness, and haste are preferred strategies in timing. The Western valuation that time is money can press the negotiator to come to terms prematurely. Many different cultures find that the best way to reach an agreement is to give the matter sufficient time to allow adjustments to be made, accommodations to emerge, and acceptance to evolve and emerge. Believing that “time is people”, they are in less haste to reach closure.
- Language employed should be reasonable, rational, and responsible. In some cultures, deprecative language, extreme accusations and vitriolic expressions are used as a negotiating power tactic.
- “No is no” and “yes is yes” (an affirmation is absolute, a negation final). In some cultures, one does not say no to an offer; requests are not phrased to elicit negotiations; when an offer is affirmed, the real meanings are weighed and assessed carefully. Many negotiators have left a meeting with a perceived agreement only to find that the real

position was more subtle, more concealed, and the reverse of their public expectations.

- When an agreement is reached, implementation will take care of itself as a logical consequence. The agreements negotiated may mean different things to parties in a reconciliation. Built-in processes, ongoing negotiations, open channels for resolving problems as they arise in ongoing interpretation, and circumstances that would warrant renegotiation are all useful elements for ensuring ongoing success.

#### 7.5.4 *Mediation*

Sometimes two individuals or groups cannot work through conflict on their own. They may request an intermediary, or one may be assigned to intervene. In some societies, these third parties may be rather informal. In Western societies, though, they tend to be built into the legal and judicial system. For example, lawyers or counselors may act as mediators to settle community or family disputes.

Contemporary Western mediation models often ignore cultural variations in conflict processes. Fortunately, more scholars and mediators are looking at other cultural models that may work better in intercultural conflicts. Augsburg suggests that the culturally sensitive mediator engages in conflict transformation (not conflict resolution or conflict management). The conflict transformer assists disputants to think in new ways about the conflict – for example, to transform attitudes by redirecting negative perceptions. This requires a commitment by both parties to treat each other with goodwill and mutual respect [2, p. 202]. Of course, this is often much easier said than done. Behavior can be transformed by limiting all action to collaborative behavior; this can break the negative cycle but requires a commitment to seek a non-coercive process of negotiation even when there has been intense provocation.

Traditional societies often use mediation models based on non-direct means. The models vary but share many characteristics. Whereas North American mediation tends to be more formal and structured, involving direct confrontation and communication, most traditional cultural models are more communally based, with involvement by trusted leaders. Indirect communication is preferred in order to permit individuals to save face. In addition, the process is more dynamic, directed toward resolving tension in the community – the responsibility of the disputants to their larger community is central [ibid., p. 204].

The author provides the example of mediation in the Gitksan Nation, in

northwest British Columbia, where mediation of disputes begins with placement of the problem “in the middle of the table”. Everyone involved – including those in authority and the witnesses – must make suggestions in a peaceful manner until they come to a decision all can live with. Even conflicts ending in murder are resolved in this consensus-oriented fashion. For instance, *land would be transferred as compensation to help deal with the pain of the loss. The murderer might be required to give up his or her name and go nameless for a period to show respect for the life taken* [ibid., p. 213]. Eventually, however, the land or anything else that was given up would be returned, *when the pain has passed and time has taken care of the grief* Augsburg points out that this traditional communal approach to mediation is based on collectivistic beliefs that make individualistic solutions to conflicts unacceptable [ibid.].

Contemporary mediators have learned some lessons from the traditional non-Western models, and mediation is used increasingly in Canada, United States and Europe to resolve conflicts. Mediation is advantageous because it relies on the disputing parties’ active involvement in and commitment to the resolution. Also, it represents the work of all involved, so it is likely to be more creative and integrative. Finally, mediation is often cheaper than adversarial legal resolution.

## SUMMARY

- In this chapter, we took various approaches to understanding conflict. Intercultural conflict may be characterized by ambiguity, language issues, and combinations of conflict management styles. There are two very different cultural orientations to conflict – conflict as opportunity and conflict as destructive force – as well as various cultural differences in viewing conflict. The interpersonal approach to understanding conflict focuses on cultural differences, types of conflict (affective conflict, conflict of interest, value conflict, cognitive conflict, and goal conflict), and conflict styles (dominating, integrating, compromising, obliging, and avoiding). The choice of conflict style depends on cultural background and on gender and ethnicity. For example, people from individualistic cultures may tend to use dominating styles, people from collectivistic cultures may prefer more integrating, obliging, and avoiding styles. However, the type of conflict and the relationship the disputants have will mediate these tendencies.

- Conflict may be productive or destructive. Productive conflict is more likely to be managed or resolved. One theme of destructive conflict is a competitive atmosphere. A cooperative atmosphere is more conducive to conflict management or resolution. Suggestions for dealing with intercultural conflicts include staying centered, maintaining contact, recognizing the existence of different conflict management styles. It would be also rationale to identify a preferred style, to be creative and expand one’s conflict style repertoire, recognize the importance of conflict context, and to be willing to forgive.
- Transforming methods of mediation are commonly used in many cultures. A conflict transformer helps the disputing parties change their attitudes and behaviors.

## PRACTICE

### ➤ **Answer the Following Questions:**

- How does the *conflict as opportunity orientation* differ from the *conflict as a destructive force orientation*?
  - Why is it important to understand the context in which intercultural conflict occurs?
  - How are conflict strategies used in social movements?
  - How does an attitude of forgiveness facilitate conflict resolution?
  - What are some general suggestions for dealing with intercultural conflict?
- **Cultures in Conflict.** For this assignment, work in groups of four. As a group, whereas select two countries or cultural groups that are currently in conflict or that have historically been in conflict. In your group, form two pairs. One pair will research the conflict from the perspective of one of the two cultural groups or countries; the other pair will research the conflict from the perspective of the other group or country. Use library and community resources (including interviews with members of the culture if possible). Outline the major issues and arguments. Explore the role of cultural values, and political, economic, and historical contexts that may contribute to the conflict. Be prepared to present an oral or written report of your research.

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# THE OUTLOOK FOR INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

## Overview

Now that we are nearing the end of our journey through this textbook, you might ask – How do you really know whether you are a good intercultural communicator? We have covered a lot of topics and discussed some ideas that will help you be a better communicator. You can not learn how to be a good communicator merely by reading books, though. Just as in learning to be a good public speaker or a good relational partner, it takes experience. In this chapter we want to leave you with some specific ideas and suggestions for improving your skills in communicating across cultures.

We can approach intercultural competence in several ways. We will begin this chapter with the social science approach, identifying specific components of competence: motivation, knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and skills. We then turn to interpretive and critical approaches, emphasizing the contextual issues in competence. Finally, we continue our dialectical perspective, combining individual and contextual elements to offer specific suggestions for improving intercultural relations by building alliances and coalitions across cultures.

Topics covered include: Components of Competence; Applying Knowledge about Intercultural Communication; Entering Into Dialogue; Interpersonal Allies; Coalitions Forgiveness and Transformation.

*Key words: Conscious Competence, Conscious Incompetence, Empathy, Intercultural Alliances, Motivation, Non-Judgmentalism, Self-knowledge, Tolerance, Transpection, Unconscious Competence, Unconscious Incompetence.*

## 8.1 The Components of Competence

What are the things we have to know, the attitudes and behavior, to make us competent communicators? Do we have to be motivated to be good at intercultural communication? Communication scholars Brian Spitzberg and William Cupach studied interpersonal communication competence in U.S. contexts from a social science perspective, and other scholars have tried

to apply their findings in intercultural contexts. These studies resulted in a list of basic components, or building blocks, of intercultural communication competence [15, p. 317]. We present these components here because we think they serve as a useful starting point. However, we offer three cautionary notes. First, this is only a starting point. Second, the basic components are interrelated; it is difficult to separate motivation, knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills. Third, it is important to contextualize these components – to ask ourselves: “Who came up with these components? Are they applicable to everyone?” For example, if a group of Native American scholars came up with guidelines for what it takes to be interculturally competent, would these guidelines apply to every cultural context?

### *8.1.1 Individual Components*

**Motivation.** Perhaps the most important dimension of communication competence is motivation. If we aren’t motivated to communicate with others, it probably does not matter what other skills we possess. We can not assume that people always want to communicate. And yet, motivation is an important aspect of developing intercultural competence.

Why might people not be motivated to engage in intercultural communication? One reason is that members of large, powerful groups often think they do not need to know much about other cultures; there is simply no incentive. In contrast, people from less powerful groups have a strong incentive to learn about and interact with more powerful groups. For example, female managers in corporations are motivated to learn about and adjust to the dominant male norms, Latinos are motivated to learn European American norms, and visitors overseas are motivated to learn about and adjust to the norms of foreign cultures. The survival of these less powerful groups often depends on members’ motivation to succeed at intercultural interaction [9, p. 408].

Sometimes people can become motivated to learn about other cultures and to communicate interculturally. For example, the events of 9/11 motivated many U.S. Americans to become more aware of how U.S. worldviews and behavior, on both a personal and a political level, are intertwined with those in other cultures and countries. As an essay in the *Christian Science Monitor* reported, educators scrambled to incorporate more material about Islam and the Middle East in their curricula, in order to help students make some sense out of the historical and political reasons for the terrorist attacks.

For educators the rush for knowledge has been gratifying. But to some

it dramatically underscores the fact that an inward-looking America routinely fails to ground its citizens in the complexities of world history. Most schools serve up little or no material related to the Middle East or a basic understanding of Islam. “Maybe there are courses about the Middle East in some of the more affluent school districts” – says Bill Schechter, a history teacher at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School in Sudbury, Massachusetts. “But in most schools there’s just a bit about the crusades in world history, and then 30 minutes at some point during the school year to talk about the current crisis” [3].

A second reason that people are not motivated is because intercultural communication can be uncomfortable. As discussed previously, anxiety, uncertainty, and fear are common aspects of intercultural interactions. And yet, moving out of our *communication comfort zone* often leads to insights into other individuals, groups, and cultures.

Psychologist Beverly Tatum suggests that people do not address delicate intercultural issues out of fear – fear of being isolated from friends and family members who may be prejudiced and not motivated themselves. She points out that this fear and the resulting silences have huge costs to us, as individuals and society. Individually, when we are not motivated to reach out across cultural divides, we suffer from distorted perception (we do not really know how individuals from other cultures may view us or a particular situation) and a lack of personal growth. On the societal level, when we are not motivated to embrace other cultures and other ways of thinking and behavior, our organizations suffer from a loss of productivity and human potential (not everyone gets the opportunity to contribute ideas) [14, p. 199].

Third, motivation is lacking in contexts in which historical events or political circumstances have resulted in communication breakdowns. For example, it is understandable, given the history of animosity in the Middle East, that Israeli and Arab students would not be motivated to communicate with each other. It is also understandable why a Serbian student would not want to room with a Croatian student, or why a Greek Cypriot would not want to forge a friendship with a Turkish Cypriot, given that these two ethnic communities have been engaged in one of the most protracted international disputes of all time.

The point here is that it does not matter how good a communicator you are if you are not motivated to use those communication skills. For some people, the first step in developing intercultural communication competence may be to examine their motivation to reach out to others who are culturally different.

**Knowledge.** The knowledge component comprises various cognitive aspects of communication competence; it involves what we know about ourselves and others, and about various aspects of communication. Perhaps most important is self-knowledge – knowing how you may be perceived as a communicator and what your strengths and weaknesses are. How can you know what these are? Sometimes you can learn by listening to what others say and by observing how they perceive you.

Acquiring self-knowledge is a long and sometimes complicated process. It involves being open to information coming in many different ways. A White student describes her growing awareness of what it means to be White in the United States after listening to Chicano and African American guest speakers: *They each spoke about their experiences that they have had [with others prejudging them] ... We discover our White identity by listening to others. We hear these hardships that they have had to endure and we realize that we never have had to experience that. You learn a lot about yourself that way ... By listening to our guest speakers today, I realized that sometimes other ethnicities might not view my culture very highly.*

We often do not know how we are perceived because we do not search for this information or because there is not sufficient trust in a relationship for people to reveal such things. Of course, knowledge about how other people think and behave will help you be a more effective communicator. However, learning about others in only abstract terms can lead to stereotyping.

Of course, we can not know everything about all cultures or develop relationships with people from all cultural groups, so it is important to develop some general knowledge about cultural differences. For example, in this manual, we have described cultural variations in both verbal and non-verbal communication. To avoid stereotyping, perhaps it is better simply to be aware of the range in thought and behavior across cultures, and not to assume that, because someone belongs to a particular group, he or she will behave in a particular way. One way to achieve this is to expand our mental “category width”, or the range of things we can include in one category. For example, can “snake” be included in the category of “food” as well as the category of “scary thing to be avoided”? Psychologist Richard Detweiler measured category width among Peace Corps volunteers and discovered that those with more flexible categories tended to be more successful in their work as volunteers.

Linguistic knowledge is another important aspect of intercultural competence. Awareness of the difficulty of learning a second language helps us appreciate the extent of the challenges that sojourners and immigrants face

in their new cultural contexts. Also, knowing a second or third language expands our communication repertoire and increases our empathy for culturally different individuals.

**Attitudes.** Many attitudes contribute to intercultural communication competence, including *tolerance for ambiguity*, *empathy*, *nonjudgmentalness* [9, p. 412]. *Tolerance for ambiguity* refers to the ease in dealing with situations in which much is unknown. Whether we are abroad or at home, interacting with people who look different from us and who behave in ways that are strange to us requires a tolerance for ambiguity. Tolerance for ambiguity is one of the most difficult things to attain. As mentioned previously, people have a natural preference for predictability; uncertainty can be disquieting. *Empathy* refers to the ability to know what it is like to “walk in another person’s shoes”. Empathic skills are culture-bound. We cannot really view the world through another person’s eyes without knowing something about his or her experiences and life. To illustrate, Tom Nakayama gives the following example: suppose an American and a Japanese have been introduced and are conversing. The Japanese responds to the American’s first remark with a giggle. The American feels pleasurable empathic sensations and makes an impulsive comment, indicating a congenial, accepting reaction. However, the Japanese observer now feels intensely uncomfortable. What the American does not realize is that the giggle may not mean that the Japanese is feeling pleasure. Japanese often giggle to indicate embarrassment and unease. In the case, the American’s “empathy” is missing the mark [9, p. 413]. In this sense, empathy is the capacity to imagine oneself in another role, within the context of one’s cultural identity.

Intercultural communication scholars have attempted to come up with a more culturally sensitive view of empathy. For example, Ben Broome stresses that, in order to achieve empathy across cultural boundaries, people must forge strong relationships and strive for the creation of shared meaning in their interpersonal encounters. However, because this is difficult to achieve when people come from very different cultural backgrounds, Broome suggests that this shared meaning must be seen as both provisional and dynamic, that understanding is not an all-or-nothing proposition. In addition, cross-cultural empathy must integrate both thinking and feeling – we must try to understand not only what others say (content) but also how they feel (empathy). Finally, he reminds us that to achieve cross-cultural empathy we must seek to understand the context of both others’ lived experiences and the specific encounters.

Magoroh Maruyama, an anthropologist-philosopher, agrees that

achieving cross-cultural empathy and trying to see the world exactly as the other person sees is very difficult. She describes the process as *transpection*, a postmodern phenomenon that often involves trying to learn foreign beliefs, assumptions, perspectives, and feelings in a foreign context. Transpection, then, can be achieved only with practice and requires structured experience and self-reflection [11].

Communication scholar Milton Bennett suggests a *Platinum Rule* (“Do unto others as they themselves would have done unto them”) instead of the *Golden Rule* (“Do unto others as you would have done unto you”) [1, p. 213]. This, of course, requires movement beyond a culture-bound sympathy or empathy for others.

Achieving *nonjudgmentalism* is much easier said than done. We might like to think that we do not judge others according to our own cultural frames of reference, but it is very difficult. The *D.I.E. exercise* developed by an American scholar Jillian Wendt, is helpful in developing a nonjudgmental attitude. It involves making a distinction between description (D), interpretation (I), and evaluation (E) in the processing of information. Descriptive statements convey factual information that can be verified through the senses (e.g., “There are 25 chairs in the room” and “I am 1,75 meters tall”). Interpretive statements attach meaning to the description (e.g., “You must be tired”). Evaluative statements clarify how we feel about something (e.g., “When you’re always tired, we can’t have any fun together”). Only descriptive statements are nonjudgmental [15, p. 400].

This exercise can help us recognize whether we are processing information on a descriptive, interpretive, or evaluative level. Confusing the different levels can lead to misunderstanding and ineffective communication. For example, if I think a student is standing too close to me, I may interpret the behavior as “This student is pushy”, or I may evaluate it as “This student is pushy, and I do not like pushy students”. However, if I force myself to describe the student’s behavior, I may say to myself: “This student is standing 50 centimeters away from me, whereas most students stand farther away”. This observation enables me to search for other (perhaps cultural) reasons for the behavior. The student may be worried about a grade and may be anxious to get some questions answered. Perhaps the student is used to standing closer to people than I am. Or perhaps the student is really pushy.

It is impossible to always stay at the descriptive level. But it is important to know when we are describing and when we are interpreting. Most communication is at the interpretive level. For example, have you ever been set up for a blind date and asked for a description of the person? The

descriptions you might get (e.g., tall, dark, handsome, nice, kind, generous) are not really descriptions; rather, they are interpretations that reflect individual and cultural viewpoints [15].

***Behavior and Skills.*** Behavior and skills are another component of intercultural competence. What is the most competent behavior? Is there any universal behavior that work well in all cultural contexts? At one level, there probably are. Communication scholar Brent D. Ruben devised a list of universal behavior patterns that actually include some attitudes. These behavior patterns are a display of respect, interaction management, ambiguity tolerance, empathy, relational rather than task behavior, and interaction posture [13, p. 16].

Some general behavior seems applicable to many cultural groups and contexts [8, p. 234]. However, these skills become problematic when we try to apply them in specific ways. For example, being respectful works well in all intercultural interactions, and many scholars identify this particular skill as important [4, p. 130]. However, how one expresses respect behaviorally may vary from culture to culture and from context to context. For example, European Americans show respect by making direct eye contact, whereas some Native Americans show respect by avoiding eye contact.

In one research project, American theorists Thomas Nakayama and Judith Martin asked European American and Chicano students to identify non-verbal behaviors that they thought would be seen as competent. They identified some of the same behavior patterns (smiling, direct eye contact, nice appearance, and so on), but they assigned different levels of importance to various behavior depending on the context [10, p. 213]. There seem to be two levels of behavioral competence. The macro level includes many culture-general behavior patterns, such as be respectful, show interest, act friendly, and be polite. Then there is the micro level, at which these general behavior patterns are implemented in culture-specific ways.

It is important to be aware of these different levels of behavior and be able to adapt to them. let us see how this works. In one study, Mitch Hammer and his colleagues evaluated the effectiveness of a cross-cultural training program for Japanese and American managers in a joint venture (a steel company) in Ohio. One goal was to determine if the managers' intercultural communication skills had improved significantly. The research team used a general behavioral framework of communication competence that included the following dimensions: immediacy, involvement, other orientation, interaction management and social relaxation [ibid., p. 214]. The two groups (Japanese managers and American managers) rated these dimensions

differently. The Americans said that the most important dimension was involvement (how expressive one is in conversation), whereas the Japanese managers said that the other orientation (being tuned in to the other person) was most important. The researchers also judged how well each group of managers adapted to the other group's communication style. They videotaped the interaction and asked Japanese raters to judge the American managers on how well they adapted to the Japanese style, and vice versa. For example, good interaction management for the Japanese meant initiating and terminating interaction, and making sure everyone had a chance to talk; for Americans, it meant asking opinions of the Japanese, being patient with silence, and avoiding strong disagreement and assertive statements. As this example shows, intercultural communication competence means being able to exhibit or adapt to different kinds of behaviors, depending on the other person's or group's cultural background.

William Howell, a renowned intercultural scholar, investigated how top CEOs (chief executive officers) made decisions. He found, to his surprise, that they did not follow the analytic process prescribed in business school courses – analysis of cost, benefits, and so on. Rather, they made decisions in a very holistic way. That is, they reflected on the problem and talked about it with their friends and counterparts in other companies, then they would ignore the problem for a while, coming back to it when their minds were fresh to frame the answer. Howell emphasized that intercultural communication is similar, that only so much can be gained by conscious analysis, and that the highest level of communication competence requires a combination of holistic and analytic thinking. He identified four levels of intercultural communication competence: *unconscious incompetence*, *conscious incompetence*, *conscious competence*, and *unconscious competence*.

*Unconscious incompetence* is the “be yourself” approach, in which we are not conscious of differences and do not need to act in any particular way. Sometimes this works. However, being ourselves works best in interactions with individuals who are very similar to us. In intercultural contexts, being ourselves often means that we are not very effective and do not realize our ineptness.

At the level of *conscious incompetence*, people realize that things may not be going very well in the interaction, but they are not sure why. Most of us have experienced intercultural interactions, in which we felt that something was not quite right but could not quite figure out what it was. This describes the feeling of conscious incompetence. As lecturers of intercultural communication, we teach at a conscious, intentional level. Our instruction

focuses on analytic thinking and learning. This describes the level of conscious competence. Reaching this level is a necessary part of the process of becoming a competent communicator. Howell would say that reaching this level is necessary but not sufficient.

*Unconscious competence* is the level at which communication goes smoothly but is not a conscious process. You have probably heard of marathon runners “hitting the wall”, or reaching the limits of their endurance. Usually, inexplicably, they continue running past this point. Communication at the unconscious competent level is like this. This level of competence is not something we can acquire by consciously trying to. It occurs when the analytic and holistic parts are functioning together. When we concentrate too hard or get too analytic, things do not always go easier.

Have you ever prepared for an interview by trying to anticipate every question and forming every answer, and then not done very well? This silent rehearsing – worrying and thinking too hard – is called the *internal monologue*. According to Howell, people should avoid this extraneous and obstructive activity, which prevents them from being successful communicators. You have also probably had the experience of trying unsuccessfully to recall something, letting go of it and then remembering it as soon as you are thinking about something else. This is what unconscious competence is – being well prepared cognitively and attitudinally, but knowing when to “let go” and rely on your holistic cognitive processing [10, p. 305].

Communicative scholar S. Rosen discusses the powerful stereotyping (or essentializing) of Asian people – referred to as *Orientalism*. By way of illustration, he analyzes a description of Japanese taken from a traveler’s guidebook: “Orientalism is a total misseeing of the other through a veil of interpretations of reality which are relatively impenetrable and resistant to change. Orientalism as a cultural myth has been articulated through metaphors which characterize the East in ways which emphasize its strangeness and otherness the Oriental person is a single image, a sweeping generalization; an essentialized image which carries with it the feeling of inferiority” [12].

To give one powerful example of this essentializing process of image formation which is entailed by Orientalism, we quote from a book entitled *When Cultures Collide* by Richard D. Lewis, a kind of manual for people traveling and doing business around the world to help to understand the various cultures they come in contact with. By no means the worst of its kind Lewis’ book expresses very well the way we use metaphors to trivialize another culture in a totalistic way, so as to make it easier to capture it in the

network of our own understandings:

- Japanese children are encouraged to be completely dependent and keep a sense of interdependence throughout their lives;
- everything must be placed in context in Japan;
- Japanese are constrained by their thought processes in a language very different from any other;
- they do not like meeting newcomers;
- they represent their group and cannot therefore pronounce on any matters without consultation and cannot initiate an exchange of views;
- westerners are individuals, but the Japanese represent a company which represents Japan;
- as we all know, Japanese do not like to lose face;
- Japanese go to incredible lengths to be polite [9, p. 417].

This kind of Orientalism (essentializing) carries with it the implication that Asian people are much more conformist than we are, and less respecting of the dignity of individual rights, i.e., inferior. Social and cognitive psychology tells us that stereotyping is a kind of mental schema making designed to help us grasp reality – to make things more understandable and less threatening; these mental schema such as stereotypes provide us with the illusion of understanding by dividing up and categorizing the flux of experience into easily manageable cognitive maps. Orientalism has been the prevalent mode by which this cognitive need to schematize has manifested itself in apprehending Asian people [ibid.].

### *8.1.2 Contextual Components*

As we have stressed throughout this book, an important aspect of being a competent communicator is understanding the context in which communication occurs. Intercultural communication happens in many contexts. An interpretive perspective reminds us that a good communicator is sensitive to these contexts.

We have emphasized that many contexts can influence intercultural communication. For instance, by focusing only on the historical context, you may overlook the relational context; by emphasizing the cultural context, you may be ignoring the gender or racial contexts of the intercultural interaction and so on. It may seem difficult to keep all of these shifting contexts in mind. However, by analyzing your own intercultural successes and failures, you will come to a better understanding of intercultural communication [10, p. 220].

Another aspect of context is the communicator's position within a speech community. Reflect on your own social position in relation to various speech communities and contexts. For example, if you are the only woman in a largely male environment you may face particular expectations or have people project motivations onto your messages. Recognizing your own relation to the speech community and the context will help you better understand intercultural communication.

These are important questions raised by the critical perspective that force us to rethink intercultural communication competence. Indeed, you now have the skills to push your own thinking about intercultural communication – both strengths and weaknesses – as it helps and hinders your ability to communicate.

## **8.2 Applying Knowledge about Intercultural Communication**

Now that we have taken you down the path of intercultural communication, we would like to conclude with specific suggestions for becoming better intercultural communicators. Our dialectical approach recognizes the important role of individual skills and contextual constraints in improving intercultural relations. The dialectical perspective also emphasizes the relational aspects of intercultural communication. Perhaps the first step in applying our knowledge to intercultural communication is to recognize the connectedness of humans and the importance of dialogue.

***Entering into Dialogue.*** In order to recognize and embrace our connectedness even to people who are different from us, we have to engage in true dialogue. True dialogue is different from conversation, which can be one-sided, strident, and ego focused. “True dialogue is characterized by authenticity, inclusion, confirmation, presentness, spirit of mutual equality, and supportive climate” [9, p. 420]. What does this mean for intercultural communicators? Authenticity means that we approach others knowing ourselves, recognizing our social location, and admitting that we might be uneasy or make mistakes in intercultural interactions (or that we might be racist). True dialogue reflects feelings of mutual equality and supportiveness. This means that we promote reciprocity and solicit equal contributions from all. It is not a one-sided conversation.

But how can we really hear the voices of those who come from cultures very different from our own – and especially those who have not been heard from? As you think about all the messages you hear every day, the most obvious voices and images are often the most privileged. To resist the

tendency to focus only on the loudest, most obvious voices, we should strive for harmonic discourse. This is discourse in which all voices “retain their individual integrity, yet combine to form a whole discourse that is orderly and congruous” [ibid.].

Any conciliation between cultures must reclaim the notion of a voice for all interactants. In intercultural contexts, there are two options for those who feel left out – exit or expression. When people feel excluded, they often simply shut down, physically or mentally abandoning the conversation. When this happens, their potential contributions – to some decision, activity, or change – are lost. Obviously, the preferred alternative is to give voice to them. People’s silence is broken when they feel that they can contribute, that their views are valued. And those who have historically been silenced sometimes need an invitation. Or those who have a more reserved conversation style may need prompting, as was the case with this traveler from Finland: *I was on a business trip in England with some colleagues. We visited universities, where we were shown different departments and their activities. The presenters spoke volubly, and we, in accordance with Finnish speaking rules, waited for our turn in order to make comments and ask questions. However, we never got a turn; neither had we time to react to the situations* [2, p. 26].

In sum, one way to become a more competent communicator is to work on dialogue skills by trying to engage in true dialogue. It is important to work on speaking and listening skills. A second step is to become interpersonal allies with people from other cultures.

***Becoming Interpersonal Allies.*** The dialectical approach involves becoming allies with others, in working for better intergroup relations. But we need a new way to think about multiculturalism and cultural diversity – one that recognizes the complexities of communicating across cultures and that addresses power issues. Otherwise, we can get stuck within a competitive framework. If we win something, the other person or group loses, and we can only win if others lose. This kind of thinking can make us feel frustrated and guilty.

The goal is to find a way in which we can achieve equitable unity despite holding many different and contradictory truths, a unity based on conscious coalition, a unity of affinity and political kinship, in which we all win. Daniel Kealey suggests a “both / and” dialectic: “In this framework we assume that the needs and perspectives of different parties are not necessarily conflicting. Using this approach allows us to embrace both sides’ perspectives and draw up a solution that includes elements of each. There may be as many “truths” as there are people or groups involved in the process. There is usually

common ground on which we can build our decisions. Finding that common ground needs to be a process in which everyone is included, a democratic multicultural process, everyone is included in. [This] takes time, inclusion and more complex decision-making processes than most of us are used to participating in” [7, p. 392].

How can we do this? We first identify what intercultural alliances might look like. Communication scholar Mary Jane Collier interviewed many people in intercultural friendships and identified three issues that characterize intercultural alliances. The first has to do with power and privilege: Intercultural friends recognize and try to understand how ethnic, gender, and class differences lead to power and try to manage these power issues.

Communication scholar Karen Dace describes how difficult it is to understand power issues in interracial relationships. Her findings are based on observation of a semester-long interracial discussion group at her university. She describes how difficult it was for the students to discuss the topic openly and honestly. Although the White students quizzed the Black students about their attitudes and experiences, they did not really want honest answers from them. Much of the discussion involved talking about interactions African-American students had “with European-American students and faculty members”. On several occasions, the African-American students talked about being excluded from activities. For example, ... *[they talked about] being told not to pledge during a European-American sorority rush, being the only African-American member of a small class at the university and the only person in the class not invited to a party thrown by another classmate. Still others talked about what they perceived to be racist comments made during lectures by some faculty members* [ibid., p. 424].

Dace observes that in most cases the White students suggested that these experiences were not “reality” and asked the African American students to “prove” that they had actually experienced racism. People who have not often experienced feelings of powerlessness or been discriminated against have a hard time recognizing their impact.

Collier’s second component of intercultural alliances has to do with the impact of history: Intercultural friends recognize that people from historically powerful groups view history differently than do those who belong to less powerful groups. As we learned in previous chapters, history often plays an important part in intercultural interactions.

History also plays a part in Black-White relationships. We are often struck by how, in discussions about race in our classes, White students go to great lengths to affirm that they are not racist, often telling stories about

friends and family members – who, unlike them, are racist. They seem to want to be absolved of past or present responsibilities where race was concerned. And Whites expect persons of color to communicate in ways that are friendly, comfortable, and absolving. In this case, true dialogue for Whites involves a genuine commitment to listening, to not being defensive, and to recognizing the historical contexts that impact us all. True intercultural friends accept rather than question others' experiences, particularly when historical inequities and power issues are involved. They recognize the importance of historical power differentials and affirm others' cultural experiences even when this calls into question their own worldviews.

Collier's third component of intercultural alliances has to do with orientations of affirmation: Intercultural friends value and appreciate differences and are committed to the relationship even when they encounter difficulties and misunderstandings.

Beverly Tatum gives some guidelines for people who want to engage in cross-cultural dialogue. She suggests that they look for role models – those who are effective intercultural communicators. She notes that you might not be able to influence public policy or promote grandiose schemes to facilitate intercultural dialogue, but you can influence the people around you to adopt the principles of effective intercultural communication [14, p. 202].

***Building Coalitions.*** As we have emphasized throughout this book, there are many identities and contexts that give meaning to who you really are. That is, your identities of gender, sexual orientation, race, region, religion, age, social class, and so on gain specific meaning and force in different contexts. Coalitions can arise from these multiple identities. There are many good examples, such as the Seeds of Peace project, which brings together Jewish and Palestinian young people to work toward peace and harmony. Other local coalitions work to promote dialogue between Blacks and Whites, and between gays and straights.

Some contexts that arise in the future may cause you to rethink many of your identities. The rhetoric that people use to mobilize coalitions may speak to you in various ways. As you strive to build better intercultural relations, you may need to transcend some of your identities, as the workers in Hawaii did, or you may reinforce other identities. These shifting identities allow you to build coalitions among seemingly different peoples, to foster positive intercultural relationships for a better world.

Coalitions, which are built of multiple identities, are never easy to build. In the process, you may find that some of your own identities feel neglected or injured. Part of the process is the commitment to work through

these emotional blows, rather than simply withdrawing to the safety of older identities. Work your way to a richer, more meaningful life by navigating between safety and stability, and change.

***Forgiveness and Transformation.*** Sometimes the cultural divide simply seems too huge. Sometimes there are grievances perpetrated by one cultural group upon another or by one individual on another that are so brutal as to make the suggestions listed above sound hollow and idealistic. Although limited and problematic, forgiveness is an option for promoting intercultural understanding and reconciliation. As we noted, forgiveness is more than a simple rite of religious correctness; it requires a deep intellectual and emotional commitment during moments of great pain. It also requires a letting go, a moving on, a true transformation of spirit. Dean Murphy, writing in the *New York Times*, reports how scholars, leaders, and other individuals live out the concept of forgiveness. One example is Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Nobel Laureate and chairman of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and an advocate of forgiveness. He puts it in the context of the African ***concept of ubuntu*** – that a person is only a person through other people. Again, the importance of human connection and relationships emerges. Tutu says that forgiveness can be seen as an act of self-interest, because forgivers are released from the bonds that hold them captive to the forgiven. And many have stressed this aspect – that people cannot be consumed by the wrongs that others have done to them, because then their oppressors have won. According to civil rights advocate Roger Wilkins, “If you are consumed by rage, even at a terrible wrong, you have been reduced” [9, p. 429]. Religious and medical professionals also advocate the healing benefits of forgiveness.

Forgiveness has been likened to a train. People get on the train but must make various stops before forgiveness becomes a way off. The trick is not to miss your stop. And perhaps we might remember these cautionary words from Philip Yancy, an award-winning Christian author who writes about grace and forgiveness in the face of atrocities and brutality: “The only thing harder than forgiveness is the alternative” [6, p. 176].

### **8.3 What the Future Holds**

We live in exciting times. The world is changing rapidly, but not necessarily in a positive direction for intercultural relations. We see a move toward larger political entities, such as the European Union (EU). This relatively new political giant has even adopted a single currency, the euro.

The population and economic power of the EU surpasses that of the United States, and the EU has standardized many regulations among its member states. Yet the unification of much of Europe has not led to a strong European identity. Instead, there has been a retreat to earlier, regional identities. France offers one example of such a retreat, as the national identity is challenged by the resurgence of regional identities conquered in the past [5].

The appearance of regional dictionaries, the upsurge in folk celebrations, and the continual resurgence of small subnational identities has the potential to diversify Europe. And, of course, there is the ongoing struggle between fundamentalist Islamic groups and many national governments. The struggle has been variously characterized as a clash of civilizations, a struggle between religions, and an uprising of the Middle East against the cultural imperialism of the West. In any case, it is hard to know how to view this struggle from an intercultural communication perspective.

There are no easy answers to what the future holds. But it is important to think dialectically about these issues, to see the dialectical tensions at work throughout the world. For example, a fractured, fragmented Europe is in dialectical tension with a unified Europe. We can see the history / past / present / future dialectic at work here. The fragmented Europe returns to its historical roots, but the unified Europe represents a forward-looking attempt to deal with the global economy. As a unifying force, a global economy also creates fragmentation.

## **SUMMARY**

In this chapter, we focused on the outlook for intercultural communication. The individual components of intercultural communication competence include motivation, knowledge, attitudes, behavior and skills. The levels of competence are unconscious incompetence, conscious incompetence, conscious competence and unconscious competence. Competence has interpretive and critical contextual components, and contexts are both dynamic and multiple. One approach to improving intercultural relations recognizes both individual and contextual elements of competence: entering into dialogue, building alliances and coalitions, and, finally, recognizing the importance of forgiveness and transformation.

## **PRACTICE**

### **➤ Answer the Following Questions**

- In what ways is the notion of intercultural competence helpful?

In what ways is it limiting?

- How can you be an interpersonal ally? How do you know if you are being an ally?
- How might you better assess your unconscious competence and unconscious incompetence?
- How does your own social position (gender, class, age, and so on) influence your intercultural communication competence? Does this competence change from one context to another?

- **Global Trends and Intercultural Communication.** Identify and list global trends that are likely to influence intercultural communication in the future. Reflect on the contexts and dialectics that might help you better understand these trends.
- **Roadblocks to Communication.** Identify and list some of the biggest roadblocks to successful intercultural communication in the future. In what ways will the increasingly global economy be a positive or a negative factor in intercultural communication?
- **Strategies for Becoming Allies.** In a dialogue with someone who is culturally different from you, generate a list of ways that each of you might become an ally of the other. Note the specific communication strategies that will help you become each other's allies.

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## **-CONCLUSION-**

*Theory of Communication: Interdisciplinary Approach* as an additional reference guide for students of linguistics represents an overview of some of the general issues arising when one studies linguistic patterns across languages as one of the phenomenon resulting from the process of intercultural cooperation among nations – active users of these languages.

The work discusses the concept of culture in linguistics, possible interconnection among language and culture, situations of language and culture contact; the notion of language community; varieties of language; the notion of speech as social interaction, etc.

The present manual is a work of diverse and wide-ranging nature, both interdisciplinary and intercultural in approach. Like many other intercultural study areas it might provoke arguments about its precise boundaries, methodological procedures and essential aims. Thus, the main objective of the manual has become to help anyone who is interested in the study of language communication to begin to think dialectically, to begin to see the many contradictions and tensions at work in the world. Understanding these contradictions and tensions is the key to understanding the events themselves. It is acknowledge that there are no easy answers to the challenge of intercultural communication. However, the manual has been written in the hope that it will be of informing and stimulating nature for the newcomer in the fields of Communicative and Cross-Cultural Linguistics, as well as provide a theoretical framework, within which the findings of Communicative Linguistics may be related to the theory of language structure (Theoretical Linguistics).

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## -GLOSSARY-

Listed here are definitions of important terms of interpersonal communication and theory of language contact – many of them peculiar or unique to these disciplines. These definitions and statements of skills should make new or difficult terms a bit easier to understand and should help place the skills in context. All boldface terms within the definitions appear as separate entries in the glossary.

1. **Acculturation** – the process of internalizing the culture of a discourse community; the process by which your culture is modified or changed through contact with or exposure to another culture.
2. **Act of Identity** – way in which speakers display their cultural stance toward their membership in a specific culture, and toward the culture of others through their use of language.
3. **Active Listening** – the process by which a listener expresses his or her understanding of the speaker’s total message, including the verbal and non-verbal, the thoughts and feelings. *Listen actively by paraphrasing the speakers meanings, expressing understanding and acceptance of the speaker’s feelings, and asking questions to check the accuracy of your understanding, thereby encouraging the speaker to explore further his or her feelings and thoughts and increase meaningful sharing.*
4. **Adaptors** – non-verbal behaviors that, when engaged in either in private or in public, serve some kind of need and occur in their entirety – for example, scratching until an itch is relieved. *Avoid adaptors that interfere with effective communication and reveal discomfort or anxiety.*
5. **Adjustment** (principle of) – the principle of verbal interaction that claims that effective communication depends on the extent to which communicators share the same system of signals. *Expand the common areas between you and significant others; learn one another’s systems of communication signals and meanings in order to increase understanding and interpersonal communication effectiveness.*
6. **Adstratum** – language entering into a linguistic alliance in **Sprachbund** situation.
7. **Affect Displays** – movements of the face and body that convey emotional meanings such as anger, fear, and surprise.
8. **Affirmation** – the communication of support and approval. *Use affirmation to express your supportiveness and to raise esteem.*

9. **Alter-adaptors** – body movements you make in response to your current interactions; for example, crossing your arms over your chest when someone unpleasant approaches or moving closer to someone you like. *Become aware of and control your own alter-adaptors; become aware of the adaptors of others, but be cautious and tentative about attributing meanings to these adaptors.*
10. **Ambiguity** – the condition in which a message may be interpreted as having more than one meaning. *To reduce ambiguity, use language that is clear and specific, explain terms and references that may not be clear to the listener, and ask if your message is clear.*
11. **Apprehension.** See **Communication Apprehension.**
12. **Appropriateness** – characteristic of linguistic and social practices that meet the expectations of native speakers within their given culture.
13. **Appropriation** – process by which members of one discourse community make the language and the culture of another their own.
14. **Arbitrariness** – the random nature of the fit between a linguistic sign and the object that it refers to, for example, the word ‘rose’ does not look like a rose.
15. **Argumentativeness** – a willingness to argue for a point of view, to speak your mind. *Cultivate your argumentativeness – your willingness to argue for what you believe – by, for example, treating disagreements as objectively as possible, reaffirming the other, stressing equality, expressing interest in the others position, and allowing the other person to save face. Distinguished from Verbal Aggressiveness.*
16. **Assertiveness** – a willingness to stand up for your rights but with respect for the rights of others. *To increase assertiveness, analyze the assertive and nonassertive behaviors of yourself and others, rehearse assertive behaviors, - and communicate assertively in appropriate situations.*
17. **Assimilation** – a process in which a group gradually gives up its own language, culture and system of values and takes on those of another group with a different L., C. and system of values, through a period of interaction.
18. **Asymmetrically** – the lack of a perfect fit between a sign and its referent, between signifier and signified, for example, the sign ‘rose’ always means more than a flower of a certain shape and smell.
19. **Attention** – the process of responding to a stimulus or stimuli; usually some consciousness of responding is implied.
20. **Attitude** – a predisposition to respond for or against an object, person, or position.

21. **Attraction** – the process by which one individual is emotionally drawn to another and finds that person satisfying to be with.
22. **Attractiveness** – a person’s visual appeal and / or pleasantness in personality.
23. **Attribution** – the processes involved in assigning causation or motivation to a person’s behavior. *In identifying the motivation for behaviors, examine consensus, consistency, distinctiveness, and controllability. Generally, low consensus, high consistency, low distinctiveness, and high controllability identify internally motivated behavior; high consensus, low consistency, high distinctiveness, and low controllability identify externally motivated behavior.*
24. **Avoidance** – an unproductive **Interpersonal Conflict** strategy in which you take mental or physical flight from the actual conflict. *Instead, take an active role in analyzing problems and in proposing workable solutions.*
25. **Balkanism** – structural feature shared by the majority of contemporary Balkan languages.
26. **Barbarism** – violation of the standard language by not fully competent speakers of the language (from Greek *barbaros*: outsider).
27. **Barriers to Intercultural Communication** – physical or psychological factors that prevent or hinder effective communication. *Such barriers include ignoring differences between yourself and the culturally different, ignoring differences among the culturally different, ignoring differences in meaning, violating cultural rules and customs, and evaluating differences negatively.*
28. **Belief** – confidence in the existence or truth of something; conviction.
29. **Bicultural** – a person who knows the social habits, beliefs, customs etc. of two different social groups can be described as bicultural. A distinction is made between *biculturalism* and *bilingualism*. E.g. a person may be able to speak two languages, but may not know how to act according to the social patterns of the second or foreign language community. This person can be described as **bilingual** but not as bicultural.
30. **Bilingual** – a person who is able to produce grammatical sentences in more than one language.
31. **Blame** – an unproductive **Interpersonal Conflict** strategy in which we attribute the cause of the conflict to the other person or devote our energies to discovering who is the cause and avoid talking about the issues causing the conflict. *Avoid using blame to win an argument,*

*especially with those with whom you are in close relationships.*

32. **Calque** – see **Loan Translation**.
33. **Censorship** – restrictions imposed on individuals' right to produce, distribute, or receive various communications.
34. **Certainty** – an attitude of closed-mindedness that creates defensiveness among communicators. *Opposed to Provisionalism*.
35. **Channel** – the vehicle or medium through which signals are sent; for example, the vocal-auditory channel.
36. **Chronemics** – the study of the communicative nature of time – how a person's or culture's treatment of time reveals something about the person or culture. Often divided into *psychological* and *cultural time*.
37. **Civil Inattention** – polite ignoring of others (after a brief sign of awareness) so as not to invade their privacy.
38. **Closed-mindedness** – an unwillingness to receive certain communication messages.
39. **Code** – formal system of communication; a set of symbols used to translate a message from one form to another.
40. **Code-Switching** – verbal strategy by which bilingual or bidialectal speakers change linguistic code within the same speech event as a sign of cultural solidarity or distance, and as an act of (cultural) identity; a change by a speaker (or writer) from one language or language variety to another one. Code-switching can take place in a conversation when one speaker uses one language and the other speaker answers in a different language. A person may start speaking one language and then change to another one in the middle of their speech, or sometimes even in the middle of a sentence.
41. **Cognitive Labeling Theory** – a theory of emotions that holds that your emotional feelings begin with the occurrence of an event; then you respond physiologically; then you interpret the arousal (you in effect decide what it is you're feeling); and then you experience (give a name to) the emotion.
42. **Coherence** – the meaning created in the minds of speakers / readers by the situated inferences they make based on the words they hear / read.
43. **Cohesion** – the semantic ties between units of language in a text.
44. **Cohesive Device** – linguistic element like a pronoun, demonstrative, conjunction, that encodes semantic continuity across a stretch of text.
45. **Collectivist Culture** – a culture in which the group's goals are given greater importance than the individual's and in which, for example,

benevolence, tradition, and conformity are given special emphasis.  
*Opposed to Individualistic Culture.*

46. **Color Communication** – the use of color to communicate different meanings; each culture seems to define the meanings colors communicate somewhat differently. *Use colors (in clothing and in room decor, for example) to convey desired meanings.*
47. **Communication** – (1) the process or act of communicating; (2) the actual message or messages sent and received; (3) the study of the processes involved in the sending and receiving of messages.
48. **Communication Apprehension** – fear or anxiety of communicating. *Manage your own communication apprehension through cognitive restructuring, thematic desensitization, and acquisition of the necessary communication skills. In addition, prepare and practice for relevant communication situations, focus on success, familiarize yourself with the communication situations important to you, and try to relax. In cases of extreme communication apprehension, seek professional help.*
49. **Communicative Competence** – knowledge of the appropriate style of language to use in a given situation.
50. **Communication Network** – the range of persons that members of a group communicate with. In any group some members communicate more frequently with one another than with others, depending on their relationships, frequency of contact etc. Communication networks may be studied as part of the study of bilingualism and diglossia as well as in studies of second language acquisition, since language learning and language use may depend upon both the frequency of use of a language as well as on whom one uses it to communicate with.
51. **Communication Ritual** – a set form of systematic interactions that take place on a regular basis.
52. **Communication Style** – the metamessage that contextualizes how listeners are expected to accept and interpret verbal messages.
53. **Communication Strategy** – a way used to express a meaning in a second or foreign language, by a learner who has a limited command of the language. In trying to communicate, a learner may have to make up for a lack of knowledge of grammar or vocabulary. e.g., a learner may not be able to say *It's against the law to park here* and so he / she may say *This place, cannot park*. For *handkerchief* a learner could say *a cloth for my nose*, and for apartment complex the learner could say *building*. The use of paraphrase and other communication strategies characterize the interlanguage of some language learners.

54. **Competence** – "Language competence" is a speaker's ability to use the language; it is a knowledge of the elements and rules of the language. "Communication competence" generally refers both to knowledge about communication and also to the ability to engage in communication effectively.
55. **Compliance-gaining Strategies** – behaviors designed to gain the agreement of others, to persuade others to do as you wish. *Widely used compliance-gaining strategies include expressions of liking, promise, threat, expertise, altercasting, esteem manipulation, and moral appeals.*
56. **Compound Bilingual** – a bilingual who has acquired his two languages in the same settings and uses them interchangeably in the same settings.
57. **Compromise Style** – a style of interaction for an intercultural couple in which both partners give up some part of their own cultural habits and beliefs to minimize cross-cultural differences. (Compare with **Consensus Style, Obliteration Style, Submission Style**).
58. **Confidence** – a quality of interpersonal effectiveness; a comfortable, at-ease feeling in interpersonal communication situations.
59. **Confirmation** – a communication pattern that acknowledges another person's presence and indicates an acceptance of this person, this person's definition of self, and the relationship as defined or **viewed** by this other person. *Opposed to rejection and disconfirmation. To confirm, acknowledge the presence and the contributions of the other person and at the same time avoid any sign of ignoring or avoiding the other person.*
60. **Conflict** – a disagreement or difference of opinion; a form of competition in which one person tries to bring a rival to surrender; a situation in which one **person's** behaviors are directed at preventing something or at interfering with or harming another individual. *See also Interpersonal Conflict.*
61. **Confrontation** – direct resistance, often to the dominant forces.
62. **Congruence** – a condition in which both verbal and non-verbal behaviors reinforce each other.
63. **Connotation** – the associations evoked by a word in the mind of the hearer / reader; the feeling or emotional aspect of meaning, generally viewed as consisting of the evaluative (for example, good-bad), potency (strong-weak), and activity (fast-slow) dimensions. *Opposed to Denotation.*
64. **Conscious Competence** – one of the four levels of intercultural communication competence, the practice of international, analytic

thinking and learning.

65. **Conscious Incompetence** – one of the four levels of intercultural communication competence, the awareness that one is not having success but the inability to figure out why.
66. **Consensus Style** – a style of interaction for an international couple in which partners deal with cross-cultural differences by negotiating their relationship.
67. **Consistency** – a process that influences you to maintain balance in your **Perception** of messages **or** people; a process that makes you see what you expect to see and feel uncomfortable when your perceptions run contrary to expectations. *Recognize the human tendency to seek and to see consistency even where it does not exist – for example, to see friends as all positive and enemies as all negative.*
68. **Contact** – the first stage in **Relationship Development** consisting of "perceptual contact" (you see or hear the person) and "interactional contact" (you talk with the person).
69. **Contact Cultures** – cultural groups in which people tend to stand close together and touch frequently when they interact – for example, cultural groups in South America, the Middle East, and Southern Europe.
70. **Content and Relationship Dimensions** – two aspects to which messages may refer: the world external to both speaker and listener (content) and the connections existing between the individuals who are interacting (relationship).
71. **Context of Communication** – the physical, psychological, social, and temporal environment in which communication takes place. *Assess the context in which messages are communicated and interpret the messages accordingly; avoid seeing messages as independent of context.*
72. **Context of Culture** – the historical knowledge, the beliefs, attitudes, values shared by members of a discourse community, and that contribute to the meaning of their verbal exchanges.
73. **Context of Situation** – the immediate physical, spatial, temporal, social environment in which verbal exchanges take place.
74. **Context-dependent** – characteristic of oral exchanges which depend very much for their meaning on the context of situation and the context of culture of the participants.
75. **Context-reduced** – characteristic of essay-type writing. Because readers are far removed in time and space from the author, the text itself must be able to make meaning without access to its original context of production.

76. **Contextualization Cues** – a term coined by anthropologist John Gumperz to indicate the verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal signs that help speakers understand the full meaning of their interlocutors' utterances in context.
77. **Contrastive Analysis** – comparison of the structures of language A and language B, for the purpose of predicting errors made by learners of language B and designing teaching materials that will take account of the anticipated errors.
78. **Conversation** – two-person communication, usually following five stages: opening, **feedforward**, business, **feedback**, and closing.
79. **Conversational Management** – the management of the way in which messages are exchanged in **conversation**. *Respond to conversational turn cues from the other person, and use conversational cues to signal your own desire to exchange (or maintain) speaker or listener roles.*
80. **Conversational Maxims** – rules that are followed in **conversation** to ensure that the goal of the conversation is achieved. *Because these maxims differ from one culture to another, be sure you understand the maxims operating in the culture in which you 're communicating.*
81. **Conversational Style** – a person's way of talking in the management of conversations.
82. **Conversational Turns** – the process of passing the speaker and listener roles during conversation. *Become sensitive to and respond appropriately to conversational turn cues, such as turn-maintaining, turn-yielding, turn-requesting, and turn-denying cues.*
83. **Cooperation** – an interpersonal process by which individuals work together for a common end; the pooling of efforts to produce a mutually desired outcome.
84. **Cooperative Principle** – a term coined by the philosopher Paul Grice to characterize the basic expectation that participants in informational exchanges will cooperate with one another by contributing appropriately and in a timely manner to the conversation.
85. **Coordinate Bilingual** – a bilingual who has learned his two languages in separate settings.
86. **Co-text** – the linguistic environment in which a word is used within a text.
87. **Credibility** – the degree to which you see a person to be believable; the major dimensions of credibility are competence, character, and charisma (dynamism).
88. **Creole** – a language claimed to have descended from a pidgin, having

become the native language (first language) of the children of a group of pidgin speakers; the form of language that emerges when speakers of several languages are in long-lasting contact with each other; creole has characteristics of both languages.

89. **Critical Thinking** – the process of logically evaluating reasons and evidence and reaching a judgment on the basis of this analysis.
90. **Cross-Cultural Analysis** – analysis of data from two or more different cultural groups in order to determine if generalization made about members of one culture are also true of members of other cultures. Cross-cultural research is an important part of sociolinguistics, since it is often important to know if generalization made about one language group reflect the culture of that group or are universal.
91. **Cross-Cultural Communication** – an exchange of ideas, info etc. Between persons from different cultural backgrounds. Each participant may interpret the other's speech according to his or her own cultural conventions and expectations (conversational rules). If the cultural conventions of the speakers are widely different, misinterpretations and misunderstandings can easily arise, even resulting in a total breakdown of communication. This has been shown by research into real-life situations, such as job interviews, doctor-patient encounters etc.
92. **Cross-Cultural Training** – training people to become familiar with other cultural norms and to improve their interactions with people of different domestic and international cultures.
93. **Cultural Adaptation** – a process by which individuals learn the rules and customs of new cultural contexts.
94. **Cultural Assimilation** – the process by which a persons culture is given up and he or she takes on the values and beliefs of another culture; as when, for example, an immigrant gives up his or her native culture to become a member of this new adopted culture.
95. **Cultural Deprivation** (also Cultural Disadvantage) – the theory that some children particularly those from lower social and economic backgrounds lack certain home experiences and that this may lead to learning difficulties in school. E.g. children from homes which lack books or educational games and activities to stimulate thought and language development may not perform well in school. Since many factors could explain why some children do not perform well in school, this theory is an insufficient explanation for differences in children's learning abilities.
96. **Cultural Display** – signs that communicate one's cultural identification;

for example, clothing or religious jewelry.

97. **Cultural Display Rules** – rules that identify what are and what are not appropriate forms of expression for members of the culture.
98. **Cultural Identity** – bureaucratically or self-ascribed membership in a specific culture.
99. **Cultural Imperialism** – domination through the spread of cultural products.
100. **Cultural Literacy** – term coined by literary scholar E.D.Hirsch to refer to the body of knowledge that is presumably shared by all members of a given culture.
101. **Cultural Pluralism** – a situation in which an individual or group has more than one set of cultural beliefs, values and attitudes. The teaching of a foreign language or programs in bilingual education are sometimes said to encourage cultural pluralism. An educational program which aims to develop cultural pluralism is sometimes referred to as multicultural education, e.g. a program designed to teach about different ethnic groups in a country.
102. **Cultural Relativism** – the theory that a culture can only be understood in its own terms. This means that standards, attitudes and beliefs from one culture should not be used in the study or description of another culture. According to this theory there are no universal cultural beliefs or values or these are not regarded as important. Cultural relativism has been a part of the discussions of **Linguistic Relativity** and **Cultural Deprivation**.
103. **Cultural Rules** – rules that are specific to a given culture. *Respond to messages according to the cultural rules of the sender; in order to avoid, misunderstanding others' intended meanings, avoid interpreting the messages of others exclusively through the perspective of your own culture.*
104. **Cultural Time** – the meanings given to the ways time is treated in a particular culture.
105. **Cultural Studies** – studies that focus on dynamic, everyday representations of cultural struggles. Cultural studies is multidisciplinary in nature and is committed to social change.
106. **Cultural Texts** – cultural artifacts (magazines, T.V. programs, movies and so on) that convey cultural norms, values, and beliefs.
107. **Cultural Values** – the worldview of a cultural group and its set of deeply held beliefs.
108. **Culture** – (1) membership in a discourse community that shares a

common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting. (2) The discourse community itself. (3) The system of standards itself; the total set of beliefs, values, attitudes, customs and behaviors of the members of a particular society.

109. **Culture Shock** – strong feelings of discomfort, fear, or insecurity which a person may have when they enter another culture. E.g. when a person moves to live in a foreign country, he may have a period of culture shock until he becomes familiar with the new culture.
110. **Decoder** – something that takes a message in one form (for example, sound waves) and translates it into another form (for example, nerve impulses) from which meaning can be formulated. In human communication, the decoder is the auditory mechanism; in electronic communication, the decoder is, for example, the telephone earpiece. *Decoding* is the process of extracting a message from a code— for example, translating speech sounds into nerve impulses. See *also Encoder*.
111. **Defensiveness** – an attitude of an individual or an atmosphere in a group characterized by threats, fear, and domination; messages evidencing evaluation, control, strategy, neutrality, superiority, and certainty are thought to lead to defensiveness. *Opposed to Supportiveness*.
112. **Deictic** – element of speech that points in a certain direction as viewed from the perspective of the speaker, for example, here, there, today, coming, going.
113. **Deixis** – process by which language indexes the physical, temporal, and social location of the speaker at the moment of utterance.
114. **Denial** – the process by which you deny your emotions to yourself or to others; one of the obstacles to the expression of emotion.
115. **Denotation** – the basic conceptual meaning of a word; the objective or descriptive meaning of a word; the meaning you'd find in a dictionary. *Opposed to Connotation*.
116. **Depth** – the degree to which the inner personality – the inner core of an individual – is penetrated in interpersonal interaction.
117. **Deterioration** – the stage of a relationship during which the connecting bonds between the partners weaken and the partners begin drifting apart.
118. **Dialogic** – based on dialog.
119. **Diaspora** – a massive migration often caused by war, famine, or

- persecution that results in the dispersal of a unified group.
120. **Diffusion** – anthropological concept that refers to the process by which stereotypes are formed by extending the characteristic of one person or group of persons to all, for example, all Americans are individualists, all Chinese are collectivists.
  121. **Diglossia** – a situation in which a more prestigious form of a language is used in “High” functions and a relatively less prestigious, colloquial form is used in “Low” functions.
  122. **Direct Speech** – speech in which the speaker’s intentions are stated clearly and directly. *Use direct requests and responses (1) to encourage compromise, (2) to acknowledge responsibility for your own feelings and desires, and (3) to state your own desires honestly so as to encourage honesty, openness, and supportiveness in others.*
  123. **Disclaimer** – statement that asks the listener to receive what you say without its reflecting negatively on you. *Use disclaimers when you think your future messages might offend your listeners. But avoid using them if they may not be accepted by your listeners; that is, if your disclaimers may raise the very doubts you wish to put to rest.*
  124. **Disconfirmation** – the process by which someone ignores or denies a person’s right even to define himself or herself. *Opposed to **Rejection and Confirmation**.*
  125. **Discourse** – this term, with a capital D, coined by linguist James Gee, refers, not only to ways of speaking, reading and writing, but also of behaving, interacting, thinking, valuing, that are characteristic of specific discourse communities; the ways in which language is actually used by particular communities of people, in particular contexts, for particular purposes.
  126. **Discourse** – the process of language use, whether it be spoken, written or printed, that includes writers, texts, and readers within a sociocultural context of meaning production and reception; d. text.
  127. **Discourse Accent** – a speaking or writing style that bears the mark of a discourse community’s ways of using language.
  128. **Discourse Community** – a social group that has a broadly agreed set of common public goals and purposes in its use of spoken and written language; cf. speech community.
  129. **Discrimination** – behaviors resulting from stereotypes or prejudice that cause some people to be denied equal participation or rights based on cultural group membership, such as race.
  130. **Dissolution** – the termination or end of an interpersonal relationship. If

the relationship ends: (1) *Break the loneliness-depression cycle*; (2) *take time out to get to know yourself as an individual*; (3) *bolster your self-esteem*; (4) *remove or avoid symbols that may remind you of your past relationship and may make you uncomfortable*; (5) *seek the support of friends and relatives*; and (6) *avoid repeating negative patterns*.

131. **Diversity** – the equality of being different.
132. **Diversity Training** – the training meant to facilitate intercultural communication among various gender, ethnic and racial groups in the United States.
133. **Downward Communication** – communication sent from the higher levels of a hierarchy to the lower levels – for example, messages sent by managers to workers, or from deans to faculty members.
134. **Dyadic Effect** – the tendency for the behaviors of one person to stimulate similar behaviors in the other interactant; often used to refer to the tendency of one persons self-disclosures to prompt the other also to self-disclose. *Be responsive to the dyadic effect; if it's not operating (when you think it should be), ask yourself why.*
135. **Effect** – the outcome or consequence of an action or behavior; communication is assumed always to have some effect.
136. **Emblems** – non-verbal behaviors that directly translate words or phrases—for example, the signs for *OK* and *peace*.
137. **Emotion** – the feelings we have – for example, our feelings of guilt, anger, or love.
138. **Emotional Communication** – the expression of feelings – for example, of feelings of guilt, happiness, or sorrow. *Before expressing your emotions, understand them, decide whether you wish to express them, and assess your communication options. In expressing your emotions, describe your feelings as accurately as possible, identify the reasons for them, anchor your feelings and their expression to the present time, and own your feelings.*
139. **Emotional Contagion** – the transferal of emotions from one person to another, analogous to transmission of a contagious disease from one person to another.
140. **Empathy** – the sharing of another person's feeling; feeling or perceiving something as does another person. *In expressing empathy, demonstrate active involvement through appropriate facial expressions and gestures, focus your concentration (maintaining eye contact and*

*physical closeness), reflect back the feelings you think are being experienced, and self-disclose as appropriate*

141. **Encoder** – something that takes a message in one form (for example, nerve impulses) and translates it into another form (for example, sound waves). In human communication the encoder is the speaking mechanism; in electronic communication one encoder is the telephone mouthpiece. *Encoding* is the process of putting a message into a code—for example, translating nerve impulses into speech sounds. *See also Decoder.*
142. **Encoding** – the translation of experience into a sign or code.
143. **Enculturation.** The process by which culture is transmitted from one generation to another.
144. **Equality** – a goal of effective communication; recognition that each individual in a communication interaction is equal, that no one is superior to any other; encourages supportiveness. *Opposed to Superiority. To communicate with equality, talk neither down nor up to others but as equals, share speaking and listening turns, and recognize that all parties in communication have something to say.*
145. **Equity Theory** – a theory claiming that you experience relational satisfaction when there is an equal distribution of rewards and costs between the two persons in the relationship.
146. **Ethics** – the branch of philosophy that deals with the rightness or wrongness of actions; the study of moral values; in communication, the morality of message behavior.
147. **Ethnocentrism** – the tendency to see others and their behaviors through your own cultural filters, often as distortions of your own behaviors; the tendency to evaluate the values and beliefs of your own culture more positively than those of another culture.
148. **Euphemism** – a polite word or phrase used to substitute for some **Taboo** or less polite term or phrase.
149. **Evaluation** – a process whereby a value is placed on some person, object, or event. *Avoid premature evaluation; amass evidence before making evaluations, especially of other people.*
150. **Expressiveness** – a quality of interpersonal effectiveness; genuine involvement in speaking and listening, conveyed verbally and non-verbally. *Communicate involvement and interest in the interaction by providing appropriate feedback, by assuming responsibility for your thoughts and feelings and for your roles as speaker and listener, and by appropriately using variety and flexibility in voice and bodily action.*

151. **Extensional Devices** – linguistic devices proposed to make language a more accurate means for talking about the world. The extensional devices include **Etcetera, Date, and Index.**
152. **Extensional Orientation** – a point of view in which primary consideration is given to the world of experience and only secondary consideration is given to labels. *Opposed to* **Intensional Orientation.**
153. **Eye Contact** – a non-verbal code, eye gaze, that communicates meanings about respect and status and often regulates turn-taking during interactions.
154. **Face** – a person’s social need to both belong to a group and be independent of that group.
155. **Facework** – the social strategies required to protect people’s face.
156. **Facial Expressions** – facial gestures that convey emotions and attitudes.
157. **Facial Feedback Hypothesis** – the theory that your facial expressions can produce physiological and emotional effects.
158. **Facial Management Techniques** – techniques used to mask certain emotions and to emphasize others, as when you intensify your expression of happiness to make a friend feel good about a promotion.
159. **Fact-Inference Confusion** – a misevaluation in which one makes an inference, regards it as a fact, and acts upon it as if it were a fact. *Distinguish facts from inferences; respond to inferences as inferences, not as facts.*
160. **Factual Statement** – a statement made by the observer after observation and limited to what is observed. *Opposed to* **Inferential Statement.**
161. **Family** – a group of people who consider themselves related and connected to one another and among whom the actions of one have consequences for others.
162. **Feedback** – information that is given back to the source. Feedback may come from the source’s own messages (as when you hear what you’re saying) or from the receiver(s) – in forms such as applause, yawning, puzzled looks, questions, letters to the editor of a newspaper, or increased/decreased subscriptions to a magazine. *Give clear feedback to others, and respond to others’ feedback, either through corrective measures or by continuing current performance, to increase communication efficiency and satisfaction.* See also **Negative Feedback, Positive Feedback.**

163. **Feedforward** – information that is sent prior to a regular message telling the listener something about what is to follow; messages that are prefatory to more central messages. *In using feedforward, be brief; use feedforward sparingly, and follow through on your feedforward promises.*
164. **Feminine Culture** – a culture in which both men and women are encouraged to be modest, oriented to maintaining the quality of life, and tender. Feminine cultures emphasize the quality of life and so socialize their people to be modest and to emphasize close interpersonal relationships. *Opposed to Masculine culture.*
165. **Flexibility** – the ability to adjust communication strategies and skills on the basis of the unique situation.
166. **Focusing** – anthropological concept referring to the process by which stereotypes are formed by selectively focusing on certain classificatory concepts prevalent within a certain discourse community, for example, individualism vs. collectivism.
167. **Footing** – a term coined by sociologist Erving Goffman to denote the stance we take up to the others present in the way we manage the production or reception of utterances.
168. **Force** – an unproductive **Conflict** strategy in which you try to win an argument by physically overpowering the other person either by threat or by actual behavior.
169. **Foreign Accent** – carryover of the pronunciation of sounds in language A into the pronunciation of sounds in language B.
170. **Frame** – culturally determined behavioural prototype that enables us to interpret each other's instances of verbal and non-verbal behaviour.
171. **Friendship** – an interpersonal relationship between two persons that is mutually productive, established and maintained through perceived mutual free choice, and characterized by mutual positive regard. *Adjust your verbal and non-verbal communication as appropriate to the stages of your various friendships. Learn the rules that govern each friendship; follow them or risk damaging the relationship.*
172. **Fundamental Attribution Error** – the tendency to overvalue and give too much weight to the contribution of internal factors (i.e., the person's personality) and **Undervalue** and give too little weight to the contribution of external factors (i.e., the situation the person is in or the surrounding events).
173. **Gender Display Rules** – cultural rules that identify what are and are not appropriate forms of expression for men and for women.

174. **Gender Identity** – the identification with the cultural notions of masculinity and femininity and what it means to be a man or a woman.
175. **Global Village** – a term coined by Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s that refers to a world in which communication technology unites people in remote parts of the world.
176. **Gossip** – oral or written **Communication** about someone not present, some third party, usually about matters that are private to this third party. *Avoid gossip that breaches confidentiality, is known to be false, and/or is unnecessarily invasive.*
177. **Grammatical Interference** – use of features from the grammar of language A in the production of language B.
178. **Grapevine Messages** – messages that do not follow any formal organizational structures; office-related gossip.
179. **Genre** – a socially-sanctioned type of communicative event, either spoken, like an interview, or printed, like a novel.
180. **Great Divide** – theory advanced by humanist Eric Havelock according to which the invention of writing created an irreducible difference between oral and literate cultures, and their ways of thinking.
181. **Halo Effect** – the tendency to generalize a person’s virtue or expertise from one area to other areas.
182. **Haptics** – the study of touch.
183. **Heterogeneity** – consisting of different or dissimilar elements.
184. **Heterosexist Language** – language that denigrates lesbians and gay men.
185. **High-Context Culture** – a culture in which much of the information in communication messages is left implied; it’s "understood." Much information is considered to be in the context or in the person rather than explicitly coded in verbal messages. **Collectivist Cultures** are generally high context. *Opposed to Low-Context Culture.*
186. **Home Territories** – territories for which individuals have a sense of intimacy and over which they exercise control – for example, a teacher’s office.
187. **Hypercorrection** – overapplication of a rule in an inappropriate fashion due to mistaken belief in its correctness; overgeneralization of a rule.
188. **Iconic** – a meaning of words based on resemblance of words to reality, for example, onomatopoeia (‘bash’, ‘mash’, ‘smash’, ‘crash’, ‘dash’).
189. **Illustrators** – non-verbal behaviors that accompany and literally illustrate verbal messages – for example, upward movements of the

head and hand that accompany the verbal "It's up there".

190. **Imessages** – messages in which the speaker accepts responsibility for personal thoughts and behaviors; messages in which the speaker's point of view is stated explicitly. *Opposed to You-Messages.*
191. **Immediacy** – a quality of interpersonal effectiveness; a sense of contact and togetherness; a feeling of interest and liking for the other person. *To communicate immediacy use inclusive terms, give appropriate and supportive feedback, maintain eye contact, use an open body posture, and maintain physical closeness.*
192. **Implicit Personality Theory** – a theory of personality, complete with rules about what characteristics go with what other characteristics, that you maintain and through which you perceive others. *Be conscious of your implicit personality theories. Avoid drawing firm conclusions about people on the basis of your theories; instead, treat these theories as hypotheses.*
193. **Indirect Speech** – speech that hides the speaker's true intentions; speech in which requests and observations are made indirectly. *Use indirect speech (1) to express a desire without insulting or offending anyone, (2) to ask for compliments in a socially acceptable manner, and (3) to disagree without being disagreeable.*
194. **Indiscrimination** – a misevaluation caused by categorizing people, events, or objects into a particular class and responding to them only as members of the class; a failure to recognize that each **Individual** is unique. *To avoid indiscrimination, index your terms and statements to emphasize that each person and event is unique; avoid treating all individuals the same way because they are covered by the same label or term.*
195. **Individualistic Culture** – a culture in which the individual's goals and preferences are given greater importance than the group's. *Opposed to Collectivist Cultures.*
196. **Inevitability** – a principle of communication holding that communication cannot be avoided; all behavior in an interactional setting is communication.
197. **Inferential Statement** – a statement that can be made by anyone, is not limited to what is observed, and can be made at any time. See also **Factual Statement.**
198. **Informal Time Terms** – terms that are approximate rather than exact; for example, *soon, early, and in a while.* *Recognize that informal time terms are often the cause of interpersonal difficulties; when misun-*

*derstanding is likely, use more precise terms.*

199. **Integrating Style** – a conflict management strategy characterized by the open and direct exchange of information in an attempt to reach a solution acceptable to both parties.
200. **Integration** – a type of cultural adaptations in which individuals maintain both their original culture and their daily interactions with other groups.
201. **Intensional Orientation** – a point of view in which primary consideration is given to the way things are labeled and only secondary consideration (if any) to the world of experience. *Respond first to things; avoid responding to labels as if they were things; do not let labels distort your perception of the world. Opposed to **Extensional Orientation**.*
202. **Interaction Management.** A quality of interpersonal effectiveness in which the interaction is controlled and managed to the satisfaction of both parties; effective handling of conversational turns, fluency, and message consistency. *Manage the interaction to the satisfaction of both parties by sharing the roles of speaker and listener, avoiding long and awkward silences, and being consistent in your verbal and non-verbal messages.*
203. **Intercultural** – 1. Refers to the meeting between people from different cultures and languages across the political boundaries of nation-states. 2 Refers to communication between people from different ethnic, social, gendered cultures within the boundaries of the same nation.
204. **Intercultural Communication** – communication that takes place between persons of different cultures or persons who have different cultural beliefs, values, or ways of behaving.
205. **Interpersonal Communication** – communication between two persons or among a small group of persons as distinct from public or mass communication; communication of a personal nature as distinct from impersonal communication; communication between or among connected persons or those involved in a close relationship.
206. **Intercultural Conflict** – conflict between two or more cultural groups.
207. **Intercultural Identity** – identity based on two or more cultural frames of reference.
208. **Interdisciplinary** – integrating knowledge from different disciplines in conducting research and constructing theory.

209. **Interference** – deviations from the norms of either language that occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language.
210. **Intermediary** – in a formal setting, a professional third party, such as a lawyer, real estate agent, or counselor, who intervenes when two parties are in conflict. Informal intermediaries may be friends or colleagues who intervene.
211. **Interpersonal Competence** – the ability to accomplish one’s interpersonal goals; interpersonal communication that is satisfying to both individuals.
212. **Interpersonal Conflict** – a disagreement between two connected persons. *To manage interpersonal conflict more productively: (1) Become an active participant; don’t avoid the issues. (2) Use talk rather than force. (3) Enhance the self-esteem, the face, of the person you’re arguing with. (4) Be supportive of the other person. And (5) focus as objectively as possible on the points of disagreement; avoid attacking the other person.*
213. **Interpersonal Effectiveness** – the ability to accomplish one’s interpersonal goals; interpersonal communication that is satisfying to both individuals.
214. **Interpersonal Perception** – the **Perception** of people; the processes through which you interpret and evaluate people and their behavior.
215. **Intimacy** – the closest interpersonal relationship; usually a close primary relationship.
216. **Intimacy Claims** – obligations a person incurs by virtue of being in a close and intimate relationship. *Reduce the intensity of intimacy claims when things get rough; give each other space as appropriate.*
217. **Intimate Distance** – the closest distance in **Proxemics**, ranging from touching to 18 inches.
218. **Involvement** – the second stage in **Relationship Development** in which you further advance the relationship, first testing each other and then intensifying your interaction.
219. **Irreversibility** – a principle of communication holding that communication cannot be reversed; once something has been communicated, it cannot be uncommunicated. *To prevent resentment and ill feeling, avoid saying things (for example, in anger) or making commitments that you may wish to retract; you won’t be able to.*
220. **Language** – the rules of syntax, semantics, and phonology by which sentences are created and understood; the term **a Language** refers to

- the sentences that can be created in any language, such as, English, Bantu, or Italian.
221. **Language Crossing** – the switch from one language code or variety to another, or stylization of one variety, or creation of hybrid varieties of the same code, as an act of Identity or resistance.
  222. **Lateral Communication** – communication between equals – manager to manager, worker to worker.
  223. **Leave-Taking Cues** – verbal and non-verbal signals that indicate a desire to terminate a conversation. *Become sensitive to the leave-taking cues of others, and communicate your own leave-taking desires tactfully so as not to insult or offend others.*
  224. **Leveling** – a process of message distortion in which the number of details in a message is reduced as the message gets repeated from one person to another.
  225. **Lexical Interference** – changes in the lexicon of language B due to contact with the lexicon of language A.
  226. **Lingua Franca** – a commonly shared language that is used as a medium of communication between people of different languages.
  227. **Linguicism** – term coined by Robert Phillipson to refer to discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of language, analogous to racism, sexism.
  228. **Linguistic Nationalism** – association of one language variety (standard or national language) with membership of one national community.
  229. **Linguistic Relativity Principle** – a hypothesis advanced by the linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf, according to which different languages offer different ways of perceiving and expressing the world around us, thus leading their speakers to conceive of the world in different ways.
  230. **Linguistic Rights** – a concept promulgated by the UN and other international organizations to defend the right of peoples to develop and promote their own languages, in particular the right of children to have access to education in their languages; d. linguistic imperialism.
  231. **Listening** – an active process of receiving aural stimuli that consists of five stages: receiving, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding. *Adjust your listening perspective, as the situation warrants, between active and passive, judgmental and nonjudgmental, surface and depth, empathic and objective, and active and inactive listening.*

232. **Literacy** – the cognitive and sociocultural ability to use the written or print medium according to the norms of interaction and interpretation of a given discourse community.
233. **Literacy Event** – interaction of a reader or community of readers with a written text.
234. **Literate** – characteristic of the use of written language. See **Literacy**.
235. **Loanshift** – a change in the meaning of a morpheme in language A on the model of language B.
236. **Loan Translation** – a type of lexical interference consisting of translation of morphemes of language A into language B.
237. **Low-Context Culture**. A culture in which most of the information in communication is explicitly stated in the verbal message rather than being left implied or assumed to be "understood." Low-context cultures are usually **Individualistic Cultures**. *Opposed to High-Context Culture*.
238. **Manipulation** – an unproductive **Conflict** strategy that avoids open conflict; instead, one person attempts to divert the conflict by being especially charming and getting the other person into a noncombative frame of mind.
239. **Manner Maxim** – a principle of **Conversation** that holds that speakers cooperate by being clear and by organizing their thoughts into some meaningful and coherent pattern.
240. **Markers** – devices that signify that a certain territory belongs to a particular person. *Become sensitive to the markers of others, and learn to use markers to define your own territories and to communicate the desired impression.*
241. **Masculine Culture** – a culture in which men are viewed as assertive, oriented to material success, and strong; women, on the other hand, are viewed as modest, focused on the quality of life, and tender. Masculine cultures emphasize success and so socialize people to be assertive, ambitious, and competitive. *Opposed to Feminine Culture*.
242. **Matching Hypothesis** – an assumption that you date and mate people who are similar to yourself—who match you—in physical attractiveness.
243. **Mediation** – the act of resolving conflict by having someone intervene between two parties.
244. **Melting Pot** – a metaphor that assumes that immigrants and cultural minorities will be assimilated into the U.S. majority culture, losing

- their original cultures.
245. **Mentoring Relationship** – a relationship in which an experienced individual helps to train someone who is less experienced; for example, an accomplished teacher might mentor a younger teacher who is newly arrived or who has never taught before.
246. **Message** – any signal or combination of signals that serves as a **stimulus** for a receiver.
247. **Metacommunication** – communication about communication. *Metacommunicate to ensure understanding of the other persons thoughts and feelings: Give clear feedback, explain feelings as well as thoughts, paraphrase your own complex thoughts, and ask questions.*
248. **Metaphor** – not only a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish, metaphor is a property of our conceptual system, a way of using language that structures how we perceive things, how we think, and what we do.
249. **Mindfulness** and **Mindlessness** – states of relative **Awareness**. In a mindful state, you are aware of the logic and rationality of your behaviors and of the logical connections among elements. In a mindless state, you're unaware of rationality and logical connections. *Be mindful when applying the principles of interpersonal communication. To increase mindfulness, create and re-create categories, be open to new information and points of view, and avoid relying too heavily on first impressions.*
250. **Mixed Message** – a message that communicates two different and often contradictory meanings, for example, a message that asks for two different (often incompatible) responses such as "leave me alone" and "show me more attention." Often, one meaning (usually the socially acceptable meaning) is communicated verbally and the other (usually the less socially acceptable meaning) non-verbally. *Avoid emitting mixed messages by focusing clearly on your purposes when communicating and by increasing conscious control over your verbal and non-verbal behaviors. Detect mixed messages in other people's communications and avoid being placed in double-blind situations by seeking clarification from the sender.*
251. **Model** – a representation of an object or process.
252. **Monochronic Time Orientation** – a view of time in which things are done sequentially; one thing is scheduled at a time. *Opposed to Polychrome Time Orientation.*

253. **Multicultural** – political term used to characterize a society composed of people from different cultures or an individual who belongs to several cultures. See **Intercultural**.
254. **Multicultural Identity** – a sense of inbetweenness that develops as a result of frequent or multiple cultural border crossings.
255. **Multilingual** – the ability to speak more than two languages fluently or at least competently.
256. **Myths** – a) theories or stories that are widely understood and believed; b) in semiotics, the layers of meaning beneath a signifier.
257. **Narrative Style** – a person’s way of telling stories that reflects the uses of language of the discourse community he/she has been socialized into. See conversational style; discourse accent.
258. **National Identity** – national citizenship.
259. **Native Speaker** – a person who is recognized, linguistically and culturally, by members of a discourse community as being one of them.
260. **Negative Feedback** – feedback that serves a corrective function by informing the source that his or her message is not being received in the way intended. Looks of boredom, shouts of disagreement, letters critical of newspaper policy, and teachers’ instructions on how better to approach a problem are examples of negative feedback and (ideally) serve to redirect the speaker’s behavior.
261. **Networking** – connecting with people who can help you accomplish a goal or help you find information related to your goal; for example, to your search for a job.
262. **Neutrality** – a response pattern lacking in personal involvement; encourages defensiveness. *Opposed to Empathy.*
263. **Noise** – anything that interferes with your receiving a message as the source intended the message to be received. Noise is present in communication to the extent that the message received is not the message sent. *In order to increase communication accuracy, combat the effects of physical, physiological, psychological, and semantic noise by eliminating or lessening the sources of physical noise, securing agreement on meanings, and interacting with an open mind.*
264. **Nonjudgmental** – free from evaluating according to one’s own cultural frame of reference.
265. **Nonnegotiation** – an unproductive **Conflict** strategy in which the individual refuses to discuss the conflict or to listen to the other person.
266. **Non-verbal Communication** – communication without words; for example, communication by means of space, gestures, facial

- expressions, touching, vocal variation, or silence.
267. **Object-Adaptors** – movements that involve your manipulation of some object; for example, punching holes in a styrofoam coffee cup, clicking a ballpoint pen, or chewing on a pencil. *Generally, object-adaptors communicate discomfort and a lack of control over the communication situation and so are best avoided.*
268. **Obliging Style** – a conflict management strategy characterized by playing down differences and incompatibilities while emphasizing commonalities.
269. **Olfactory Communication** – communication by smell.
270. **Openness** – a quality of interpersonal effectiveness encompassing (1) a willingness to interact openly with others, to self-disclose as appropriate; (2) a willingness to react honestly to incoming stimuli; and (3) a willingness to own one’s feelings and thoughts.
271. **Opinion** – a tentative conclusion concerning some object, person, or event.
272. **Orality** – features of discourse associated with the use of spoken language; cf. literacy.
273. **Orate** – characteristic of either spoken or written language that bears traces of orality; cf. literate.
274. **Orientalism** – term coined by Edward Said to denote the colonialist perspective taken by European writers on the Orient, and by extension, a colonialist view of any foreign culture.
275. **Other-Orientation** – a quality of interpersonal effectiveness involving attentiveness, interest, and concern for the other person. *Convey concern for and interest in the other person by means of empathic responses, appropriate feedback, and active listening responses.*
276. **Outing** – the process whereby a person’s affectional **Orientation** is made public by another person without the gay man or lesbians consent.
277. **Overattribution** – the tendency to attribute a great deal or even everything a person does to one or two characteristics.
278. **Overdifferentiation** – imposition of phonemic distinctions from the primary language system on the sounds of the secondary system.
279. **Owning Feelings** – the process by which you take responsibility for your own feelings instead of **Attributing** them to others. *To increase honest sharing, own your feelings by using messages and acknowledging responsibility for your own thoughts and feelings.*
280. **Paralanguage** – the vocal but non-verbal aspect of speech.

Paralanguage consists of voice qualities (for example, pitch range, resonance, tempo), vocal characterizers (laughing or crying, yelling or whispering), vocal qualifiers (intensity, pitch height), and vocal segregates ("uh-uh" meaning "no" or "sh" meaning "silence"). *Vary paralinguistic elements, such as rate, volume, and stress, to add variety and emphasis to your communications, and be responsive to the meanings communicated by others' variation of paralanguage features.*

281. **Passive Listening** – listening that is attentive and supportive but occurs without the listener's talking or directing the speaker in any non-verbal way; also, negatively, inattentive or uninvolved listening.
282. **Pauses** – silent periods in the normally fluent stream of speech. Pauses are of two types: filled pauses (interruptions in speech that are filled with such vocalizations as "er" or "urn") and unfilled pauses (silences of unusually long duration).
283. **People-centered** – characteristic of conversational exchanges where participants have to engage their listeners, not just convey information; cf. **Topic-Centered**.
284. **Perception** – the process by which you become aware of objects and events through your senses.
285. **Perception Checking** – the process of verifying your understanding of some message, situation, or feeling. *Use perception checking to get more information about your impressions by describing what you think is happening and asking whether this is correct or in error.*
286. **Personal Distance** – the second closest distance in **Proxemics**, ranging from 18 inches to 4 feet.
287. **Persuasion** – the process of influencing attitudes and behavior.
288. **Phatic Communion** – term coined by anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski to characterize the ready-made chunks of speech like 'Hi, how are you?' that people use more to maintain social contact than to convey information; communication that is primarily social; communication designed to open the channels of communication rather than to communicate something about the external world. "Hello" and "How are you?" are examples in everyday interaction.
289. **Phonic Interference** – perception and reproduction of the sounds of a bilingual's secondary language in terms of his primary language.
290. **Phonotactic Interference** – carryover of distributional restrictions of language A into language B.
291. **Pidgin** – a contact vernacular, a spoken language used for communication between speakers who have no other language in

common; a mixed language incorporating the vocabulary of one or more languages, having a very simplified form of the grammatical system of one of these, and not used as the main language of any of its speakers.

292. **Pitch** – the highness or lowness of the vocal tone.
293. **Polarization** – a form of fallacious reasoning by which only two extremes are considered; also referred to as "black-or-white" and "either-or" thinking or two-valued orientation. *In order to describe reality more accurately, use middle terms and qualifiers when describing the world; avoid talking in terms of extremes (for example, good and bad).*
294. **Politics of Recognition** – the political debates surrounding the right of minorities to be legitimately recognized and accepted as members of a culture (2) that is different from the dominant culture. See **Legitimation**.
295. **Polychrome Time Orientation** – a view of time in which several things may be scheduled or engaged in at the same time. *Opposed to Monochrome Time Orientation.*
296. **Popular Culture** – a new name for low culture, referring to those systems or artifacts that most people share and that most people know about, including television, music, videos and popular magazines.
297. **Positive Feedback** – feedback that supports or reinforces the continuation of behavior along the same lines in which it is already proceeding – for example, applause during a speech encourages the speaker to continue speaking this way.
298. **Positiveness** – a characteristic of effective communication involving positive attitudes toward oneself and toward the interpersonal interaction, and expression of these attitudes to others (as in complimenting) along with acceptance and approval. *Communicate positiveness verbally and non-verbally with, for example, smiles, positive facial expressions, attentive gestures, positive verbal expressions, and the elimination of negative appraisals.*
299. **Power** – the ability to influence or control the behavior of another person; A has power over B when A can influence or control B's behavior. Power is an inevitable part of interpersonal relationships. *Communicate power through forceful speech; avoidance of weak modifiers and excessive body movement; and demonstration of knowledge, preparation, and organization in the matters at hand.*
300. **Power Play** – a consistent pattern of behavior in which one person tries

to control the behavior of another. *To combat power plays use an effective management strategy; for example, express your feelings, describe the behavior you object to, and state a cooperative response.*

301. **Pragmatics** – the study of what speakers mean with words, as distinct from what the code means; the study of how meaning is constructed in relation to receivers and how language is actually used in particular contexts in language communities.
302. **Primacy** and **Recency** – typical patterns in human perception. Primacy is our tendency to give more importance to that which occurs first; recency is our tendency to give more importance to that which occurs last (i.e., most recently).
303. **Primary Relationship** – the relationship between two people that they consider their most (or one of their most) important; for example, the relationship between husband and wife or domestic partners.
304. **Principle of Cooperation.** An implicit agreement between speaker and listener to cooperate in trying to understand what each is communicating.
305. **Print Culture** – the artefacts, mindsets, and social practices associated with the production and reception of printed language; cf. orality; literacy.
306. **Process** – ongoing activity; **Communication** is referred to as a process because it is always changing, always in motion.
307. **Provisionalism** – an attitude of open-mindedness that leads to the development of a supportive relationship and atmosphere. *Opposed to Certainty.*
308. **Proxemics** – the study of how people communicate through the ways they structure their space—the distances between people in their interactions, the organization of space in homes and offices, and even the design of cities.
309. **Psychological Time** – the importance you place on past, present, or future time. *Recognize the significance of your own time orientation to your ultimate success, and make whatever adjustments you think desirable.*
310. **Public Distance** – the farthest distance in **Proxemics**, ranging from 12 feet to more than 25 feet.
311. **Pupil Dilation** – the extent to which the pupil of the eye is expanded; generally large pupils indicate positive reactions.
312. **Pygmalion Effect** – the condition in which you make a prediction of success, act as if it is true, and thereby make it come true (as when a

teacher's acting toward students as if they'll be successful actually influences them to become successful); a type of **Self-Fulfilling Prophecy**.

313. **Quality Maxim** – a principle of **Conversation** that holds that speakers cooperate by saying what they think is true and by not saying what they think is false.
314. **Quantity Maxim** – a principle of **Conversation** that holds that speakers cooperate by being only as informative as necessary to communicate their intended meanings.
315. **Racial Identity** – identifying with a particular racial group. Although in the past racial groups were classified on the basis of biological characteristics, most scientists now recognize that race is constructed in fluid social and historical contexts.
316. **Racist Language** – language that denigrates, demeans, or is derogatory toward members of a particular race.
317. **Rate** – the speed with which you speak, generally measured in words per minute. *Use variations in rate to increase communication efficiency and persuasiveness as appropriate.*
318. **Receiver** – any person or thing that takes in messages. Receivers may be individuals listening to or reading a message, a group of persons hearing a speech, a scattered television audience, or machines that store information.
319. **Referent** – object that a signifier (sound or word) points to, for example, a flower of a certain shape and smell is the referent for the word 'rose'.
320. **Regional Identity** – identification with a specific geographic region of a nation.
321. **Regulators** – non-verbal behaviors that regulate, monitor, or control the communications of another person.
322. **Reinterpretation of Distinctions** – the process of distinguishing phonemes of the secondary system by features that are distinctive in the bilingual's primary system but merely concomitant or redundant in the secondary system.
323. **Rejection** – a response to an individual that acknowledges another person but expresses disagreement. Opposed to **Confirmation** and **Disconfirmation**.
324. **Relation Maxim** – a principle of **Conversation** that holds that speakers communicate by talking about what is relevant and by not talking about what is not.

325. **Relationship Communication** – communication between or among intimates or those in close relationships; for some theorists, synonymous with interpersonal communication.
326. **Relational Dialectics Theory** – a theory that describes relationships in terms of a series of opposites representing competing desires or motivations, such as the desire for autonomy and the desire to belong to someone, desires for novelty and for predictability, and desires for closedness and for openness.
327. **Relationship Message** – message that comments on the relationship between the speakers rather than on matters external to them. *In order to ensure a more complete understanding of the messages intended, recognize and respond to relationship as well as content messages.*
328. **Relationship Repair** – a relationship stage in which one or both parties seek to improve the relationship. *If you wish to preserve or repair a deteriorating relationship, take positive action by recognizing the problem, engaging in productive conflict resolution, posing possible solutions, affirming each other, integrating solutions into normal behavior, and taking risks.*
329. **Relexification** – very rapid replacement of the vocabulary of a language by lexical items taken from another language.
330. **Religious Identity** – a sense of belonging to a religious group.
331. **Rules Theory** – a theory that describes relationships as interactions governed by a series of rules that a couple agrees to follow. When the rules are followed, the relationship is maintained and when they are broken, the relationship experiences difficulty.
332. **Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis** – the linguistic relativity hypothesis advanced by linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf. See **Linguistic Relativity Principle**
333. **Schema** (pl. schemata) – mental representation of typical instance used in discourse processing to predict and make sense of the particular instance which the discourse describes. See **Structures of Expectation; Frame**. Ways of organizing perceptions; mental templates or structures that help you organize the millions of items of information you come into contact with every day as well as those you already have in memory. Schemata include general ideas about people (Pat and Chris, Japanese, Baptists, New Yorkers); yourself (your qualities, abilities, or even liabilities); and social roles (the qualities of police officers, professors, or multimillionaire CEOs).
334. **Script** – a type of schema; an organized body of information about

some action, event, or procedure. A script is a general idea of how some event should play out or unfold; the rules governing events and their sequence.

335. **Segregation** – the policy or practice of compelling groups to live apart from each other.
336. **Selective Exposure** – the tendency of listeners to actively seek out information that supports their opinions and to actively avoid information that contradicts their existing opinions, beliefs, attitudes, and values.
337. **Self-Acceptance** – being satisfied with yourself, your virtues and vices, your abilities and limitations.
338. **Self-Adaptors** – movements that usually satisfy a physical need, especially to make you more comfortable; for example, scratching your head to relieve an itch, moistening your lips because they feel dry, or pushing your hair out of your eyes. *Because these often communicate your nervousness or discomfort, they are best avoided.*
339. **Self-Awareness** – the degree to which you know yourself. *Increase self-awareness by asking yourself about yourself and listening to others; actively seek information about yourself from others by carefully observing their interactions with you and by asking relevant questions. See yourself from different perspectives (see your different selves), and increase your open self.*
340. **Self-Concept** – your self-image, the view you have of who you are.
341. **Self-Disclosure** – the process of revealing something about yourself to another, usually information you might normally keep hidden. *Self-disclose to improve the relationship when it's appropriate, when there's an opportunity for open responses, and when you're willing to risk the burdens that self-disclosure might entail. In responding to self-disclosures, listen actively, support and reinforce the discloser, keep the disclosures confidential, and don't use the disclosures against the person.*
342. **Self-Esteem** – the value you place on yourself, your self-evaluation; usually refers to a positive self-evaluation. *Increase your self-esteem by attacking destructive beliefs, engaging in self-affirmation, seeking out nourishing people, and working on projects that will result in success.*
343. **Self-Fulfilling Prophecy** – the situation in which making a prediction tends to cause it to come true. For example, expecting a person to be hostile, you act in a hostile manner toward this person, and in doing so

elicit hostile behavior from the person – thus confirming your prophecy that the person is hostile. *Carefully examine your perceptions when they conform too closely to your expectations; check to make sure that you're seeing what exists in real life, not just in your expectations or predictions.*

344. **Self-Monitoring** – manipulation of the image you present to others in interpersonal interactions so as to give the most favorable impression of yourself. *To communicate a desired impression, monitor your verbal and non-verbal behavior as appropriate.*
345. **Self-Serving Bias** – a bias that leads you to take credit for the positive consequences of your behaviors and to deny responsibility for the negative consequences. *In examining the causes of your own behavior, beware of the tendency to attribute negative behaviors to external factors and positive behaviors to internal factors. In self-examinations, ask whether and how the self serving bias might be operating.*
346. **Semantic Networks** – associations of related meanings evoked by words.
347. **Semantics** – the study of how meaning is encoded in language, as distinct from what speakers mean to say when they use language.
348. **Separation** – a type of cultural adaptation in which an individual retains his or her original culture while interacting minimally with other groups. Separation may be voluntary, or it may be initiated and enforced by the dominant society, in which case it becomes segregation.
349. **Sexist Language** – language derogatory to one sex, generally women.
350. **Sexual Harassment** – unsolicited and unwanted verbal or non-verbal sexual messages. *If confronted with sexual harassment, consider talking to the harasser, collecting evidence, using appropriate channels within the organization, or filing a complaint. Avoid accusations of sexual harassment by beginning with the assumption that others are not interested in sexual advances and stories; listen for negative reactions to any sexually explicit discussions, and refrain from any behaviors you think might prove offensive.*
351. **Shyness** – discomfort and uneasiness in interpersonal situations.
352. **Sign** – the relation between a signifier (word or sound) and the signified (image or concept).
353. **Signal-to-Noise Ratio** – a measure of what is meaningful (signal) to what is interference (noise).
354. **Silence** – the absence of vocal communication; often misunderstood to

refer to the absence of communication. *Use silence to communicate feelings or to prevent communication about certain topics. Interpret silences of others in their cultural context.*

355. **Silencers** – a tactic (such as crying) that literally silences your opponent — an unproductive **Conflict** strategy.
356. **Situated Inferences** – mental links made by participants in verbal exchanges between the words spoken and the relevant context of situation and context of culture.
357. **Social Comparison** – the processes by which you compare aspects of yourself (for example, your abilities, opinions, and values) with those of others and then assess and evaluate yourself on the basis of the comparison; one of the sources of **Self-Concept**.
358. **Social Deixis** – process by which language Indexes (1) not only the physical and temporal location of the speaker at the moment of speaking, but also his/her social status and the status given to the addressee.
359. **Social Distance** – the third farthest distance in **Proxemics**, ranging from 4 feet to 12 feet; the distance at which business is usually conducted. The feeling a person has that his or her social position is relatively similar to or relatively different from the social position of someone else. The social distance between two different groups or communities influences communication between them, and may affect the way one group learns the L. of another (e.g. an immigrant group learning the L. of the dominant group in a country). Social distance may depend on such factors as differences in the size, ethnic origin, political status, social status of two groups, and has been studied in second language acquisition research.
360. **Social Exchange Theory** – a theory hypothesizing that you develop profitable relationships (those in which your rewards are greater than your costs) and that you avoid or terminate unprofitable relationships (those in which your costs exceed your rewards).
361. **Socialization** – the process by which a person internalizes the conventions of behavior imposed by a society or social group. See **Acculturation**.
362. **Social Penetration Theory** – a theory concerned with relationship development from the superficial to the intimate levels (**depth**) and from few to many areas of interpersonal interaction (**breadth**).

363. **Sociocultural Context** – the synchronic (social, societal) and the diachronic (historical) context of language use, also called *sociohistorical context*.
364. **Sound Substitution** – replacement of a sound in language B by a sound in language A.
365. **Source** – any person or thing that creates messages; for example, an individual speaking, writing, or gesturing; or a computer solving a problem.
366. **Speech** – messages conveyed via a vocal-auditory channel.
367. **Speech Community** – a social group that shares knowledge of one linguistic code and knowledge also of its patterns of use; cf. **Discourse Community**.
368. **Spontaneity** – the communication pattern in which you say what you're thinking without attempting to develop strategies for control; encourages **Supportiveness**. *Opposed to Strategy*.
369. **Sprachbund** – a language convergence area and the languages spoken within that area, in which genetic heterogeneity is gradually replaced by typological homogeneity.
370. **Standard Language** – artificially conventionalized linguistic code, fashioned from a multiplicity of dialects spoken within a national community, and imposed as the national code. See **Linguistic Nationalism**.
371. **Static Evaluation** – an orientation that fails to recognize that the world is constantly changing; an attitude that sees people and events as fixed rather than as ever changing. *To emphasize the likelihood of change, date your statements (mentally or actually)*.
372. **Status** – the relative level one occupies in a hierarchy; status always involves a comparison, and thus your status is only relative to the status of another. Significant determinants of social status in the United States, for example, are occupation, financial position, age, and educational level.
373. **Stereotype** – conventionalized ways of talking and thinking about other people and cultures. See **Symbol**; in communication, a fixed impression of a group of people through which we then perceive specific individuals; stereotypes are most often negative (Martians are stupid, uneducated, and dirty) but may also be positive (Venusians are scientific, industrious, and helpful). *Avoid **stereotyping** others; instead, see and respond to each individual as a unique individual*.
374. **Stimulus** – any external or internal change that impinges on or arouses

- an organism.
375. **Strategy** – the use of some plan for control of other members of a communication interaction that guides your communications; often encourages **Defensiveness**. *Opposed to Spontaneity*.
376. **Structures of Expectation** – mental structures of knowledge that enable us to understand present events and anticipate future ones. See **Frame; Schema**.
377. **Submission Style** – a style of interaction for an intercultural couple in which one partner yields to the other partner's cultural patterns, abandoning or denying his or her own culture.
378. **Substratum** – primary language of a group of speakers who have shifted from speaking their primary language to speaking another, adopted language.
379. **Superiority** – a point of view or attitude that assumes that others are not equal to yourself; encourages **Defensiveness**. *Opposed to Equality*.
380. **Superstratum** – former language of a group of speakers who have been linguistically absorbed into a population that continues to speak its primary language.
381. **Supportiveness** – an attitude of an individual or an atmosphere in a group that is characterized by openness, absence of fear, and a genuine feeling of equality. *Exhibit supportiveness to others by being descriptive rather than evaluative, spontaneous rather than strategic, and provisional rather than certain. Opposed to Defensiveness*.
382. **Symbol** – conventionalized sign that has been endowed with special meaning by the members of a given culture.
383. **Syntactic Interference** – carryover of syntactic patterns from language A into language B, or interpretation of patterns of language B in terms of patterns of language A.
384. **Taboo** – forbidden; culturally censored. Taboo language is language that is frowned upon by *polite society*. Topics and specific words may be considered taboo – for example, death, sex, certain forms of illness and various words denoting sexual activities and excretory functions. *Substitute more socially acceptable expressions or euphemisms*.
385. **Tactile Communication** – communication by touch; communication received by the skin. *Use touch when appropriate to express positive affect, playfulness, control, and ritualistic meanings and to serve task-related functions; but avoid touching that may be unwelcome*.
386. **Temporal Communication** – the messages conveyed by your time orientation and treatment of time.

387. **Territoriality** – a possessive or ownership reaction to an area of space or to particular objects. *Establish and maintain territory non-verbally by marking or otherwise indicating temporary or permanent ownership. Become sensitive to the territorial behavior of others.*
388. **Text** – the product of language use, whether it be a conversational exchange, or a stretch of written prose, held together by cohesive devices; cf. **Discourse**.
389. **Topic-Centered** – characteristic of essay-type writing, where the transmission of a message is of prime importance; cf. **People-Centered**.
390. **Touch Avoidance** – the tendency to avoid touching and being touched by others. *Recognize that some people may prefer to avoid touching and being touched. Avoid drawing too many conclusions about people from the way they treat interpersonal touching.*
391. **Touch**. See **Tactile Communication**.
392. **Transactional View** – a point of view that sees communication as an ongoing process in which all elements are interdependent and influence one another.
393. **Transfer of Rules** – application of a rule characteristic of language A in the production of utterances in language B.
394. **Uncertainty Avoidance** – a cultural variability dimensions that concerns the extent to which uncertainty, ambiguity, and deviant ideas and behaviors are avoided.
395. **Uncertainty Reduction** – the process of lessening uncertainty in adapting to a new culture by seeking information.
396. **Underdifferentiation** – failure to distinguish two sounds in the secondary system because their phonetic counterparts are not distinguished in the primary system.
397. **Unproductive Conflict Strategies** – ways of engaging in conflict that generally prove counterproductive; for example, avoidance, force, blame, silencers, manipulation, personal rejection, and fighting below the belt.
398. **Upward Communication** – communication sent from the lower levels of a hierarchy to the upper levels – for example, line worker to manager, faculty member to dean.
399. **Value** – relative worth of an object; a quality that makes something desirable or undesirable; ideals or customs about which we have emotional responses, whether positive or negative.

400. **Verbal Aggressiveness** – a method of winning an argument by attacking the other person's *self-concept*. Avoid inflicting psychological pain on the other person to win an argument.
401. **Voice Qualities** – aspects of **Paralanguage** – specifically, pitch range, vocal lip control, glottis control, pitch control, articulation control, rhythm control, resonance, and tempo.
402. **Worldview** – underlying assumptions about the nature of reality and human behavior.
403. **You-messages** – messages in which you deny responsibility for your own thoughts and behaviors; messages that attribute your **Perception** to another person; messages of blame. *Opposed to I-messages.*