

Preface





As we continue to teach and write about intercultural communication, we are struck by the continued need for information covering the practical aspects of communicating across cultures. Since we wrote the first edition, the field of intercultural communication has changed at a rapid pace. The events of September 11, 2001, the increasing complexity of global relations, increasing conflicts that are not state sponsored, the increasing diversity of our country, the increasing interconnectedness of nations in a global economy—all mean that our lives and jobs depend more and more on intercultural communication skills. Are there general intercultural communication skills that can be used in a variety of cultural contexts? Is there culture-specific information that can help us become better intercultural communicators? Is there a way to tap into information on the Internet that may provide useful guidelines for intercultural communication?

We wrote this book to address these questions and issues. As in our other books, we have tried to use information from a variety of approaches in the field of intercultural communication, drawing from traditional social psychological approaches as well as from ethnographic studies and more recent critical media studies. However, the emphasis in this book is on the practical, experiential nature of intercultural communication. We attempt to give solid practical guidelines while noting the layers of complexity in communicating across cultural boundaries.

FEATURES OF THE BOOK

This book addresses the core issues and concerns of intercultural communication by introducing a group of general skills in Chapter 1 and by emphasizing the concepts and the skills of communicating interculturally throughout the text. This textbook:

- Includes a balanced treatment of skills and theory. The skills focus is framed by the presentation of the conceptual aspects of culture and communication. Each chapter has a section called “Building Intercultural Skills” that provides guidelines for improving students’ intercultural communication skills.
- Provides a framework for understanding intercultural communication by focusing on four building blocks (culture, communication, context, and power) and four barriers (ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination).

- Focuses on personal experiences by including students' narratives and authors' personal experiences throughout the text.
- Presents material in a student-friendly way. There are four types of thoughtful and fun bits of information in the margin provided for student interest. This edition contains new updated examples and websites:
 -  "What Do You Think?" includes information and questions that challenge students to think about their own culture and communication styles.
 -  "Surf's Up!" suggests websites that students can visit for more information about culture and communication.
 -  "Pop Culture Spotlight" presents popular culture examples of culture and communication.
 -  "Info Bites" provides fun facts and figures that illustrate issues related to intercultural communication.
- Includes separate chapters on history and identity, with sections on Whiteness and assisting European American students in exploring their own cultural issues.
- Focuses on popular culture, both in a separate chapter and in examples woven throughout the book.
- Applies concepts to real-life contexts; the book includes four chapters on how intercultural communication works in everyday settings in tourism, business, education, and health.

NEW TO THE SECOND EDITION

To reflect the increasing importance of religion in global conflicts, particularly in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, we have interwoven a discussion of the role of religion in intercultural communication throughout the text.

For example, in Chapter 1, we explore the intercultural conditions that may have led to these attacks and their relationship to the Peace imperative in the study of intercultural communication. In Chapter 2 we added a discussion of stereotypes that develop based on recent religious struggles. In Chapter 3, we've expanded our discussion of religious identity and in Chapter 8, we explore the role of religion in intercultural conflict.

To acknowledge the increasing role technology plays in human communication, we expanded our discussion of the technology imperative in Chapter 1 to include a discussion of the "digital divide"; we also added a discussion of cyberspace as cultural space in Chapter 6. In Chapter 9, we discuss the role of culture and computer-mediated communication in a new section "Culture and Internet Relationships."

We have also expanded our discussion of cultural variations in communication style and models for effective intercultural communication. For example, in Chapter 5, we added a section on cultural variations in attitudes toward speak-

ing, writing, and silence. There is also a new section on “third culture building” and “intercultural communication as improvised performance.”

Finally, to acknowledge the importance of the impact of societal contexts on human communication, we expanded our discussion of the social and political impacts on international business (e.g., terrorism and international business) and tourist (impact of terrorism, SARS scare) encounters.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Chapter 1 focuses on the changing dynamics of social life and global conditions that provide a rationale for the study of intercultural communication. In this edition, we provide an extensive look at the complexities and possible causes of the 9/11 attacks and how these events impact the lives of everyday communicators. We also incorporate statistics of the 2000 census in our discussion of the demographic imperative.

Chapter 2 outlines a framework for the book and identifies four building blocks of intercultural communication—culture, communication, context, and power—and four attitudinal and behavioral barriers to effective intercultural communication—ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination (including racism and other “isms”). This edition explores how events of 9/11 are related to current stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination directed at specific cultural groups.

Chapter 3 focuses on helping students see the importance of history in understanding contemporary intercultural communication issues. The edition includes a discussion of global religious histories and their implications for intercultural communication.

Chapter 4 discusses issues of identity and intercultural communication. In this chapter we address a number of identities (gender, age, race and ethnicity, physical ability, religion, class, national and regional identity). We also discuss issues of multicultural identity—and the people who live on the borders—as well as issues of crossing borders and culture shock and adaptation. This edition includes the most recent thinking about white identity and post-ethnicity.

Chapter 5 addresses verbal aspects of intercultural communication, describing the components of language and cultural variations in language and communication style as well as issues of power and language. This edition includes a new section on cultural variations in attitudes toward speaking, writing and silence, and an expanded discussion of models for effective intercultural communication including “third culture building” and “intercultural communication as improvised performance.”

Chapter 6 focuses on the role of nonverbal behavior in intercultural interaction, describing universal and culture-specific aspects of nonverbal communication and how nonverbal behavior can provide a basis for stereotyping and prejudice. This chapter also addresses cultural space and its dynamic, changing nature. This edition includes a new discussion of cyberspace as cultural space.

Chapter 7 addresses popular culture and intercultural communication, defining pop culture and discussing the ways in which pop culture forms our images of cultural groups and the ways in which we may consume (or resist) popular culture products. This edition includes a discussion of recent rise in popularity of “reality tv” and its implications for intercultural communication.

Chapter 8 discusses the role of culture and conflict. The chapter identifies characteristics of intercultural conflict, describes both personal and social/political aspects of conflict and how conflict management varies from culture to culture. This edition includes a section on “religion and conflict” and a refined presentation of conflict styles, to reflect recent developments in conflict style scholarship.

Chapter 9 focuses on intercultural relationships in everyday life. It identifies the challenges and benefits of intercultural relationships, examines how relationships may differ across cultures, and explores a variety of relationship types: friendship, gay, dating, and marriage relationships. The edition includes a new section on “culture and Internet relationships.”

Chapters 10 through 13 focus on intercultural communication in specific contexts. Chapter 10 addresses issues of intercultural communication in the tourism industry, exploring various ways in which host and tourist may interact, how varying cultural norms may affect tourist encounters, and language issues and communication style. This edition includes an expanded discussion of the sometimes-complex attitudes of hosts toward tourists and a new section on “the social/political contexts of tourism” discussing the impact of terrorism, health risks (e.g., SARS, mad cow disease) on tourism.

Chapter 11 focuses on intercultural communication in business contexts and identifies several communication challenges (work-related values, differences in management styles, language issues, and affirmative action) in both domestic and international contexts. This edition includes a new section on the social and political contexts of business.

Chapter 12 explores intercultural communication and education, discussing different kinds of educational experiences (such as study abroad and culture-specific settings) and communication challenges (such as varying roles for teachers and students and grading and power) and also addressing social concerns and identity issues in educational settings. This edition includes a new section exploring the role of culture in admissions, affirmative action, and standardized tests.

Chapter 13 addresses intercultural communication and health care, focusing on intercultural barriers to effective health care, the historical treatment of cultural groups, and how power dynamics have influenced communication in health care settings. This edition includes a discussion of the role of religion in health care delivery and the implications for intercultural communication.

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

The Online Learning Center, at www.mhhe.com/experiencing2, provides interactive resources to address the needs of a variety of teaching and learning styles. For every chapter, students and instructors can access chapter outlines, sample

quizzes with feedback, crossword puzzles using key terms, and Internet activities. For instructors specifically, the Online Learning Center offers an online Instructor's Resource Manual with sample syllabi, discussion questions, and pedagogical tips designed to help teach the course in general.

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