

# Principle Reasons for Studying Intercultural Communication

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## **Abstract**

There may be considered three major causes for examining the intercultural communication: Interpersonal Adjustment; Job Skills; Cosmopolitanism. The world needs better relations between peoples to overcome many social, economic, and political problems. Students of different professions need diverse, but systematized attitude towards courses that teach them empathy and conflict, which will be based on practical case studies, and not just theoretical definitions of culture. The response to challenges of intercultural communication should be simple: democratic- public participation in deciding the kind of communication to be worked out, asking the people what they desire. Its aim will be to reach freedom and impartiality in communication everywhere.

**Keywords:** Accommodation, communication, cosmopolitanism, empathy, intercultural.

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## Introduction

In the era of unprecedented influx of transnational migration in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the examining of intercultural communication has become fundamentally important to scholars engaged in observing the processes and outcome of human relationship.

This new mobility changes not only places, but lifestyle and people's identities as a result of transformation of people's physical, social, and political place. As a result of accelerated speed of cultural and economic exchange during the last decade of the twentieth century and continuing through the XXI century, new communication technologies induce changes in peoples relationship as well. The possibility that migration transforms human lives and identities is the object of study of many scholars.

Since the sixteenth century, almost every section of the universe has been impacted by great international migrations. The U.S. maybe considered as one of very few countries in the world that calls itself a nation of immigrants. Many of the immigrants lived or now are engaged in leading transnational lives; it means that they have several lifestyles in more than one national territory, consequently they are representing new identities binding them in a way to places and territories, involving national ones – at home and in places where they live and work abroad.

U.S. is a place where change of identity is a part of nation – building (Winant, 1994).

## Handling Immigration

The United States has a long tradition of administering immigration, going back to 1860s. early legislation, e.g., the 1945 National Origins Act; Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, limiting immigration, although were positively disposed to immigrants from Europe over other parts of the world.

It should be underlined the importance of the Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1965, which propelled strong forces that are still moulding the

United States today. The 1965 amendments proclaimed drastic changes to immigration strategy by banning the national origins quota system substituting it with a seven-category choice system for the issuing immigrant visas (Jernegan, 2010).

In addition to that, numerical limitation was enhanced from 154, 000 to 290, 000, out of which 120,000 were reserved for immigrants from Western Hemisphere.

The Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended by the Refugee Act of 1980, brought U.S. policy in agreement with the 1967 Protocol to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. The protocol with the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention, increased the number of persons identified as refugees. If before the interpretation of refugee had focused on those impacted by World War II, the new framework took into consideration other global conflicts benefiting the refugee segment of population.

The decade of the 1990s was noteworthy for state and federal legislation that curtailed a range of social services and benefits. In 1994, California issued Proposition 187, one of the most debatable regulations, which rejected undocumented immigrants in California access to public schools, medical care, and other services, and demanded from public employees reporting of illegal immigrants to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

In 1996 Congress issued (PRWORA), known as the welfare Reform, - according which legal and undocumented immigrants were banned access to Medical, Supplement Security Income.

Three pieces of legislation, the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA), made it possible to imprison, detain and deport non-citizens.

By the end of the decade, Congress paid attention to the increasing need in economy and need for highly skilled immigrants for occupying technology jobs. The America Competitiveness in the Twenty-First Century Act, issued in 2000 enhanced the temporary work visas (H-1Bs) available annually 65,000 to

115,000 in 2000, then to 195,000 for 2001, 2002 and 2003.

Although the regulations concerning immigration quota and benefits have been fluctuating, we see how important immigration is for the U.S.

The main question in the wake of tremendous immigration flows swamping the nation, that comes up is: "Why is it so important to study intercultural communication?" Three crucial causes are underlined: interpersonal accommodation; job skills; and metropolitanism.

Different scholars have different attitudes towards intercultural studies; e.g., some study role playing, to know what role anticipations are in another culture. Others – focus on nonverbal communication. To chemists, lawyers and other professionals, role taking and body language maybe attractive, but not vital (Smith, 2000).

### **Interpersonal Accommodation**

The most accepted famous reason for studying intercultural communication is to increase individual potential for effective relationship at international and intercultural levels.

This is communication on the individual and personal level: face to face, eyeball to eyeball, nose to nose, heart to heart.

The world needs improvement of human relations all the time, but that very much is based on hindrances as follows: alleviating poverty, ignorance, injustice, war, and that cannot be helped on interpersonal level.

Some Protestants and Catholics in Belfast may reach some personal agreement with one another, but that does not solve the main conflict in their country. Peace and justice are not reached between peoples at the level of personal agreement. Intercultural communication between Black and White, Arab and Israeli needs reorganization of political and economic institutions. When societal conditions improve and people are able to provide for their

families, then there is a perspective for better interpersonal relations.

It might need a critical mass of twenty percent for interpersonal adjustments to have a substantial influence on underlying differences between cultures. At that rate, the developing countries need a hundred million interpersonal accommodation cases.

As for leaders, they can impact many people. Their interpersonal adjustments can spread among their stuff. Although most leaders do not consider intercultural communication as a personal matter. They ignore their interpersonal adjustments and concentrate on the main topics for their group: security and resources.

Interpersonal accommodation is important to intercultural communication, and intercultural problems influence people personally. Although these problems can not be solved at an interpersonal level; they can only be solved at an intercultural level.

One of these problems is the intrusion in privacy. The United States has laws against bugging, and Americans talk freely on phones; The Russians and Cubans, however listened to Americans' conversations, through transmitting equipments connecting the telephones, openly from ships off American shores. Every country has its own regulations to shield personal information: person's bank balances, medical files, school records and tax payments, people's votes and arrests. Different countries have diverse laws.

Through the international web of computerized data banks, information that is not obtainable in one country, may be obtainable in another country. Private information that becomes accessible publicly in international communication is one of many personal challenges that can entail a great change in the lives of millions of peoples, however that can only be handled at the international level.

We think interpersonal accommodation occupies an important place in studying intercultural communication, because as Sigmund Freud described personality as analogous to an iceberg with the largest

part being unconscious, so Edward T. Hall – an anthropologist proposed that the culture like personality is also resembles iceberg, the tip, or (external culture) is the smallest part. The largest part of culture is inside our heads and unconscious – beneath the water level of awareness. When icebergs sail together in the ocean, first we see the tips, while they collide underwater. When people from different cultures come together, they may worry about making mistakes on the external level – uttering the wrong word, etc. The real disagreement happens at the internal level when values, thought patterns, central beliefs, perceptions and attitudes clash (Hall, 1976).

### **Job Skills**

A lot of manuals, courses, programs advise that the second most popular cause to study intercultural communication is to acquire skills that are important on the job. These skills courses are for an established vulnerability to human relations and cultural divergencies; It is without any doubt beneficial on any job to have such susceptibility.

Teaching students compassion and conflict is determined by what professions they are choosing: air traffic controller from India, a Peruvian studying pharmacy in Alabama, etc. they all need some additional training in order to adjust their main work to international environment. Some students make intercultural communication their major field. These students will become generalists rather than technical specialists. The intercultural job skills taught in these courses don't make explicit discipline, such as computer programming, it's a general complementary, and con-technical awareness.

Courses on sensitivity training won't stop major problems of intercultural communication, like agitation between the U.S. and Russia, problems of unemployed Blacks in Miami, problems of starving refugees. These problems require reorganization of society systems. But air traffic controllers, pharmacists, non-technical generalists confront the problems of

interpersonal adjustment, and require skills of interpersonal sensitivity. These skills are useful on the job. Here comes the question: what is the main job and what skills does it need? Is it the job for the pharmacy student who need some additional and non-technical skills for the personal accommodation? Or is it the main job of intercultural communication to cope with problems of negotiation and war?

So we have to consider what skills to develop and also how to develop them. Alfred G. Smith has a critical approach to the syllabuses, books, programs, intending to promote a general recognition of cultural differences, that they always begin with the concept of culture, depersonalizing that concept. Authors of these books, programs, syllabuses make culture, which is an impalpable abstraction, into a physical body. According them, culture does this and calls for it, and that this is a confused perceptibility.

According Smith case methods should be worked out; Like business administration and law, intercultural communication is one of the policy disciplines, and the case method is the best way that is available. Harvard Business School spent forty years and millions of dollars to workout a model of cases for its program. Legal scholars and professionals are still working on the case study of law. So, intercultural communication requires enormous endeavor to develop its methodological progress (Smith, 2000).

### **Cosmopolitanism**

The third reason for examining intercultural communication is – to make ourselves stand above our gullible provincialism and work out more civilized cosmopolitanism; to achieve higher stage of patience, charity.

This personal cosmopolitanism may adjust to the global work, in which differences are vanishing.

The Radisson, or Hilton are in many places of the world, you can buy a Big Mac and a Coke nearly anywhere. You'll see Toyotas and Panasonics everywhere. The world is shrinking and amalgamating.

Personal cosmopolitanism may also be adjustable to the world interdependence. For example: Pontiac's price is \$20000. Out of this \$6,000 goes to South Korea for labor and assembly; \$3,500 goes to Japan for engines and electronic systems; \$1,500 goes to Germany for design engineering; \$1,400 goes to other countries for small components, marketing and data processing.

The Cokes are considered as economic cosmopolitanism of multinational corporations. But the personal cosmopolitanism of syllabuses, programs is less concerned with Hilton, cokes, but more with personal relationships, constructive ideas about free trade.

There are intercultural fights of belief and convincing. For example some religious or autocratic leaders are convinced that they have the truth. Sometimes it is a political ideology, sometimes a moral theology. For them foreign ideas are demanding and damaging, and sometimes they think such ideas should be undermined. For cosmopolitanists these anti-cosmopolitans are themselves decedent.

We require a cosmopolitan attitude when we study intercultural communication, but for less personal causes. We need to evaluate the state of the world system of intercultural communication to make subject matter determinations about what to study, and how to improve these studies? One universal answer is – democratic – to know the public opinion.

## Conclusion

There are three main reasons to study intercultural communication: a) Interpersonal Adjustment; b) Job Skills; c) Cosmopolitanism. The study of intercultural communications should be more developed than they are now. The study can be beneficial for the interpersonal accommodation on the international scene, if it will concertante on the bases for such adjustments, on the political and economic institutions of the world. They study can promote serious

cosmopolitanism if it will concentrate on the global system of communication. The shared enterprise of a number of scientists can aid to cope with major challenges of intercultural communication.

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