



普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

# 跨文化交际学

Selected Readings  
in Intercultural  
Communication Studies

**选读**  
(第2版)



西安交通大学出版社  
XI'AN JIAOTONG UNIVERSITY PRESS

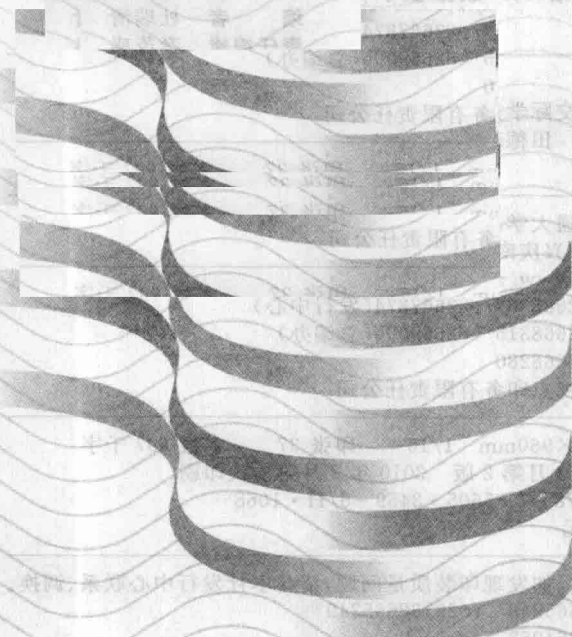


普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

# 跨文化交际学

Selected Readings  
in Intercultural  
Communication Studies **选读**  
(第2版)

杜瑞清 田德新 李本现 编



西安交通大学出版社

XI'AN JIAOTONG UNIVERSITY PRESS

· 西安 ·

## 内容简介

本书包括 12 个单元 24 篇课文以及每篇课文前后的导言、注释和思考题,书后另附有跨文化交际学术语解释与参考书目。主要内容涉及跨文化交际学概述、语言与文化的相互关系、语言与非语言交际、东西方思维模式与价值观念差异、文化与感知模式、跨文化交际障碍与文化适应,以及日常生活与商贸洽谈跨文化交际实践等诸多方面。本书适于英语专业本科高年级学生和硕士研究生的教学使用,也是具有中级以上水平的广大英语学习者和各类涉外工作人员的必备参考读本。

---

### 图书在版编目(CIP)数据

跨文化交际学选读/杜瑞清,田德新,李本现编.  
—2 版. —西安:西安交通大学出版社,2010.3  
ISBN 978-7-5605-3459-6

I. ①跨… II. ①杜… ②田… ③李… III. ①文化交  
流 IV. ①G115

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2010)第 030824 号

---

书 名 跨文化交际学选读(第 2 版)  
编 者 杜瑞清 田德新 李本现  
责任编辑 秦茂盛

---

出版发行 西安交通大学出版社  
(西安市兴庆南路 10 号 邮政编码 710049)  
网 址 <http://www.xjtupress.com>  
电 话 (029)82668357 82667874(发行中心)  
(029)82668315 82669096(总编办)  
传 真 (029)82668280  
印 刷 西安新视点印务有限责任公司

---

开 本 727mm×960mm 1/16 印张 37 字数 697 千字  
版次印次 2010 年 3 月第 2 版 2010 年 3 月第 4 次印刷  
书 号 ISBN 978-7-5605-3459-6/H·1068  
定 价 48.50 元

---

读者购书、书店添货、如发现印装质量问题,请与本社发行中心联系、调换。  
订购热线:(029)82665248 (029)82665249  
投稿热线:(029)82664953  
读者信箱:cf\_english@126.com

版权所有 侵权必究

## 再版前言

《跨文化交际学选读》于2004年出版后受到了广大读者的欢迎和肯定,被全国许多高校列为教材使用,并被遴选为普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材。为了更全面、更及时地反映全球范围内跨文化交际学研究成果,更有效地保证和提高我国高等院校跨文化交际学课程的教学质量,进一步促进跨文化交际学研究,我们广泛征求了意见,在西安交通大学出版社和西安外国语大学的大力支持下,对该书内容进行了修订和增补。

第2版在保持原书基本框架和体系的前提下,采纳了许多专家和读者的建议,增加了4篇有关跨文化交际理论探讨的文章,构成本书的第11单元和第12单元,调换了第8单元的第1篇和第9单元的第2篇选文,补充和调整了部分注释,增补和更新了附录中的术语和参考书目。

我们殷切希望《跨文化交际学选读》(第2版)能更好地适应我国高等院校跨文化交际课程的教学需要,满足广大读者的要求。对修订版中仍然存在的缺憾或不足,我们期待着各位专家和读者的建议和批评。

值此《跨文化交际学选读》(第2版)出版之际,我们再一次向关心、支持本书的各位专家和广大读者表示衷心的感谢。

编 者

2009年12月

## 前 言

日新月异的现代化交通工具和全球联网的高科技通讯手段,使得整个世界缩小,让全人类似乎生活在一个地球村里。不同国家、不同文化、不同种族之间的交往日益频繁。欲实现顺畅、有效和得体的交流与沟通,需要我们培养大量具有跨文化交际能力的各类人才。为适应跨文化交际学在国内外的发 展态势,并结合我国英语专业本科与研究生教学的实际需求,在多年教学实践的基础上,我们编写了《跨文化交际学选读》一书。

本书 10 个单元包括 20 篇文章,每篇文章前后设有导言、注释和思考题,书后附有跨文化交际学术语解释与参考书目。书中主要内容涉及跨文化交际学概述、语言与文化的相互关系、语言与非语言交际、东西方思维模式与价值观念差异、文化与感知模式、跨文化交际障碍与文化适应,以及日常生活与商贸洽谈跨文化交际实践等诸多方面。课前导言提纲挈领,旨在激发读者求知欲的同时,将其导入正文赏析;文中术语和文化背景注释尽可能简明扼要;思考题紧扣文章主旨,并力求发人深省;书后术语解释与参考书目可为读者理解原文和进一步研修提供方便。

读者通过本书的学习,一方面能够熟悉各种跨文化交际规则,另一方面能够提高在不同场合的跨文化交际能力。本书适于英语专业本科高年级学生和硕士研究生的教学使用,同时,也是具有中级以上水平的广大英语学习者和各类涉外工作人员的必备参考读本。

本书由杜瑞清教授规划统筹。编选工作分工如下:

田德新 第四、五、六、八单元、术语解释、参考书目;

李本现 第二、三、九、十单元;

杜瑞清 第一、七单元。

在本书编写过程中,承蒙曾萍和刘颖勤两位同事协助搜集、提供材料,谨在此致谢。

限于编者的水平以及其他客观原因,本书难免有疏漏之处,敬请英语界各位前辈、同行和广大读者不吝赐教,予以指正。

编 者

2004 年 7 月

# Contents

<b>Unit One</b>	<b>Intercultural Communication: An Overview</b>	(1)
Reading One	An Introduction to Intercultural Communication	(1)
Reading Two	The History of the Study of Intercultural Communication	(22)
<b>Unit Two</b>	<b>Language and Culture</b>	(43)
Reading One	Communicative Codes: Linguistic Aspects	(43)
Reading Two	Language and Culture: Sounds and Actions	(68)
<b>Unit Three</b>	<b>Cultural Identity and Intercultural Communication</b>	(94)
Reading One	Intercultural Dilemma in Multicultural Setting: Doing vs. Being	(94)
Reading Two	Intercultural Competence in Interpersonal Relationships	(114)
<b>Unit Four</b>	<b>Verbal Communication</b>	(144)
Reading One	Verbal Intercultural Communication	(144)
Reading Two	Relationships in Face-to-Face Communication	(170)
<b>Unit Five</b>	<b>Nonverbal Communication</b>	(194)
Reading One	Nonverbal Intercultural Communication	(194)
Reading Two	Nonverbal Codes and Cultural Space	(224)
<b>Unit Six</b>	<b>Cultural Patterns and Perception</b>	(248)
Reading One	Cultural Patterns and Communication: Taxonomies	(248)
Reading Two	Cultural Diversity in Perception: Alternative Views of Reality	(276)
<b>Unit Seven</b>	<b>Intercultural Communication—East and West</b>	(305)
Reading One	Collectivism vs. Individualism: A Reconceptualisation of a Basic Concept in Cross-Cultural Social Psychology	(305)



Reading Two	The Concept of “Face” in Chinese-American Interaction .....	(318)
<b>Unit Eight</b>	<b>Intercultural Barriers</b> .....	(330)
Reading One	Attitudes toward the Culturally Different; the Role of Intercultural Communication Barriers, Affective Responses, Consensual Stereotypes, and Perceived Threat .....	(330)
Reading Two	Stumbling Blocks in Intercultural Communication .....	(356)
<b>Unit Nine</b>	<b>Intercultural Communication in Business, Management and Negotiation</b> .....	(373)
Reading One	Negotiating Across Cultures .....	(373)
Reading Two	Reconciling Cultural Dilemmas .....	(393)
<b>Unit Ten</b>	<b>Cultural Adaptation and Intercultural Competence</b> .....	(413)
Reading One	Cross-Cultural Adaptation; Axioms .....	(413)
Reading Two	The Potential for Intercultural Competence .....	(433)
<b>Unit Eleven</b>	<b>Theories of Intercultural Communication</b> .....	(451)
Reading One	Theorizing about Intercultural Communication; An Introduction .....	(451)
Reading Two	Measuring Culture; The Utility of Verifying Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions .....	(489)
<b>Unit Twelve</b>	<b>Scholarship on Chinese Communication</b> .....	(505)
Reading One	Chinese Communication Scholarship as an Expansion of the Communication and Culture Paradigm .....	(505)
Reading Two	No Limits Careers: A Critical Examination of Career Discourse in the U. S. and China .....	(531)
<b>Glossary</b>	.....	(557)
<b>Bibliography</b>	.....	(575)

# Unit One

---

## Intercultural Communication: An Overview

### Reading One

#### An Introduction to Intercultural Communication<sup>1</sup>

by Richard E. Porter & Larry A. Samovar

#### Introductory Remarks

*It is gratifying to see that more and more emphasis and importance have been placed on intercultural communication both in and outside the academia. As the world is "shrinking," the influence of cultural diversity on human communication has become greater than ever before. The increasing contact of people from different cultural backgrounds inevitably calls for attention to appropriate communicative behaviors. "Human beings have reached the point where they can ill afford the luxury of ignoring the reality of the many different cultural worlds in which humans live." It is, therefore, essential for us to cultivate sufficient intercultural awareness and understanding with the aim of achieving communicative competence on different occasions.*

*The following selection offers us a panoramic view of intercultural communication beginning with the four major events that lead to the need and urgency for the study of intercultural communication. The article argues that to behave as "good citizens" in the global village it is imperative for us to recognize that "All people have the right to be equal and the equal right to be different." This naturally necessitates the understanding of communication and culture with their divergent facets. The latter part of the article discusses the definition and ingredients of communication and the function,*



*definition, ingredients and characteristics of culture. What is discussed will hopefully provide the basic framework and lay a solid foundation for the understanding of the selected readings in the following units.*

"The times, they are a changin'," proclaimed Bob Dylan<sup>2</sup> in his popular folk song of the 1960s. Dylan was right; the times were changing. And, as we move into the final half decade of the twentieth century, the times still "are a changin'." Numerous events have caused major changes to occur, both worldwide and locally. These changes have transformed the world into the global village forecast by Marshall McLuhan<sup>3</sup> in the 1960s. From an intercultural communication perspective, four of the events leading to the development of the global village are crucial: (1) improvements in transportation technology, (2) developments in communication technology, (3) globalization of the economy, and (4) changes in immigration patterns. These events have produced major transformations in both worldwide and local patterns of communication and interaction and are of primary concern to the study of intercultural communication.

*Improvements in transportation technology* have helped to shrink the earth to a figurative global village by creating the means for people to travel almost anywhere in the world within less than a day's time. Aircraft now in the design stage will increase travel speeds so that the travel time between China and the United States, for instance, will come to be measured in durations of minutes. Also in development are single-state-to-orbit (SSTO) rocket vehicles that will provide near-earth-orbit capabilities to an increased number of nations and cultures.

*Developments in communication technology* paralleled those in travel technology and prompted further movement toward the global village. It is now possible for people to have instantaneous vocal, graphic, and textual communication with most parts of the world. Indeed, with a few hundred dollars' worth of battery-powered equipment in the form of a facsimile machine and a cellular telephone, it is possible to be in instant oral and print communication with others in almost any place in the world while driving interstate highways in the United States. In addition, the development of the

Internet and the World Wide Web have provided a means for people everywhere to interact with one another and to transmit, store, and retrieve information about nearly any topic virtually anywhere in the world.

Although these improvements in communication technology have produced many effects, three are significant to intercultural communication. First, new communication technology has created an almost free flow of news and information throughout the world and has become so important in the everyday conduct of commerce and government that it cannot be set aside. These changes have made it virtually impossible to keep communication capabilities out of the hands of common citizens. Government attempts to censor the free flow of ideas, opinions, and information have been frustrated.

Second, communication technology also has dissolved our isolation. Not more than a half century ago it was virtually impossible for the average citizen to have an informed awareness of what was happening outside her or his city, let alone be informed about the world. People had to wait for reports to arrive by mail or appear in newspapers, where the news could be up to several months old. Although transcontinental and transoceanic telegraph and telephone services and the development of radio permitted essentially instantaneous contact, those channels of communication were quite easy to control in terms of who might use them and what information they might contain. The situation today is quite different. With existing communication technology we can sit in our living rooms and watch events anywhere on earth, or, indeed, in space, as these events are actually happening. Only a scant few years ago we had to wait hours, days, and even weeks to learn who won gold medals in the Olympic Games. Today, we can witness these events in our living rooms as they occur.

Third, the immediacy of this new communication technology has impacted us in another manner: In the past when news and information reception was delayed and we learned of events days, perhaps weeks, after they occurred, it was difficult to develop strong feelings about what might have happened thousands of miles away. But, consider how different is the impact of reading in a newspaper that the police have beaten someone while making an arrest from that of actually watching the videotape of the Rodney King beating. Similarly, television coverage of the Reginald Denny beating as it occurred at the outset of the 1992 riots in Los Angeles could not help but move us. The ability to deny the cruelty

of these acts is virtually reduced to zero. And it hardly seems necessary to mention the worldwide impact of the televised O. J. Simpson trial.

*Globalization of the economy* has further brought people together. At the end of World War II, the United States was the only military and economic superpower. Most of the rest of the world's economy was in disarray. Most industries had been destroyed, and few banks were functioning.

Because the United States escaped World War II with its industry and its banking system intact, it was the dominant economic force in the world. Only 5 percent of American businesses faced international competition. In the 1990s, however, 75 percent of American industries face international competition. This leads to interdependence among national economies and to intercultural contact in arenas of both politics and business.

As the economy has internationalized, the U. S. presence overseas has increased dramatically. Today, over 8,000 U. S. companies have international operations in foreign countries. American holdings total over \$309 billion, with some \$3.5 billion committed to more than 600 joint ventures with China. American companies also are engaging in joint ventures with other Asian countries. IBM, for instance, has worked with Japan to build a plant there to produce advanced versions of computer memory chips. The Alltel Signal Corporation of Morristown, New Jersey, "expects to complete plans for at least 10 joint ventures or wholly owned operations in China in the next two years." And a \$92 million venture involving Hoa Binh Limited of Vietnam and such American companies as General Instrument, ITS, and Standard Communications is being planned to broadcast local and international television programs in the cities of Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Danang, and Can Tho. Additionally, young Americans are finding jobs abroad. Fourteen percent of the Stanford University business school class of 1994 elected to seek jobs abroad, compared with 6 percent in 1989. At New York University's Stern School of Business, the number of American students taking overseas jobs jumped 20 percent in 1994 compared to 1993. Student applications for the University of Michigan's overseas-study programs in 20 countries have increased 70 percent since 1992. In addition, 1 million Americans apply for business passports each year, with more than 2.5 million Americans now working abroad.

Simultaneously, foreign presence in the United States has increased; over

8,000 foreign firms operate in the United States. Foreigners have invested more than \$300 billion and own nearly \$1.5 trillion in U.S. assets, a 200 percent increase since 1980. In 1990, overseas concerns controlled over 13 percent of American industrial assets, causing companies such as AT&T to prepare thousands of its annual stockholder reports in foreign languages. Foreign investors own more than 1 million acres of U.S. farmland and 64 percent of the commercial property in downtown Los Angeles.

The interconnectedness of the global economy seems to become more apparent on a daily basis. This was evidenced recently when key stock markets in Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Tokyo, Taipei, Hong Kong, New York, and London fell due in part to the collapse of Barings Investment Bank in London. It is obvious that the strength of our economy depends on communication with and among other cultures such as those of Japan, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Korea, Italy, France, Canada, Saudi Arabia, and many smaller nations.

*Changes in immigration patterns* have also contributed to the development of the global village. Although transportation improvements, communication technology, and globalization of the economy have figuratively shrunk the world, the world's population has continued to increase and shift. In 1974, the world numbered approximately 3.9 billion people and was growing by nearly 80 million a year. Since 1974, the world's population has expanded by nearly 1.7 billion and now increases by nearly 90 million annually. This has a severe impact on ecosystems, and fresh-water supplies continue to shrink. Experts question whether the world can adequately feed and shelter the 5 billion mouths that will be added during the next 50 years. Refugees produced by population pressures in Africa and Asia already threaten to destabilize nations.

Recent immigration patterns have physically shifted segments of the world population. Legal migration to North America—the United States and Canada—is nearly double what it was in the decade of the 1960s. In the 1980s, 872,704 legal immigrants entered North America from many parts of the world including sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and western Asia, south Asia, eastern and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

As a result of population growth and immigration, contacts with new cultures or with cultures that previously appeared unfamiliar, alien, and at times

mysterious are becoming a normal part of our day-to-day routine. People from Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Cuba, Haiti, Colombia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Ecuador, among others, have entered the United States to become our neighbors and add to the cultural diversity of our society. As these people adjust to this culture, we will have increasing intercultural contacts in our daily lives. Adaptation to this new cultural diversity by American businesses was demonstrated recently when some telephone companies advertised in the Chinese language to remind the Chinese community to call home during the Chinese New Year holiday.

While this global phenomenon involving transportation, communication, an international economy, and migration was taking place, change was also taking place within our own boundaries. Domestic events made us focus our attention on often-demanding co-cultures. African Americans, Asians, Latinos, Native Americans, women, homosexuals, the poor, the disabled, the homeless, and countless other groups became visible and vocal as they cried out for recognition and their rightful place in our community.

This attention on co-cultures made us realize that although intercultural contact is inevitable, it is not always successful. The communicative behavior of the co-cultures frequently disturbed many of us. Their behavior seemed strange and, at times, perhaps bizarre; frequently it failed to meet our normal expectations. We discovered, in short, that intercultural communication is difficult. Even when the natural barrier of a foreign language is dissolved, we can still fail to understand and to be understood.

These communication difficulties, both in the international arena and on the domestic scene, give rise to a major premise: The difficulty with being thrust into a global village is that we do not yet know how to live like global villagers; there are too many of us who do not want to live with "them." Ours is a culture in which racism and ethnocentrism run deep. Although there has been a lessening of overt racial violence since the 1960s, the enduring racist-ethnocentric belief system has not been appreciably affected.

For centuries, not only Americans, but most other groups of people as well have classified themselves and their neighbors by the color of their skin. Belief in the reality of race is at the heart of how people traditionally perceive differences in those around them; it is how they define themselves. And, until recently, it

was a basis used by many scientists to describe the evolution of humanity. Today, an ever growing number of anthropologists and geneticists are convinced that the biological concept of race has become an antiquated approach to self and group description and identity. Recent genetic research has indicated that “people can be divided just as usefully into different groups based on the size of their teeth, or their ability to digest milk or resist malaria.” These characteristics are easily identified as hereditary characteristics shared by large numbers of people, and they are no more useful nor less significant than use of skin colors to delineate race. Scientists do not claim that all humans are the same, but race does not lend assistance in understanding how people are different.

In many respects, racism and ethnocentrism have become institutionalized and are practiced unconsciously. The result is a structured domination of people of color by the white European American power structure. Perhaps it would behoove us to adopt the concept of race advanced by Viktor Frankl, who asserts that there are but two races of humankind: the decent and the indecent. Both are found everywhere, and they penetrate into all groups—transcending ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, and sexual preference. With such an approach we may be able to eliminate, or at least lessen significantly, this deep-seated antagonism and be able to assume our proper place in global village community.

Our incapacity to yet behave as good citizens in the global village is cause for major concern because we have not learned to respect and accept one another. We must come to recognize, as Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres has so clearly stated: **All people have the right to be equal and the equal right to be different.** If we can recognize and operate from this assumption, we can learn to communicate with one another effectively, to learn to understand one another, even if our cultures are different. Then, when we have a strong desire to communicate, we can face and attempt to conquer the difficulties imposed upon us by cultural diversity and its impact on the communication process.

Concern with the difficulties cultural diversity poses for effective communication has given rise to the marriage of culture and communication and to the recognition of intercultural communication as a field of study. Inherent in this fusion is the idea *that intercultural communication entails the investigation of those elements of culture that most influence interaction when members of two different cultures come together in an interpersonal setting.*

To help us understand what is involved in intercultural communication we will begin with a fundamental definition; **Intercultural communication** occurs whenever a message produced in one culture must be processed in another culture. The rest of this essay will deal with intercultural communication and point out the relationships between communication, culture, intercultural communication, and cultural context.

## **Communication**

To understand intercultural interaction, we must first understand human communication. Understanding human communication means knowing something about what happens when people interact, why it happens, the effects of what happens, and finally what we can do to influence and maximize the results of a particular communication event.

## **Understanding and Defining Communication**

We begin with the basic assumption that communication is a form of human behavior derived from a need to connect and interact with other human beings. Almost everyone desires social contact with other people, and this need is met through the act of communication, which unites otherwise isolated individuals. Our behaviors become messages to which other people may respond. When we talk, we are obviously behaving; but when we wave, smile, frown, walk, shake our heads, or gesture, we also are behaving. These behaviors frequently become messages; they communicate something to someone else.

Before behaviors can become messages, however, they must meet two requirements: (1) they must be observed by someone, and (2) they must elicit a response. In other words, any behavior that elicits a response is a *message*. If we examine this last statement, we can see several implications.

First, the word *any* tells us that both verbal and nonverbal behaviors may function as messages. Verbal messages consist of spoken or written words (speaking and writing are word-producing behaviors), while nonverbal messages consist of the entire remaining behavior repertory.

Second, behavior may be either conscious or unconscious. We frequently do things without being aware of them. This is especially true when nonverbal behavior involves such habits as fingernail biting, toe tapping, leg jiggling, head



shaking, staring, and smiling. Even such things as slouching in a chair, chewing gum, or adjusting glasses may be unconscious behaviors. Since a message consists of behaviors to which people may respond, we must thus acknowledge the possibility of producing messages unknowingly.

Third, we frequently behave unintentionally, in some cases uncontrollably. For instance, if we are embarrassed, we may blush or speak with vocal disfluencies; we do not intend to blush or stammer, but we do so anyway. Again, these unintentional behaviors can become messages if someone perceives them and responds to them.

This concept of conscious-unconscious, intentional-unintentional behavioral relationships give us a basis to formulate a clearer definition of communication. **Communication** may be defined as *that which happens whenever someone responds to the behavior or the residue of the behavior of another person*. When someone perceives our behavior or its residue and attributes meaning to it, communication has taken place regardless of whether our behavior was conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional. If we think about this for a moment, we must realize that it is impossible for us not to behave. Being necessitates behavior. If behavior has communication potential, then it is also impossible for us not to communicate. In other words, we cannot *not* communicate.

Behavioral **residue** (just mentioned in our definition) refers to those things that remain as a record of our actions. For instance, this essay that you are reading is a behavioural residue—it resulted from certain behaviors. As the authors, we had to engage in a number of behaviors; we had to research, think, and use our word processors. Another example of behavioral residue might be the odor of cigar smoke lingering in an elevator after the cigar smoker has departed. Smoking the cigar in the elevator was the behavior; the odor is the residue. The response you have to that odor is a reflection of your past experiences and attitudes toward cigars, smoking, smoking in public places, and, perhaps, people who smoke cigars.

Our approach to communication has focused on the behavior of one individual causing or provoking a response from another by the attribution of meaning to behavior. **Attribution** means that we draw upon our past experiences and give meaning to the behavior that we observe. We might imagine that somewhere in each of our brains is a meaning reservoir in which are stored all of the experience-

derived meanings we possess. These various meanings have developed throughout our lifetime as a result of our culture acting upon us as well as the result of our individual experiences within that culture. Meaning is relative to each of us because each of us is a unique human being with a unique background and a unique set of experiences. When we encounter a behavior in our environment, each of us dips into our individual, unique meaning reservoirs and selects the meaning we believe is most likely to be appropriate for the behavior encountered and the social context in which it occurred.

If someone walks up to us and says, "If you've got a few minutes, let's get a cup of coffee," we observe this behavior and respond to it by giving it meaning. The meaning we give it is drawn from our experience with language and word meaning and also from our experience with this person and the social context. Our response could vary significantly depending upon prior experiences and the circumstances. If the person is a friend, we may interpret the behavior as an invitation to sit and chat for a few minutes. On the other hand, if the behavior comes from someone with whom we have had differences, we might respond by attributing conciliatory goodwill to the message and seeing an invitation to try to settle past differences. Yet another example could be a situation in which the person is someone you have seen in a class but do not know. Then your ability to respond is diminished because you may not be able to infer fully the other person's intention. Perhaps this is someone who wants to talk about the class; perhaps it is someone who only wants companionship until the next class; or if gender differences are involved, it is perhaps someone attempting to "hit" on you. Your response to the observed behavior is dependent upon knowledge, experience, and social context.

Usually this works quite well, but at other times it fails and we misinterpret a message; we attribute the wrong meaning to the behavior we have observed. This may be brought about by inappropriate behavior when someone does or says something not intended. Or it could occur when the experiential backgrounds of people are sufficiently different that behavior is misinterpreted.

### **The Ingredients of Communication**

Next, we examine the *ingredients* of communication, the various components that fit together to form what we call communication. Since our purpose in