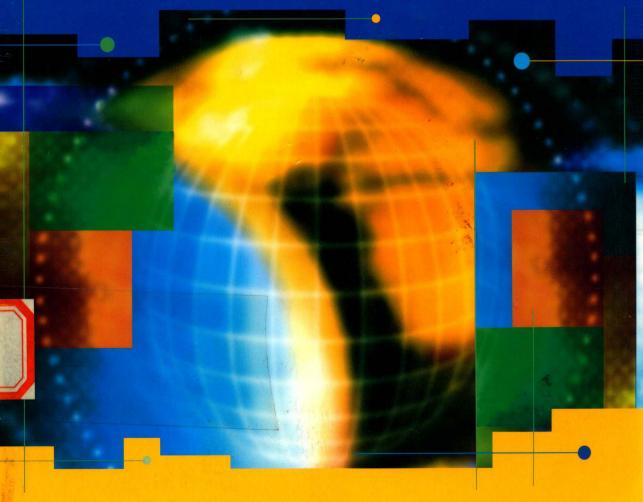
Intercultural Communication in Contexts



Judith N. Martin Thomas K. Nakayama

# INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXTS

**FOURTH EDITION** 

Judith N. Martin
Thomas K. Nakayama
Arizona State University



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### **About the Authors**

The two authors of this book come to intercultural communication from very different backgrounds and very different research traditions. Yet we believe that these differences offer a unique approach to thinking about intercultural communication. We briefly introduce ourselves here, but we hope that by the end of the book you will have a much more complete understanding of who we are.



Judith Martin grew up in Mennonite communities, primarily in Delaware and Pennsylvania. She has studied at the Université de Grenoble in France and has taught in Algeria. She received her doctorate at the Pennsylvania State University. By background and training, she is a social scientist who has focused on intercultural communication on an interpersonal level and has studied how people's communication is affected as they move or sojourn between international locations. She has taught at the State University of New York at Oswego, the University of Minnesota, the University of New Mexico, and Arizona State University of New Mexico, and Arizona State University

sity. She enjoys gardening, going to Mexico, and hosting annual Academy Awards parties, and she does not miss the harsh Midwestern winters.

Tom Nakayama grew up mainly in Georgia, at a time when the Asian American presence was much less than it is now. He has studied at the Université de Paris and various universities in the United States. He received his doctorate from the University of Iowa. By background and training, he is a critical rhetorician who views intercultural communication in a social context. He has taught at the California State University at San Bernardino and Arizona State University. He is a voracious reader and owns more books than any other faculty member in his department. He watches TV—especially baseball games—and lifts weights. Living in the West now, he misses springtime in the South.



The authors' very different life stories and research programs came together at Arizona State University. We have each learned much about intercultural communication through our own experiences, as well as through our intellectual pursuits. Judith has a well-established record of social science approaches to

intercultural communication. Tom, in contrast, has taken a nontraditional approach to understanding intercultural communication by emphasizing critical perspectives. We believe that these differences in our lives and in our research offer complementary ways of understanding intercultural communication.

Since the early 1990s, we have engaged in many different dialogues about intercultural communication—focusing on our experiences, thoughts, ideas, and analyses—which led us to think about writing this textbook. But our interest was not primarily sparked by these dialogues; rather, it was our overall interest in improving intercultural relations that motivated us. We believe that communication is an important arena for improving those relations. By helping people become more aware as intercultural communicators, we hope to make this a better world for all of us.

## **Preface**

# THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD

When we look back upon the international and intercultural situation at the time we first began writing this book, we recognize how rapidly the world has changed, with even more pressing issues for intercultural communication scholars and practitioners. In the third edition of this book, we were writing in the shadow of the events of September 11. Since then, human events such as the invasion of Iraq and bombings in London, Russia, and Spain have focused more attention on interethnic and religious conflicts. Natural disasters such as the tsunami in Indonesia and hurricanes Katrina and Rita that hit the Gulf Coast summoned a variety of positive responses, including tremendous caring and compassion across intercultural and international divides, but these tragedies also exacerbated enduring social-group inequities. In addition, the increasing use of the Internet and cell phones has made intercultural interactions that may once have seemed distant or peripheral to our lives now far more immediate.

In this climate, the study of intercultural communication takes on special significance, offering tools to help us as we grapple with questions about religious and ethnic differences, hate crimes, and many other related issues. Those who study, teach, and conduct research in intercultural communication are faced with an increasing number of challenges and difficult questions to address: Is it enough to identify differences among people? Are we actually reinforcing stereotypes in emphasizing differences? Is there a way to understand the dynamics of intercultural communication without resorting to lists of instructions? Don't we have to talk about the broader social, political, and historical contexts when we teach intercultural communication? How can we use our intercultural communication skills to help enrich our lives and the lives of those around us? Can intercultural communication scholars promote a better world for all?

Such questions are driven by rapidly changing cultural dynamics—both within the United States and abroad. On one hand, attempts to establish peace between Israel and Palestine by withdrawal of Israeli settlements in Gaza, as well as the continued expansion of the European Union, CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement), and the African Union (formerly the Organization of African States), reflect some global movement toward unity. On the other hand, the increase in nuclear armaments, continuing conflicts between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, and the conflict with and within Iraq illustrate continuing

intergroup conflict. These extremes demonstrate the dynamic nature of culture and communication.

We initially wrote this book in part to address questions and issues such as these. Although the foundation of intercultural communication theory and research has always been interdisciplinary, the field is now informed by three identifiable and competing *paradigms*, or "ways of thinking." In this book, we attempt to integrate three different research approaches: (1) the traditional social-psychological approach that emphasizes cultural differences and how these differences influence communication, (2) the interpretive approach that emphasizes understanding communication in context, and (3) the more recent critical approach that underscores the importance of power and historical context in understanding intercultural communication. In this edition, we extend the critical paradigm to include recent scholarship in postcolonial approaches.

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. In this fourth edition, we have further strengthened our *dialectical* approach that encourages students to think critically about intercultural phenomena as seen from these vari-

ous perspectives.

Throughout this book, we acknowledge that there are no easy solutions to the difficult challenges of intercultural communication. Sometimes our discussions raise more questions than they answer. We believe that this is perfectly reasonable. Not only is the field of intercultural communication changing, but also the relationship between culture and communication is—and probably always will be—complex and dynamic. We live in a rapidly changing world where intercultural contact will continue to increase, creating an increased potential for both conflict and cooperation. We hope that this book provides the tools needed to think about intercultural communication, as a way of understanding the challenges and recognizing the advantages of living in a multicultural world.

#### SIGNATURE FEATURES OF THE BOOK

Students usually come to the field of intercultural communication with some knowledge about many different cultural groups, including their own. Their understanding often is based on observations from television, movies, the Internet, books, personal experiences, news media, and more. But many students have a difficult time assimilating information that does not readily fit into their pre-existing knowledge base. In this book, we hope to 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, experience, media reports, and so on—but these differing forms of knowledge need to be seen dynamically and in relation to each other. We offer students a number of ways to begin thinking critically about intercultural communication in a dialectical manner. These include:

- An explicit discussion of differing research approaches to intercultural communication, focusing on both strengths and limitations of each
- Ongoing attention to history, popular culture, and identity as important factors in understanding intercultural communication
- "Student Voices" boxes in which students relate their own experiences and share their thoughts about various intercultural communication issues
- "Point of View" boxes in which diverse viewpoints from news media, research studies, and other public forums are presented
- Incorporation of the authors' own personal experiences to highlight particular aspects of intercultural communication

#### **NEW FEATURES IN THE FOURTH EDITION**

- Running glossary that gives students immediate definitions for terms used in the chapter
- Chapter objectives which guide students reading through each chapter
- Bulleted summaries which focus students' attention to the most important points in the chapter

#### **NEW CONTENT IN THE FOURTH EDITION:**

- To reflect the increasing influence of globalization, we have expanded our discussion of globalization and its importance to intercultural communication. For example, in Chapter 1, we discuss how globalization and related economic disparities influence intercultural communication. In Chapter 8, we expanded our discussion of the impact of globalization on continuing worldwide migration and the resulting intercultural encounters.
- The continuing and expanding influence of communication technology in our daily lives is addressed by new material in Chapter 7 on virtual spaces (e.g., blogs) and expanded coverage of online intercultural relationships in Chapter 10.
- Our expanded discussion of the implications of religious identity in Chapters 5 and 11 is prompted by continued awareness of the important role religion plays in intercultural communication.
- We have also incorporated new sections on the important roles that institutions play in intercultural contact. In Chapter 8, we note the role of churches and government institutions in facilitating or discouraging cultural adaptation of immigrants. Similarly, in Chapter 10, we address the role of institutions in supporting or discouraging intercultural relationships; in Chapter 11, we examine how institutions can exacerbate or ameliorate intercultural conflict.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

The Online Learning Center (OLC), at www.mhhe.com/martinnakayama4, provides interactive resources to address the needs of a variety of teaching and learning styles. Students and instructors can access chapter outlines, sample quizzes with feedback, crossword puzzles using key terms, and Internet activities for every chapter. For instructors specifically, the OLC offers an online *Instructor's Resource Manual* with sample syllabi, discussion questions, and pedagogical tips designed to help teach the course in general, and to help meet the special challenges arising from the controversial nature of much of the material.

In addition, an Instructor's Resource CD-ROM features the instructor's manual, test bank files, and a computerized test bank. McGraw-Hill's EZ Test is a flexible and easy-to-use electronic testing program. The program allows instructors to create tests from book-specific items. It accommodates a wide range of question types. Instructors may add their own questions as well. Multiple versions of the test can be created, and any test can be exported for use with course management systems such as WebCT, BlackBoard, or PageOut. EZ Test Online is a new service and gives you a place to easily administer your EZ Test—created exams and quizzes online. The program is available for both Windows and Macintosh environments.

#### CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Intercultural Communication in Contexts is organized into three parts: Part I, "Foundations of Intercultural Communication"; Part II, "Intercultural Communication Processes"; and Part III, "Intercultural Communication Applications."

Part I, "Foundations of Intercultural Communication," explores the history of the field and presents various approaches to this area of study, including our own.

We begin Chapter 1 with a focus on the dynamics of social life and global conditions as a rationale for the study of intercultural communication. We introduce ethics in this chapter to illustrate its centrality to any discussion of intercultural interaction. In this edition, we have expanded our discussion of the impact of globalization and global economic disparities, as well as the increasing role of technology in intercultural encounters.

In Chapter 2, we introduce the history of intercultural communication as an area of study, as well as the three paradigms that inform our knowledge about intercultural interactions. We establish the notion of a dialectical approach, so that students can begin to make connections and form relationships among the paradigms. We utilize the example of Hurricane Katrina to help explicate the three paradigms. In this edition, we have extended the critical approach to include recent scholarship on postcolonial approaches—helping students learn how past colonization impacts contemporary intercultural relations.

In **Chapter 3**, we focus on four basic intercultural communication components—culture, communication, context, and power. In this edition we have strengthened **the discussion of culture**—to more clearly reflect our dialectical approach.

Chapter 4 focuses on the importance of historical forces in shaping contemporary intercultural interaction. We have expanded our discussion of the ways in which colonial histories are related to current economic and political structures that influence intercultural relations.

Part II, "Intercultural Communication Processes," establishes the factors that contribute to the dynamics of intercultural communication: identity, language, and nonverbal codes.

Chapter 5 on identity has extended coverage of religious identity, multicul-

tural identity, as well as the new concept of cultural hybridity.

Chapter 6 addresses language issues, including sections on code-switching and globalization, and expanded coverage of interlanguage. We also emphasize the postcolonial views on language.

Chapter 7 focuses on nonverbal codes and cultural spaces and includes new material on postmodern virtual spaces.

Part III, "Intercultural Communication Applications," helps students apply the knowledge of intercultural communication presented in the first two parts.

Chapter 8 addresses intercultural transitions. We have incorporated new material addressing the important role of the host society, including social institutions, in facilitating or discouraging adaptation of new immigrants into their culture. We have also added information on the effects of colonialism on contemporary international migration. We address the complexities of relations between and among various migrant co-cultures.

In **Chapter 9**, we focus on popular and folk culture and their impact on intercultural communication. We have also added **recent examples of popular-culture resistance and English-language dominance** as well as **international** 

examples of popular culture.

Chapter 10 explores intercultural relationships. We have added new material on the effect of colonial histories and contemporary institutions on intercultural relationships. Another new section addresses online intercultural relationships.

In Chapter 11, we focus on intercultural conflicts. We have strengthened the discussion of a dialectical approach to conflict and incorporated new material on the effects of globalization and economic disparities in intercultural conflict; there is new material on the role of institutions in exacerbating or ameliorating intercultural conflicts.

Finally, in **Chapter 12**, we turn to the outlook for intercultural communication. We have expanded our discussion on motivation and the difficulty in achieving effective intercultural communication and provided **contemporary examples of groups working together to promote better intercultural relations.** 

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The random convergence of the two authors in time and place led to the creation of this textbook. We both found ourselves at Arizona State University in the early 1990s. Over the course of several years, we discussed and analyzed the multiple approaches to intercultural communication. Much of this discussion was facilitated by the ASU Department of Communication's "culture and communication" theme. Department faculty met to discuss research and pedagogical issues relevant to the study of communication and culture; we also reflected on our own notions of what constituted intercultural communication. This often meant reliving many of our intercultural experiences and sharing them with our colleagues.

Above all, we must recognize sponsoring editor Suzanne Earth, developmental editor Josh Hawkins, media producer Nancy Garcia, marketing manager Leslie Oberhuber, project manager Melissa Williams, designer Violeta Diaz, and media project manager Stacy Bentz. In addition, we want to thank all the reviewers of this and previous editions of *Intercultural Communication in Contexts*, whose comments and careful readings were enormously helpful. They are:

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Other people helped us understand intercultural communication closer to home, especially the staff and students at the Guadalupe Learning Center at South Mountain Community College, and also Dr. Amalia Villegas, Laura Laguna, Felipa Montiel, Cruzita Mori, and Lucia Madril.

In spirit and conceptualization, our book spans the centuries and crosses many continents. It has been shaped by the many people we have read about and encountered. It is to these guiding and inspiring individuals—some of whom we had the good fortune to meet and some of whom we will never encounter—that we dedicate this book. It is our hope that their spirit of curiosity, openness, and understanding will be reflected in the pages that follow.

## To the Student

Many textbooks emphasize in their introductions how you should use the text. In contrast, we begin this book by introducing ourselves and our interests in intercultural communication. 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. Ideally, we would like to begin a dialogue with you about some of the ways to think about intercultural communication. 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. Unfortunately, it is not possible for us to engage in dialogues with our readers.

Instead, we strive to lay out a number of issues to think about regarding intercultural communication. In reflecting on these issues in your own interactions and talking about them with others, you will be well on your way to becoming both a better intercultural communicator and a better analyst of intercultural interactions. There is no endpoint from which we can say that we have learned all there is to know. Learning about communication is a lifelong process that involves experiences and analysis. We hope this book will generate many dialogues that will help you come to a greater understanding of different cultures and peoples and a greater appreciation for the complexity of intercultural communication.

# COMMUNICATING IN A DYNAMIC, MULTICULTURAL WORLD

We live in rapidly changing times. Although no one can foresee the future, we believe that changes are increasing the imperative for intercultural learning. In Chapter 1, you will learn more about some of these changes and their influence on intercultural communication.

You stand at the beginning of a textbook journey into intercultural communication. At this point, you might take stock of who you are, what your intercultural communication experiences have been, how you responded in those situations, and how you tend to think about those experiences. Some people respond to intercultural situations with amusement, curiosity, or interest; others may respond with hostility, anger, or fear. It is important to reflect on your experiences and to identify how you respond and what those reactions mean.

We also think it is helpful 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. They may believe that such people require more assistance and patience, or they may simply think of them as "different." People bring to intercultural interactions a variety of emotional states and attitudes; further, not everyone wants to communicate interculturally. Because of this dynamic, many people have had negative intercultural experiences that influence subsequent intercultural interactions. Negative experiences can range from simple misunderstandings to physical violence. Although it may be unpleasant to discuss such situations, we believe that it is necessary to do so if we are to understand and improve intercultural interaction.

Intercultural conflict can occur even when the participants do not intentionally provoke it. When we use our own cultural frames in intercultural settings, those hidden assumptions can cause trouble. For example, when renting a small apartment in a private home in Grenoble, France, coauthor Judith Martin invited a number of her U.S. friends who were traveling in Europe to stop by and stay with her. The angry and frustrated response that this drew from her landlady came as a surprise. She told Judith that she would have to pay extra for all of the water they were using, that the apartment was not a motel, and that Judith would have to move out if the practice of having overnight guests continued. Differing notions of privacy and appropriate renter behavior contributed to the conflict. Intercultural experiences are not always fun. Sometimes they are frustrating, confusing, and distressing.

On a more serious level, we might look at "Operation Iraqi Freedom" in the spring of 2003 as yet another example of intercultural communication. The subsequent interpretations of and reactions to that televised event by different communities of people reflect important differences in our society and in the world at large. Although some people in the United States and abroad saw this effort as an attempt to liberate an oppressed people, others viewed it as imperialist aggression on the part of the United States. These differing views highlight the complexity of intercultural communication. We do not come to intercultural interactions as blank slates; instead, we bring our identities and our cultures.

#### IMPROVING YOUR INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Although the journey to developing awareness in intercultural communication is an individual one, it is important to recognize the connections we all have to many different aspects of social life. You are, of course, an individual. But you have been influenced by culture. The ways that others regard you and communicate with you are influenced largely by whom they perceive you to be. By enacting cultural characteristics of masculinity or femininity, for example, you may elicit particular reactions from others. Reflect on your social and individual characteristics; consider how these characteristics communicate something about you.

Finally, there is no list of things to do in an intercultural setting. Although prescribed reactions might help you avoid serious faux pas in one setting or culture, such lists are generally too simplistic to get you very far in any culture and may cause serious problems in other cultures. The study of communication is both a science and an art. In this book, we attempt to pull the best of both kinds of knowledge together for you. 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 our 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.

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