

西安外国语大学 编 著

西安外国语大学“十一五”规划教材

21[★]世纪英语专业

系列教材

跨文化交际选读

Understanding Intercultural Communication through Selected Readings

主 编 李本现

副主编 文晓莉 袁艺舟



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郑 燕

新世纪之初,随着英语教育的快速发展,高等学校英语专业学生的入学英语水平在不断提高,这对英语专业教材的时效性和适用性是一种挑战。随着新世纪的到来,中国在文化和经济等领域变化巨大,国际交往越来越多,网络应用不断普及,知识更新周期不断缩短。社会的种种变化也对英语专业的教学与教材建设提出了新的任务。为了顺应时代的进步,满足不断发展的社会对英语人才知识结构的新要求,高等学校英语专业应在继承优秀教材编写传统的前提下,不断创新,推出能够反映新的教学理念、体现新的教学改革成果、富有时代气息和丰富内容、符合英语专业教学实际需要的新教材。基于以上思路,西安外国语大学英文学院将“21 世纪英语专业系列教材”列为“十一五”规划教材建设项目,统一策划并组织富有教学经验的教师参与编写。

“21 世纪英语专业系列教材”包括英语语音、口语、听力、阅读、写作、翻译、英美文学、语言学、英语国家社会与文化等英语专业必修课程和选修课程使用的教材。本系列教材的编写以高等学校英语专业教学大纲为依据,在全面分析我国中西部地区英语专业学生实际水平和需要的前提下,对每门课程的教材内容进行精心筛选,有针对性地对教材的编排体例进行合理设计。专业基础课程的教材做到有利于学生英语基本功的训练和语言技能的全面发展;相关专业知识课程的教材旨在拓宽学生的知识范围,提高他们的人文素养,培养分析问题、解决问题的能力。

“21 世纪英语专业系列教材”在选材方面依据知识性、科学性、时代性的总原则,力图反映该教材涉及学科新的教学与研究成果。专业基础课程的教材选取语言知识丰富、内容生动活泼、能够反映现当代社会特征、启迪思想并能够调动学习自觉性的材料。此类教材在内容安排上体现循序渐进、由浅入深、有利于教学活动组织和学生参与讨论交流的原



则。相关专业知识课程的教材在侧重学科基础知识传授的同时力图体现反映学科发展的新内容,注意专业知识的系统性介绍并体现相近专业课程之间的相互关联。此类教材在编写方面力图做到表述语言简明、信息量大且相对集中,在选材和内容安排方面考虑到有利于现代教育技术的应用。

教材建设是英语专业建设的一项重要工作。编写能够通过教学有效传授系统的专业基础知识和相关专业知识、反映各门课程涉及学科的发展、体现和推广英语专业教学改革成果和成功经验的教材,是高等学校英语专业建设的一项长期任务。西安外国语大学英文学院在英语专业本科教育方面已有 50 多年的积淀,在长期的专业建设和发展中形成了自身的英语教育特色,编写了一批反响良好的本科教材。此次推出的“21 世纪英语专业系列教材”有的是在过去出版使用的基础上修订再版的,有的是使用数年的校内教材经编者重新改编修订的,有的是依据教学大纲要求、结合编者的研究成果和教学经验新编的。所有教材编写人员均有多年的专业教学经验和相关研究成果。他们熟悉英语专业本科教学的原理与规律,了解学生的难点所在和实际需要,将各自的课程教学经验积累融入编写的教材之中并体现在教材内容科学合理的编排方面。

“21 世纪英语专业系列教材”的编写出版丰富了英语专业教材的种类,为本科教学提供了更多的教材选择,从而使教学更符合学生需要、更有明确的针对性。限于编写水平,本系列教材不足之处在所难免。我们真诚地希望专家、同行提出宝贵意见,以帮助我们改进教材编写工作。

编 委 会

2008 年 9 月

现代交通工具的广泛使用和互联网的日益普及给不同文化之间的接触与对话提供了方便。仅仅几十年间,麦克卢汉抽象的“地球村”概念现今已成了活生生的社会现实,并且以共同社区的形式影响着每一位世界公民。在这里,尽管人们仍然使用着不同的语言,遵循着或许迥然不同的行为准则和生活信条,但“地球村”更重要的共同关注却将他们愈来愈紧密地联系在了一起。

人们需要寻找有效的跨文化交际途径,需要携手构建不同文化可以协商、吸纳和融合的公共平台,需要建立基于多元文化之上,为绝大多数人所认可的兼容并蓄的地球村文化。当然,要实现这一目标,地球村的公民首先需要自觉践行“己所不欲,勿施于人”的公理,更需要换位思考体会不同文化成员的心理感受,在学习尊重异质文化的过程中赢得他人的尊重。换句话说,就是要怀着真挚的态度了解对象国文化,承认不同文化享有平等的发展权和话语权,以同理之心包容差异与多元,以开放态度拓展行为范域,增强自己对于他国文化差异性的敏感度,在尊重差异平等对话的前提下实现有效的跨文化沟通。

基于这样的考虑,本书精选了十六篇文章,每单元包含两篇文章,共八个单元。内容涵盖言语交际,非言语交际,语言与文化,中西思维方式对比,文化与管理,文化与健康,文化与冲突,文化与旅游等话题。每篇选读之前均有一个日常插曲式的小案例供读者研磨、分析,旨在增强跨文化意识。文章前的导读提纲挈领,略读一遍便对文章所述观点及背景有所了解。文章后的问题皆为开放式思考题,可作书面练习,也可供小组讨论之用。生词和短语及难点注释供本科低年级学生阅读时参考。

本书由李本现教授主编,并负责全书规划及统筹。具体编写工作分工如下:文晓莉:第1单元第2篇、第2单元第2篇、第3单元第2篇、第7单元第1篇;袁艺舟:第5单元第1篇、第6单元第1篇、第8单元第1



篇;李本现:其余单元、各章小案例及术语。

在本书编写过程中,我们参考了国内外近年来出版的许多有关教科书和电子读物,也从研读老一辈跨文化交际学学者的专著、文章中吸取了不少教益。另外,在本书编写思路梳理与材料收集过程中,得到访学期间指导老师 Spencer-Oatey 博士(英国华威大学)及陈国明教授(美国罗得岛大学)的鼎力帮助;卢雪飞、颜沁、郝旭娇、赵璟、吕晶等同学参与了部分校对工作。借此机会对他们一并表示感谢。由于作者水平和经验有限,书中难免有缺点和错误,希望使用本书的师生和读者不吝指正。

编 者

2011 年 6 月 10 日

Unit One Concepts and Principles Related to Intercultural Communication /1

Mini Case Talk to Let Others Know You Want to /1

Reading One Basic Principles of Intercultural Communication /1

Mini Case The Chinese Student Has No Idea about Personal View /31

Reading Two Understanding Intercultural Communication /31

Unit Two Variations of Culture and Language and Their Subtle Implications /64

Mini Case The Korean Mom Was Mad about Her Son's Decision /64

Reading One Levels of Culture /64

Mini Case "I Have Really Had Enough" Is Not Enough /85

Reading Two Language and Intercultural Communication /85

Unit Three Language and Culture /108

Mini Case Please Be Punctual /108

Reading One Verbal Code /108

Mini Case How Can You Invite Us to Sit Naked /138

Reading Two Culture, Language and Online Dispute Resolution /139

Unit Four Culture and Nonverbal Codes /158

Mini Case What's Wrong with My Friendly Pat on His Back /158

Reading One Perspective on Nonverbal Intercultural Communication /158

Mini Case Zhiang Walked Off toward the Cafeteria Alone /182

Reading Two Communicative Codes: Nonverbal Aspect /182

Unit Five Cultural Influences on Context /198

Mini Case A Packed Lunch /198

Reading One Culture and Foreign Language Teaching /198

Mini Case Robert Was Not a Guy to Make Friends with /222

Reading Two Culture and Its Implications to Management /223



Unit Six Culture and Its Shaping Power /243

Mini Case The Spinal Tap Mustn't Be Done Before My Husband Comes /243

Reading One The Role of Culture in Health Communication /243

Mini Case How Can Honey Lubricate My Lungs /258

Reading Two Intercultural and Cross-Cultural Health Communication /259

Unit Seven Intercultural Communication Issues /281

Mini Case Why They Treat Me Like This /281

Reading One Culture, Communication, and Conflict /281

Mini Case What a Poor Service /307

Reading Two A Comparison of Thinking and Writing Patterns in Korea
and the United States /308

Unit Eight Some Concerns in Cross-Cultural Communication Studies /324

Mini Case Montreal to London /324

Reading One Thinking Dialectically about Culture and Communication /324

Mini Case Suzanne Was Left Puzzled by Her Taiwanese Boyfriend /346

Reading Two From "Context" to "Contexts" in Intercultural Communication
Research /346

Glossary /364

Bibliography /376

Unit One



Concepts and Principles Related to Intercultural Communication

Mini Case Talk to Let Others Know You Want to >>>>>

It is a Monday morning; students are doing a group discussion as the tutor has asked. Wang, a Chinese MA student, is among one of the groups. His group members are Greek, British, American, and German, and they are discussing China's Terror Cotta Warriors heatedly without any pause. It seems that only Wang sits still when others are in discussion. After five minutes, John, the British student, turns to the silent-keeper, "Wang, why don't you say something? It seems that you have no interest in our discussion." "No, no, no, your ideas are brilliant. I enjoyed it," Wang says. "Then why not join us?" John asks. "I want to, but you guys don't give me a chance." Wang answers. "But everybody knows that in this classroom everyone is free to say anything. You've had plenty of chances. If you don't talk, nobody knows you want to." John is annoyed. (*Provided by JI Hong*)

Discuss the mini case with your peers and find out the cultural reasons that cause the conflict.

Reading One

Basic Principles of Intercultural Communication¹

By Richard Porter and Larry Samovar

Introductory Remarks

Improvements in communication and transportation technology have made it possible for previously stable cultures to meet in unstructured situations, e. g. the



*Understanding Intercultural Communication
through Selected Readings*

internet opens lines of communication without mediation, while budget airlines transplant ordinary citizens into unfamiliar cultural environment. Experience proves that merely crossing cultural boundaries can be considered threatening, while positive attempts to interact may provoke defensive responses. Misunderstanding may be compounded by either an exaggerated sensitivity to possible slights, or an exaggerated and over-protective fear of giving offence.

This selection begins with the discussion of the concept of communication, defining communication as a dynamic transactional behavior-affecting process in which people behave intentionally in order to induce or elicit particular response from another person. It explores the relationship between communication and culture, and elaborates on the reciprocal relationship between culture and communication in the intercultural interaction context. What we talk about; how we talk about it; what we see, attend to, or ignore; how we think; and what we think about are influenced by the culture we were raised in. In turn, what we talk about, how we talk about it, and what we see help shape, define, and perpetuate our culture. Culture cannot exist without communication; one cannot change without causing change in the other. The authors also point out that the attribution of meaning to messages is in many respects influenced by the culture of the person responding to the message behavior, thus differences in culture may result in diverse interpretations of the same message, cross-culturally speaking.

During the past thirty years a number of events have led to many changes in worldwide and local interaction patterns. First, changes in transportation technology made the world "shrink" by providing means for people to be almost anywhere within a few hours flying. (The suborbital aircraft now being designed will cause greater shrinkage. Travel time between China and the United States, for example, will be measured in minutes rather than in hours.) This increase in travel technology was soon followed by changes in communication technology which made it possible for people to have instantaneous vocal, pictorial, and textual communication anywhere in the world without the need for traveling. Indeed, with a few hundred dollars worth of equipment in the form of a portable facsimile machine and a cellular telephone, it is possible to have instant oral and print communication almost anywhere in the world while driving the freeways in the United States.

Unit One Concepts and Principles Related to Intercultural Communication

These changes have wrought many effects, two, however, stand out as being significant for our purposes. The first is that new communication technology has created an almost free flow of news and information throughout the world and has become so important in the everyday activity of conducting commerce and government that it cannot be set aside. Because of this it is also impossible to keep communication capabilities out of the hands of the people. Government attempts to censor the free flow of ideas, opinions, and information have been thwarted. In one of the Asian countries, for instance, during a political episode some two decades years ago, the foreign correspondents were banned from reporting on observed incidents by cutting their access to telephone and television broadcast facilities. American television viewers, however, were shown many incidents of reporters using their cellular telephones to call the United States via the handy communications satellite in stationary orbit over Asia. By the time the government reacted to this technology, the story and information had long since been disseminated to the world in other parts of the world, similar incidents have occurred, for example, the widespread and multiple changes currently taking place in Eastern Europe are due in part to the availability of news and information.

Communication technology has also broken down our isolation. One hundred years ago it was virtually impossible for the average citizen to have an informed awareness of what was happening in 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. Today is quite different. With existing communication technology we can sit in our living rooms and watch events anywhere on earth, or, indeed, in orbit around the earth, as these events are actually happening. Only a scant few years ago we had to wait hours, days, and even weeks to see who won gold medals in the Olympic Games. Today, we can watch these events as they occur.

This new communication technology has a considerable impact upon us. When we received news and information days and weeks after an event, it was difficult to develop a feeling about or a caring for what was happening thousands of miles away. But consider the differences in the impact upon us when we read in the newspaper that the South African police had put down a disturbance in a black township three weeks ago and when we sit today in the living room and watch while a police officer actually clubs someone with a baton. The ability to deny the cruelty of that act is reduced virtually to zero.



The second change has brought us to the brink of a McLuanesque global village. While transportation and communication technology have figuratively shrunk the world, immigration patterns have physically shifted segments of the world population. People from Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Cuba, Haiti, Columbia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Ecuador, among others have entered the United States and become our neighbors. As these people try to adjust their lives to this culture, we will have many opportunities for intercultural contacts in our daily lives. Contacts with cultures that previously appeared unfamiliar, alien, and at times mysterious are now a normal part of our day-to-day routine. All of this means that we are no longer isolated from one another in time and space.

While this global phenomenon involving transportation, communication, and migration was taking place, there was also a kind of cultural revolution within our own boundaries. Domestic events made us focus our attention upon new and often demanding co-cultures. Asians, blacks, Hispanics, women, homosexuals, the poor, the disabled, the drug culture, the homeless, and countless other groups became highly visible and vocal as they cried out for recognition and their place in our new global village.

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

These interaction failures, 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 villagers; there are too many of us who do not want to live with "them". Ours is a culture where racism and ethnocentrism still run deep below the surface. Although there has been a lessening of overt racial violence since the 1960s, the enduring racial ethnocentric belief system has not been appreciably affected. 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 Anglo power structure. Until this deep-seated antagonism can be eliminated, we will not be able to assume

Unit One Concepts and Principles Related to Intercultural Communication

our place in a global village community.

Our inability to yet behave as villagers in the global village is cause for major concern because not only have we not learned to respect and accept one another, we have not learned to communicate with one another effectively, to understand one another, because our cultures are different. Thus, even if we have the strongest desire to communicate, we are faced with the difficulties imposed upon us by cultural diversity and the impact that diversity has on the communication process.

The difficulties cultural diversity poses for effective communication have given rise to the marriage of culture and communication and to the recognition of definition of intercultural communication as a field of study. Inherent in this fusion is the idea that intercultural communication entails the investigation of culture and the difficulties of communicating across cultural boundaries.

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 article will deal with intercultural communication and point out the relationships between communication, culture, and intercultural communication.

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 that event.

Understanding and Defining Communication

We begin with a basic assumption that communication is a form of human behavior that is derived from a need to 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

*Understanding Intercultural Communication
through Selected Readings*

requirements: First, they must be observed by someone, and second, 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.

The first implication is that 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 behavioral repertoire.

Second, behavior may be either conscious or unconscious. We frequently do things without conscious awareness of them. This is especially true of nonverbal behavior, habits such as fingernail biting, toe tapping, leg jiggling, head basking, staring, and smiling. Even such things as slouching in a chair, chewing gum, or adjusting glasses are frequently unconscious behaviors. Since a message consists of behaviors to which people may respond, we must thus acknowledge the possibility of producing messages unknowingly.

A third implication of the behavior-message linkage is that 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 to stammer but we do so anyway. Again, these unintentional behaviors can become messages if someone sees them and responds to them.

This concept of conscious-unconscious, intentional-unintentional behavior relationships gives us a basis to formulate a 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 observes 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 communicate.

The notion of behavior residue just mentioned in our definition refers to things that remain as a record of our actions. For instance, this article that you are reading is a behavior 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 processor. Another example of behavior residue might be the odor of cigar

Unit One Concepts and Principles Related to Intercultural Communication

smoke lingering in an elevator after the cigar smoker has departed the elevator. Smoking the cigar was the behavior; the odor is the residue. The response you have to that smell is a reflection of your past experiences and attitudes toward cigars, smoking in public elevators, 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 lifetimes 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 the most appropriate for the behavior encountered and the social context in which it occurred. For instance, if someone walks up to us and says: "If you've got a few minutes, let's go to the student union and 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 responses could vary significantly depending upon 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, the response may be one of attributing conciliatory good will to the message and an invitation to try and 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 lessened because you may not be able to guess fully the other person's intention. Perhaps this someone who wants to talk about the class; perhaps this someone who only wants social company—until the next class; or perhaps, if gender differences are involved, it may be someone attempting to "put the make" 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