

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Intercultural Communication Competency (ICC) and Understanding

with

Eric Aoki, Ph.D.

FOR FORT COLLINS ROTARY CLUB

**ROTARY SUSTAINABLE PEACEBUILDING
FELLOWSHIP**

WEDNESDAY, 7 JULY 2021, 1:30-2:30PM MT

Preview

Introduction

I. Key Terms

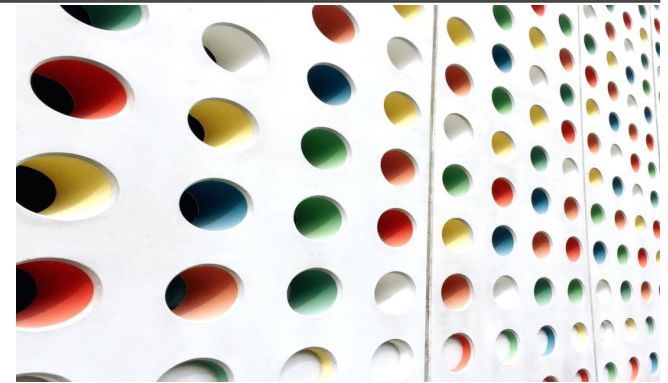
II. Intercultural Models & An Applicable Theory

III. Wrap Up and Q&A



Key Terms

1. Intercultural Communication Competency (ICC)
2. Ascription & Avowal
3. Embodied Ethnocentrism & Ethnocentrism



Take-Away: All three concepts have implications toward *communicative alignment* (Note: alignment is different from communicative agreement)

Content Adapted from: Martin, J. & Nakayama, T. (2018). Intercultural Communication in Contexts (7th Edition). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

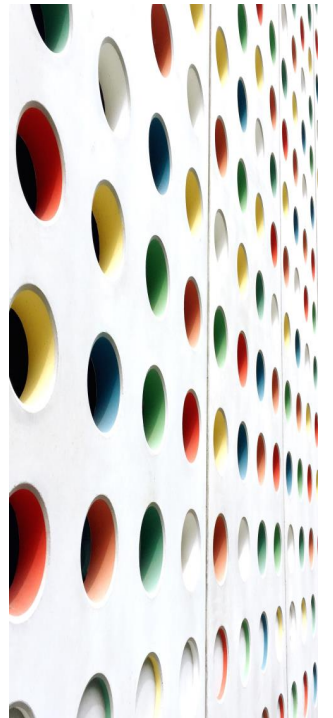
ANTECEDENTS OF CONTACT

(WE bring our Personal Histories to each Intercultural Interaction)

Four elements of personal histories that influence interaction & intercultural communication

- 1. We bring childhood experiences to intercultural interactions**
- 2. We may bring historical myths/stereotypes to intercultural interactions**
- 3. The languages that we speak influence our interactions & the languages we speak can ease or pose challenges to I.C. interactions**
- 4. We tend to be affected by recent, vivid events**

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ANTECEDENTS OF CONTACT

(WE bring our Personal Histories to each Intercultural Interaction)

TAKE-AWAY:

Reflect on how the four antecedents shape and influence who you decide to bring into intercultural interactions like the workplace with your coworkers:

- How, for example, do our early day influences (our embodied ethnocentric defaults) shape how we speak and behave with others?
- What stereotypes and/or historical myths need to be addressed? What intercultural limitations do we face?
- How do current events shape how we see cultures, people, and issues around the globe?

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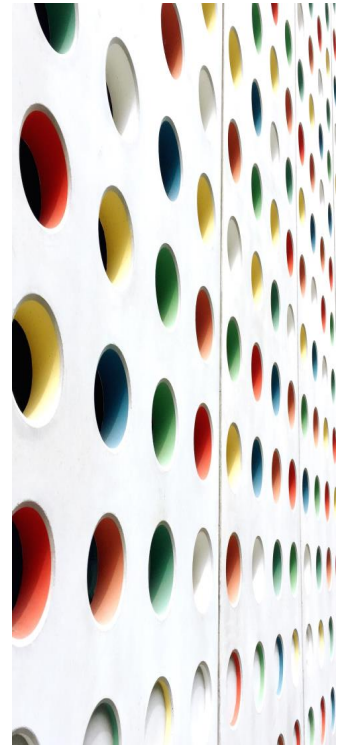
Intercultural Dialectical Tensions

(Opposing tensions of need, state of being, or performance – Context Matters)

For example:

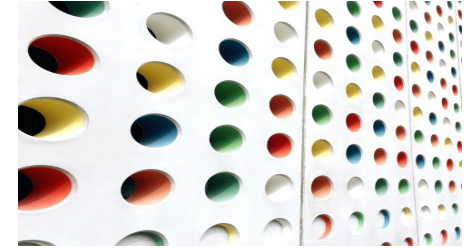
- **Individualistic -----Collectivistic**
- **Static -----Dynamic**
- **Individual -----Cultural**
- **Differences -----Similarities**
- **Privileges -----Disadvantages**
- **History/Past -----Present/Future**

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Intercultural Dialectical Tensions, cont'd.

(Opposing tensions of need, state of being, or performance – Context Matters)



TAKE-AWAY:

- What intercultural contexts drive our needs to one end of the dialectical tension spectrum or the other end or middle and why?
 - For example, in what contexts am I more likely to perform on the individualistic side of the dialectical tension v. the more collectivistic side?
 - As a community leader, citizen, what privileges and disadvantages do I carry into various intercultural contexts (re: e.g., education, social class, social networks, dominant/power in a system)?

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Communication Accommodation Theory

See Communication Scholar Howard Giles



- To understand how and when individuals accommodate speech and nonverbal comm. to others in intercultural interactions.
- We emphasize or minimize socio-cultural difference via convergence/divergence; listen and observe for the alignment or non-alignment
- Individuals are likely to adapt during low-threat interactions or when there are perceived little differences between communicators; the underlying assumption is we accommodate when we feel positive toward the other
 - E.g., we may slow down speech for non-language speakers; we might mirror communication to show similarity or common ground (e.g., bowing vs shaking hands in the moment, using common or known expressions to relate)
 - Be careful with over-accommodation and being read as disrespectful or disingenuous (e.g., in-group/out-group identity dynamics)

TAKE-AWAY: In what contexts/situations do you expect or default to other people needing to accommodate to your cultural ways of being & when are you more apt to accommodate to theirs? For what reasons?

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TYPES OF I.C. CONFLICT

“Conflict is defined as involving a perceived or real incompatibility of goals, values, expectations, processes, or outcomes between two or more interdependent individuals or groups” (See Cupach & Canary, 1997; Wilmot & Hocker, 2001)

1. **AFFECTIVE CONFLICT**: incompatible emotions/feelings
2. **COGNITIVE CONFLICT**: incongruent thoughts or perceptions; different ways of perceiving the same thing
3. **GOAL CONFLICT**: disagree on preferred outcome or end state
4. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**: incompatible preference for course of action/the plan to pursue
5. **VALUE CONFLICT**: differ on ideologies on specific issues

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Four Approaches to Conflict

1. Direct Approach = a view that the best way to deal with conflict is to use precise and specific language

2. Indirect Approach = a view that the best way to approach conflict is to use vague and non-specific language; talk or nonverbally negotiate around the conflict

3. Emotional Restraint Approach = a view that the best way to deal with conflict is by hiding or suppressing feelings and emotions while emphasizing logic and structure

4. Emotional Expressiveness Approach = a view that the best way to deal with conflict is by overt displays of expressing feelings

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Four I.C. Conflict Styles

1. **DISCUSSION STYLE**: Combines the DIRECT & EMOTIONALLY RESTRAINED Approaches

- Comfortable expressing disagreements but prefer to be emotionally restrained
- “Say what you mean and mean what you say,” “let’s talk this out in a logical and cool, calm, collected way”

2. **ENGAGEMENT STYLE**: Combines the DIRECT & EMOTIONALLY EXPRESSIVE Approaches

- Verbally direct and confronting approach to dealing with conflict; use of verbal/nonverbal modes as genuine willingness to engage, even intensely

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Four I.C. Conflict Styles, cont'd.

3. **ACCOMODATING STYLE**: Combines the INDIRECT & EMOTIONALLY RESTRAINED Approaches

- People using this style may be ambiguous/indirect in expressing views, thinking this mode is best so conflict doesn't get out of control; Swahili proverb: "Silence produces peace, and peace produces safety"
- Silence and avoidance used to manage conflict
- Generally, would rather preserve relational harmony and/or lose face than escalate conflict

4. **DYNAMIC STYLE**: Combines the INDIRECT & EMOTIONALLY EXPRESSIVE Approaches

- People who use the style may use strong language, stories, metaphors, and use of third-party intermediaries
- Comfortable with emotionally confrontational talk and views credibility of other person as grounded in their degree of emotional expressiveness

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Wrap Up and Q&A

Three ICC Reminders:

1. Communicative alignment doesn't always mean agreement with each other
2. Our socialization into familiarity and comforts (our embodied ethnocentrisms) has interplay with engaging the world, interculturally (e.g., the platinum rule)
3. Difference is work, but importantly it provides opportunities to grow, think, and learn in new ways with each other. Over time and each day, we can work to increase our skill sets for our Intercultural Communication Competency (ICC) backpacks or toolboxes

Thank you, everyone. Questions and/or additional comments?