Fred E. Jandt

An Introduction to
Intercultural Communication

Identities in a Global Community

10^{edition}

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10th Edition

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Fred E. Jandt

$SAGE

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Preface

Why Study Intercultural Communication?

When a student asks, "What is this class about?" I have two answers. If it's a short hallway conversation, I say something like "to learn to become a more effective communicator with peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds." If we have time for a sit-down discussion, I start by talking about identities—the identities each of us accepts to be known by in the world. We then discuss what goes with those identities—everything from what we wear, to the language we speak, to the values we use to guide our behavior. It then becomes obvious that diverse identities can be at the root of many communication barriers. At this point, students see the broader challenges and raise the issues of immigration, treatment of women, clash of religions and terrorism, corporate influence over local cultures, and countries exerting unwelcome influence over other countries.

In order to live, work, and play in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, we all need to communicate effectively with people of diverse cultural backgrounds. We need to be aware of how our language and nonverbal communications might be understood by people whose frame of reference is different than ours. We also need to understand how the historical relationships between cultures inform how they interact today. The aim of this book is to equip students with the knowledge and skills to be competent and confident intercultural communicators. In each chapter, the book guides students through key concepts and helps readers connect intercultural competence to their own life experiences in order to increase understanding.

The core objectives of this book have not changed with the 10th edition: I continue to promote the skills of intercultural competence by developing an understanding of cultures to better appreciate the opportunities and challenges each culture presents to its people, developing a better understanding of how people become who they are, becoming less threatened by those of different backgrounds, and becoming better able to select and perform communication behaviors appropriate to various settings.

What I strive to do is to provide information that is balanced and up-to-date in a manner that is accessible and interesting. It has been my objective from the first edition of this book to make it readable, engaging, and thought provoking while at the same time flexible enough to support individual instructors' approaches to the content theories.

After reading this book, students will become effective intercultural communicators by developing the following skills and knowledge:

- Expanding the range of verbal and nonverbal communication skills

- Becoming able to communicate effectively in unfamiliar settings

- Recognizing the influence our own culture has had on the way in which we view ourselves

- Expanding knowledge of different cultural traditions

It is my pleasure to have worked with thousands of students face-to-face and online through the years. I consider this book's readers to be part of that group and have received many questions and comments from them via e-mail that have helped improve each edition. Thank you for reading this book and for participating in this learning community to appreciate and to become more effective in intercultural encounters.

New to the 10th Edition

The world has changed dramatically in the past few years: Attitudes toward immigration and refugees, attitudes toward gender identifications, awareness of social class identity, and awareness of religious identity are just a few of the changes our society has experienced in recent years. As in previous editions, these major regulators of human life are the core themes that run throughout the book.

The chapter content has been updated throughout to address current international developments and communication challenges, such as the relationship between DNA testing and cultural identity, negotiations between North and South Korea, the refugee experience in Europe, and the introduction of the idea of "glocalization." Additionally, I have removed the dated terms *subculture* and *subgroup* and replaced them with *community*, added coverage of nonbinary gender identities, and rewritten the chapter on nation-state cultures (Chapter 6) to highlight the objections and alternatives to Hofstede. Chapters 2 and 3 were significantly reorganized to move intercultural communication competence and ethics earlier in the text and to have barriers to effective intercultural communication, perception, and an extended discussion of high- and low-context cultures follow.

Pedagogical Features

Many of the most successful features from previous editions—those that really enhance student engagement and learning—are still here, updated for the new edition. These include the following:

- **Focus on Skills** boxes that challenge students to apply the key concepts they have learned in each chapter to a "real-life" intercultural communication scenario

- **Focus on Technology** features that explore contemporary examples of intercultural communication on the Internet, social media, and mobile devices

- **Focus on Theory** boxes that call students' attention to communication theories

- **Focus on Culture** features, which help students understand cultural practices within their own and other cultures

- **Global Voices** boxes that use brief, provocative quotes to introduce students to a range of perspectives on global intercultural communication

- **Learning Objectives** at the start of each chapter that identify what students should expect to know or be able to do after engaging with the chapter material

- **Charts, graphics, and photos** that convey information in a visually engaging way

- **Maps** that help readers better understand the geographical and cultural locales discussed

- **Case studies** of specific cultures that connect key concepts to real-world examples

- **Discussion Questions** that spark in-class conversation and encourage students to reflect critically on what they have learned in each chapter

- **Glossary** with **Key Terms** highlighted in each chapter

Author's Note

The production of this edition was concluding as the COVID-19 situation was developing, hence the pandemic is not mentioned in this edition. The author recommends that faculty work with students to consider the impact of COVID-19 on nonverbal communication and on U.S. relations with China, both having been affected by the pandemic.

Acknowledgments

Through the years, many people have reviewed previous editions, and I have thanked them in each and every edition. That list has grown so that I can only thank previous reviewers collectively and list the new reviewers for this edition. This group of reviewers has provided extensive critical comments that have made this the best possible edition.

Donna S. Acerra, Northampton Community College

Mo Bahk, California State University, San Bernardino

David Bashore, College of the Desert

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Aimee Richards, Fairmont State University

Jeremy Walden, Auburn University

Zuoming Wang, University of North Texas

Ralph Webb, Purdue University

Over the years, the professional staff at SAGE has done so much to make this book such a success. Matthew Byrnie, associate director, guided the revisions for the seventh and eighth editions with sensitivity and foresight. Lily Norton, communication acquisitions editor, enthusiastically took over that role for this new edition. Jennifer Jovin-Bernstein, content development editor, shepherded the project through production and supervised the development of the digital materials for this edition. Sarah Wilson provided needed and much-appreciated assistance throughout manuscript development. Thanks to Melinda Masson, copy editor for this edition, and very special thanks to Tracy Buyan, senior project editor, who guided this manuscript and others for me through the production process with such experience and attention. The team at SAGE has done so much to make this edition the best, and I am deeply appreciative.

About the Author

Fred E. Jandt was born of second-generation German immigrants in the multicultural south-central region of Texas. After graduating from Texas Lutheran University and Stephen F. Austin State University, he received his doctorate in communication from Bowling Green State University. He has taught and been a student of intercultural communication for more than 40 years, developing his experience through travel and international training and research projects. While professor of communication at The College at Brockport, State University of New York, his reputation as a teacher led to his appointment as SUNY's first director of faculty development. He has retired as professor and branch campus dean after having been named outstanding professor. He has also been a visiting professor at Victoria University of Wellington, in New Zealand. He has extensive experience in the areas of intercultural and international communication, negotiation, mediation, and conflict management. He was one of the first scholars to introduce the study of conflict to the communication discipline with his text *Conflict Resolution Through Communication* (Harper & Row, 1973). He has subsequently published many other titles in this area, including the successful trade book *Win-Win Negotiating: Turning Conflict Into Agreement* (Wiley, 1985), which has been translated into eight languages; a casebook on international conflict management, *Constructive Conflict Management: Asia-Pacific Cases* (SAGE, 1996), with Paul B. Pedersen; and *Conflict and Communication* (SAGE, 2017). For several years, he conducted the training workshop "Managing Conflict Productively" for major corporations and government agencies throughout the United States. Jandt continues to train volunteers who are learning to become mediators in the California justice system and served as an elected trustee of the Desert Community College District.

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Defining Culture and Communication

Have you ever considered why there's not just one human culture rather than many cultures? Biologists Rebecca L. Cann, Mark Stoneking, and Allan C. Wilson (1987) studied genetic material from women around the world and contend that all humans alive today share genetic material from a woman who lived some 200,000 years ago in sub-Saharan Africa. Their African "Eve" conclusion is supported by linguistic observations. Cavalli-Sforza, Piazza, Menozzi, and Mountain (1988) have shown that considerable similarity exists between Cann et al.'s tree of genetic relationships and the tree of language groups, which hypothesizes that all the world's languages can be traced to Africa.

The languages that vary the most from other languages today can be found in Africa. This suggests that these African languages are older. Africa's Khoisan languages, such as that of the !Kung San, use a clicking sound that is denoted in writing with an exclamation point. Such evidence, along with genetic evidence, suggests that almost 7 and a half billion of us alive today share ancestry from one group in Africa. Yet among all of us there are diverse ways of understanding the world, languages, beliefs, and ways of defining our identities. In this chapter, first you'll read about the regulators of human behavior and identity. Then you'll read about the related concepts of culture, subculture, co-culture, subgroup, and microculture. Finally, you'll read about the concept of communication as something that is itself a product of culture, meaning that how communication as a concept is defined and how communication is performed are very much part of each cultural group—so much so that it has been said culture and communication can only be understood together.

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

Explain the regulators of human behavior and identity

Understand the meanings and connotations of the terms *culture, subculture, co-culture, subgroup, counterculture,* and *microculture*

Explain why this text recommends we prioritize the terms *culture* and *community* over other terms to describe those concepts

Describe how communication is defined by different cultures and understand how people of diverse cultures communicate differently

Describe the relationship between culture and media

Sources of Identity

How, then, did so many distinct human identities develop? Climate changes and other pressures led to migrations out of Africa. The first wave may have been along the coastline of southern Asia through southern India into Australia. The second wave may have traveled to the Middle East, and from there, one branch went to India and a second to China. Those who left the Middle East for Europe may have actually traveled first through central Asia and then throughout the world to other parts of Asia, Russia, the Americas, and Europe (Wells, 2002). Neuroscientist Antonio Damasio (2010) contends that our world, our environment, is so complex and so varied on the planet that diverse social networks developed to regulate life so that we could survive. Centuries of geographical separation led to the development of diverse social network regulators of human life. These social network regulators of human life over the history of humanity have been the basis for ways of understanding the world, for beliefs, and for shared individual identities, which at times resulted in confrontations and conflicts between groups. Understanding these identities and the resulting confrontations explains our past, provides insights about the present, and predicts our future. Sir David Cannadine (2013) posits six forms of regulators of human life and identity: religion, nation, class, gender, race, and civilization.

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Generational transmission of important cultural rituals provides cultural continuity through the ages.

Religion and Identity

Cannadine (2013) argues that religion is the oldest source of human identity. Religion can clearly be a regulator of how we live our lives. Religious identity can affect all elements of our lives. For example, the Hindu writes from left to right, prays to the rising sun, and keeps a mustache. The Muslim writes from right to left, faces the setting sun when praying, and always shaves the upper lip (Jacoby, 2011).

Religion provides a sense of identity and source of conflicts. Religious wars are those clearly caused or justified by differences in religious beliefs exclusive of other issues. Even with that restrictive definition, religious wars have resulted in tens of millions of deaths. The Crusades of the 11th through 13th centuries against the Muslims were blessed as a *bellum sacrum* ("holy war") by Pope Urban II. In the 16th century, there was a succession of wars between Roman Catholics and Protestants known as the French Wars of Religion. The Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970) pitted Islam against Christianity, as does ongoing violence in the Central African Republic. In the early 1990s, Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks in the former Yugoslavia were divided along Orthodox, Catholic, and Muslim lines. In Iraq, Muslims are divided between Sunni and Shiite. India, founded as

a secular, pluralist republic, has passed a new citizenship law that critics say marginalizes Muslims. Late in 2019, protests had spread across the country. At other times, of course, religious groups have coexisted without conflict.

In Chapter 8, you'll read more about religion and identity, but first let's look in more detail into Cannadine's remaining five sources of human identity and conflict.

National Identity

The nation-state may be the most significant political creation of modern times. For much of humanity from the 18th century on, national identity has superseded religious identity as a primary identity in many parts of the world. It has become common practice today to equate nation-state identity with cultural identity. In most cases, this is largely true. Ladegaard (2007), for example, demonstrated that in a large global corporation employing some 8,500 people in nearly 40 countries, employees perceive their nation-states as the frame of reference or identity while any conceptualization of a global identity is perceived as a hypothetical construction. An individual born and raised in Spain who has worked for years for the Swedish technology company Ericsson at its service center in India most likely self-identifies as Spanish.

Map 1.1 Catalonia, a Semi-Autonomous Region With a Distinct History and Language

North and South Korean athletes perform under the Korean Unification Flag as a symbolic break in the tensions between the two countries.

National identity is not descriptive when arbitrarily drawn political boundaries do not reflect peoples' identities. For example, in Europe there are several examples of popular support for secessionist states. In the United Kingdom, a vote for independence for Scotland was held in 2014. In a hotly contested election, nearly 45% voted for independence. While the referendum failed, British prime minister David Cameron pledged reforms granting Scotland greater autonomy. Catalonia is a region of about 7.5 million people in northeastern Spain with its own culture and language. In 2017, 90% of the 2.26 million Catalonians voted in favor of independence. Against Spain's government's objections, the region's parliament has begun the process of separating from Spain. The Spanish government suspended local government and jailed leaders of the independence movement. In Belgium, Dutch-speaking Flemings in the north have pressed for separation from the French- and German-speaking Walloon population in the south.

Just as religious identity has been the basis for conflict, obviously national identity has been the basis for millions and millions of deaths from conflicts. Cultures provide diverse ways of interpreting the environment and the world as well as relating to other peoples. To recognize that other peoples can see the world differently is one thing. To view their interpretations as less perfect than ours is another.

How differences can lead to conflict can be seen in the evolution of the connotative meaning of the word *barbarian* from its initial use in the Greek of Herodotus to its meaning in contemporary English (Cole, 1996). To better understand the origins of hostilities between the Greeks and the Persians, Herodotus visited neighboring non-Greek societies to learn their belief systems, arts, and everyday practices. He called these non-Greek societies *barbarian*, a word in Greek in his time that meant people whose language, religion, ways of life, and customs differed from those of the Greeks. Initially, *barbarian* meant different from what was Greek.

Later, the Greeks began to use the word *barbarian* to mean "outlandish, rude, or brutal." When the word was incorporated into Latin, it came to mean "uncivilized" or "uncultured."

The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the contemporary definition as "a rude, wild, uncivilized person," but acknowledges the original meaning was "one whose language and customs differ from the speaker's." Conflict between nations often begins with the judgment that how others live their lives is in some ways less perfect than how we live our own. In Chapters 6 and 7, you'll read about the values that come with national identity.

Class and Identity

Marx and Engels (1850) claimed that identities were created not by religions or countries, but in the relationship to the means of production—that is, the capitalists

who own the means of production and the proletariat, or "working class," who must sell their own labor. The opening sentence of *The Communist Manifesto* is "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle" (Marx & Engels, 1850). In this understanding of class, conflict is inevitable. The collapse of Communism, though, has demonstrated that this understanding of class is not pervasive or an all-encompassing source of identity (Cannadine, 2013). Max Weber believed that **social class** was determined by wealth, status, and power rather than by one's relationship to the means of production (Appiah, 2018). Following this, class refers to one's economic position in a society. Basically, this is the basis of today's use of the terms *upper*, *middle*, and *lower class*.

While classes may exist in any society, how clearly defined they are and how much they are a source of identity varies. When asked to identify an example of social classes, some think of British television drama series such as *Upstairs, Downstairs* and *Downton Abbey*, two of the most widely watched television dramas in the world, which depict the lives of servants and masters. Others identify the Indian Hindu caste system as one of the oldest and most rigid. Based on heredity, castes ranked from the Brahmin to the Kshatriya, to the Vaishya caste of artisans, farmers, and merchants, to the lower castes of Shudra and Atishudra laborers. Below these were the Dalits (formerly known as Untouchables), who continue to experience social and economic marginalization 70 years after India's constitution outlawed caste-based discrimination. Mehta (2014, p. 37) describes the social and economic inequality in India: "The one thing my sons are always amazed by when they visit India is the condescension displayed toward entire groups of people. They hate the way people speak to their maids, their drivers, their waiters—anybody Indians consider socially inferior."

In France, the States-General established in 1302 provided a legislative assembly ranking members by hereditary class. The First Estate were the highborn sons of families who had devoted themselves to religion. The Second Estate were the highborn sons devoted to war. The Third Estate were the richest members of the bourgeoisie. The rigidity of the French hereditary system was one cause of the French Revolution.

The Great British Class Survey in 2011 clearly showed that class remains a source of identity. The top 6% had much higher income, education at elite universities, and a network of social connections to one another. The lowest 15% had the lowest income, irregular or unstable employment, little in savings, and few social connections to the classes above them (Savage et al., 2013). In Chapter 7, you'll read more about social class in the United States.

The drama television series *Downton Abbey* depicted aristocratic and domestic servant life in the post-Edwardian era. British society was characterized by marriage within one's class and hereditary transmission of occupation, social status, and political influence. Today, social status in the United Kingdom is still influenced by social class, with other factors such as education also being significant.

Gender and Identity

According to feminists like Germaine Greer, gender identity is more significant than religion, nation, or class. In *The Whole Woman*, Greer (1999) wrote, "Before you are of any race, nationality, religion, party or family, you are a woman" (p. 11). Cannadine (2013), however, contends it is difficult to substantiate that there is a unifying identity solidarity among all women.

For at least the past half-century, various scholars have attempted to demonstrate fundamental differences among the genders. Rather than review that research and argue for separate gender identities, Chapter 9 in this text is devoted to how nations treat genders differently. Chapter 9 also considers nonbinary gender identities worldwide. How a nation deals with gender reveals much about that nation's values. Gender identity may be influenced more by one's national identity and other factors than by one's biology alone.

Additionally, in Chapter 12, you'll read about sexual orientation as a source of identity.

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Why are we more aware of skin color than of other variables that distinguish each of us? For example, how aware are you of having detached or attached earlobes?

Race, Skin Color, Ethnicity, and Identity

While class and gender may not have the same strength of regulation of human life and identity creation as national identity, some will argue that race and skin color do. When people speak about **race**, they usually refer to visible physical features such as skin color.

From this popular biological perspective, race refers to a large body of people characterized by similarity of descent (Campbell, 1976). From this biologically based definition, your race is the result of the mating behavior of your ancestors. The biologically based definition is said to derive from Carolus Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist, physician, and taxonomist, who said in 1735 that humans are classified into four types: *Africanus*, *Americanus*, *Asiaticus*, and *Europaeus*. Race became seen as biologically natural and based on visible physical characteristics such as skin color and other facial and bodily features. In the 19th century, the "racial sciences" rank ordered distinct races from the most advanced to the most primitive. Such science became the basis for hospitals segregating blood supplies, Hitler's genocidal Germany, and South Africa's apartheid state.

While some physical traits and genes do occur more frequently in certain human populations than in others, such as some skull and dental features, differences in the processing of alcohol, and inherited diseases such as sickle-cell anemia and cystic fibrosis,

Focus on Culture 1.1

Ads for genetic-ancestry tests have shown a man trading his lederhosen for a kilt and a woman upon learning of her ancestry to be the Akan people of Ghana to say, "When I found you in my DNA, I learned where my strength comes from." Sandy Banks, senior fellow at the University of Southern California Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership & Policy, who self-identifies as a Black American, discovered that her DNA was 54% European and 24% Nigerian. She reported "excitement, wonder, pain, and pride" on learning of her Nigerian ancestry. But later she reported a "comedown" feeling when a reevaluation of her non-European DNA identified her ancestry as Benin/Togo, Cameroon, Congo and South Bantu, Mali, and Ivory Coast/Ghana. She concluded that "identity is more than ancestry" (Banks, 2019). Communication professor

Anita Foeman conducts the DNA Discussion Project, which records stories people tell of their family history and then their reactions when presented with their DNA results (Foeman, Lawton, & Rieger, 2015). A 2014 study (Phelan, Link, & Zelner, 2014) revealed that when people read an article about genetic-ancestry tests, their beliefs in racial differences increase.

If you don't speak French, don't eat French food, and don't celebrate any French traditions, but your DNA test reveals French ancestry, are you French?

How would you react if you were told that your DNA test results contradicted what you had been told of your family history?

20th-century scientists studying genetics found no single race-defining gene. (Focus on Culture 1.1 considers whether one's DNA reveals anything about one's cultural identity.) Popular indicators of race, such as skin color and hair texture, were caused by recent adaptations to climate and diet. Jablonski and Chaplin (2000) took global ultraviolet measurements from NASA's Total Ozone Mapping Spectrometer and compared them with published data on skin color in indigenous populations from more than 50 countries. There was an unmistakable correlation: The weaker the ultraviolet light, the fairer the skin. Most scientists today have abandoned the concept of biological race as a meaningful scientific concept (Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, & Piazza, 1994; Owens & King, 1999; Paabo, 2001).

A second way to define race, then, is as a sociohistorical concept, which explains how racial categories have varied over time and between cultures. Worldwide, skin color alone does not define race. The meaning of race has been debated in societies, and as a consequence, new categories have been formed and others transformed. Dark-skinned natives of India have been classified as Caucasian. People with moderately dark skin in Egypt are identified as White. Brazil has a history of intermarriage among native peoples, descendants of African slaves, and immigrants from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, but no history of explicit segregation policies. So in Brazil, with the world's largest Black population after Nigeria, and where half of the population is Black, there are hundreds of words for skin colors (Robinson, 1999), including a census category *pardo* for mixed ancestry.

The biologically based definition establishes race as something fixed; the sociohistorically based definition sees race as unstable and socially determined through constant debate (Omi & Winant, 1986). While race is associated with physical appearance, when people speak

Focus on Culture 1.2

Is this person a citizen of the United States?

☐ Yes, born in the United States

☐ Yes, born in Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Northern Marianas

☐ Yes, born abroad of U.S. citizen parent or parents

☐ Yes, U.S. citizen by naturalization – *Print year of naturalization*

☐ No, not a U.S. citizen

What is this person's age and what is this person's date of birth? *For babies less than 1 year old, do not write the age in months. Write 0 as the age.*

Print numbers in boxes.

Age on April 1, 2020	Month	Day	Year of birth
years			

Information on race has been collected in every U.S. census, beginning with the first in 1790, but what the U.S. Census Bureau considers as a racial category has changed in almost every census.

For example, according to Gibson and Jung (2002), from 1790 to 1850, the only categories used were "White and Black (Negro), with Black designated as free and slave." In 1890, categories included mulatto, quadroon, octoroon, Chinese, and Japanese. The 2010 survey raised some concerns in that it included the term *Negro* in addition to *Black* and *African-American*.

During decades of high immigration, Irish, Italians, and many central European ethnic groups were considered distinct races. "Armenians were classified as white in some decades, but not in others" (Hotz, 1995, p. A14).

In the 1930 census, there was a separate race category for Mexican; people of Mexican ancestry were classified later as White and today as Hispanic but could be of any race.

Immigrants from India have gone from Hindu, a religious designation used as a racial category, to Caucasian, to non-White, to White, to Asian Indian.

Michael Omi, an ethnic studies expert at the University of California, Berkeley, described the resulting confusion: "You can be born one race and die another" (quoted in Hotz, 1995, p. A14).

A recent study showed that 9.8 million people in the United States changed their race or ethnicity identity response from the 2000 census to the 2010 census (Lieblier, Rastogi, Fernandez, Noon, & Ennis, 2014).

of **ethnicity** they generally refer to shared heritage, family names, geography, customs, and language passed on through generations (Zenner, 1996). For some, *tribe* would be a more understood term. In Afghanistan, for example, people identify by tribes—Tajiks and Pashtuns. According to some estimates, there are 5,000 ethnic groups in the world (Stavenhagen, 1986). In Chapter 2, you'll read more about race and ethnic groups.

As discussed in Focus on Culture 1.2, the U.S. Census Bureau establishes categories of identity.

Civilization and Identity

Cannadine's (2013) final form of identity is civilization. Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee believed civilizations to be the most significant determinant of identity but also believed that civilizations were largely self-sufficient and sealed off from one another.

In the 19th century, the term *culture* was commonly used as a synonym for Western civilization. The British anthropologist Sir Edward B. Tylor (1871) popularized the idea that all societies pass through developmental stages, beginning with "savagery," progressing to "barbarism," and culminating in Western "civilization." It's easy to see that such a definition assumes that Western nations were considered superior. Both Western nations, beginning with ancient Greece, and Eastern nations, most notably imperial China, believed that their own way of life was superior.

In his 1996 book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel P. Huntington continued the position that civilizations were the most important form of human identity. In general, Huntington identified the world's civilizations as Western, Latin American, sub-Saharan African, Eastern Orthodox (including the former Soviet Union), Islamic, Confucian, Hindu, and Japanese.

Huntington predicts that future conflicts will be among civilizations, especially between the West and Islam. There are many critics of Huntington's thesis, including Paul Berman (2003), who argues that distinct civilization boundaries do not exist today—that is, that national identities have become more important than any civilization identities.

Culture

Can each of these sources of identity be considered a "culture"?

Traditionally, the term **culture** was used to refer to the following:

- A community or population sufficiently large enough to be self-sustaining—that is, large enough to produce new generations of members without relying on outside people.

- The totality of that group's thought, experiences, and patterns of behavior and its concepts, values, and assumptions about life that guide behavior and how those evolve with contact with other cultures. Hofstede (1994) classified these elements of culture into four categories: symbols, rituals, values, and heroes. **Symbols** refer to verbal and nonverbal language. **Rituals** are the socially essential collective activities within a culture. **Values** are the feelings not open for discussion within a culture about what is good or bad, beautiful or ugly, normal or abnormal, which are present in a majority of the members of a culture, or at least in those who occupy pivotal positions. **Heroes** are the real or imaginary people who serve as behavior models within a culture. A culture's heroes are expressed in the culture's **myths**, which can be the subject of novels and other forms of literature (Rushing & Frentz, 1978). Janice Hocker Rushing (1983) has argued, for example, that an enduring myth in U.S. culture is the rugged individualist cowboy of the American West.

- The process of social transmission of these thoughts and behaviors from birth in the family and schools over the course of generations.

- Members who consciously identify themselves with that group. Collier and Thomas (1988) describe this as **cultural identity**, or the identification

with and perceived acceptance into a group that has a shared system of symbols and meanings as well as norms for conduct. What does knowing an individual's cultural identity tell you about that individual? If you assume that the individual is like everyone else in that culture, you have stereotyped all the many, various people in that culture into one mold. You know that you are different from others in your culture. Other cultures are as diverse. The diversity within cultures probably exceeds the differences between cultures. So just knowing one person's cultural identity doesn't provide complete or reliable information about that person. Knowing another's cultural identity does, however, help you understand the opportunities and challenges that each individual in that culture has had to deal with.

We can have no direct knowledge of a culture other than our own. Our experience with and knowledge of other cultures is limited by the perceptual bias of our own culture. An adult Canadian will never fully understand the experience of growing up as an Australian. To begin to understand a culture, you need to understand all the experiences that guide its individual members through life. That includes language and gestures; personal appearance and social relationships; religion, philosophy, and values; courtship, marriage, and family customs; food and recreation; work and government;

Focus on Skills 1.1
Applying Cultural Concepts

Throughout this book, take note of special boxes marked Focus on Skills that identify intercultural communication skills appropriate to the content of that chapter.

Members of a culture share symbols and behavior norms, and identify as members of the culture. While families are not cultures, we can use that setting to explore the concept of culture.

Assume you have a sister, brother, or very close childhood friend. Think back to your relationship with that sibling or friend as a child. Probably, you remember how natural and spontaneous your relationship was. Your worlds of experience were so similar; you shared problems and pleasures; you disagreed and even fought, but that didn't mean you couldn't put that behind you because you both knew in some way that you belonged together.

Now imagine that your sibling or friend had to leave you for an extended period. Perhaps your brother studied abroad for a year or your sister entered the military and served overseas. For some time, you were separated.

Identify some of the experiences your friend or sibling had that may have changed your relationship in some way. For example, during the time your brother studied abroad, he likely acquired new vocabulary, new tastes, and new ideas about values. He uses a foreign-sounding word in casual conversation; he enjoys fast food or hates packaged food; he has strong feelings about politics.

Identify the ways that that separation changed how the two of you now communicate.

education and communication systems; health, transportation, and government systems; and economic systems. Think of culture as everything you would need to know and do so as not to stand out as a "stranger" in a foreign land. Culture is not a genetic trait. All these cultural elements are learned through interaction with others in the culture.

This understanding of the concept of culture is common in popular literature and media in reference to national sources of identity. Thus people commonly think of national citizenship as one's culture. Yet clearly within nations there are small groups that have continuity and that function as cultures in the sense that they regulate human behavior and provide important parts of identity. The terms *subculture*, *co-culture*, *subgroup*, *counterculture*, *microculture*, and *community* have been used to identify these groups. Each group has critical implications for its members' identities.

Subculture

Complex societies are made up of a large number of groups with which people identify and from which are derived distinctive values and rules for behavior. These groups have been labeled *subcultures*. Perhaps a hundred years ago, the term was applied to human groups with shared cultural features that distinguish the group from the wider society. A **subculture** resembles a culture in that it usually encompasses a relatively large number of people and represents the accumulation of generations of human striving. However, subcultures have some important differences. They exist within dominant cultures and are often based on geographic region, ethnicity, or economic or social class.

Ethnicity

As you read earlier, the term *ethnicity* refers to a group of people of the same descent and heritage who share a common and distinctive culture passed on through generations. Ethnic groups can exhibit such distinguishing features as language or accent, physical features, family names, customs, and religion. **Ethnic identity** refers to identification with and perceived acceptance into a group with shared heritage and culture (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Sometimes, the word *minority* is used. Technically, of course, the word *minority* is used to describe numerical designations. A group might be a minority, then, if it has a smaller number of people than a majority group with a larger number. In the United States, the word *majority* has political associations, as in the *majority rules*, a term used so commonly in the United States that the two words have almost become synonymous. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term *minority* was first used to describe ethnic groups in 1921. Since that time, advantage has been associated with the majority, and disadvantage has been associated with the minority.

Just as definitions of words such as *culture* have changed, the way words are written has changed. There has been considerable controversy surrounding whether terms such as *Italian-American* should be spelled open or hyphenated. It has been argued that immigrants to the United States and their descendants have been called "hyphenated Americans," suggesting that their allegiance is divided. Style manuals

such as the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th edition, suggest omitting the hyphen. In this text, the term *African-American* is used for American Black persons of African descent while *Black* is used for peoples of any national identification. However, when reporting published studies, we adhere to the identifications reported by researchers.

That ethnic identity can be the basis of a cultural identity and affect communication with others outside that group has been demonstrated by Taylor, Dubé, and Bellerose (1986). In one study of English and French speakers in Quebec, they found that though interactions between ethnically dissimilar people were perceived to be as agreeable as those between similar people, those same encounters were judged less important and less intimate. The researchers concluded that to ensure that interethnic contacts were harmonious, the communicators in their study limited the interactions to relatively superficial encounters.

Co-Culture

Whereas some define *subculture* as meaning "a part of the whole," in the same sense that a subdivision is part of—but no less important than—the whole city, other scholars reject the use of the prefix *sub* as applied to the term *culture* because it seems to imply being under or beneath and being inferior or secondary. As an alternative, the word **co-culture** is suggested to convey the idea that no one culture is inherently superior to other coexisting cultures (Orbe, 1998).

However, mutuality may not be easily established. Take the case of a homogeneous culture. One of the many elements of a culture is its system of laws. The system of laws in our hypothetical homogeneous culture, then, was derived from and reflects the values of that culture. Now assume immigration of another cultural group into the hypothetical culture. New immigrants may have different understandings of legal theory and the rights and responsibilities that individuals should have in a legal system. In the case of a true co-culture, both understandings of the law would be recognized.

See Focus on Culture 1.3 for a discussion of New Zealand struggling with the concept of co-culture.

American Indians

The Census Bureau uses the term *American Indian*. That term is derived from a colonizer's worldview—that is, Columbus thought he was going to India—and the land was named for another Italian navigator. It is a label applied to people by someone other than themselves. During the civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the term *Native American* came into common use as it was considered to represent historical facts more accurately ("native" predated European colonization). Yet that term as well is a label applied by outsiders and for some has the pejorative meaning from the colonial era of "primitive."

To use the labels that people apply to themselves would be to use labels such as *Cherokee*, *Seminole*, and *Navajo*. However, in many cases, these labels are actually derived from names created by the groups' neighbors or enemies. *Mohawk* is a Narragansett name meaning "flesh eaters." *Sioux* is a French corruption of an Anishinabe word for "enemy."

Focus on Culture 1.3

Hannah Peters/Getty Images News/Getty Images

Map 1.2 New Zealand

The original inhabitants of what is today known as New Zealand were Polynesians who arrived in a series of migrations more than 1,000 years ago. The original inhabitants' societies revolved around the *iwi* (tribe) or *hapū* (subtribe), which served to differentiate the many tribes of peoples. In 1769, Captain James Cook claimed the entire land for the British Crown. It was only after the arrival of the Europeans that the term *Māori* was used to describe all the tribes on the land. Those labeled Māori do not necessarily regard themselves as a single people.

The history of the Māori parallels the decline of other indigenous peoples in colonized lands, except for the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 by more than 500 chiefs. The treaty was recorded in Māori and in English. The Māori and the English may have had different understandings of the terms *governance* and *sovereignty.* In exchange for granting sovereignty to Great Britain, the Māori were promised full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their lands, forests, fisheries, and other properties and the same rights and privileges enjoyed by British subjects. The terms of the treaty were largely ignored as Māori land was appropriated as settlers arrived.

Activism in the late 1960s brought a renaissance of Māori languages, literature, arts, and culture, and calls to address Māori land claims as the Treaty of Waitangi became the focus of grievances.

New Zealand's population by descent is approximately 14% Māori and 71% Pākehā (European). New Zealand is governed under a parliamentary democracy system with two separate electoral rolls: one for the election of general members of parliament and one for the election of a small number of Māori members of parliament. Pākehā can enroll on the general roll only; people who consider themselves Māori must choose which one of the two rolls they wish to be on.

(*Continued*)

Navajo is from the Spanish version of a Tewa word. A survey reported in 1997 showed that 96% of high school and college youth with American Indian or Native American heritage identified themselves with the nation name (e.g., *Cherokee*, *Seminole*).

In Canada, the term *Indian* is generally considered offensive. The term *First Nations* is now the preferred term. At the United Nations, the term *indigenous peoples* was first used in documents in 2002. Objections to this term include that it puts all peoples under one label.

In a 1977 resolution, the National Congress of American Indians and the National Tribal Chairmen's Association stated that in the absence of a specific tribal designation, the preferred term is *American Indian* and/or *Alaska Native*. In a 1995 survey, 50% preferred the term *American Indian* to 37% for *Native American*. Some activists such as Russell Means publicly are said to prefer *American Indian* to *Native American* ("People Labels," 1995, p. 28). In the belief that people should be referred to by the term they prefer, this text uses the label of specific nations or, when referring to all nations within the United States, the term *American Indian*.

Can one nation have two legal systems? Can two legal systems coexist equally? Some 573 distinct nations exist by treaty within the territorial limits of the United States. One is the federal government in Washington, D.C. The remaining 572 are American Indian nations recognized by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs that enjoy some areas of complete sovereignty and some areas of limited sovereignty. By treaty, the American Indian nations have their own territory, governmental structure, and laws; collect their own taxes; and are protected by U.S. federal law in the practice of their culture and religion (Dudley & Agard, 1993). The American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 proclaimed "to protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right to believe, express and exercise the traditional religions."

Tribal sovereignty refers to the ability of tribes to govern themselves (Pevar, 2012). The U.S. Constitution gives Congress rather than the states exclusive authority over American Indian affairs. The 1832 Supreme Court decision in *Worcester v. Georgia* ruled that the state could not impose its laws on a Cherokee Indian reservation. In modern times, it is the issue of gaming that has further defined the relationship between tribes and the state and federal governments. A 1987 Supreme Court decision in *California v. Cabazon Band of Mission Indians* ruled that the state has no authority to regulate tribal gaming if the state otherwise allows any form of gaming. The following year, Congress

adopted the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, which requires states to negotiate gaming compacts with tribes who wish to establish gaming operations. The states and tribes are to negotiate as distinct sovereigns, thus acknowledging shared sovereignty while retaining the authority to legislate all matters for the tribes including the form of government (*United States v. Wheeler*, 1978).

When nations adopt one system of laws, that system reflects the cultural values of one culture. But when one is surrounded by a more powerful culture or exists within the culture of the other, the less powerful culture must accept the laws and legal system of the other, thus subordinating any other understanding of legal systems. At least in this one way, the groups are not mutually powerful. The case of American Indians supports the argument that the term *co-culture* does not accurately reflect reality in the United States. Just as the term *subculture* has undesired consequences, so too does *co-culture*. In an attempt to avoid misunderstandings, this text avoids using either word.

Subgroup and Counterculture

In the past, some used the term *subculture* to refer to groups that in some way deviate from the dominant societal standard (Hebdige, 1979). While members of subcultures present themselves differently than the larger culture, they still function and abide by its rules. The term **counterculture** was more typically used to refer to groups that actively go against mainstream culture. To avoid confusing groups based on geographic region, ethnicity, and economic or social class with groups based on occupations and interests, the term **subgroup** was sometimes used to refer to these groups.

Psychologists have long recognized that subgroups, or membership groups, have an important influence on the values and attitudes people hold. Like cultures, subgroups provide members with relatively complete sets of values and patterns of behavior, and in many ways pose similar communication problems as cultures. Subgroups exist within a dominant culture and are dependent on that culture. One important subgroup category is occupation. Think of large organizations and of occupations in which most people dress alike, share a common vocabulary and similar values, and are in frequent communication, as through magazines and Twitter. These subgroups include nurses and doctors, police officers, and employees of large organizations such as Microsoft.

Subgroups usually do not involve the same large number of people as cultures and are not necessarily thought of as accumulating values and patterns of behavior over generations in the same way cultures do.

The term *subgroup* has at times been negatively linked to the word *deviant*. Actually, however, *deviant* simply means differing from the cultural norm, such as vegetarians in a meat-eating society. Unfortunately, in normal discourse, most people associate deviance with undesirable activities. To understand what is meant by subgroups, you must recognize that vegetarians are as deviant as prostitutes—both groups deviate from the norm, and both are considered subgroups.

Membership in some subgroups is temporary; that is, members may participate for a time and later become inactive or separate from it altogether. For example, there are organizations devoted to Ford cars and trucks. Some people are preoccupied with that for a while and then lose interest and relinquish membership in the group. Membership in other subgroups may be longer lasting. One person may be a firefighter for life and another gay.

However, it is a mistake to think of membership in a culture or subgroup as being so exclusive that it precludes participation in other groups. All of us are and have been members of a variety of subgroups. Think of times in your life when you were preoccupied with the concerns of a certain group. At those times, you were a subgroup member. Examples range from Girl Scouts to Alcoholics Anonymous to youth gangs to religious cults to the military.

Recognize, too, that individuals can adhere to values and attitudes and behaviors of groups of which they are not members. The term **reference group** refers to any group in which one aspires to attain membership (Sherif & Sherif, 1953). This behavior is identified in contemporary slang as the *wannabe*, an individual who imitates the behavior of a group he or she desires to belong to. Some people dress like and talk like gang members but are not members of any gang.

Just as each of us has a cultural identity and one or more subcultural identities, we may also have a subgroup identity. While that group membership may be short-lived, it can, for a while, provide some symbols, rituals, values, and myths that we acknowledge and share with others.

Microculture and Community

We've seen that some believe the term *subculture* implies "less important." Others point out that *co-culture* doesn't seem to be a realistic term as history suggests that one culture will be dominant over the other. The term *subgroup* seems also to imply "not important." Others now advocate using the term *microculture*, which in biology refers to a small culture of microorganisms. Applied to human behavior, **microculture** refers to any identifiable smaller group bound together by a shared symbol system, behaviors, and values. *Microculture*, then, clearly communicates a smaller size, but national cultures can be large while others are so small that they may be smaller than some microcultures.

Popular media today more commonly use the term *community* for what was defined earlier as a subculture, subgroup, or counterculture. While the term *community* may not be commonly used in academic literature, it has an important advantage. The effects

on identity of labels matter. The terms *subculture*, *subgroup*, and *counterculture* all carry negative connotations. Therefore, this text recommends and only uses the terms *culture* and *community*.

Let's now begin to address the statement from the beginning of this chapter that "culture and communication can only be understood together."

Communication

From the perspective of the study of cultures, **communication** has two critical functions:

- Communication is the means by which individuals learn appropriate behaviors and the means by which those behaviors are regulated.

- Communication is the means by which individuals having one group identity interact with individuals with other group identities and on a more general level the means by which the groups interact with one another as formal groups.

As we saw earlier, the history of human interactions between groups has been fraught with suffering and death. Can there be a more critical time to study intercultural communication?

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to developing an understanding of communication. Our purpose is not to highlight any one definition or model of communication. Rather, the purpose here is to develop an understanding of how communication is defined and performed differently by diverse cultures.

Cultural Definitions of Communication

It has often been said that communication and culture are inseparable. As Alfred G. Smith (1966) wrote in his preface to *Communication and Culture*, culture is a code we learn and share, and learning and sharing require communication. Communication requires coding and symbols that must be learned and shared. Godwin C. Chu (1977) observed that every cultural pattern and every single act of social behavior involves communication. To be understood, the two must be studied together. Culture cannot be known without a study of communication, and communication can only be understood with an understanding of the culture it supports.

Confucian Perspectives on Communication

That cultures define communication in diverse ways demonstrates that communication is an element of culture (Krippendorff, 1993). Definitions of communication from many Asian countries stress harmony (Chen & Starosta, 1996). This is most notable in cultures with a strong Confucian tradition. Societies heavily influenced today by Confucian history or tradition are China, North and South Korea, Singapore, and many East Asian countries with large Chinese communities.

The Chinese scholar K'ungFutzu, a title the Jesuits later Latinized as Confucius (550–478 BCE[1]), lived in a time when the feudal system in China was collapsing. Confucius proposed a government based less on heredity than on morality and merit.

Confucius set up an ethical-moral system intended ideally to govern all relationships in the family, community, and state. Confucius taught that society was made up of five relationships: those between ruler and subjects (the relation of righteousness), husband and wife (chaste conduct), father and son (love), elder brother and younger brother (order), and friend and friend (faithfulness). Three of these five bases of relations occur within the family. The regulating factors in family relationships are extended to the whole community and state. The chief virtue is filial piety, a combination of loyalty and reverence, which demands that the son honor and respect his father and fulfill the demands of his elders.

Confucianism emphasizes virtue, selflessness, duty, patriotism, hard work, and respect for hierarchy, both familial and societal. Just as George Washington and the story

Map 1.3 Countries in Asia With Strong Confucian Influences

of the cherry tree is used in the United States to teach the value of honesty, Confucianism reinforces its lessons with stories about people who represent particular virtues. For example, Chinese children learn about such heroes as Mulan, a woman of the 6th century who disguised herself as a man and served 12 years as a soldier so that her ill father would not be disgraced or punished because he could not report for military duty. Mulan teaches courage and filial devotion.

Confucianism guides social relationships: It can be said that one should seek to live in harmony with the universe and with one's fellow man through proper behavior. Confucianism considers balance and harmony in human relationships to be the basis of society. June Yum (1988) describes five effects that Confucianism has on interpersonal communication:

1. *Particularism.* There is no universal pattern of rules governing relationships: No rules govern interaction with someone whose status is unknown. Instead of applying the same rule to everyone, such factors as status, intimacy, and context create different communication rules for diverse people. In fact, there are several patterns guiding interaction with others whose status is known. In the Confucian countries of North and South Korea, it's quite common for strangers to find out each other's age in the first few minutes of conversation and adjust their language to show respect. Koreans are friends (*chingu*) only with those whose age is within a few years of their own. If a male acquaintance is older than this "friendship age range," he must be addressed as *adjussi*, or if it is a female acquaintance, as *adjumoni*—terms that equate roughly to "uncle" and "aunt," respectively.

2. *Role of intermediaries.* Rituals should be followed in establishing relationships. In China, it's not unusual to use a third party to negotiate with future in-laws about wedding plans and, in general, to use a third party to avoid direct confrontations and resolve disputes (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998).

3. *Reciprocity.* Complementary obligations are the basis of relationships. Gratitude and indebtedness are important parts of Chinese culture. For example, a person feels uneasy to be indebted to someone, and payback is necessary to achieve balance in the relationship. Reciprocity is the basic rule of interpersonal relationships (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). Obligations in relationships are contrary to Western ideas of individualism.

4. *In-group/out-group distinction.* Scollon and Scollon (1991) argue that the distinction between inside and outside influences every aspect of Chinese culture. In-group members engage in freer and deeper talk and may find it difficult to develop personal relationships with out-group members (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). There can even be different language codes for in-group members.

5. *Overlap of personal and public relationships.* Business and pleasure are mixed. Frequent contacts lead to common experiences. This contrasts with Western patterns of keeping public and private lives separate. There are several Chinese terms for the English word *communication*, including *jiao liu*

(to exchange), *chuan bo* (to disseminate), and *gou tong* (to connect among people). The Chinese term *he* denotes harmony, peace, unity, and kindness. Seeking harmony with family and others is the goal of communication in Chinese culture (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998).

As a consequence of the value placed on balance and social harmony, Chang and Holt (1991) explain how the Chinese have developed many verbal strategies such as compliments, greeting rituals, and so on to maintain good interpersonal relations. Fong (2000), for example, has described the "luck talk" (speech acts related to luck) during the celebration of the Chinese New Year.

Korea adopted Confucianism as a state religion for six centuries. Yum (1987) explains how the Korean language easily accommodates the Confucian rules of relationships. For example, a grammatical form of direct address, called an **honorific**, shows respect. English speakers might vary in how they ask a child, a friend, or a grandparent "to sit" by using a sentence, whereas Korean speakers would use different forms of the root *ahnta*, meaning "to sit or to take a seat":

- To a child, younger person, or person of lower rank: *ahnjo* or *ahnjara* (informal)

- To a friend or person of equal rank: *ahnjuseyo* (polite)

- To an elder, person of higher rank, or honored person: *ahnjushipshio* (more polite)

Korean has special vocabularies for each sex, for different degrees of social status and degrees of intimacy, and for formal occasions. When two people are introduced, they first engage in small talk to determine each other's social position so they know who should use common language and who should use honorific language. And ironically, because Confucianism does not consider relationships with strangers, Koreans are said to ignore—often to the point that some in other cultures would consider rude—anyone to whom they have not been introduced.

In modern Korea, a generation gap exists: Junior business associates may address seniors with familiar rather than honorific language. The collectivist values of Confucianism mandate a style of communication in which respecting the relationship through communication is more important than the information exchanged. Group harmony, avoidance of loss of face to others and oneself, and a modest presentation of oneself are means of respecting the relationship. One does not say what one actually thinks when it might hurt others in the group.

In some sense, the same ethic can be found in business dealings. Much of commercial life in China is lubricated by *guanxi*, a concept best translated as "connections" or "personal relationships." *Guanxi* is an alternative to the legal trappings of Western capitalism in that business is cemented by the informal relationships of trust and mutual obligation. Sometimes viewed as bribery, *guanxi* is less like using professional lobbyists than relying on mutual friends among whom trust can be maintained.

A Confucian perspective on communication would define it as an infinite interpretive process in which all parties are searching to develop and maintain a social relationship. Carey (1989) describes this as a ritual model of communication that "is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of

society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs" (p. 18).

Western Perspectives on Communication

The study of communication in Western culture has a recorded history of some 2,500 years and is said to have begun in Greece with Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, which describe the process of communication as involving a speaker, the speech act, an audience, and a purpose. To demonstrate how a communication theory reflects Western culture, let's review one well-known theory made popular by David Berlo's (1960) *The Process of Communication.* There are many other models available, but we will use this one to highlight the components of communication and how communication models themselves reflect the culture within which they were developed.

Berlo was interested in using communication to solve problems such as finding more effective ways of communicating new agricultural technologies to farmers and communicating health information to the peoples of developing countries. He drew from engineering to conceptualize communication as a process of transmitting ideas to influence others to achieve the communicator's goals. Even though Berlo emphasized that communication is a dynamic process, as the variables in the process are interrelated and influence each other, overall his conceptualization of communication can be labeled

Figure 1.1 Ten Components of Communication
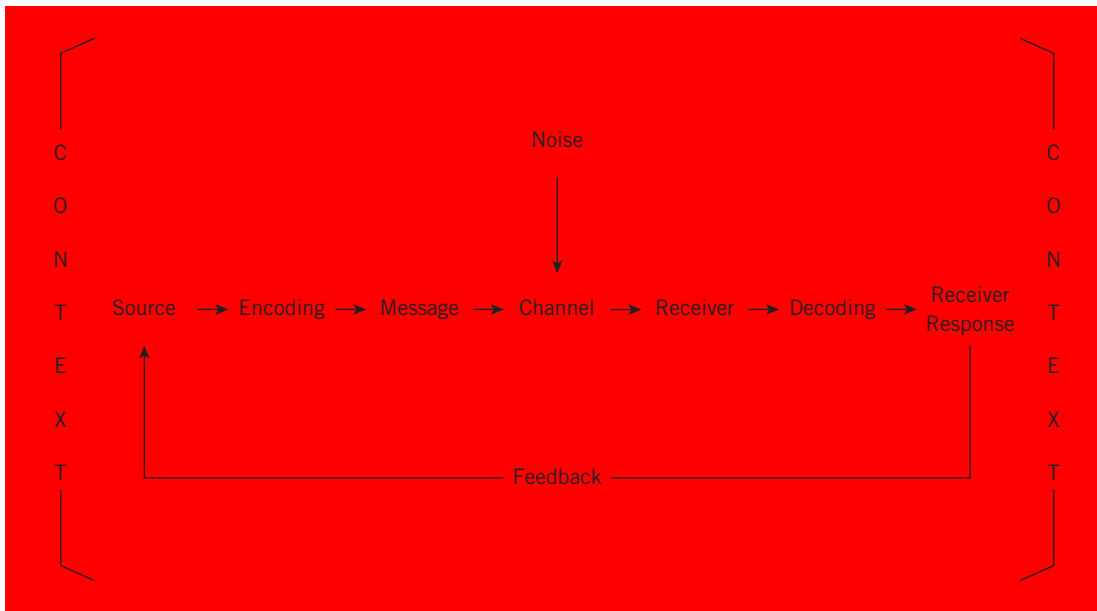
machinelike or mechanistic. Communication was conceptualized as one-way, top-down, and suited for the transmission media of print, telephones, radio, and television.

Components of Communication. Because the transmission models of communication clearly identify components in the communication process, they are particularly useful in beginning a study of communication. You are better able to understand communication when you understand the components of the process (DeVito, 1986). The components of communication, shown in Figure 1.1, are source, encoding, message, channel, noise, receiver, decoding, receiver response, feedback, and context.

Source. The **source** is the person with an idea she or he desires to communicate. Examples are CBS, the White House, your instructor, and your mother.

Encoding. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), humans cannot share thoughts directly. Your communication is in the form of a symbol representing the idea you desire to communicate. **Encoding** is the process of putting an idea into a symbol. The symbols into which you encode your thoughts vary. You can encode thoughts into words, and you also can encode thoughts into nonspoken symbols. Tobin and Dobard (1999), for example, have shown how messages were encoded in quilts made by slaves.

Message. The term **message** identifies the encoded thought. Encoding is the process, the verb; the message is the resulting object.

Channel. The term **channel** is used technically to refer to the means by which the encoded message is transmitted. Today, you might feel more comfortable using the word *media.* The channel or medium, then, may be print, electronic, or the light and sound waves of face-to-face communication.

Noise. The term **noise** technically refers to anything that distorts the message the source encodes. Noise can take many forms:

- External noise can be the sights, sounds, and other stimuli that draw your attention away from the message.

- Internal noise refers to your thoughts and feelings that can interfere with the message.

- Semantic noise refers to how alternative meanings of the source's message symbols can be distracting.

Receiver. The **receiver** is the person who attends to the message. Receivers may be intentional—that is, they may be the people the source desired to communicate with— or they may be any person who comes upon and attends to the message.

Decoding. **Decoding** is the opposite of encoding and just as much an active process. The receiver is actively involved in the communication process by assigning meaning to the symbols received.

Receiver Response. **Receiver response** refers to anything the receiver does after having attended to and decoded the message. That response can range from doing nothing to taking some action or actions that may or may not be the action desired by the source.

Feedback. **Feedback** refers to that portion of the receiver response of which the source has knowledge and to which the source attends and assigns meaning. You as a reader of this text may have many responses, but only when you respond to a survey or send an e-mail to the author does feedback occur. Feedback makes communication a two-way or interactive process.

Context. The final component of communication is **context**. Generally, context can be defined as the environment in which the communication takes place and helps define the communication. If you know the physical context, you can predict with a high degree of accuracy much of the communication. For example, you have certain knowledge and expectations of the communication that occurs within synagogues, mosques, and churches. At times, you intentionally plan a certain physical environment for your communication: You may want to locate your romantic communications in a quiet, dimly lit restaurant or on a secluded beach. The choice of the environment, the context, helps assign the desired meaning to the communicated words.

In social relationships, the relationship between the source and receiver may help define much of the meaning of the communication. Again, if you know the context, you can predict with a high degree of accuracy much of the communication. For example, knowing that a person is being stopped by a police officer for speeding is enough to predict much of the communication. Certain things are likely to be said and done; other things are very unlikely.

Culture is also context. Every culture has its own worldview; its own way of thinking of activity, time, and human nature; its own way of perceiving self; and its own system of social organization. Knowing each of these helps you assign meaning to the symbols.

Not everyone agreed with the Berlo (1960) model. For example, semanticist S. I. Hayakawa (1978) noted that decoding—or listening—seems to give the receiver a subordinate role to the source. When someone speaks, others stop what they are doing to listen. Therefore, it would seem that the source is viewed as more active and as more important in the process. Hayakawa's observation makes it clear that cultural beliefs affect how the process of communication is defined.

The Berlo model can lead you to think of communication as consisting of an active source and a passive receiver. Speaking may be considered a more noble activity and may demand that others cease other activities to listen. Indeed, in many cultures, listening does place one in a subordinate role to that of the source. In other cultures, where the group's history and knowledge are told and retold verbally, the role of the listener who accurately remembers is critical. The story is told that the Puritans, believing themselves to have been called to save heathens, preached to the American Indians. The Indians affirmed conversions to Christianity to the delight of the early settlers. Then the Indians told the Puritans the Indian story of creation and asked the settlers to affirm it. The Indian communication style was not to disagree but to listen and affirm. The Puritans were disappointed that communication, in the Western understanding of communication, had failed. In the American Indian understanding of communication, it had not.

Linear and interactive models seem to suggest that communication is an isolated single discrete act independent of events that precede or follow it. Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM) (Pearce & Cronen, 1980) views communication as a social process, rather than a tool, in which individuals achieve some degree of mutual understanding and act together to achieve mutual goals. CMM emphasizes patterns of interaction rather than a single communication act and recognizes that interacting parties have influence on each other.

In interactions with others, we assign meanings to others' communication based on past experiences and past cultural learning. Through continued communication, we create a new shared social reality. In intercultural interactions, communicators seek a cultural independent way of achieving mutual understanding.

The Media of Intercultural Communication

One component of the communication process is the channel, or medium, by which the encoded message is transmitted. In past centuries, written letters carried by human couriers were the dominant media. In the Roman Empire of the 1st century BCE,

letters and books were copied and distributed among friends that could reach Britain in 5 weeks and Syria in 7 weeks (Standage, 2013). In the 20th century, electronic mass media became dominant. Through today's social media, communicators create online communities to instantly share messages and images. The focus in this text is not on the form of media use but rather on how culture is reflected in media use.

Human Couriers and Intermediaries

One early form of intercultural communication still in widespread use today is human couriers. Another person can be used as a medium. You can easily imagine messages being entrusted to a courier to deliver to a faraway village.

In some cultures, intermediaries are used instead of face-to-face confrontation to reduce the risk of losing face or the value or standing one has in the eyes of others. Ting-Toomey (1985) has proposed that cultures like the United States with a greater concern for privacy and autonomy tend to use direct-face negotiation and express more self-face maintenance, whereas cultures such as China with a greater concern for interdependence and inclusion tend to use indirect-face negotiation and express more mutual-face and other-face maintenance. In a study conducted in central China, Ringo Ma (1992) confirmed that a friend or respected elder intervenes in interpersonal conflict situations, serving as a message carrier.

Telephone

It is estimated that as of 2017 there were 984 million land line telephones—a reduction from over 1 billion in earlier years. Alexander Graham Bell expected the telephone to be more of a broadcasting medium, more like what radio would become. Well into the 20th century, telephone executives believed the telephone was primarily a medium for business and actually discouraged "socializing" by telephone.

Using the telephone in intercultural interactions has the barriers of the lack of contextual cues other than those related to voice. For this reason, it may be the conversation openings that are significant in establishing the first impression from which the relationship develops. An opening sequence that violates a cultural expectation may lead the parties to develop negative views and attitudes toward each other (Pavlidou, 2006). Later language misunderstandings, such as the meanings of certain words, idioms, and humor, can exacerbate the problem.

What is commonly called a cell phone in the United States is called a mobile in the United Kingdom, cellular in Latin America, *keitai* (portable) in Japan, *shou-ji* (hand machine) in China, *nalle* (teddy bear) in Sweden, *Pelephone* (wonder phone) in Israel, and *handy* in Germany. Smartphones with Internet access and apps are common worldwide. By whatever name, the estimated number of mobile phones in 2017 was 7.8 billion— more than the world's population (see Figure 1.2). Many emerging and developing countries simply skipped developing land line capacity. Because the United States relied heavily on land lines, mobile phone adoption was slower in the United States than in other countries. In Africa and Asia, where land lines were not as common, and in Europe, where mobile phone service is less expensive than land lines, mobile phone adoption was faster (Ling, 2005). In 2005, for example, 95% of European teenagers had mobile phones while 45% of U.S. teenagers did (Ling & Baron, 2007).

Figure 1.2   Land Line and Mobile Phones in Use, 2017

A. Landline and Mobile Phones in Use

Country	Landlines	Mobile Phones
Indonesia	22.39	338.43
India	25.52	1,011.05
Russia	36.52	227.29
Brazil	43.68	257.81
Japan	63.63	158.59
United States	121.99	382.31
China	231.00	1,305.74

Number in Millions

Landlines   Mobile Phones

B. Landline and Mobile Phones in Use, Percentage Penetration

Country	Landlines	Mobile Phones
India	2%	79.8%
Indonesia	8.7%	131%
China	16.8%	95.1%
Brazil	21.2%	125.3%
Russia	25.7%	159.7%
United States	37.7%	118%
Japan	50.2%	125.2%

Percentage Penetration*

Landlines   Mobile Phones

Source: Central Intelligence Agency (2020).

*Penetration is the percentage of the total population.

Text messaging is the more commonly used term in North America, the United Kingdom, and the Philippines for what other countries are more likely to refer to as Short Message Service (SMS). Shuter and Chattopadhyay (2010) compared texting in the United States and India and found a definite relationship to each culture's norms. For example, consider where texting is done. Consistently, people in the United States are more likely to send and read messages in public social settings like restaurants, shops, and movie theaters. Perhaps because of the area where texting is done, people in the United States text when they are with strangers and acquaintances or friends but much less with family members. Indians text when they are with family members or boyfriends or girlfriends. People in the United States are more likely to consider it impolite to text in a classroom, in a movie theater, at dinner, and while conversing with others, especially with loud text alerts. Indians are more likely to find as impolite swearing in texts. Shuter and Chattopadhyay conclude that the social use of texting is guided by forces deeply embedded in each culture.

Yoojung Kim, Dongyoung Sohn, and Sejung Choi (2011) compared U.S. and Korean college student SMS use and found clear cultural connections. In both countries, the reasons for using SMS were the same: seeking friends, social support, information, entertainment, and convenience. The difference was that, for students in the United States, socially close others (e.g., family members, close friends) were only a minor part of their online social networks, while families and close friends were 70% of the Koreans' networks. The researchers conclude that students in the United States tend to focus more on entertaining themselves by making new friends through SMS, while Korean students tend to focus more on existing relationships with socially close others from whom they can acquire useful information and social support. Abeele and Roe (2011) found a similar pattern comparing Flemish and U.S. new college students. Flemish students were more likely to text and instant message precollege friends, while U.S. students were more likely to text and instant message new friends.

Internet

Since the mid-1990s, the Internet has grown to serve 4.19 billion users in every part of the world and has forever changed how we communicate. Figure 1.3 shows the 10 countries with the most Internet users.

There are more than 2.5 times the number of Internet users in China as in the United States. Slightly more than half of the world's population now has Internet access.

Language Use. The Internet originated in the English-speaking world. Computers are English-oriented. Early computer systems were limited to the characters in the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII), making, for example, texts transmitted unaltered from francophone keyboards appear as garbage on English-favoring keyboards; Netscape and Java are in English; search engines were developed in and for English. At its origin, the language of the Internet was English. But as Figure 1.3 shows, the Internet is now truly worldwide. That suggests two questions:

- Will the Internet encourage the worldwide dominance of English? Will the Internet, then, become a major force blending the world's population together?

Figure 1.3   Internet and Facebook Users, 2019

Number of Users

United States	292,892,868					89.0
	240,000,000				72.9	
Japan	118,626,672					93.5
	71,000,000			55.9		
Russia	116,353,942				80.9	
13,100,000	9.1					
Brazil	149,057,635				70.7	
	139,000,000				65.9	
Mexico	88,000,000				66.5	
	79,000,000				59.7	
China	854,000,000				60.1	
1,800,000	0.1					
Indonesia	171,260,000				63.5	
	130,000,000			48.2		
Nigeria	123,486,615				61.4	
17,000,000	8.4					
Bangladesh	96,199,000				57.2	
	28,000,000	16.6				
India	560,000,000			40.9		
	300,000,000	21.9				

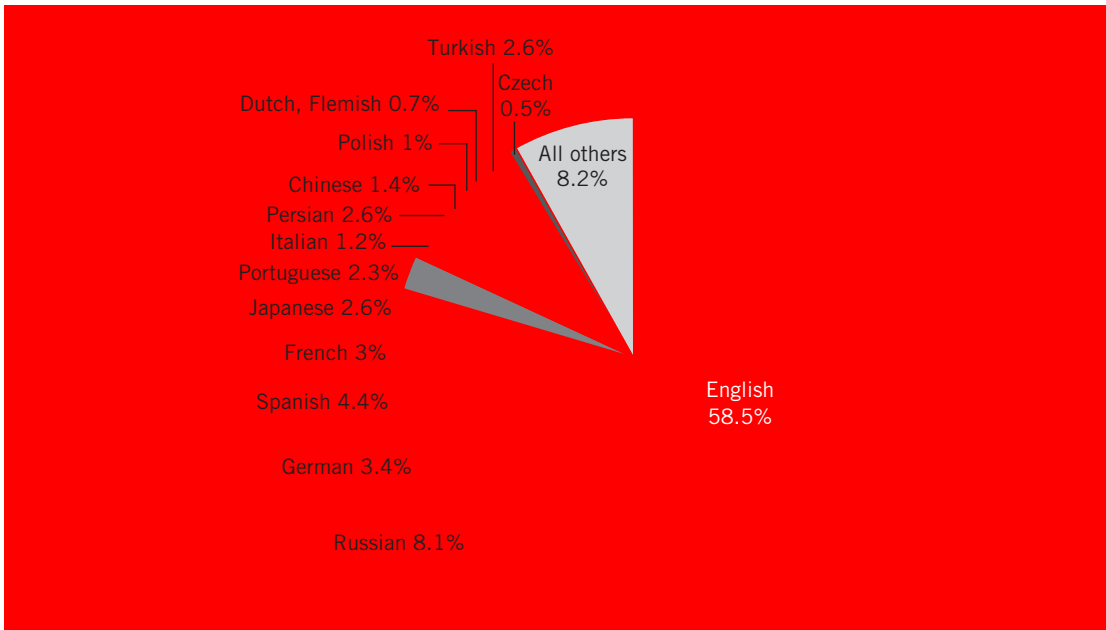0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Percentage Penetration

Facebook   Internet

Sources: Internet World Stats (2019).

- Will Internet users favor native languages, and over time will the dominance of English diminish? Will the divisions of language groups force the Internet to use other languages, perpetuating divisions based on existing language use lines?

Figure 1.4 Language of Internet Content, 2020

Turkish 2.6%

Czech 0.5%

Dutch, Flemish 0.7%

Polish 1%

All others 8.2%

Chinese 1.4%

Persian 2.6%

Italian 1.2%

Portuguese 2.3%

Japanese 2.6%

French 3%

English 58.5%

Spanish 4.4%

German 3.4%

Russian 8.1%

Source: Q-Success (2020).

Note: Percentages are current as of February 20, 2020.

We can't fully answer these questions by examining the language abilities of Internet users. There are more Internet users worldwide who can speak and read English than there are Internet users in predominantly English-speaking countries. While these multilingual users might be able to use English, they might also prefer to use their first language. Figure 1.4 shows the percentages of websites using various content languages as of early 2020.

Perhaps the answer to the questions above is yes: At least in the immediate future, English may continue to be the dominant language on the Internet, but at the same time, technology is supporting the use of local languages worldwide. Additionally, translation technology will make it possible for everyone to use any preferred language and be understood by anyone. Google Translate provides text translations for over 100 languages, including Chinese characters. Translations also are built into the Chrome web browser.

Design Elements. As you can see in the model of communication presented earlier, communication symbols can be verbal and nonverbal. While translation technology may deal to some extent with the verbal symbols, there remain the nonverbal. Research has

demonstrated that culture is reflected in the nonverbal aspects of the Internet. Singh, Zhao, and Hu (2003) assert that "the web is not a culturally neutral medium," because websites contain unique design elements that give "country-specific websites a look and feel unique to the local culture" (p. 63). Design elements include different icons, colors, and site structures (Barber & Badre, 1998). Schmid-Isler (2000) compared Western and Chinese Internet news sites and found that their layout is different. She contended that this difference is related to culturally influenced perceptions of information storage and display. For example, Google has clean lines and uncluttered "negative space." Chinese web users are accustomed to pop-ups and floating banner ads. Chinese webpages are "packed with information and multimedia graphics, requir[ing] many scroll-downs to see the whole page" (Clark, 2016, p. 166). In contrast, Google seems static and dull to Chinese web users.

Social Media

The term *social media* is used to describe a variety of Internet-based platforms, applications, and technologies, such as Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, and Twitter, that enable people to socially interact with one another online (see Figure 1.3 for Facebook use worldwide). While Facebook has over 2 billion users, it is not alone (see Figure 1.5 for leading social networks).

Social media use does not necessarily correlate with Internet and smartphone use. Social media use is in the Middle East at 68% and in Latin America at 59%, which compares to 55% in 10 developed European countries. Germany has only 40% social media use; Japan has only 39% (Poushter, Bishop, & Chwe, 2018).

Facebook offers its free Internet service for mobile users in half the countries in Africa with a combined population of 635 million. As Facebook's service does not provide full access to all of the Internet, some have labeled it "digital colonialism."

African companies are launching local social media platforms (Essoungou, 2010; Kalan, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015b).

Many countries limit or censor the Internet and social media. Freedom House regularly surveys countries for Internet freedom defined as Internet access, freedom of expression, and privacy. Of 65 countries representing 87% of the world's Internet users in 2019, 15 were labeled as free, 29 as partly free, and the remaining 21 as not free. The report identified the greatest abuser as China followed by Iran, Syria, Cuba, and Vietnam. The countries with the greatest Internet freedom were Iceland, Estonia, Canada, Germany, and Australia (Shahbaz & Funk, 2019).

Mobile phone use on Japanese public transport.