

○ **HOLLIDAY, A., HYDE, M. & KULLMAN, J.,
INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION:
AN ADVANCED RESOURCE BOOK
FOR STUDENTS**

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Intercultural Communication: an advanced resource book for students is a welcome addition to the Routledge Applied Linguistics Series. This book provides a valuable update on key theories of intercultural communication and is intended to provide upper level undergraduate and post-graduate students undertaking advanced studies in applied linguistics with strategies and principles for effective communication, viewed as fundamentally intercultural.

Following the same structure as others in the series, *Intercultural Communication* is organised according to three main sections: Section A Introduction, defines key terms and concepts; Section B Extension, develops understanding of the concepts by connecting to the relevant literature; and Section C Exploration, invites application of understandings to a series of research tasks. Each section is organised through three themes drawn from intercultural communication. They are Identity, Othering, and Representation, and taken together, these themes provide an excellent organisational and conceptual framing for advanced students. Identity invites students from the outset to reflect on themselves as intercultural communicators and consider how their own identity is constructed and influential in daily interactions. Othering problematises issues of stereotyping and generalising, exploring how these processes are a primary cause in inhibiting effective engagement between people. Finally, Representation extends the perspective to a societal level, considering for example the influence of discourses and media in shaping culture and how people understand themselves and others. It is strength of the book that the themes are interrelated and the explanatory text throughout constantly draws connection back to the themes as fundamental concepts in *Intercultural Communication*. The style of interweaving sections and themes provides a rich pathway for advanced students through complex terrain and the integration of real-world examples, stories and anecdotes brings the ideas to life and gives a sense of relevance for the reader.

Conceptually, Section A commences with an explication of the concept of Essentialism and declares that this phenomenon needs to be challenged at every turn. This represents the core concern of the book and is a useful focus for readers as they explore the subsequent theme of Identity and consider how they both perceive others and are in turn perceived by them. The

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book also tackles key ideas such as prejudice, Culturalism, and Critical cosmopolitanism in the early section as a basis for later exploration.

Readers are supported in their understanding of the concepts throughout each section with the use of key phrases that capture the core of the idea e.g. 'What we project onto each other'. The sub-headings are followed by scenarios and anecdotes with accompanying deconstruction and analysis and further discussion of the initial concept. The subsection organisation successfully creates a dialogic experience for students, developing concepts and deepening understanding through regular invitations to pause, reflect and consider the meaning of these ideas for themselves.

At the end of Section A the key theories of Intercultural communication are synthesised into what is termed 'disciplines'. While the summary itself is useful and provides a valuable reference point for students moving into the next section, the nomenclature may be somewhat confusing for what appear to be principles more so than disciplines.

Section B extends discussion of the key concepts by drawing on literature related to intercultural communication. The initial subsection traces understandings that underpin the field, focussing in particular on the concept of Culture. Extracts from the literature over time are used to demonstrate how previous views have led to contemporary understandings. The next subsection focuses on the concept of Identity, considering the relationship between self and social context in the shaping of identity. This section includes discussion of the power of discourse and language in reflecting, shaping and negotiating identity from individual through to societal perspectives. The role of language learning as social, cultural and linguistic practice, and its role in constructing individual identity and identities of cultural groups, is discussed however briefly. Similarly, the treatment of intercultural communication in virtual spaces and communities could be further developed as these are increasingly challenging and rich sites for exploration (Scollon et al., 2012).

Section C positions students as creators of their own personal theory and understanding of intercultural communication. It is rich with connections to earlier sections in an attempt to revisit concepts with a view to real-world application and abstraction to one's own personal experiences and theories. There is potential in this section for students to draw connections with a range of sites of intercultural communication of importance to them individually. The design of this section, and indeed the whole resource, models the analytical skills and interpretive processes that have been espoused throughout. It encourages students to consolidate their understandings and develop their own methodology. The recognition and prominence given in this section to individual responsibility in all communication is valuable in advancing contemporary ideas in intercultural communication.

A real strength of the resource is the range of examples across cultures, gender and class. A further strength is the organisation and dialogic nature of the book that interweaves its

themes and constantly invites reader reflection. The Further Reading section is extensive and thoughtfully organised according to a range of fields and students' needs. A valuable addition to the text would be greater exploration of the role of language and the incorporation of examples of intercultural communication in various languages, and bilingual and multilingual interactions including instances of translanguaging (Garcia & Beardsmore, 2008; Kramsch, 2009). A minor point is that the book ends with a task related to miscommunication, and there is no cumulative task that captures students' meta-awareness on their understandings of the field.

Intercultural Communication: an advanced resource book for students more than adequately meets its aims of providing a comprehensive and up to date resource book for advanced study of this field. The book is an engaging, extensive and accessible multidisciplinary journey into intercultural communication.

REFERENCES

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