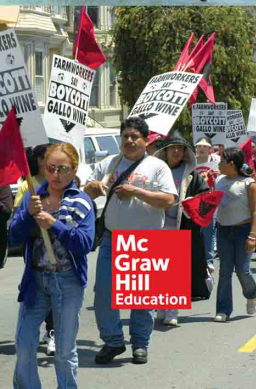


Sixth Edition

# EXPERIENCING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AN INTRODUCTION



Judith N. Martin  
Thomas K. Nakayama

**Mc  
Graw  
Hill**  
Education

Experiencing  
Intercultural  
Communication

*This page intentionally left blank*

# Experiencing Intercultural Communication

## *An Introduction*

Sixth Edition

---

Judith N. Martin

*Arizona State University*

Thomas K. Nakayama

*Northeastern University*





EXPERIENCING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: AN INTRODUCTION, SIXTH EDITION

Published by McGraw-Hill Education, 2 Penn Plaza, New York, NY 10121. Copyright © 2018 by McGraw-Hill Education. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. Previous editions © 2014 and 2011. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written consent of McGraw-Hill Education, including, but not limited to, in any network or other electronic storage or transmission, or broadcast for distance learning.

Some ancillaries, including electronic and print components, may not be available to customers outside the United States.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 LCR 21 20 19 18 17

ISBN 978-1-259-87056-9

MHID 1-259-87056-1

Chief Product Officer, SVP Products & Markets: *G. Scott Virkler*

Vice President, General Manager, Products & Markets: *Michael Ryan*

Vice President, Content Design & Delivery: *Betsy Whalen*

Managing Director: *David Patterson*

Brand Manager: *Penina Braffman*

Director, Product Development: *Meghan Campbell*

Product Developer: *Jamie Laferrera*

Marketing Manager: *Meredith Leo*

Director, Content Design & Delivery: *Terri Schiesl*

Program Manager: *Jennifer Shekleton*

Content Project Managers: *Lisa Bruflodt, Samantha Donisi-Hamm*

Buyer: *Laura M. Fuller*

Content Licensing Specialist: *DeAnna Dausener*

Cover Image: *Shutterstock/Nicolas Economou; Shutterstock/Tyler Olson; © McGraw-Hill Education/John Flournoy*

Compositor: *MPS Limited*

Printer: *LSC Communications*

All credits appearing on page or at the end of the book are considered to be an extension of the copyright page

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been requested from the Library of Congress.

The Internet addresses listed in the text were accurate at the time of publication. The inclusion of a website does not indicate an endorsement by the authors or McGraw-Hill Education, and McGraw-Hill Education does not guarantee the accuracy of the information presented at these sites.

[mheducation.com/highered](http://mheducation.com/highered)

# Brief Contents

Preface xv

## **Part I Foundations of Intercultural Communication**

- Chapter 1** Studying Intercultural Communication 1
- Chapter 2** Intercultural Communication 30
- Chapter 3** History and Intercultural Communication 69
- Chapter 4** Identity and Intercultural Communication 94

## **Part II Intercultural Communication Processes**

- Chapter 5** Verbal Issues in Intercultural Communication 134
- Chapter 6** Nonverbal Communication Issues 172

## **Part III Intercultural Communication in Everyday Life**

- Chapter 7** Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication 203
- Chapter 8** Culture, Communication, and Conflict 226
- Chapter 9** Intercultural Relationships in Everyday Life 254

## **Part IV Intercultural Communication in Applied Settings**

- Chapter 10** Intercultural Communication in Tourism Contexts 288
- Chapter 11** Intercultural Communication and Business 310
- Chapter 12** Intercultural Communication and Education 338
- Chapter 13** Intercultural Communication and Health Care 364

Glossary G-1

Index I-1

*This page intentionally left blank*

# Contents

**Preface xv**

## **Part I Foundations of Intercultural Communication**

### **Chapter 1 Studying Intercultural Communication 1**

- The Peace Imperative 4
- The Economic Imperative 6
  - The Workplace* 6
  - The Global Economy* 6
- The Technological Imperative 9
  - Technology and Human Communication* 9
- The Demographic Imperative 12
  - Changing U.S. Demographics* 12
  - Changing Immigration Patterns* 13
- The Self-Awareness Imperative 18
- The Ethical Imperative 19
  - Ethical Judgments and Cultural Values* 19
  - Becoming an Ethical Student of Culture* 21
- Summary 24
- Building Intercultural Skills 25
- Activities 26
- Endnotes 26

### **Chapter 2 Intercultural Communication 30**

- Building Block 1: Culture 32
  - Culture Is Learned* 33
  - Culture Involves Perception and Values* 33
  - Culture Involves Feelings* 35
  - Culture Is Shared* 35
  - Culture Is Expressed as Behavior* 37
  - Culture Is Dynamic and Heterogeneous* 37
- Building Block 2: Communication 39
- Culture and Communication 41



*Communication, Cultural Worldviews, and Values* 41  
*Communication and Cultural Rituals and Rules* 51  
*Communication and Resistance to the Dominant Culture* 52

Building Block 3: Context 53

Building Block 4: Power 54

Barriers to Intercultural Communication 56

*Ethnocentrism* 56

*Stereotyping* 57

*Prejudice* 59

*Discrimination* 62

Summary 64

Building Intercultural Skills 65

Activities 65

Endnotes 66

### **Chapter 3 History and Intercultural Communication 69**

From History to Histories 72

*Political, Intellectual, and Social Histories* 72

*Family Histories* 73

*National Histories* 74

*Cultural Group Histories* 75

*The Power of Other Histories* 76

History and Identity 77

*Histories as Stories* 77

*Nonmainstream Histories* 78

Intercultural Communication and History 86

*Historical Legacies* 88

Summary 90

Building Intercultural Skills 90

Activities 91

Endnotes 92

### **Chapter 4 Identity and Intercultural Communication 94**

Understanding Identity 95

*Identities Are Created through Communication* 96

*Identities Are Created in Spurts* 96

*Identities Are Multiple* 97

*Identities Are Influenced by Society* 97

<i>Identities Are Dynamic</i>	99
<i>Identities Are Developed in Different Ways in Different Cultures</i>	100
<b>Social and Cultural Identities</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Gender Identity</i>	101
<i>Sexual Identity</i>	102
<i>Age Identity</i>	103
<i>Racial and Ethnic Identity</i>	104
<i>Physical Ability Identity</i>	107
<i>Religious Identity</i>	108
<i>Class Identity</i>	110
<i>National Identity</i>	112
<i>Regional Identity</i>	113
<i>Personal Identity</i>	113
<b>Identity Development</b>	<b>114</b>
<i>Minority Identity Development</i>	114
<i>Majority Identity Development</i>	116
<i>Characteristics of Whiteness</i>	118
<b>Multicultural Identity</b>	<b>121</b>
<i>Multiracial People</i>	122
<i>Global Nomads</i>	123
<i>Identity and Adaptation</i>	124
<i>Living “On the Border”</i>	126
<i>Post-Ethnicity</i>	127
<b>Summary</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Building Intercultural Skills</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Activities</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>129</b>

## **Part II Intercultural Communication Processes**

### **Chapter 5 Verbal Issues in Intercultural Communication 134**

<b>The Study of Language</b>	<b>137</b>
<i>The Components of Language</i>	137
<i>Language and Perception</i>	140
<b>Cultural Variations in Language</b>	<b>142</b>
<i>Attitudes toward Speaking, Writing, and Silence</i>	142
<i>Variations in Communication Style</i>	145
<i>Influence of Interactive Media Use on Communication Style</i>	149

*Variations in Slang and Humor* 149  
*Variations in Contextual Rules* 150  
Communicating Across Differences 151  
Language and Power 153  
    *Language and Social Position* 153  
    *Assimilation Strategies* 154  
    *Accommodation Strategies* 155  
    *Separation Strategies* 157  
Moving between Languages 157  
    *Multilingualism* 157  
    *Translation and Interpretation* 161  
    *Language Politics and Policies* 164  
Summary 167  
Building Intercultural Skills 168  
Activities 169  
Endnotes 169

**Chapter 6 Nonverbal Communication Issues 172**

Defining Nonverbal Communication 173  
    *Comparing Verbal and Nonverbal Communication* 174  
    *What Nonverbal Behavior Communicates* 176  
Cultural Variations in Nonverbal Behavior 178  
    *Nonverbal Codes* 179  
    *Cultural Variation or Stereotype?* 189  
Defining Cultural Space 191  
    *Cultural Identity and Cultural Space* 192  
    *Changing Cultural Space* 196  
    *The Dynamic Nature of Cultural Spaces* 197  
Summary 198  
Building Intercultural Skills 199  
Activities 199  
Endnotes 200

**Part III Intercultural Communication in Everyday Life**

**Chapter 7 Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication 203**

Viewing Others Through Popular Culture 204  
What Is “Popular Culture”? 205

U.S. Popular Culture and Power	208
<i>Global Circulation of Images/Commodities</i>	209
<i>Popular Culture from Other Cultures</i>	210
<i>Cultural Imperialism</i>	211
Consuming and Resisting Popular Culture	213
<i>Consuming Popular Culture</i>	213
<i>Resisting Popular Culture</i>	216
Representing Cultural Groups	217
<i>Migrants' Perceptions of Mainstream Culture</i>	218
<i>Popular Culture and Stereotyping</i>	219
Summary	221
Building Intercultural Skills	222
Activities	223
Endnotes	223

## **Chapter 8 Culture, Communication, and Conflict 226**

Characteristics of Intercultural Conflict	229
<i>Ambiguity</i>	230
<i>Language Issues</i>	230
<i>Contradictory Conflict Styles</i>	231
Conflict Types and Contexts	231
<i>Types of Conflict</i>	231
<i>The Importance of Context</i>	232
Influences on Conflict Management	233
<i>Cultural Values Influences</i>	233
<i>Family Influences</i>	233
<i>Two Approaches to Conflict</i>	234
<i>Intercultural Conflict Styles</i>	236
<i>Gender, Ethnicity, and Conflict</i>	238
<i>Religion and Conflict</i>	238
Managing Intercultural Conflict	239
<i>Productive versus Destructive Conflict</i>	239
<i>Competitive versus Cooperative Conflict</i>	240
Understanding Conflict and Society	241
<i>Social and Economic Forces</i>	241
<i>Historical and Political Forces</i>	243
<i>Societal Responses to Conflict</i>	245

*Peacebuilding* 247  
*Forgiveness* 248  
Summary 249  
Building Intercultural Skills 250  
Activity 251  
Endnotes 251

**Chapter 9 Intercultural Relationships in Everyday Life 254**

Benefits of Intercultural Relationships 255  
Challenges in Intercultural Relationships 258  
*Motivation* 258  
*Differences in Communication Styles, Values, and Perceptions* 258  
*Negative Stereotypes* 259  
*Anxiety* 260  
*Affirming Another Person's Cultural Identity* 260  
*The Need for Explanations* 261  
Foundations of Intercultural Relationships 262  
*Similarities and Differences* 263  
*Cultural Differences in Relationships* 264  
Relationships across Differences 270  
*Communicating in Intercultural Relationships* 270  
*Intercultural Dating* 273  
*Intercultural Marriage* 274  
*Online Relationships* 278  
Society and Intercultural Relationships 280  
Summary 282  
Building Intercultural Skills 283  
Activity 284  
Endnotes 284

**Part IV Intercultural Communication in Applied Settings**

**Chapter 10 Intercultural Communication in Tourism Contexts 288**

Intercultural Communication and Tourism 291  
*Characteristics of Tourist–Host Encounters* 291  
*Social, Historical, and Economic Contexts of Tourism* 292  
*Attitudes of Hosts toward Tourists* 293

Communication Challenges in Tourism Contexts	296
<i>Language Challenges</i>	296
<i>Social Norms and Expectations</i>	297
<i>Culture Shock</i>	299
<i>The Search for Authenticity</i>	301
Cultural Learning and Tourism	301
Tourism, Intercultural Communication, and Social Media	303
Political and Environmental Impacts on Tourism	304
Summary	306
Building Intercultural Skills	306
Activities	307
Endnotes	307

## **Chapter 11 Intercultural Communication and Business 310**

The Domestic and Global Economy	311
<i>Domestic Growth</i>	311
<i>Global Growth</i>	312
Power Issues in Intercultural Business Encounters	314
Communication Challenges in Business Contexts	317
<i>Work-Related Values</i>	317
<i>Language Issues</i>	321
<i>Communication Styles</i>	323
<i>Business Etiquette</i>	325
<i>Virtual Communication</i>	326
<i>International Negotiation</i>	327
<i>Intercultural Relationship Building</i>	328
<i>Diversity, Prejudice, and Discrimination</i>	329
Intercultural Communication Training in Business	331
Social and Political Contexts of Business	332
Summary	333
Building Intercultural Skills	334
Activities	334
Endnotes	334

## **Chapter 12 Intercultural Communication and Education 338**

Educational Goals	340
Studying Abroad	342

Culturally Specific Education	346
Intercultural Communication in Educational Settings	349
<i>Roles for Teachers and Students</i>	350
<i>Grading and Power</i>	350
<i>Admissions, Affirmative Action, and Standardized Tests</i>	352
Communication, Education, and Cultural Identity	354
Social Issues and Education	357
Summary	360
Building Intercultural Skills	361
Activities	361
Endnotes	361

**Chapter 13 Intercultural Communication and Health Care 364**

The Importance of Communication in Health Care	366
Intercultural Barriers to Effective Health Care	370
<i>Historical Treatments of Cultural Groups</i>	370
<i>Prejudicial Ideologies</i>	372
Religion and Health Care	374
<i>Cultural Influences on Approaches to Medicine</i>	376
Power in Communication about Health Care	377
<i>Imbalances of Power in Health Communication</i>	377
<i>Health Care as a Business</i>	378
<i>Intercultural Ethics and Health Issues</i>	380
Summary	382
Building Intercultural Skills	382
Activities	383
Endnotes	383

**Glossary G-1**

**Index I-1**

# Preface

As the once powerful Chinese economy slows down, what economic changes will ensue around the world? What changes will happen in Europe after the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union? Economic inequality, the disparity between the rich and the poor in the United States, is higher than ever and highest of all industrialized countries. These economic issues may drive the shape and character of intercultural contact in the future—because businesses drive what types and which cultures are more and less likely to come into contact.

Changes in governmental systems seem to happen at a rapid rate. In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, governments all over the Middle East—Libya, Egypt, Iraq, Tunisia, etc.—seem fragile or almost nonexistent. Rising regional identities may lead to new nations (e.g., Flanders, Catalonia, Scotland). Is a Palestinian state a future possibility, and how might it change the Middle East? As these changes and others appear on the horizon, how will intercultural conflict be managed? What role does intercultural communication play in these disputes?

Natural disasters may also affect intercultural communication. Climate change may bring about significant changes that require us to work with others around the world. Droughts, earthquakes, hurricanes, typhoons, tsunamis, and other natural disasters may increase the need for intercultural cooperation to help those in need.

The rising use of social media presents new intercultural issues; social media enable both better intercultural understanding as well as negative attacks on various cultural groups. The photo of the body of a tiny Syrian child washed up on a beach in Greece went viral on social media and garnered much sympathy for the plight of refugees fleeing war and tragedy in the Middle East. On the other hand, social media have been used to broadcast beheadings of journalists and others by the Islamic State and to recruit new members around the world.

They are not alone in using social media to heighten intercultural tensions. How we use and misuse social media leaves a trail that can build bridges to other cultures or reinforce walls between them.

What role can intercultural communication play in the changing world that we all live in? How can we use our intercultural skills to help enrich our lives and the lives of those around us? What should intercultural communication scholars be focusing on? What are the best ways to better understand intercultural communication in this dynamic world? As the world changes, how important is it for us to understand the past? Should we focus on culture-specific information? Or should we strive to develop more universal rules? How can anyone understand every culture around the world? Or every language? We wrote this book to shed light on these and many other questions about intercultural communication.

As in our earlier books, we have tried to use information from a variety of approaches, drawing from social psychological approaches as well as from ethnographic



studies and more recent critical media studies. However, the emphasis in this book is on the practical, experiential nature of intercultural communication. We still acknowledge that there are no easy answers to many intercultural situations. However, we attempt to give solid, practical guidelines, while noting the complexity of the task facing the student of intercultural communication.

## FEATURES OF THE BOOK

This book addresses the core issues and concerns of intercultural communication by introducing a group of general skills in Chapter 1 and emphasizing the concepts and the skills of communicating interculturally throughout the text. This textbook

- Includes a balanced treatment of skills and theory. The skills focus is framed by the presentation of the conceptual aspects of culture and communication. Each chapter has a section called “Building Intercultural Skills” that provides guidelines for improving the reader’s intercultural communication.
- Provides a framework for understanding intercultural communication, focusing on four building blocks (culture, communication, context, and power) and four barriers (ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination).
- Focuses on personal experiences by including students’ narratives and the authors’ personal experiences highlighted throughout the text.
- Presents the material in a student-friendly way. There are four types of thoughtful and fun bits of information in the margin provided for students’ interest. This edition contains new updated examples and websites:



“What Do You Think?” includes information and questions that challenge students to think about their own culture and communication styles.



“Surf’s Up!” suggests websites that students can visit for more information about culture and communication.



“Pop Culture Spotlight” presents examples of culture and communication from today’s popular culture.



“Info Bites” provides fun facts and figures that illustrate issues related to intercultural communication.

- Includes separate chapters on history and identity, with sections on Whiteness and assisting European American students in exploring their own cultural issues.
- Focuses on popular culture, both in a separate chapter and in examples woven throughout the book.
- Discusses important role of communication technologies in intercultural encounters in various contexts.

- Applies concepts to real-life contexts; the book includes four chapters on how intercultural communication works in everyday settings in tourism, business, education, and health.

## NEW TO THE SIXTH EDITION

This edition includes updated material addressing recent challenges of intercultural communication, including increased worldwide religious and ethnic conflict, the enormous numbers of migrants fleeing intercultural conflict and economic challenges, the impact of political context on intercultural encounters, and technological challenges. For example, Chapter 1 includes a discussion of how security concerns translated to anti-immigrant/refugee attitudes and legislation and their impacts on intercultural communication. In Chapter 8, we extended our discussion of ongoing religious and racial tensions in the United States and overseas, and added new material on peacebuilding efforts and “skilled disagreement” strategies as responses to protracted intercultural conflicts.

We also recognize the continuing importance of political issues in intercultural contexts. For example, Chapter 2 includes a discussion of the slow reaction to finding lead in Flint Michigan drinking water; in Chapter 4, Canada’s welcoming stance to refugees, as part of its national identity; and in Chapter 13, the impact of various communication strategies about the Zika virus.

To continue to recognize the increasing role technology plays in intercultural communication, in Chapter 1 we acknowledge the increasing role, both negative and positive, of social media in intercultural encounters. Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the impact of machine translation on intercultural communication. Chapters 10 and 11 include new material on the role of social media in tourist and business contexts, and social media examples are interwoven throughout the other chapters.

## OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

The first chapter focuses on the changing dynamics of social life and global conditions that provide a rationale for the study of intercultural communication, suggesting that intercultural learning is not just transformative for the individual, but also benefits the larger society and other cultural groups in our increasingly interdependent world. In this edition, we have updated statistics and examples as well as provided expanded discussions on the impact of income wealth and income inequality in the United States as well as the negative and positive impacts of social media on intercultural communication.

Chapter 2 outlines a framework for the book and identifies four building blocks of intercultural communication—culture, communication, context, and power, as well as four attitudinal and behavioral barriers to effective intercultural communication: ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. In this edition, we discuss the most recent addition to the Hofstede value framework (indulgence vs. restraint) as well as examples of cultural resistance through social media (e.g., #blacklivesmatter) and also provide updated examples of anti-immigrant prejudice and discrimination.

Chapter 3 focuses on helping students see the importance of history in understanding contemporary intercultural communication issues and a discussion of how postcolonial histories intertwine with today's practices of outsourcing and global business. This edition provides updated examples of the use of history for contemporary situations and underscores the ways that intercultural relationships can be impacted.

Chapter 4 discusses issues of identity and intercultural communication. In this chapter we address a number of identities (gender, age, race, and ethnicity [including White identity], physical ability, religion, class, national and regional identity). We also discuss issues of multicultural identity—people who live on the borders—and issues of crossing borders and cultural shock and adaptation. This edition includes a discussion of Canada's welcoming refugees and how it ties to Canadian identity, as well as new examples of popular culture products and their impact on various cultural identities.

Chapter 5 addresses verbal issues in intercultural communication, describing cultural variations in language and communication style, attitudes toward speaking, writing and silences, as well as issues of power and language. This edition includes an expanded discussion of how social media influences cultural differences in communication style, as well as a discussion of the impact of machine translation on intercultural encounters, and new material in code-switching.

Chapter 6 focuses on the role of nonverbal behavior in intercultural interaction, describing universal and culture-specific aspects of nonverbal communication, and the ways nonverbal behavior can provide a basis for stereotyping and prejudice. This chapter also addresses cultural space and its dynamic, changing nature, and a discussion of cyberspace as cultural space. This edition includes recent research questioning the universality of facial expressions, and an expanded discussion focusing on micro-aggression—nonverbal expression of bias and prejudice.

Chapter 7 addresses popular culture and intercultural communication. We define pop culture and discuss the ways in which pop culture forms our images of culture groups and the ways in which we consume (or resist) popular culture products. This edition includes updated popular culture examples, including Beyoncé's new music video, "Formation," in the current context of concern over policing and race relations.

Chapter 8 discusses the role of culture and conflict. The chapter identifies characteristics of intercultural conflict, describes both personal and social/political aspects of conflict, and examines the role of religion in intercultural conflict and the ways conflict management varies from culture to culture. This edition includes an updated discussion of the role economic conditions and social inequities play in intercultural conflict and peacebuilding efforts in protracted intercultural conflict situations.

Chapter 9 focuses on intercultural relationships in everyday life. It identifies the challenges and benefits of intercultural relationships, examining how relationships may differ across cultures and exploring a variety of relationship types: friendship, gay, dating, and marriage relationships. In this edition, we updated the status of same-sex marriages and included a discussion of transgender friendships.

Chapters 10 through 13 focus on intercultural communication in specific contexts. Chapter 10 addresses issues of intercultural communication in the tourism industry, exploring various ways in which hosts and tourists may interact, the ways varying cultural norms may affect tourist encounters, language issues and

communication style, and the sometimes-complex attitudes of hosts toward tourists. In this edition, we include discussions of the impacts of the recent economic downturn, political instability, terrorist attacks, health risks, and environmental disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes) on touristic encounters; new material on hosts' attitude toward tourism; and the role of social media on tourism.

Chapter 11 focuses on intercultural communication in business contexts, identifying several communication challenges (work-related values, differences in management styles, language issues, and affirmative action) in both domestic and international contexts, and the social and political contexts of business. We also provide a discussion of how power relations affect intercultural business encounters—both interpersonal relationships and larger system impacts. This edition includes new material on workplace diversity issues as well as the impact of globalization, immigration, terrorist attacks, and intercultural communication in business contexts.

Chapter 12 explores intercultural communication and education, discussing different kinds of educational experiences (e.g., study abroad, culture-specific settings) and communication challenges (e.g., varying roles for teachers and students, grading, and power); addressing social concerns and the role of culture in admissions, affirmative action, and standardized tests; and examining the challenges of educating immigrants. We also explore minority serving institutions as well as gender issues, including campus rape.

Chapter 13 addresses intercultural communication and health care, focusing on intercultural barriers to effective health care, the historical treatment of cultural groups, and the ways power dynamics, religious beliefs, and language barriers influence communication in health care settings. It also includes a discussion on alternative and complementary medicine as other ways of thinking about health care. This edition provides information on the communication strategies in response to the Zika virus as well as issues with vaccines and updated information on the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare).



*The sixth edition of Experiencing Intercultural Communication: An Introduction is now available online with Connect, McGraw-Hill Education's integrated assignment and assessment platform. Connect also offers SmartBook for the new edition, which is the first adaptive reading experience proven to improve grades and help students study more effectively. All of the title's website and ancillary content is also available through Connect, including:*

- *A full Test Bank of multiple choice questions that test students on central concepts and ideas in each chapter.*
- *An Instructor's Manual for each chapter with full chapter outlines, sample test questions, and discussion topics.*
- *Lecture Slides for instructor use in class.*



©Getty Images/iStockphoto

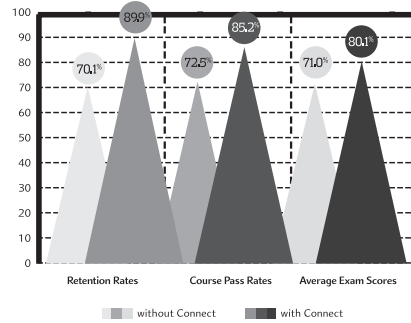
## McGraw-Hill Connect® Learn Without Limits

Connect is a teaching and learning platform that is proven to deliver better results for students and instructors.

Connect empowers students by continually adapting to deliver precisely what they need, when they need it, and how they need it, so your class time is more engaging and effective.

73% of instructors who use **Connect** require it; instructor satisfaction **increases** by 28% when **Connect** is required.

### Connect's Impact on Retention Rates, Pass Rates, and Average Exam Scores



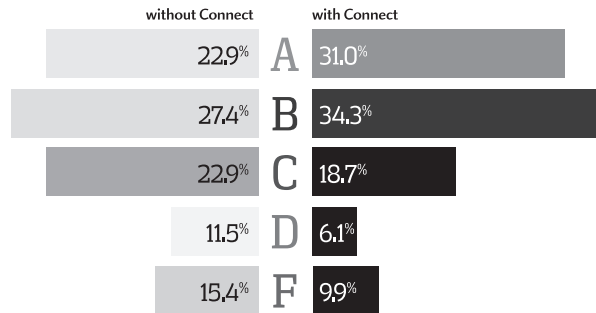
Using **Connect** improves retention rates by **19.8%**, passing rates by **12.7%**, and exam scores by **9.1%**.

## Analytics

### Connect Insight®

Connect Insight is Connect's new one-of-a-kind visual analytics dashboard—now available for both instructors and students—that provides at-a-glance information regarding student performance, which is immediately actionable. By presenting assignment, assessment, and topical performance results together with a time metric that is easily visible for aggregate or individual results, Connect Insight gives the user the ability to take a just-in-time approach to teaching and learning, which was never before available. Connect Insight presents data that empowers students and helps instructors improve class performance in a way that is efficient and effective.

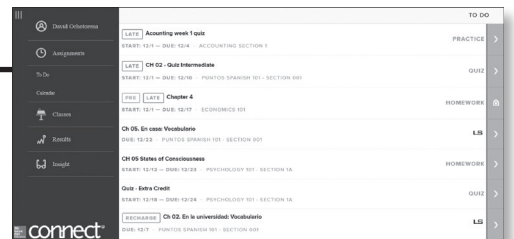
### Impact on Final Course Grade Distribution



Students can view their results for any **Connect** course.

## Mobile

Connect's new, intuitive mobile interface gives students and instructors flexible and convenient, anytime-anywhere access to all components of the Connect platform.



# Adaptive



More students earn **A's** and **B's** when they use McGraw-Hill Education **Adaptive** products.

## SmartBook®

Proven to help students improve grades and study more efficiently, SmartBook contains the same content within the print book, but actively tailors that content to the needs of the individual. SmartBook's adaptive technology provides precise, personalized instruction on what the student should do next, guiding the student to master and remember key concepts, targeting gaps in knowledge and offering customized feedback, and driving the student toward comprehension and retention of the subject matter. Available on tablets, SmartBook puts learning at the student's fingertips—anywhere, anytime.

Over **8 billion** questions have been answered, making McGraw-Hill Education products more intelligent, reliable, and precise.

[www.mheducation.com](http://www.mheducation.com)

## THE ADAPTIVE READING EXPERIENCE DESIGNED TO TRANSFORM THE WAY STUDENTS READ

STUDENTS WANT

Mc  
Graw  
Hill  
Education

SMARTBOOK®

95%

of students reported **SmartBook** to be a more effective way of reading material.

100%

of students want to use the Practice Quiz feature available within **SmartBook** to help them study.

100%

of students reported having reliable access to off-campus wifi.

90%

of students say they would purchase **SmartBook** over print alone.

95%

of students reported that **SmartBook** would impact their study skills in a positive way.

Mc  
Graw  
Hill  
Education

\*Findings based on 2015 focus group results administered by McGraw-Hill Education

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As always, we owe a great deal to our colleagues in the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, at Arizona State University as well as to our colleagues outside our school. Our colleagues at ASU helped us work through our ideas and shared insights from their lives and the lives of their students. Our students have contributed a great deal to this book; they willingly shared examples and stories from their own lives and enthusiastically supported this project.

Special thanks go to our graduate editorial assistants Maggie Williams at Northeastern University and Gladys Muasya, Arizona State University, who found new margin material for us, worked competently, creatively, and with extreme good nature under tight deadlines.

Many other Communication colleagues contributed, including Professor Anneliese Harper (Scottsdale Community College) who gave us the idea of writing this book by pointing out the need for more context-specific and experientially based materials in the intercultural communication curriculum. Professor Shelley Smith (University of Minnesota–Duluth), Professor Dawn Braithwaite (University of Nebraska), and Professor Denis Leclerc (Thunderbird School of Global Management) provided us with resources and suggestions for framing the “contexts” chapters in the first edition. Thanks also to Robert Barr, M.D., of the Mecklenburg Radiology Associates in Charlotte, North Carolina, for the helpful tips on health communication.

Thanks to the fine team at McGraw-Hill who make it all happen. Thanks to Brand Manager, Jamie Laferrera, who skillfully guided us through the McGraw-Hill publishing process. We also want to acknowledge the fine work of Production Manager Lisa Bruflo and Marketing Manager, Meredith Leo; and Editorial Coordinator, Jasmine Staton. Finally, thanks to the **ansr**source developmental editing team led by Anne Sheroff and Poornima H.

In addition, we want to thank the reviewers and readers, whose thoughtful and insightful comments led to careful revisions and a much-improved manuscript: Amie D. Kincaid, University of Illinois–Springfield; Cheryl L. Nicholas, Penn State–Berks; Kevin C. Lee, Darton College; Marilyn Brimo, Mt. Hood Community College; Michael Lenaghan, Miami Dade College; Tracey Powers, Central Arizona College; Celeste Lacroix, College of Charleston; Cheryl L. Nicholas, Penn State Berks; Thomas Damp, Central New Mexico Community College; Karen Krumrey-Fulks, Lane Community College; Racheal Ruble, Iowa State; Puvana Ganesan, Mesa Community College; and Elizabeth Catanese, Community College of Philadelphia.

To those friends and colleagues who enrich our lives and our scholarship by helping us understand what it means to live interculturally, we are grateful: Dr. Amalia Villegas, Laura Laguna, Cruzita and Aurelio Mori, Lucia Madril and family, many of the faculty, staff, and participants at the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication in Portland, Oregon, and Jean-Louis Sauvage (Université de Mons-Hainaut). Finally, we thank our partners, Ronald S. Chaldu and David L. Karbonski, for hanging in there with us once again!

# About the Authors

**Judith Martin** grew up in Mennonite communities, primarily in Delaware and Pennsylvania. She has studied at the Université de Grenoble in France and has taught in Algeria. She received her doctorate from the Pennsylvania State University. By background and training, she is a social scientist who has focused on intercultural communication on an interpersonal level and has studied how people's communication is affected as they move or sojourn between international locations. More recently, she has studied how people's cultural backgrounds influence their online communication. She has taught at the State University of New York at Oswego, the University of Minnesota, the University of New Mexico, and Arizona State University. She enjoys gardening, reading murder mysteries, traveling, and hanging out with her large extended family.

**Tom Nakayama** grew up mainly in Georgia, at a time when the Asian American presence was much less than it is now. He has studied at the Université de Paris and various universities in the United States. He received his doctorate from the University of Iowa. By background and training, he is a critical rhetorician who views intercultural communication in a social context. Prior to Northeastern University, he has taught at California State University at San Bernardino, Arizona State University, the University of Iowa, and the Université de Mons-Hainaut (now the Université de Mons). He has guest lectured at many institutions, including the University of Maine, Centre Universitaire (Luxembourg), University of Southern California, University of Georgia, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris), and the École des hautes études commerciales du nord (Lille). He loves the changes of seasons in New England, traveling, and playing trivia.



*This page intentionally left blank*



© kristian sekulic/Getty Images RF

## CHAPTER ONE

# Studying Intercultural Communication

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### The Peace Imperative

#### The Economic Imperative

*The Workplace*

*The Global Economy*

#### The Technological Imperative

*Technology and Human Communication*

#### The Demographic Imperative

*Changing U.S. Demographics*

*Changing Immigration Patterns*

#### The Self-Awareness Imperative

#### The Ethical Imperative

*Ethical Judgments and Cultural Values*

*Becoming an Ethical Student of Culture*

#### Summary

#### Building Intercultural Skills

#### Activities

#### Endnotes

### STUDY OBJECTIVES

*After reading this chapter, you should be able to:*

1. Describe the peace imperative for studying intercultural communication.
2. Identify and describe the economic and technological imperatives for studying intercultural communication.
3. Describe how the changing demographics in the United States and the changing worldwide immigration patterns affect intercultural communication.
4. Explain how studying intercultural communication can lead to increased self-understanding.
5. Understand the difference between a universalistic and relativist approach to the study of ethics and intercultural communication.
6. Identify and describe characteristics of an ethical student of culture.

### KEY TERMS

assimilable  
class structure  
cosmopolitans  
cross-cultural trainers  
demographics  
diversity  
enclaves  
ethics  
globalization

heterogeneous  
immigration  
*maquiladoras*  
melting pot metaphor  
relativist position  
self-awareness  
self-reflexivity  
universalist position

*A child born today will be faced as an adult, almost daily, with problems of a global interdependent nature, be it peace, food, the quality of life, inflation, or scarcity of resources. He/she will be both an actor and a beneficiary or a victim in the total world fabric, and may rightly ask: “Why was I not warned? Why was I not better educated? Why did my teachers not tell me about these problems and indicate my behavior as a member of an interdependent human race?”*

—Robert Muller<sup>1</sup>

This quote from Robert Muller, known as “the father of global education” is as relevant today as it was 30 years ago and underscores the importance of learning about our interdependent world. In addition to peace, food, the economy, and the quality of life identified by Muller, climate change, terrorism, conflicts around the globe require working across cultural differences to find solutions to these complex problems. For example, religious and ethnic conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, territorial tensions in Asia over strategic island claimed by more than one country (China, Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines, South Korea) as well as the worldwide refugee problem with millions of migrants streaming into Europe into already fragile economies, for example, Greece and Eastern European countries. In addition, the once powerful Chinese economy is now struggling, leading to nervousness of U.S. investors and a volatile stock market.<sup>2</sup> On the more positive side, global interconnectedness also brings us the World Cup, the Olympics, as well as global cooperation in dealing with health challenges like the Ebola and Zika outbreaks. The personal impact of this global interconnectedness has been extensive. Although the recession in the United States is technically over, wages here are stagnant and the promises of the American Dream seem illusive for many—particularly for minority households whose financial resources remain at a fraction of White households. Perhaps your parents or someone you know lost their jobs, or their houses in the economic downturn. Perhaps you worry about how you’ll pay off your college debt or whether you’ll ever be able to own a home or achieve economic independence. Let’s consider how the economic conditions and world tensions are affecting intercultural relations. Let’s start at home, in the United States where some adult children, many saddled with large college debt, are still living at home and according to a recent report, even though there have been positive economic trends, there has been no increase in the number of young adults establishing their own household. In fact, the number is no higher in 2015 than it was before the recession.<sup>3</sup> As one 20 something said “I can’t foresee a future where we’re going to buy a house. . . It’ll be 10 to 15 years, and by that time, we’ll be too old to have children. I don’t know how people afford to have children these days.”<sup>4</sup>

This intergenerational living arrangement, common in many parts of the world, presents challenges to independent minded children (and parents) in the United States and requires (intercultural) communication skills—listening to each other openly and respectfully. Some even say it’s a good thing—that parents and children get to spend extra time with each other that they wouldn’t be able to do in other circumstances.<sup>5</sup>

The global economic slowdown has had enormous consequences for intercultural relations in the fledging European Union (EU). As you probably know, European countries have experienced the crisis differently but are economically interdependent. The northern countries of Germany, Finland, Sweden, and Denmark have implemented austerity measures and have relatively healthy economies, which are being dragged down by the economically weak southern countries of Greece, Spain, and Italy. The resulting tensions over economic issues and the recent refugee crisis are fueling old stereotypes. Germans (even some politicians) are calling Greeks work-shy, rule-bending, and recklessly extravagant while they see themselves as hard-working, law-abiding people who live within their means. On the other hand, Greeks make fun of German frugality and some are even invoking the old “Germans as Nazis” stereotype.<sup>6</sup>

The challenges of increased immigration and economic tensions in Europe and the resulting fears of security are present in the United States as well. After the devastating terror attacks in Paris and San Bernardino in 2015, security concerns translated to anti-immigrant/refugee attitudes and legislation. One poll found that 53 percent of U.S. Americans didn’t want to accept any Syrian refugees at all and about 50 percent said immigrants are a burden because they take jobs, housing, and health care.<sup>7</sup> While some feel that these are reasonable attitudes and policies, others feel that it paves the way for increased prejudice and discrimination against foreigners, particularly those from the Middle East and Latin America.

So what does all this mean for intercultural communication? While these close economic connections highlight our global economy, these relationships also point to the large numbers of people who communicate every day with people from around the world. Some of this communication is face-to-face with international students, business travelers, tourists, migrants, and others. Some of this communication is online through the Internet, texting, or other communication media.

Economics are one important force, but there are many other reasons that people come into intercultural contact. Wars or other violent conflicts drive some people to leave their homelands to seek a safer place to live. Natural disasters can drive people to other areas where they can rebuild their lives. Some people seek a better life somewhere else, or are driven by their own curiosity to seek out and visit other parts of the world. People often fall in love and build families in another country. Can you think of other reasons that drive people to interact across cultural differences?

What do you as a student of intercultural communication need to learn to understand the complexities of intercultural interaction? And how can learning about intercultural communication benefit you?

It is easy to become overwhelmed by that complexity. However, not knowing everything that you would like to know is very much a part of the learning process, and this inability to know everything is what makes intercultural communication experiences so exciting. Rather than being discouraged by everything that you cannot know, think of all the things you can learn from intercultural communication experiences. This book will introduce you to some of the basic concepts and guidelines for thinking about intercultural interaction. You can also learn a lot of intercultural communication by listening to other people's experiences, but intercultural communication is a lifelong project and we hope you will continue your journey long after you read this textbook.

Why is it important to focus on intercultural communication and to strive to become better at this complex form of interaction? There are many reasons why you might want to learn more about intercultural communication. Perhaps you want to better serve a diverse clientele in your chosen occupation; perhaps members of your extended family are from different races or religions, or have physical abilities that you would like to understand better. Perhaps you want to better understand the culturally diverse colleagues in your workplace. Or perhaps you want to learn more about the people you come into contact with through the Internet, or to learn more about the countries and cultures that are in the daily news: Iraq, racial tensions on university campuses, hate crimes in cities large and small. In this chapter we discuss the following imperatives—reasons to study intercultural communication: peace, economic, technological, demographic, self-awareness, and ethical. Perhaps one or more will apply to your situation.



### What Do You Think?

A group of prominent Canadian international figures have called for a "Department of Peace" or "Ministries of Peace" that would promote and utilize nonviolent methods of resolving conflicts around the world. What do you think would be the major functions of a Department of Peace? What kind of person is capable of becoming a Minister of Peace?

## THE PEACE IMPERATIVE

The key issue is this: Can individuals of different genders, ages, ethnicities, races, languages, and religions peacefully coexist on the planet? According to the Center for Systemic Peace, while conflict between national powers has decreased, societal wars (conflict between groups within a country) have increased. The current trend is toward longer, more intra-national protracted conflicts where military or material support is supplied by foreign powers—fighting "proxy wars"—to warring groups (<http://www.systemicpeace.org/vlibrary/GlobalReport2014.pdf>). For example, consider the religious strife between Shia and Sunni Muslims throughout the Middle East and between Kurds and government forces in Iraq and Turkey, the conflict between insurgent rebel groups and the government in Syria—with Russia and the United States backing different factions; the various groups in Libya where there is no central government at the moment, and woven throughout this region, conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). There are also the conflicts between the government and various drug cartels in Mexico, and the Boko Haram and Christian–Muslim conflicts in Nigeria.

Some of the conflicts have roots in past foreign policies. The rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has been linked to the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the strength of the Taliban related to the U.S. policies in twice promising to help Afghanistan people (against Soviet aggression in late 1980s and against the Taliban



© Abid Katib/Getty Images

People are often caught in devastating consequences of conflicts they neither started nor chose. In this photo, victims of the Gaza conflict search through the rubble of buildings destroyed by war. While communication skills cannot solve all political conflicts, they are vital in dealing with intercultural strife.

in 2003) and both times withdrawing military and infrastructure building support, both times leaving Afghan people at the mercy of the Taliban. Still other conflicts are tied to the tremendous influence of U.S. technology and media which may be celebrated by some and as a cause of resistance by others. For example, the massive influence of U.S. pop culture is seen by some as inhibiting the development of other nations' indigenous popular culture products and forcing U.S. values on them, which sometimes leads to resentment and conflict.<sup>8</sup>

Some conflicts have to do with economic disparities and legacies of oppression, seen in the racial and ethnic tensions in U.S. neighborhoods and recent conflicts between law enforcement and some Black communities. There are also tensions regarding what some people perceive as racist symbolism of the Cleveland Indians, a U.S. major league baseball team, and the Washington Redskins, a U.S. professional football team.

Communication scholar Benjamin Broome has worked with many conflict areas, including in Cyprus with Greeks and Turk Cypriots (once the most heavily fortified border in the world) and also Native American groups in the United States. He emphasizes that one cannot focus only on the interpersonal level or the societal level, but all levels. He proposes an approach of peacebuilding which is not just the absence of conflict, but an effort to stop all forms of violence and promote transformative ways to deal with conflict, including strategies that address personal, relational, and structural (organizational, economic conditions, etc.) elements of conflict. According to Broome, communication, especially facilitated dialogue, plays a key role in the peacebuilding process.<sup>9</sup> We need to remember that individuals



### Surf's Up!

How global is the news you get each day? Think about the lead stories in the newspapers that you read, the news stories in the blogs and Internet sites you visit, the news programs you watch, and the news stories you hear on the radio. Is the news primarily about local or international events? For daily news on international events, check out [www.PBS.org/frontlineworld/](http://www.PBS.org/frontlineworld/) and compare the stories to other U.S. news sites.

often are born into and are caught up in conflicts that they neither started nor chose and are impacted by larger societal forces. We will explore further approaches to dealing with conflict in Chapter 8.

## THE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE

You may want to know more about intercultural communication because you foresee tremendous changes in the workplace in the coming years. This is one important reason to know about other cultures and communication patterns. In addition, knowing about intercultural communication is strategically important for U.S. businesses in the emerging transnational economy. As noted by writer Carol Hymowitz of the *Wall Street Journal*, “If companies are going to sell products and services globally, then they will need a rich mix of employees with varied perspectives and experiences. They will need top executives who understand different countries and cultures.”<sup>10</sup>

### The Workplace

Given the growing cultural diversity in the United States, businesses necessarily must be more attentive to diversity issues. As the workforce becomes more diverse, many businesses are seeking to capitalize on these differences: “Once organizations learn to adopt an inclusive orientation in dealing with their members, this will also have a positive impact on how they look at their customer base, how they develop products and assess business opportunities, and how they relate to their communities.”<sup>11</sup> Benefiting from cultural differences in the workplace involves not only working with diverse employees and employers but also seeing new business markets, developing new products for differing cultural contexts, and marketing products in culturally appropriate and effective ways. From this perspective, diversity is a potentially powerful economic tool for business organizations. We will discuss diversity issues further in Chapter 11.

### The Global Economy

Businesses all around the world are continually expanding into overseas markets in a process of **globalization**. This recent trend is shown dramatically in the report of a journalist who asked a Dell computer manager where his laptop is made. The answer? It was codesigned by engineers in Texas and Taiwan; the microprocessor was made in one of Intel’s factories in the Philippines, Costa Rica, Malaysia, or China; the memory came from factories in Korea, Germany, Taiwan, or Japan. Other components (keyboard, hard-disk drive, batteries, etc.) were made by Japanese, Taiwanese, Irish, Israeli, or British firms with factories mainly in Asia; and finally, the laptop was assembled in Taiwan.<sup>12</sup>

What is the ultimate impact of globalization on the average person? Some economists defend it, saying that the losses are always offset by the gains in consumer prices but many workers who have lost jobs in the recent past and seen wages stagnate aren’t so sure. There are many blue collar industrial jobs that have been lost to overseas in the past 10 years but one recent study concludes that as many as



### Surf's Up!

Do you know the proper procedure for exchanging business cards in Japan? Did you know that even though meetings run late in Brazil, it is considered rude to exit before the gathering ends? Did you know you should never give a clock as gift to a Chinese, it represents death? Globalization has changed the face of business. The manner by which we conduct business in the United States is often very different from other countries. What should you know about different cultural practices to become an international business  
(continued)



© Pixtal/AGE Fotostock RF

Multicultural work environments are becoming increasingly common in the twenty-first century. In many of these situations, working in small groups is especially important. Given this trend, workers need to learn to deal with cultural differences.

14 million white-collar jobs are also vulnerable to being outsourced offshore—jobs in information technology, accounting, architecture, advanced engineering design, news reporting, stock analysis, and medical and legal services—jobs that generate the bulk of tax revenues that fund our education, health, infrastructure, and social security systems. In fact, the Department of Labor reminds us that the track record for the re-employment of displaced U.S. workers is not good, that more than one in three workers who are displaced remains unemployed, and many of those who are lucky enough to find jobs take major pay cuts.<sup>13</sup>

The world economy has been volatile and seemingly shrinking in recent years. The economic powerhouse, China, has seen disastrous economic trends with a plummeting stock market, housing crises, and a manufacturing slowdown, and its slowest growth since 1990. The worry now and the evidence seems to support it that a slowing China also lowers growth in other countries.<sup>14</sup>

The point is that to compete effectively in this shrinking global market, Americans must understand how business is conducted in other countries and how to negotiate deals that are advantageous to the U.S. economy.<sup>15</sup> However, they are not always willing to take the time and effort to do this. For example, eBay, the successful American Ecommerce giant copied its American model to China and got completely destroyed by local competitor *Taobao*. Why? Because *Taobao* understood that in China, shopping was a social experience and people like talking and even haggling with sellers and building relationships with them. *Taobao* had a chat feature that allowed customers to easily talk to sellers.<sup>16</sup> Stories abound of U.S. marketing slogans that were inaccurately translated, like Pepsi's "Come alive with Pepsi Generation" (which was translated into Chinese as "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave"), or General Motors marketing the Nova in South America (*no va* is Spanish for "no go").<sup>17</sup> In contrast, Starbucks' recent decision to change its logo

### Surf's Up! (cont.)

traveler? Check out [www.buzzle.com/chapters/travel-and-tourism\\_business-and-executive-travel\\_etiquette-and-related-issues.asp](http://www.buzzle.com/chapters/travel-and-tourism_business-and-executive-travel_etiquette-and-related-issues.asp) for information on conducting business in other countries. Check out the following link for information on conducting business in other countries: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2012/06/15/business-etiquette-tips-for-international-travel/#409041f86755>



International trade is one of the driving forces in interactions between cultures. However, as shown by these people protesting at the G-20 meeting in Brisbane, Australia, in November 2014, there is some concern that growing poverty and inequality resulting from globalization may lead to increased intercultural conflict.



© Daniel Munoz/Getty Images

when it entered the Asian markets seems to be successful. Starbucks decided to drop the Starbucks name and the word “coffee” from its logo, giving it a more rounded appearance, which seems to appeal to collectivist consumers—found in China and other Asian countries.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, there are other considerations in understanding the global market. Moving operations overseas to take advantage of lower labor costs has far-reaching implications for corporations. One example is the *maquiladoras*—foreign-owned plants that use domestic labor—just across the U.S.–Mexican border. The U.S. companies that relocate their plants there benefit from lower labor costs and lack of environmental and other business regulations, while Mexican laborers benefit from the jobs. But there is a cost in terms of environmental hazards. Because Mexico has less stringent air and water pollution regulations than the United States, many of these *maquiladoras* have a negative environmental impact on the Mexican side of the border. Because the two nations are economically and environmentally interdependent, they share the economic and environmental impact. Thus, these contexts present intercultural challenges for Mexicans and Americans alike.

To help bridge the cultural gap, many companies employ **cross-cultural trainers**, who assist people going abroad by giving them information about and strategies for dealing with cultural differences; such trainers report that Japanese and other business personnel often spend years in the United States studying English and learning about the country before they decide to build a factory or invest money here. By contrast, many U.S. companies provide little or no training before sending their workers overseas and expect business deals to be completed very quickly. They seem to have little regard for cultural idiosyncrasies, which can cause ill will and mistrust, enhance negative stereotypes, and result in lost business opportunities.

In the future, global economic development will create even more demand for intercultural communication. Economic exchanges will drive intercultural interactions. This development will create not only more jobs but also more consumers to purchase goods from around the world—and to travel in that world.

## THE TECHNOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE

Communication technology is a constant. We are linked by technology to events in the most remote parts of the world and also to people that we may never meet face-to-face. In any given day you may text message or snapchat with friends about evening plans, post a Facebook message to a relative stationed overseas, participate in a discussion board for one of your courses, send an e-mail message to your professor and use Google Hangout for a virtual team project in an online course. It's possible not only to communicate with other people but also to develop complex relationships with them through such technology.

### Technology and Human Communication

The extent of global connection and communication through social network sites is staggering. For example, Facebook was the first to surpass 1 billion monthly active users. These networks are often available in multiple languages and enable users to connect with friends or people across geographical, political, or economic borders. About 2 billion people now use social network sites Facebook, Instagram, and Tumblr in the United States, VK in the United Kingdom, and Qzone and Renren in China.<sup>19</sup> By some accounts, people spend more time on social networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook than any other online activity, and 80 percent of Facebook users are outside the United States and Canada.<sup>20</sup> The effect of social media like Facebook and Twitter have far-reaching consequences, and it is important to understand that these technologies can have positive and negative impacts on intercultural encounters. For example, by using Twitter and Facebook, people were able to receive up-to-the-minute information and connect with friends and family in the immediate aftermath of the devastating Japanese tsunami in January 2011.<sup>21</sup> Syrians, Egyptians, and Libyans were able to broadcast to the world—through text and videos—minute-by-minute reports of the progress and challenges of their fight for democracy against their repressive governments.<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, you may feel like you're too dependent on social media and suffer from FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), checking your phone many times a day to see if you have messages or if there are new posts to Facebook that you have to see. An even worse impact of social media is the vicious trolls and nasty posts. For example, there was a multitude of vicious racist tweets posted in reaction to the crowning of the first Indian American as Miss America.<sup>23</sup> Or consider the videos of brutal beheadings of U.S. journalists and others posted by Islamic State militants that shocked and appalled millions as well as their skillful use of social media to persuade and enlist recruits all around the world. These media videos and messages illustrate the far-reaching negative potential of



### Surf's Up!

Social media is not just for socializing. Remember the poignant photo of the little three-year-old Syrian boy whose body (still dressed in his red shirt, blue shorts, and velcro shoes) washed up on a Turkish beach? His family was fleeing the Syrian civil war and their boat capsized. The photo went viral on social media when a Human Rights Watch staff member shared it on Twitter. It is just one example of the tremendous power of social media in drawing world attention to human events (and tragedies) in faraway places. Read more about the impact of this photo on <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/photo-dead-syrian-refugee-boy-puts-face-crisis-rooted-numbers/>.