

effectively, and adaptively (→ Interpersonal Communication). In a direct empirical test of the theory (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey 2003), the research program uncovered that self-face concern was associated positively with dominating style and other-face concern was associated positively with avoiding and integrating styles. The research also found significant differences between subjects from different countries (→ International Communication).

Current face-negotiation theory effort has been directed to testing the intricate relationship among face, emotional facets, and conflict styles in different cultures. Further effort has also extended the face-negotiation theory to the realm of intergroup (i.e., different social identity membership issues such as intergenerational family conflicts) face-threatening and face-honoring situations, and examining the shifting values of face in diaspora communities.

See also: ► ENCODING–DECODING ► INTERCULTURAL AND INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION  
► INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION  
► INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION  
► LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

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## Intercultural and Intergroup Communication

BERNADETTE WATSON  
*University of Queensland*

HOWARD GILES  
*University of California, Santa Barbara*

Social groups, such as adolescents and ethnic groups, very often have their own distinctive cultures that include specialized foods, customs and rituals, literature, music, while other intergroup situations (e.g., artificially constructed laboratory groups) constitute social categories that cannot claim such cultural artifacts. This entry compares two parallel traditions of theorizing communication between such groups: Intercultural communication (ICC; Gudykunst 2002) and Intergroup communication (IGC; Giles 2012).

## Origins of the Theories

ICC has been studied for over 50 years (see Leeds-Hurwitz 1990) and developed to focus on how different cultures are distinguished from one another through their management of behaviors such as personal space and gestures. Particular attention has been devoted to understanding the cultural values that underpin different cultures' communicative practices, including individualism–collectivism, high–low contexts, and so forth (Watson 2012). From the ICC perspective, when an individual recognizes that he is engaged in an intercultural interaction, the focus remains on competent interpersonal communication (→ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework)

In contrast to ICC, the IGC approach came out of social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel 1978) which states that individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups and have a need to compare themselves with others, as a way of attaining a positive self-concept. We seek to favor our own groups (ingroups) compared to groups to which

we do not belong (outgroups) and, communicatively act in accord with these social identities (Giles & Giles 2012). To join an outgroup, as, for instance, with immigrants wishing to acculturate into a host community, we communicate with members in ways akin to them so that we may gain membership to that group (Giles et al. 2012). SIT is not a communication theory but, rather, represents a theory of intergroup behavior and cognitions. Communication theories such as → communication accommodation theory explain how and why individuals engage in specific communication strategies when they interact with representatives of salient ingroups and outgroups.

### Applications

Wiseman (2002) detailed the applications of ICC competence to assist individuals from differing cultures to communicate effectively with one another (→ Culture: Definition and Concepts). The ICC literature embraces a skills training approach, the premises of which are that individuals must have knowledge of the culture with which they engage, the motivation to effectively communicate (including intercultural sensitivity and empathy), and appropriate communication skills. Interactions are viewed as activities that occur at the interpersonal level.

In contrast, the main focus in IGC is on interactants implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) taking on the role of being representatives of their respective cultures. This explicit acknowledgment that at times our intergroup identities take precedence has important implications for any interaction. Individuals who perceive that their personal identity is salient may engage in different communications strategies from those who believe they are representative of a particular group. Whether individual or group identities, or both, are made salient will shape the communication process in different ways which, in turn, can reconstruct the very nature of those identities (Dragojevic & Giles in press).

The way a group or culture expresses its unique identity through a dialect, specialized jargon, or nonverbal demeanor (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture), is fundamental to a healthy social identity, and to one (under differing conditions) that group members can vigorously and creatively sustain and proliferate. Intercultural

communication is not subsumed under, or even a special case of, intergroup communication, but rather the two are parallel traditions capable of significant coalescence (Gudykunst 2002).

### Assumptions of Both Theories

There are assumptions within ICC theories that are not held in IGC (Brabant et al. 2007). These are: that strangers to a new culture will take on an ethno-relativist position; they need to be educated in the new culture's values and norms; and when strangers possess knowledge of the culture and use expedient communication skills, effective communication will prevail. However, there is no extension within ICC theories to predict and explain when misunderstanding could in some cases be inevitable, despite any one individual's excellent skills and cultural knowledge. Socio-psychological theories that emphasize the intergroup nature of intercultural communication, rather than only its interpersonal aspects, directly address miscommunication and related issues of prejudice and intercultural tensions.

IGC is highly cognizant of how *status and power differentials* impact communication behavior. Power is, arguably, not a key consideration in ICC and the implicit overarching assumption is that competent communication is the main communication goal (→ Power in Intergroup Settings). However, when two individuals from different cultures with a history of power differentials and consequent perceived injustices come together, effective and competent communication may not be their mutual goal. A training and skills focus on achieving effective communication does not take account of the fact that culturally-salient power differentials may dictate what is appropriate communication for any particular encounter.

ICC as well as IGC – beyond the study of national and ethnic groups – can truly embrace an array of different categories including older people, homosexuals, bisexuals, or academicians from different disciplines, as well as those embedded in for example, religious, or organizational cultures (Giles 2012). Importantly, their members may view themselves as belonging to a group that owns specific characteristics and traits that set them apart from others. IGC theories distinguish between “me” in an interaction as an individual

and “us” as a virtual representative of a group. While intercultural as well as intergroup perspectives have sometimes been infused into studies in such contexts, there is much more room for invoking each other’s positions. The challenge is to move toward bringing these two theoretical viewpoints together in order to explain and predict the variables that determine effective and ineffective interactions (Kim, forthcoming).

See also: ► COMMUNICATION ACCOMMODATION THEORY ► CULTURAL PATTERNS AND COMMUNICATION ► CULTURE: DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS ► CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION, ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES ON ► INTERCULTURAL CONFLICT STYLES AND FACEWORK ► INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION AND DISCURSIVE PSYCHOLOGY ► INTERGROUP CONTACT AND COMMUNICATION ► MEDIA AND GROUP REPRESENTATIONS ► NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE ► POWER IN INTERGROUP SETTINGS ► PREJUDICED AND DISCRIMINATORY COMMUNICATION ► SOCIAL STEREOTYPING AND COMMUNICATION

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## Intergenerational Communication

MARY LEE HUMMERT

University of Kansas

The term ‘intergenerational communication’ applies to interactions involving individuals who are from different age cohorts or age groups. Families provide ready examples of individuals whose communication would be classified as intergenerational: parent and child or grandparent and grandchild. These interactions stand in contrast to intragenerational communication or communication between individuals from the same generation or age cohort, such as siblings. Intergenerational communication occurs outside the family context as well. Any interaction between a child and an adult, a young person and one who is middle-aged or older, or a middle-aged person and an older person fits the definition of intergenerational communication. As a result, much communication in daily life – in the workplace, social settings, and the home – is intergenerational in nature.

Although common, intergenerational communication carries a strong *potential for miscommunication* and unsatisfying interpersonal interactions. This occurs not only because people from different age cohorts vary in their life experiences, but also because people at different points in the life-span vary in their communication goals, needs, and behaviors. Other challenges