

- 1 **UNIT 1**
Introduction: Intercultural Communication Today
- 2 **What is meant by intercultural communication?**
 - How we successfully interact with people different in...
 - ...appearance
 - ...beliefs
 - ...values
 - ...behavior
 - ...language
 - What's needed for successful interactions?
 - Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes
- 3 **Why is it important in today's world?**
 - Globalization
 - Commerce
 - Travel
 - Communication
 - Intercultural Strife
 - Ethnic conflict
 - Immigrant communities
- 4 **Technology Trends**
 - The world becoming a “global village”
 - Internet access 2012: world 33%
 - Cell phone usage 2012: world 80%
 - Social networking
 - The “echo chamber”
- 5 **U.S. Domestic Diversity Trends**

By 2042, the U.S. population will likely be:

 - 50% European American
 - 25% Latinos

- 14% African American
- 8% Asian American
- 1% Native American

6 **Benefits of Intercultural Communication**

- Personal growth
- Healthier communities
- Reduced conflict
- Leaders more attuned to diversity

7 **Interpersonal Learning Opportunities**

“It is through the mirror of others that we learn to know ourselves. It is through facing our own discomfort and anxiety that we learn to stretch and grow. Encountering a dissimilar other helps us to question our routine way of thinking and behaving. Getting to *really know* a dissimilar stranger helps us to glimpse into another world.”

Stella Ting-Toomey (1999)

8 **Intercultural Communication in Context**

Important today in a variety of fields:

- *Business*: ability to sell dependent on understanding client
- *Health*: Need to understand patients from different cultures
- *Education*: multicultural & bilingual education
- *Tourist industry*

9 **Intercultural Communication as Academic Discipline**

Founder: Edward Hall, *Silent Language*, 1956

Actually involves many different disciplines:

- Cultural anthropology
- Linguistics, 2nd Lang. Acquisition
- Communications
- Social Psychology
- International Studies
- World religions
- Ethnography
- Global Arts

- Cultural geography
- Ethnogastronomy

10 Culture

- An accumulated pattern of *values, beliefs, and behaviors*, shared by an identifiable group of people with a common history and verbal and nonverbal symbol systems
- Culture does not exist in a vacuum, nor is it static
 - Dynamic, multi-faceted, socially constructed, learned
- Paradox of culture: pervasive yet invisible (if it's your own culture and particularly if it's the dominant culture)

11 Culture: An iceberg metaphor

Universal Human Needs

(safety, security, inclusion, dignity, respect, control, connection, meaning, creativity, & a sense of well-being)

12 Comparing Cultures

- Popular approach to describing cultures is to use categories to draw comparisons
- Based on work of Edward Hall and Geert Hofstede
 - Individualism versus collectivism
 - Power distance
 - Time orientation
 - Uncertainty avoidance

13 Individualism—Collectivism

- Individualism
 - Individuals brought up to be...
 - creative, self-reliant, assertive
 - Nature of group memberships?
 - many, but shallow, short-lived
- Collectivism
 - Individuals brought up to...
 - have strong sense of duty to group, accept interdependence, highly value harmony

- Nature of group memberships?
 - few, but deep => family, work

14 **Power Distance**

“the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.” Gert Hofstede

Small PD => minimize inequalities

Large PD => inequality accepted, even desired

15 **Time Orientation**

- Monochronic orientation
 - Time segmented, priority to schedules
 - Focused on one transaction at a time
- Polychronic orientation
 - Time a continuum, priority to relationships
 - Tolerant of interruptions, multiple interactions
- Time orientation influences:
 - Scheduling
 - Housing space
 - Business practices

16 **The Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension**

Uncertainty avoidance refers to the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain and unknown situations and the extent to which they try to avoid these situations.

17 **Cultural Taxonomies: Caution**

- Cultures can vary internally

- Dominant culture vs. microcultures
- Cultures change
- Individuals have personal choice
- Many factors contribute to individual identity