Intercultural Communication: U.S.-Japan Cultural Studies (Ⅱ)

Part 2: Survey of Literature on Intercultural Communication: Shortcomings and Effective Interactions

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Introduction

In recent years, the study of intercultural communication as a subject of speech communication has become an enormously important endeavor. There has been a concomitant increase in the number of intercultural communication courses and workshops being offered at institutions of higher learning and other social organizations throughout the world. Associated with this growth of the field has been the emergence of published materials authored by researchers and practitioners in the field of communication and in other related disciplines. There exists a plethora of written materials focusing on cultural aspects of communication, human communication behavior, and cross-cultural training. Yet it is somewhat startling, given the varied interest of the people involved, that little attention has been directed toward an exploration of: the nature and the process of intercultural communication; the effects of different levels of communication on successful intercultural relations; pragmatic approaches to effective intercultural communication; and a variety of factor analyses as to why people (including Japanese and Americans) behave that way or how and why the differences in social structure, hierarchical systems, emotional expressions, nonverbal behavioral patterns and proxemics affect intercultural communication. The paucity of literature on these topics will not enhance our awareness and understanding of different cultures, and our effectiveness in intercultural communication.

The purpose of this section is not to review the vast amount of general literature and scattered articles which depict all aspects of inter-

cultural communication, nor is it a type of cross-cultural training since such an undertaking requires more than a life-time of analysis, and limitations of space preclude such an enormous task. Rather it attempts to select and highlight the pertinent literature on intercultural communication in general and on intercultural communication as it takes place between Japanese and Americans. It should be noted that the present author based his selection on three considerations. He chose the relevant literature: (1) written primarily by communication theorists and in part by behavioral scientists; (2) which not only addresses some of the issues and inherent problems raised above but provides a guide, framework, and perspectives for understanding effective intercultural communication in an engaging manner; (3) from which he had been much benefited during the process of research project.*

Investigations and assessment

Hall, known to be one of the most qualified communication theorists, has authored numerous books dealing with nonverbal communication and relations between culture and communication. In "The Silent Language (1959)," he explored a new frontier in the study of implicit areas of culture and human behavior in line with communication. He also points out a number of distinctions in levels of culture and communication ranging from formal and informal to technical. Although space constrains do not allow a detailed description of "The Silent Language," each chapter aims for a blend of academic thoroughness and general public revelence. Taken as a whole, the book is a significant contribution to our knowledge of the "out-of-awareness" aspects of communication and of understanding intercultural communication in general.

In "The Hidden Dimension (1966)," he draws attention to the proxemic behavioral patterns of people in different cultures (including Japan). The term "proxemics" was in fact first coined by Hall. Chapters

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* Some of the fundamental issues associated with the literature on different styles of negotiations and decision-making processes particularly between Japanese and Americans will be investigated in the next article.

Ten, Eleven, and Twelve are designed to shed light on our own out-of-awareness proxemic patterns. By drawing heavily from Hediger's theory, he expands on descriptions of the following distance zones: intimate, personal, social and public.

"Beyond Culture (1977)" is a book in which Hall synthesizes a number of insights and concepts from his earlier books mentioned above. In "Beyond Culture," by opening the chapter with a discussion of the paradox of culture, he describes a link between cultural variations and communicative patterns by using the term "context." What continues to get the reader's attention would be Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight in which he gives a detailed account of how he envisages the contexting process and what it is as well as how it works. High and low context cultures are also examined and contrasted.* Hall's constrastive method of characterizing cultures as high-context or low-context reminds the reader of B. Bernstein's typology of restricted code versus elaborated code. The book is rich in insights and makes a meaningful addition to the literature which concerns intercultural communication.

In his most recent book entitled "The Dance of Life (1983)," Hall enlarges on the main subject of time and explains the way in which people are tied together yet isolated from each other by different threads of ryhthm and nonverbal codes such as time and speech. It appears that in contrast with his earlier book "The Silent Language," the concept of time as culture is more pathtakingly formulated and analyzed in this book in the following divergent cultures: African culture; North American culture, including the Native American cultures; South American cultures; European cultures; and Japanese culture. The first part, under the heading of "Time as Culture," treats different kinds of time (Sacred Time; Profane Time; Micro Time; Sync Time; Personal Time; Biological Time; Physical Time; and Metaphisical Time) and Monochronic and Polychronic

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* In high-context communication or message, the listener, for example, is already contexted. Therefore, he or she does not need to be told in great detail whereas in low-context communication, the listener knows very little and needs to be informed and told almost everything. The Americans, Swiss, and North Europeans are regarded as low-context while the Arabs and the Japanese are high-context.

Time. The other sections delve into how cultures handle, pattern, and talk about time as a way of getting additional insights into those cultures and understanding psychodynamic aspects of the people. The second part focuses its attention on how people in different cultures synchronize their movements and speech patterns with others. In this part, Hall pulls together a range of material from many related disciplines to introduce the concept of synchrony and entrainment (the term coined by William Condon). "The Dance of Life" presents a significant contribution to the study of nonverbal communication in general and intercultural communication in specific.

Of the communication theorists, Condon and Yousef offer an extended discussion of new approaches to intercultural communication effectiveness. While there have been a great many communication specialists who have spelled out selected aspects of intercultural communication: international communication; interpersonal communication across cultures; approaches to human communication and mass communication, "An Introduction to Intercultural Communication (1975)" provides the reader in the field of communication and culture with a thorough background of the fundamental issues which underlie the study of effective intercultural communication. In the book, they also predispose the reader to consider cultural roots of his or her values, behavior, and the behavior of others. Furthermore, the process of intercultural communication is explored by them in a lucid manner.

Prosser's book "The Cultural Dialogue (1978)" draws together many new vistas of insights and conclusions from many academic disciplines. The book not only gives a better understanding of how communication and culture interact both at the theoretical and practical level but also leaves the reader with a question of how one can become an effective intercultural communicator. Part One overviews fundamental issues in intercultural communication; Part Two summarizes the role which components of communication play in any interaction between communities or cultures; Part Three makes further inquiries into the components of culture and details some linkages between communication and culture. Although in Part Four, Prosser applies his key theories to an actual

practice—an actual dialogue, the dialogue is primarily confined to two national groups—Americans and Japanese, not the dialogue among and between people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Nonetherless, a major strength of this book is that it will serve as the basis for developing a humanistic view toward intercultural communication.

Further insight into the humanistic side of intercultural communication is also found in "Communicating Across Cultures For What? (1976)" introduced by Kenneth Boulding and edited by Condon and Saito.* The book contains selected transcripts of the conference proceedings and the format prepared for a symposium on Humane Responsibility in Intercultural Communication held in Tokyo in 1976. By calling on the resources of specialists in the fields of communication, behavioral sciences, and social sciences from many parts of the world, the volume addresses contemporary and long-range questions of intercultural communication in its relation to the technology of communication, the patterns of cultural change, and cultural values. Hall speaks on "Cultural Models in Transcultural Communication," Y.V.L. Rao, from India and director of a research institute in Singapore contributes a paper talking about "Some Dilemmas in Cross-Cultural Communication," Kawata, an economist, reports on "Contemporary International Relations," and Schramm presents "A Note on the Building Bridges." All of them and other participants, including Stewart express their concern over such issues as how people throughout the world can preserve intercultural unity, cultural diversity, and humanism with a view to technological changes that have been taking place around us. In the words of Condon and Saito, "the symposium theme of 'humane responsibility' was chosen in order to encourage discussion of issues in intercultural communication in the broadest terms, rather than focusing on the narrower consideration of political or legal responsibilities (p. 2)."

"Intercommunication Among Nations and People's (1978)" edited by Prosser is a conceptually sound and refreshing book. It attempts to define

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* Those who are interested in the study of empathic communication in connection with humane aspect of communication, see Howell's book "The Empathic Communicator (1982)."

international and intercultural communication as a field of an inter-disciplinary study in a "global village." Although the amounts and kinds of material devoted to particular topics on communication and culture vary from chapter to chapter, the volume, for example, seeks to discover a broader intercultural understanding of theoretical and methodological perspectives on: Intercommunication; attitude formation and opinion development; the communication of leadership; communication conflict resolution; communication as agent and index of social change; propaganda; freedom; communication rights and censorship; and the integrative role of intercommunication. What intrigues the author of this article is the fact the volume is a collection of essays contributed by forty researchers from a wide variety of academic disciplines. Prosser puts it: "The study of intercultural and international communication is shared by the best efforts of anthropologists, political scientists, public opinion analysts, sociologists, historians, communicalogists, and varied other scholars (p. x)." Furthermore, the volume is a collaboration of twenty nine American scholars and eleven non-American scholars. For instance, the following are the major contributors: Michael Prosser; Walter J. Ong, S.J.; Ali A. Mazuri: Edward Hall; Dell Hymes; A.W. van den Ban and others.

Samovar and Porter (1972 & 1982) have stressed communication processes as vital to intercultural competence. Their discussion centers around the following eight variables which they consider major sourses of communication difficulty: attitudes; social organization; patterns of thought; roles and role expectations; language; space; time; and non-verbal expression. Recognizing and understanding these variables are helpful if we wish to reach a degree of intercultural competence through communication processes. Likewise, Hoopes (1973) brings together many articles which not only cover many aspects of the relationship between culture and communication process but touch on a number of basic problems with which researchers and practitioners in intercultural communication have to deal. The first section describes basic issues in intercultural communication research addressed by Porter and Samovar; Stewart; Hoopes; Hwang; Daniel; Triandis; and Smith. The second section demon-

strates applications related to cross-cultural training and the intercultural communications workshop. Articles presented by Brislin; Pedersen and Hoopes; and Mestenhauser talk about how to conduct intercultural communication workshops which help the participants deepen their understanding and enhance their awareness of the role culture plays in intercultural relations.

Smith in his book "Transracial Communication (1973)" examines the process of communication as it takes place between different racial groups rather than between the people of the same race. The book further discusses the fundamental transracial problems of which most of the people are unaware, and makes the reader more aware of our own culturally influenced patterns of behavior which affect effective interpersonal communication among different ethnic and racial groups. While Smith emphasizes the salient features of transracial communication, the book is highly relevant to many aspects of interpersonal communication across cultures. Chapter One gives a partial review of processes, and possibilities of transracial communication to be followed by discussions of communication among different racial groups within the scope of communication theory, definitions of transcultural communication and ethnic groups, the process as well as the purpose of transcultural communication. Chapter Three offers a viewpoint of culture and communication both verbal and nonverbal, black language styles, and functions of black language—all of which appear to set the tone for the rest of chapters. Chapter Six focuses its attention on symbolism, and Smith argues how symbols that exist in one ethnic group affect multi-cultural communication. By including insights and examples from other disciplines and from his personal experiences, he presents a model of transcultural communication which enables the reader to increase an awareness of effective interpersonal communication between groups.

Barna (1976) investigates major issues which stand in the way of effective communication across cultures. She has chosen the following five causes for unsuccessful intercultural communication and communication breakdown when two or more people from different cultures interact with each other: language problems; nonverbal misunderstanding;

the presence of preconceptions and stereotypes; the tendency to evaluate; and the high anxiety which is very common in cross-cultural experiences. She maintains that "one way to reach an improved state of awareness and sensitivity to what might go wrong is to examine five variables in the communication process that seem to be major stumbling blocks when the dyad or small group is cross cultural (p. 293)." In her view, a lack of understanding of these variables would result in serious communication problems.

Ruben (1976), in a similar fashion, looks at seven categories which he considers crucial to successful intercultural interaction. The seven categories he examines are: display of respect; interaction posture; orientation to knowledge; empathy; role behavior; interaction management; and tolerance for ambiguity. Stewart (1971) is very specific in dealing with the issues on successful intercultural communication, though he treats intercultural commnication problems primarily encountered by Americans. In chapter two of part 1, the concepts of patterns of thinking, assumptions, and values are discussed with a view to dispelling the confusion which is associated with the uses of these terms. The book also pays increased amounts of attention to contrasting cultural patterns of many parts of the world.

Fisher in his book "American Communication In A Global Society (1979)," in turn, offers his perspective analysis of problems and prospects the United States faces in international affairs. While the book does not stress communication content of intercultural interaction in a practical sense, it provides new ways of looking at the effects of American communication on the rest of the world and also offers trends and new considerations which might influence the policies of both governmental and educational institutions. It appears that the book is chiefly written for those who engage in foreign service affairs and international communication activities. However, the book will be of interest to anyone who shows deep concern about American foreign policy in international and intercultural interactions with the rest of the world at present and in the future. "Public Diplomacy and the Behavioral Sciences (1972)" by Fisher also covers specific problem areas likely to be encountered by foreign

affair specialists and private citizens who are (and will be) involved in policy making matters and international relations with their overseas counterparts. In comparison with "American Communication In A Global Society," this book is more illuminating and forward-looking. As a starting point, he looks into perceptions and its relationship to culture. And then he explores effects which culture and psychological aspects of the international/intercultural communication process have on the outcome of policy making and overseas problems by employing considerable portions of the behavioral sciences approaches (deriving mainly from psychology, sociology, and anthropology). In his opinion, the behavioral sciences could hold the key to an exploration of why people do what they do and think what they think in view of intercultural communication. This is a book which challenges conventional thinking about the conduct of foreign affairs in terms of international communication.

Glenn's "Man and Mankind: Conflict and Communication between Cultures (1982)" is a book written for whose who wish more depth in probing a cognitive analysis of societies, nations, cultures, communication processes, and communication problems that often arise between cultures. By using a multidisciplinary collaboration of anthropology, sociolngy, history, psycholinguistics, political sciences, and communication, he devises his own model for intercultural communication analysis (which is based on cognitive approach) to the causes of intercultural conflicts and misunderstandings. His contention is as such that intercultural conflicts as well as intercultural misunderstandings do not stem from political reasons, but from differences in the way each culture gains and organizes information and creates world views in a different manner. Glenn has, for example, this to say: "Understanding communication calls, first of all, for an understanding of the manner in which people acquire, organize, and transmit information (p. 7)." Glenn's experience working for the U.S. State Department as a simultaneous interpreter is well reflected throughout the book.

"Toward Internationalism (1979)" by Smith and Luce is a collection of the material extracted from books and articles by communication specialists as well as communication theorists. For instance, in "Culture

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Shock and the Problem of Adjustment in New Cultural Environment," Oberg portrays symptoms of culture shock and anxiety. Thereafter his discussion revolves around the four stages a stranger goes through (leading to adjustment) in a different cultural environment. Hall describes the way Americans, English, French, and Germans treat spatial patterns—the concept, which was excerpted from "The Hidden Dimension," is spelled out in "Proxemics In A Cross-Cultural Context: Germans, English, and French." The book is interdisciplinary in nature and elaborates on intercultural interaction between Americans and nationals from Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. In "Out of House and Home," Condon and Yousef discuss the use of home space and home styles found in several different societies in relation to the cultural values and communicative patterns. The material was taken from "An Introduction to Intercultural Communication."

"Handbook of Intercultural Training: Volumes I, II, & III (1983)," edited by Landis and Brislin, are valuable source books for understanding a comprehensive theory of intercultural research and of the training which enable the reader to increase intercultural competence as well as intercultural communication. Volume One offers a vast collection of insights and analyses of intercultural training theory. Volume Two consists of twelve chapters, with the research methodology and training methodology. Volume Three is a collection of readings which illustrates intercultural education and area studies. The articles in these volumes are drawn from more than thirty research findings, essays, and professional papers written by intercultural communication theorists, researchers, and trainers. An important part of these volumes would be bibliographies which they assembled for the reader. These volumes would also be a useful supplement to current books dealing with intercultural communication.

The literature which touches on many aspects of communication and culture between the East and the West is extremely scarce. Oliver pinpoints the deficiency in literature on the topic in his books "Communication and Culture (1971) and "Communication and Culture in Ancient India and China" (1971). Like Northrop's East and West comparison, "Communication and Culture in Ancient India and China" particularly attempts

to specity differences in the approach to communication in the Western and Eastern cultures. Although the major thrust of the book is not to provide some practical guide or advice for explaining the differences between western and eastern communication patterns, it allows the reader to re-think how western communicative perceptions and presumptions differ from those of the Indians and Chinese.

Sitaram and Cogdell (1976) seek to explore cultural variations in communicative behavior between westerners and easterners in their book "Foundations of Intercultural Communication." The book presents a detailed account of both verbal and nonverbal behaviors as they are practiced by people in India, the Middle East, Asia and the United States, and offers a breadth of topics such as value systems and the relationship between mass communication and intercultural communication. The author of this article feels that while "Foundations of Intercultural Communication" focuses more on the implication for effective intercultural communication teaching than on research, the book gives a possible theoretical base to explain the differences in communicative patterns between western and eastern cultures.

Turning our attention to the literature on intercultural communication dealing with Japanese and Americans, few offers answers to the critical questions raised at the outset of this article and fewer helps further the understanding of the theoretical basis of interpersonal intercultural communication between the two national groups. Most rare are the following literature to which the author of this article has been much indebted.

"Public and Private Self in Japan and the United States (1975)" by Barnlund thorougly examines different aspects of the relationship between culture and communication in Japan and the United States. The book is the outcome of a comparative study investigating the character of interpersonal communication between Japanese and Americans. To explore the differences and similarities in communicative behavior of the two peoples, Barnlund presents extensive research data and findings. Chapter One talks about the emergence of "global village", the coinage used by Marshall McLuhan, and also deals with the immensity of the challenge

of intercultural communication in a global village. Problems of meaning involved in cultural differences, interpersonal-intercultural interactions, and the role of the collective unconscious in intercultural relations are being analyzed. A fasinating concept called the "interpersonal equation" is also introduced in the chapter. Chapter Two deals with the concept of the "public self" versus "private self" in Japan and the United States-unique relationships in these two cultures and also verbal interaction patterns of the Japanese and Americans. Chapter Three entails profiles of two cultures. The remainder of the chapters look into the depth of verbal/nonverbal self-disclosure which distinguishes the two peoples. The final chapter summarizes relationships among the findings and suggests the growing importance of intercultural understanding. Barnlund, for example, points out that in our effort to gain an empathy or rapport for other cultures, people must search for the truth about themselves in the context of their own cultures.

"Intercultural Encounters With Japan (1974)" by Condon and Saito collects many articles into a single book. The book contains a number of diverse topics regarding intercultural communication between the Japanese and Americans. Most of the topics not only assist the reader in appreciating and understanding issues inherent in an intercultural interaction involving the two nations. They also provide guidelines for establishing effective intercultural relationships between the Japanese and Americans. Doi, for example, describes the extent to which the concept of "Amae (Japanese personal trait)" affects language behavior and character of the Japanese people. In his opinion, the main reason why the Japanese people show hesitancy and manipulate ambiguous expressions when interacting with Americans, for instance, derives from the concept of Amae. Nakane's article "The Social System Reflected in Interpersonal Communication" (which grew out of her book "Japanese Society") examines in depth the complex relationship between interpersonal communication and the existing social relationship in Japanese society. To talk about interpersonal communication in Japanese society, Nakane sets up three categories which differenciate Japanese from other people. Condon's article "The Values Approach to Cultural Patterns of Communication"

makes the new ways of viewing the relationship between cultural values and intercultural communication characteristics in Japan and the United States. Other works written by social scientists and selected students are worth reading and accessible to non-specialists with an interest in communication, language and culture relationships. The influence of cultural values as well as cultural patterns on the character of the Japanese is further demonstrated by "In search of What's Japanese about Japan (1975)" by Condon and Kurata. What the reader may find useful in the book are a number of pictures and brief explanations which contribute to our understanding of largely unnoticed the Japanese cultural values and behavioral patterns in connection with intercultural communication.

"Indigenous Barriers to Communication in the Japan Interpreter (1973)" by Kunihiro provides incisive and broadly accessible explanations into problems and issues Japanese and Americans face in intercultural communication. While the main discussion in the article revolves around Japanese patterns of communication as they relate to its internal sociocultural structures and Japanese-American relations, he closely examines the following critical questions: "Where are Japanese and Americans likely to misunderstand?," "Why does there exist miscommunication?," and "What are the primary causes of the communication gap when the Japanese are faced with Americans in an intercultural setting?" and offers concrete examples and suggestions as to how to bridge the U.S.-Japan communication gap.

Kunihiro's another work "The Japanese Language and Intercultural Communication (1976)" is an article written for Americans and non-Japanese as well. In the article, he analyzes the Japanese people's conception of and attitude toward language in its total scope including a discussion of such topics as the Japanese people's peculiar view toward language and mode of language usage, and unique patterns of cognition and perceptions with reference to intercultural communication. Both of his works will fill a gap that currently exists in the literature on language, culture, and communication patterns. "Mutual Understanding of Different Cultures (1981)" by Naotsuka and Sakamoto also investigates the relation-

ship between language, culture and communication patterns. On the basis of their survey conducted between 1975 and 1978, they display both a penetrating insight and empirical analysis of intercultural communication problems among Japanese, non-Japanese and Americans. The book will help lend non-communication specialists to the point of sophistication since it clearly demonstrates areas in which, what Barnlund calls, "critical incidents" that are likely to occur and also presents examples of misinterpretation of both verbal and nonverbal behaviors leading to intercultural misunderstandings inherent in an interaction involving the aforementioned national groups.

"With Respect to the Japanese: A Guide for Americans (1984)" by Condon is a practical guide book which is primarily, if not exclusively, written for Americans (and non-Japanese as well) who are in need of socializing and interacting with Japanese in a work or social setting. The book is not theoretically oriented, nor is it meant for a scholarly audience, but it strives for an awareness of unexpected difficulties and common intercultural communication problems which often occur when Americans deal with Japanese. The book also investigates values and behavioral patterns which affect the way Americans and Japanese view, interpret and react to each other and offers practical suggestions as to how Americans and Japanese can establish effective intercultural communication.

Summary

In this article, the deficiency of literature on effective intercultural communication and its shortcomings were briefly examined. Inasmuch as the key concern of this paper was not to review the bulk of literature whose cover title begins with intercultural, cross-cultural, or communication and culture, and vice versa, only the relevant literature-(1) which deals with intercultural communication in general and intercultural communication focusing on Japanese and Americans to a lesser extent; (2) that has been authored mainly by communication theorists and behavioral scientists; and (3) to which the present author has been much indebted during the process of his research-was merely chosen and highlighted.

The reasons for these were the obvious lack of space and limitations of time. However, most of the printed materials found in the selected literature will broaden an awareness and a framework for understanding effective intercultural communication among different cultural groups as well as between Japanese and Americans.

For the study of intercultural communication to make strides and move out of the early stage of development, scholars and researchers in the field of intercultural communication must be aware of the fact that they are in much greater demand than ever before to advance new theories, concepts, analyses, and models which will facilitate intercultural communication. The world in which we will live requires us to increase a higher degree of understanding and far greater capacity for cooperation and interdependence between different cultural groups, desparate people, and countries through effective communication in human terms. However, one significant thing communication specialists and people in the field of intercultural communication must take into consideration in this regard can be summarized by the following remarks of Kenneth Boulding: To some extent communication across cultures is a rich man's good; poor people simply cannot afford it and are trapped within the confines of their small neighborhood. They are confined to the sometimes healthy, but often pathological dynamic of their immediate and local situation and cannot break out of it. How we make all the world rich enough to enjoy cross-cultural communication is a critical part of the problem (p. iii, 1976).

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