

# DM2556

# Intercultural communication

## Lecture 2

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**‘Intercultural encounters are ubiquitous; they occur within neighbourhoods, across national borders, in face-to-face interactions, through mediated channels, in business, in personal relationships, in tourist travel, and in politics.’ (IC 2)**

**Nevertheless, here comes some motivational cues:**

**Demographic imperative:** multicultural societies in EU & USA

**Technological imperative:** massmedia (global village), travel, Internet, voice-over-internet (Skype), mobile technologies, social media (fb)

**Economic imperative:** globalization (integration of labor, capital, technology, goods & information across national borders), travel, higher education

**Peace imperative:** cultural clashes, hate crimes

**Interpersonal imperative:** in our daily lives, at work and through work, when travelling, studying, through friends, via Internet and social media...

‘The term communication is defined broadly to include all activities of message exchange between an individual and the environment. All actions and events are communicative messages as soon as they are perceived by a human being. Messages are more than explicit, verbal, and intentional messages. They include all those implicit, non-verbal, and unintentional messages by which people influence one another.’

Communication is ‘a basic life process’.

‘Every cultural pattern and every single act of social behaviour involves communication in either an explicit or an implicit sense.’ (46)

(‘One cannot not communicate’)

## Components of communication:

- people (source/receiver)
- message
- channel
- encoding/decoding
- noise
- feedback
- context

## Communication

auditory (sound)  
optic/visual  
haptic (touch)  
olfactory (smell)  
gustatory (taste)

## Communication (definition) (IC 12-18):

‘Communication is a symbolic, interpretive, transactional contextual process in which people create shared meanings’ (IC 12)

(I) Symbolic, ie consists of signs:

**Symbols** (arbitrary, conventional)

**Icons** (similarity: visual, auditive, etc)

**Index** (causal connexion:  
smoke for fire)



## (2) Interpretive

Communication is always a question of interpretation (hermeneutics), ie meaning is never given. We're always trying to understand, to make sense of what others are saying



### (3) transactional

#### 4 communication models:

- **'actional' model** (sender sends message; goal is to influence)
- **'interactional' model** (sender sends to receiver, receives limited 'feedback'; goal is to influence)
- **'interpassive' model** (receiver receives message, gives limited feedback; goal is to control input)
- **'transactional' model** (messages goes back and forth between participants; construction of shared creation of meaning)

## (4) Context

Physical context  
Socio-cultural context  
Interpersonal context

## (5) Process

Communication is a process, ie is never static but dynamic; things are constantly changing, moving, developing, evolving; determined by (previous) experiences and (future) expectations; the "same" message may be interpreted differently at different times during the process.

## (6) Shared meanings

It always takes place among several participants. You don't communicate alone by yourself.

## Interpersonal communication (definition) (IC 19f)

‘Interpersonal communication is a form of communication that involves a small number of individuals who are interacting exclusively with one another and who therefore have the ability both to adapt their messages specifically for those others and to obtain immediate interpretations from them.’

Culture

High culture  
Popular culture  
Folk culture

Culture

is holistic  
is learned  
is dynamic &  
is ethnocentric

Culture is 'the **total way of life** of a people, composed of their learned and shared behaviour patterns, values, norms, and material objects'

'Culture is a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, norms, and social practices, which affect the behaviour of a relatively large group of people.' (IC 25)



An iceberg floating in the ocean. The top part is above the water surface, and the bottom part is submerged. The sky is blue with white clouds. The water is a deep blue. The iceberg is white and has some texture. The text 'Culture' is written on the top part of the iceberg. The text 'Iceberg analogy (Edward Hall)' is written on the submerged part of the iceberg. The text '10% above (visible), food, music, tools, clothes, etc' is written to the right of the top part of the iceberg. The text '90% below the surface (invisible): core aspects of culture, conventions, deeply held beliefs, values, norms' is written to the right of the submerged part of the iceberg.

**'Culture'**

10% above (visible), food, music, tools, clothes, etc

**Iceberg analogy  
(Edward Hall)**

90% below the surface  
(invisible): core aspects of culture, conventions, deeply held beliefs, values, norms

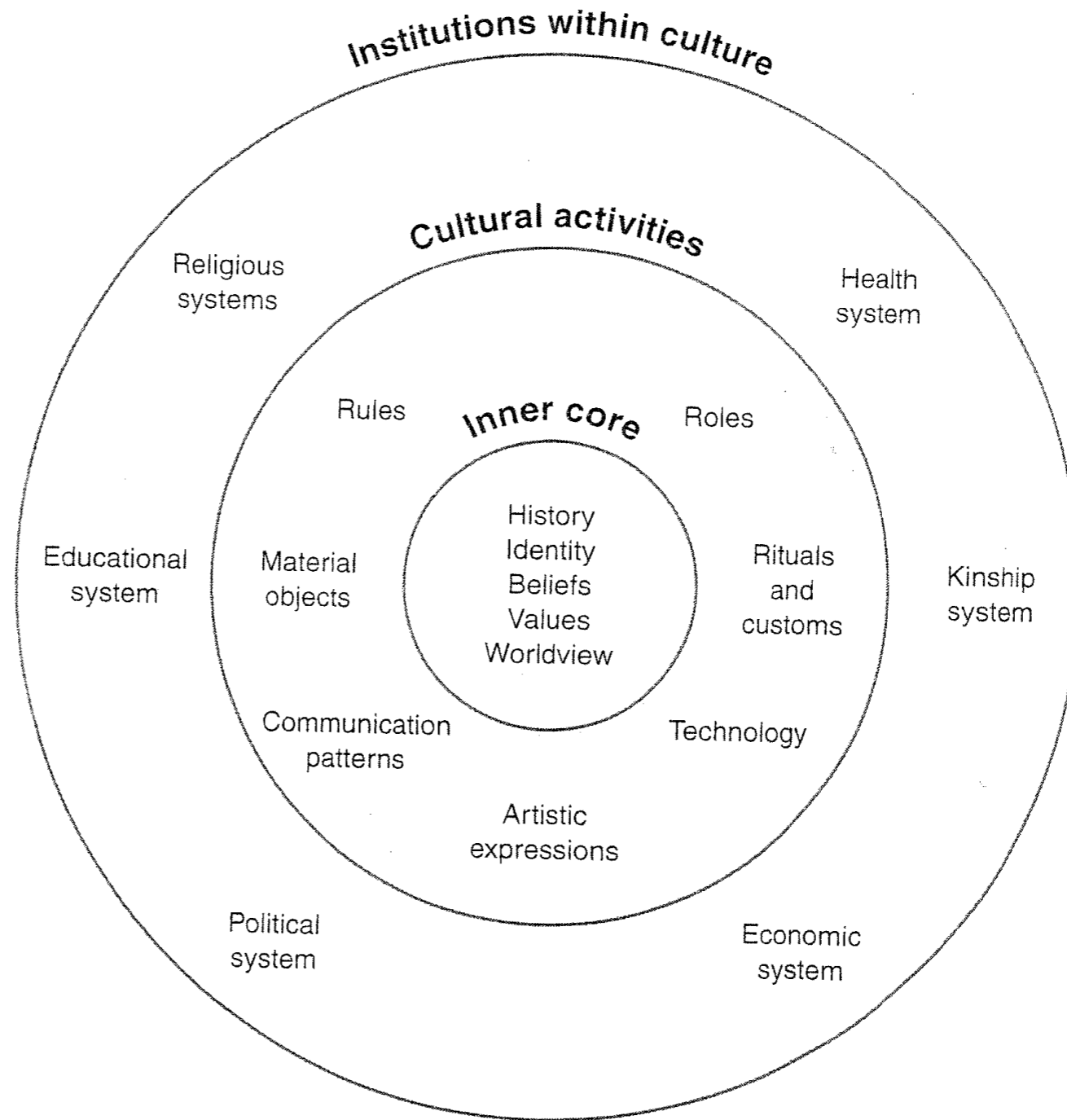




## Culture (definitions)

‘Culture is a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, norms, and social practices, which affect the behaviours of a relatively large group of people.’ (IC 25)

**‘beliefs,  
values,  
norms, and  
social  
practices’**



**Figure 3.1:** A model of culture

Source: Adapted from Dodd, Carley H. (1998) *Dynamics of Intercultural Communication*, (5th edn). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill. p. 38.

both in minds and in 'behaviours'

‘Cultures vary in language and verbal behaviour; in manners and movement; in ways of sitting, standing, and gesturing; in postures; in tones of voice and facial expressions; and in ways of handling time, space, and materials. It is culture that programs a society’s members to interpret verbal and non-verbal messages by defining what is **real**, what is **true**, what is **right**, what is **beautiful**, and what is **good**. Culture conditions individuals to certain patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving in varied social transactions.’

‘Culture is imprinted on each individual as a pattern of perception, attitudes, and behaviours that is accepted and expected by others in a given society below the level of conscious thought. We are programmed by culture from the very day we are born and are largely unaware of the hidden cultural programming that shapes many of our mind-sets and behavioural patterns.’

‘relatively large group of people.’

professional culture  
youth culture  
urban culture  
lesbian & gay culture  
etc

‘related terms’:

nation

race (social and legal construction)

ethnic group

subculture, lifestyle or social group

## What 'maintains' cultural difference?

- History, collective memory, tradition
- Nature, ecology
- Technology
- Institutional networks
- Interpersonal communication patterns
- 'Biology'



- Example of 'technological force', the **Internet**:

'the Internet helps people *sustain* their cultural beliefs, values, norms and social practices. (IC36)

## Intercultural communication (first definition) (IC 43)

‘Intercultural communication is a symbolic interpretive, transactional, contextual process in which people **from different cultures** create shared meanings.’

## Intercultural communication (second definition) (IC 49)

‘Intercultural communication occurs when large and important cultural differences create **dissimilar** interpretations and expectations about how to communicate competently.’

## “D.I.E.”

- Description
- Interpretation
- Evaluation

