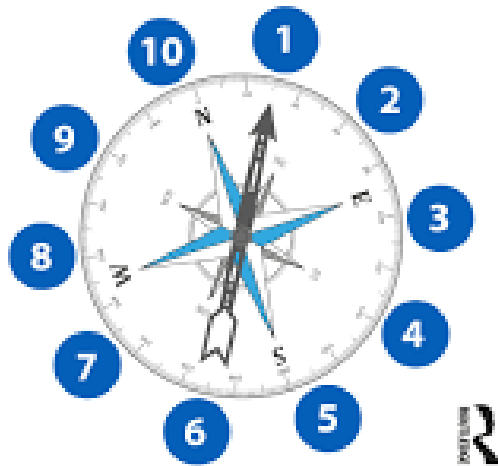


PRINCIPLES OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

IGOR E. KLYUKANOV

Second Edition



Book Review

Klyukanov, I. E. (2021). *Principles of intercultural communication* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

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Professor Igor E. Klyukanov is currently a Professor of Communication in the Department of Communication Studies at Eastern Washington University. He has numerous books and research publications in the field of intercultural and global communication. Many of his works explore intercultural communication in Russian language and culture. One of his early books, *Principles of Intercultural Communication*, was published in 2005 by Pearson Education, and Routledge has now released the second edition.

In this book, Professor Klyukanov addresses 10 principles of intercultural communication: (1) Punctuation, (2) Uncertainty, (3) Performativity, (4) Positionality, (5) Commensurability, (6) Continuum,

(7) Pendulum, (8) Transaction, (9) Synergy, and (10) Sustainability. Fully understanding a complex phenomenon like intercultural communication at present requires multi-dimensional principles, because, as the author says, “no single theory can explain a complex object in its entirety” (p. 2).

Each chapter begins with questions which invite the reader to consider each principle in the intercultural communication framework. Basic terms, thorough explanations, and precise definitions related to each principle, help the reader understand the questions. In addition, 10 case studies are given to help clarify the theory, including (1) ‘Peace Walls’ in Northern Ireland, (2) ‘The Shock of the Other’, (3) ‘Translation zone(s): A stuttering’, (4) ‘The Kosher Phone’, (5) ‘The Globalization of Chinese Medicine’, (6) ‘The 1999 Coca-Cola Scare in Europe’, (7) ‘Dialectics of Colonial Encounter: Interacting with the Kobon’, (8) ‘The Wall of Death: A Conflict Between Japanese and Western Cultures’, (9) ‘The Case of AMD: Unleashing Intercultural Potential’, and (10) ‘An Ethics of Cultural Exchange’. These case studies are intercultural diverse rather than exclusively American like other previous studies especially on cross-cultural communication (cf. Samovar et al., 2017). At the end, a few side trips—minor excursions—are included, inviting the reader to draw connections to their own experience. The many authentic incidents described allow readers to enjoy the book, even those without expertise in the field. In addition, the author’s style is reader-friendly. Although there is occasional jargon and some difficult concepts, the author explains it all clearly.

The 10 principles show us that intercultural communication is a reiterating, ongoing, and interactive process in which diverse people work toward mutual objectives. However, there are distinctions to be made among the principles. The Punctuation Principle (Ch. 1) explains how people create their identities “by drawing boundary lines between themselves.” These lines separate in-groups from out-groups, and intercultural communication means searching for “a mutually acceptable boundary fit” between in-groups and out-groups. The Uncertainty Principle (Ch. 2) discusses how people seek knowledge beneficial to their intercultural contacts, especially those with different or unpredictable backgrounds. The Performative Principle (Ch. 3) shows how people of different backgrounds use different modes to communicate. The Positionality Principle (Ch. 4) discusses how different groups “claim authority” for their worldviews. The Commensurability Principle (Ch. 5) explains how people compare their cultures with others’ and seek common ground. The Continuum Principle (Ch. 6) shows how groups, when distant from one another, construct “a shared space” for meaning. The Pendulum Principle (Ch. 7) illustrates how different groups are connected or kept apart in order to “produce multiple voices.” The Transaction Principle (Ch. 8) explains how different groups relocate within “a negotiation zone” to resolve conflicts. The Synergy Principle (Ch. 9) shows how groups integrate ‘resources’ and ‘interests’ to achieve the best results, revealing how and why the most satisfying results are produced by groups not individuals. The Sustainability Principle (Ch. 10) suggests that groups display mutual ‘tolerance’, ‘trust’, and ‘resistance’ both to maintain group identity and make interactions more effective.

This book will benefit postgraduate students, researchers, and teachers of intercultural communication at any level, as well as the general public. The ideas will certainly broaden the reader’s perspective, helping them understand and thrive in a diverse world.

Reference

Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E., McDaniel, E. R., & Roy, C. S. (2017). *Communication between cultures* (9th ed.). Cengage Learning.

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