

# **BASIC CONCEPTS OF INTERCULTURAL RELATING**

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### **Perception** [Table p.3]

#### Levels of Culture

- Culture (Objective Culture) e.g. art, literature, drama, music, dance; social, economic, political, linguistic systems; history
- culture (subjective culture) = learned, shared patterns of beliefs, behaviors, values of groups of interacting people; everyday thinking and behavior; psychological features [Table p. 4]

#### Interculturalist Approach

Focus on how differences are likely to affect “face-to-face interaction” (Bennett 1998, p.9)

Cultural-General Skills – useful in many cross-cultural situations = cultural self-awareness, nonevaluative perception, cultural adaptation strategies, cross-cultural empathy [Table pp. 5, 6, 7]

### **Language**

#### Function

- Tool for communication, system of representation for perception and thinking, guide to formation of concepts and categorization of objects, directs experience of “reality”
- Perceptual relativity

### **Non-Verbal Behavior**

- Components – voice, gestures, eye contact, spacing, touching, paralanguage -- pitch, stress, volume, speed [Table p. 8]
- Ethnocentric Perception – Failure to observe intended cues, observe cue when none intended

## **Communication Styles**

- Linear/Circular or contextual
- High Context/Low Context [Table p. 9]
- Male/Female [Table p. 10]

## **Values and Assumptions**

- Within culture there is variety but one preferred, most common [Table pp. 11, 12, 13, 14]

## **Cultural Adaptation**

- Assimilation – resocialize, replace original [Table p. 15]
- Adaptation – expansion, multicultural
- Cultural shock – Euphoria of Contact, Confusion of Disintegration, Anger of Reintegration, Self-Assured Autonomy, Creativity of Independence
- Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) [Tables pp. 16, 17, 18]
  - Denial – outsiders less than human; not recognized
  - Defense – denigrate others
  - Minimization – try to bury difference, all alike
  - Acceptance – recognize and explore differences
  - Adaptation – shift frames of reference
  - Integration – multicultural

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Source: Milton J. Bennett, “Intercultural Communication: A Current Perspective.” In Milton J. Bennett (ed) *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication: Selected Readings*. Yarmouth, Main: Intercultural Press, 1998, pp. 1-34.

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