

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Intercultural Communication

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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND IDENTITY

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Intercultural Communication and Identity

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Abstract: This Element asserts how identity as a construct enables a critical awareness of how speakers position themselves and are positioned by others in intercultural encounters. It discusses how identity vis-à-vis culture has been theorized through social psychological, poststructuralist, and critical lenses, and how identity is discursively constructed and mediated. Rejecting essentialist notions of language and culture, this Element demonstrates how inscriptions of identity such as race, ethnicity, nationality, and class can be used to critically examine the dynamics of situated intercultural encounters and to understand how such interactions can index competing and colluding ideologies. By examining identity research from different parts of the world, it casts a light on how identities are performed in diverse intercultural contexts and discusses research methodologies that have been employed to examine identity in intercultural communication.

Keywords: identity, ideology, positionality, inequality, critical intercultural communication

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Theorizing Identity	3
3	Performing Identity	9
4	Categorizing Identity	17
5	Contextualizing Identity	24
6	Researching Identity	39
7	Conclusion	44
	References	47