

# Intercultural Communication

by Anna Sudoł and Natalia Sas



# Origins

- Intercultural communication stretches back into antiquity. It all began when people from different cultures started to meet together and communicate with each other. First, it was promoted by missionaries, merchants or diplomats.
- As an academic field of study and research it has been popular since 1950s. The term 'intercultural communication' was first used when the American anthropologists **Edward T. Hall, Ruth and John Useem** began to explore how people from different cultures can successfully communicate.
- During the past decades the growth of globalization, immigration and international tourism has involved large numbers of people in intercultural interaction. This has led to an increased desire and need for knowledge regarding how people from different cultures, beliefs and religions come together to work and communicate with each other.



# Definition

Interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds;  
a process of exchanging, negotiating, and mediating one's cultural  
differences through language, non-verbal gestures,  
and space relationships



# Interdisciplinary orientation

- cultural anthropology
- psychology
- social psychology
- sociology
- linguistics and semiotics
- cultural studies
- rhetoric



# Benefits of studying Intercultural Communication according to F.E. Jandt<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ improving verbal and nonverbal communication;
- ▶ becoming better in recognizing and undertaking communication behaviours in various contexts;
- ▶ better adaptation to a new environment;
- ▶ learning how to understand, reduce and overcome stress;
- ▶ better understanding of one's own culture and finding one's place in a society;
- ▶ reduced feeling of anxiety in contacts with members of other cultures;
- ▶ learning about customs and habitual behaviours of members of other cultures.

<sup>1</sup>Jandt, F. E. (1995) *Intercultural Communication*. Sage Thousand Oaks.

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# Benefits of Intercultural Communication

- willingness to accept differences;
- personal growth through increased tolerance;
- dialogue;
- cooperation;
- developing a positive attitude towards otherness;
- increased international, national, and local commerce;

