

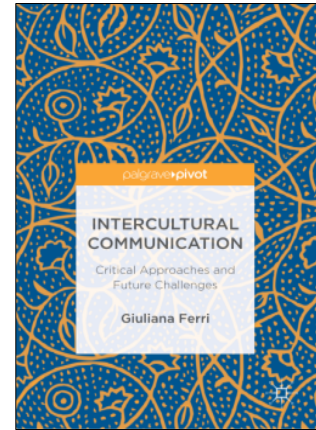
Giuliana Ferri, **Intercultural Communication: Critical Approaches and Future Challenges**, London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 117 pp., \$54.99 (hardcover).

Reviewed by

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Recently, an increasing number of intercultural researchers have turned their attention to ethical studies in intercultural dialogue from a philosophical perspective (Guilherme, 2017). Giuliana Ferri, in **Intercultural Communication: Critical Approaches and Future Challenges**, critically examines intercultural theory and its interrelations with globalization, education, and dialogue in multicultural societies. Her innovative work is in proposing a new model of rational communicative ethics concerning the needs and demands of communicators in coping with relations of self and other and keeping open-ended dialogue interaction, through critical reflection of the two paradigms that are commonly applied in intercultural communication: tolerance and intercultural awareness. It contributes not only to giving an interdisciplinary philosophic perspective of intercultural research but also to providing a new intercultural paradigm that challenges static interpretations of self and other based on Levinas's ethics theory. On the one hand, Ferri elucidates the intercultural ethical dialogue model as interdisciplinary ideas and theories for intercultural researchers to shift their focus toward philosophical views through the systematic exploration of current intercultural communicative approaches with contacting of leading critical thinkers, including Bakhtin, Derrida, Adorno, and Spivak. On the other hand, Ferri queries the current common instrumentalist approaches for intercultural communication and provides an insightful and alternative intercultural paradigm involving Levinas's ethics theory, which may have a pedagogical significance in intercultural education, especially in cultivating learners' intercultural attitudes. Thus, it is undoubtedly an important and practical book for educators and language teachers to help learners effectively develop intercultural competence.



This volume is a collection of five chapters that gives us ideas for reflection of the three main paradigms that are common in intercultural communication research—tolerance, intercultural awareness, and intercultural competence—and also offers an alternative intercultural ethics paradigm that is more apt to reconcile the relationship between intercultural encounters. The introductory chapter starts out with a critical framework for intercultural communication, the ethics of interculturalism, and modalities of interculturality. It helps readers clearly understand the current development trends of intercultural communication. The author in this chapter makes great efforts to explore the relationship between self and other in intercultural interaction within the background of widening gaps along axes of citizenship, inequality, and cultural hegemony.

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From the interdisciplinary perspective in chapter 2, the author analyzes the current critical intercultural communication frameworks—perspectivism, social constructivism, and emancipatory critique—aiming to establish the appropriate relations between self and other in intercultural interaction. Through the discussion, the situated, dynamic, and shifty relations between self and other are revealed in intercultural interaction, so it is difficult to grasp the relations and negotiate meaning for intercultural encounters, especially in situations of power imbalance. In this respect, it is necessary to guide intercultural encounters to concern alterity in terms of letting otherness of the other emerge in interaction while considering power differences between self and other in intercultural education.

Chapter 3 provides an in-depth exploration of the epistemological assumptions of intercultural communication toward two conceptions of ethical engagement between self and other. The author in this chapter emphasizes the importance of conciliating differences within the confines of some universal ethical rules, and advocates that Levinasian ethics can be regarded as an alternative assumption, riveting the needs and demands of other in intercultural interaction, which makes teachers and educators understand that the premise of meeting encounters' ethical needs and demands is to obey some common ethical rules regarding laws, institutions, and social relations. It suggests the pedagogical importance of cultivating learners' attitudes toward concerning others' needs and demands based on common intercultural communicative rules.

Chapter 4 makes a comparison analysis among three models of competence: Deardorff's pyramid model, the ICOPROMO project, and Phipps's notion of intercultural competence in terms of dwelling. The three models give us guidance to adapt intercultural living better in the process of gradual improvement, as the first model emphasizes the acquisition of intercultural knowledge and skills, the second model claims the importance of transformation and internalization of intercultural knowledge and skills, and the third model advocates for the valuable experience from intercultural knowledge and skills in interaction. The author in this chapter provokes a rethinking of attitudes of reconciliation, universal tolerance toward intercultural differences, and ignorance of the messiness of intercultural living. Meanwhile, this chapter offers an insightful model of dialogism based on the notion that sojourning is established, which proposes to reconfigure the relations between self and other, and to discover the incompleteness of the self in dialogic interaction. However, it also falls short on certain aspects. It has an unsolved problem of how to assess the complex dynamics of intercultural competence effectively, though the critique of the traditional component assessment model is mentioned.

The last chapter gives us a clear thread by which to grip the development of the intercultural ethical paradigm through summarizing the main themes presented in previous chapters. This paradigm, based on Levinas's ethics theory, reveals that intercultural communication offers the opportunity to discover the otherness, and to accept the fact that both self and other remain unknowable in dialogic interaction. It provides teachers and educators with a new perspective on how foreign language teaching involves shifting learners' attitudes that are developed in the praxis of engagement with the other, which includes criticality of constructs of culture, ability to assess the context of interaction, and readiness to engage in dialogue. And it also gives intercultural researchers ideas about the future directions of intercultural communication: the development of a postmethodological framework, a shift of research toward precarity and insecurity in intercultural interaction, and a concern for alterity. It lays the foundation for intercultural educators and researchers to conduct their practice in an effort to facilitate the development of learners' intercultural competence.

This volume can be recommended for the following reasons. First, it brings a solid theoretical foundation for future intercultural philosophical research, such as the critical intercultural themes of perspectivism, social constructivism, and emancipatory critique. Second, a new and insightful dialogic interaction model is proposed that gives educators and researchers a sensible alternative on how to make intercultural communication effective and appropriate. Third, some suggestions are put forward that point out the future directions for intercultural researchers, such as the development of a postmethodological framework, a shift of research toward precarity and insecurity in intercultural interaction, and attention on alterity.

Overall, from the interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives, this book provides researchers and language teachers with the critical tools needed to challenge instrumentalist approaches to communication in a diverse global context, characterized by conflict and fear of the other and fresh insights to scholars of education, applied linguistics, and sociology. And it can also serve as a guide for teachers and educators to help learners develop their intercultural competence effectively, especially intercultural attitudes.

### Reference

Guilherme, M. (2017). Freire's philosophical contribution for a theory of intercultural ethics: A deductive analysis of his work. *Journal of Moral Education*, 46, 422–434.