

Translation as a process of intercultural communication

Intercultural communication principles guide the process of exchanging meaningful and unambiguous information across cultural boundaries, in a way that preserves mutual respect and minimizes antagonism. For these purposes, culture is a shared system of symbols, beliefs, attitudes, values, expectations, and norms of behaviour. It refers to coherent groups of people whether resident wholly or partly within state territories, or existing without residence in any particular territory. Hence, these principles may have equal relevance when a tourist seeks help, where two well-established independent corporations attempt to merge their operations, and where politicians attempt to negotiate world peace. Two factors have raised the importance of this topic:

- improvements in communication and transportation technology have made it possible for previously stable cultures to meet in unstructured situations, *e.g.* the internet opens lines of communication without mediation, while budget airlines transplant ordinary citizens into unfamiliar milieu. Experience proves that merely crossing cultural boundaries can be considered threatening, while positive attempts to interact may provoke defensive responses. Misunderstanding may be compounded by either an exaggerated sensitivity to possible slights, or an exaggerated and over-protective fear of giving offence;

- some groups believe that the phenomenon of globalization has reduced cultural diversity and so reduced the opportunity for misunderstandings, but characterizing people as a homogeneous market is simplistic. One product or brand only appeals to the material aspirations of one self-selecting group of buyers, and its sales performance will not affect the vast multiplicity of factors that may separate the cultures.