Giuliana Ferri

Intercultural Communication

Critical Approaches and Future Challenges

palgrave
macmillan

Preface

This book came about as the result of a doctoral research on the theoretical underpinnings of the field of intercultural communication. Its main purpose is to interrogate three paradigms that have become common currency in intercultural communication, but that are becoming the object of scrutiny in recent critical approaches to the field: the role of tolerance in shaping the relation between self and other, the idea of intercultural awareness as a narrative of reconciliation and final erasure of all differences and finally the notion of intercultural competence. These paradigms are interrogated in a systematic review of the relevant literature, while proposing an alternative conceptualisation of the intercultural, based on the ethics of Levinas. In doing this, the book confronts the issue of future developments in the field, in particular in relation to new methodological perspectives that reflect the contingent and shifting nature of intercultural relations. The book questions the idea of intercultural dialogue as an unproblematised construct, and it focuses on aligning research in this field with current debates on tolerance and multiculturalism, and with the issue of displacement and conflict at a global level. This critical analysis of the field of intercultural communication challenges current instrumentalist approaches to communication in complex and often challenging circumstances in an ever increasing diverse global context, characterised by conflict and fear of the other.

London, UK — Giuliana Ferri

Contents

1 Intercultural Communication-Current Challenges and Future Directions 1
Main Themes 1
Methodological Considerations 3
Self and Other, a Question of Difference? 8
Philosophical Inquiry in Intercultural Communication 9
The Role of Levinasian Ethics in Problematizing Intercultural Communication 11
Conclusion 12
References 13

2 A Critical Framework for Intercultural Communication 17
Introduction 17
Culture 'Under Erasure' 18
Perspectivist Intercultural Communication 20
Post-modernism and the Politics of Interculturality 23
Holliday and the Critical Cosmopolitan Potential 28
Guilherme: Critical Intercultural Citizenship 31
The Emancipated Intercultural Subject 34
Hegelian Dialectics as a Narrative of Positive Resolution 38
Adorno and Negative Dialectics 40
Conclusion 42
References 42

3 The Ethics of Interculturalism 47
Introduction 47
The Promise as Deferred Understanding 50
Kantian Autonomy and the Levinasian Other 54
Accusativity vs. Subjectivity 58
Asymmetry vs. Symmetry 61
Heteronomy vs. Autonomy 62
Proximity vs. Distance 64
Conclusion. Interculturality and the Distinction Between the Saying *and the* Said 66
References 68

4 Dwelling or Sojourning? Modalities of Interculturality 73
Introduction 73
The Pyramid Model 74
The ICOPROMO Project 78
The Idealised Intercultural Speaker in the Pyramid Model and the ICOPROMO Project 79
Intercultural Competence as Dwelling 83
A Dialogic Understanding of Interaction 89
The Processual 90
Context 92
The Multiperspectival 93
A Comparison of Competence Models 95
Assessing Intercultural Competence, an Impossible Task? 98
Conclusion 100
References 101

5 Conclusion 107
Final Thoughts 107
Future Directions and Methodological Implications 111
References 113

Index 115