

Jackson, J. (Ed.). (2012). *The Routledge handbook of language and intercultural communication*. Abington, United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group. 605p.

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The world is connected economically, culturally, politically, and socially (Jackson, 2008) thanks in large part to advances in technology that have made international interaction commonplace (Jackson, 2008). These interactions have created amazing opportunities but at the same time, the tension caused by the challenges of intercultural interactions is being recognised and the demand for individuals who are competent in communication across different cultural, linguistic and societal perspectives is on the rise (Stier, 2006; Zarzu, 2013).

As the field of intercultural communication becomes more esteemed, the need for more educational and research material becomes evident. *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication* (Jackson, 2012), which is part of the *Routledge Handbooks in Applied Linguistics* series, states explicitly that its audience is “advanced undergraduates and postgraduate students of applied linguistics as well as those in related degrees such as applied English language and TESOL/TEFL” (p. i).

The *Handbook* constitutes a comprehensive introduction to the state of historical and current research in the multidisciplinary field of intercultural communication. The editor has organised the text logically with the later chapters building on and referencing concepts from earlier ones. The general concepts develop into more specific cases, and the theories and practices evolve from the past to the present, and project into the future. The *Handbook* is made up of 35 chapters, divided into five sections that cover historical perspectives, core issues and topics, and new debates in the field, with a particular focus on the language dimension of intercultural communication.

The *Handbook* includes an introduction and overview by the editor, which provide the reader with a valuable indication of the focus of each section and chapter. “Section I: Foundations of Language and Intercultural Communication” consists of five chapters and eases the reader into the subject matter with a survey of the major strands of research that have influenced the historical foundations of contemporary intercultural communication and applied linguistics. “Section II: Core Themes and Issues” includes 14 chapters and is further divided into four subsections: “Verbal/Nonverbal Communication and Culture;” “Language, Identity and Intercultural Communication;” “Understanding Intercultural Transitions: From Adjustment to Acculturation;” and “Intercultural Communicative Competence: Multiple Conceptual Approaches.” These chapters review fundamental topics and issues and consider the competing conceptualisations and positions in the field. The authors of the five chapters in “Section III: Theory into Practice: Towards Intercultural (Communicative) Competence and Citizenship” discuss current innovative intercultural communication pedagogy, thus demonstrating how practitioners are building on theory. “Section IV: Language and Intercultural Communication in Context” is made up of 10 chapters focussing on intercultural contact in diverse contexts and how it is affected by culture, language, and power relations. “Section V: New Debates and Future Directions” concludes the volume by situating the preceding chapters within the “wider context of globalization and transnational mobility” (Jackson, 2012, p. 553).

In the introduction, Jackson, the editor, emphasises the importance of reaching outside one's disciplinary sphere during this time of accelerating globalisation. This supposition is demonstrated in various ways throughout the *Handbook*. Jackson addresses the topic of intercultural communication by drawing on the expertise of authors from a variety of different specialities and geographical perspectives. The "List of Contributors" section gives a short description of each author's research interests and career goals, demonstrating how graduate students, professors, and researchers from various regions, countries, and fields of study have contributed to the materials collected for the *Handbook*. Drawing on the knowledge of leading experts from diverse areas of relevance, several chapters are co-authored by individuals from different disciplines. This volume offers a multicultural, multidisciplinary, multinational, and collaborative examination of the subject matter, which is appropriate for a volume concerning intercultural communication.

The individual chapters flow very well one into the other; the *Handbook* is not made up of distinct articles on similar topics haphazardly assembled to form a book, as is the case with many anthology-style handbooks. The articles were solicited by the editor and thus fall into a preplanned framework. The terminology is well defined in the first chapters and the same definitions and word usage are utilised throughout.

Many of the authors suggest directions for further research at the end of their respective chapters. Trends and implications looking into the future are also often suggested within each subtopic, as well as recommendations for practice and practical application of theoretical research especially in formal learning settings. Several authors discuss the contentious issues surrounding the rise and increasing influence of English as a lingua franca globally and as the principal medium for intercultural education.

Jackson sets out to comprehensively outline the state of research in the field of language and intercultural communication, to outline the key debates and issues, to introduce experts in the various areas, to demonstrate the various ways in which research and practice are approached currently, and to hypothesise the direction in which they will head in the future. This volume has embraced the complexity inherent within the dizzying scope and fragmented, contested nature of the field, and serves as an example of theory put into practice.

The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication provides a valuable resource for the academic, research, business, and nonspecialist spheres. Though the *Handbook* is situated in the field of applied linguistics and aimed at advanced undergraduates and postgraduate students, it could also be of use to faculty; researchers; students; professionals in other fields such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, and cross-cultural relations; and anyone interested in language use in intercultural communication.

References

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