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## **COMM/PSYC 290: Intercultural Communication**

### **Course Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Gabriella Brigitte Klein, Ph.D.

**Credits:** 3

**Contact Hours:** 45

**Prerequisites:** None

**Class Hours:** TBA

**Office Hours:** TBA

**Course Type:** Standard Course

**Lab Fee:** 90€

### **Course Description**

This course serves as an introduction to contemporary concepts, practices, and processes of interpersonal communication in an intercultural perspective. Throughout this class, students will acquire the methodologies and knowledge to engage critically with their personal experiences abroad as intercultural communicators. They will participate in critical assessment of intercultural communication theories and apply the explicit goal of addressing a variety of topics. These topics range from the nature of language, culture and society, to analysis of verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal communication, underlying meaning in discourse, representation of individual stereotypes and prejudices. A strong focus will be given to the relationship between one's linguistic, cultural and social identity, and relevant topics will be deeply discussed and applied with hands-on activities. Students will observe communicative events in their context, at various levels of "interculturality", keeping in mind that all types of interpersonal communication are ultimately intercultural. This course will also help students better navigate the intricacies of Italian cultural identities and their own intercultural communication practices during their study abroad experience.

Students will be expected to bring personal insights into the classrooms and use communication theories to understand, analyze, and evaluate intercultural experiences. Questions that they will examine include the following: How is communication scientifically investigated? What are the different components that are relevant in a communication event? What are different elements to communication, e.g., verbal, paraverbal, non-verbal, as well as some visual elements? What is the role of different languages in different contexts of usage? What is the relationship between language, culture, society and one's? The answers to these issues will be explored through lectures, class discussions, readings, writing assignments, and research activities of everyday interactions.

## Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measures
	<i>Course requirements that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome</i>
Critically discuss basic concepts of ICC models and theories	Observation Forms; ICC Portfolio
Prepare role-plays and perform simulations of communication events	Active participation in the classes
Better understand their own ICC experience in Italy giving concrete personal examples	A Final Exam consisting of a poster and its oral explanation supported by a PPT or Prezi presentation; ICC Portfolio
Demonstrate how interpersonal communication works basically and in its intercultural dimension	Quiz; Participation to activity
Analyze single conversational moves (discriminating between techniques, procedures and strategies)	Reflection paper; Participation to activity
Apply consciously communication techniques, procedures and strategies in their interaction	Quiz; Final Exam
Recognize and overcome potential communication problems and conflicts	Quiz; Final Exam; Active participation in the classes
Generate a new communication attitude towards people from different social and cultural contexts/backgrounds	Reflection paper; Observation Forms; ICC Portfolio
Critically assess the relationship between language, cultural and social identity	Quiz; Intercultural Portfolio, Participation to activity
Learn communication techniques to solve intercultural and interpersonal conflicts	Interpersonal communication workshop; Gibberish workshop

## Course Materials

### Readings

Piller, Ingrid., *Intercultural Communication, A critical introduction*, Edinburgh University Press (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), 2017.

A course reader, including all the indicated readings, will be available at a local copy shop.

Please see “Umbra Institute Course Materials - Textbooks and Readers” handout provided in the orientation folder for more information.

## Assessment

Participation	10%
4 Quizzes	10%
Observation Forms	10%
Intercultural Portfolio	30%

Reflection Paper	20%
Presentation as Final Exam	20%

### Grading

Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-	90% - 92%	Excellent
B+	87% - 89%	
B	83% - 86%	Superior
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	
C	73% - 76%	Satisfactory
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	
D	63% - 66%	Low Pass
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

### Course Requirements

Grades are based on the following criteria.

#### *Participation (10%)*

Active Participation is an important component in this class. Participation will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria: 1) being on time for class and for the submission of material; 2) attitude towards fellow students and group-work; 3) pertinence and relevance of oral contributions through an active engagement in class and discussion.

#### *4 Quizzes (10%)*

The instructor will provide the students with four quizzes (2,5% each) throughout the semester to assess their engagement with the readings and critical literature. Quizzes will be distributed according to the syllabus, and will be closed book/closed note.

#### *Observation Forms (10%)*

Students will carry out a total of two observations and report them in the dedicated observation form, which will be devised in class. Students are expected to do this as a homework, with no suggestion nor mediation of the instructor or the class. The focus of the observations will be communicative events taking place in a private, semi-public and/or public context. Students can choose two among the following contexts for their observations:

- 1) Public Transport. If students choose this context, they are expected to observe verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal behaviors as well as visual elements related to public transport (bus or train) in Italy.
- 2) Grocery Shopping. If students choose this context, they are expected to observe verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal behaviors as well as visual elements related to the event of grocery shopping in any supermarket (or market) in Perugia.
- 3) A misunderstanding/miscommunication with friends. If students choose this context, they are expected to observe verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal behaviors that lead to a misunderstanding/miscommunication among people.

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- 4) A meal in a restaurant. If students choose this context, they are expected to observe verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal behaviors that lead to a misunderstanding/miscommunication among people.
- 5) A front-office interaction. If students choose this context, they are expected to observe verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal behaviors as well as visual elements during any conversation at a public front-office (bank office, post office, information desk at the Sportello del Cittadino (the citizen's desk; <http://www.provincia.perugia.it/sportelloonline/sportellodelcittadino>), police station (Corso Vannucci), etc.)
- 6) A tv talk-show. If students choose this context, they are expected to observe verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal behaviors as well as visual elements during any TV talk-show..

#### *Intercultural Portfolio (30%)*

Students will build an Intercultural Portfolio throughout the course. The entries for the portfolio should be relevant to the theories and phenomena discussed in class. Students are expected to collect four objects and two audio-visual files. The communicative content of the entries should be analyzed according to the theories and practices presented in class. Each entry will be explained with a paragraph of 80-100 words. Each student will present their Portfolio in class at the end of the course. Students will collect two objects for each of the following categories:

- 1) Two objects displaying verbal messages (e.g. flyers, menus, signs, newspapers, books, posters, etc.);
- 2) Two objects displaying visual messages (e.g. advertisement, magazines, textiles, public posters, etc.);
- 3) Two audio-visual representations of a communicative event (private conversations, institutional interactions, public speeches, public announcements; min. 30 secs, max. 90 secs.)

Students will review the content of their portfolio with the instructor regularly during the course.

#### *Reflection Paper (20%)*

Students will write a Reflection Paper after the workshop on Gibberish led by Elisa De Meo. An additional workshop on Interpersonal Communication will be led by Gabriella B. Klein. These workshops will offer a different approach to interpersonal communication in an intercultural dimension, and students are asked to discuss their personal experience of the workshops and to relate them with relevant concepts and ideas discussed in class. The paper should be between 2-3 pages long.

#### *Presentation as final exam (20%)*

Based on their Portfolio, Observation Forms and Reflection Paper, Students will give a 10-minute Presentation in front of the whole class. The Presentation should focus on how they intend to exploit their intercultural experience back home.

This is the only time the exam will be given. **No alternative exam dates will be offered.**

#### Attendance Policy

Class attendance is **mandatory**. Students are allowed **two "free" absences**, which do not need to be justified. **It is the students' responsibility to keep them in case of real necessity (sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class)**. Each additional absence, unless for a very serious reason, will lower the students' grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. It is also the policy of the Institute that any student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. **Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and**

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**any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason.** Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important for student performance in class. Missing a mandatory field trip, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to the professor and Umbra Academic Director in a timely manner, will lower students' final grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

#### Academic Integrity

All forms of **cheating** (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and **plagiarism** (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

#### Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate **respect** for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that **cell phones** must be turned off before the beginning of each class. **Computers and other electronic devices** cannot be used during class lectures and discussions.

## Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

### WEEK 1 – Introduction

	<p><i>Who, Where, and When are we? Situating Ourselves in Perugia, Italy, 2020.</i> This lesson presents the study of Intercultural Communication. In this first class, the professor will explain the structure of the course, with special reference to the types and elements of communication.</p> <p><u>Videos</u></p> <p>Gabriella B. Klein: Challenge for integration and mobility [3 :31] Source: BRIDGE-IT European project (2013) <a href="https://youtu.be/GX0sPFQSHG4">https://youtu.be/GX0sPFQSHG4</a></p> <p>A Dutch couple in Italy (McDonald’s Ad Video) [0:37] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oIrgQ6-Nhw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oIrgQ6-Nhw</a></p> <p><u>Video on Verbal communication and Barriers</u> Alex Lyon (2018): Communication Barriers [7:17] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&amp;v=jsl468Hwr4o&amp;feature=emb_logo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&amp;v=jsl468Hwr4o&amp;feature=emb_logo</a></p>
	<p>Watching part 1 of Spike Lee’s movie “Jungle Fever” (1991)</p>

### WEEK 2 – Objectives and activities of the course

	<p><i>How Study Intercultural Communication? The Basis for Intercultural Communication. Getting Familiar with communication processes and differences</i></p> <p>Outline of pertinent aspects and communication processes. Discuss objectives of the course, observation process, portfolio creation, and the service learning project.</p> <p><u>Videos on non-verbal communication</u></p> <p>Babbel (2016): Can You Guess The Meanings Of These Italian Gestures? [Babbel; 5:38] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ryi2rW6Psvg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ryi2rW6Psvg</a></p> <p>Dagmar Birke (2017): body language by Coaching Atelier Muenchen Dagmar Birke [2:50] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSyGmXD7XYQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSyGmXD7XYQ</a></p> <p><u>Videos on paraverbal communication</u></p> <p>Buzz Williams (2018): Paraverbal Communication Skills [3 :13] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKP9DkdmfUg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKP9DkdmfUg</a></p> <p>Alex Lyon (2018): Tone of Voice in Communication [8:06] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hvVjOqk_4o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hvVjOqk_4o</a></p>
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	Watching part 2 of Spike Lee’s movie “Jungle Fever” (1991)
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**WEEK 3 – Basic precepts: Language, language variation, culture, society, communication**

	<p><i>What is a language? What is a language variety? How do we use our language(s)? How is our cultural and social identity reflected through our language use and our communication?</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>What is Linguistics? (chap. 1, pp.1-6)          Language Variation (chap. 9, pp. 176-208)          In:          AKMAJIAN, Adrian / DEMERS, Richard A. / HARNISH (1979). Robert M. <i>Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication</i>. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: MIT Press. - <b>Reader #1</b></p> <p>Toward Ethnographies of Communication (chap.1, pp. 3-27: 3-9)          In:          HYMES, Dell (1974). <i>Foundation in Sociolinguistics. An Ethnographic Approach</i>. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. - <b>Reader #2</b></p>
	Students will analyze some scenes of Spike Lee’s movie “Jungle Fever” (1991) using a specific observation form

**WEEK 4 – The intercultural dimension in communication: Theory and Practice**

	<p><i>Beyond Language: Verbal, Paraverbal, Non-verbal and Visual Communication.</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>DOSSOU, Koffi M. / KLEIN, Gabriella B. / RAVENDA, Andrea F. (2016). Our RADAR Communication Concept.          In:          DOSSOU, Koffi M. / KLEIN, Gabriella B. RADAR Guidelines. Understanding hate-oriented communication and tools for anti-hate communication strategies in an intercultural dimension. Deruta/Perugia: Key &amp; Key Communications. 2016: 5-18. - <b>Reader #3</b></p> <p><u>Videos</u></p> <p>Interacting without sharing the same language - simulation exercise [1:41]          e-SPICES project workshop (2010) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADHWrd2dL2o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADHWrd2dL2o</a></p>

	Students will analyze some selected scenes of Spike Lee’s movie “Jungle Fever” (1991) using a specific observation form
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**WEEK 5 – Communicative Event: where language, culture and society are performed**

	<p><i>What is a Communicative Event? How to collect material?</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>Toward Ethnographies of Communication (chap.1, pp. 3-27: 9-27) In: HYMES, Dell. <i>Foundation in Sociolinguistics. An Ethnographic Approach</i>. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1974 - <b>Reader #4</b></p> <p>GUMPERZ, John J. / COOK-GUMPERZ Jenny (1982). Introduction: language and the communication of social identity (chap. 1, pp. 1-21) In: GUMPERZ, John J. (ed.) (1982). <i>Language and social identity</i>. Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University press - <b>Reader #5</b></p> <p><u>Videos</u></p> <p>Adam Ambrozy (2019): The Fundamentals of Qualitative Research Vol. 1   Participant Observation [8:36] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJiUblMSDv8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJiUblMSDv8</a></p> <p>Skye Gillingham (2016): Ethnographic Research [5:12] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2UyJWwOWnA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2UyJWwOWnA</a></p> <p><u>Homework</u></p> <p>Choose one of the 5 analyzed scenes from the movie Jungle Fever: describe the context and transcribe the words of the dialogue(s) chosen Work in pairs or small groups (max 4 people)</p> <p><u>Activity</u></p> <p>Present your work in the next class (25 February) Send the work together with the related form filled to the instructor by latest Sunday evening</p>
	<b>CLASS CANCELED FOR WORKSHOP</b>

**WEEK 6 – HOMEWORK PRESENTATION**

	<p><u>Activity</u></p> <p>Present your homework in class</p>
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<b>CLASS CANCELED FOR WORKSHOP</b>
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**WEEK 7 – Conversation: conveying meaning, understanding, misunderstanding, miscommunication**

*What is a 'Conversation'? How to collect, transcribe and analyze verbal interactions*

Readings

KLEIN, Gabriella B. (2015) *Verbal interactions and their transcription*. University of Perugia: RADAR: Regulating AntiDiscrimination and AntiRacism [6 pp.] - **Reader #6**

KLEIN, Gabriella B. / DOSSOU, Koffi M. / PASQUANDREA, Sergio (2011). Embodying epistemicity. Negotiating (un)certainly through semiotic objects (chap.11, pp. 223-246)

In:

ZUCZKOWSKI, Andrzej / BONGELLI, Ramona / RICCIONI, Ilaria / CANESTRARI, Carla (eds.) (2011). *Communicating Certainty and Uncertainty In Medical, Supportive and Scientific Contexts*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins – **Reader #7**

Video

Service counter at the public relation office (URP) of the municipality of Perugia [13:32]  
BRIDGE-IT project (2012-2014) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8vmZ11Cyuk>

Quiz n. 1

*Approaching Intercultural Communication, Stereotypes and Prejudices, Communication Barriers*

Readings

Piller, Preface and Chapter 1, pp. ix-xi; 1-12

Video

A Dutch couple in Italy (McDonald's Ad Video) [0:37]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oIrgQ6-Nhw>

Activity: your experience.

Representations of Italy and the US compared. Each student must bring something representative of their idea of Italy or USA and present it in class.

Did your idea about Italians and the way they behave change since you arrived in Italy?

Do you know about any stereotype non-USA nationals have about USA nationals?

How do you perceive the way Italians talk together?

	Devise Observation Forms and discuss Portfolio creation. Give examples.
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**SEMESTER BREAK – March, 9-15**

**WEEK 8 – CULTURE, CULTURE SHOCK, LANGUAGE, NATION**

	<p><i>The Genealogy of Intercultural Communication. The Genealogy of the Concept of Culture. Culture Shock: The Experience and Development</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>Piller, Chapter 2, pp. 13-30</p> <p>TING-TOOMEY, Stella (2013), What is Culture Shock? (pp. 114-137)</p> <p>In:</p> <p>LAVENDA, Robert H. / SCHULTZ, Emily A. (2013). <i>Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology</i>. Fifth Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.</p> <p>- <b>Reader #8</b></p> <p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>Case studies of classical Intercultural Communication literature.</p> <p>Bring an example (object, photo, video, narration...) to class that is representative of your Culture Shock experience in Italy.</p>
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	<p><i>Language and Culture. Nation and Culture.</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>Piller, Chapter 3, pp. 31-53 + Chapter 4, pp. 54-70</p> <p><u>Video</u></p> <p>Max Fisher / Josh Keller / Mae Ryan, The New York Times (2018) [5:31]</p> <p><a href="https://www.internazionale.it/video/2018/03/07/identita-nazionale-invenzione-nazionalismo">https://www.internazionale.it/video/2018/03/07/identita-nazionale-invenzione-nazionalismo</a></p>
	<p>Communication workshop: Interpersonal Communication in Practice (3+3 hrs with light lunch break in the Umbra kitchen)</p> <p>changing perspective exercise; listening exercise; “controlled” dialogue exercise; paraverbal and non-verbal exercise</p>

### week 9 – Hands-on Activities and Discussion

	<p><i>Practical Conversational Transcription exercises</i></p> <p>Bring your Portfolios with at least one example of a video-recorded interaction and related rough transcription of the conversation.</p>
	<p><u>Revision and Discussion</u></p> <p>Bring your Portfolios and Observation Forms. Be ready to ask questions about the course, to discuss your experience and to give feedback to other students.</p> <p><u>Quiz n. 2</u></p> <p><u>Homework</u></p> <p>A multilingual tour around the city: students will go around the city to map the different languages represented</p>

### WEEK 10 – ICC AND MULTILINGUALISM

	<p><u>Data session</u></p> <p>Bring your transcription and present it to the class. The example should represent conversationally at least one of the phenomena discussed (misunderstanding vs miscommunication; culture shock; stereotypes, prejudices; ...)</p>
	<p><i>Intercultural Communication in a Multilingual World.</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>Piller, Chapter 5, pp.71-99</p> <p><u>Activity</u></p> <p>Present your homework: A multilingual tour around the city</p>

### WEEK 11 – ICC, Globalization, and Business

	<p><i>Intercultural Communication in a Transnational World.</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>Piller, Chapter 6, pp. 100-119</p>
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	<p><i>Intercultural Communication at Work. Intercultural Communication for Sale.</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>Piller, Chapter 7, pp. 120-141 + Chapter 8, pp. 142-156</p> <p><u>Quiz n. 3</u></p>
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**WEEK 12 – ICC – Education and Mediation**

	<p><i>Intercultural Romance. Intercultural Communication in Education.</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>Piller, Chapter 9, pp. 157-172 + Chapter 10, pp. 173-192</p>
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	<p><i>Becoming an Intercultural Mediator.</i></p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <p>Piller, Chapter 11, pp. 194-206</p> <p><u>Activity</u></p> <p>Discussion with an expert of intercultural mediation.</p>
	<p><i>Gibberish Workshop</i></p>

**WEEK 13 – Student Presentations**

	<p><i>Revision and Discussion</i></p> <p>Bring your Portfolios, Reflection Paper and Observation Forms. Be ready to ask questions about the course, to discuss your experience and to give feedback to other students.</p> <p>Quiz n. 4</p>
	<p><i>Poster preparation</i></p> <p>Supervision by the instructor for the preparation of the posters: tips and hints</p>

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**FINAL EXAM**

	The Final Exam and Special Academic Events Calendar will be provided later in the semester
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### Bibliography

- Piller, Ingrid. *Intercultural Communication: A Critical Introduction*, Second Edition. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011.

### Supplemental Bibliography

- AKMAJIAN, Adrian / DEMERS, Richard A. / HARNISH, Robert M. *Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: MIT Press 1979. **(Reader #1)**
- DOSSOU, Koffi M. / KLEIN, Gabriella B. / RAVENDA, Andrea F. Our RADAR Communication Concept. In: DOSSOU, Koffi M. / KLEIN, Gabriella B. *RADAR Guidelines. Understanding hate-oriented communication and tools for anti-hate communication strategies in an intercultural dimension*. Deruta/Perugia: Key & Key Communications 2016: 5-18. **(Reader #3 + #4)**
- EVANS, Vyvyan. *The Language Myth. Why language is not an instinct*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
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- HYMES, Dell. *Foundation in Sociolinguistics. An Ethnographic Approach*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974. **(Reader #2)**
- KLEIN, Gabriella B. *Verbal interactions and their transcription*. University of Perugia: RADAR: Regulating AntiDiscrimination and AntiRacism. 2015 [6 pp.]. **(Reader #6)**
- KLEIN, Gabriella B. / DOSSOU, Koffi M. / PASQUANDREA, Sergio. Embodying epistemicity. Negotiating (un)certainly through semiotic objects. In: ZUCZKOWSKI, Andrzej / BONGELLI, Ramona / RICCIONI, Ilaria / CANESTRARI, Carla (eds.) (2011). *Communicating Certainty and Uncertainty In Medical, Supportive and Scientific Contexts*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2011: chap.11, pp. 223-246. **(Reader #7)**
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- TING-TOOMEY, Stella / CHUNG, Leeva C., *Understanding Intercultural communication*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005 (2nd edition 2011).
- TING-TOOMEY, Stella (2013), What is Culture Shock? In: LAVENDA, Robert / SCHULTZ, Emily. *Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology*. Fifth Edition. New York, McGraw-Hill, 2013: pp. 114-137. **(Reader #8)**