

ALLIANCE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY/UNIVERSITY

PEOPLE AS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BEINGS

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RYNKIEWICH, CHAPTER 3 INTERACTION PAPER.

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This is an interaction paper from the third chapter of the book Soul, Self, And Society A Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World. The book is authored by Michael Rynkiewicz. The book was published by Cascade Books; and the publishing date is 2011 in Eugene, Oregon.

In my paper, you will find four central areas that will be focused on. There will be a one sentence thesis statement, a one paragraph summary of the chapter, personal interaction with specific themes in the readings, and two questions for further engaging this topic. This chapter is titled Language, Symbols, and Cross-Cultural Communication; and the focus of the chapter is on Ethnographic Field Methods.

THESIS STATEMENT

“Speaking is not the only way that people communicate.”ⁱ

SUMMARY PAGES 45-63

LANGUAGE and CULTURE

The argument that the author is making in this chapter is that communication is not limited to language. He supports his argument by saying that in itself, communication has many segments to it. Whether it be through verbalization, “facial expressions, body distance, body posture, movements, and gestures.”ⁱⁱ It is further shared in this chapter that for the individuals who have spent “their lives in a one speech community,” have the tendency to believe that there is a kinship relationship between the “word” of an object, the “mental image” of the object, and the “physical” object (in this case, the writer uses the word bird as the object). He further shared that dissimilar root words may be chosen and after awhile progress into unlike perceptions.ⁱⁱⁱ

PERSONAL INTERACTION

LANGUAGES IN THE WORLD PAGE 50-53

In relation to the above mentioned sub-topic, the writer shares the biblical story of the tower at babel, that this biblical story depicts the scattering of languages and peoples, by virtue of the builders’ inner pride.^{iv}

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PAGES 62- 63

The writer pens in this chapter that the things that we may have learned concerning culture, such as “perception, ethnocentrism, values, and worldviews,” will assist us in our communication with other people in our own society. He further states that however, these same things can serve as obstacles to cross-cultural communication.^v

Additionally, the writer shares that the context of communication includes many assumptions about shared understandings of history, geography, religion, politics, and economics, as well as about what makes for appropriate conversation, a reasonably convincing argument, and a proper accompanying para-linguistic performance. The wonder is not what we communicate so well, the wonder is that we communicate at all.^{vi}

TWO QUESTIONS

1. Will the Missiology Society/Board of World Missions be able to redeem these languages that are deemed “extinct.”?^{vii}
2. In Missiology, how does one communicate the gospel to the deaf mute on the mission field who may not have had the benefits of prior sign language exposure?^{viii}

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