



Communicating Around Interculturality in Research and Education

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Volume 19, Number 2, 2025

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1118268ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22329/jtl.v19i2.9686>

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Publisher(s)

University of Windsor

ISSN

1492-1154 (print)

1911-8279 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Syahrizal, I. (2025). Review of [Communicating Around Interculturality in Research and Education]. *Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 19(2), 201–204. <https://doi.org/10.22329/jtl.v19i2.9686>

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Book Review:

Communicating Around Interculturality in Research and Education

by Fred Dervin

New York, USA: Routledge, Published November 29, 2024, 100 pages

ISBN: 978-1-03-258877-3 (paperback) and 978-1-03-258859-9 (hardback)

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The book instructs readers on how to communicate interculturality and supports them in reflecting on how they can renegotiate and reconstruct knowledge, ideologies, and relationships around the notion of interculturality. Anchored in the author's original and thought-provoking perspectives on interculturality, this interdisciplinary and globally insightful book explores how communicating around such notions cannot exclude ideologism, language, and translation issues or problematizing voice and silence in research and education. Written in an original and stimulating way, relying on a variety of genres and writing styles to mimic the dynamism and flexibility of the ideas under review, the authors urge us to (un)voice, scrutinize, nurture and galvanize our ways of dealing with interculturality ourselves and together with others in academia. The book's very specific focus on communicating around interculturality (rather than 'doing' interculturality) is a new and important step towards observing, analyzing, talking about, and contributing to today's complex and fragmented world.

Chapter 1, "Interculturality is dead; long live interculturality!" explores the evolving concept of interculturality, challenging traditional approaches while urging critical reflection on how intercultural communication and education are understood and practiced. This chapter is particularly relevant to intercultural education. It seeks to shift the focus from simply "doing" interculturality to "communicating around" interculturality. With this, the author critiques the Euro-centric perspective and calls for a more reflective and participatory approach in building intercultural dialogue. His contribution encourages educators, researchers, and policy makers to reconstruct narratives and practices of intercultural education to be more critical and contextualized. The book helps identify communication challenges, such as the ideologization of

concepts or translation problems, which are often barriers to promoting inclusive cultural dialogue. The chapter is based on Bakhtin's dialogic thinking, which sees communication as the result of a dialogue between many voices and enunciative pragmatics, emphasizing the importance of reflection on how voices are used in discourse. The author also challenges rigid definitions of interculturality, proposing a more dynamic and open perspective. Researchers, educators, and students involved in intercultural studies or practice are the primary audience. This book invites them to rethink how they communicate about interculturality, both in the classroom and in research. This chapter offers a more critical and reflexive approach compared to other chapters. Instead of providing practical guidelines, it invites readers to question and deconstruct the assumptions underlying their intercultural communication practices. With its in-depth and critical approach, this chapter significantly contributes to intercultural education by inspiring new ways of thinking and communicating that are more adaptive to the complexities of the contemporary world.

Chapter 2, "(Un-)voicing," focuses on the concepts of voice and silence in education and research related to interculturality. The author, Fred Dervin, explores how voices are used, represented, and often ignored in intercultural discourse while emphasizing the importance of understanding silence as an integral part of communication. This chapter is particularly relevant to intercultural education as it explores how individual and group voices- both dominant and marginalized- play a role in building intercultural dialogue. The author highlights the importance of listening to and reflecting on different voices, including those often marginalized and ignored, to enrich intercultural understanding. Its main contribution is to invite educators and researchers to consider the dimensions of voice and silence in their practice. By exploring how voices are used or excluded, the chapter provides conceptual tools for understanding the dynamics of power, representation and inclusion in intercultural education. The chapter is based on Bakhtin's dialogism, which underlines the interaction between different voices in discourse, and an enunciative pragmatics approach, emphasizing the context and complexity of voice in communication. The author also uses the metaphor of a musical conductor to illustrate the educator's role in harmonizing the various voices. This chapter will benefit researchers, educators, and students who want to develop a critical understanding of the role of voice and silence in intercultural communication. Practitioners in the field of intercultural education can also use these insights to create more inclusive learning environments. Compared to other chapters, this chapter is unique in that it provides an in-depth focus on the dimensions of voice and silence, which are often overlooked in intercultural discourse. Its reflective and critical approach encourages readers to rethink their communication practices, making it a significant contribution to the intercultural education literature. This chapter invites readers not only to speak and listen but also to understand what is unspoken. With its critical and reflective approach, "(Un-)voicing" expands the understanding of intercultural communication, making it an essential reading for anyone involved in education and research.

Chapter 3, "Scrutinising," explores ideologization, language, and translation issues in interculturality discourse. Fred Dervin invites readers to critically analyze how invisible ideologies often shape intercultural education concepts, terms and practices and how language and translation issues influence communication and research. This chapter closely relates to intercultural education, highlighting how ideology and language shape how we understand and teach interculturality. The author shows how certain ideological dominations (such as Eurocentric views or English language hegemony) affect access and representation in intercultural dialogue. The main contribution of this chapter is to provide conceptual tools to deconstruct and analyse the often-unquestioned critique of ideology and language in intercultural education. The author offers

insights into the importance of deep reflection on the terms and practices used and proposes a more sensitive approach to the issue of translation in cross-cultural communication. The chapter uses Bakhtin's dialogism to highlight the interaction between voices in discourse and postcolonial and decolonial theories to analyze the ideologies underlying concepts of intercultural education. A pragmatics approach is also used to underline the importance of context and language sensitivity in this discourse. Researchers, educators and policy makers who wish to critique the ideologies underlying intercultural education will greatly benefit from this chapter. Students studying cross-cultural communication can also use this guide to approach the concepts critically and reflectively. Compared to other chapters, this chapter stands out for its focus on ideological deconstruction and sensitivity to language and translation. Its critical approach to ideologizing the concept makes it a unique contribution beyond the surface analysis often found in intercultural education literature. The chapter "Scrutinising" challenges readers to question the ideologies and practices underpinning intercultural education. With a critical approach to language, translation, and ideology, this chapter offers valuable guidance for creating a more inclusive and reflective intercultural dialogue. This reading is particularly relevant for anyone who wants to understand or engage in intercultural education more profoundly and critically.

Chapter 4, "Nurturing and Galvanising," focuses on concrete steps to support and inspire more reflective and critical communication around interculturality in education and research. Fred Dervin offers practical and theoretical recommendations to strengthen individuals' and institutions' ability to create inclusive and adaptive spaces for intercultural dialogue. This chapter is particularly relevant to intercultural education as it provides guidance on how to build more meaningful and equitable dialogue amidst global challenges such as polarization and ideological domination. The author invites readers to see intercultural education as an ongoing process that requires nurturing and strengthening through critical and reflective action. The main contribution of this chapter is to offer frameworks and strategies to address practical and theoretical challenges in intercultural education. By highlighting the importance of listening to, supporting and empowering multiple voices, the authors provide ways to build more effective and inclusive cross-cultural dialogue. The chapter is based on Bakhtin's dialogism, which emphasizes the importance of interactions between voices in discourse and decolonial theory to explore ways to create more equitable spaces dialogue. The author also uses a reflective approach to encourage readers to challenge their own assumptions and the ideologies underpinning their practice. This guide will greatly benefit educators, researchers and policy makers in intercultural contexts. Students studying or engaged in cross-cultural communication can also use these insights to strengthen their ability to support inclusive dialogue. This chapter offers a more practical and targeted approach compared to other chapters. By linking theory and practice, it provides concrete guidance rarely found in the intercultural education literature, which is often too theoretical or lacks operational steps. The chapter "Nurturing and Galvanizing" makes an important contribution by offering practical and reflective steps to support inclusive and equitable cross-cultural dialogue. It is essential reading for anyone who wants to take intercultural education to the next level, theoretically and practically.

Chapter 5, "Communicating as a Lesson in Humility," discusses the importance of a humble approach to cross-cultural communication, particularly in the context of education and research. Fred Dervin reminds readers that intercultural communication is often complex and imperfect, requiring a reflective attitude and acceptance of one's own limitations. This chapter closely relates to intercultural education, underscoring the need for humility in approaching dialogue. The author invites the reader to understand that there is no universal formula for intercultural communication, but rather a process that requires flexibility, willingness to learn, and respect for differences. His main contribution is encouraging educators, researchers, and

practitioners to reflect on where they stand in intercultural communication. By emphasizing the importance of humility, the chapter provides guidelines to reduce ideological dominance and open space for more inclusive and authentic dialogue. The chapter adopts Bakhtin's dialogism approach, emphasizing hearing and interacting with multiple voices. The author also uses principles of communication ethics and critical reflection to challenge readers to be more aware of their biases and assumptions in communication. This chapter is helpful for researchers, educators, students, and policy makers who want to deepen their understanding of intercultural communication. Students can learn about the importance of self-reflection, while practitioners can use it to create more effective cross-cultural interactions. Compared to other chapters, this chapter is unique for its focus on the dimension of humility heart, which is often overlooked in intercultural education literature. The ethical and reflective approach offers a new perspective beyond technical or theoretical analyses. The chapter "Communicating as a Lesson in Humility" provides important guidance on how to adopt a humble attitude in cross-cultural communication. With its reflective and ethical approach, this chapter broadens the understanding of intercultural education, making it a relevant read for all who wish to improve the quality of intercultural dialogue.

The book "Communicating Around Interculturality in Research and Education" by Fred Dervin offers a critical and reflective new approach to interculturality in the context of education and research. The author highlights the importance of "communicating around" interculturality rather than simply "doing" or "teaching" this concept. Through analyses of voice, silence, language, and ideology, Dervin invites readers to deconstruct the assumptions underlying the practice of intercultural communication. The book emphasizes the importance of humility, openness and reflection in creating inclusive cross-cultural dialogue. With its transdisciplinary approach and innovative style, this book is a valuable guide for educators, researchers, and students to understand and strengthen their role in building more equitable and meaningful intercultural communication.

References

Dervin, F. (2024). *Communicating around interculturality in research and education*. Routledge.

