Chapter 3 Outline

(Italicized words are key words)

I. Because of the increased likelihood of people of different cultures communicating with each other, culture, culture shock, and intercultural communication are important concepts to understand.
   A. Culture shock is the psychological discomfort of adjusting to a new cultural situation.
   B. Intercultural communication refers to interactions that occur between people whose cultures are so different that the communication between them is altered.

II. Culture affects communication.
   A. Culture is the system of beliefs, values, and attitudes shared by a particular segment of the population.
   B. Values are the commonly accepted preference for some states of affairs over others.

III. Although the United States is a multicultural society, there are attitudes, values, and beliefs that the majority of people have in common and which the minority feel they must follow.
   A. Dominant culture is a culture within society whose attitudes, values, beliefs, and customs reflect the majority lifestyle.
      1. Co-cultures are groups of people living within a dominant culture who are clearly different from the dominant culture.
      2. Cultural identity is the sense of self that people form based on the cultural groups with whom they most closely align themselves.
   B. Gender is a co-cultural group, because men and women have different cultural identities based on biological and socialization differences.
   C. Race is an important cultural signifier for many people, and racial identity can influence communication in different ways.
   D. Ethnicity is a co-culture, though one that lacks an exact distinction.
      1. Ethnicity is a classification of people based on shared national characteristics and is an inexact distinction.
      2. Language is an obvious influence of ethnicity on communication.
   E. Sexual orientation/gender identity is a co-cultural group, since the dominant culture values and privileges heterosexuality and identity with one’s birth gender.
   F. Religion is a co-culture, since the dominant culture of the United States has historically reflected Judeo-Christian values and practices.
      1. Religion is a system of beliefs, rituals, and ethics shared by a group based on a common perception of the sacred or holy.
      2. All observant practitioners of a religion participate in a co-culture.
   G. Social class is a co-culture, since most Americans identify with the middle class.
      1. Social class is the level in the power hierarchy of society whose membership is based on income, education, occupation, and social habits.
      2. Aspects of verbal communication, including grammar, vocabulary, and the use of slang, may be influenced by social class.
   H. Generational differences can create miscommunication, since people of the same generation tend to form a group whose personal values, beliefs, and
communication behaviors have been influenced by the same common life experiences and events.

I. **Cultural identity** is that part of your self-image that is based on the cultural group or groups with which you most closely associate and align yourself.

II. There are four ways to identify cultural similarities and differences.
   A. First, cultures vary in terms of the value of the individual versus the group.
      1. **Individualistic cultures** emphasize personal rights and responsibilities, privacy, and self-expression.
      2. A **collectivist culture** is one that emphasizes community, collaboration, shared interests, and the public good.
   B. Second, cultures differ based on attitudes toward predictability and uncertainty.
      1. **Uncertainty avoidance** is the extent to which the people in a culture avoid unpredictability regarding people, relationships, and events.
      2. A **low uncertainty avoidance culture** is a culture characterized as being accepting and having a low need to control unpredictable people, relationships, and events.
      3. A **high uncertainty avoidance culture** is one characterized as having a low tolerance for and a high need to control unpredictable people, relationships, and events.
   C. **Power distance** is the amount of difference in power between people, institutions, and organizations in a culture.
      1. A **high power distance culture** is a culture in which power is distributed unequally.
      2. A **low power distance culture** is a culture in which power is distributed equally.
   D. Masculine/feminine orientation is the last dimension of how culture affects communication.
      1. **Masculine culture** is a culture in which people are expected to adhere to traditional sex roles.
      2. **Feminine culture** is a culture in which people, regardless of sex, are expected to assume a variety of roles based on the circumstances and their own choices.

III. There are additional cultural factors that influence communication.
   A. Time orientation varies by culture.
      1. **Chronemics**, the study of how perception of time differs between individuals and cultures.
      2. Some people and cultures are **monochronic**, perceiving time as being small, even units that occur sequentially.
      3. Other people and cultures are **polychronic**, seeing time as a continuous flow.
   B. Different cultures vary in terms of their reliance on contextual cues to convey the actual meaning of a message.
      1. **Low-context cultures** usually encode meaning into the verbal part of the message.
2. For **high-context cultures**, much of the real meaning of a message is indirect and can only be accurately decoded by referring to unwritten cultural rules and subtle nonverbal behavior. 

IV. To develop intercultural communication competence, one must understand the specific barriers to effective intercultural communication. 
A. Anxiety can cause one to do a poor job communicating and become a barrier to communicating effectively. 
B. Assuming similarity or differences can be a barrier to effective communication, since assumptions guide communication behavior. 
C. Ethnocentrism, the belief that one’s own culture is superior to others, can lead to attitudes of superiority, resulting in condescending messages being sent, which can get in the way of effective intercultural communication. 
D. Stereotyping is assigning attributions to people that ignore individual differences and assume that everyone in a cultural group is the same. 
E. Incompatible communication codes can occur in exchanges between different cultures or co-cultures. 
F. Different cultures may have incompatible norms and values. 

V. The pyramid model of intercultural competence depicts how the lifelong process of acquiring intercultural competence occurs. 
A. **Intercultural competence** as the effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations. 
   1. Have requisite attitudes, which include respect, openness, or curiosity. 
   2. Develop culture specific knowledge and understanding through observation, language study, formal cultural study, and cultural immersion. 
   3. Develop skills for acquiring cultural knowledge, such as listening. 
   4. Internal and external outcomes may change one’s mental library or map, such as engaging in ethnorelativism, which allows for seeing the value in other cultural perspectives.