Evans, Adam; Suklun, Harika

Article

Workplace diversity and intercultural communication: A phenomenological study

Cogent Business & Management

Provided in Cooperation with:
Taylor & Francis Group

This Version is available at:
http://hdl.handle.net/10419/206027

*Corresponding author: Adam Evans, Business Administration, Transylvania University, Lexington, KY, USA
E-mail: Aevans@transy.edu

OPERATIONS, INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Workplace diversity and intercultural communication: A phenomenological study

Adam Evans[1]* and Harika Suklun[2,3]

Abstract: For decades, the United States has seen an increasing number of immigrants, which has led to a significant increase in cultural diversity in the United States. This phenomenological study examines the contextual history of professional non-native English-speaking women in the United States to form a basis of comparison with native English speakers. It attempts to compare their lived communicative experiences with those of non-native English speakers in the workplace. In this study, 16 professional, native English-speaking women currently working in the US were interviewed. Participants in this study were asked to describe professional and intercultural experiences through interactions with non-native English-speaking coworkers, any expectations of the interactions or violations of those expectations, and any miscommunications that may have occurred. Many native English speakers positively reflected upon these intercultural interactions and shared examples of their vocal adjustments and challenges of verbal and intercultural communication. To overcome these challenges, professional native English speakers described trying to slow speech or asking confirming questions such as "Do you understand?" to mitigate verbal conflicts and miscommunication. Based on the trends within the responses, however, there is a potential for unintentional and often offensive consequences to occur. Several coping mechanisms were found to be considered rude or off-putting by non-native speakers, while the intent of a more direct message was often misinterpreted by native English speakers. In addition, it seems that native
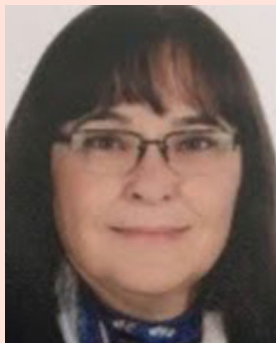
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I have participated substantially in the conception and design of research related to the interpersonal communication in the workplace. As a native of Turkey and longtime resident of the United States, I have witnessed first-hand the many strategies used by professionals; some were effective and others were not. I hope to increase the effective strategy list through my ongoing research. Especially in current times, the ability to communicate across cultures will only become more vital. That is why through instances such as this work, which specifically takes a look at cultural demographics in the workplace, we must strive to further our knowledge of effective communication.

Harika Suklun

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

For decades, the United States has seen an increasing number of immigrants, which has led to a significant increase in cultural diversity in the United States. In this study, 16 professional, native English-speaking women currently working in the US were interviewed. Participants in this study were asked to describe professional and intercultural experiences through interactions with non-native English-speaking coworkers. Many native English speakers positively reflected upon these intercultural interactions and shared examples of their vocal adjustments and challenges of verbal and intercultural communication. Based on the trends within the responses, however, there is a potential for unintentional and often offensive consequences to occur. In addition, it seems that native English speakers often may have good intentions in their actions but do not have the skillset to better facilitate communication with non-native English speakers.

English speakers often may have good intentions in their actions but do not have the skillset to better facilitate communication with non-native English speakers.

Subjects: Intercultural Communication; Interpersonal Communication; Human Resource Management; International Business; Organizational Studies

Keywords: communication; multicultural; workplace communication; non-verbal communication

1. Introduction

This study is a continuation of the qualitative study, *Professional Immigrant Women in Medium and Large Organizations in the USA: A Phenomenological Study Exploring Communication Conflicts that Arise from Language Barriers* (Suklun, 2014). Diversity initiatives in the workplace are trending upward in 2017 (Biggs, 2015) and improving the language and context of multiculturalism will only increase in importance. Perspectives such as this continuing study may help native English-speaking professional women better understand their non-native English-speaking coworkers. Biggs believes that through conscious practice, we are able to enhance our consciousness to be more in tune with our environment. It is the hope that improved engagement with others will lead to improved relationships and better workplace results.

When visiting a foreign place, individuals attempt to integrate and assimilate into the foreign culture. The desire to "fit in" and avoiding negative reactions or misunderstandings have often been found to be the motivators for assimilation (Glenn & Kuttner, 2013). For many, the diverse workplace can also be a challenging new land, adding cultural elements that can complicate communication and understanding. This research focuses on the phenomenon of the interactions between native and non-native English-speaking women based on the experiences of the native English speaker and the growing cultural diversity in organizations in the United States.

For the sake of both consistency and comparison, the guidelines utilized in the Suklun (2014) research are reflected in this study. However, the primary participant has shifted from non-native English speakers to native English speakers, and an expansion of modern literature focusing on native and non-native approaches to communication have also been integrated to update the former study.

1.1. Literature review

Professionals often relocate in search of better job opportunities, a trend that has increased in recent years (Dewaele & Stavans, 2014). With increased travel, intercultural workplaces and social diversities have also increased (Aneesh, 2012; Breckenridge & Moghaddam, 2012). Developed countries such as the United States have seen a significant growth in multicultural workplace environments (Oudenhoven & Ward, 2013). Innovations in communication technologies such as Skype and other online mediums have only expedited and facilitated this process, making it easier to create asynchronous, online workplaces that are culturally diverse and globally connected (Biggs, 2015).

1.2. Cultural diversity in the workplace

The meaning of the term "diversity" has evolved over time from an initial focus on racial differences, to include sex, political affiliation, cultural affinity, gender identity, religion, and sexual orientation in 2017 (Roberson, Ryan, & Ragins, 2017). Diversity has become a trending topic in literature (Borjas, 2006; Neault & Mondair, 2011; Selmer, Lauring, & Jonasson, 2013; Wolfson, Kraiger, & Finkelstein, 2011), yet effectively managing diversity seems an elusive challenge for many firms and organizations. This challenge is particularly taxing for countries with higher immigration rates due to the complex nature of mixed cultures (Hellerstein & Neumark, 2002; Selmer et al., 2013). In 2017, leaders across the globe struggle to find ways to promote tolerance and respect for diverse group identities; from 2016 to present, this topic has been an intense area of sociological study for scholars researching non-Christian immigrants and ethnic minority groups such as the Black Lives Matter movement (Morris, 2017).

Workplaces that embrace diversity gain the potential to recruit, retain, and engage employees while improving their job satisfaction (Neault & Mondair, 2011; Selmer et al., 2013; Wolfson et al., 2011). Damelang and Haas (2012) concluded that culturally diverse employees also bring unique skillsets and perspectives to workplace challenges. Pieterse, Knippenberg, and Dierendonck (2013) found that a homogeneous workplace is not only a discriminatory practice and unwise, but may also sacrifice the competitive advantage cultural diversity often provides an organization.

1.2.1. Verbal communication

People shape meanings (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Mink, 2010; Lakoff, 2003) and relationships when they verbally communicate (Glenn & Kuttner, 2013; Malafouris, 2013). Verbal communication differs among people because of their lived experiences. Visual cues such as subtle facial gestures can lend clues to importance, direction, emotional context, and intent (Ventrella, 2014; Zabetipour, Pishghadam, & Ghonsooly, 2015). Waltman and Wagner-Marsh (2010) note that previous experience helps formulate our present dialog; the reliability factor between the sender's message and experiences and those of the receiver determines the efficiency of the communication taking place. Non-native English speakers have different experiences than their native English counterparts; in verbal communication, they communicate differently as well. That difference is often first recognized by the accent of the non-native English speaker.

The accent is often listed as a major contributor to communication barriers even among native speakers. Accented speech can be particularly challenging to understand (Stevenage, Clarke, & McNeill, 2012) and receives less positivity than native speech (Tsurutani & Selvanathan, 2013). The determination that a speaker has an accent often occurs very quickly. Southwood and Flege (1999) found that a native speaker of any language could identify an accent after just hearing a few syllables of a sentence. Munro and Derwing (1995) noted that miscommunication could be caused by an accent because the native speaker is not able to recognize phonetic segments, particular words, or distinguish between large groups of words and a large word.

1.3. Study objectives

Within the context of the current literature and theory, the intent of the current study was to identify and compare verbal conflicts that occur between non-native English professional women and native English-speaking professional women who work in, or are retired from, mid-sized to large organizations. Comparison of the intercultural communication deficiencies in the workplace may help determine the root of intercultural communication conflict by assessing the expectations for each side of the communication and dependence on intercultural communication skills. By understanding the conflict, future suggestions for improved communication may be narrowed and utilized. In addition, as most mid-sized and large organizations in the United States have at least one non-native English-speaking employee, this study will have practical applications for many professional organizations. Finally, a third objective of this study is to increase scholarly interest in intercultural communication and conflicts, which arise from language use and other cultural barriers.

2. Method and procedures

This research expanded Suklun's (2014) study to include the views of professional native English-speaking professional women. This expansion was undertaken to better understand a new perspective of communicative conflicts that arise from language and cultural barriers in the workplace. In the original study, 16 professional non-native English-speaking women were interviewed. These women worked or had worked in mid-sized and large organizations and were 25 years of age or older. Suklun's transcripts of their experiences are included in this study as a basis for comparison with native English-speaking professional women. The same essential criteria were used for the 16 native English-speaking professional women recruited to participate in this study. Participants' names and the organizations are kept confidential. In recruiting, the invitation letter sent to participants addressed the confidentiality process and security of the records, and a consent form was signed by each participant before participating in the interview.

It was critical to maintain not only the confidentiality of the participants, but also their personal experiences with non-native English-speaking women. An identification code consisting of numbers and letters was assigned to each participant to further protect her anonymity. To help mitigate potential bias on the part of the participants, the interviews were conducted by a native English speaker. Thus, the participants were able to freely answer questions about their experiences without fear of offending a non-native English speaker.

In phenomenological methodology, coding data is a necessary step in the process of analyzing in-depth interviews. To enable coding, the recorded digital files were manually transcribed and to protect participants' identity, the recorded files did not include any type of personal information about the interviewees. In this study, a snowball sampling strategy was utilized and semi-structured interview questions were developed. Semi-structured interview questions included questions about the participants' experiences of working as professional women in the United States, experiences of communication barriers with female, non-native English-speaking coworkers, and situations that influenced their experiences of communication barriers. The questions were carefully developed and sought to provide an understanding of the common experiences of the participants. Other open-ended questions were included as well. The data analysis of the coded transcripts explored the lived experiences of language conflicts between native English-speaking professional women with non-native English-speaking professional women. The questions were asked of the native English-speaking professional women without inference or influence of the researchers' own opinions. During the analysis, the transcripts were read multiple times and each sentence was parsed to explore what was revealed about the lived experiences. Transcripts from Suklun's (2014) study are included to compare those findings with the results of the current study.

2.1. Data analysis

The three questions that drive the current study are listed here and described in the following sections.

(1) What is the perception of the woman's role in communication as a professional in the workplace?
(2) Do the professional native English-speaking women recognize communication conflicts in their lived experiences?
(3) How do the professional native English-speaking women perceive and feel when interacting with a professional non-native English speaker?

2.2. Native english-speaking professional women findings

After reviewing all transcripts at the conclusion of the interviews, all professional native English-speaking women interviewed had noted a generally positive workplace experience in the United States. Simultaneously, many of them mentioned having to work harder than male peers to obtain similar results. Despite noticing this inequity, many also felt professionally supported in workplaces, especially if the respondent had a strong and consistent mentor. However, some also noted support was limited for their personal and professional growth.

2.2.1. Communication and conflict

All of the participants stated that even though they could think of no personal conflicts or examples of ill will, that when communicating with non-native English-speaking women the language barriers often caused misunderstanding. Some rationales given for misunderstanding included words in English having different connotations and denotations and the non-native English speaker using those words in an unexpected manner; a communicative style related to a strong personality that may detract focus from the communication itself; and unfamiliarity with idiomatic phrases that can be perceived as offensive or off-putting. Some observed that these language barriers caused non-native English-speaking women to become defensive or quiet.

2.2.2. Foreign accent

Some participants blamed themselves for not understanding the accent of the non-native English-speaking women and others described being unable to hear well in general. All of the respondents specifically mentioned having no personal problems with the non-native English speakers, but having witnessed others complaining about not understanding non-native English-speaking women's accents. They also mentioned that some accents are harder to understand than others and that they often felt able to recognize the speaker's background of origin or would hypothesize where the non-native speaker was from. All participants stated that it takes time at the beginning of any conversation with a non-native English speaker to grow accustomed to hearing those accents. Due to the accent of non-native English-speaking women, native English-speaking women often misunderstood word selection. All native speakers also noted empathy toward non-native English speakers, recalling instances non-native English-speaking women were excluded in the workplace due to the accent or delay in understanding.

2.2.3. Affect and understanding

All participants recalled overall positive experiences with non-native English-speaking women and noted a general positive opinion of them. A majority of participants stated that they attempt to be respectful and appreciative, especially when they slow a conversation to better ensure understanding. Some participants observed that non-native English-speaking women tend to be more reserved and less talkative in interactions. All of the participants experienced instances of non-native English-speaking women pretending to understand the conversation with the native English speaker only to later find that their understanding was often incorrect or incomplete. When questioned, the participant believed that the reason for the non-native English speaker to pretend to understand was to avoid appearing foolish or inept and to maintain good standing or not offend the native English speaker.

2.2.4. Directness

Although all of the participants agreed that non-native speaking women are more direct than the native English-speaking women they were familiar with, they believed that being a direct person is related to culture and often reminded themselves within those conversations that the directness was not confrontational but cultural. Some of the participants felt appreciative for the non-native English speakers' direct nature and found they would deliver a point quickly and efficiently. Others found a direct nature simply blunt and without elaboration. As one participant described, "I always thought this person [referring to a non-native English speaking woman] a very critical and direct person." Another participant stated, "I would say that it is uncomfortable because I am not used to people doing it," referring to the directness of the non-native English speaker. Another issue mentioned was that non-native English-speaking women try to be direct to simplify communication and limit what they are asking. Some of the participants stated that they have been socialized locally to be "nice" as an expectation of gender and they like it when other women are not. Directness not being a challenge for native speakers but for non-native English-speaking women is also a common theme of the interviews. Some suggested that non-native English-speaking women being direct are not perceived positively in the workplace. They all agreed that in the US, native English speakers are far more accustomed to positive word choices, using elaboration or even "sugar-coating" words to increase the likelihood of a positive reception even though a more direct manner of speech would be less time consuming and more honest.

2.2.5. Coping with language barriers

Participants described personal coping strategies including: asking the non-native English speaker to repeat statements; asking confirmation questions such as "do you understand?" to clarify understanding; asking "do you know what I mean?" to clarify meaning; observing facial expressions for contextual cues such as a smile or frown, confusion or understanding; rephrasing sentences; using "easier" vocabulary words; slowing speech pace; asking the recipient to repeat back what was said or what is expected of her when making a request; making attempts to be friendly so the non-native English speaker might feel welcomed; avoiding idiomatic expressions; and attentive listening.

2.3. Non-native English-speaking women
These notes are summarized from the findings of the study by Suklun (2014).

2.3.1. Working as professional women
Although non-native English-speaking professional women had a generally positive experience working as professional women, they felt they have had to work harder than native English speakers to prove themselves and faced many language and cultural challenges.

2.3.2. Communication
The Suklun (2014) study noted that non-native English-speaking professional women felt stressed about not knowing all of the complex meanings and ever-changing rules of English, and they were aware that not knowing enough words to rephrase sentences sometimes led to misunderstanding. They specifically mentioned having problems with idioms. Non-native English-speaking women expressed having a fear of not being understood and making mistakes. They sometimes felt offended, as some words used daily in their native language were not culturally accepted in the United States. Non-native English speakers were also offended when native English speakers slowed their speech to a noticeable degree.

2.3.3. Speaking with an accent
Non-native English-speaking women also stated that native English speakers sometimes claimed not to hear them, which they found offensive. Some wished that they did not have an accent, though all stated that their accent was part of their personal identity. The native English speaker's interest in a foreign accent was mentioned as well. The participants expressed that not being a native English speaker and having an accent often prevented them from advancing their careers.

2.3.4. Directness
Non-native English-speaking women associate directness with honesty. They believe that in a work environment, being direct is necessary because it is efficient and without useless or invaluable language. Instead, direct language places the focus on work. They all said that directness is prevalent in their native land and stems directly from their culture.

2.3.5. Coping with language barriers
Non-native English-speaking women noted they establish ways within a foreign culture to cope with communication problems, including: warning the listener about their English; making fun of themselves (humor); observing body language for contextual cues; and using only the words they know and feel comfortable using in dialog with a native English speaker.

3. Discussion
A comparison of the results of the two studies revealed that native English-speaking professional women and non-native English-speaking professional women had similar experiences and even shared the same challenges working as professional women in the United States. Both groups identified the complexity of the English language as a cause for misunderstanding. The idiomatic phrases of the language are particularly challenging in the lived experiences of both groups within their communication. The study seems to confirm that the language barriers and miscommunication for both non-native and native English-speaking professional women can cause defensive responses and unintended consequences. Furthermore, both studies confirmed that an accent, though a part of a personal identity for both native and non-native English speakers, is major source of challenges from assumptions of origin to hindrances in advancement in career due to verbal misunderstandings it might cause. Native English-speaking professional women felt that non-native English-speaking women feel less empowered to advance their careers because of their accents and non-native English-speaking professional women confirmed that they were correct in that assumption.

In this study, it was discovered among all participants, native English-speaking professional women found non-native English-speaking professional women more direct in communication. This

finding echoes the previous study (Suklun, 2014), which found non-native English-speaking professionals recognize and identify as being more direct. Both studies revealed that directness is related to culture. Native English-speaking professional women and non-native English-speaking professional women developed similar coping strategies for language barriers between cultures.

Molinsky (2013) noted that in multicultural environments, there are standards or cultural norms for behaviors that are considered appropriate and acceptable. Those behaviors vary based on the native culture. When cultures blend, these new norms that form may also violate previously ingrained values and beliefs creating conflict. Although professional immigrant women consciously attempt to assimilate and adapt, those efforts often contradict native characteristics, such as accents (Molinsky, 2013). The challenge instantly becomes a struggle between losing one's personal identity in an effort to fit into the new culture (Suklun, 2014). Blume, Baldwin, and Ryan (2013) note that multicultural appreciation awareness is "showing openness, tolerance, and interest of a diversity of individuals" (p. 161). Thus, to mitigate potential negative conflicts, organizations could foster an environment where all employees generally accept and find ways to appreciate the differences among one another.

This study revealed that native English-speaking professional women express empathetic intentions toward non-native English speakers in the workplace. They utilize their coping mechanisms intending to improve communication with the non-native English-speaking professional women. It is within these coping mechanisms that a potential conflict was identified, as native English speakers attempting to slow down speech can be offensive to the non-native English-speaking women.

3.1. Limitations of the study

There were multiple limitations to this study, one of which was the sampling size. The location of the participants was convenient, since they reside in a general geographic area which was convenient to the researchers; however, regional differences may influence the results of this study. Similarly, while common themes emerged when coding the data, the sample is not large enough and findings cannot be generalized to a larger population. In addition, the participants for this research work or have worked in establishments of higher education. After initiating the interviews, multiple participants revealed their professional experience in scholarly research in the field, which added an element of possible outliers when comparing general knowledge to specialized knowledge. That is, the study participants held a level of understanding about the topic that would not be generalized to a broader population, and therefore, may have affected the findings.

All participants were familiar with the interviewer, which provided familiarity and comfort, but also created the potential for their answers to not be as honest or direct. Since the participants were all women and the interviews specifically explored women's experiences, the fact that the interviewer was male also may have influenced the honesty of the responses. Finally, as in Suklun's (2014) study, this study explored the experience of communication conflict only among native English-speaking professional women under the definitions set by the researcher. "Professional" is a subjective term and there may be more to discover about this subject by studying the reflections of non-professional native English-speaking women.

3.2. Implications of the study

Blau and Kahn (2013) noted that women are still working on balancing work and life. The authors contend that although the gender gap is slowly closing, there are many issues, such as parental leave, that create the "double jeopardy" of a positive benefit (such as expanding options for infant care) while simultaneously creating a hindering bias that could slow or halt progress for the professional woman's career. Along similar lines, this study suggests that while diversity is increasingly valued in the workplace, the implications of those things that accompany diversity, such as the accent of a non-native English speaker, may actually hinder the progress of the non-native English-speaking professional woman. For organizations that have non-native English-speaking employees, a comparison of the two studies may help reduce communication conflicts between native English

speakers and non-native English speakers in the workplace. The results of this study and continuing research may also help native English-speaking professional women better understand their non-native English-speaking coworkers. This study may also help non-native English-speaking professional women understand how native English-speaking professional women coworkers perceive and feel about them. Biggs (2015) posited that through conscious practice, we are able to enhance our consciousness to be more in tune with our environment. Therefore, improved engagement with others will lead to improved relationships and better results.

3.3. Suggestions for future research

The primary suggestion for future research is to expand the sampling size. That expansion could include a larger number of participants and/or a broader variety of participants for comparison to improve generalization of the findings. As most participants in this study reside in the same general geographic area, expanding beyond the state of Kentucky or outside of establishments of higher education may lead to new findings. After initiating the interviews, multiple participants revealed having professional experience in scholarly research in the field of cultural studies. Adding a question to measure and compare general knowledge to specialized knowledge in this area may prove useful. Future research might include a screening question to separate those with advanced knowledge or training for multicultural affairs.

As the participants were asked to recall memories during the interview and in some instances the events described might have occurred long before the interview, it may be wise to create a field study or controlled interaction between a native and non-native English speaker for better or instant memory recall. This process could potentially be accomplished by having the participant watch a video of an interaction between a native and non-native speaker for convenience and consistency among participants. More recommendations include anonymous interview questions via online survey to increase the likelihood of honest responses, and employing a female interviewer who may or may not be familiar with the participants. Finally, future research could include non-professional women to acquire new perspectives using similar methodology and questions.

Author details
Adam Evans[1]
E-mail: Aevans@transy.edu
ORCID ID: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5819-7980
Harika Suklun[2,3]
E-mail: Harika.suklun@gmail.com
ORCID ID: http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1016-268X
[1] Business Administration, Transylvania University, Lexington, KY, USA.
[2] Business Administration, Sullivan University, Lexington, KY, USA.
[3] AGU, Kayseri, Turkey.

References
Aneesh, A. (2012). Negotiating globalization: Men and women of India's call centers. *Journal of Social Issues, 68*(3), 514–533. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.2012.68.issue-3

Biggs, K. (2015). Soma in the city: How does listening and responding to a "somatic podcast" affect one's relationship to urban space? *Journal of Dance & Somatic Practices, 7*(1), 75–92. https://doi.org/10.1386/jdsp.7.1.75_1

Blau, F., & Kahn, L. (2013). Female labor supply: Why is the US falling behind? *American Economic Review, 103*(3), 251–256. https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.103.3.251

Blume, B. D., Baldwin, T. T., & Ryan, K. C. (2013). Communication apprehension: A barrier to students' leadership, adaptability, and multicultural appreciation. *Academy of Management, Learning & Education*, 12(2), 158–172.

Borjas, G. (2006). Native internal migration and the labor market impact of immigration. *Journal of Human Resources, XLI*, 221–258. https://doi.org/10.3368/jhr.XLI.2.221

Breckenridge, J. N., & Moghaddam, F. M. (2012). Globalization and a conservative dilemma: Economic openness and retributive policies. *Journal of Social Issues, 68*(3), 559–570. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.2012.01763.x

Damelang, A., & Haas, A. (2012). The benefits of migration. *European Societies, 14*(3), 362–392. doi:10.1080/14616696.2012.676758

Dewaele, J., & Stavans, A. (2014). The effect of immigration, acculturation, and multicompetence on personality profiles of Israeli multilinguals. *International Journal of Bilingualism, 18*(3), 203–221. doi:10.1177/1367006912439941

Glenn, P., & Kuttner, R. (2013). Dialogue, dispute resolution, and talk-in-interaction: On empirical studies of ephemeral phenomena. *Negotiation & Conflict Management Research, 6*(1), 13–31. doi:10.1111/ncmr.12001

Hellerstein, J. K., & Neumark, D. (2002). *Ethnicity, language, and workplace segregation: Evidence from a new matched employer-employee data set* (Working paper No. 9037). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. https://doi.org/10.3386/w9037

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Mink, M. (2010). *Culture and organizations, software of the mind, intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Lakoff, G. (2003). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226470993.001.0001

Malafouris, L. (2013). *How things shape the mind: A theory of material engagement*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Molinsky, A. L. (2013). The psychological process of cultural retooling. *Academy of Management Journal, 56*(3), 683–710.

Morris, A. (2017). WEB Du Bois at the center: From science, civil rights movement, to Black Lives Matter. *The British Journal of Sociology, 68*(1), 3–16. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjos.2017.68.issue-1

Munro, M. J., & Derwing, T. M. (1995). Processing time, accent, and comprehensibility in the perception of native and foreign-accented speech. *Language and Speech, 38*(3), 289–306. https://doi.org/10.1177/002383099503800305

Neault, R., & Mondair, S. (2011). Supporting workplace diversity: Emerging role for employment counselors. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 48*(2), 72–80. https://doi.org/10.1002/(ISSN)2161-1920

Oudenhoven, J., & Ward, C. (2013). Fading majority cultures: The implications of transnationalism and demographic changes for immigrant acculturation. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 23*(2), 81–97. doi:10.1002/casp.2132

Pieterse, A. N., Knippenberg, D. V., & Dierendonck, D. V. (2013). Cultural diversity and team performance: The role of team member goal orientation. *Academy of Management Journal, 56*(3), 782–804.

Roberson, Q., Ryan, A. M., & Ragins, B. R. (2017). The evolution and future of diversity at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102*(3), 483–499.

Selmer, J., Lauring, J., & Jonasson, C. (2013). Academic staff involvement and openness to diversity in international educational organisations: Is there a moderating effect of shared language? *Higher Education Quarterly, 67*(2), 135–156. doi:10.1111/hequ.12008

Southwood, M. H., & Flege, J. E. (1999). Scaling foreign accent: Direct magnitude estimation versus interval scaling. *Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics, 13*(5), 335–349.

Stevenage, S. V., Clarke, G., & McNeill, A. (2012). The "other-accent" effect in voice recognition. *Journal of Cognitive Psychology, 24*(6), 647–653. doi:10.1080/20445911.2012.675321

Suklun, H. (2014). *Professional immigrant women in medium and large organizations in the USA: A Phenomenological study exploring communication conflicts that arise from language barriers* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Louisville: Sullivan University.

Tsurutani, C., & Selvanathan, E. (2013). Influence of generational cohort and experience with non-native speakers on evaluation of speakers with foreign-accented speech. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 2013*(224), 43–62. doi:10.1515/ijsl-2013-0055

Ventrella, J. (2014). *The tail wagging the brain*. Retrieved from https://ventrellathing.wordpress.com/2014/12/31/the-tail-wagging-the-brain/

Waltman, J. L., & Wagner-Marsh, F. (2010). Adapting for diversity: Overcoming key communication barriers for human resource professionals. *Journal of International Diversity, 4*, 92–104.

Wolfson, N., Kraiger, K., & Finkelstein, L. (2011). The relationship between diversity climate perceptions and workplace attitudes. *Psychologist-Manager Journal, 14*(3), 161–176. doi:10.1080/10887156.2011.546170

Zabetipour, M., Pishghadam, R., & Ghonsooly, B. (2015). The impacts of open/closed body positions and postures on learners' moods. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 6*(2), 643.