**CHAPTER 8**

**What Causes Us to Hold Biases Against Outgroups?**

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**Chapter 8: Learning Objectives**

As a result of reading Chapter 8 and participating in related class discussions and activities, you should be able to

1. Name and explain three key principles of human perception.

2. Describe both ethnocentrism and stereotyping and how these biased intergroup filters may be reduced.

3. Explain the process of intergroup interaction, the struggles experienced by outgroup members, and intergroup attribution biases that often occur.

4. Define prejudice, discrimination, racism, and the concepts of power, privilege, and microaggression, describing concrete steps that can be implemented to reduce these.

5. Identify and know how to apply skills to effectively deal with ethnocentrism and prejudice, including the steps you can take to become a change agent.

**Chapter 8: Brief Outline**

1. **Human Perception Tendencies: Some General Principles**

Introduction: **Perception**: highly subjective process of selecting cues from the environment, organizing them, ending with interpreting the pattern (NOTE: This is a brief description; see the textbook for actual definitions.)

* 1. Selective Attention: pick cues from cultural landscape
  2. Selective Organization and Labeling: our culture and language guide us to relevant aspects, language labels impose order, but can delimit our thinking
  3. Selective Interpretation: Attach meaning to data, often quickly moving from interpretation to evaluation or ethnocentric judgment

1. **Biased Intergroup Filters: Ethnocentrism and Stereotypes**
   1. Ethnocentrism and Communication
      1. **Ethnocentrism**: views and standards of our ingroup considered superior to any outgroups
      2. Privilege: “invisible package of unearned assets.”
      3. Degrees of ethnocentrism:
         1. **Distance of indifference** (low ethnocentrism): lack sensitivity
         2. **Distance of avoidance** (moderate): nonverbal lack of attention, avoidance, and language switching with outgroup members
         3. **Distance of disparagement** (high): racist jokes, hate speech
      4. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)
         1. 3 states of ethnocentrism
            1. **Denial of cultural difference**: avoid other cultures
            2. **Defense against cultural difference**: one’s culture is only good one
            3. **Minimization of cultural difference**: “we’re all the same”
         2. 3 states in development of ethnorelativism
            1. **Acceptance of cultural difference**: curiosity, respect of other cultures
            2. **Adaptation of cultural difference**: see things from other cultural angle
            3. **Integration of cultural difference**: intentionally incorporate diverse cultural worldviews
   2. Stereotypes and Communication
      1. **Stereotypes**: exaggerated pictures of group on basis of inflexible beliefs and expectations
      2. Stereotype Content Model (SCM) forms along 2 dimensions:
         1. *Perception of warmth*: whether cooperation or competition w/ group
         2. *Perception of competence*: perceive group as high or low status
   3. Stereotypes: We Are What We Watch
      1. Media create “character types,” shape way we view dissimilar others
      2. Stereotyping is inevitable
         1. **Inflexible stereotyping***:* negative stereotyping on automatic pilot
         2. **Flexible stereotyping**: “mindfully minding our mind” – awareness
2. **Marking Ingroup/Outgroup Membership Boundaries**
   1. Us Versus Them
      1. **Ingroup**: feel connected to, high familiarity. Outgroup: feel emotionally and psychologically detached.
      2. **Intergroup communication:** individuals in one group interact with another group (or members) in terms of their group membership identification
      3. **Ingroup favoritism principle:** positive attachment and predisposition for norms related to one’s group
   2. Group Membership Struggles
      1. Membership in an ingroup is a matter of degree and variation
      2. The more association with ingroup, the greater expected conformity
      3. Ingroup membership provides security and inclusion
      4. Ingroup member can feel like outgroup member because he or she is not accepted by ingroup members; amount of conformity influences
   3. Intergroup attribution biases
      1. **Attribution**: explanation, meaning of why people behave as they do
      2. Three biases that typically occur during intergroup encounters:
         1. **Fundamental attribution error**: overestimate negative personality factors to explain stranger’s negative event and underestimate situational factors
         2. **Principle of negativity**: emphasize negative information about outgroup members
         3. **Favorable self-bias and other-derogation principle**: favor ingroup in explaining success, create derogatory explanations for outgroups’ successes
         4. **Self-effacement bias**: collectivistic cultures, remember our failures
3. **Shattered Lens: Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism**
   1. Prejudice: multiple explanations and functions
      1. **Prejudice**: indiscriminate negative feelings and predispositions toward outgroup members (but it can also mean the opposite)
      2. Four explanations for development of prejudice:
         1. **Exploitation theory**: higher status/power group restrains lower
         2. **Scapegoating theory**: blame minority groups for one’s failures
         3. **Authoritarian personality approach**: personality type rigidly adheres to norms, completely accepts those in authority
         4. **Structural approach**: institutions promote “pecking order”
      3. The communication function of prejudice
         1. **Ego-defense mechanism**: acts as shield to protect fragile ego
         2. **Regularity**: need to view own cultural values, norms, and practices as the proper and civilized
         3. **Lacking accurate cultural knowledge**: ignore the unfamiliar
         4. **Rewards and approval**: received from ingroup members
   2. Different Types of Racism
      1. **Racism** involves three principles
         1. Feelings of superiority based on biological or racial differences
         2. Strong ingroup preferences, rejection of “different” outgroups
         3. Doctrine that conveys special advantage to those in power
      2. Examples of racism:
         1. **Racial profiling**: intentionally or unintentionally promotes unfair treatment
         2. **Perpetuating stereotypic images**: majority group present selves positively and minority group negatively
         3. **Hate crimes**: hostility to the victim as a member of a group
      3. Prejudice-Discrimination Typology
         1. **Active bigots**: prejudiced discriminators (KKK, Nazis)
         2. **Timid bigots**: prejudiced nondiscriminators
         3. **Fair weather liberals**: nonprejudiced discriminators
         4. **Proactive change agents**: nonprejudiced nondiscriminators (Ghandi)
   3. Power, Privilege, and Microaggression
      1. Power and Privilege: Privilege is an invisible package of unearned assets due to ethnicity, accent, social class, age, heterosexuality
      2. Microaggressions: intentional or unintentional snubs or insults. Three forms:
         1. **Microinsult**: conscious or unconscious, conveys rudeness, demeans person’s ethnic heritage
         2. **Microinvalidation**: often unconscious, exclude or negate the person’s thoughts, feelings, reality
         3. **Microassault**: often unconscious, classic racism messages
   4. Reduction of Prejudice and Discrimination
      1. Intergroup-Level prejudice Reduction: includes accurate knowledge of value differences, opportunities for groups to cooperatively learn, see the human face beyond stereotypes
      2. Individual-Level Prejudice Reduction: confront our own biases, deepen complexity of our intergroup perceptions, open dialogue about sensitive issues
4. **Intercultural Reality Check: Doables**

Flexible communicators will reduce prejudice and racism in the following ways:

* 1. Start with a clean slate: be flexible with your first best guesses
  2. Use your most precious gift: your brain; be open to multiple perspectives
  3. Continue learning about those around you
  4. Stereotyping is inevitable, but engage in flexibly “minding” your own social categorization process
  5. Remember, all of us are works in progress

**Chapter 8: Chapter Checkup**

**Check out the following self-assessment questions:**

**QuikChoice 8.1:** Use [**QuikChoice 8.1**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-quickchoice-8-1?previousFilter=tag_chapter-08) to learn explore your understanding of ethnocentrism and tolerance of ambiguity. Then see QuikChoice 8.1 in the text to take a full assessment of these two tendencies.

**Figure 8.2**: Take this quick quiz on [**Figure 8.2.**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-figure-table-quiz-8-2?previousFilter=tag_chapter-08)To see more about ingroup and outgroup attributions, check out Figure 8.2 in the text.

**Chapter 8: Critical Incident Analysis**

**Check out the following intercultural scenario:**

(NOTE: See “Chapter 8 Exercise Handouts” for a printable version.)

**A Critical Incident: Friendly Teasing or Verbal Harassment?**

A few months ago Jessica Martinez had just graduated from a well-respected, local university with a degree in mass communications. She had several offers, but the most exciting, not to mention the one closest to home, was with TechnoloComm. She was hired in the human resources office to work on internal newsletters and publicity.

Everything went well for the first week or two, and then something happened that made her question her job and the organization. It was last Monday morning, and she joined a conversation with her coworkers, Peter and Alex. Peter and Alex were working together on other projects. So, when she saw them in the coffee room, she thought this was a great chance to get to know them.

***First Episode***: "Hi, Jessica," said Peter enthusiastically. "We were just talking about the big street party last weekend." "Yeah," chimed in Alex. " I was really frustrated because I couldn’t get into my neighborhood. Did you experience the same problem?" After pausing, he added, "I guess not, since you probably don't live on the north side of town."

"Yeah, you must live in the *el barrio*, right?" questioned Peter, making sure to try to give a Latin twist to *el barrio*. Jessica felt her face flush; she nodded slightly, and faked a laugh. Jessica lived with her family in a traditionally Hispanic area of town and would never want to live anywhere else. Her neighborhood was *home***.** It was where she had grown up and where she knew everyone.

Before she could think of a good response, the men headed back to their desks. Jessica's gut reaction was: "Why do they assume I live in the barrio? I *could*live anywhere; I just don't want to and my family doesn't want to either." After thinking about the conversation for a while, though, she decided to try to forget it, thinking, "It might be a verbal misunderstanding; I just need to focus on my own job."

***Second Episode*:** A week later, the three of them bumped into each other again in the coffee room on a Monday morning. Peter asked "Hey, guys, how was your weekend?" Alex replied, "Great! I got together with my family and had a surf and turf barbecue." Jessica responded: "Sounds yummy. I love barbecue!" Peter commented, "I'm surprised to hear that."

With a surprising and innocent tone, Jessica asked: "Why's that?" Peter replied: "Well, you know, I've always heard that Hispanics don't like to barbecue."

Jessica responded with an irritated voice, "And, pray tell, why not?" "Well," Peter said, "because the beans fall through the grill!" At this point, both Peter and Alex started laughing as Jessica responded with total disgust, "You guys are totally hopeless!" and she walked away with her heart pounding.

*Source*: Adapted from: Mary Meares and John Oetzel (2004), Chapter 31*:* “A Case of Mistreatment at Work?”In J. Keyton & P. Shockley-Zalabak, *Case Studies for Organizational Communication*. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury.

**Interactive Probes for**

**“Friendly Teasing or Verbal Harassment?**

**(Ask yourself and probe your classmates' reactions)**

(NOTE: See “Chapter 8 Exercise Handouts” for a printable version.)

1. What happened in this critical incident? How would you analyze the case? To what extent can you relate to Jessica's experience?

2. In both conversations, were they merely friendly teasing or casual jokes? Were both episodes involving language misunderstandings?

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree, how would you rate the first episode as a verbal harassment episode? How so?

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree, how would you rate the second episode as a verbal harassment episode? How so?

5. Given what you know about connotative meanings and language pragmatic rules, what would you say to Peter, Alex, and Jessica?

**Chapter 8: Glossary-Matching Quizzes**

Click for[**Matching Quiz 8.1.**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-glossary-matching-quiz-8-1?previousFilter=tag_chapter-08)

Click for[**Matching Quiz 8.2.**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-glossary-matching-quiz-8-2?previousFilter=tag_chapter-08)

**Chapter 8: Practice Quiz**

Take the [**Chapter 8 Review Practice Quiz.**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-chapter-8-review-prep-quiz?previousFilter=tag_chapter-08)

**Chapter 8: Exercise Handouts**

Note: Your instructor may ask you to[**download,**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/ting-toomey3e-student-resources#tag_chapter-08)print out, and/or e-mail the following class handouts for this chapter:

**Reflections on Mindless Stereotyping and Racist Rant + A Musical Response**

**Reflecting on Ethnocentrism and Attribution Biases**

**Interactive Probes for “Friendly Teasing or…”**