

Free essay on contact between cultures

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The contact between the human cultures is increasing for many unknown decades. People are coming closer to one another due to the contact between the cultures. However, the nature of contact differs greatly, but the contacts are established in order to understand and develop relations among different people belonging to different countries. Media, cultural imperialism, cultural icons, cultural hegemony, diffusion, acculturation, and transculturation play a significant role in the contact between cultures.

The cultural imperialism approach to the communication considers that the media have great significance on the cultural values. The countries with efficient media become capable of capturing and dominating the international markets. This can be analyzed from an example that in the United States it is not just the aircraft industry that is dominating the exports market and different cultures, but the Hollywood movies are also responsible for creating awareness and promoting American culture in different cultures. The unrestricted flow of the U. S. media in different countries exerts its influence on the aspirations and objectives of people belonging to other cultures, and establishes contact between the cultures.

Moreover, the cultural icons also important roles in establishing contact between the cultures. The products comprise of the cultural values, and the products that represent culture are popular, and they are considered as significant. The artifacts and icons are the significant aspects of the popular culture (Whetmore, 1987). An icon represents a symbol that is admired and idolized in a culture. An example of the icon is the U. S. baseball with triumphs in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. An artifact represents an object that is not widely recognized. For example, Winnie the Pooh, and the Body

shop is the representation of the British culture for many people, whereas Koalas and Kangaroos are the representations of Australia for many people. However, a global brand has same logo and the brand name at a global level. McDonalds, KFC, Levi's, and Sony, etc., are some of the examples of the global brands, these brands playing their role in establishing the contact among the cultures worldwide. According to De Mooij (2009), most of the global brands are of American origin and they represent the American lifestyle and American culture. The values and the positioning of the global brands are, however same in all the countries. Additionally, they have brand loyalty in the countries where they are advertised and marketed. An example of such a brand is Marlboro, which has positioned itself as an urban premium brand at a global level , it has appealed for the freedom that is symbolized by the Marlboro country and Marlboro man (Jandt, 2010). But, the product can be modified in order to meet the demands and needs of the local consumers and the competitive requirements of the market. Furthermore, the concept of the cultural hegemony is also essential in order to understand the contact between cultures. Some countries in the world focus on exporting their own culture; the United States is an example of the country that exports its culture. there are many countries which are the significant markets for the icons of the United States, but there are also many countries that resist accepting the ideas because they may become anxious about the change that are brought by the new ideas. Some cultures may consider the popularity and fame of the U. S. icons as a type of the cultural hegemony, while others fear about the dominance of the U. S. culture over their culture.

It is believed that the values of the culture are transmitted, and the receiving culture adopts and absorbs these values unconsciously. In this regard, cultural dependency indicates that the receiving culture become comfortable with the products of the other culture, which discourage the products of the local culture and affects the local business. For example, Pakistan has become accustomed to the cars imported from Japan, which is affecting the local business as people are buying imported cars more.

Moreover, diffusion, acculturation, and transculturation also play significant role in establishing the contact between cultures. Diffusion represents the movement of ideas and things among different cultures. However, the ideas, traits, and the things may not move from one society to another in the original or real cultural meaning. An example of this fact is McDonald's, whose food was considered as luxury food in Beijing and Moscow, but it has different meaning in America, where McDonald's food items are a part of every day and ordinary fast food items. Further, the diffusion process can be analyzed form the adoption of the new technologies. An example of the adoption of the new technologies by the countries across the world is Automated Teller Machine i. e., ATM (Rogers, 1986).

Acculturation, however, occur when other culture diffuse in a culture to a larger extent and replace the prevailing traditional and the cultural pattern of the culture (Barney, 2008). For example, The Native American Culture is acculturated by the European Americans, and as a consequence of which majorities of the American Indians has adopted English and speak English, wear clothes of European style, and consider the world from the European perspective. Transculturation occurs when an individual moves to another

country and adopts its culture. For example, the immigrants learn and adopt the traditions of the country, and helps in forming contact with different cultures.

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