



Conceptualizing the *Other* in Intercultural Encounters: Review, Formulation, and Typology of the *Other*-Identity

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ABSTRACT

Acculturation's impact on migrating individuals' cultural identity is one of the foci of intercultural communication research. Many intercultural communication studies deliberately place ethnic identity at the core of identity research to avoid using racial identity. Influenced by the difference-as-problem viewpoint, sojourners' and immigrants' *Other*-identities are often viewed as abnormal, deviant, and alien and therefore should be managed, reduced, and even eliminated. However, critical scholarship has revealed that the sense of being the *Other* is the main theme of sojourners and immigrants. Drawing upon postmodern, postcolonial, and hermeneutic approaches, sojourners' and immigrants' 3 types of *Other*-identities are conceptualized in this review, and their embeddedness in asymmetric power structures is explained. These ideas emerge from social categorization processes that use both phenotypic and cultural markers as primary categorizing criteria. Consequently, the view held by biculturalists is refuted, and elaboration is presented about the ways migrating individuals—in intercultural encounters—enrich their sense of *Self* through integrating their *Other*-identities into their *Self*-identities, producing fused identities.

KEYTERMS

Hermeneutics; postmodernism; postcolonialism; the *Other*-identity; *Otherness*

At the core of intercultural communication studies, acculturation has been extensively explored in terms of its impact on sojourners' and immigrants' identification with the host culture. Against this backdrop, migrating individuals' *Other*-identities have become an understudied topic in this field. The insufficient exploration of sojourners' and immigrants' *Other*-identities is in part because of the definition of biculturalism itself, as well as the viewpoint of difference-as-problem, both prevalent in intercultural communication studies. Researchers who are influenced by biculturalism assume a dichotomous structure consisting of ethnic ties at one pole and ties with the host culture at the other (S. Liu, 2015). Given the difference-as-problem viewpoint, successful intercultural adaptation is advocated to help sojourners and immigrants establish their identification with the host culture, proponents arguing this benefits the psychological wellbeing of migrating individuals (Berry, 1997; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Berry & Sabatier, 2011; Berry & Sam, 1997; Gudykunst, 1985, 1988, 1995; Kim, 1988, 2001, 2006; Ting-Toomey, 2005). Consequently, sojourners' and immigrants' *Other*-identities are

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underestimated, ignored, too often disregarded altogether in intercultural communication studies (S. Liu, 2015; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Xu, 2013).

These phenomena are important given that the sense of being the *Other* is the main theme of sojourners and immigrants, echoing across situations, over time, and throughout their lives (Hegde, 1998; S. Liu, 2015). Grounded in marked distinctness, sojourners and immigrants are distinguished as the *Other* by host nationals on two levels: phenotype and culture (Modood, 1997, 2005a, 2011). Embedded in asymmetric power structures, these migrating individuals are further described as abnormal, deviant, uncivilized, alien, marginal, and incompetent *Others* (Hegde, 1998; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Xu, 2013). Consequently, sojourners and immigrants are frequently exposed to discrimination, stereotype, prejudice, and even racism as powerless minorities (Bhatia, 2007; Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005; Modood & Salt, 2011; Schiefer, Mollering, & Daniel, 2012; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Wodak & Reisigl, 2015).

With this situation in mind, this review is an attempt to enlarge perspectives and deepen understanding of sojourners' and immigrants' *Other*-identities in intercultural communication. To this end, studies that attend to the *Other*-identities of sojourners and immigrants across diverse disciplines are collected through library databases (e.g., ERIC, JSTOR, Elsevier, Springer, ScienceDirect, and Wiley), and Google Scholar, using combinations of search terms, including the *Other* (e.g., minority, outsider, and out-group), *Othering* (e.g., alienation, stereotype, and discrimination), intercultural encounters, and acculturation. Based on the synthesis of the findings in the literature, the concept of identity and its origins on both individual and social aspects are described. Next, identity construction is scrutinized, using culture as a significant social category, and critiques of existing intercultural elaborations of identity are included. Finally, a refined conceptualization of the *Other*-identity, inspired by postmodern, postcolonial, and hermeneutic approaches, is presented—the formulation and typology of sojourners' and immigrants' *Otherness* in intercultural communication.

Identity on both individual and social aspects

Identity as part of self-concept

Identity on the individual aspect, as part of the individuals' self-concept, “derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1981, p. 2). Individuals acquire and develop their identities through interactions with others (Collier, 1998; Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005; Ting-Toomey, 2005). The view of social construction is deeply rooted in symbolism interactionism, which can be traced back to works written by Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934). Cooley (1902) offered the social psychological concept “looking-glass self,” which proposed that an individual's *Self* grew out of his or her interpersonal interaction, and was manufactured by his or her understanding of how other people in the society perceived him or her. Based on Cooley's illustration of the looking-glass self, Mead (1934) conceptualized the notion of *Self* in relation to the *Generalized Other*, which was defined as the organized community or social groups that gave individuals their unity of *Self* (Abouafia, 2012). According to Mead (1934), individuals can only develop the *Self* during interaction with generalized

Others through assuming certain roles. During social interaction with others, such functional social units or subgroups as political parties, clubs, and corporations ascribe various characteristics to roles, resulting in multiple generalized *Others*.

Identity as a social-cultural construct

In addition to the individual aspects that conceptualize identity within the society-individual structure (Hecht et al., 2005), social aspects are also used to explore identity as a social-cultural construct (Collier & Thomas, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), manifested through communication in social interaction (Hecht, 1993). Social identity theory, developed by Tajfel (1978, 1982) and Turner (1975, 1982, 1985) in the 1970s and 1980s, puts more weight on the social aspects of identity, which is viewed as “a product of social categorization” (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 259). In other words, an individual’s identity derives from his or her perceived membership in a relevant social group (Turner & Oakes, 1986). With emphasis on social categorization, Turner (1985) and his colleagues established self-categorization theory, a cousin to social identity theory. According to self-categorization theory, such in-group/out-group markers as class, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, political affiliation, and occupation are among the social categories used in identity formation processes (Hecht et al., 2005; Turner & Oakes, 1986). By identifying with membership in specific social categories, society is “internalized by individuals in the form of social identities on the basis of social categories” (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 259).

Sojourners’ and immigrants’ identity formation: Culture as a social category

Intercultural elaboration of identity in interpretive and social scientific approaches

Among the factors that influence identity formation, culture is one of the most important social categories and variables that shape individuals’ identities (Ting-Toomey, 2005; Turner, 1982). As Geertz (1977) argued, the process of self-identification, and meaning attached to the process were culturally bound. In the field of intercultural communication, cultural identity developed through shared meanings and values is the focus of interpretive approach (Collier & Thomas, 1988; Hecht, Ribeau, & Alberts, 1989). In this approach, *cultural identity* is viewed as “a cultural construction in which core symbols, labels, and norms are expressed and communicated among a group of people” (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 219; see also Collier, 1997, 1998; Collier & Thomas, 1988). From the interpretive perspective, cultural identity is formed during the process of cultural identification by means of the ascribed *Self* (e.g., who I am) and the avowed *Self* (one’s *Self* perception; Collier, 1997). Holding to Goffman’s idea of performing the culture, interpretive intercultural communication scholars reason that enacted communicative behaviors and their performed meanings should be used to reflect about cultural identity (Mendoza, Halualani, & Drzewiecka, 2002; Philipsen, 1975).

The culture-as-social category construction of identity is also contemplated in depth from the social science perspective (Mendoza et al., 2002). Two models have guided intercultural communication scholars in the social scientific approach: one is a linear

bipolar model and the other a two-dimensional model (Gui, Berry, & Zheng, 2012). The linear bipolar model places the ethnic ties of sojourners and immigrants to their home countries on one end of a continuum, and their ties with the host culture on the opposite extreme (S. Liu, 2015). The assumption underlying this model is that the negotiation between two ethnic or cultural identities is a zero-sum game (E. Kramer, 2000). To put it differently, “the strengthening of one identity requires the weakening of the other” (Gui et al., 2012, p. 600). In contrast with the linear bipolar model, the two-dimensional model indicates that both ethnic ties and ties with the host or dominant culture “should be considered separately and that these two relationships may be independent” (Gui et al., 2012, p. 600). The acculturation model originally proposed by Berry (1980) delineates four possible results of intercultural contact: assimilation (identification with the host culture), integration (identification with both the heritage culture and the host culture), separation (identification with the heritage culture), and marginalization (identification with neither culture).

In addition to the above-mentioned binary thinking, identity studies in the social science realm argue that differences among cultures should be managed because differences are viewed as “a problematic source of misunderstanding and conflict” (Xu, 2013, p. 379). Therefore, sojourners and immigrants should attempt to adapt to the host society to reduce misunderstanding and conflict (Xu, 2013). For instance, Kim (1988, 2001) suggested that sojourners and immigrants should adapt to the host culture by virtue of inter-ethnic communication. Kincaid (1988) stated that a stage of greater cultural uniformity could be achieved through convergence over time through unrestricted communication among members in a relatively closed social system. In this context, issues with anxiety, uncertainty, and identity inconsistency arising from intercultural encounters are considered to be problems that should be solved through adaptation, which is viewed as the ideal way for sojourners and immigrants to be successfully accepted by members of the host society. Gudykunst (1985, 1988, 1995) stressed that an individual’s interaction with people from different cultural groups often resulted in anxiety and uncertainty, that should be managed through effective communication to ultimately achieve successful intercultural communication. In addition, Ting-Toomey (1993, 2005) contended that individuals had a tendency to change and transform their identities when situated in unfamiliar cultural environments, with the hope of attaining identity consistency and feeling included through exposure to repeated cultural routines in a familiar cultural environment.

Existing problems of intercultural elaboration of identity

Preceding elaborations about identity in the intercultural communication literature have been criticized by scholars from the critical approach in three areas. First, racial identity is examined less in macro contexts. Although interpretative intercultural communication scholars “highlight the importance of historical, contextual, and power-laden aspects of identity” by virtue of the ascribed *Self* and the avowed *Self*, the dilemma lies in the fact that context “is conceptualized as a stable, community space that fully determines subjective meaning” without “adequate connotative linkage” to “wider social-political formations and historical influences” (Mendoza et al., 2002, p. 314). In addition,

communication scholars' deliberate avoidance of using racial identity makes it more difficult to examine identity from a macro view in terms of historical, social, and political contexts, for example (Shin & Jackson, 2003). As a result, ethnicity and race are used interchangeably in the literature, and ethnic identity is at the core of identity research in many intercultural communication studies (Kim, 2007). However, ethnic identity and racial identity have different theoretical connotations. The former refers to the "subjective sense of belonging to or membership in an ethnic culture" (Hecht, Collier, & Ribeau, 1993, p. 30), and the latter is a biological term, labeling "people on the basis of physical characteristics such as skin color or salience of physiology" (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 213; see also Jackson, 1999; Yetman, 1991). In the context of intercultural encounters, both ethnic and racial identities can use discourse to influence sojourners' and immigrants' identity construction by virtue of discrimination, stereotype, prejudice, and cultural value discrepancies (Bhatia, 2007; Modood & Salt, 2011; Schiefer et al., 2012).

The second criticism is that biculturalism is overemphasized. Since the 1980s, the notion of biculturalism, which advocates for identification with both heritage and host cultures, has prevailed in intercultural communication (S. Liu, 2015). Influenced by biculturalism, researchers explore the impact of cultural identity on intercultural contacts in a binary structure, consisting of ethnic ties at one pole and ties with the host culture at the other. As a result, sojourners' and immigrants' ethnic identities and the host cultural identities are negotiated in dichotomous categories such as either/or and us/them (S. Liu, 2015). From these negotiations, sojourners and immigrants acquire and develop a bicultural identity, which is regarded as the optimal and ultimate goal of acculturation (Berry, 1997, 2003, 2005; Gudykunst, 1985, 1995; Kim, 1988, 1991, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005). Nonetheless, the increasing complexity of global migration in the past two decades has challenged biculturalism with diversity in intercultural relations which are influenced by such factors as race, ethnicity, culture, and geographical locale (S. Liu, 2015). Against this backdrop, cultural studies scholars have shifted their attention to mixed-up differences and hybridity (Bhatia, 2007; Geertz, 1977; E. Kramer, 2000; S. Liu, 2015).

The final criticism included here is the viewpoint of difference-as-problem that has been widely adopted. Intercultural communication scholars assume that differences among cultures in terms of values and behaviors should be managed to reduce uncertainty and barriers to effective communication (Gudykunst, 1985, 1988, 1995; Ting-Toomey, 2005). Underlain by this assumption, identity research in the social scientific approach prioritizes sojourners' and immigrants' identification with the host culture, believed to benefit the psychological wellbeing by facilitating successful intercultural adaptation (Berry, 1997; Berry et al., 2006; Berry & Sabatier, 2011; Berry & Sam, 1997; Gudykunst, 1985, 1988, 1995; Kim, 1988, 2001, 2006; Ting-Toomey, 2005). Therefore, effective communicative strategies are developed to foster intercultural competence—viewed as the marker of sojourners' and immigrants' identification with the host culture. During this process, the gap between sojourners' and immigrants' ethnic identity and the host cultural identity is neglected. Differences between these individuals' heritage culture and the host culture are seen as reducible and even eliminable (Xu, 2013).

Conceptualization of the *Other*-identity in intercultural encounters

With this background, scholars following the critical approach view cultural identity as a location of oppression in which race, gender, and class intersect with the politics of inequality (Hall, 1990, 1992, 1996; hooks, 1992, 1994). Rather than forcing the *Self* and *Other* into a dichotomous structure, the two should be viewed as products of dialectical processes (Hecht, 1993). Talking about the *Other* inherently involves talking about the *Self* (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984, 1986; Xu, 2013). Situated in specific social-historical circumstances, the *Other* we perceive is always outcomes of communicative practices (Deetz & Simpson, 2004). Among approaches used to explore *Otherness* in intercultural encounters, the following three theoretical lenses provide the framework to conceptualize sojourners' and immigrants' *Other*-identities in this review, the purpose of which is to reveal the formulation and typology of the cultural *Other* in intercultural communication.

Theoretical approaches to explore the Other

The postmodern lens. The framework proposed by Hecht et al. (2005) in their elaboration of the communication theory of identity (CTI) sheds light on the exploration of the *Other*. CTI authors integrate the postmodern approach in elaborating identity formation by viewing identity as a four-layer phenomenon, including relational, communal, enacted, and personal identities (Hecht et al., 2005; Jung & Hecht, 2004). Borrowing ideas from social identity theory, CTI developers argue that individuals are socially categorized through their social interaction with others. Identity mutually formed through interaction is called *relational identity*. Social interaction places the group as the locus of identity construction, *communal identity* is ascribed to individuals who are in line with common group characteristics that function, in turn, to form the group's identity (Hecht et al., 2005). Integrating communication into identity studies, CTI authors suggest that identity "is formed, maintained, and modified in a communicative process and thus reflects communication" and in turn, "is acted out and exchanged in communication" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 262). Therefore, *enacted identity* is also seen as expressed performances "enacted in communication through messages" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 263). These three layers, together with the personal layer, on which individuals define themselves in general as well as in particular situations, provide a platform on which CTI provides a synthetic view of identity that integrates *Self*-concept, communication, social relationships, and community (Hecht et al., 2005).

This four-layer model explains the ways individuals are exposed to their individual, relational, and group distinctness through social interaction with others. The distinctiveness, which is made salient by enacted communicative behaviors in social interaction, nurtures individuals' sense of *Otherness*. This process is described by CTI as internalization of communication as identity, which is accomplished in at least two ways (Hecht et al., 2005). One is to create a social phenomenon's symbolic meanings (e.g., the sense of being the *Other*) and establish, exchange, and entrench these meanings through social interaction. The other refers to the individuals' confirmation or validation of social categories (e.g., acceptance of the out-group membership, and creation of counter-discourse to demystify the hegemony) made relevant to them through social interaction.

The postcolonial approach. The postcolonial approach to the *Other* has its roots in the decolonization of *Self*, initiated by Du Bois (1903, 1915) and further elaborated by Fanon (1967). The basic assumption of this approach is that “the *Other*-identity is imposed and ascribed by power structures (or colonizers) in a hegemonic way that needs to be described toward reconstruction of a *Self*” (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 224). The classic analysis of the us-and-them binary social relationship is described by Said (1979), who critiqued colonialism in general, and European colonialism in particular in *Orientalism*. At the core of Said’s elaboration is the binary opposition between Occidental (us) and Oriental (them). Particular types of discourse are applied to construct the *Other* in the non-Western world as the homogeneous cultural entity known as the East. During the process of *Othering*, Europeans express and represent themselves and European cultures as superior, progressive, rational, and civil, and the Orient as inferior, backward, irrational, and wild.

From the postcolonial perspective, discourses of truth-and-normalcy are embedded in certain power relations and ideologies, and are created to oppress diverse aspects of *Self* through rejecting differences as deviant or abnormal identities (Bhabha, 1983, 1984, 1985; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Xu, 2013). Consequently, the *Other* represents the discursive oppression formulated by colonial powers and cultural imperialism through a fixed signification (Bhabha, 1983, 1985), and its formation is the “product of various forms of oppression” (Shin & Jackson, 2003, p. 226). As a result, scholars in this approach insist on problematizing identity and representing cultural differences in specific historical and sociopolitical contexts with the purpose of examining the politics of differences (Tiffin & Lawson, 1994; Xu, 2013). Counter-discourses or alternative narratives are invented to reject the ambivalent *Other*-identity ascribed by European-dominant cultural imperialism via racialization, colonization, and objectification (C. Kramer, 1974; Shin & Jackson, 2003; van Dijk, 1993; West, 1993).

The hermeneutical perspective. Gadamer (1991) considered identity as historically effected consciousness grounded in an awareness of the hermeneutic situation, described as *horizon*, or “the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point” (p. 301). As socialized human beings, individuals have been endowed with certain horizons by their cultures, and constantly encountered other people’s horizons by virtue of such communicative acts as dialogue. Through conversation, one can discover a partner’s standpoint and horizon without being in agreement with the partner. Rooted in and committed to furthering one’s common bond with another, dialogue affirms the finite nature of interlocutors’ knowing and invites them to remain open to one another. It is an individual’s openness to dialogue with others that fosters the emergence of his/her understanding and interpretation of a certain event or phenomenon. The understanding and interpretation are the products of fusion of the past and the present horizons (Croucher & E. Kramer, 2017; E. Kramer, 2000).

Applying Gadamer’s elaboration of horizon to intercultural communication, E. Kramer (2000) proposed cultural fusion theory, viewing sojourners’ and immigrants’ acculturation as an additive and integrative process of combining the heritage culture and the host culture in an unpredictable way to generate a fused identity. The goal of acculturation, according to cultural fusion theory, is to make life meaningful through negotiating and celebrating the niches and differences (Callahan, 2004; Croucher & E.

Kramer, 2017; E. Kramer, 2000, 2011). Therefore, sojourners' and immigrants' heritage cultures should be maintained rather than being unlearned, nor are their original cultural identities abandoned during the process of learning new cultures (Croucher & E. Kramer, 2017; E. Kramer, 2000). These migrating individuals' *Other*-identities, which are continually generated by their distinctness, should be embraced rather than eliminated; recognized rather than marginalized. With more new horizons brought in, sojourners and immigrants develop a fused identity by integrating aspects of the host culture into their *Other*-identities in an additive, integrative, and unique way. Such a growth is described by E. Kramer (2013) as an accrual and integral process rather than a zero-sum game. For sojourners and immigrants, the fused identity defines who they are and separates them from those who do not share similar consciousness structures, whether co-nationals in their home country or local individuals they meet in the host country. The *Other*, from a hermeneutic perspective, is situated in the similar experiences and consciousness structures, rather than dualistic structures such as heritage-host culture and co-ethnic-different-ethnic groups.

Otherness formulated in intercultural encounters

In the context of intercultural encounters, culture works as an important social group marker to differentiate one racial or ethnic group from another. Through comparing or contrasting themselves with people from the host culture, sojourners and immigrants are exposed to their group distinctness which is activated to generate social divisions between them and host nationals (Tajfel, 1981). Situated in an asymmetric power structure, the intergroup differentiation contributes to the formation of sojourners' and immigrants' *Otherness*, which leads to the development of a fused intercultural identity through integrating the *Other*-identity into the *Self*-identity.

Otherness emerging from social categorization. Drawing upon the CTI framework, it is argued here that sojourners and immigrants are singled out, becoming out-groups in the host culture by social categorization that uses both phenotypic and cultural markers as primary categorizing criteria. Phenotype, due to its racial (e.g., non-White skin color) and ethnic (e.g., ways of dressing) features, is used as an important marker to distinguish sojourners and immigrants as out-groups through simplistically reducing them to the *Other* via ethnic labeling (Hecht et al., 2005; Tajfel, 1981). Focusing on group memberships, ethnic terms or labels are typically employed by the census to place sojourners and immigrants in overly broad ethnic categories in an oversimplified and unsophisticated way (Hecht et al., 2005). As a result, these homogenous racial and ethnic group labels are used to explain the complex relationships among migrating individuals' race, ethnicity and behaviors, frequently ignoring other factors that affect these individuals' behaviors (Phinney, 1996; Trimble 1995).

In addition to physical dissimilarity, language is considered a strong determinant of social categorization, owing to its psychological and functional impacts on social interaction (Giles & Johnson, 1981). Stepping outside their own cultures, sojourners and immigrants are exposed to the linguistic gap between them and host nationals. Given the level of linguistic proficiency in second languages, sojourners and immigrants are frequently unable to thoroughly express themselves, take active roles in communication,

and fully participate in some culturally-bound conversations with host-nationals (Corder, 1983; Suarez, 2002). This linguistic gap distinguishes sojourners and immigrants from the host linguistic community as out-groups. The highlighted difference, embodied in limited linguistic proficiency in second language, constantly remind migrating individuals that they are linguistically incompetent *Others* in the host culture.

Besides language, cultural values function as less overt determinants of social categorization based on their impacts on social interaction (Hecht et al., 2005; S. Liu, 2015; Peltokorpi & Clausen, 2011). At the core of cultures, cultural values generate differences by virtue of marking an individual or a group distinct, explicitly or implicitly (S. Liu, 2015). Differences among individuals' cultural values are termed *cultural value discrepancies* (Schiefer et al., 2012). When sojourners and immigrants are relocated to a different culture, they are confronted with some cultural values that are incompatible with their own. The cultural value discrepancies displayed by these migrating individuals distinguish them as the *Other* in the host country (Schiefer et al., 2012).

The aforementioned social categorizing processes, functioning on both phenotypic and cultural levels, expose sojourners and immigrants to symbolic meanings of being the *Other* during social interaction with host nationals on both relational and communal levels. Then the *Other*-identity, enacted in communication as expressed performances, is confirmed, validated, and internalized by sojourners and immigrants in and through communication. CTI authors corroborate this, arguing these communicative processes ascribe *Otherness* to such social phenomena as immigration and sojourning (Hecht et al., 2005). The symbolic meaning of being the *Other* in the host culture is established, exchanged, and entrenched through social interaction. Ultimately, sojourners and immigrants use these communicative processes to internalize communication as identity.

Otherness rising from unequal power distribution. From the postcolonial perspective, the *Other*-identity is imposed and ascribed by dominant groups in a hegemonic way (Said, 1979; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Xu, 2013). Based at least in part on the unequal power distribution among dominant groups and marginalized minorities, sojourners' and immigrants' *Other*-identities are denied and rejected as deviant or abnormal when compared to the host cultural identity (Shin & Jackson, 2003). Linguistic labels and other discursive actions used by dominant groups further *otherize* sojourners and immigrants as powerless minorities in binary structures including normal-alien, insider-outsider, us-them, and superior-inferior, in postcolonialism fashion. Such a failure to recognize complexity of sojourners' and immigrants' cultural identities does not only "make difficult equal membership in the wider society or policy" (Modood, 2011, p. 44), but also "reinforces ethnic prejudices and perpetuates racist stereotypes" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 265). Ultimately, sojourners and immigrants, as marginalized groups with marked distinctness, are reduced to the alien, inferior, threatening, unwelcome, and even unwanted *Other* in asymmetric power structures (S. Liu, 2007).

Specific to intercultural communication, sojourners' and immigrants' identity construction should be analyzed "in the specific historical contexts and power relations between different cultural groups" (Xu, 2013, p. 380). A product of global White supremacy is the idea that being white, which symbolizes pre-established privileges and powers, legitimizes White people and their cultures as ideal representations of

civilization and advancement (Blackwood & Purcell, 2014; Blay, 2011; Jackson, 1999; Shin & Jackson, 2003). Consequently, the ethnic identities of sojourners and immigrants in the West are reduced to a general non-White identity, constructed as the wild and backward *Other* in a structurally oppressive environment (Chen, 1992; Nakayama, 1994, 1996). With the migration from the West to the rest of the world, the global White supremacy, defined and validated through using whiteness as the standard, endows white sojourners and immigrants with social superiority in non-Western countries (Bloch, 1998; Y. Liu, 2017). For instance, American immigrants in Israel were perceived by Israelis to be a highly desirable category of immigrants in comparison to many other immigrants placed by Israelis in subordinate positions (Bloch, 1998). Similarly, American sojourners in China were well taken care of, institutionally and financially (Y. Liu, 2017). They were guaranteed higher wages and more benefits than their Chinese colleagues to live a more financially secure life in China as the *Other*, even though they were still marginalized as the powerless out-group politically and culturally.

Otherness contributing to a fused identity. If *acculturation* is defined as assimilating to the host culture, the process does not support the ideas included in the linear bipolar model of assimilation, owing to sojourners' and immigrants' marked differences on both phenotypic and cultural levels (Croucher & E. Kramer, 2017). Recognizing more of the complexities of these migrating individuals' cultural identities, the two-dimensional model still adopts a binary thinking that suggests sojourners' and immigrants' *Self*-identities and *Other*-identities somehow negotiate with each other in dichotomous categories such as either/or and us/them (S. Liu, 2015). In this context, sojourners and immigrants are encouraged to adapt to the host society in order to acquire and develop a bicultural identity, considered the optimal and ultimate goal of acculturation (Berry, 1997, 2003, 2005; Gudykunst, 1985, 1995; Kim, 1988, 1991, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005).

Endorsed by biculturalism, both the linear bipolar model and the two-dimension model place the *Self* and the *Other* in a binary structure (Croucher & E. Kramer, 2017; Hecht, 1993; E. Kramer, 2000; Xu, 2013). However, the difference-erasing binary thinking promoted by biculturalism has been challenged by the increasing complexities brought about by global migration and the subsequent diverse cultural encounters (S. Liu, 2015). In spite of being placed in the position of the *Other*, sojourners and immigrants can still carve their own niches in the host country by taking advantage of their distinctness (E. Kramer, 2000). For example, many American sojourners pursue employment opportunities exclusive to Westerners and/or untapped markets in China by using their *Other*-identities (Y. Liu, 2017).

Against this backdrop, hybridity is advocated, characterized by better understanding and incorporation of mixed-up differences (Bhatia, 2007; Geertz, 1977; E. Kramer, 2000; S. Liu, 2015). The *Self* and the *Other* are not placed in a dichotomous structure, and they are viewed as complementing rather than confronting each other (Xu, 2013). Reflecting on their *Other*-identities, sojourners and immigrants often gain deeper understanding of their *Self*-identities. For instance, American sojourners in China strongly identified with American cultural values when exposed to cultural value discrepancies between them and Chinese people on such dimensions as individualism versus collectivism, and high power distance versus low power distance (Y. Liu, 2017). In light of the

Otherness ascribed to them by cultural value discrepancies, American sojourners frequently gained better understanding of their own cultures and embraced their American identity more strongly. Compared to their *Self*-concept before moving to China, these American sojourners' reported *Self* was enriched by their re-confirmation of being Americans as a result of living in China. In addition, they showed appreciation for some Chinese values and integrated them into their own value systems, for example taking more care of in-group members, and being modest about their achievements. The integration of sojourners' and immigrants' *Other*-identities into their sense of *Self* is described by cultural fusion theory as expansion of horizons, from which migrating individuals continually fuse experiences and consciousness structures from two or more cultures in an additive way to generate a fused identity (Croucher & E. Kramer, 2017; E. Kramer, 2000).

Types of Otherness

As elaborated previously, sojourners' and immigrants' *Otherness* emerges from their ongoing social interaction with host nationals. Enacted in communication, the process of *Othering* is described as the way power works to construct dominant groups' hegemonic positions by designating marginalized and powerless minorities and their lifestyles, cultures, etc., as the *Other* (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005). Three types of *Otherness* are generated, namely exoticized *Other*, stereotyped *Other*, and ostracized *Other*.

Exoticized Other. Because of the different physicality, sojourners and immigrants encounter general inquiries from host nationals about their nationality, origins, belongings, beliefs, and many cultural features. For example, Indian immigrants in the United States were often politely asked by their American peers about India, and similar questions (Bhatia, 2007). By the same token, sojourners in China, especially those with Western features, frequently aroused attention from ordinary Chinese people who rarely see foreigners on a daily basis (Kochhar, 2011; Y. Liu, 2017). Such inquiries and staring from host nationals, exclusively triggered by sojourners' and immigrants' physical dissimilarities, exemplify the general ascription of their *Otherness* through visual differences, hence placing them in the category of the exoticized *Other* by virtue of objectification, generalization, and alienation (Bhatia, 2007; Kochhar, 2011; Y. Liu, 2017). Consequently, sojourners' and immigrants' sense of being the *Other* in the host culture is made salient, with their racial and ethnic identities being placed prior to their other identities (Bhatia, 2007).

Stereotyped Other. In addition to being exoticized as the *Other*, minority groups can be differentiated from the majority society through stereotyping (Miles, 1989; Modood, 2011). Stereotypes are derived by simplifying complexity, rendering over-generalizations to label all members of a given group (Mackie, Hamilton, Susskind, & Rosselli, 1996; Ottati & Lee, 1995). Hence, the simplifications and over-generalizations contribute to homogenous, one-dimensional, and incomplete descriptions, missing the complexities and variations within, between, and among individuals and groups (Lippmann, 1922; Phinney, 1996; Trimble 1995). Specific to intercultural communication, stereotypes are inevitable because interlocutors from different cultures often lack firsthand personal interaction with the cultural *Others* (Lebedko, 2014). These interlocutors navigate initial

interactions with cultural *Others* guided by their incomplete and inaccurate expectations of culturally different *Others*. When viewed as a way to gain benefits, stereotypes are used by sojourners and immigrants to acquire respect and admiration from local people (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2010; Y. Liu, 2017). For example, some Indian immigrants during the 1960s and 1970s in the United States found deeper acceptance among hippies who simplistically equated Mahatma Gandhi with Hinduism (Bhatia, 2007). At the same time, stereotypes often reinforce ethnic prejudices and perpetuate racist beliefs, creating barriers to effective intercultural communication (Hecht et al., 2005; Lebedko, 2014). For example, Indian immigrants' accents, which were associated with foreignness and inefficiency, were treated as a form of cultural incompetence in American society (Bhatia, 2007). Stereotyping draws attention to sojourners' and immigrants' sense of being different is made prominent by such specific identifying markers as accent, language, and mannerisms (Bhatia, 2007; S. Liu, 2007). Stereotyped *Otherness* is designed to make sojourners and immigrants feel abnormal and to marginalize them (Bhatia, 2007).

Ostracized Other. Compared to exoticized *Otherness* and stereotyped *Otherness*, sojourners' and immigrants' ostracized *Otherness* emerges from the negative attributes assigned to the out-group. To maintain self-esteem, in-groups tend to positively differentiate themselves from out-groups through devaluing and even rejecting those outsiders by virtue of such acts as discrimination, prejudice, isolation, and rejection, especially when they perceive threats from these outsiders (Brewer, 1999; Pehrson, Brown, & Zagefka, 2009; Wagner, Becker, Christ, Pettigrew, & Schmidt, 2012). Disruptive in nature, *Otherness* generated in this way often makes sojourners and immigrants feel alienated and develop disturbing feelings toward the host society (Bhatia, 2007). For instance, first-generation Indian immigrants in the United States were pushed to confront issues of race and ethnicity in daily life through racial discrimination, ethnic prejudice, and rejection by their peers, which accentuated their pain of displacement as non-Western immigrants in the West (Bhatia, 2007).

The exclusion of out-groups becomes more evident when nationalism is interwoven with intergroup relations. Emerging from in-group identification with their own nation, nationalism is detrimental to positive out-group evaluations in that in-group members too often view their country as superior to other nations and hence should be dominant (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989). As the result of upgrading the in-group, out-groups are devalued and the derogation of them is positively related to the degree of nationalism (Wagner et al., 2012). The devaluation of the out-group sometimes devolves to actual rejection of the out-group and even intergroup conflict (Brewer, 1999; Brown & Zagefka, 2005). For instance, American sojourners in China were subject to Chinese people's penalization and exclusion during sports competition that intensified nationalism by taking on national significance for the Chinese as a source of national pride (Hessler, 2006; Y. Liu, 2017).

In summary, this review is a refutation of the view of biculturalism and the difference-as-problem viewpoint, both of which describe sojourners' and immigrants' *Other*-identities as abnormal, deviant, uncivilized, alien, marginal, and incompetent (Hegde, 1998; Shin & Jackson, 2003; Xu, 2013). Inspired by postmodern, postcolonial, and hermeneutic approaches, the cultural *Other* is conceptualized in large part through such

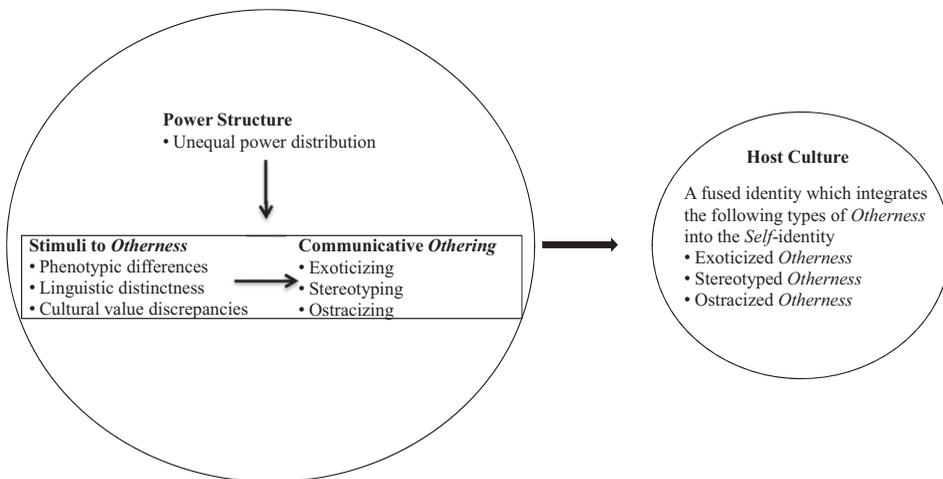


Figure 1. Conceptualization of Sojourners' and Immigrants' *Other*-identities.

stimuli as physical dissimilarity (e.g., phenotypic differences) and divergent cultural resources (e.g., linguistic distinctness and cultural value discrepancies), examining its production through diverse discourses (e.g., exoticizing, stereotyping, and ostracizing) embedded in asymmetric power structures, and articulating its integration into the *Self* to generate a fused identity (see Figure 1). Consequently, a typology of sojourners' and immigrants' *Otherness* has been presented, consisting of three types of *Otherness*, namely exoticized *Otherness*, stereotyped *Otherness*, and ostracized *Otherness*.

Final thought on *Otherness* in the context of global migration

Sojourners' and immigrants' *Otherness* is believed to contribute to the (re)production of racism, owing to *Othering's* emphasis on making racial distinctions (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005; Wodak & Reisigl, 2015). Drawing on the theoretical articulation of Modood (1997, 2005a, 2005b, 2011), we would argue that sojourners and immigrants are *otherized* by a new racism, which is composed of two steps: the first step is color/phenotype racism and the subsequent step cultural racism. Racism enacted through biological features is termed by Modood (1997, 2005) *color/phenotype racism*, encompassing a phenotype-centered view that attributes the existence of cultural traits to phenotype (Miles, 1989). Following color/phenotype racism, such cultural motifs as language, family structures, cuisine, and religion can serve as the basis for the exclusion, harassment, and discrimination inflicted by majority groups against them (Modood, 2005b). Racism on this level is termed *cultural racism*, and it is grounded in certain vilified cultural attributes that are associated with antagonistic and demeaning stereotypes (Modood, 2005b, 2011).

A hundred years ago, Du Bois predicted "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line" (as cited in Modood, 2015, p. 23). One hundred years later, such an interpretation of racism still sheds light on interracial conflicts and riots globally manifested by friction between racial, ethnic, and national groups. In the contemporary context of global migration that has produced an ever-increasing number of

conflicts among orthodox majorities and alienated minorities, it is undeniable that *Otherring* impairs intercultural and international relations among racial, ethnic, and national groups. Therefore, scholarly attention should be drawn to the importance of studying the phenomenon of *Otherness* in the intercultural communication context, which would be useful in education, professional, and personal contexts.

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