

About Understanding Ideas and Observations on Cross-Cultural Communication

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Recommended Citation

King, Jim (1984) "About Understanding Ideas and Observations on Cross-Cultural Communication," *Journal of Applied Communications*: Vol. 67: Iss. 1. <https://doi.org/10.4148/1051-0834.1673>

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About Understanding Ideas and Observations on Cross-Cultural Communication

Abstract

A review of *About Understanding Ideas and Observations on Cross-Cultural Communication*, by Andreas Fuglesang.

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Reviews

***About Understanding Ideas and Observations on Cross-Cultural Communication.* Andreas Fuglesang. Dag Hammerskjold Foundation, Ovre Slottsgaten 2, 752 20 Uppsala, Sweden, 1982.**

Full of ideas and observations about “applied communication” in the developing countries, Andreas Fuglesang’s book should create much discussion in communication circles.

The author is mainly concerned with three things important to the communication worker in developing countries—culture, language, and seeing. Briefly, Fuglesang argues that Western cultures bias most observers from those cultures and lead them to misinterpret the way non-Western cultures operate. Derived from cultures, languages—both written and spoken—are not used in the same manner and do not share the same definitions. So languages present different world views. As with language, seeing is a cultural phenomenon and thus visuals are interpreted differently by different people.

Fuglesang challenges J. Piaget, E. Rogers, and other Western writers about how non-Western cultures think, change, and develop. He offers a variety of suggestions for developing communication materials, especially visuals.

Before going into development work, Fuglesang spent 20 years in a marketing and advertising consultant firm. He started in Zambia on a food and nutrition campaign and has worked as a field advisor to governments and international organizations in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Besides being a communication advisor, Fuglesang is also a journalist, photographer, graphic artist, and producer of educational films.

About Understanding is an updated and expanded version of the 1973 book *Applied Communication in Developing Countries: Ideas and Observations*. Both books should be in your communication library, but especially this new and provocative volume.

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