

# Building an Interconnected World through Fostering Global Fitness

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Intercultural competence – or what we call *Global Fitness* – is now included in many language learning frameworks. For example, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) includes Culture as one of its five goal areas. Similarly, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages, in its 2020 Companion volume, refers to ‘plurilingual and pluricultural’ competence.

In this talk I will start by considering how our socialisation-based multiple identities affect our behaviour – not only of what we do and say, but also of how we interpret and evaluate what others do and say. I link this to my rapport evaluation model (Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2021), explaining how the judgement process works. With the help of real life intercultural examples, I explore how we can all learn to notice key elements in the context, reflect on their potential significance and meaning, and gain insights into their impact on our (mis)evaluations of others. I suggest a helpful tool that learners and teachers alike can use to help with this and point to the vital importance of the insights for friendship building.

## Brief bio

Helen Spencer-Oatey is Emeritus Professor of Intercultural Communication/Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick, UK, and Director of GlobalPeople Consulting Ltd. Her academic background is in both psychology and pragmatics. Having lived and worked abroad for many years (mainly in China), her main research interests are in intercultural communication, especially as it affects interpersonal relations. She has published widely in this area, including the books *Culturally Speaking*, *Intercultural Interaction* (with Franklin), *Handbook of Intercultural Communication* (with Kotthoff) and the recently published *Intercultural Politeness: Managing Relations across Cultures* (with Kádár). In these books she had developed various analytic models, including that of rapport management. Helen is particularly interested in the applied relevance of her research and, with colleagues, has developed extensive intercultural resources for practitioners.