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# Intercultural Neologisms for a New Revolution

Guest post by Wenshan Jia

Since the beginning of the third millennium, neologisms such as Chindia, Chimerica, and BRIC(S) have been floating in the English-speaking world, particularly in the field of international politics and diplomacy, international business and economics. The concept of Chindia was originally created to refer to the geopolitical unity between China and India by Jairam Ramesh, Rural Development Minister of Indian Government in 2005 (Ramesh, 2005). His argument is that given the large population of 2.7 billion shared by both China and India, almost 40% of the world's population, the huge economic potential, geographical proximity, and cultural affinity, the two countries can jointly forge the leadership of Asia and potentially that of the world if the two parties can, to use his own words, "overcome suspicions and establish reciprocal partnerships" ([http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/chindia-still-vibrant-idea-jairam-ramesh-114032700382\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/chindia-still-vibrant-idea-jairam-ramesh-114032700382_1.html)). Chimerica was coined by Ferguson and Schularick (2007) to refer to "the sum of China, the world's most rapidly growing emerging market, and America, the world's most financially advanced developed economy" (p. 1). Specifically, Chimerica accounts for 13 percent of the world's land surface, a one-fourth of the world's population, a third of its gross domestic product (GDP), and over half of the global economic growth over the past six years since 2000. This symbiotic relationship between the US (as the big spender) and China (as the big saver) is compared to "a marriage made in heaven" and regarded as "the defining feature of the current world economy" (p. 1). Besides, the two countries are also co-dependent in their concerted global efforts to address global issues such as terrorism and nuclear proliferation, global warming and poverty, transnational crime, energy shortage, and gaps of intercultural communication. Last but not least, "the acronym 'BRICs' was initially formulated in 2001 by economist Jim O'Neill, of Goldman Sachs, in a report on growth prospects for the economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China – which together represented a significant share of the world's production and population" (<http://brics.itamaraty.gov.br/about-brics/information-about-brics>). In 2006, the four countries Brazil, Russia, India, and China decided to create a BRICs dialogue structure and hosted the First BRICs Summit and in 2011, BRICs turned into BRICS with the addition of South Africa. BRICS has now entered into deeper collaborations with the establishment of the BRICS Bank, the BRICS Think Tanks Council (initiated in 2013) as well as the BRICS Media Summit and BRICS Global University Summit (<http://gusbrics.org/>, both initiated in 2015).

So far, these concepts have been primarily used by circles of international politics, diplomacy, international finance, international development as well as related media. Such terms have been

creeping into related academic fields. For example, the India China Institute (<http://www.indiachinainstitute.org/>) was established as part of The New School in 2005 to respond to the idea of Chindia first created by Ramesh. Nial Ferguson, a Harvard historian, who is the co-creator of the term “Chimerica”, has established a private company named Chimerica Media (<http://www.chimerica.com/>).

BRICS-related research centers have been established in almost all BRICS countries such as South Africa (<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/departments/brics-research-centre>). Research bodies in various developed countries such as the United Kingdom have established research programs focusing in BRICS (<http://www.ids.ac.uk/idsresearch/brics-and-rising-powers>). Alluding to BRICS, the University of Cambridge has set up The Center for Rising Powers (<http://www.crp.polis.cam.ac.uk/>). To respond to the prospect for Chindia, and the possible rising power block of leading rising Eurasian powers such as China, India, and Russia which are the major pillars of BRICS, the United States initiated the so-called “Pivot to Asia” (<http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/12/21/the-american-pivot-to-asia/>) in 2011 which has been deploying more than 60% of the American military power in the Asia-Pacific region and has just approved the Trans-Pacific Partnership (<https://ustr.gov/tpp/>) excluding China, India and Russia. However, few efforts have been made to research and promote intercultural communication, particularly between the US and the BRICS countries.

I myself have started the exploration of intercultural communication dimensions of neologisms such as Chimerica and BRICS. First, with regard to the concept of Chimerica, I redefined the original financial term so that it has become an intercultural term which now means an open and evolving transnational community of intercultural communicators who have acquired both the bilingual and bicultural competence in the US-China interactions at all levels, ranging from international relations to interpersonal dynamics (Jia, Tian, & Jia, 2010). I have also edited an innovative and forward-looking intercultural communication reader titled *Intercultural Communication: Adapting to Emerging Global Realities* (2016) with a focus, albeit not exclusively, on intercultural communication issues between the developed countries and the BRICS countries as well as among the BRICS countries. I have similarly proposed using BRIC(S), originally a political-economic concept for financial investment, as an intercultural as well as a geopolitical concept.

Indeed, the coming into being of these and similar terms itself is both a reflection and a continuation of a realistic dialogue on a global scale - a dialogue which I would define as a series of strategic discursive moves by nation-states and the like with an attempt to not only redistribute power and resources on a transnational and global scale, but also to alter the inter-civilizational structure so that the East and West, the North and the South could be on a more equal basis. In this sense, this kind of dialogue is not merely logo-centric; it is both geopolitical, and politico-economic-cultural. Our job as interculturalists may be limited in this process, but at least we could both help the players and the audience better understand the nature and functions of such dialogues and suggest ways to improve the processes and structures of such dialogues for more peace and equity.

However, far from enough scholarly literature has been produced on the (inter)cultural communication dimensions of such terms to meet the demands of the growing transnational dynamics, be it between China and India, China and the US, among Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, or between the developed countries (such as G7) and the BRICS. Such terms can only become fully acknowledged and included in the global field of intercultural communication studies after a large body of high-quality scholarship on intercultural issues from interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary perspectives becomes available. Obviously, the global field of intercultural communication needs another revolution. This piece of writing is my personal invitation to readers to join in such new research initiatives and directions in order to expand and deepen the global field of intercultural communication for the sake of humanity's peace and prosperity.

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