

According to the author, our social identities are shaped by the communities we belong to, which we, in turn, shape by our actions (agency).

What implications does this analysis have for anyone undertaking an intercultural “communicative moment”?

How might such an analysis help prepare them?

From this perspective, individual identity is always in production, an outcome of agentive moves rather than a given. When we enter a communicative event, we do so as individuals with particular constellations of historically laden social identities. While these social identities influence our linguistic actions, they do not determine them. Rather, they predispose

us to participate in our activities and perceive the involvement of others in certain ways. At any communicative moment there exists the possibility of taking up a unique stance towards our own identity and those of others, and of using language in unexpected ways towards unexpected goals.