

# Aikido communication for professional intercultural interaction: training, co-creation, valorisation and dissemination

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## 1. Benchmark study

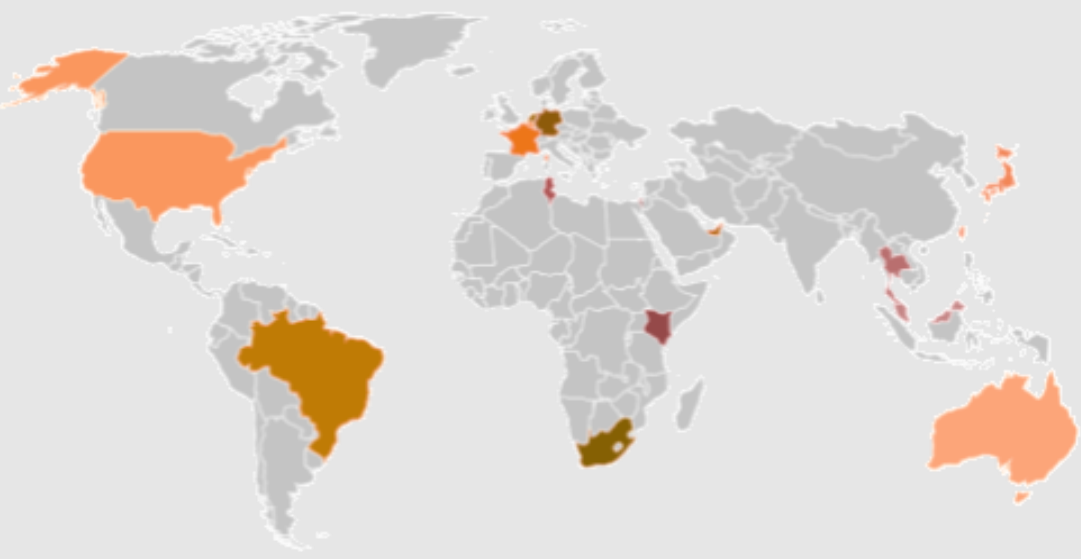
### Aim

What are aikido's core principles?  
How do aikido principles serve intercultural communication?

### Method

Qualitative research

- Semi-structured interviews
- 20 aikido experts
- World-wide
- Different aikido styles
- Thematic analysis (NVivo)



### Findings

The benchmark study showed fundamental similarities between successful aikido and intercultural interactions.

1. Both interactions consciously aim for

cooperation

noble outcomes

2. The aikido pedagogy comprises

multisensory learning  
by stimulating all senses

somatic learning  
by training physiological and mental tranquillity

The conclusion: aikido has potential as an embodied pedagogy for intercultural communication training.

### Result

Aikido communication models for an intercultural communication course.

The benchmark study produced three aikido communication models.

Interaction model

Competence model

Development model



This valorisation study tests communication training for companies and organisations in which participants learn to optimise professional intercultural interaction through the body. It incorporates the findings of a benchmark study.

The training resorts to body movements from aikido, a Japanese martial art, and is a valorisation of ongoing doctoral research into the added value of embodied learning in teaching intercultural communication skills: training that is not only transfer of knowledge but that stimulates brain, body and all senses. After all, knowledge and language alone do not guarantee intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006).

Aikido departs from an unsafe situation similar to an intercultural situation in which interlocutors may perceive differences as signals of unsafety. Aikido typically turns an unsafe interaction around into a safe one for any party involved. At the core of aikido interaction:

Tranquillity

developed by self-regulation training

Connection

developed by co-regulation training

Aikido communication training mainly relies on embodied learning and uses aikido interaction as a model for professional intercultural interaction. By involving the target group, the training design evolves into a valorised pedagogical model.

## 2. Valorisation study

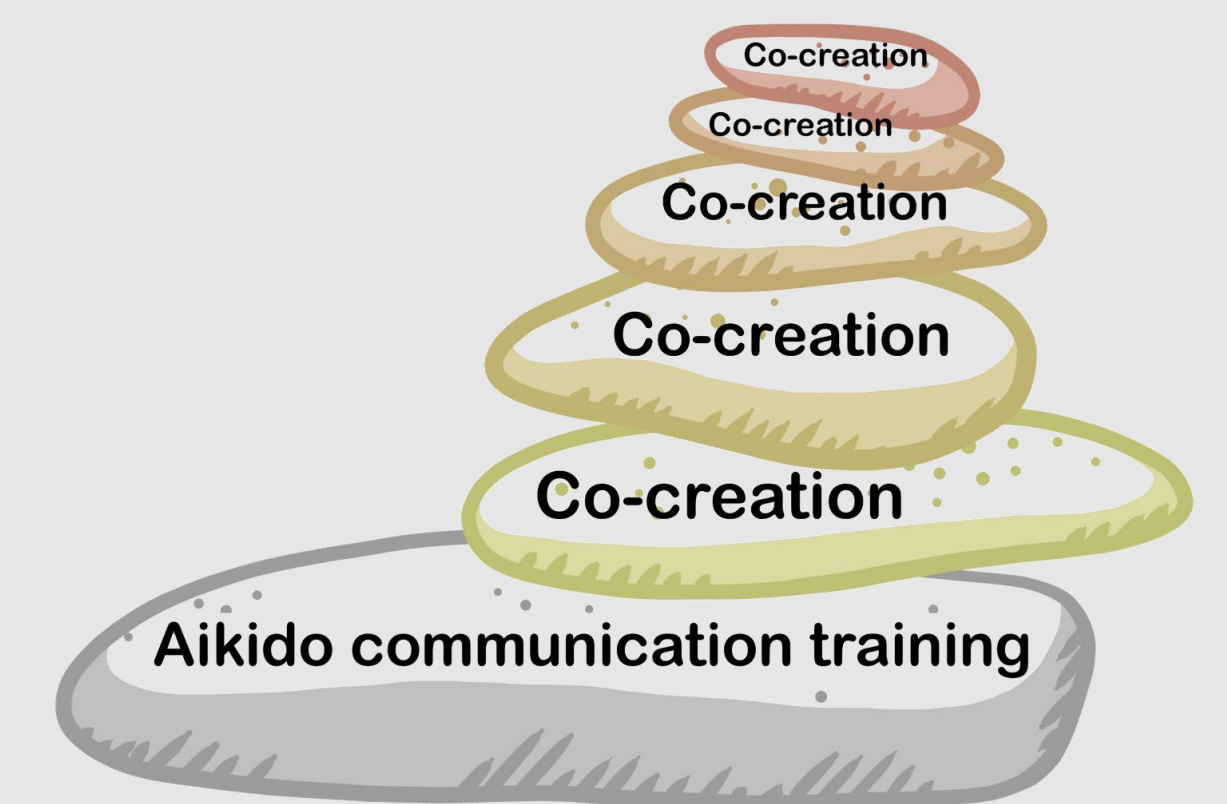
### Aim

How efficient and effective is aikido as an embodied pedagogy for intercultural business communication training?

### Method

Stakeholder co-creation involving the target group

- 76 employees and employers
- 6 training cycles
- 12 participants per training cycle
- 3 interviews per participant



### Objectives

The valorisation study aims to design intercultural communication training

based on research

tested by the target group

To teach aikido communication principles, moves and skills, the training course focuses on

- the three models of the benchmark study.
- embodied teaching and learning.
- culture-general interaction.
- the needs of the target group for professional intercultural interaction.

### Output

Valorised training design for an aikido communication course.

Dissemination towards employees, employers and communication trainers

- workshop
- online interactive infographic



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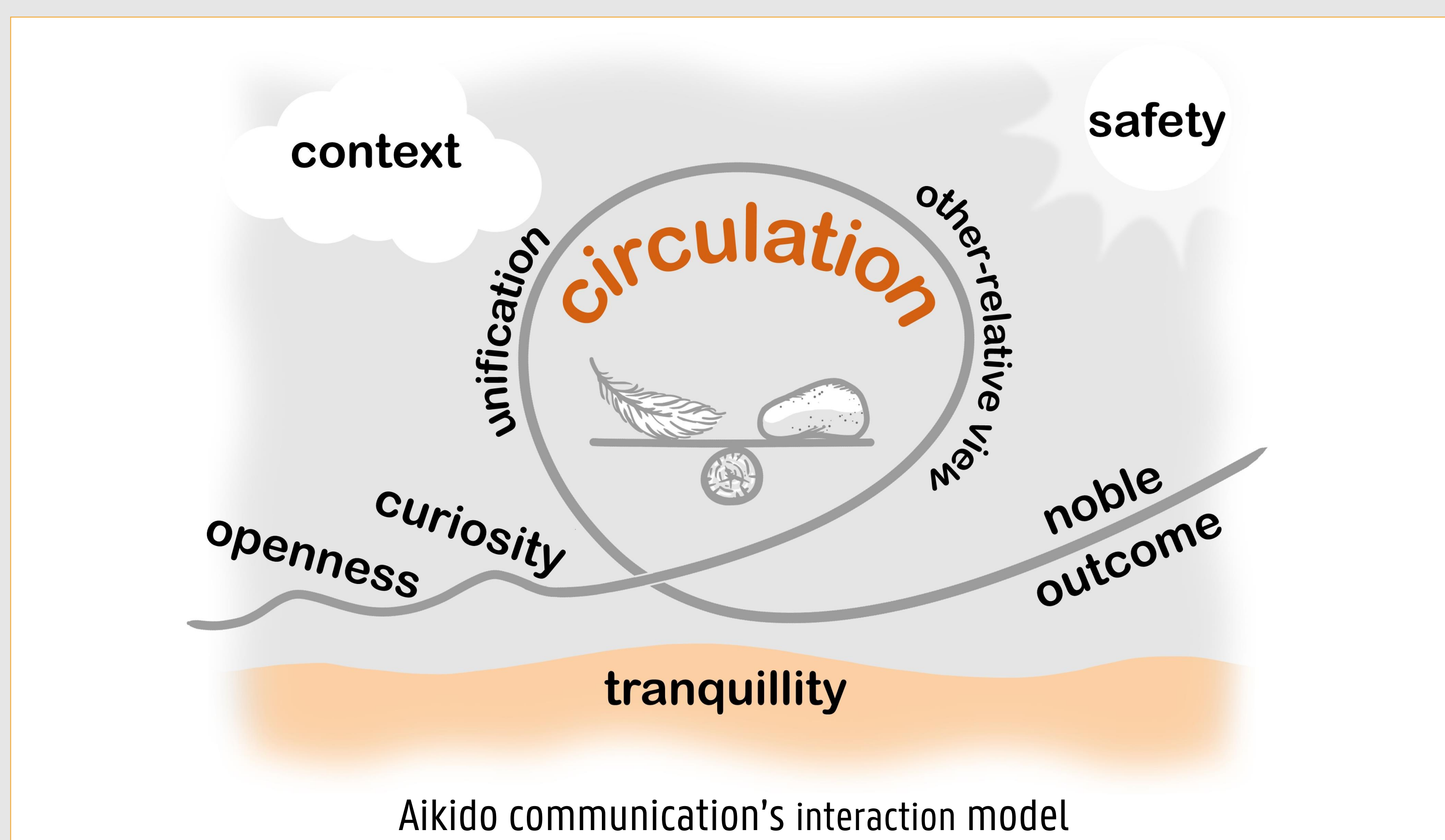


Illustrations by Alexandra Vansteenland, www.alexandravansteenland.be

Deardorff, D. K. (2006). Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10(3), 241-266.

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Aikido communication's interaction model