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ABSTRACT

An article on interethnic communication by J. Martin, M. Hecht, and L. Larkey in "Communication Monographs" (1994) suggests some important issues for understanding the potential impact of culture on communication practices--researchers might examine such variations in communication in future research. "Culture" is an ambiguous and uncertain term, but for communication researchers, the emphasis would be on speech in language communities. A speech community shares a common method of using symbols to accomplish the transmission of ideas. Culture, as a variable, might produce 3 impacts on empirical results: (1) measurement differences; (2) differences in the mean of a variable; and (3) process differences. A reexamination of the results of the study reported in Martin, Hecht, and Larkey demonstrate limited but consistent and important differences between African American and European American perspectives on communication. (Contains a table of data and 54 references.) (Author/NKA)

EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF CULTURE SOCIAL SCIENTIFICALLY:

SOME SUGGESTIONS FROM EXAMINING MARTIN, HECHT, AND LARKEY

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ABSTRACT

The article by Martin, Hecht, and Larkey (1994) in Communication Monographs suggests some important issues for understanding the potential the impact of culture on communication practices. This essay suggests possible avenues ways in which researchers might examine these and other variations in communication. Culture, as a variable, might produce three impacts on empirical results: (a) measurement differences, (b) differences in the mean of a variable, and (c) process differences. A reexamination of the results of the study reported in Martin, Hecht, and Larkey demonstrate limited but consistent and important differences between African American and European American perspectives on communication.

Examining the impact of cultural differences on various communication behaviors occupies a great deal of scientific attention. The questions come in two varieties: (a) does culture make a difference, and (b) in what ways can culture make a difference. This essay argues that culture can make a difference when studying communication on three different outcomes of quantitative analysis: (a) psychometric measurement differences, (b) mean or comparative quantity differences, and (c) process differences. Finally, an illustration of the differences that existed in Martin, Hecht, and Larkey (1994) article demonstrate the impact of culture on the process of communication. This reanalysis of existing data provides a clear example of the third type of situation, the existence of a process or functional difference among variables.

HOW CAN CULTURE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Intercultural research typically examines two types of phenomena: (a) communication between members of different cultural groups, and (b) how communication within one culture differs from communication within other cultures. This essay does not distinguish between the two areas of research, but more often than not the issues involve the second type of communication research (comparing cultural groups). The question considers whether findings from one cultural setting may or may not replicate or generalize to another cultural setting. Cultural differences based on how communities of symbol users communicate generates three different analyzable outcomes for quantitative researchers. The following sections develop the basis of potential differences: (a) psychometric, (b) mean or quantity, and (c) process or functional differences.

Psychometric differences relate to issues of measurement. How does culture impact on the issues of psychometric measurement? The second

difference deals with the quantity or mean differences of some variable that might occur when comparing cultures (one culture scores "higher" or "lower" on the measured variable). The final potential difference between cultural groups considers the examination of communication processes and whether the very fundamental assumptions governing the functioning of variables within a theoretical model might differ from culture to culture.

Using the Term "Culture"

Understanding communication variations related to "culture" creates a difficulty because the term possesses a great deal of ambiguity and uncertainty (Carbaugh, 1989). It is probably true that communication behavior creates, reinforces, and expresses a culture, but often the identity of a cultural group becomes established on the basis of the communication pattern of that group. Philipsen (1987) considers culture as code, that creates a system of symbols and meanings, a conversation or way of interacting and a symbolic community that persons share through conversational interactions. The mere act of sharing symbols creates the possibility of forming a community providing persons a sense of membership.

The use of the term "culture" is this paper emphasizes speech in language communities. A speech community shares a common method of using symbols to accomplish the transmission of ideas. Within the literature comparing racial groups in the United States (principally Latino, African American, Native American, and European American) the assumption is that each group uses symbols differently in some manner than other groups (e.g., Kochman, 1990; Smitherman, 1977). Membership in a group is often defined on the basis of the orientation of individuals towards a particular group and the manner in which that group communicates (Allen,

Henry, & Grimes, 1995; Cummings & Carrere, 1975; Enty, 1979; Spencer & Horowitz, 1973).

Corporations often discuss the "culture" of the organizational membership. Management control is discussed in terms of ideological or cultural forms (Alvesson, 1993). A person does not simply join and work at a job, an organization try to enact form of experience by creating common meanings and definitions (Deetz, 1992). Gangs, sports teams, followers of rock groups, political parties, and just about practically any identifiable group could constitute a culture. The defining element is whether the quality of interaction by the collective of persons create a lens for the grouping and understanding of the environment.

The problem with the thesis is of course even within a specific racial, ethnic, or other group (like for example European Americans) there exists a great deal of diversity. Religious grouping like Jews, Muslims, Mormons, Catholics, Southern Baptists, Quakers, Amish, etc., provide a few examples of groups that could claim the potential of a culture based on common symbol sharing that differentiates the members of that group from other persons sharing the same geographic space. Within these groupings there may exist large and extensive subcultures involving other bases of division. Alternatively, any person may belong to multiple cultures simultaneously or a culture with many prerequisites for membership.

Once one accepts, or understands how the term culture is used a consumer can understand the analysis provided. The danger only exists if the terms become reified rather than recognized as socially constructed terms serving a limited functional purpose for an analysis. If for no other reason, some cultures develop, flourish, and then can disappear. Cultures can change, become absorbed, or splinter. The notion of culture

is historically and contextually defined. Thus, culture provides a lens or perspective rather than a physical entity that can be defined in a fixed way, such as through geographic boundary or by genetic code. The theoretical focus should illuminate the basis of the culture which comes from the common construction of symbols to form the lens by which the members illuminate their symbolic world.

Psychometric Differences

Different cultural groups may differ on the psychometric measurement of a concept that the scientist uses as a variable. Psychometric measurement using participant self-report measures takes a concept and defines that concept in terms of a set of related semantic features. Whether one uses a semantic differential, Likert, true-false, or other method of self-report measurement, the method asks for the participant to indicate a response. The resulting items used in the analysis assume that the content of the scale, at a semantic level, is shared by the persons filling out the scale. The subsequent factor analytic, reliability assessments, Q sorts, or other validation procedures become valid only when basic semantic assumptions about content homogeneity are fulfilled.

Interestingly enough, the social scientist creating the scale assumes a level of knowledge sufficient to understand the semantic connections of the respondents. This acquisition and utilization of knowledge functions as a hidden qualitative process that lies underneath any statistical tests conducted. The scientist acts on the basis of a kind of ethnographic or everyday understanding of whatever culture is under investigation (even if it is the culture of the scientist). The ability of a scholar to claim a sharing of that semantic cultural space permits some assurance that a reflective academic articulates that concept with relevant scale items.

The quantitative analysis functions as a form of check on that understanding of the scholar. However, a quantitative analysis, even when successful, does not guarantee completeness or accuracy in the assumptions of this "hidden" qualitative process.

Suppose a scholar becomes interested in understanding why some persons are viewed with greater acceptability as sources of information than other persons. The investigator terms this idea, "the credibility of the communicator." The investigator defines this concept after careful thought and decides to create a three item scale. Consider a credibility scale with the items, "the speaker is honest", "the speaker is trustworthy," and "the speaker demonstrates expertise." Each item is formed in a Likert statement to which the person can rate a 1 (strongly agree) and a 5 (strongly disagree). For persons in the standard American English speaking group, the three phrases probably approximate similar overlapping content that is shared enough for the purposes of scaling. In any subsequent mathematical test using factor analysis, we would say the two items should "load" on the same factor. Typically, scholars would offer proof with a some type of analysis demonstrating an acceptable level of association between the items (common loadings, high alpha reliability, large inter-item correlations, etc.).

A person should act consistently towards both credibility items if the items share the same semantic or cultural space that was used to define credibility. A person should agree (or disagree) with all the positively valanced items, disagree (or agree) with the negatively valanced items, or feel neutral towards all the statements. The key is the consistency of response to the items by the person. The mean level of response is not an issue in measurement (unless ceiling, floor, or restriction in range

effects exist). The consistency of response is taken as one indicator that the scale represents a set of semantic space reliable enough for measurement.

If the psychometric analysis demonstrates differences, then that indicates that the items do not "load" with each other in the same manner across cultures. Scaling procedures assume that the items on the scale share the same underlying semantic information. The reason that social scientists use multiple items to elicit information about a concept under study is that the items assume to share the same basic semantic content. The ability of scale to validate and cross validate with different samples and alternative forms creates the basis for accepting the measurement as reliable. Concepts with clear definitions and well conducted scale validation permit highly accurate measurement.

If items with similar meaning come from the same underlying concept, the choice of the particular items constitutes a random choice from all possible items. While individual words may differ in the degree to which they share the exact same semantic territory, sentences can indicate a great deal of similarity. For example, suppose someone describes music heard over the radio as "terrible." The person could have said that the music was "awful" and most persons would argue that the choice of words, while not arbitrary does not represent fundamentally different concepts. The problem is that the relationship among features may not be shared, even when translated correctly from culture to culture (For a more extensive discussion on guidelines for establishing conceptual and linguistic equivalence in cross cultural research see Lonner & Berry, 1986).

The problem is that while terms have denotative meaning (mainstream

usage indicated by a dictionary, there exist a whole host of other implications when using words in combination. Slang terms represent one hobgoblin of research relying on scales. For example, "gay" may not indicate happy or joyous in the current American parlance. Telling someone that we should "rap" provides another indication of the arbitrariness of words and the different meaning words take on over time.

Some items are better than other items because they reflect the underlying concept with less semantic and syntactic ambiguity, noise, and/or completeness. However, different symbol using communities may take the terms and define the relationships differently (for example, "bad" may mean good). When the symbolic community does that, they have created a systematic difference between themselves and other communities such that the measurement assumption of shared semantic meaning fails to be met. Hunter (1980) argues that the number one criteria for the validity of measurement is content homogeneity. That different cultures would view the semantic content of words differently is not surprising. Conversely, alternative cultures do not always mean differences, it is possible to illustrate the cultures share the same underlying factor structure. But if psychometric differences exist between cultures, the scale scores should not be compared, the existence of measurement differences indicates the scale fails to measure the same construct in each culture (Lonner, 1990.

An illustration of this is found in the Suzuki and Rancer (1994) study comparing Japanese and United States citizen responses to the argumentativeness scale. Each sample filled out the scale in the native language of the country (United State sample received the scale items in English and the Japanese subjects received the scale in Japanese). The

authors conclude that for the Argumentativeness Scale (Infante & Rancer, 1982) and Verbal Aggressiveness Scale (Infante & Wigley, 1986) there was "a reasonable overall fit to both samples, with some culture-specific unreliable items" (p. 256). What happens is that both cross cultural commonality existed as well as some specificity with regards to the scale.

These differences also can occur within a national culture. Larkey and Hecht (in press) compared African American and European American ratings of ethnic identity salience> An ethnic identity salience scale was constructed from items used by Hofman (1965) and White and Burke (1987) to include the dimensions of political and social/personal identity salience found in those studies among African American respondents. A confirmatory factor analysis replicated the factor structure among African Americans but indicated a single factor solution emphasizing social/personal identity salience for European Americans. Similar analyses, however, support a conclusion of factorial invariance for communication satisfaction measure constructed from items that had been validated on both groups in a previous study (Hecht & Ribeau, 1984).

Another example of the issues about comparing cross cultural samples on communication measures was evident in the Levine and McCroskey (1990) study using the PRCA-24 comparing samples in the United States and Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rican sample responded to a Spanish version of the scale while United States participants responded to an English version of the scale. The Puerto Rican sample differed when considering the psychometric issues and the authors concluded that, "It is quite possible that the CA construct and measure cannot be translated into the language and culture of some other groups around the world" (p. 71).

Levine and McCroskey (1990) point out the implication of this study of

the PRCA, "this implication may well extend to the cross-cultural use of other measurement instruments validated within a single culture" (p. 71). What the authors point to constitutes a basic and fundamental threat to all research using scales derived in one culture and used in another. This does not mean that all scales by definition suffer from this flaw, research may reveal that this problem is uncommon and not a serious threat to the valid use of scales.

The critical feature to remember is that this criticism becomes targeted at the measurement device not the concept. The possibility exists that the concept remains pancultural. For example, fear appeals, identity, and shyness/loneliness probably exist within every culture. The stimulus creating the fearful reaction in an audience probably is di ferent from culture to culture. It would be difficult to imagine a society or culture without something that creates fear.

Considering the idea of communication apprehension, it may or may not cause measurement problems. While "shyness" might exist, it may be embedded within totally different meanings and value systems that render shyness noncommensurate shyness in another culture. If shyness is caused by different factors and interpreted differently in each culture, it is difficult to even conceptualize the essence that "shyness" shares cross culturally. In such cases, cultural differences transcend issues of measurement. The goal of the social scientist should be a focus at the conceptual level on the construct. Measurement devices only measure constructs and as such scales are only useful to the degree they serve that function.

The critical first step in comparing communication (or a behavior) within a culture is to as Berry (1980), Lonner (1990), Bhawuk & Triandis

(1995) and other cross-cultural researchers suggest, make sure that the measurement devices reflect the construct under study as it manifested within that culture. That means that the items must be considered to reflect the underlying meaning within that group. Words from one culture might be relevant but there may exist no corresponding exact word in another culture. The key to remember is that it is the conceptual translation that is important not the literal translation (Brislin, 1986; Lonner, 1990).

Quantity of a Feature

One possible comparison among cultural groups examines mean differences. Assuming that any measurement device used for comparing cultures share the same psychometric properties (this must be assumed or any comparison is meaningless), the question is whether the mean level of the concept differs among the groups. A classic case of that occurs in the communication apprehension (CA) literature that compares the level of CA between countries (Barraclough, Chistophel, & McCroskey, 1988; Elliot, Scott, Jensen, & McDonough, 1982; Klopf, 1980; Klopf & Cambra, 1979; Sallinen-Kaparinen, McCroskey, & Richmond, 1991). Notice that the concept of communication apprehension (shyness, reticence, etc.,) is considered a universal across the cultures, and that the measurement model in the United States generally works in other cultures (for a counter example see Levine & McCroskey, 1990).

Summaries of data comparing cultures on measures of communication apprehension (Bourhis, Tkachuk, & Allen, 1993) demonstrate mean differences between cultures. The data indicate that Lithuanians suffer from relatively large amounts of communication apprehension (26% of the population is highly apprehensive) when compared to the United States (16%

of the population highly apprehensive). Koreans experience relatively low levels of CA (3% of the population reports high levels of apprehension) when compared to United States participants. This comparison provides a sense of comparison of cultures along a common metric. As long as the scale continues to remain psychometrically coherent (and the reports indicate this is the case) the comparison may have value.

The indication of mean differences must be followed up with indications of the meaning of those differences in terms of behaviors and other associated outcomes with the self-reported measurement of CA. Does a mean difference in a scale indicate something about the nature of the communication practices of the culture. While there are a number of indication from current meta-analyses of a correspondence between attitudes and behavior (with data largely from the US culture) (Allen, 1989; Allen & Bourhis, 1995; Kim & Hunter, 1993a, 1993b; Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988), this correspondence might differ with data from a variety of cultures.

The important aspect of this line of research is the ability to demonstrate the pancultural nature of the construct. When that mean difference becomes combined with differences in the communication behaviors of the cultural group (in this case defined on the basis of geography associated with nationality), the impact of the variable takes on importance. The scale becomes able to provide evidence of the impact of various cultural orientations toward communication behavior.

The ability to understand how communication practices impact on cultural expectations takes on a great deal of significance. For example, if more members of a culture are highly apprehensive about communication how should the structure of existing communication practices differ from a

given society whose members possess high CA. The next step after finding mean differences is to determine what that difference indicates about the communicative practices of the group. When this becomes combined with an understanding of a process model (discussed in the next section) the usefulness of the model improves.

Another example is the cross cultural research conducted by Gudykunst and colleagues comparing uncertainty reduction processes in a variety of cultural groups and contexts (Gudykunst, 1983, 1985a, 1985b, 1985c, 1987; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1984; Gudykunst, Nishida, & Chua, 1986).

Mean differences however still assume that the basic model operates consistently across cultural groups. The assumption is that differences between groups reflect the impact of the mean differences of the construct. In other words, the mean only indicates where the cultural group starts in terms of the model. The accuracy of the prediction fails when groups develop functional models that differ from each other.

Process Differences

The third difference explores the possibility of process differences between cultures. Communication process differences may exist independently of mean differences between cultures. Two cultures could share the same mean value but just use the concept differently in handling decisions. Conversely, mean differences may or may not indicate process or relational differences with other variables. Process differences indicate that the same variable is functioning or used differently by the different cultures.

The best exhibition would be a causal model where the coefficients were different for each groups, or a case where models fit for one culture but did not fit for another culture. Several causal models have been

tested using different perspectives of individuals to determine if the paramsters of the model are the same for all participants (Burrell, Donohue, & Allen, 1988; Burrell, Narus, Bogdanoff, Allen, 1994; Hale, Lemieux, & Mongeau, 1995). The key is that a generalizable model should not depend on the particular characteristics (culture) of the sample chosen. The basic feature of the theoretical model is that the configuration should work regardless of the setting or nature of the participants.

Examples that require different models for different samples are rare, most meta-analyses (see for example Allen & Krone, 1990) demonstrate a lack of such differences when considering the relationships among variables moderated by culture. Some meta-analyses are limited because most data is collection within the United States using college students (for example, see Dindia & Allen, 1992). One problem of generalizing any set of results could stem from the possibility that college students share a great deal in common in terms of culture regardless of ethnicity or geography. The most exciting scientific research occurs when such differences exist because eventually the building of theoretical models to explain such differences gets at an understanding of how differences in culture impact communication processes. The result that indicates a difference on the basis of culture gets at the very meaning of culture as a variable. It is not the fact that two cultures differ that plays the critical role, but an understanding of why divergent results occur that advances scientific understanding.

If culture plays an important part in communication processes, then different cultures should demonstrate an impact when making comparisons of data from different cultures. The issue is the degree to which difference

become capable of clear demonstration. The demonstration of such difference in the function of variables between cultures represents a necessary prerequisite for a theory of culture. The failure to find differences between identifiable cultural groups in research could render culture an irrelevant feature. The goal should be the development of a theory of culture that forms a basis for the understanding of how communication differs. The logic should indicate that differences in communication practices should form the basis of why cultures expect to differ in communication processes.

ILLUSTRATION OF A PROCESS DIFFERENCE

Process differences, when observed, constitute probably the most important and certainly most interesting issues in intercultural research. If the measurement assumptions are met and the cultural group members do not differ on the basis of measurement than the difference is described by the function the variables serve within that speech community. Understanding that the practices of the members differ not because of mean differences in some construct but on how constructs relate to each other forms the basis of articulating models that can highlight the differences culture makes in communication practice.

The research reported by Martin, Hecht, and Larkey (1994) illustrates an excellent example of a process difference between two ethnic cultures. The original investigation considers the issues of conversational improvement and compares African American and European American samples. This issue assumes no measurement differences based on cultural or ethic issues, the authors report the results of a confirmatory factor analysis done separately for each group (p. 244). The analysis demonstrates that the same measurement model works for both groups.

The sharing of a common language may make the use of that language common enough for measurement purposes, but the underlying variables might share different functional relationships to each other. The question is whether the two cultural groups use the concepts in the same manner to respond to communication situations.

The problem is that when examining Table 3 of the original text for the results of the multiple regression analyses there appear to be differences but they appear inconsistent and not easily interpreted. This becomes frustrating when trying to draw conclusions about the nature of potential differences. The authors appear unable to sustain an argument about a consistent set of differences existing between African Americans and European Americans. The problem is that the pattern of significant standardized coefficients is not replicated with any consistency when comparing the two cultures. The analysis provides some basis for claiming differences but the results do not provide an interpretable solution for this differences.

Consider the correlation matrices reported in Table 2 (p. 246) within the article (the information appears in Table 1 of this text along with some appropriate summary statistics). There exists a matrix for each culture among the variables of interest for each ethnic group. If one computes a z-score between each of the correlations, the average z-score between the two matrices is nonsignificant ($z = .90$). However, if one examines the row/column for just the variable "Nothing Other" the average z-score is significant ($z = 2.97$) and accounts for about 75% of the total variation between the matrices. Examining the remaining variables one finds some possible differences but no pattern across a row or column of consistent differences when compared to the average difference dealing

with the Nothing Other Person Can Do Column.

The results provide evidence for a consistent difference between the cultures involving one variable, "Nothing Other." The difference is that for the African Americans this variable is less related (the correlations are smaller) than for the European Americans. No evidence for measurement differences exist, the authors performed all the appropriate tests (using PACKAGE, Hunter & Cohen, 1969). Even if mean differences exist, they may or may not explain why the relationship of this variable differs between the two cultures.

The next step, after finding a consistent difference between two cultural groups requires some theoretical explanation. The key is now that there is established some type of consistent finding the differentiates the two samples but why that exists becomes a framework for discussion. This finding for "Nothing Other Can Do" is consistent with Martin et. al.'s (1994) original explanation for the results. They argue that African Americans use more active conversational improvement strategies whereas European Americans tend to rely on passive strategies. This is consistent with a great deal of research describing African American communication as highly active and assertive (garner, 1994, Hecht, et. al., 1993; Kochman, 1981, 1990a, 1990b). This research describes African Americans as more willing to deal with disagreement conflict directly and confrontively.

European American emphasis on "Nothing Other Can Do" also may reflect a power differential. Feelings of powerlessness are on of the most common communication issues for African Americans. They report feeling controlled, manipulated, and trapped, with the European American taking control of the conversation (Hecht, et. al., 1989; Hecht, et. al., 1993;

Martin, et. al., 1994). The reanalysis points to a basis for that perception. European Americans are less likely to ascribe an ability to improve a conversation to their African American interactional partners. When European Americans say that there is "Nothing the Other Can Do" they are projecting a passivity and powerlessness on their African American conversational partner.

However, the building and testing of explanatory models would appear fruitful in examining the apparently consistent difference between these two cultures. The current test only describes a difference and the nature of that difference between African Americans and European Americans. The development of the full theoretical implications and the tests to substantiate that theoretical claim remains for future investigation.

CONCLUSION

One problem that exists within social scientific research considering the nature of culture is a lack of specific, a priori commitment toward conceptualizing the nature of differences. The initial step in any comparison of more than one group should be the expectation of what kinds of differences should exist. Do the two groups share enough common space that the understanding of the concepts in question will create a basis for common measurement.

Consider comparing two cultures on the basis of communication apprehension. In the United States there exists a subgroup dealing with public communication situations like public speaking. Suppose that in another culture, public speaking contexts are rare, or nearly nonexistent. Speaking about apprehension or the normal fear felt by a person for public communication is problematic at best.

This essay illustrates the problems of finding differences between cultural groups in communication behaviors. The examination of the Martin, Hecht, and Larkey data (1994) illustrates the nature of finding potential differences. The many multiple regressions generate the feeling that a difference existed but provide no clear interpretation. The ability to synthesize a consistent body of findings does not appear possible. The argument is whether members of various ethnic groups function differently and explain the nature and scope of these differences.

However, research should examine similarities as well. As important as the differences in the reanalysis are, the similarities are as striking and no less important as well. The key is to provide insofar as possible, an a priori description of the culture(s) under investigation to interpret the data. When using a hypothetical-deductive model, this prior commitment to description is essential. But even in grounded or emerging models relying on descriptive analysis require an essential understanding of the cultural practices and assumptions prior to data collection and analysis. What is necessary is some framework for the interpretation of any data or observation.

The advantage of reporting the complete findings, in the form of a correlation matrix, permits a reexamination and test supporting the claim of cultural differences. Once found, such differences should serve as the basis for continued interest and focus. The next step is to build models and explanations about why such distinctions exist and their meaning. The key is what the analyses generated indicate about cultural differences in communication.

The data set tested within this example (Martin, Hecht, & Larkey,

1994) assumes an isomorphism between ethnicity and culture. In addition, there is the assumption of a type of homogeneity of culture within the ethnic grouping. To assume that racial groups represent unique cultures and that all members of an ethnic grouping share a common culture may prove problematic. This is under dispute and should always temper claims, particularly those arguing for a unique finding of a group. The findings of this reanalysis do however confirm Hecht, Ribeau, and Alberts' (1989) conclusion that there is evidence for some unique features of communication for African Americans different from European Americans. This argument would extend the work of Hecht and Ribeau (1994) that compare Mexican Americans and argue for a unique set of expectations for another ethnic group when communicating (see also, Hecht, Ribeau, & Sedano, 1990).

If culture should indicate anything in communication science, it should provide the reference to a "speech" community. By the term "speech" we do not mean simply the actual phonetic and semantic commonalities that a group share but also the social competencies and practices. Hecht and Ribeau (1987) suggest that, for example, identity labels for African Americans serve to help construct reality. As the expectations for the process of communication change the net effect is to create a set of normative assumptions about communication that serve to guide and reinforce subsequent interaction.

The question facing researchers is the identification and understanding of those differences. The key for theoretical development is to provide a framework for the analysis and understanding of identifying differences. The next step is the building of a theoretical model sufficient to explain the impact of this difference on communication

practices.

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Table 1
Data from Martin, Hecht, and Larkey--Corrected for Attenuation

	Nothin Other Can Do Scale			
	African American (n=120) (r_{xx}=.80)	European American (n=95) (r_{xx}=.91)	difference	z score
1. Nothing Self Can Do	.37	.34	.03	.25
2. Interaction Management	.15	.45	-.30	-2.40*
3. Other Orientation	.29	.69	-.40	-3.94*
4. Avoidance	.09	.60	-.51	-4.33*
5. Give In	.24	.55	-.31	-2.68*
6. Assertiveness	.00	.41	-.41	-3.13*
7. Open Mindedness	.19	.68	-.49	-4.57*

African American Correlations

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
1.	.79						
2.	.09	.72					
3.	.15	.75	.79				
4.	.16	.51	.79	.75			
5.	.01	.66	.81	.71	.80		
6.	.28	.65	.83	.74	.78	.86	
7.	.28	.72	.98	.74	.86	.85	.91

European Correlations

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
1.	.82						
2.	.47	.80					
3.	.09	.55	.89				
4.	.16	.43	.82	.88			
5.	.12	.34	.76	.83	.90		
6.	.25	.53	.74	.65	.75	.88	
7.	.16	.41	.91	.82	.86	.82	.95

Difference Scores

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
1.							
2.	-.38						
3.	.06	.20					
4.	.00	.08	-.03				
5.	-.11	.32	.05	-.12			
6.	.03	.12	.09	.09	.03		
7.	.12	.31	.07	.08	.00	.03	