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TELEVISION AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR BRIDGING
CULTURES: A STUDY OF TELEVISION'S
EFFECTS ON TAIWANESE STUDENTS
IN THE UNITED STATES

THESIS

Presented to the Graduated Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Ray C. Lu, B.S.

Denton, Texas

August, 1994

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This study tested American television effects on Taiwanese Students in uncertainty reduction and stereotype forming. The study consisted of a questionnaire analysis and a focus group discussion. Fifty-five subjects responded to the questionnaires and twenty of them joined two group discussions.

Statistical results of questionnaire indicated that subjects were more confident in predicting Americans behavior than predicting Japanese behavior. Also, statistical results suggested subjects held normative stereotype toward American people.

Group discussions propose that television viewing may relate to subjects' uncertainty and stereotypes toward American people. However, finding suggest that subjects tend to ignore information incompatible with Chinese culture.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	v
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Culture and Cross-culture Problems	
Television Effects	
Purpose of the Study	
Background of Taiwan	
Hypotheses	
Methodology	
Limitation	
II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	25
Subjects' Uncertainty Study	
Subjects' Stereotype Study	
Focus Group Study	
III. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS	48
Conclusion	
Suggestions	
APPENDIX	58
REFERENCES	75

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Uncertainty Mean Scores of Chinese, American, and Japanese	5
2	Uncertainty Scores T-test: Chinese/American..	6
3	Uncertainty Scores T-test: American/Japanese.	7
4	Stereotype mean Scores of Chinese, American, and Japanese	11
5	Stereotype Scores T-test: American/Chinese ..	13
6	Stereotype Scores T-test: Japanese/Chinese ..	14

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis attempts to investigate television's intercultural capacities at an interpersonal level with the focus on cross-national and cross-racial communication. The conflict, misinterpretation and confusion that occur because of cultural differences are very common in modern society, and how to bridge those differences has become a consequential topic in our global society. The need for effective communication channels to eliminate conflicts and to transfer different voices among diverse cultures has been seriously considered, and the role of television in cross-cultural communication has been frequently discussed. This research project intends to explore the relationship of American television program viewing and its effects on Taiwanese students' uncertainty, stereotyping and understanding of American people. Also, this paper tries to discover whether television viewing helps Taiwanese students interact with American society.

Before researching and testing on the effectiveness of cross-cultural practice of American television program to Taiwanese students, we must first realize the concepts of culture and the problems of cross-culture communication;

secondly, we have to recognize how television has and may affect on our global society.

Culture and Cross-Culture Problems

According to Leighton, culture may be defined as "the sum of ways of living developed by a group of human beings to meet biological and psychosocial needs. It refers to elements such as values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, folkways, behavior styles and traditions that are linked together to form an integrated whole that functions to preserve the society" (1982). Culture provides us with a system of knowledge that allows us to know how to communicate with others and how to interpret others' behavior in our culture (Keesing 1974). Members of a culture share the broad designed social principles of the "system of knowledge" and are shaped by that system of knowledge in order to fit into the culture system. However, no single knowledge system can be universal, and different systems usually cause communication breakdowns or even conflicts among people living in different cultures. This is why cross-cultural or intercultural communication studies have always been so important to people who have opportunities to interact with people of different cultures.

Studying cross-cultural or intercultural communication means dealing with a very complex process, because a variety of human attributes and conditions can, in a certain culture

system, cause people to view themselves as different from others. Each culture system can be broken down into more specific subculture systems. Different cultural factors such as race, religion, ideology, nationality, ethnicity, appearance, behavior, sex, age, size, family structure, occupation and socioeconomic background can all cause difficulties in the intercultural communication process (Pinderhughes, 1989). Accordingly, even toward members of a culture who share the same system of knowledge, each individual's theory differs from others' because of each individual's particular experiences and environment. As Alfred G. Smith points out, a transaction between any two persons has some aspects of intercultural communication within it. Even within the same family, different norms, beliefs, social positions, etc. develop that complicate the transactions in which those persons engage (1966). We just have to know that the gaps that culture differences create always exist.

Before proceeding to the topic of intercultural communication, one must first know how to bridge cultural differences. Understanding differences of other people's behavior will help encourage people to communicate with one another. Albert suggests that "interpersonal differences caused by variations in cultural assumptions about, and interpretation of, behavior can be understood in terms of

the attributions" of the thought processes that people use to explain the causes of their and others' behavior (1986).

Understanding others' behavior is a critical topic with which we have to deal in the intercultural communication process. Understanding others' behavior involves obtaining information, knowing, comprehending and interpreting. Three levels of understanding can be differentiated -- description, prediction and explanation. Description involves delineating what is observed in terms of its physical attributes, prediction involves projecting what will happen in a particular situation, and explanation involves stating why something occurred (Berger, Gardner, Parks, Shulman & Miller, 1976; Gudykunst, 1991). People have to be able to properly delineate, project and explain what the other culture is in order to accept the differences. However, our narrow stereotyping of and uncertainty about other people always prevents us from further understanding their behavior. Gudykunst and Kim suggest that we must broaden our stereotypes and reduce our uncertainty toward people in other cultures (1992).

When a study focuses on cross-national or cross-racial communication as this thesis does, one must know how stereotyping and uncertainty can relate to intercultural communication.

Stereotypes are cognitive beliefs that associate groups of people with certain traits. The term stereotype was first

used in its modern sense by journalist Walter Lippman. Lippman defined stereotype as: (a) a way of organizing images, (b) a fixed simplified impression, and (c) salient features chosen to represent the whole (1922). The information of stereotypes involves two related processes. The first is categorization. As perceivers, people naturally sort different objects into groups rather than thinking of each object as unique (Rosch & Lloyd, 1978). People used to sort each other into groups based on nationality, race, gender, religion and other common attributes. Out-group homogeneity bias, the second process that promotes stereotyping, derives from the first. When social categorizations are formed, perceivers themselves are members or nonmembers of the categories with which they identify. Groups with which we identify are called "in-groups"; those with which we do not identify are called "out-groups."

People have a tendency to assume that there is greater similarity among members of out-groups. Consequently, people are quick to generalize from a single individual to a whole group (Lippa, 1990). This kind of stereotyping often causes oversimplified beliefs and inaccurate impressions about individuals from different cultures.

Stereotypes create expectations that often lead us to misinterpret messages that we receive from others; receiving more information about other culture groups to extend our

stereotypes categories will help to eliminate the possibility of misjudging them.

The theory of uncertainty reduction attempts to explain the motivation and the methods for communication in interpersonal relationships. In Berger and Calabrese's study (1975), the theory proposes that "as relationships develop, communicators have a high need to understand both himself or herself and the other in an interaction situation. Communication generates that understanding (of a reduction of uncertainty) and thus serves as the basis of relationship development" (Sanders, Wiseman & Matz, 1991). To choose appropriate behavior for interacting with one another, individuals must be able to predict each other's behavior.

This study applies the uncertainty reduction theory to intercultural initial interaction to test its relationship with television viewing. At least two significant implications of examining the initial stage of cross-cultural relationships exist according Lee and Boster's illustration (1991, p. 191):

First intercultural initial interaction occurs in the matrix of the perceived dissimilarity between interacting individuals (Allen & Wilder, 1979; Billig & Tajfel, 1973; Brown & Turner, 1981). Allen and Wilder, for example, demonstrate that people assume that a fellow in-group member possesses more beliefs similar to their own than would a member of the out-group, even

when they were categorized into groups based on a dictatorial task. Billig and Tajfel report similar findings. Accordingly, if the mere categorization of people into groups without a realistic pretext for the classification is sufficient to lead to a perception of intergroup differences in beliefs and attitudes, then it is necessary for intercultural scholars to study the functions of perceived dissimilarity for subsequent intercultural behavior, as intercultural relationships make many differences between interacting individuals - such as skin color, language and communication style -- tangible. So, the initial stage of intercultural interaction is a larger contributor in developing a deeper relationship than the initial stage of cross-cultural relationship.

Second, several cross-cultural studies show that, once individuals of different cultures overcome the barriers of the initial interaction, culture is not a major factor in subsequent interaction. When close intracultural and intercultural relationships were compared, no differences were observed in either perceived similarity or in perceptions of social penetration (Gudykunst, 1985; Gudykunst, Chua & Gray, 1987). Summarizing social penetration studies in the intercultural context, Gudykunst, Nishida, and Chua (1987, p.176) state that when relationships reach the

point of close friendship, people base their predictions about their partners' actions on psychological data. The degree of social penetration in which people engage should not differ in intracultural and intercultural relationships as a function of culture.

This paper uses the uncertainty and stereotype texts to examine the initial stage of cross-cultural interaction and their relationships with television viewing. Formerly, cultural dissimilarity readily formed the basis for uncertainty about and strong stereotypes of other people. This thesis suggests that people need information to understand people of different cultures, and television is considered the most accessible information agent in the modern global society; thus, the thesis intends to investigate whether television viewing can transmit enough knowledge about other cultures to reduce viewers' internal uncertainty about and stereotypes of other cultures.

Television Effects

Considering the number of television sets and the amount of time those sets are watched, television has quickly become one of the major forces in our media-oriented society, and audiences are turning to television as a major source of information and perhaps even for beliefs and values; therefore, television, which has transformed the

sociocultural landscape of most the world's countries, is considered the most powerful social communication instrument of all media. Social scientists and communication scholars have played a prominent role in examining television's influence on society and have conducted thousands of studies. Notably, all this research has not generated a uniform answer about television's effects on society.

In discussing media's effects on the cross-cultural level, one ought to consider the tradition of media effects research. The early theories of mass communication were developed in the first half of the century and were heavily influenced by the studied phenomena of stimuli response developed in psychology. Media was considered to be "the magic bullet" that could directly affect an audience's behavior. At the time, it was thought by some that mass communication tended to influence all members of the audience in the same way and that audiences are passive and malleable recipients. The magic bullet theory was soon challenged by studies done during the 1940 presidential election as reported in *The People's Choice* (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944) and *Personal Influence* (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). The research results found that audiences are more than just passive receivers. Lasswell (1954), the most influential scholar of the time, proposed the classical question of "who says what to whom, with which channels and with what effects." Lasswell's statement

indicated that we have to, for effectively transferring information, know not only media but also specific audiences' cultural background.

Even though the media do not have the absolute power to influence people's thoughts, we nevertheless depend on media to bring us information from distances. About the relationship between media and our modern society, Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur point out "Society, the individual, and the media are interdependent. ... The relationship among media, society and individual is one of mutual needs. However, that modern industrialized and urbanized society has made us all dependent on media for information, for social correlation and for value clarification because we no longer have a close-knit social system to meet these needs" (1986, p.81). Mass media have become the information center that can inform as well as transform; no matter how differently one may interpret the information from media, one still needs to learn the information to interact with the whole society. From this point of view, topics such as how to effectively transfer messages to audiences and how media will affect an audience are still worth studying. Subsequently, this paper will review several studies related to television's effect.

Cultivation theory is based on a belief in television's effect. The term cultivation is derived from a particular approach Gerbner and Gross used in 1976 to study media

effects. The cultivation analysis approach represents a particular set of theoretical and methodological assumptions and procedures designed to assess the contributions of television viewing to people's conceptions of social reality. Cultivation analysis is the third component of a research paradigm called "cultural indicators" that investigates the institutional processes underlying the production of media content, the images in media content, and the relationships between exposure to television's messages and audience beliefs and behavior. The theory is concerned with the long-term consequences of cumulative exposure to an essentially repetitive and stable system of messages, rather than immediate short-term responses or individual interpretations of content. It is concerned with continuity, stabilization and gradual shifts rather than outright change.

Cultivation through mass media operates by homogenizing attitudes and values throughout the viewing public. When what people see on television is consistent with what they already believe, their initial attitudes will be strengthened. When what they see disagrees with their opinions, they may change their positions. Therefore, the cultural mainstream is defined by what is allowed to appear on the screen. If mainstream television programs are full of violence, aggression may gain acceptance with viewer. Gerbner contends that the prevalence of violence on

television makes viewers feel vulnerable to the aggression of others and this leads to audiences' view of the world as a dangerous place. Similarly, researchers have used various research methods to present television as a cultivator of a wide range of social perceptions or norms, such as sex roles (Morgan, 1982), age-role stereotypes (Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli & Morgan, 1980), race roles (Barcus, 1983) and many other issues.

As this paper has discussed previously, each culture has its own system of knowledge that may lead people living in different cultures to interpret information differently. Cultivation analyses conducted on American society are developed primarily in the context of the political, cultural and media systems of the United States, which means that American cultivation research results may not apply to international cultivation analyses. According to Morgan, "messages are socially and historically determined expressions of concrete conditions and social relationships. Messages imply propositions, assumptions and points of view that are understandable only in terms of the social relationships and ideological contexts within which they are produced." All this implies that cultivation is highly culture specific. If a particular message system (and culture) contains a great deal of, for example, violence, then the media system of that society should cultivate corresponding conceptions; if it does not, then it should

not (1990). American television programs may or may not produce the same cultivation effects elsewhere as those observed in the United States.

International cultivation analysis is conceptually and politically linked with arguments and debates concerning cultural imperialism, which was defined by McQuail (1987) as "a view that media can help 'modernization' by introducing 'Western' values but they do so at the cost of a breakdown of traditional values and the loss of 'authentic' local culture." But international cultivation research suggests that the effect of the imported programs on local systems is not as great as people believe. Every television system has its own structure, policies and programming and is unique because it exists in a specific social, historical, economic and cultural background. Because of the structural differences, each system imports different numbers and different types of programs that may differ only slightly with its local programming and culture form (Lee, 1979; Ten, Li & Simpson, 1986). The popular American situation comedy Cheers was rejected by Taiwanese audiences because the "American bar culture" has very little in common with the local culture; different to "American bar culture," Chinese people never talk about their personal life in public. Another example to explain programming caused by different cultural form, Dallas, the most popular American television serial in the United States and European countries, had poor

rating when the program was aired in Taiwan. According Tan, Li, and Simpson's research, Taiwanese respondents were averagely watching Dallas, a weekly broadcasting program, only once in very one to two months (1986). Taiwanese television viewers just did not as much interest in the mean world of Dallas as western society did. These examples show that a culture system may reject a program that is not compatible with the local culture. We have no reason to assume that cultivation patterns will be similar or uniform across cultures.

Many international cultivation studies support Morgan's statement about cultivation being highly cultural specific in Europe, Australia and Asia (1990). Most of the studies present very different findings of American programs' cultivation effects on local cultures. For example, Wober finds little support for cultivation in terms of violence in Great Britain, because the British have so few violent programs (1978). In Australia, Pingree and Hawkins find that the exposure to American crime and adventure programs makes Australian students sense the "mean world" and "violence in society" in Australia but not in the United States (1981). Tan, Tan and Tan, in the Philippines, find that heavy viewers of U.S. television are more likely to rate "pleasure" as an important value and de-emphasize "salvation" (1987). By reviewing past research on the topic of international cultivation, cultural imperialism is not

overwhelmingly supported. The evidence suggests that people will interpret the content of imported programs, yet they interpret programming content based upon their cultural background.

Two researchers, Cohen and Roeh, suggest that "there will be different levels of mediation and modification in the process of the importation of texts across borders. At the minimal level, a text crosses the border without undergoing any change, and it is up to the consumer to use it in a way that is particularly meaningful to himself or herself. At the maximal level, the text goes through one or more processes of change prior to reaching its potential consumers" (1992). At the maximal level, is the example of advertising, which is designed to attract audience purchases through specially designed texts. At the maximal level, people believe that television greatly influences passive viewers. A minimal level example is soap opera. The soap opera has been seen as a relatively "open" genre that invites its viewers to become involved, committed, speculative, evaluative, to fill in gaps and make relevant their own experiences in order to identify with some characters. For example, Katz and Liebes' project on "export of meaning" reveals how different cultural groups interpret Dallas (1986). At the minimal level, it is believed that audiences will quite inconsistently interpret program context. This kind of study describes how interpretation may

differ and what accounts for these differences based on different types of program viewing.

Television certainly is an entertaining instrument in our daily life; however, it also is an instrument for obtaining information. Television can still bridge cultural differences when viewers understand the context of other cultures on television. In Robert and Lichter's research, students of different ethnic groups said they considered television not only as a vehicle for entertainment but also as a learning tool and a point of entry into the broader world. The survey indicates that many people admit using television to guide them in their social and personal situations and that their feelings about television's ethnic characters may influence their images of real-life people. Furthermore, the survey results show that television exercises its greatest power over those who do not hold strong opinions or who have no opinions or information about a particular topic or group of people (1988). This survey suggests that television viewers' perception of a program's context can still affect how they view a society and how they interact with other ethnic groups, even when the contexts of a drama are not as open as a soap opera would be.

By reviewing these intercultural television effect studies, I discern that television might not convert other cultures. Nevertheless, television can still help people

understand one other by presenting programs that embody focused and understandable contexts.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to test whether television programs sent across borders can foster understanding among different cultures. For this purpose, the thesis will study the effects of imported American television programs on Taiwanese college students in the United States.

Background of Taiwan

Television in Taiwan is unique, because the government not only censors controversial programs but also products from Japan, its one-time colonial ruler. By the end of World War II, Taiwan had been ruled by Japanese militarists for fifty-one years (1894-1945). Japan's tight thought control and stern measures to "de-Chinese" did not depend on Taiwan broadcasting but instead focused on political indoctrination efforts of education, the police and to some extent, the press (Lee, 1979). Japanese culture did directly affect Taiwanese people's living for more than fifty years, without broadcasting system. The Taiwanese broadcasting system was not fully utilized as a propaganda tool until the Chinese Nationalists' takeover in 1947 (Lee, 1979).

Even though Taiwan has maintained equally close economic and political relationships with the United States

and Japan since World War II, Taiwanese media regulation has treated the countries differently. The Taiwanese television system under Kuomintang government is one of the most self-reliant systems in the media realm, and historically, imported programming has never exceeded thirty-five percent of the total programs (Morgan & Shanahan, 1992). Most of the imported television programs are American, and none of are them Japanese. Japanese television programs and films have been kept off the screens mainly because of cultural pride and historical hostility. This is done in spite of technical assistance and limited financial investment by Japan's private sector in Taiwan's media industry; for example, forty percent of Taiwan's first commercial television company, the Taiwan Television Company, was owned by a group of Japanese television stations when it was found (Lee, 1979). Therefore, we might conclude that Japanese culture has more direct contact with Taiwanese people than American culture, and American culture has more contact with Taiwanese people through broadcasting system than Japanese culture.

Hypotheses

The absence of Japanese programs and the dominance of American products among television programs imported by Taiwan provides a great opportunity to observe whether television can make a difference in intercultural

communication. The study will measure the level of Taiwanese students' uncertainty about and stereotyping of American and Japanese cultures.

Television is not the only thing that affects our perceptions of the world; many other cultural sources may cause subjects to have different degrees of understanding and predicting capacity toward other culture groups. Ethnicity refers to connectedness based on commonalties (such as religion, nationality, region, etc.) where specific aspects of cultural patterns are shared and where transmission over time creates a common history. Race, although a biological factor, takes on ethnic meaning when and if members of that biological group have evolved specific way of living (Pinderhughes, 1989).

My hypotheses concerns whether television viewing can increase our predicting capacity toward people of other cultures regarding ethnicity, race and other cultural factors. Regarding ethnicity, race and cultural factors, Japanese and Taiwanese populations have a lot in common. Japan and Taiwan are Asian island nations both settled by Asian people. They are closer to each other ethnically and racially than they are to people living in Western societies. Asian people share a similar Asian high context culture communication form, in which most of the information is either in a physical context or internalized, and very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the

message; on the other hand, American communication is categorized as a low context culture communication form, in which the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988). According to Allen and Wilder's demonstration (1979), the perceived similarity between Taiwanese and Japanese should reduce uncertainty and enhance interpersonal attraction. The similarity of ethnic, race, communication styles and other cultural factors between Japanese and Taiwanese may cause Taiwanese subjects to retain a higher degree of behavior predicting confidence (lower uncertainty) toward Japanese. On the other hand, if American television does have an intercultural effect, Taiwanese, who have watched only local and American television for years, may have a higher degree of behavior predicting confidence toward Americans, based on their knowledge about American culture experienced from television.

Hypothesis No. 1

If television has intercultural effects to Taiwanese students, watching American television may decrease their uncertainty to predict and to explain American behaviors regardless of the greater cultural and ethnic differences between Chinese and Americans.

Hypothesis No. 2

Supposing television programs have impacts on intercultural communication, Taiwanese students should be able to form certain stereotypes to outgroup peoples whom are portrayed in foreign television programs.

Hypothesis No. 3

Assuming that Taiwanese students have learned about American culture through television for years and feel confident about predicting American behavior, they will tend to become more involved in American activities when they live in the United States.

Methodology

Subjects

This study will consist of self-administered questionnaires and group discussions with fifty-five Taiwanese undergraduate and graduate students who were enrolled at the University of Texas at Austin during the fall semester of 1991. According to the International Office of the University of Texas at Austin, which is in charge of international student affairs, five hundred and fifty-five Taiwanese students were enrolled in the university at the time. Members of the survey population have all received college or higher degrees before arriving in the United States. These higher-educated subjects are within a population, college-educated Taiwanese, that is most likely to watch imported American television programs. According to

studies of Taiwanese television audiences' viewing patterns, fifty percent of Taiwanese college-educated audiences like to watch imported television programs (Lee, 1979; Varis, 1988).

After more two hundred phone calls were made to potential subjects, fifty-eight volunteers came to the laboratory at ten different scheduled times. In order to collect more accurate data, all subjects were told that they could stop filling out the questionnaire whenever they did not feel like continuing. Three of the fifty-eight subjects did not complete their questionnaires, leaving fifty-five questionnaires in the study.

Research Instrument

The research instrument consists of 1) a questionnaire about attitude change, presenting in appendix, and 2) a focus group study. The questionnaire was used to measure the subjects' uncertainty about and stereotypes of American and Japanese. The focus group discussion helped the researcher to further investigate these subjects' personal experiences with American television and American culture.

The questionnaire was composed of three parts: uncertainty, stereotypes and general information. Six uncertainty reduction questions based on an eleven-point scale measured the intensity of the registered opinion. Thirteen questions on an eleven-point scale were used to test changes in stereotypes. And these two measures are

presented in means and T-test. Additionally, a general questionnaire asked the subjects about their personal relationships with American students and their experiences with American television.

The uncertainty reduction questions asked about the subjects' confidence in predicting American, Japanese and Chinese attitudes, values, feelings, behavior, knowledge and their understanding of the subjects. Stereotype questions asked subjects to describe the strength of stereotyping of American and Japanese in thirteen categories, which include ambition, sociableness, compassion, cooperation, diligence, responsibility, loyalty, politeness, authoritativeness, self-confidence, quietness, passivity, humor. The general information questionnaire was designed mainly to help understand the students' activities within American culture, and the focus group discussion allowed the subjects to frankly describe how television viewing has influenced their perception of culture.

Process

In Phase I, the subjects were asked to answer a questionnaire testing uncertainty about Americans, Japanese and Chinese, and stereotypes of Americans and Japanese.

In Phase II, a discussion group was conducted randomly. Discussion groups of twelve and eight people were formed in two different laboratory experiences. Questions about

American television effects and foreign students' culture interacting experiences were asked, and discussion group members were allowed to express their opinions liberally.

LIMITATIONS

Like other experimental studies, this study has its limitations. First, this experiment was designed to study the effects of American television programming on Taiwanese college students. The results may or may not apply to the all Taiwanese people. Further study of demographic effects needs to be done in the future. Secondly, viewing pattern factors are not the main consideration this study, but these may also influence television's effects. Finally, the subjects of this study are all Taiwanese and therefore, the finding may or may not apply to other cultures.

Organization of the Study

This study is divided into three chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction

Chapter II: Results and Discussion

Chapter III: Conclusion and Suggestion

CHAPTER II

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A questionnaire providing statistical results and a focus group discussion are presented in this chapter. The purpose of the following analyses is to examine the relationship between television and the Taiwanese student's uncertainty and stereotypical forms.

The statistical results of uncertainty and stereotype measurement were responded to by fifty-five Taiwanese students (21 males and 34 females). Twenty-one of them were newcomers who had been the United States of America less than three months, while other thirty-four respondents were "oldcomers" who had been America more than eighteen months. Eighty-five percent of these subjects said they were either very likely or likely to watch television news on a daily basis, and sixty-seven percent of them said they were either very likely or likely to watch television entertainment programs on a daily basis.

The questionnaire measuring of uncertainty included the following kinds of questions. First, subjects were asked to describe how well they could predict other people's behavior and thinking. They rated degrees of predictive confidence in relation to three ethnic groups, American, Japanese, and

Chinese. Questions centered on the degree of confidence in predicting attitudes, values, feeling, and social behaviors. The next series of questions asked the subjects to rate the degree to which they understood and were understood by Americans, Japanese, and Chinese. They were asked if they were confident of knowing and being known by different groups of people.

The stereotype questions attempted to establish whether the subjects had formed normative or nonnormative stereotypes, which might help to identify whether or not the subjects had received information about Americans and Japanese.

Focus group discussions were held by two interviewers. During the discussion meeting, five topics were proposed to two discussion groups. "Discuss becoming acquainted with the differences in behaviors between American and Japanese, and the images of Black Americans on television" helped define the relationship between television and the subjects' uncertainty reduction and stereotypes. Next, discussions of "talk about your use of television" and "how you learn things from television" identified how television could help people to gain knowledge of other cultures. Finally, subjects were asked about "problems you have with watching American television or interacting with American people," and "are you afraid of AIDS." these were designed to investigate the possible presence of cultivation effects in

the relationship between American television viewing and Taiwanese students.

Uncertainty Study

This test was intended to discover the different degrees of uncertainty that subjects held concerning Americans and Japanese. The idea was that both predictions and explanations were relevant to uncertainty reduction. When subjects were more well-defined in their expectations, they were more assured in predicting strangers' behavior; when subjects knew more about other cultures, they were more confident in explaining other peoples' behavior.

Cultural similarity was a factor that might have an influence on subjects' uncertainty reduction. Gudykunst and Kim pointed out that the degree to which the ingroup was similar to the outgroup affected uncertainty reduction; however, similarity could reduce only predictive uncertainty, but was less likely to reduce explanatory uncertainty (1992). People understood relatively easily outgroup members who were most like themselves; whereas, knowledge of actual similarities and dissimilarities among ingroups and outgroups was necessary to reduce people's explanatory uncertainty. Simard found that ethnic similarity and dissimilarity did cause difficulty in predicting and interacting with other ethnic groups in his experience (1981). Base on previous findings in similarity study,

Chinese people, therefore, supposedly held more uncertainty to outgroup members who had greater differences in outlook or culture.

For tests on similarity theory, a paired differences T-test was performed in the Chinese-American uncertainty analysis to test whether the means of Chinese and American uncertainty scores differ. Subjects were expected more confident to predict and to explain Chinese behaviors because they live in similar Chinese culture, which was different to American culture. All six testing items showed that there were significant differences of degree in the uncertainty score; results are presented in Table 2. When compared to the uncertainty score of Americans, results indicated that subjects did hold greater confidence in predicting Chinese attitudes (MD = 2.42, $p < 0.001$), predicting Chinese values (MD = 2.44, $p < 0.001$), predicting Chinese feelings (MD = 2.64, $p < 0.001$), and predicting proper social behaviors (MD = 1.44, $p < 0.001$). In addition, subjects also felt they knew Chinese people better than they knew American people (MD = 2.40, $p < 0.001$), and they thought that Chinese ingroup members could, without verbal expression, better understand what they feel than Americans, the outgroup members, could understand them (MD = 2.82, $p < 0.001$). Six uncertainty test items proposed that subjects had more confidence on both predictive and explanatory uncertainty to ingroup members, Chinese people, than

Table 1.

The Means of Uncertainty Scores Toward Three Ethnic Groups, Chinese, Americans, and Japanese:

Items	Chinese Mean	American Mean	Japanese Mean
Predicting Attitudes	8.18	5.76	4.25
Predicting Values	8.13	5.67	4.40
Predicting Feelings	8.05	5.42	3.85
Predicting Behaviors	7.64	6.20	5.13
Knowing Characters	8.15	5.75	5.20
Knowing Subjects With Nonverbal Expression	7.09	4.27	3.96

Maximum Score = 10 (very certain to predict behaviors)

Minimum Score = 0 (very uncertain to predict behaviors)

Neutral Score = 5

outgroup members, American people. These results did suggest that ingroup and outgroup similarities did have an affect upon the degree of predictive and explanatory uncertainty with others.

Because of the similarity of ethnic, historical, and cultural backgrounds, subjects were expected to hold higher degrees of certainty to Japanese than to Americans. The

Table 2.

Paired Differences Uncertainty Study - Rating of Chinese and American: Mean Differences, Standard Deviation, T-value, and 2-tail Significant:

Item	MD	SD	t-value	2-tail sig
Predicting Attitudes	2.42	1.92	9.33	p < 0.001
Predicting Values	2.44	2.10	8.60	p < 0.001
Predicting Feelings	2.64	1.87	10.46	p < 0.001
Predicting Behaviors	1.44	2.17	4.92	p < 0.001
Knowing Characters	2.40	2.02	8.79	p < 0.001
Knowing Subjects With Nonverbal Expression	2.82	1.92	10.91	p < 0.001

Maximum Score = 10 (very certain to predict behaviors)

Minimum Score = 0 (very uncertain to predict behaviors)

Neutral Score = 5

following study identified the differences of subjects' predictive and explanatory uncertainty to American people and Japanese people. The second T-test scores were performed in an American-Japanese uncertainty analysis. Paired differences, means, standard deviations, and T-values on these dependent measures for subjects within each condition were presented in Table 3. By comparing the subjects' uncertainty rating to Americans and Japanese, it was found

Table 3.

Paired Differences Uncertainty Study - Rating of American and Japanese: Mean Differences, Standard deviation, T-value, and 2-tail Significant:

Items	MD	SD	t-value	2-tail sig
Predicting attitudes	1.51	2.34	4.78	p < 0.001
Predicting Values	1.26	2.46	3.76	p < 0.001
Predicting Feelings	1.56	2.46	4.71	p < 0.001
Predicting Behaviors	1.07	2.56	3.11	p < 0.01
Knowing Characters	0.55	2.48	1.63	p = 0.11
Knowing Subjects with nonverbal express	0.26	1.87	1.02	p > 0.05

Maximum Score = 10 (very certain to predict behaviors)

Minimum Score = 0 (very uncertain to predict behaviors)

Neutral Score = 5

that results indicated that Taiwanese subjects believed they could more accurately predict American attitudes than they could predict Japanese attitudes (MD = 1.51, p < 0.001), and subjects believed that they could better predict American holding values than those of the Japanese (MD = 1.26, p < 0.001). Furthermore, paired means differences scores also showed these Chinese students felt more confidence in predicting American feelings (MD = 1.56, p < 0.001) and American social behavior (MD = 1.07, p < 0.001) compared

with less confidence in Japanese scores. These four findings presented significant results suggesting that students from Taiwan held lower predictive uncertainty to American people than to Japanese people.

However, the uncertainty scores failed to present significant differences on two other uncertainty measures. The result, $MD = 0.55$ and $p = 0.11$, put the statement "subjects knowing American people better than Japanese" as a "suspended judgment" (Bartz, 1988) which demands repetition of the experiment to verify the result. However, this result suggested that subjects held no significant differences of explanatory uncertainty between American and Japanese, which means subjects rated themselves as having lower degrees of knowledge (and thereby scoring closely in both American and Japanese groups) which explained both American and Japanese behavior. Cultural similarity did not make subjects more certain to know Japanese than American was suggested.

Finally, T-test results were found to be insignificant on identifying that Chinese subjects believed they could be more understood by either American or Japanese without verbally expressing themselves ($MD = 0.26$, $p > 0.05$). Subjects presumed that Americans and Japanese would have similar degrees of difficulty in understanding their behavior if subjects did not express themselves verbally.

These uncertainty findings suggest that Taiwanese students did not hold a lower degree of predicting

uncertainty (low predictive confidence) toward Japanese people because of the similarity of intercultural factors such as skin color, similar communication style, and closer cultural relationship; contrary to intercultural theories of expectation, Taiwanese students had a lower degree of predicting uncertainty (higher predictive confidence) toward American people, which suggested that Taiwanese students had better defined expectations of Americans. In this experiment, subjects' responses provided no significant evidence that subjects felt they had lower explanatory uncertainty toward Japanese, and that they believed Japanese would understand the subjects better than Americans would. These results suggest that ethnic and cultural similarity are not caused subjects decreasing their explanatory uncertainty to Japanese people.

Subjects in this research, college educated students, were mostly a U.S. television watching group. It was suspected that television's interpersonal effects might have caused the lower amount of uncertainty that subjects held toward American people, compared to the uncertainty that subjects held toward Japanese - the community more similar ethnically and culturally to Chinese people. This research, with the use of a focused group study, investigated the possibility that these controversial results, which differ with prior intercultural communication studies, were

actually caused by television intercultural effects on the subjects.

Subjects' Stereotype Study

In this part of the test, the experiment considered the effects of stereotype formation. Vassiliou and his colleagues (1972) explained stereotype formation and differentiated the formation between normative and nonnormative stereotypes. A normative stereotype is a cognitive standard applied to a group of people, and this cognitive standard should be based on information from sources such as education, mass media systems, or historical events. Contrary to normative stereotypes, nonnormative stereotypes are purely projective in nature. Within the formation of nonnormative stereotypes, lacking information from outside the ingroup members, these members began thinking about the outgroup people just as they did themselves.

After two paired differences tests had been performed in this section of the research, it was ascertained that the Chinese subjects perceived American and Japanese as normative stereotypes. Subjects did not think about the outgroup peoples, Americans and Japanese, just as subjects themselves. They applied different scores to two outgroup of people in stereotype scales other than to Chinese, which indicated subjects stereotyping both Americans and Japanese

Table 4.

The Means of Stereotypes Scores toward Three Ethnic Groups

Items	Chinese	American	Japanese
	Mean	Mean	Mean
Ambitious	5.47	7.29	8.42
Sociable	5.22	8.05	5.78
Compassionate	6.00	6.27	4.27
Cooperative	4.29	6.27	7.51
Diligent	8.36	4.82	8.82
Responsible	6.56	6.24	8.58
Loyal	6.18	4.96	7.56
Polite	6.78	6.16	7.11
Authoritative	5.85	6.22	6.61
Self-confident	5.35	8.20	7.11
Quiet	7.07	3.22	6.36
Passive	7.16	3.18	4.98
Humorous	4.87	7.93	3.22

Maximum score = 10 (typical stereotype of the group)

Minimum score = 0 (atypical stereotype of the group)

Neutral score = 5

with certain cognitive standard. What sources formed subjects' cognitive standard toward Americans and Japanese would be discussed by focus groups.

Thirteen stereotype differential scales were used in the rating of three culture concepts which included Chinese, Americans and Japanese. The results had been analyzed with paired difference tests, which were American-Chinese and Japanese-Chinese tests.

In the American-Chinese stereotypes study, there were four stereotype ratings in paired differences failing to reach the significant level in the T-test; these included compassionate (MD = 0.27, $P > 0.1$), responsible (MD = -0.15, $p > 0.1$), polite (MD = -0.62, $p > 0.1$), and authoritative (MD = 0.32, $P > 0.1$). However, the other nine paired differences stereotype ratings presented significant mean differences. These significant stereotype ratings included ambitious (MD = 1.8, $p < 0.001$), sociable (MD = 2.84, $p < 0.001$), cooperative (MD = 1.98, $p < 0.001$), diligent (MD = -3.55, $p < 0.001$), loyal (MD = -1.22, $p < 0.001$), self-confident (MD = 2.85, $p < 0.001$), quiet (MD = -3.85, $p < 0.001$), passive (MD = -3.98, $p < 0.001$), and humorous (MD = 3.05, $p < 0.001$). The results are presented in Table 5.

With the Japanese-Chinese stereotype study, the rating of paired differences on sociable (MD = 0.56, $p > 0.05$), Chinese subjects perceived American and Japanese as normative stereotypes. Subjects did not think about the

Table 5.

Paired Differences Stereotypes Study - Ratings of American/Chinese: Means Differences, Standard Deviations, and Significant Level:

Items	MD	SD	2-tail Sig
Ambitious	1.80	2.53	p < 0.001
Sociable	2.84	2.51	p < 0.001
Compassionate	0.27	3.02	Not Sig
Cooperative	1.98	3.12	p < 0.001
Diligent	-3.55	2.32	p < 0.001
Responsible	-0.15	2.83	Not Sig
Loyal	-1.22	2.22	p < 0.001
Polite	-0.62	3.03	Not Sig
Authoritative	0.32	3.18	Not Sig
Self-confident	2.85	2.81	p < 0.001
Quiet	-3.85	3.00	p < 0.001
Passive	-3.98	3.14	p < 0.001
Humorous	3.05	2.25	p < 0.001

Maximum score = 10 (typical stereotype of the group)

Minimum score = 0 (atypical stereotype of the group)

Neutral score = 5

Table 6.

Paired Differences Stereotypes Study - Rating of
Japanese/Chinese: Means Differences, Standard Deviations and
Significant Level

Items	MD	SD	2-tail Sig
Ambitious	2.93	2.16	p < 0.001
Sociable	0.56	2.46	Not Sig
Compassionate	-1.73	2.32	p < 0.001
Cooperative	3.22	2.84	p < 0.001
Diligent	0.45	1.36	p < 0.05
Responsible	2.02	2.09	p < 0.001
Loyal	1.22	2.22	p < 0.001
Polite	0.37	2.60	Not Sig
Authoritative	0.76	2.11	p < 0.05
Self-confident	1.72	2.62	p < 0.001
Quiet	-0.71	2.73	Not Sig
Passive	-2.18	2.83	p < 0.001
Humorous	-1.65	2.26	p < 0.001

Maximum score = 10 (typical stereotype of the group)

Minimum score = 0 (atypical stereotype of the group)

Neutral score = 5

outgroup peoples, Americans and Japanese, just as subjects themselves. They applied different scores to two outgroup of polite (MD = 0.37, $p > 0.1$), and quiet (MD = 0.71, $p > 0.5$) exhibited no significant differences. On the other hand, ten other scales were found to display clear paired differences: ambitious (MD = 2.93, $p < 0.001$), compassionate (MD = -1.73, $p < 0.001$), cooperative (MD = 3.22, $p < 0.001$), diligent (MD = 0.45, $p < 0.05$), responsible (MD = 2.02, $p < 0.001$), loyal (MD = 1.38, $p < 0.001$), authoritative (MD = 0.76, $P = 0.1$), self-confident (MD = 1.72, $p < 0.001$), passive (MD = -2.18, $p < 0.001$), and humorous (MD = -1.65, $p < 0.001$). The results are presented in Table 6.

In the paired stereotypes studies, there was no evidence presented that Taiwanese students think about American or Japanese people as being "like themselves." Most of the stereotype indicators in the test provided significant results; subjects did not stereotype ingroup members the same as either American or Japanese. Therefore, the study suggested that subjects had normative rather than nonnormative stereotypes toward American and Japanese people. Subjects must received information about American and Japanese from certain social sources in Taiwan. This research investigated if the subjects' normative stereotype toward American and Japanese was related to television viewing, and found the answer in subsequent later focus group discussion.

Focus Group Study

Two focus groups of twelve and eight people (9 males and 11 females) were held for this television effects study. Each discussion group was composed partly of newcomers who had been in the United States less than three months, and partly of students who had been in the United States for more than eighteen months. Subjects were allowed to speak or argue whenever they wanted to during the discussion process. The discussion topic concentrated mainly on the impact of American television on subjects' personal experiences.

In relation to the impact of television impacts study, this study found that subjects' uncertainty and stereotypes toward Japanese are inherent in Chinese heritage. The individuals in the discussion group did not form stereotypes and uncertainty through television viewing patterns; on the other hand, the uncertainty and stereotypes of Chinese toward Americans were more likely to be based on knowledge about Americans obtained from television.

Topic: Discuss becoming acquainted with the differences in behavior between Americans and Japanese, and the images of Black Americans on television.

Newcomers: "I do not have too many ideas about Japanese people. I just... well, I value them based on our social values. Americans? It partly relates to television watching. Except football information, I watch television programs mostly based on my stereotypes of Americans on television

which have aired in Taiwan and I look at American people pretty much the same as the stereotypes I get from television." "I cannot specifically discuss the differences between Japanese and Americans because I have little information dealing with Japanese people's behaviors... Americans? Oh, I would like to say that I know them better, but American images in my mind are pretty much based on their images in media." "I was not used to initiating friendships with Black Americans because I had gotten negative stereotypes of Black people by watching American movies and television programs in Taiwan. I like to watch The Cosby Show, yet I considered him only a fictional character. What made the difference was my Black adviser. He had a great character which made me so comfortable talking to him. Since then, I just knew there were lovely Black people in the real world, especially when I compared my Black adviser to some snobbish White classmates of mine in business school.

Oldcomers: "You should know that I know nothing about Japanese. Do not ask me about it because it is one subject I don't know anything about. My images of America are media." "Same here, I believe that television creates American images' after all..." "...Can I refuse to answer this question... Well, all my stereotypes of Americans are formed by television and movies. Before I arrived in the United States, the American images on my mind were formed by

American television and movies. I had no other sources to get to know what were the differences between Black Americans and White Americans - besides those Hollywood-made movies and American television. American media just portrays Black Americans that way - naturally, I formed my stereotype of Black Americans that way..." "I never intended to make friends with Black Americans too; however, my best American friend is a Black American who has the most caring personality I have ever seen... why aren't I trying to make more Black friends? I am just not used to doing so..." "Stereotypes learned from television is one of the reasons; you cannot connect Cosby to some people who speak aloud in the movie theater. Cosby is a white collar person I seldom see."

The uses of television seemed to vary in certain ways between newcomer and oldcomer. Newcomers more likely took television as an entertaining instrument; oldcomers considered television not only as an apparatus of entertainment, but also as a facility for learning about American culture and information agents. It appeared that newcomers did not care to obtain information from television; whereas, oldcomers believed that they could learn more about American culture by watching American television.

Topic: Talk about your use of television.

Newcomers: "Watching television is just watching television, I need not think too much about it." "News does offer information, but news is little help for my daily life; I get useful information only when I get it from local people."

Oldcomers: "I mostly watch CNN news, it offers me updated information all day, You do not have to wait for it." "I watch movies, news, and conferences." "Television is a very important part of my life, I especially like to watch Fox, Cable Channel 5, during the period from five to seven o'clock. In this period, sitcoms like Perfect Strangers and The Cosby Show are short and realistic. Watching these sitcoms helps me improve my English a lot. If you have paid attention to the screen, you may find out that the caption is different then the spoken English..." "Television can get you involved in different places and situations, and you can learn about them from the screen." "I believe television watching can help me observe people's interaction, comparing the differences between us, and the values they hold..." "Right, we may have no idea about what Halloween is, for example, by watching some Halloween specials we may get to know the stories and customs of Halloween. You can learn American culture through television." "Watching television can improve your social life in America. You can offer better topics from news to talk with American people so that

you do not have to pay special attention to weather all the time." "Yes, I agree with him. It is impossible always talking about class work with classmates. Knowing American sports culture, for example, will help individuals build better relationships with friends."

No matter how members of focus groups had considered how they use television or if television messages were useful in their personal life, both newcomers and oldcomers agreed that television would put some ideas in their minds when they were watching. They felt the same if they watched for a short time or a long time. And they agreed that they may learn something from television subconsciously.

Topic: How you learn things from television.

Newcomer: "Watching television is just watching television. The audience can never pay special attention to memorizing something from television and using it. Because our own life is much more complex than the television show, you have no way learn how to handle certain situations by watching television." "You need not try to learn from television, you will imitate the lifestyles subconsciously."

Oldcomers: "Watching television is sort of experience accumulation'." "The information is amassed. In most cases, I reacted or spoke just as some characters of television shows - then, I found that I was using the words or the

movements learned from television." "Compared with the past, I have learned better how to talk with Americans in the 'American way' by viewing television. It takes time."

A cultural gap still exists between subjects and American culture. There is still very much mystification when subjects interact with American people and watch American television, especially for newcomers. Taiwanese students feel confused about certain American culture forms and some American television programs that they had never seen in Taiwan. Newcomers still looked for American programs familiar to them from broadcasts on the Taiwanese television system.

Topic: Problems you have watching American television or interacting with American people.

Newcomers: "I do not like watching television here because I see weird programs whenever I turn on the television. I think I do need to order cable for new movies. Without cable, I can only watch programs I have seen in Taiwan." "You remind me that I have seen many television programs which are not funny at all. To Chinese, those characters' behaviors just look meaningless." "Me too. When I watch television with friends, everybody laughs loudly, except me. I really do not understand what they laugh at?" "It is the reason that I am looking at news programs and programs that aired in Taiwan." "I like to see The Cosby

Show, Family Ties, and L.A. Law. I saw these programs regularly before I came to the United States, and I still watch them when I have time to do so." "...I feel nervous when I stay with my American classmates. They are really nice to me, yet I do not know what should I say to them. Americans are used to speaking about their personal life in public. For example, they talk about what they do with their boyfriends...I just feel embarrassed." "I like most to watch American commercials, they are short, vivid, and easy to understand... No, I did not watch television commercials in Taiwan." "Yes, I like to watch American television commercials too."

Oldcomer: "Taiwanese television censorship makes all broadcast programs alike; American television systems offer much more varied programs and the audience can choose." "In Taiwan, I used to believe I knew how to interact with Americans from watching television, yet I found I was wrong when I arrived this country. They just felt no fun the way I treat them."

Cultivation effects were not found in this study. American media, including television programs, had discussed the HIV virus frequently within the timefrance of the discussions meetings were held; still, subjects were, without exception, not very reflective about the disease. They all noticed the presence of AIDS, but they all took it

only as information about American culture. During the discussion, newcomers and oldcomers expressed their opinion that the virus was localized within American society; they stated that the AIDS had no relation to them because of cultural differences.

Topic: Are you afraid AIDS?

Newcomers: "I will not feel uncomfortable when I watch AIDS information on television, it is part of American culture anyway and it is their business, not mine." "I am not surprised at all, since I have heard a lot of information about this in Taiwan. I will not be fearful, but really question why the virus express so fast. However, I truly fear about the American crime rate; probably because crime more directly relates to my daily life than gay society." "Why should I be afraid? People can do what they like to do if they are not bothering me."

Oldcomers: "What! Magic Johnson declared that he had HIV positive? You mean the great basketball player? I did not watch the evening news today. What a pity...Why am I afraid? I am a Chinese." "I have watched the news and feel sorry for Mr. Johnson; however, I live in a different culture. I do not need to be afraid." "I would like to remind everybody, the HIV positive rating for Austin is the highest in Texas. We do not need to be afraid, but we should pay attention to it." "Maybe I have been here too long, I feel nothing whatsoever against some people's living style."

I can accept them... but, again, it is their business." "It is their business, American society has less limitation on American behavior, it is not our business." "HIV is related to people who have a certain lifestyle and it is different than my lifestyle; it is different with the crime rate."

"Yes, I agree that I am paying more attention to the crime rate and I'm concerned it may happen to me, I really care about nothing else (AIDS).

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion:

Uncertainty and stereotypes have been regarded as two of the most important decoding factors for understanding intercultural relations. Considering the negative effects of uncertainty and stereotypes it is important to understand how they have been formed in different cultures. In this study, it was demonstrated that television could be a factor in forming uncertainty and stereotypes across cultures.

In the first part of the test, statistical studies on subjects' uncertainty presented some results that were different from intercultural theories. Taiwanese students were not more confident in predicting Japanese behavior despite similarities in outlook, cultural background, and historical relationship; contrary to the findings of other researchers, subjects held higher degree of predictive confidence toward American people, though there were more differences in outlook, culture, and historical relationship between Chinese and Americans. Subjects even considered that they had more confidence in explaining American behavior than Japanese behavior, although the differences were not very significant. Still, the degree of uncertainty for

subjects' ingroup people was very different than the degree of uncertainty toward American people in all six testing items. It suggested that subjects felt they had more certainty toward Chinese people than Americans.

However, because Taiwanese people who like to watch American television had a better chance of obtaining information, and of knowing, comprehending, and interpreting American people, this study postulated that subjects' higher degree of confidence to describe, predict and even explain American behavior was related to watching American television.

Group discussion results suggested that television viewing was related to subjects' different degree of uncertainty toward American and Japanese. Taiwanese students felt it difficult to interpret and predict Japanese behavior because they had seldom seen Japanese. But they had more opportunities to observe American society because of the availability of U.S. television programs which allowed them to better understand American culture.

The television cumulatively effects had been mentioned in group discussion. Though some of the newcomers did argue that they never intended to learn American culture from television; members of discussion groups accordingly agreed that they cumulatively got to know American people through television broadcasting systems. Newcomers mentioned understanding and feeling no fear of AIDS because they had

understood the environment from watching television programs in Taiwan. Some subjects had even believed they knew how to interact with Americans before they came to the United States - until they found that information on Americans obtained from Taiwanese television could not realistically be applied to their daily lives. Oldcomers mentioned that television had introduced them to different places and situations in American culture, and they sometimes could apply subconsciously what they had seen on television to their daily lives. Compared to their reluctance to predict Japanese behavior, subjects believed television to be more knowledgeable about American culture through television viewing before they became involved in American society.

Observing both statistical and focus group discussion results, we may demonstrate in relation to hypothesis 1 that viewing imported American television may gradually increase the certainty toward Americans held by people living in different cultures. Watching American television can help Taiwanese increase their confidence in predicting American behavior even though there are greater ethnic and cultural dissimilarities between Americans and Chinese.

In the stereotypes tests, Taiwanese students defined their stereotypes of Chinese, American, and Japanese with certain degrees of differences. Subjects did not stereotype people living in three cultures as similar to themselves. The findings suggested subjects did not hold nonnormative

stereotypes toward Americans and Japanese. They stereotyped Americans and Japanese based on cognitive standards of thinking about these outgroup people.

According to the group discussions, the study found subjects' stereotypes toward American people were more likely based on American films and television they had watched in the past. They possessed unique stereotype scores toward Japanese, but these did not come from their personal experience. No members in discussion groups could give examples, by experience, of the kinds of people they characterized as thought Japanese. Subjects' stereotypes toward Japanese already had become a type of social heredity. On the other hand, subjects consistently told the interviewers that they became familiar with Americans through watching American television. Subjects could even propose clearly that watching American film and television formed their negative stereotypes toward Black Americans in Taiwan. In American society, they tended to confirm within their environments their negative stereotypes of Black Americans, and considered characters in The Cosby Show only as fictional. Their stereotypes caused subjects to be less likely to seek Black American friendships.

This result is similar to Maykovich's finding (1980). Maykovich asked college students, people most likely to view imported American television programs, and farmers in Taiwan about their willingness to engage in various types of social

interaction with White, Black, and Chinese Americans. Only college students held different degrees of willingness to interact with different ethnic groups. Findings showed that Taiwanese students felt closest to the Chinese American, next closest to the White Americans, and least close to Black Americans. Farmers on the other hand were either uncertain of their sentiments towards Americans or did not wish to have any transactions with them.

However, discussion group study suggested that Taiwanese students might change their stereotypes toward Black Americans through a direct interaction process on an individual basis. Though respondents told the interviewer that they always will interact hesitantly with Black Americans because of existing stereotypes, most of them did develop good relationships with some Black American instructors and classmates when subjects had the opportunity to know personally the characters of the people with whom they interacted. Mostly, they considered their Black American friends to be exceptions to their stereotypes of Black Americans. The stereotype of Black American they learned from American television was not changed.

Research results agreed with hypothesis 2 American television can form certain ethnic stereotypes and normative stereotypes which influence Taiwanese students. And negative stereotypes gained from American television may cause Taiwanese to have less desire to interact with the

stereotyped subjects. Stereotypes formed by television can change only by interaction on an individual basis. When discussing the use of television, the study found that newcomers questioned television as a tool for learning about American culture; whereas, oldcomers perceived television as an apparatus for entertainment, learning, and information gathering. Notably, though the uses of television were different for newcomers and oldcomers, all subjects agreed that television effects were accumulative whether or not subjects intended to learn from television.

Cultivation effects were not obvious. Cultural differences caused the most interesting discovery in this study; subjects gradually learned information about American culture from television, but left out or ignored messages incompatible with Chinese culture. This cultural gap caused certain degrees of difficulty for subjects as they got involved in American society and attempted to understand American television in U.S., especially newcomers.

Having spent years under Taiwanese television censorship, newcomers tended to look only at programs that had been aired in Taiwan, and considered other American television programs meaningless or incomprehensible. They thought they understood how Americans interacted with each other, yet they found that American behavior they recognized from American programs aired in Taiwan did not constitute the whole spectrum of American behavior. They were confused

about the content of many programs, for example, talk shows; they also felt uncomfortable in certain forms of interaction with American classmates such as speaking about one's personal life in public.

In the AIDS cultivation effects discussion, the study discovered that subjects simply ignored AIDS information because they believed that American culture was different from Chinese culture, and they believed they had no need to be afraid. The most typical response was, "I know the danger of AIDS. I feel no fear because I understand it is part of America's culture and I live a different lifestyle. Why should I worry?" Compared to AIDS, subjects were more concerned about the crime rate around them because they feared crime was more likely to affect their life in America than AIDS. Their opinions suggest that cultivation effects are very culturally specific to Taiwanese students. They perceived that part of American culture which was not compatible to Chinese culture as "information," but it was less likely they would be affected by it.

The study suggests that intercultural communication is highly culturally specific in this case. Taiwanese students accept American television programs selectively and learn about only those aspects of American culture that are compatible with their own. If television programs cannot find better ways to explain American culture to Taiwanese students, then watching American television can only help

Taiwanese students to form stereotypes of Americans and decrease only a limited amount of uncertainty toward American people.

Suggestions:

Television is the most efficient medium today for establishing direct contact between people of different cultures. With the image and voice that television offers to audiences, people can become acquainted with other people and cultures gradually. However, to produce television programming by your own judgment is one thing; to construct the program as useful information to other people is another.

The research results discussed suggest about that American television viewing might help Taiwanese viewers more confident to predict the behavior of American people over to predict behavior of Japanese people, a closer culture group. Secondly, television programs can form stereotypes in viewers' minds. With long-term negative stereotype portrayal of an ethnic group, audiences might become unwilling to communicate with that group. Finally, culture gap is another factor we need to examine. Programs which are not compatible to local culture will not be accepted.

It is important to note that well designed television programming with useful information may help to provide

stability in some parts of the world. Television can help viewers predicting behaviors of and categorizing of people in dissimilar cultures, when television contains are compatible to the local culture. Therefore, producers who work on cross-cultural television programs should fully understand the people portrayed. Shaheen suggests that TV producers should meet with people of other cultures, study the history of other ethnic groups, and participate in conferences on stereotyping (1984). Producers need to be more sensitive to cultural concerns and to reflect different points of view in television programs. Further, producers must note that other cultures might be structured differently than their own. The presentation must be compatible with other cultures.

In order to decrease subjective stereotype portrayal and to make television accessible across cultural boundaries, international co-production may be the best tool for maximizing results. With the efforts of co-production, diverse cultures and peoples can be more accurately presented on the television screen. Programs will fulfill broad market needs for positive perspectives and will strengthen the power of television in cross cultural communication.

APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear friend or Schoolmate:

You are invited to fill out the attached questionnaire for a study which is designed to examine the relationship between American television and Taiwanese attitude toward American culture. The questionnaire is a very important part of my research project. It includes three parts: questions designed to test how certain you know people living in different cultures, questions asking how typical characters that you consider about people in different cultural groups, and finally, information about yourself.

None of the questions is designed to get private information about you. However, if you feel uncomfortable about any question(s) when filling out the questionnaire, just skip and continue to answer following questions or you can stop answering the questionnaire at any time you want. Your responses, along with those from other Taiwanese students, will be coded into numbers and used for statistical analysis. After the analysis, the data will be destroyed, so there is no way to identify you with your responses.

Finally, please do not consult with anybody else when answering the questions. This is vital to the validity and reliability of the whole study. Please do take this matter seriously when filling out the questionnaire. Your help and cooperation are crucial to the success of my study. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Ray c. Lu

Study Director

Survey of Cross-cultural Attitude

People vary in the degree to which they can predict how other people behave and think. Please answer each of the following questions with respect to your ability to predict. Answer each question using a scale from zero (0) to ten (10). If you would have to make a total guess about the person's behavior or feelings you should answer "0"; if you have total certainty about the other person's behavior you should answer "10." Feel free to use any number between 0 and 10.

- * How accurate are you at predicting
 - 1) attitudes of Americans ? _____
 - 2) attitudes of Japanese ? _____
 - 3) attitudes of Chinese ? _____

- * How accurate are you at predicting the values
 - 1) Americans hold ? _____
 - 2) Japanese hold ? _____
 - 3) Chinese hold ? _____

- * How well can you predict
 - 1) feelings of Americans ? _____
 - 2) feelings of Japanese ? _____
 - 3) feelings of Chinese ? _____

- * When you meet for the first time how certain are you that
 - 1) Americans _____
 - 2) Japanese _____
 - 3) Chinese _____
 will behave in a socially appropriate way when it is important ?

- * How well do you feel you know what
 - 1) Americans are like? _____
 - 2) Japanese are like? _____
 - 3) Chinese are like? _____

- * How certain are you that
 - 1) an American _____
 - 2) a Japanese _____
 - 3) a Chinese _____
 can understand your feelings when you do not verbally express them?

每一個人對其他民族人民的思考方式及行為模式都有不同程度的了解，請您以假設的方式，回答下列問題：

假設標準分為0（如果您完全不了解某一民族人民的行為及感覺）到10（如果您完全掌握某一民族人民的行為及感覺）不同的量度，請根據您自己的印象，選用0-10之間的數字表達您對各問題之同意程度。

· 您能準確的判斷（預測）

- _____1 美國人的態度
- _____2 日本人的態度
- _____3 中國人的態度

· 您能準確的判斷（整體來看）

- _____1 美國人的價值觀
- _____2 日本人的價值觀
- _____3 中國人的價值觀

· 您能正確的知道

- _____1 美國人的感覺
- _____2 日本人的感覺
- _____3 中國人的感覺

· 當您第一次在一個社交場合遇見

- _____1 一個美國人時
- _____2 一個日本人時
- _____3 一個中國人時

您能正確的知道他（她）會表現出合宜的舉止。

· 您覺得您能準確的判斷

_____1 美國人的特質

_____2 日本人的特質

_____3 中國人的特質

· 如果不用言語表達（語言溝通）您認為

_____1 一個美國人能了解您的感覺？

_____2 一個日本人能了解您的感覺？

_____3 一個中國人能了解您的感覺？

We would like to know how you tend to describe groups of people. Let's start with your own ethnic group, the Chinese. For each word listed below, circle the number that represents how well you think that word describe the Chinese people.

CHINESE

- * Choose zero (0) if you think the word is not at all typical of the group.
- * Choose ten (10) if you think the word is perfectly typical of the group.

	Not at all typical of the group ----->										Perfectly typical of the group
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ambitious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sociable	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Compassionate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Cooperative	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Diligent	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Responsible	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Loyal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Polite	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Authoritative	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Self-confident	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quiet	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Passive	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Humorous	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

我們也同時希望了解您會如何形容各個不同民族，讓我們先從中國人開始。
 請在下列各詞彙中圈選一個能夠真切地表現出中國人特性的量度：

中國人

· 如果您認為這詞彙完全不能表現中國人特性請圈選“0”

· 如果您認為這詞彙完全能表現中國人特性請圈選“10”

有強烈企圖心的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
善於交際的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
富於同情心的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
樂於合作的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
勤奮的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
負責的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
忠實的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
溫文有禮的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
獨斷的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
自信的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
沉靜的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
被動的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
幽默的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Now let's do one more group. Using the same scale as before, circle the number you think represents how well each word describes the American people.

AMERICANS

- * Choose zero (0) if you think the word is not at all typical of the group.
- * Choose ten (10) if you think the word is perfectly typical of the group.

	Not at all typical of the group	----->										Perfectly typical of the group
Ambitious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Sociable	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Compassionate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Cooperative	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Diligent	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Responsible	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Loyal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Polite	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Authoritative	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Self-confident	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Quiet	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Passive	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Humorous	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

美國人

· 如果您認為這詞彙完全不能表現美國人特性請圈選“ 0”

· 如果您認為這詞彙完全能表現美國人特性請圈選“ 10”

有強烈企圖心的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
善於交際的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
富於同情心的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
樂於合作的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
勤奮的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
負責的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
忠實的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
溫文有禮的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
獨斷的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
自信的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
沉靜的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
被動的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
幽默的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Now let's do another group. Using the same scale as before, circle the number you think represents how well each word describes the Japanese people.

JAPANESE

- * Choose zero (0) if you think the word is not at all typical of the group.
- * Choose ten (10) if you think the word is perfectly typical of the group.

	Not at all typical of the group	----->										Perfectly typical of the group
Ambitious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Sociable	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Compassionate	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Cooperative	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Diligent	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Responsible	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Loyal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Polite	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Authoritative	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Self-confident	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Quiet	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Passive	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Humorous	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

日本人

· 如果您認為這詞彙完全不能表現日本人特性請圈選“ 0”

· 如果您認為這詞彙完全能表現日本人特性請圈選“ 10”

有強烈企圖心的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
善於交際的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
富於同情心的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
樂於合作的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
勤奮的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
負責的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
忠實的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
溫文有禮的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
獨斷的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
自信的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
沉靜的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
被動的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
幽默的	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Finally, we would like to know a few things about you personally so that we can compare your responses to those of other groups of people. All your responses will be completely confidential.

* What is your major? _____

* What is your classification? (circle one)

1. freshman 2. sophomore 3. junior 4. senior 5. graduate

* How long have you been in the United States?

_____ year(s), _____ month(s)

* Had you ever travelled in the United States before you came here to study? Yes _____ No _____

* How long did you watch TV yesterday? (circle one)

1. less than one hour 2. two to three hours
3. three to four hours 4. more than four hours

* Was your viewing yesterday _____? (circle one)

1. lot more than usual 2. little more than usual
3. same as usual 4. little less than usual
5. lot less than usual

* How likely are you to watch news on a daily basis?
(circle your answer by using a scale from 1 to 5)

Very likely	Likely	Don't know	Unlikely	Very unlikely
1	2	3	4	5

<-----

* How likely are you to watch entertainment programs on a daily basis? (circle your answer by using a scale from 1 to 5)

Very likely	Likely	Don't know	Unlikely	Very unlikely
1	2	3	4	5

<-----

· 請問您的主修為何? _____

· 請問您目前就讀幾年級?

1.大一 2.大二 3.大三 4.大四 5.研究生

· 請問您來美國已有多長的時間?

_____年 _____月

· 請問您來美國讀書之前是否曾經到美國旅遊?

是 _____ 否 _____

· 請問您昨天花了多少時間看電視?

1.少於一小時 2.二至三小時

3.三至四小時 4.多於四小時

· 請問您昨天看電視的時間是否

1.多於平時看電視的時間 2.略多於平時看電視的時間

3.和平時看電視的時間一樣 4.略少於平時看電視的時間

5.少於平時看電視的時間

· 如果可能的話，您是否每天收看電視新聞?

(請圈選最適合的答案)

非常可能 可能 不知道 不可能 非常不可能
1 2 3 4 5

· 如果可能的話，您是否每天收看娛樂性節目?

非常可能 可能 不知道 不可能 非常不可能
1 2 3 4 5

* In the past month, how often did you have lunch or dinner with an American friend? (circle one)

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. never | 2. one to two times |
| 3. three to four times | 4. more than five times |

* In the past month, how often did you talk with an American friend on the phone? (circle one)

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. never | 2. one to two times |
| 3. three to four times | 4. more than five times |

* In the past month, how often did you study with an American friend? (circle one)

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. never | 2. one to two times |
| 3. three to four times | 4. more than five times |

* How easy do you think it is to make friends with Americans? (Please circle your answer.)

Very Difficult	Difficult	Don't know	Easy	Very easy
1	2	3	4	5

* In general, how do you feel about the American classmates/ friends you have met here? (circle one)

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. I like them very much. | 2. I like them. |
| 3. I don't know. | 4. I dislike them. |
| 5. dislike them very much | |

* In general, how similar are you and your American friends? (circle one)

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. very similar | 2. similar |
| 3. don't know | 4. different |
| 5. very different | |

- 在過去的一個月裡（上個月），您是否經常和美國同學或朋友一塊用餐？

1. 從不 2. 一、兩次 3. 兩、三次 4. 三、四次 5. 五次以上

- 在過去的一個月裡（上個月），您是否經常和美國同學用電話聊天？

1. 從不 2. 一、兩次 3. 兩、三次 4. 三、四次 5. 五次以上

- 在過去的一個月裡（上個月），您是否經常和美國同學一塊唸書？

1. 從不 2. 一、兩次 3. 兩、三次 4. 三、四次 5. 五次以上

- 您覺得和美國人交朋友是件容易的事嗎？

非常困難	困難	不知道	容易	很容易
1	2	3	4	5

- 一般來說，您對在這兒認識的美國同學（朋友）感覺如何？

1. 我非常喜歡他們 2. 我喜歡他們

3. 我不知道 4. 我不喜歡他們

4. 我非常不喜歡他們

- 一般來說，您覺得您和您的美國同學（朋友）在言行舉止上是否相同？

1. 非常相同 2. 相同 3. 不知道

4. 不相同 5. 非常不相同

* How likely are you to talk about personal life with your American friends?

Most unlikely	Unlikely	Don't know	likely	Most likely
----->				
1	2	3	4	5

*When you don't understand something about American culture or customs, what are you most likely to do? (circle one)

1. Ask a Chinese friend who has been here for a long time
2. Ask any Chinese friend
3. Ask an American friend
4. Ask a professor
5. Don't bother to ask
6. Other (please specify): _____

· 您是否願意（可能）和美國同學（朋友）談及私生活？

非常不可能 不可能 不知道 可能 非常可能
1 2 3 4 5

· 當您不了解美國的文化與風俗習慣時，您最可能向誰請教？

1. 向一位在美居住多時的中國朋友請教

2. 隨便問一位中國同學

3. 向一位美國朋友請教

4. 向一位教授請教

5. 其他（請詳細說明） _____

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