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ABSTRACT

A study examined the relationship between interaction involvement--a kind of communication competence--and communication behavior in a negotiation setting. Subjects, 120 college students, completed the Interaction Involvement Scale and were placed in same-sex dyads of three types: (1) mixed dyads of one high- and one low-involved subject; (2) same-level dyads composed of two high-involved subjects; or (3) same-level dyads composed of two low-involved subjects. Each dyad was videotaped as it engaged in a negotiation scenario. The transcripts were then coded for type of negotiation strategy used--assertions, argument assertions, refutations, countersupport statements, statements of blame, and other strategies. Results showed that subjects who were higher in interaction involvement used a significantly different negotiation strategy than subjects who were lower in involvement. Specifically, the high-involved subjects used a more thoughtful, reasoned, and persuasive negotiating style than did low-involved subjects. Results indicate, however, that high involvement was not an advantage in negotiation; in fact, results suggest the highest levels of involvement might actually have inhibited the negotiator's chances for success. (Tables appear throughout the text, and copies of scenarios used in the study are appended.) (FL)

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A BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE  
IN NEGOTIATION

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between Interaction Involvement, a kind of communication competence, and communication behavior in a negotiation setting. Results indicate that persons who are higher in Interaction Involvement use a significantly different negotiation strategy than persons who are lower in Interaction Involvement. The high-involved subjects used a more thoughtful, reasoned, and persuasive negotiating style than low-involved subjects. Even though this might be true, past studies have suggested that greater levels of involvement are not related to more successful negotiation outcomes. This paper suggests that the highest levels of involvement might actually inhibit the negotiator's chances for success.

Communication scholars and researchers have been interested in the study of persuasion for over 2000 years. However, contemporary students of communication theory have witnessed an apparent decline in persuasion research (Miller & Burgoon, 1978). The reason for this decline seems to be that traditional views of persuasion and assumptions underlying persuasion research are no longer consistent with the views and interests of contemporary communication scholars (Miller & Burgoon, 1978). This is not to say, however, that research in persuasion is only a thing of the past. Recent published research indicates that it is once again capturing the interests of scholars with a behavioral orientation (e.g., Dillard, Hunter, & Burgoon, 1984; Smith, 1982a, 1982b, 1984; Tracy, Craig, Smith, & Spisak, 1984). Contemporary emphasis in persuasion research is especially apparent in various areas of interpersonal communication and small group conflict, with bargaining and negotiation settings being of particular importance (Donohue, 1978, 1981; Donohue, Diez, & Hamilton, 1984; Hopman & Walcott, 1976; Lieberman, 1979; Morley & Stephenson, 1977; Pruitt, 1981; Putnam & Jones, 1982a, 1982b; Walton & McKersie, 1965; Zartman, 1978). The focus of this study is consistent with contemporary research in persuasion as it is concerned with identifying persuasion strategies used in a negotiation setting. The study reported in this paper, however, differs from most contemporary approaches in that it examines the role of a communication competence trait in determining persuasive strategy.

#### Communication Competence and Persuasion

The connection between communication competence and persuasion is, in one sense, as old as the communication field itself. McCroskey (1982) and others

have traced concern about competence in the field as far back as Aristotle's Rhetoric. Diez (1983) and Hymes (1971) also have made reference to a close relationship between definitions of communication competence and persuasion.

While there is no agreed upon definition of communication competence (see McCroskey, 1982; Spitzberg, 1983), many scholars appear to endorse a view of competence that is consistent with the following definition offered by Wiemann (1977):

...the ability of an interactant to choose among available communicative behaviors in order that he may successfully accomplish his own interpersonal goals during an encounter while maintaining the face and line of his fellow interactants within the constraints of the situation (p. 198).

Taking this definition as representative of current views of communication competence, it is clear that there is a close connection between competence and persuasion. Indeed, the parallel between Wiemann's definition of communication competence and Aristotle's definition of rhetoric is quite obvious.

There appear to be at least two major points of similarity between current views of competence and persuasion. First, most persuasion scholars treat persuasive communication as goal oriented (see Cegala, 1984a). It is also apparent from that most scholars view communication competence as goal oriented (see Wiemann, 1977). Second, persuasion has historically emphasized the need to adapt to one's audience. Even discussions of coercive rhetoric point out the transactional nature of the persuasion process (see Burgess, 1972). As evident in Wiemann's (1977) definition, competence is also concerned with audience adaptation. In particular, it is expressed in terms of Goffman's (1967) work on the concept of face and the rules of social order that guides one's conduct in interpersonal society. In summary, then;

there appears to be considerable overlap between views of communication competence and persuasion. Also, there is a concern for how traits contribute to individual differences with respect to competence and persuasion. The concept of trait and communication competence is briefly examined below.

There is considerable controversy in interpersonal communication literature concerning how best to view competence (see Spitzberg & Hecht, 1984; Wiemann & Backlund, 1980). Some researchers emphasize competence as a trait of individuals, while others treat competence as a phenomenon determined by situation. It is likely, however, that competence is a function of dispositional tendencies of individuals, situation, and unique interaction among individuals. However, it is very difficult to examine all of these components simultaneously. Even so, some researchers are making an attempt to investigate selected communication traits in various situations to determine the role of these traits in human communication. One such program of research has focused on the trait of interaction involvement. Following is a brief description of interaction involvement and its relationship to persuasion.

#### The Concept of Interaction Involvement

Interaction involvement is a construct that has been developed and investigated by Cegala and others (Cegala, 1981, 1982a, 1982b, 1984b; Cegala, Savage, Brunner, & Conrad, 1982). Simply stated, interaction involvement is the extent to which individuals participate in communication (see Cegala, 1981). High-involved individuals typically integrate their feelings, thoughts, and conscious attention with the ongoing interaction. Conversely, low-involved individuals are characteristically not so "tuned

in" to social interactions. They are removed psychologically and communicatively from the ongoing interaction. They often appear preoccupied or withdrawn from the immediate social context.

The Interaction Involvement Scale (IIS) is an operational definition of the construct (Cegala, 1981; Cegala, et al., 1982). The IIS is a self-report questionnaire consisting of eighteen items which cluster into three related factors. The first factor, "responsiveness," is an index of an individual's certainty about how to act in certain social situations. The second factor, "perceptiveness," is a person's sensitivity to (1) what meanings ought to be applied to other's behavior, and (2) what meanings ought to be applied to one's own behavior. The perceptiveness concept is derived from Goffman's (1967) model of social interaction. The third factor, "attentiveness," has been defined as the extent to which one is cognizant of and alert to the cues in the immediate social environment, especially one's interlocutor.

The research undertaken in an effort to establish the construct validity of the IIS has, to date, gone in three related directions. First, a substantial amount of research has been done in an effort to relate interaction involvement to other trait-like measures (see Cegala, 1982a). Second, cognitive and affective responses to two communication situations have been examined (see Cegala, 1985). Finally, effort has been made to discover the overt behavioral manifestations of interaction involvement (Cegala, 1981; Cegala, Alexander, & Sokuvitz, 1979; Cegala, et al., 1982; Cegala & Sillars, 1984; Redmon, Elfert, & Gordon, 1983; Villiaume, 1984; Wallace, 1985; 1986).

### Interaction Involvement and Persuasion

A general model of interpersonal persuasion should include three separate but related items: goals, context analysis, and rhetorical strategies. In order to explicate the relationship between persuasion and interaction involvement, it is necessary to examine the general persuasion model from the interaction involvement perspective.

The persuasion goal is what directs the persuasive effort, and the behavior of the persuader is based on it. Cegala (1984b) suggests that high-involved people should have a clearer sense of their own as well as others' goals during interaction and thus are more highly motivated to to engage in communication than low-involved persons.

The context analysis of a persuasion environment includes gathering information about the persuadee, the situation, and other goal-relevant items. Gathering this information entails an attention to, and subsequent awareness of, goal relevant details. In a face-to-face situation such as interpersonal persuasion, possession of this goal relevant information also involves constant reassessment of the persuadee such that the persuader would be able to make the appropriate adjustments in strategy to compensate for unanticipated responses of the persuadee. Gathering this information, therefore, means being attentive and perceptive. By definition, low-involved individuals are low in attentiveness and perceptiveness, therefore they should not be as successful at gathering goal-relevant information as high-involved individuals.

The third component is a repertoire of rhetorical strategies to be used in the persuasive effort. This is a collection of behaviors that may be employed at any time by the persuader as a response to the requirements of

the situation (based on information gathered during context analysis). The low-involved individual would be lacking in several areas in this case. First, low involvement has been negatively correlated to behavioral flexibility (Cegala, et al., 1982); so even if the low-involved individual was "in tune" with the situation, available behavioral alternatives would be limited. Second, choosing an appropriate behavior to exhibit is based on the persuader's analysis of the situation. Since the low-involved person is less likely to make an accurate assessment of the situation, he/she should be less likely to make the appropriate behavioral choice. The low-involved person often finds himself/herself, therefore, "unsure how to respond." Responsiveness is defined as the ability to react to one's social circumstance and adapt (with some appropriate behavior). Since the low-involved individual is low in responsiveness, he/she should be less successful at interpersonal persuasion.

In summary, the more attentive, perceptive, and responsive one is, the more likely he/she is to be able to interpret accurately the behavior of the target, formulate effective strategies for goal attainment, and successfully exhibit the appropriate behaviors to achieve the desired goals. The result should be more success in persuasive efforts. Since the high-involved individuals are more attentive, perceptive, and responsive than low-involved individuals, it appears that high-involved individuals should be more successful persuaders. While it has been reported by Wallace (1985; 1996) that level of interaction involvement does not necessarily predict significant differences in negotiation outcome, communicative behavior of high-involved persuaders should still differ from that of low-involved persuaders because of more acute attentiveness, perceptiveness, and

responsiveness in the high-involved individual. This question is the focus of the research reported in this paper. In particular, given a dyadic negotiation session, it is asked:

RQ1: Will the persuasive strategies employed by high-involved individuals be significantly different than persuasive strategies used by low-involved individuals?

## METHOD

### Design

Three types of dyads were created for this study: mixed dyads containing one high- and one low-involved subject and same-level dyads containing two high-involved subjects or two low-involved subjects. As results of previous research on interaction involvement indicated the existence of sex differences (Cegala, 1983; Cegala, et al., 1982), same-sex dyads were used for this study to reduce the chances of possible confounding due to sex.

The design of this study consists of a 2 (sex) by 2 (involvement level) by 2 (mixed or same involvement level) by 2 (negotiation role) factorial arrangement.

### Subjects

A group of 120 subjects were chosen from an original pool of 433 students enrolled in a multiple section, basic communication course at a large, mid-western university. Because the course is an option in the Liberal Arts Education core requirement of the university, it attracts students from a wide variety of majors.

With regard to the subject selection criteria, the first group of subjects was selected if each individual's IIS factor scores were +/- .5

standard deviations from the mean. A second group was selected if only one of the scores was slightly closer to the mean (i.e., .4 standard deviations), but the two other scores were  $\pm .5$  standard deviations from the mean. To be certain of an adequate pool, a third group of subjects was selected if their responsiveness factor score and one other factor score was  $\pm .5$  standard deviations from the mean, and the remaining factor score was between  $\pm .2$  and  $\pm .4$  standard deviations from the mean. The result was an experimental sample with a range of responsiveness scores from -4.16 to 1.98, with seven scores less than  $\pm .5$  standard deviations; a range of perceptiveness scores from -2.55 to 2.84, with nine scores less than  $\pm .5$  standard deviations; and a range of attentiveness scores -.275 to 2.07, with thirty scores less than  $\pm .5$  standard deviations.

The subjects were placed in dyads on the basis of same sex and same or opposite involvement level. The sample consisted of 120 subjects: 60 males and 60 females; 60 high-involved subjects and 60 low-involved subjects; 80 subjects were placed in mixed-level dyads, and 40 subjects were placed in same-level dyads.

#### Procedures

The data gathering component of the study was divided into two phases. Phase 1 involved the original total pool of subjects ( $n=433$ ) completing the Interaction Involvement Scale.

To begin phase 2, subjects meeting the selection criteria were taken to a video taping room to participate in the communication task. The video taping room contained two lounge-type chairs about three feet apart, facing one another. Subjects were asked to play the roles of attorneys who were attempting to settle a lawsuit out of court. Each subject was given a

written description of the event involving his/her client (Williams, 1970) and a payoff schedule of points awarded for various dollar settlements (see Appendix A). One subject was assigned the attorney for the plaintiff, the other the defense attorney. Both were instructed to negotiate for the most points (i.e., to obtain the best settlement for their clients). Subjects were then taken to separate rooms and given five minutes to prepare arguments. They were then returned to the taping room, seated, and told that although they would have a maximum of fifteen minutes to reach a settlement, they were not required to settle.

Transcripts were made from the audio tapes of the negotiation sessions for use in this study.

#### Dependent Variables

As directed by the research question, one dependent variable was operationalized for this study: negotiation strategy. It was decided to operationally define negotiation strategy in terms of a content analytic scheme:

The transcripts of the negotiation interaction were divided into thought units. A thought unit is defined as an idea or collection of facts concerned with one topic. For example, the following statement: "And uh, the fence, it must have not been good enough for the kid to be able to get under it" contains one thought unit. This task was completed before giving the transcripts to an assistant for the purpose of computing a reliability estimate for coding the content categories.

Although a number of coding schemes are available for the content analysis of negotiation interaction (see Putnam & Jones, 1982a), Hopmann and Walcott's (1976) Bargaining Process Analysis II (i.e., BPA II) was

originally chosen for this study. A scheme developed by Donohue, et al. (1984) was also considered, but preliminary testing resulted in little intercoder agreement.

Preliminary testing of the BPA II was done using several selected transcripts of the negotiation sessions. While it was discovered at that time that the BPA II did not adequately describe the data, it could be used as a general guide for the creation of a new category scheme which could more fully accommodate the data and remain consistent with the focus of the study. Selected transcripts of the negotiation sessions were used in an attempt to create a new category scheme. The author and assistants analyzed transcripts and created new categories independently. The new scheme was then tested and the results appear in Appendix B.

An assistant coded randomly selected transcripts constituting 20% of the data in an effort to obtain an intercoder agreement estimate. The assistant's results were then compared with those of the investigator using the method of calculating intercoder agreement explained by Krippendorff (1980). Results indicate an acceptable level of reliability ( $r = .83$ ).

ANOVA was used to analyze the data following the design described earlier. The frequency of each of the negotiation strategy categories was analyzed separately in an ANOVA. An alpha level of  $P = < .05$  was set for all analyses.

## RESULTS

Interactions with less than ten subjects per cell were ignored to avoid interpreting possibly less stable relationships. Also, only categories with at least 50% usage were examined. Those categories used by less than 50% of

the subjects in the sample were ignored to avoid interpreting data that were possibly less representative of the experimental sample. In all, seven categories are not reported: Commitments (43%); Role Distance (40%); Warning (16%); Threat (18%); Sarcasm (40%); Argument of Empathy (41%); and Argument of Fair Play (12%).

The results for each of the categories are presented separately:

**Assertions:** There were no significant main effects for this category, but there were two significant two-way interactions and one significant three-way interaction. Since the three-way interaction subsumed the two-way interactions, only the former is reported. The three-way interaction included interaction involvement level by dyad type by negotiation role ( $F=5.084$ ,  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.03$ , .04 variance). The cell means are reported in Table 1. Follow-up t-tests indicate only one significant difference involving the means for plaintiffs in mixed-level dyads. High-involved subjects used significantly more assertions than low-involved subjects ( $t=2.78$ ,  $df=18$ ,  $p<.01$ , two-tailed).

Table 1  
Cell Means and Standard Deviations For Assertions:  
Three-Way Interaction

Involvement Level	Same Dyads		Mixed Dyads	
	Plaintiff	Defendant	Plaintiff	Defendant
High	19.00 <sup>a</sup> (10.76)	13.55 (6.33)	21.10 (11.43)	12.90 (8.68)
Low	20.35 (12.09)	17.75 (7.05)	9.60 (6.36)	18.60 (7.82)

<sup>a</sup> Numbers in ( ) = standard deviations

Argument Assertions. There was one main effect for interaction involvement level such that high-involved subjects used significantly more argument assertions than low-involved subjects ( $F=4.047$ ;  $df=1/83$ ;  $p<.05$ ; .04 variance).

There were also two significant three-way interactions, one including interaction involvement level by sex by negotiation role ( $F= 3.906$ ;  $df=1/83$ ;  $p<.05$ ; .03 variance) and one including interaction involvement level by dyad type by negotiation role ( $F=5.130$ ,  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.03$ , .04 variance). The cell means for the first interaction are reported in Table 2. Only two pairs of means differed significantly. High-involved males used significantly more argument assertions than low-involved males when playing the defendant role, while high-involved females used more argument assertions than low-involved females when playing the plaintiff role. The cell means for the second interaction are reported in Table 3. Follow-up t-tests revealed only two significant differences; high-involved subjects used significantly more argument assertions than low-involved subjects when playing the defendant role in same-level dyads and when playing the plaintiff role in mixed-level dyads ( $t=3.10$ ;  $df=38$ ;  $p<.004$ , two-tailed;  $t=2.24$ ,  $df=18$ ;  $p<.04$ , two-tailed; respectively).

**Table 2**  
**Cell Means and Standard Deviations For Argument Assertions:**  
**First Interaction**

Involvement Level	Male		Female	
	Plaintiff	Defendant	Plaintiff	Defendant
High	4.87 <sup>a</sup> (2.90)	5.40 (2.35)	6.00 (4.12)	3.73 (1.34)
Low	4.13 (2.67)	3.40 (1.64)	3.40 (1.88)	4.33 (4.06)

**Table 3**  
**Cell Means and Standard Deviations For Argument Assertions:**  
**Second Interaction**

Involvement Level	Same Dyad		Mixed Dyad	
	Plaintiff	Defendant	Plaintiff	Defendant
High	5.00 <sup>a</sup> (3.36)	4.85 (1.95)	6.30 (3.94)	4.00 (2.26)
Low	4.20 (1.99)	3.20 (1.36)	2.90 (2.73)	5.20 (4.87)

<sup>a</sup> Numbers in ( ) = standard deviations

**Refutations:** There were no significant main effects for this category, but there was one significant three-way interaction including interaction involvement level by dyad type by negotiation role ( $F=4.253$ ,  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.04$ ; .03 variance). The cell means are reported in Table 4. Follow-up t-tests revealed no significant differences in the means of same-level dyads,

Table 4  
Cell Means and Standard Deviations For Refutations

Involvement Level	Same Dyad		Mixed Dyad	
	Plaintiff	Defendant	Plaintiff	Defendant
High	6.30 <sup>a</sup> (5.24)	5.95 (4.65)	7.30 (4.00)	5.30 (3.80)
Low	8.20 (4.87)	7.25 (4.20)	3.20 (1.93)	10.30 (5.81)

<sup>a</sup>

Numbers in ( ) = standard deviations

but in mixed-level dyads high-involved subjects used significantly more refutations than low-involved subjects when playing the plaintiff role, but low-involved subjects used significantly more refutations than high-involved subjects when playing the defendant role ( $t=2.92$ ,  $df=12.98$ ,  $p<.01$ , two-tailed;  $t=2.28$ ,  $df=18$ ,  $p<.04$ , two-tailed, respectively).

Countersupport statements. There was one significant main effect for this category such that subjects playing the plaintiff role used fewer countersupport statements than subjects playing the defendant role ( $F=5.788$ ,  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.02$ , .05 variance). The cell means were 0.77 and 1.38, respectively. There was also a significant three-way interaction including interaction involvement level by sex by dyad type ( $F=3.837$ ,  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.05$ , .03 variance). Cell means are reported in Table 5. Follow-up t-tests revealed only one significant difference, in mixed-level dyads high-involved females used more countersupport statements than low-involved females ( $t=2.14$ ,  $df=18$ ,  $p<.05$ , two-tailed).

Table 5  
Cell Means and Standard Deviations  
For Countersupport Statements

Involvement Level	Same Dyads		Mixed Dyads	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
High	1.55	1.05	0.70	1.30
	(1.73)	(1.79)	(0.95)	(0.95)
Low	1.00	0.95	1.30	0.50
	(1.38)	(1.28)	(1.42)	(0.71)

<sup>a</sup>

Numbers in ( ) = standard deviations

Statements of blame: There were two significant main effects for this category. Subjects in same-level dyads used significantly less statements of blame than subjects in mixed-level dyads ( $F=4.357$ ,  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.04$ , .03 variance, means: 1.11 and 1.65, respectively), while subjects playing the plaintiff role used significantly fewer statements of blame than subjects playing the defendant role ( $F=4.201$ ,  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.04$ , .03 variance, means: 1.05 and 1.53 respectively).

There was one significant two-way interaction including interaction involvement level by sex ( $F=6.850$ ,  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.01$ , .05 variance). The cell means are reported in Table 6. Follow-up t-tests revealed a significant difference only for males such that high-involved males used fewer statements of blame than low-involved males ( $t=2.00$ ,  $df=38$ ,  $p<.05$ , two-tailed).

**Table 6**  
**Cell Means and Standard Deviations For Statement of Blame**

Involvement Level	Sex	
	Male	Female
High	0.37 <sup>a</sup> (1.11)	1.57 (1.50)
Low	1.57 (1.52)	1.17 (1.42)

<sup>a</sup> Numbers in ( ) = standard deviations

Restatements. There were no significant main effects for this category. However, there was one significant three-way interaction including interaction involvement level by dyad type by negotiation role ( $F=6.576$ ,  $df=1/83$ ;  $p<.01$ , .04 variance). Cell means are reported in Table 7. Follow-up

**Table 7**  
**Cell Means and Standard Deviations For Restatement**

Involvement Level	Same Dyad		Mixed Dyad	
	Plaintiff	Defendant	Plaintiff	Defendant
High	5.05 <sup>a</sup> (4.76)	3.40 (2.78)	7.50 (8.59)	2.90 (3.07)
Low	5.65 (6.19)	4.95 (4.66)	2.10 (1.73)	4.90 (5.13)

<sup>a</sup> Numbers in ( ) = standard deviations

t-tests revealed no significant difference among the means, altho in mixed-level dyads, high-involved subjects used nearly significantly more

restatements than low-involved subjects ( $t=1.95$ ,  $df=9.73$ ,  $p<.08$ , two-tailed ):

Remaining Categories. The following categories were used by 50% or more of the subjects, but resulted in no significant main effects or interactions: Disagreements, Agreements, Proposals, Questions, and Procedural Statements.

Of the strategy categories that revealed significant differences, assertions, argument assertions, and refutations appear most descriptive of the negotiation styles of high- and low-involved subjects. Overall, high-involved subjects used significantly more argument assertions than low-involved subjects, suggesting that highs attempted to advance arguments for their cause more so than lows.

The difference in negotiation styles of high- and low-involved subjects was especially illustrated by the results of how subjects played the more difficult plaintiff role. Overall, high-involved subjects made more assertions than low-involved subjects when playing the plaintiff, and they advanced more argument assertions and refutations when playing the plaintiff in mixed-level dyads. Similarly, highs used more restatements than lows overall in mixed-level dyads, suggesting that the highs were more persistent in their attempt to advance a position.

The results concerning a composite category variable perhaps best summarizes these trends. A ratio was created by dividing the sum of assertions plus argument assertions advanced by person one by the sum of disagreements plus refutations advanced by person two in each dyad; thus the higher the ratio, the more the subject was able to establish arguments without challenge from the dyad partner. The results of an ANOVA computed on

this ratio indicate a significant main effect for interaction involvement level, such that high-involved subjects performed better than low-involved subjects ( $F=5.861$ ;  $df=1/83$ ,  $p<.02$ , .05 variance, means: 4.03 and 2.30, respectively). These results indicate that high-involved subjects were more able to advance arguments to support their case than low-involved subjects.

With regard to the research question, the data suggest that high-involved subjects demonstrated a different and logically more effective negotiation style than low-involved subjects. The data indicate that the high-involved subjects used a more thoughtful, reasoned, and persuasive negotiating style than low involved subjects.

While there were not differences in all categories, the existing differences are significant. The categories in which there were differences are more representative of the behaviors which should be exhibited by the competent, successful negotiator than those categories in which there were no observed differences.

#### CONCLUSION

Results of the study suggest that there is a difference in negotiation style between high- and low-involved individuals. The high-involved subjects demonstrated a more reasoned, logical, over-all superior style to that of low-involved subjects. Wallace (1985; 1986) has reported, however, that high-involved subjects did not win the majority of settlements or win larger cash settlements than their low-involved counterparts. The high-involved negotiators used a superior argument strategy, but they were not able to "close the deal." The big question, of course, is "why?"

It could be that the nature of the experimental situation (i.e., contrived, role playing) caused interference. The situation might have

allowed subjects to behave in an uncharacteristic manner (i.e., lows achieving greater outcomes and highs lesser outcomes) achieving goals inconsistent with their persuasive abilities. It could also be that the low-involved subjects were just too insensitive to the situation to know that they had been beaten. The high-involved negotiators might have just "given in" to their stubborn partners even though they had won.

Another explanation concerns the nature of interaction involvement and communication competence. By definition, individuals high in involvement and competence are sensitive to the behavior of others as well as their own behavior. They are also concerned with the accomplishment of the others' interpersonal goals as well as their own. This all takes place in the context of what Goffman calls the "politeness structure," within which an individual strives to maintain his/her own and other's face. As such, it could be the heightened sensitivity of the high-involved person that prevents achievement of interpersonal goals at a level which otherwise might be expected.

In the case of the current study, the high-involved negotiator could be less likely to try to out-perform the opponent. A "win" for the high-involved subject necessarily means a "loss" and a loss of face for the opponent. Thus, it could be just those qualities that should make an individual a successful negotiator that prevent success. It could be that a curvilinear relationship exists between level of involvement and success as a persuader. The individual with superior reasoning ability and who has higher than average responsiveness and attentiveness, but who is not too sensitive to the interpersonal needs of the opponent, could well be the

superior negotiator. The next stage in this research will investigate this question.

Future studies might yield more accurate results if a more naturalistic communication task is used. While subjects seemed to take seriously the task used in this study, it was still a contrived situation and subjects knew they had little to lose in the case of failure. A more realistic situation with real potential gain and loss should provide more realistic data. The potential of more real loss and gain should also motivate the apparently more goal-oriented high-involved subject to try harder to achieve goals. The increased motivation should cause the subject to display a more competent persuasive strategy.

For almost 2000 years, research in persuasion has focused on the persuasive message and/or the effects of a persuasive message on an individual or audience. Contemporary persuasion research, however, has begun to examine more closely the role of the persuader. Accordingly, instead of looking at persuasive messages or their effects, this study has examined the relationship between a personality trait (i.e., Interaction Involvement) and the communicative behavior of a persuader. The results of the study indicate support for such a relationship. The data support the notion that Interaction Involvement, a form of communication competence, can manifest itself on an observable, behavioral level in the negotiation setting. The results of the study provide evidence for the argument supporting the validity of the current direction of research in persuasion. While Aristotle might be mildly surprised by this direction of research, he should at least be pleased.

NOTES

1 T's are adjusted for nonhomogeneity of variance.

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## APPENDIX A

### Allison vs. F & W Chemical Company

The F & W Chemical Company manufactures some very caustic chemicals for construction purposes. In order to clean out their manufacturing equipment, they use water which is then pumped out to a settling pond where it evaporates. The water in the settling pond is extremely caustic and will burn the flesh of a human. The company has erected a 12 foot cyclone fence around the pond and has posted warning signs.

Six year old Bobby Allison, while playing with some friends near the fence, scraped out an opening under the fence and accidentally fell into the pond. He suffered severe burns over 80% of his body, and while he has recovered from the burns, he is left with some very unsightly scars on his face and arms.

The Allisons have sued F & W Chemical Company for \$500,000 for medical expenses and the pain and suffering involved. Their attorney is arguing that by having such a dangerous pond the company accepts the liability for damage it inflicts on someone. Furthermore, the company was negligent in not providing a more foolproof fence. The company is arguing that they were not negligent in constructing the fence. Furthermore, since Bobby has completely recovered physically, the amount asked is excessive even if the company had been negligent. The judge has ordered the attorneys to settle out of court.

### Attorney for the Defendant

Your success in negotiating a settlement to this case is important in the figurative sense as your success as a lawyer and because it will determine how many points you win in the game. Remember, as attorney for the defendant, your objective is to argue for the LOWEST dollar figure. Below is a schedule of points in accordance with specific dollar settlements:

#### If you settle for:

\$400,100 and above, you will receive:	0 points
\$300,100 to \$400,000; you will receive	1 point
\$200,100 to \$300,000; you will receive	2 points
\$100,100 to \$200,000; you will receive	3 points
\$75,100 to \$100,000; you will receive	4 points
\$75,000 or below; you will receive	5 points
IF YOU FAIL TO SETTLE YOU WILL RECEIVE	0 points

Remember that your payoff schedule is not symmetrically reversed from your partner's. Do not be concerned with how many points your partner may receive from a given settlement. Just try to get as many points as you can. At no time should you reveal how many points you will obtain for a given settlement figure.

APPENDIX A (Continued)

Attorney for the Plaintiff

Your success in negotiating a settlement to this case is important in the figurative sense of your success as a lawyer and because it will determine how many points you win in the game. Remember, as attorney for the plaintiff, your objective is to argue for the HIGHEST dollar figure. Below is a schedule of points in accordance with specific dollar settlements:

If you settle for:

\$30,000 or below, you will receive:	0 points
\$80,100 to \$175,000, you will receive:	1 point
\$175,100 to \$300,000, you will receive:	2 points
\$300,100 to \$424,900, you will receive:	3 points
\$425,000 to \$450,000, you will receive:	4 points
\$450,000 or above, you will receive:	5 points
IF YOU FAIL TO SETTLE YOU WILL RECEIVE:	0 points

Remember that your payoff schedule is not symmetrically reversed from your partner's. Do not be concerned with how many points your partner may receive from a given settlement. At no time should you reveal how many points you will obtain for a given settlement figure.

## APPENDIX B

### FINAL CATEGORY SCHEME

Assertion: Statement of position without backing (reasoning or use of given facts; often implies that the speaker assumes it to be taken as a fact).

Example: Bobby lives right next to the pond.  
Bobby dug under the fence with a shovel.

Argument Assertion: Statement of position with backing or rationale based on the facts of the case and/or reasoning.

Example: Bobby was playing with friends.  
I learned in child development that six year olds can read, so Bobby knew what he was doing.

Agreement: Acceptance of opponent's position.

Example: I agree. That's correct.

Disagreement: Rejection of opponent's position with no reason or backing offered.

Example: No! You're wrong!

Refutation: Statement in direct response to opponent's position/utterance that has a rationale, explanation, or counterargument based on the facts of the case and/or reasoning.

Example: You couldn't be right about that because surgery costs \$50,000.

Statement of Blame: Statement asserting fault or blame; no rationale is offered.

Example: It's Bobby's parents' fault.  
It's your company's fault that this happened.

Proposal: Services or a dollar figure offered in an attempt to settle. Proposal is also coded if the subject raises the price after the initial offer.

Example: I'll settle this case right now for \$75,000.  
We'll fill in the pond and fix the fence.

Concession: A statement of compliance; giving in to the opponent (most often this will be a change in a dollar proposal in favor of the opponent).

Example: Ok, then I'll come down to \$400,000.

Commitment: Statement of position indicating firmness or a non-negotiable position.

Example: I'll give you \$50,000. No higher!

Question: Statement requesting clarification, information, or justification.

Example: How much was your offer?  
What is your definition of responsibility?

Procedural Statement: Statements that focus on task material (e.g., whose roles are what, what information the case contains, etc):

Example: OK, you are the defendant, right?  
We really need to reach an agreement here.

Warning: Statement implying punishment or aversive conditions that will occur from persons or agents other than the speaker if compliance does not occur.

Example: If this case goes back to court, you could lose quite a bit of money.

Threat: Statement indicating punishment or aversive actions that will be taken by the speaker if compliance does not occur.

Example: Give me \$500,000, or I'll go to the EPA.

Sarcasm: Statements that are cutting, sneering, or caustic (there is usually a negative implication about the opponent or about the opponent's position).

Example: That's the dumbest thing you've said yet!  
Your client is an idiot!

Argument of Empathy: Statement which attempts to persuade opponent to view another position.

Example: You know how it was when you were a kid.  
What if it was your kid?

Argument of Fair Play: Statement that opponent has been unjust

Example: You're not playing by the rules!

Countersupport Statement: Statements that volunteer information, facts, arguments, or interpretations which support the opponent's position.

Example: I agree with you; I think the fence was not constructed properly.

Restatement: A statement repeating the same points made earlier with no attempt to extend them with further argument.

Role Distance: Statements made out of task role; out of character.

Example: Are they watching us?  
I wish I had your part. I know I won't win.

Other: Statements not conforming to any other content category.