ALASKAN NATIVE SOCIAL INTEGRATION
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

THESIS

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

For the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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The variables communication skills, state anxiety, communication apprehension, and level of integration are studied in relation to the assimilation of Alaskan Natives into a western-culture university. Specifically, the differences in communication skills between the two cultures and their effects on course grades are addressed. Results of the statistical analyses (ANOVA, MANOVA, discriminant function analysis, multiple regression) were not significant, most likely due to the small Alaskan Native sample size. The most significant relationship appeared between situational communication apprehension and the ethnicity of the interaction partner. Other results were directional, indicating that variables may be related to assimilation of Native students into a western university environment. Further research and replication is warranted, using an adequate sample of Alaskan Natives.
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CHAPTER I

When questioned by an anthropologist on what the Indians called America before the white man came, an Indian said simply, "Ours." (Babbie, 1980, p. 283)

INTRODUCTION

Within the United States there are 1.4 million American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts, and more than 500 separate distinct Native American tribes or nations (Vander Zanden, 1983). Of that population, approximately 55,000 reside in the State of Alaska, in as many as 165 villages with populations of 25 to 2,500 (McBeath & Morehouse, 1980); they are Alaskan Natives.

"Anglo-Americans typically have a stereotyped image of how Native Americans look, ...behave, ...live, and even how they think" (Vander Zanden, 1983, p. 202). When one thinks of the word "Indian," images of nomadic hunters (Vander Zanden, 1983), tom-toms, war paint, and teepees come to mind.

The Indian is stereotypically a person who speaks in monosyllables ("ugh"), runs around almost totally naked
(except for a strategically placed loin cloth), and who can follow a trail over granite mountains. During the early settlement of the United States, this stereotypical image resulted in attempts to force the assimilation of the Native Americans into the predominant Western culture. "Some of the invaders sought to convert Indians to Christianity and to 'civilize' them according to European norms.... Still others sought to exterminate the Indian 'savages' or to isolate them from further contact" (Jackson, 1974, p. 120).

Alaskan Natives, both Indian and Eskimo, have been treated similarly.

From the first recorded contact with another culture, their way of life was deemed inferior and savage. Alaskan Natives were taught the Bible and the English language by the Russians for years before one priest took an interest in one of the Native languages and constructed a dictionary. The majority of Alaskan Natives being nomadic or subsistence hunters, their most important natural resources were their culture, children, and land (Mayo, 1987). The upheaval of both their culture and family threw the Natives into a confused existence forcing them to accept what was given them by the Westerners. Today, many Westerners blame the Native's own culture for their plight: high alcoholism, excessive poverty, and early school drop-out. But in actuality, "The inferior health status of Indians and Alaskan Natives results from their impoverished
socioeconomic status, limited education, poor and crowded housing, inadequate nutrition, lack of basic sanitary facilities, unsafe water supplies, gross unsanitary practices, and emotional problems inherent in a transitional culture" (Jackson, 1974, p. 125). Alaskan Natives have been forced into making the transition to a new and completely different culture within an extremely short period of time. Resulting complications include extreme generation gaps, deterioration of native culture, language, and history (as history is recorded orally in most native villages), as well as disregard for traditional values and beliefs. Vanstone (1974) provides valuable insight on these effects:

[Native Alaskans] have moved in less than fifty years from a way of life based on hunting and fishing to involvement in many of the most basic problems of twentieth century living. An old man who was born in a skin tent and may have paddled a freight canoe for the Hudson's Bay Company or piloted a steamboat transporting prospectors up the Yukon, today learns about the outside world as he listens to his radio [or watches his television]. When he becomes ill, a plane arrives at his village to take him to a modern, well-staffed hospital where he can expect to receive expert medical care.
His children, now men in their forties and fifties, were once expert trappers but have either greatly reduced their reliance on income derived from this uncertain activity or have given it up entirely.... At the very least, these middle-aged men are familiar with items of material [Western] culture completely unknown in their fathers' time.

Some of the old man's grandchildren have received elementary education in their community and they may have attended high school in urban centers like Yellowstone, Fort Smith, Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Sitka. The skills acquired at these institutions cannot be used in their native communities and thus they may not return except for periodic visits. At this generation level, the native language has almost completely disappeared in some areas. (p. 119)

The Alaskan Natives' situation was further complicated by the Federal Government's passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971. Alaskan Natives were given a great deal of land, in fulfillment of treaty obligations incurred informally during the purchase of Alaska in 1867. This settlement was prompted by the construction of the Alaskan Pipeline. To reiterate, the Natives, in a short period of time, not only had to integrate their traditional culture with the predominant Western culture, but also had to
begin working in a manner contrary to established beliefs and values in order to protect their land. Another unintended consequence of ANCSA concerns its push to make Alaskan Natives understand, and communicate more effectively with the Western culture; again, all in an incredibly short time.

A vital link in understanding a different culture is communication. One must be able to communicate effectively to be viewed as a functional member of any society. The most accessible and appropriate means for achieving this end is through a culture's school system; the educational system is the major agent for socializing children into the norms of American society (Jackson, 1974). In fact, many immigrant groups believe that education will allow them to "be assimilated into the American way of life" (Kitano, 1974, p. 152).

Beginning in the early 1970s, many Native children and adults enrolled in schools and universities to assist in their adjustment. Some Natives resisted assimilation, but participated in hopes of retaining their ancestral homes (Gaffney, 1976). It is those Native students who go beyond a high school education, particularly those who attend the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, that this study concerns.

**The Purpose of This Study**

There are currently two separate programs afforded Alaskan Native high school students during the summer at the
University of Alaska, Fairbanks. The Rural Alaska Honors Institute (RAHI), funded by the State of Alaska, is aimed at Native students from rural Alaskan villages. RAHI simulates a university environment, and emphasizes the acquisition of academic skills, or "how to learn at a university." The Upward-Bound program (UB) is federally funded, differing from RAHI only in that the variables stressed are social in nature. Academic information is provided, but importance is placed on "fitting in to the university social environment."

Salient literature indicates a reciprocal relationship between comfort in the new culture and experience in that culture. Social skills are also a necessary tool in adapting to the new culture. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to examine the social integration of the Alaskan Native students into the university environment, by investigating their levels of social skills, communication apprehension, number of relational ties with the target culture, and their academic achievement (grades).
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Historical Background

In 1492, approximately 900,000 Indians inhabited the land that was to become the continental United States (Vinson, 1976). At that time, the typical image of the Indian, or American aborigine, was that of a savage or barbarian (Colton, 1972), a caricature stemming from the dramatic difference in life-style between the American aborigine and the white Europeans.

European people were generally raised with this image of "savage" American aborigines. One man, in 1625, described Indians as "more brutish than the beasts they hunt, more wild and unmanly than that unmanned wild country, which they range rather than inhabit" (Richard Halkuyt, in Purchas's Pilgrims, 1625). When confronting an Indian face-to-face, the average European would treat the Native accordingly. From the first landing of Europeans on the coast of Massachusetts in the 1500s, the Natives were treated based upon this stereotype.
The Alaskan Natives were treated in a similar manner. First, the Russians took over the Alaskan land, followed by the United States after purchasing the land. The Natives were generally treated as animals; they came with the wild territory. According to the Treaty of Cession of Alaska (from Russia to the United States), the Natives were excluded from citizenship because they were considered "uncivilized native tribes," but were nevertheless subject to any laws and regulations that the United States might adopt (Gaffney, 1976). The natives accepted the new culture easily, albeit not completely voluntarily. Because of the cruelty the Russians had shown the Natives, many Natives were eager to oblige the desires of the Americans once Russian rule was relieved by the United States. However, many Natives also objected to United States ownership of Alaska since they had occupied the land long before the white man came. The growth of the white population in Alaska gradually increased, and by 1900 the Alaskan Natives were a minority (Gaffney, 1976) and had become immigrants in their own land.

With the acceptance of the laws and culture of the United States, complications arose, most noteworthy of which was the loss of much of the Native heritage. Alaskan Native history was handed down through the generations orally, and as English became the predominant language, the native tongue was increasingly ignored by succeeding Native
generations. They were being raised in a more modern and materialistic society that pushed traditional rituals into obsolescence. Why should a young girl learn the art of chewing animal hide to soften it for boots, when she could buy boots that were already made? Traditional spiritual beliefs were also challenged by the introduction of western religions. Resulting generation gaps between younger Natives and those whose beliefs were established before extensive contact with white man became larger and larger.

The process of social integration into the new western culture became a task that necessitated quick completion. Although not the intent, such was the effect of ANCSA of 1971. ANCSA was an attempt to protect and preserve the Native way of life, while simultaneously providing a power base of land for the Natives. Benefits under ANCSA (over 40 million acres of land and $962,500,000) were to be realized by the Natives through corporations. Similar to business corporations, these entities are involved in areas such as resource development, subsistence exploitation and preservation, social welfare, education, and economic development.

All Natives eligible for compensation through ANCSA had to become stockholders of these corporations; as stockholders they had to become an active participant in the workings of that corporation. Ideally, no one could just
sit back and watch; everyone had to learn the ways of the corporation in order to reap its benefits.

A twenty-year period of sole Native control over the land (between 1971-1991) was legislated to insure that Natives were given enough time to settle into the arrangement and still preserve their life-styles.

This time constraint forced the Natives to begin the process of social integration into the western culture immediately. To effectively run their corporations the Natives had to learn and use the western rules of interaction. As stated earlier, many Natives are enrolling in universities to further their education toward this end. Unfortunately, when beginning in the university system, many Natives have problems integrating into a classroom environment due to the significant differences existing between the two cultures.

Social Skills

One aid to learning involves finding some kind of anchor in a past experience to which the new knowledge or experience can be related. This is only possible if the two cultures are somewhat parallel. In this respect, there are significant differences between the western culture and the traditional Alaskan Native culture. To illustrate the degree of this difference, Table 1 presents a comparison of an Alaskan Native's (Athabaskan) perception of a "Westerner"
Table 1

Perceptual Differences Between Athabaskan and Western Cultures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s confusing to English speakers about Athabaskans</th>
<th>What’s confusing to Athabaskans about English speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The presentation of self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They do not speak.</td>
<td>They talk too much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They keep silent.</td>
<td>They always talk first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They avoid situations of talking.</td>
<td>They talk to strangers or people they don’t know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They only want to talk to close acquaintances.</td>
<td>They think they can predict the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They play down their own abilities.</td>
<td>They brag about themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They act as if they expect things to be given to them.</td>
<td>They don’t help people even when they can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They deny planning.</td>
<td>They always talk about what is going to happen later.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of talk

| They talk off the topic. | They always interrupt. |

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s confusing to English speakers about Athabaskans</th>
<th>What’s confusing to Athabaskans about English speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They avoid direct questions.</td>
<td>They ask too many questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They never start a conversation.</td>
<td>They only talk about what they are interested in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They never say anything about themselves.</td>
<td>They don’t give others a chance to talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are slow to take a turn in talking.</td>
<td>They just go on and on when they talk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The contents of talk**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>They are too indirect, too inexplicit.</th>
<th>They aren’t careful when they talk about people or things.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They don’t make sense.</td>
<td>They have to say ‘good-bye’ even when they can see that you are leaving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They just leave without saying anything.</td>
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</table>

(English speaker) to a Westerner's perception of an Athabaskan (Scollon & Scollon, 1980). This information indicates not only the lack of Alaskan Native social integration, but the added barrier of the basic non-conformity of the interaction style as well.

Verbal communication is not just language, but how people have learned to use the language, both verbally and nonverbally, (e.g. rate, turn-taking behavior, politeness, use of interruption, eye-gaze behavior, posture, and appearance), all of which is regulated within any particular culture by specific norms (Schneider, Hastorf, & Ellsworth, 1979). Before developing social relationships and really "fitting in" a person must perform these communication, or social, skills within the interpersonal boundaries of that culture's norms.

Social Support

Social support refers to verbal and nonverbal communication between recipients and providers that reduces uncertainty about the situation, the self, the other, or the relationship, and functions to enhance a perception of personal control in one's life experience. (Albrecht & Adelman, 1987, p.19)
A person learning a new culture undergoes a great deal of stress in adjusting to new and different stimuli. Such stressful life events make social support essential to both the mental and physical well-being of any individual. Albrecht and Adelman (1987) stated that "among the most noteworthy findings have been that supportive relationships can ...assist in the adaptation to change" (p. 19), primarily as stress reducers. Conversely, however, a lack of social support can result in deviant, even abusive behavior. Therefore, an adequate level of social skills is essential to cultural, and thus, social integration and adaptation to a new culture. But one's level of performance in social skills is correlated positively to one's amount of direct exposure to those social skills, given there is no handbook on verbal and nonverbal communication behavioral norms.

Because the two cultures under examination (Alaskan Native and Western) are so different, adapting to the new social skills, rules, and situations may prove very difficult; until some degree of assimilation has been achieved, the Native will not become "accepted" by many members of the other culture. Necessarily, the longer Natives have been in contact with western culture, the more socially skilled they will perceive themselves to be. If a native does not develop or perceive that he or she has
developed the appropriate social skills, feelings of uneasiness may ensue. In essence, the level of social supportiveness affects relational processes, and vice versa (Albrecht & Adelman, 1987).

Uneasiness in New Situations

Related to the concept of social support is uneasiness. A major cause of uneasiness in new situations concerns one’s level of uncertainty. This uncertainty is generally a result of the new situation’s ambiguity and complexity, coupled with a lack of information and subsequent unpredictability of that situation. Uneasiness is a major concern of Natives when they first enter a western cultural environment, as any new body of knowledge is ambiguous and complex until adequately processed. Berger and Calabrese (1975) have shown the existence of an inverse correlation between one’s level of uncertainty and: 1) amount of verbal communication, 2) intimacy level of communication content, and 3) levels of liking. Thus, when interaction in a new environment begins, there is less verbal communication, and lower levels of intimacy and liking. This information clearly suggests that there is a great deal of tension in new situations.

Accepting the above proposition, Kim (1987) added that developing and maintaining relationships at an increased pace of cultural change (as the Natives are presently
involved in) is even more difficult. By developing more relationships uncertainty is reduced for all involved, especially for the newcomer. Relationships are a channel for verification and uncertainty reduction. "Through the process of socialization, individuals acquire the collective entity called 'culture,' enabling them to respond [with less uncertainty] to various environmental messages" (Kim, 1987, p. 194). Consequently, a lack of communication and socialization may increase an individual's feelings of exclusion or inferiority.

Natives often exhibit such feelings of exclusion or inferiority as they begin the process of social integration. Kim (1987) stated that although one's first reaction when placed in a new situation is generally to gravitate toward others who are similar (i.e., exclusively to other Natives), such a person needs to have people from the dominant culture intertwined into his or her social support network. Adaptation occurs more "naturally" in this situation, regardless of the intentions of either participant. Merely by being around the host communicator, the immigrant will begin to pick-up similar attributes (Kim, 1987).

Relational Ties

As immigrants become more adept at communicating with the dominant culture, relationship formation becomes easier
and relational longevity necessarily increases. Hence, social integration becomes both easier and more rapid, thereby increasing the number of relational ties. Relationships between the host and immigrant become more important within the social network as social integration advances. "The relational ties that an immigrant has developed at a given time is one of the most frequently used indicators of his or her overall adaptation" (Kim, 1987, p. 202). Therefore, the more relational ties a Native has with people of the western culture, the better integrated into the western culture he or she likely is at a given time.

Communication Apprehension and Education

Another barrier to developing relational ties with ease is communication apprehension (CA), which is essentially anxiety concerning real or anticipated interaction in a communication situation. There are two types of CA: trait-like and situational. Trait-like CA is based within the personality, with effects that are relatively constant across a variety of situations. Situational CA, conversely, is only present in specific contexts (McCroskey, 1982). When CA interferes with daily life it can be at least dysfunctional, and at most debilitating. It can affect not only the afflicted person, but the perceptions of those around him or her as well. Those suffering from high communication apprehension will generally speak less often
and less appropriately than normal, and place themselves on the outskirts of the interaction area. A person entering a new culture will most likely have increased communication apprehension due to the situation's newness.

In an educational setting, teachers must communicate effectively with students to achieve learning. "It is through the process of communication that teachers translate the course content into a symbolic code which can be decoded and interpreted by students" (McCroskey & Andersen, 1976, p.73). Student achievement is also dependent upon asking questions for clarification of material, and determining the pace of the content presentation through feedback. Teachers are more likely to view those who are apprehensive as less intelligent, expecting them to do less well than other students (Hurt & Preiss, 1978). McCroskey and Andersen (1976) also found that the grades of those with communication apprehension were affected adversely in classes in which communication was a requisite for successful completion of the course. Further, they suggest that students with a positive attitude about school who exhibit less communicative apprehension, and who are liked by their classmates, receive higher grades than do students who do not get along. Another study (Cegala, Savage, Brunner, & Conrad, 1982) showed a negative correlation between responsiveness and communication apprehension in
interpersonal contexts; in other words, even on a one-to-one level, a person with communication apprehension may be seen as unresponsive, or simply slow. Therefore, Alaskan Native students who are new to the dominant culture will more likely receive lower grades than their more assertive classmates, due to the uncertainty of the new situation and differences in the cultures cited earlier.

Students with low apprehension are also chosen more often as opinion leaders, and thus are more frequently directed toward the central position of networks (Hurt & Joseph, 1975). Thus, examining the western perception of the Native behavior (refer to Table 1), Natives exhibiting communication apprehension in the classroom would more likely be seen as outsiders or loners, as less intelligent, and are more apt to be "left out" by other members of the class.

Hypotheses

In a land known as the "melting pot," people are continuously moving to America from other lands. Social integration into the dominant culture not only helps these immigrants to fit in, but helps them become working members of the western society. Understanding the social integration process is necessary in order to facilitate the growth and expansion America has come to expect, generally at the expense of the Native culture.
As discussed earlier, the purpose of this study is to examine the social integration of the Alaskan Native students into the university environment, examining their levels of social skills, communication apprehension, and academic achievement (i.e., grades). Appropriate hypotheses are as follows:

As discussed earlier, due to the uncertainty in the situation, the ethnicity of the interaction partner will have an affect on the level of situational CA.

Hypothesis 1: The situational CA of a student will be significantly affected by the ethnicity of the interaction partner.

Hypothesis 1a: The situational CA of Native students interacting with non-Native students will be significantly greater than the situational CA of Native students interacting with Native students.

Hypothesis 1b: The situational CA of non-Native students interacting with Native students will be significantly greater than the situational CA for non-Native students interacting with non-Native students.

In reviewing the role of social support in the development of social skills, the following suppositions are appropriate:
Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant interaction effect between students' ethnic background and size of home community, and level of social integration on a linear combination of social skills.

As a correlation has been found between responsiveness and communication apprehension on teacher's perceptions of students, the forthcoming assertions are logical:

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant interaction effect between students' ethnic background and size of home community, and final grades.

Kim's (1987) discussion concerning experience in the target culture increasing comfort and adaptation into that culture brought about the accompanying postulates:

Hypothesis 4: There will be a significant difference in level of social skills between Native students who participated in the training programs and those who did not.

Hypothesis 4a: Native students who took part in a training program will report a significantly higher score on a linear combination of social skills when compared with Native students who did not take part in a training program.

Hypothesis 4b: Native students who took part in RAHI will report a significantly higher score on a linear combination of social skills when compared with Native students who took part in UB.
Hypothesis 4c: In general, non-Native students will report a significantly higher score on a linear combination of social skills when compared with Native students.

Following the logic of H3 and H4:

Hypothesis 5: There will be a significant difference in final grades between Native students who participated in the training programs and those who did not.

Hypothesis 5a: Native students who took part in a training program will report significantly higher final grades when compared with Native students who did not take part in a training program.

Hypothesis 5b: Native students who took part in RAHI will report significantly higher final grades when compared with Native students who took part in UB.

Hypothesis 5c: In general, non-Native students will report significantly higher final grades when compared with Native students.

To examine all variables and final grades systematically, a research question will address the magnitude of the relationship between the variables and final grades.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The sample population of this study consisted of students attending courses offered by the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF), during May and June of the 1988 summer semester. Student ages ranged from 18 to 48; many undergraduate educational levels and major fields of study were represented. Ethnically, subjects were either Native or Caucasian; subjects indicating other ethnic backgrounds on the demographic questionnaire were excluded from the study to avoid introduction of confounding cultural variables. All respondents came from cities, towns, and villages of varying populations and ethnic make-up. The ratio of Native to non-Native students during the 1988 summer semester was approximately 1:17 according to the UAF Department of Institutional Research.

UAF is the largest of three land-grant institutions in the Alaska State University system, and has the greatest availability of student on-campus housing. It offers baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral degrees. Fairbanks is
the second largest city in Alaska, with a population of approximately 50,000. Therefore, UAF is a popular university choice for Alaskan residents.

**Instruments**

The survey package consisted of four self-report instruments and two consent forms. A demographic questionnaire was also included to determine each subject's: participation in RAHI or UB, ethnic background, age, gender, population of hometown, and whether the hometown was an Alaskan Native village.

Trait-like CA was measured using McCroskey's (1970) 20-item Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA). The PRCA has, in several studies, exhibited internal reliability meeting or exceeding .88 (Zakahi & Duran, 1985; Hurt & Gonzalez, 1988). The validity of the PRCA as a measure of communication apprehension is equally well supported (Beatty & Andriate, 1985; McCroskey & Beatty, 1984). For this study, the reliability of the PRCA was .93.

The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) developed by Speilberger (1966) was administered to measure subjects' stated situational CA when interacting with a target of either similar or dissimilar ethnicity. One-half of each ethnic group received a Native target; the other half a Caucasian (hereafter referred to as non-Native) target. The
STAI has demonstrated reliability between .82 and .93, as well as validity in previous research (Leherissey, O'Neil, Heinrich, & Hansen, 1973; O'Neil, Speilberger, & Hansen, 1969). For the present study, the reliability of the STAI was .96.

Spitzberg's (1985; Spitzberg & Hurt, 1987) Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS) trait form was applied to measure subjects' reported level of social skills across their general range of interactions. As with the STAI, one-half of each ethnic group received a Native target, the other half a non-Native target. The CSRS has shown reliability consistently ranging between .87 and .96 (Spitzberg & Hurt, 1987). The alpha score for this study was .97.

A simple measure (List of Relational Ties: LRT, to assess the level of social integration) was used to identify existing relational ties of each subject. Each subject was asked to list up to 20 people they would go to first for either a problem or a social visit. Subjects were then asked to indicate the ethnic background of each individual listed. This measure indicates the ratio of same-culture to target-culture ties for each subject.

The final course grades of subjects were examined as an indication of their achievement during the full term of the summer semester; a grade of A indicates a higher level of achievement than B, B more than C, and so on.
Procedures

As the ratio of Native to non-Native students was so skewed (1:17), classes were visually surveyed by the researcher for the presence of Native students. Courses with at least one Native student were selected for distribution of survey packages. Appropriate course instructors were then approached and briefed on the procedure and purpose of this study, to gain permission to use class time for data collection. Due to the completion time of the questionnaire packets (20 minutes minimum), only three instructors gave in-class time for survey completion. Remaining instructors gave in-class time for distribution of and collection of surveys, allowing the students to take the surveys and complete them at home.

Students in those courses in which approval for inclusion was granted completed the survey packets in their respective classrooms; under the guise of the researcher. Those students taking the surveys home were briefed by the researcher, and given the researcher’s phone number for questions. Each packet contained the PRCA, STAI, CSRS, LRT, demographic survey, grade release form, an informed consent form, and instructions to insure standardization. The researcher was available, either in person or via telephone, for questions from the subjects concerning procedures.
Each subject was randomly delegated either a Native or non-Native (Caucasian) target on the STAI and the CSRS. Therefore, four Subject X Target conditions resulted: 1) Native subject, Native target (NSNT); 2) Native subject, Caucasian target (NSCT); 3) Caucasian subject, Native target (CSNT); and 4) Caucasian subject, Caucasian target (CSCT). Instructions for the target directions on the STAI were stated as follows: "Please indicate how accurately each of these words or statements describe how you feel when interacting with a Native (White) person." Instructions for the target directions for the CSRS were stated as follows: "Rate yourself according to how skillfully you typically or normally use the following communicative behaviors in conversations with a Native (White) person."

Of the 208 surveys distributed, 78 were returned; a 37.50% response rate. The desired $n$ for each target condition ($n > 25$) was not achieved consistently. However, the desired $N$ was deemed unrealistic given the number of Natives who were enrolled in the summer session. In addition, the return rate was reduced greatly by the take-home distribution of a majority of the surveys. The $N$ achieved was as follows: $n=9$ NSNT, $n=8$ NSCT, $n=25$ CSNT, and $n=36$ CSCT. An interesting note is that the majority of surveys returned rated communication with a person of the same cultural background.
Statistical Analysis

The variables examined in this study were trait-like CA, situational CA, social skills, number of relational ties with persons of the target culture, and academic achievement (i.e., grades).

The five stated hypotheses were tested using various univariate and multivariate procedures, with alpha set at .05 for all tests of significance.

Hypothesis 1, that there will be a significant interaction effect on situational CA between actor/coactor ethnic background, was handled using a oneway analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedure (situational CA by subject-target ethnicity). The Scheff Posteriori Multiple Comparison t-Test was utilized to test the cell differences between the four subject situational categories.

Hypothesis 2, that there will be a significant interaction effect between student’s ethnic background and size of home community, and level of social integration with social skills, was analyzed using a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) of the variables.

Hypothesis 3, that there will be a significant interaction effect between students’ ethnic background and size of home community and final grades, was analyzed using an ANOVA. An ANOVA of final grade by subject race and home population was completed.
Hypothesis 4, that there will be a significant difference in level of social skills based upon a Native's involvement in a training program, was analyzed using a discriminant function analysis procedure of CSRS factors by subject race and subject training (participation in UB or RAHI).

Hypothesis 5, that there will be a significant difference in final grades based upon a Native's involvement in a training program was analyzed using an ANOVA procedure. An ANOVA of final grade by subject race and trained was run for hypothesis 5.

For the final research question, variables were examined using a multiple regression model. The independent variables were: Integration, subject by target condition, state anxiety, communication apprehension, and social skills. The dependent variables were course grade and overall grade point average.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Demographic Description of Respondents

Fifty-six percent of the respondents were between 20 and 29 years of age; 17% fell into the 30-34 category. Sixty-four percent of the subjects were female. Ethnically, 61 (78%) were Caucasian, while 17 (22%) were of Alaskan Native background.

The hometown population was divided into two categories: small (under 5,000), and large (5,000 or more). Thirty-two percent were from a small hometown, the remainder from a large one. Of the 78 respondents, 18% were from an Alaskan Native village or town.

Of the 17 Alaskan Native respondents, only four (5% of total) had attended either RAHI or UB. So, for the purposes of this study the two were combined, resulting in a new variable -- "trained" versus "untrained", with trained indicating participation in either RAHI or UB.

As a group, the majority (50%) received final grades of A, with another 26% receiving grades of B. The overall grade point average was also high, with 59% averaging a 3.01
or higher GPA. This resulted in a restriction of range in the variability of the academic outcome variable.

**Statistical Analysis of Hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1: The situational CA of a student will be significantly affected by the ethnicity of the interaction partner.

Hypothesis 1a: The situational CA of Native students interacting with non-Native students will be significantly greater than the situational CA of Native students interacting with Native students.

Hypothesis 1b: The situational CA of non-Native students interacting with Native students will be significantly greater than the situational CA for non-Native students interacting with non-Native students.

The analysis indicated a significant interaction effect between situational CA and the ethnicity of the interaction partner ($F = 3.83; df = 3,74; p < .02$). The Scheff procedure identified two pairs of groups as significantly different at the .05 level: the NSCT ($X = 56.500$) and the NSNT ($X = 35.667$); and the NSCT ($X = 56.500$) and the CSCT ($X = 41.028$). With significance at the .05 level, the hypothesis was supported.
Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant interaction effect between students' ethnic background and size of home community, and level of social integration on a linear combination of social skills.

For Hypothesis 2, the 2X2 factorial MANOVA procedure resulted in the following: $F = 1.313; \text{df} = 1,70; p = .274$. None of the results indicate a significant interaction effect, therefore the hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant interaction effect between students' ethnic background and size of home community, and final grades.

An ANOVA procedure produced a nonsignificant main effect ($F = 1.122, \text{df} = 2,71, p > .05$). At the .05 level the hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 4: There will be a significant difference in level of social skills between Native students who participated in the training programs and those who did not.

Hypothesis 4a: Native students who took part in a training program will report a significantly higher score on a linear combination of social skills when compared with Native students who did not take part in a training program.
Hypothesis 4b: In general, non-Native students will report a significantly higher score on a linear combination of social skills when compared with Native students.

The discriminant function analysis revealed that none of the variables met the minimum criteria for entry into the model when examining race and social skill levels. However, when examining the training variable, altercentrism ($F = 1.942$), interaction management ($F = 2.337$), expressiveness ($F = 2.215$), and composure ($F = 1.922$) all entered the model. The largest group mean differences were between the trained Natives and the non-Natives. The non-Natives indicated a higher level of social skills (a greater level of competence) than the Natives on a linear combination. Wilks’ Lambda indicates that 20% of the variance is explained. Nevertheless, the effects were not significant at the .05 level. The hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 5: There will be a significant difference in final grades between Native students who participated in the training programs and those who did not.

Hypothesis 5a: Native students who took part in a training program will report significantly higher final grades when compared with Native students who did not take part in a training program.
Hypothesis 5b: In general, non-Native students will report significantly higher final grades when compared with Native students.

Statistical analysis resulted in: (main effects) $F = 1.734; \text{df} = 2,71; p = .184$. The individual effects for race were: $F = 3.067; p = .084$. The individual effects for trained were: $F = 1.786; p = .186$. The effects were not significant at the .05 level, but are listed to indicate their possible directionality. The hypothesis was not supported.

To examine all variables and final grades systematically, a research question addressed the magnitude of the relationship between the variables and final grades.

The multiple regression procedure indicated that none of the variables were predictive of either final course grade or overall grade point average.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Conclusion and Observations

The purpose of this study was to examine the social integration of the Alaskan Native student into the university environment. This was accomplished through an examination of their levels of social skills, communication apprehension, number of relational ties with the target culture, and their academic achievement.

The only statistically significant finding of this study was an important one: The relationship between state anxiety and ethnicity of the interaction partner. This indicates that the circumstance of interacting with a person of the other culture has a tendency to create a situation of anxiety. This anxiety is dysfunctional to the communication process (see Chapter 2). As assimilation requires that communication take place between persons of different cultures, the importance of skills training as an aid to social integration is further defined.

Although the remaining hypotheses showed no effects, the significance of hypothesis 1 further substantiates the problem of the small sample size.
The analysis for hypothesis 4 curiously indicated that trained Natives were the least socially competent of the subjects. This could be due to the low number (4) of trained Native respondents; it is also possible that those four trained subjects were less mature or experienced than those Natives who were not trained.

Although hypothesis 5 was not supported, the subjects' average final course grade and overall GPA were higher than the median course grades present in a normal distribution. Thus, further study appears warranted.

Limitations

With an \( N = 78 \), this study takes the role of preliminary or exploratory research. Only 17 of those 78 were Alaskan Native subjects. Only four of those 17 had participated in RAHI or UB. In other words, this study did not have a normal distribution of subjects. The ethnicity was unbalanced, as was the amount of training. The grades received were skewed, as were the overall GPAs. Although the ratio of Native to non-Native respondents well exceeded that of the summer session enrollment, the \( N \) was not large enough to provide more concrete indications. In addition, given the take-home presentation of the survey, the sample is further limited to those students likely to do a take-home assignment that is not worth any extra credit. If the survey were administered during class-time, a more rounded sample, and a significantly higher response rate would have
resulted. Another consideration is that this research was performed during the summer, while many Alaskan Native students from smaller native villages are at home working for their families. Also, according to the University of Alaska, Department of Institutional Research, the fall and spring semesters have over twice the number of Alaskan Native students enrolled than in the summer. The larger the sample, the smaller the sampling error (Casley & Kumar, 1988), and the more significant the results.

It is important to note that the small number of Native subjects in the sample garnered for this study leads to a high probability of the existence of Type II error (Downie & Heath, 1983). Therefore, it is entirely possible that the significant effects noted here are in actuality not significant. Just as those effects noted as not significant may in actually be so. A significantly larger sample size in future replications would reduce the probability of Type II error.

An additional limitation of this study may have been the lack of content validity in instruments used concerning Native students' comprehension of the items. Content validity is necessary to insure that the instruments are actually measuring what they were designed to in people of a different cultural background. Further study in this area should take steps toward this end, such as validation of the surveys' content and pre-testing of the instruments.
Recommendations for Further Research

If a replication study were undertaken, with the following adjustments, this researcher believes that the stated hypotheses would be better supported: 1) an equal number of Native and non-Native respondents; 2) in-class time to complete the instruments; and 3) administration during either the fall or spring semesters. The administration of this survey during a short semester was a greater imposition on limited class time. Instructors would most likely be more accepting toward in-class surveys (with their usual amount of class time) during the long semester.

This researcher has two other suggestions for further research in this area. First, most subjects rated themselves fairly high on the CSRS ($X = 110.79$ out of 140). This is not unusual according to various researchers. In order to facilitate a more rounded view of each subject’s communication skills, a rating of that subject’s skills by another subject or the researcher would be beneficial. In the following instance, an example of a more accurate scoring would occur; an Alaskan Native who has "come a long way" in assimilating the Western mannerisms might rate themselves higher in comparison to how they used to be. This same subject may be rated lower by someone of the Western culture because of how far that subject has yet to go in assimilation, unaware of the progress already made. Second, a more accurate instrument to measure the level of
integration is needed. Although the basic instrument used in this study (LRT) is adequate, one that is more accurate might produce stronger relationships in the data analysis.

Finally, it is imperative that the preceding sampling suggestions be implemented in a follow-up study. A sufficient sample size and appropriate balance of ethnic backgrounds, as well as experience and age differences, is essential to accurately determine the relationships of the variables under consideration.

Because of the encouraging directions of this study’s results, even with the skewed sample, this researcher is planning a replication study. The above recommendations will be used in the follow-up study during a long semester.
APPENDIX

Informed Consent Form
Grade Release Form
Personal Inventory Survey
CSRS
PRCA
STAI
LRT
INSTRUCTIONS

Attached you will find 5 surveys, a consent form, and a grade release form. The 5 surveys deal with your communication interaction. Please answer them according to the instructions as best you can. In rating your conversational skills and feelings, just think of a general or typical situation. If you have a question about one of the questions, try and answer it as best you can. If the problem is a difficult one, one that must be answered before you can complete the survey, then call me (Mahla Strohmaier) at ###-####. The consent forms are: 1) that you understand what these survey answers will be used for, and 2) so that I can see your final grade in this class.

On each of the forms you will notice numbers in parentheses () next to each question. Just ignore these, they are for computer input of the information.

When instructed to do so, please be sure to circle the number next to the appropriate answer.

Your participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you.
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

This research is designed to study the communication behaviors of people interacting with persons of different cultural backgrounds. You are being asked to rate your own communication behaviors, and describe how you feel in certain communication situations.

Several different aspects of communication are addressed. Please answer all of the questions thinking of that particular situation in general. There are no right or wrong answers. Your answers will remain confidential.

Thank you for your participation.

________________________________________
Printed Name

________________________________________
Signature

________________________________________
Social Security #

________________________________________
Date of Birth

________________________________________
Date
FINAL GRADE RELEASE FORM

I, __________________________, give my permission for
(printed name)

Mahla Strohmaier (SS# ###-##-####) to have access to my

final grade in __________________ taken during the UAF summer
(course #)

session, 1988, as well as my overall GPA, with the
understanding that this information will remain
confidential.

__________________________________________
Signature

__________________________________________
Social Security #

__________________________________________
Date of Birth

__________________________________________
Date
PERSONAL INVENTORY SURVEY

In answering the following questions, please circle the number to the left of the answer that best applies to or describes you.

Social Security #: __________-________-________
Course #: __________________________
Section #: __________________________

Age (in years): __________

Sex: 1 Male 2 Female

What is your ethnic background?
1 AK Native 2 Caucasian
3 Asian 4 Black
5 Hispanic 6 Other

What is the approximate population of the city, village, or town that you call home?
1 less than 100
2 100-499
3 500-999
4 1000-4999
5 5000 or more

Is your home community an Alaskan Native town or village?
1 yes 2 no

What was the population of the city, village, or town where you attended high school?
1 less than 100
2 100-499
3 500-999
4 1000-4999
5 5000 or more

Semester in college: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9+
PERSONAL INVENTORY SURVEY  page 2

Do you live: 1 On-Campus    2 Off-Campus

How long have you been in Fairbanks?
   1 less than 1 year
   2 1-2 years
   3 2-3 years
   4 3-4 years
   5 4 or more years

Do you have any family with you in Fairbanks?
   1 yes    2 no

Did you attend the Rural Alaska Honors Institute (RAHI)?
   1 yes    2 no
   If yes, when?
   1 1987
   2 1986
   3 1985
   4 before 1985

Did you attend the Upward-Bound program?
   1 yes    2 no
   If yes, when?
   1 1987
   2 1986
   3 1985
   4 before 1985

How often do you interact (talk with) Native (White) persons?
several times: 7  6  5  4  3  2  1: only a few times a day

How comfortable do you feel when interacting with a Native (White)?
very comfortable: 7  6  5  4  3  2  1: not comfortable at all
CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS RATING FORM: (TRAIT FORM)

Rate yourself according to how skillfully you TYPICALLY or NORMALLY use the following communicative behaviors in conversations with a Native (White) person, where:

1 = INADEQUATE (use is awkward, disruptive, or results in a negative impression of communicative skills)
2 = FAIR (occasionally awkward or disruptive, occasionally adequate)
3 = ADEQUATE (use is sufficient but neither very noticeable nor excellent. Produces neither positive nor negative impression)
4 = GOOD (use was better than adequate but not outstanding)
5 = EXCELLENT (use is smooth, controlled, and results in positive impression of communicative skills)

Circle the single most accurate response for each behavior:

1. Speaking rate (neither too slow nor too fast)
2. Speaking fluency (avoid pauses, silences, "uh", etc.)
3. Vocal confidence (neither tense nor nervous sounding)
4. Articulation (language is clearly pronounced & understood)
5. Vocal variety (avoid monotone voice)
6. Volume (neither too loud nor too soft)
7. Posture (neither too closed/formal not too open/informal)
8. Lean toward partners (neither too far forward nor back)
9. Shaking or nervous twitches (aren't noticeable)
10. Unmotivated movements (avoided tapping feet/fingers, etc.)
11. Facial expressiveness (neither blank nor exaggerated)
12. Nodding of head in response to partners’ statements
13. Use of gestures to emphasize what is being said
14. Use of humor and/or stories
15. Smiling and/or laughing
16. Use of eye contact
17. Asking of questions
18. Speaking about partners (involve partner as a topic)
19. Speaking about self (neither too much nor too little)
20. Encouragements or agreements (encourage partner to talk)
21. Expression of personal opinions (not too passive/aggressive)
22. Initiation of new topics
23. Maintenance of topics and follow-up comments
24. Interruption of partners’ speaking turns
25. Use of time relative to partners

For the next five items, rate your overall general conversational performance:

INCOMPETENT MANAGEMENT: 1 2 3 4 5
INEXPRESSIVE: 1 2 3 4 5
INATTENTIVE: 1 2 3 4 5
ANXIOUS: 1 2 3 4 5
CONVERSATIONALLY UNSKILLED: 1 2 3 4 5

CONVERSATIONALLY SKILLED: 1 2 3 4 5
DIRECTIONS: This instrument is composed of 20 statements concerning your feelings about communicating with other people. Please indicate how accurately each of these words or statements describe how you feel when communicating with someone by writing a number indicating whether you (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Are Undecided, (4) Disagree, or (5) Strongly Disagree with each statement. Many of the statements are similar to other statements. Don't be concerned about this. Work quickly, answer every item, and just record your first impression. Thank you.

While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance I feel very nervous.

I seek out the opportunity to converse with other people.

When I talk with a member of the opposite sex who is near my own age, I feel quite nervous.

I have no fear of facing an audience.

I look forward to expressing my opinion at meetings.

I look forward to an opportunity to speak in public.

I enjoy meeting and talking with new people.

I am tense and nervous while participating in group discussions.

Although I talk fluently with friends I am at a loss for words on the platform.

My hands tremble when I try to handle objects on the platform.

I prefer not to talk with people unless I know them well.

I always avoid speaking in public if possible.
(1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Are Undecided, (4) Disagree, or (5) Strongly Disagree

____ I feel that I am more fluent when talking to people than most other people are.

____ I am fearful and tense all the while I am speaking before a group of people.

____ My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I speak before an audience.

____ Although I am nervous just before getting up, I soon forget my fears and enjoy the experience.

____ Conversing with people who hold positions of authority causes me to be fearful and tense.

____ I feel relaxed and comfortable while speaking.

____ I face the prospect of making a speech with complete confidence.

____ I would enjoy presenting a speech on a local television show.
DIRECTIONS: A number of statements people have used to describe their feelings while interacting with a person of a different ethnic background are given below. Please indicate how accurately each of these words or statements describe how you feel when interacting with a Native (White) person: whether you (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Are Undecided; (4) Disagree; or (5) Strongly Disagree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers. Work quickly, answer every item, and just record your first impression.

____  I would feel secure.
____  I would feel calm.
____  I would feel tense.
____  I would feel regretful.
____  I would feel at ease.
____  I would feel upset.
____  I would worry over possible misfortunes.
____  I would feel rested.
____  I would feel anxious.
____  I would feel comfortable.
____  I would feel self-confident.
____  I would feel nervous.
____  I would be jittery.
____  I would feel "high-strung."
____  I would be relaxed.
____  I would feel content.
____  I would be worried.
____  I would feel overexcited and "rattled."
____  I would feel joyful.
____  I would feel pleasant.
Below you will find 20 blank lines. On those lines, please list the 20 (or so) people that you would likely go to for either 1) a problem in school, or 2) a social visit (i.e., lunch, or just to talk). You only need to write their first name or initials. Then indicate if they are of Native heritage or not. Finally, in the space provided at the bottom write the number of people you listed. Thanks again!

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<th>I would see this person mainly for 1 or 2: (circle one)</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Native White Other (circle one)</th>
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_____ Number of people listed
BIBLIOGRAPHY


