Relative Influences of Personal Psychological Factors on Conversational Interpretation and Behavior
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RESEARCH TOPIC

PURPOSE AND HYPOTHESIS

The experiment will involve the utilization of multiple tests measuring motivation and influence as well as questionnaires concerning subjective evaluation to score conversationalists’ interpretations of shared discussions and of one another, hopefully resulting in data that reasonably magnify the roots of human interaction and conversational tendencies. I hypothesize that self esteem and emotional intelligence will be the most important factors influencing another conversational partner’s perception of the discussion and of the first’s friendliness and interestingsness, as high levels of both will mask more superficial influences, or their presence will preclude high levels of traits interfering with mutually perceived positive conversation.

CONCEPTUAL UNIVERSALS IN INTERPERSONAL LANGUAGE

White (1980) compares the findings of several prior analyses including his own. Those researching Eastern languages compiled the word corpuses comprising their models by recording conversations in order to reflect actual language patterns while White analyzes them in relation to the English research involving overtly semantic methods that measure individuals’ evaluations of similar corpora’s connotations in terms of good versus bad, strong versus weak, and active versus passive. Seeking real-world applicability, White also compares the stable trait focused models to behavioral attribution models and finds a strong positive correlation. Lastly, White explores ostensibly contradictory findings that context and demographics alter conceptions of qualities but proponents a core consistency between them and his universality conclusion. Covert Communication in Laboratories, Classrooms, and the Truly Real World

Rosenthal (2003) was engaged in doctoral research when he first conceived that his unintentional behavior as an experimenter could possibly be influencing participant outcomes. Because of this, he devised a meta-experiment in which he “randomly assigned different expectations for research results to different experimenters,” providing each with “the same instructions to read to their…participants,” and finding noteworthy differences in outcomes among groups (Rosenthal, 2003). The results held consistency with human-animal and teacher-student groups, and Rosenthal created the E-O-link, diagramming the possible connection-mediation between experimental expectation and participant outcome, although most preceding research had not independently manipulated mediation. This realization led Rosenthal to estimate from existing literature four factors—warmth, input, output, and feedback connecting mediation to outcome, also emerging supported. With this precedent, Rosenthal applied statistical analysis to further implicate the factors in classroom and health care settings. But if no connection exists between covert communication and outcomes, the mediation-outcome link may be extraneous, thus, Rosenthal measured tone of voice in doctors versus occurrence of malpractice lawsuits, identifying a correlation to provide support for his causal conclusions. Further, instead of waiting for others to prove or disprove him, he extended the theme through several other fields via 38 additional studies, though he notes that further research developing mediation must be conducted to prove a causal link. Finally, he cautions against assuming pragmatic value of his findings before researchers specifically study the effectiveness of teaching professionals to conform to warmth and encouragement standards.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: WHY IT CAN MATTER MORE THAN IQ

Initially the Intelligence Quotient, the division of a score yielded on the eponymous test by one’s age, was accepted as a reasonable reflection of aptitude and intelligence proponents of eugenic theory even used the racial disparities in scores to justify white supremacy theses. But contentious studies emerged, criticizing the test for language and racial bias, overestimating ability to predict professional, or a narrow standard for intelligence. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) theories today frequently avoid identical criticisms, but in its infancy the concept relied on the support of questionable methods, and its validity still under consideration. To some degree, it relies on commonly debated precedents, primarily “Big Five personality traits,” and “tests that measure verbal ability.” Related “self-report scales” are commonly shunned because of their dependence on the knowledgeable and truthful reports of test-takers. More accepted is its usefulness when considered “a set of skills,” with “ability-based tests” masking the clearly desirable answers from self-conscious or confirming participants. “The Mayr-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT)” distinctly yields IQ scores based on the “four-branched model,” with high scores being based on social acceptability as determined by the community of chosen answers in addition to the analysis of “emotion researchers” (Harrisson & Murray, 1994). The theory’s strongest evidence is the significant overlap between IQ scores with relationship success and overall satisfaction (Goleman, 2006), though the possibility remains that those with the analytic or linguistic skills to decipher the score implications of answers are also able to fool success measures.

METHODS

Pre Procedure
• University volunteers for low-risk interpersonal communication research
• Pre-experiment tests measuring personality traits, racist, sexist, ageist or homophobic attitudes, family history, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, communicative style, rational thinking tendencies, other factors
• Representative sampling
• Subjective mood ratings related to personal or daily circumstances

Post Procedure
• Subjective ratings of conversational anxiety or defensiveness about having left a potentially negative impression versus opposite of both
• Asked to consider each, as well as fear of being judged for one’s own answers, before
• Partner ratings on genuineness, pleasantness, interestingness, humor, similarity
• Speculations about partners’ impressions
• Private, general-to-specific interviews assessing the genuineness of each participant’s assessments
• Participants’ test results regarding self-esteem and the other factors compared to their average rating behaviors to explain differences in accuracy of predicting partners’ impressions of the conversations

REFERENCES

• Schramm’s Model of Communication, 1954

SCHRAMM’S MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

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