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HOW DOES CULTURE INFLUENCE CONFLICT RESOLUTION? A DYNAMIC CONSTRUCTIVIST ANALYSIS

Michael W. Morris and Ho-Ying Fu
Stanford University

Psychologists have taken several approaches to modeling how culture influences the ways individuals negotiate interpersonal conflict. Most common has been the approach of searching for cultural traits-general, stable value-orientations that predict a variety of culturally typical conflict resolution behaviors. Increasingly researchers have adopted a constructivist approach of locating the nexus of cultural influence in the knowledge structures that guide negotiators' judgments and decisions. In this paper, we advocate extending the constructivist approach by incorporating principles from social cognition research on knowledge activation. We develop dynamic constructivist hypotheses about how the influence of culture on negotiation is moderated by the stimulus or task that the conflict presents, the social context in which the negotiator is embedded, and the negotiator/perceiver's epistemic state.

The ways cultures differ in conflict resolution has been of longstanding interest not only to psychologists and anthropologists but also to scholars in the applied fields of international diplomacy and business (for reviews of these different literatures, see Cohen, 1991; Gelfand & Dyer, 2000; Wolfe & Yang, 1996). Contrasts between many different cultural traditions have been drawn and many aspects of the ways individuals negotiate conflict have been compared. In this paper, we focus on one of the most frequently noted cultural differences-the tendency for negotiations in Anglo-American cultural settings to involve more overt competition in comparison to those in Confucian East Asian settings, which

Michael W. Morris is currently a Professor at the Graduate School of Business and (by courtesy) Psychology Department, Columbia University; Ho-Ying Fu is a post-doctoral researcher at the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University.

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instead involve more harmonious, compromising behaviors. Although many accounts by ethnographers and applied researchers have been primarily descriptive in their aims (Doo, 1973; Goh, 1996; March, 1988), psychological researchers have proposed explanatory models of how culture influences negotiators. In this paper we consider several approaches to modelling the influence of culture and we propose a new approach, which extends the previous ones.

Let us begin with a brief overview. After laying out a few initial conceptual distinctions, we describe the dominant paradigm in cross-cultural psychology, which we call the *trait approach*. This involves explaining cultural differences as arising from the stable, general characteristics of negotiators, such as the degree to which their value-orientations are individualistic as opposed collectivistic (e.g., Chan, 1992; Triandis et al., 1986). Next, we consider an alternative, the *constructivist approach*, which draws its inspiration, concepts, and methods from cognitive psychology rather than personality psychology. Constructivists explain cultural differences as arising from the knowledge structures that guide negotiators as they make sense of their conflicts and counterparts and make tactical decisions (Gelfand & McCusker, 1999; Leung, 1987; Morris, Leung, & Sethi, 1995). While noting certain advantages of the constructivist approach in capturing the complexity of cultural influences, we also note ways in which it falls short. We suggest that this research program has not taken its commitment to a cognitive analysis far enough, and in particular it would benefit from incorporating the rich insights about the dynamics of knowledge structures accrued in social cognition research (Higgins, 1996). In the second half of the paper, we delineate a *dynamic constructivist* model and demonstrate its advantages in integrating findings recalcitrant to previous explanations and illuminating topics not easily amenable to research under the assumptions of previous models.

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

In anthropological debates over how to best analyze on the nebulous and mercurial phenomenon of culture, several axes of disagreement are perennial. We see these as highly relevant to the evaluation of psychological research on culture. A first dimension of debate is whether to emphasize the public or private aspect of culture. Conceptions of culture as a public entity can be traced (at least) as far as to Durkheim's notion of "collective representations" which exist as "realities external to the individual" (Durkheim, 1951, pp. 37-38). The location of culture outside of the heads of individuals has been stressed in more recent movements, such as the semiotic analysis that culture exists in the network of symbols individuals use to communicate (Geertz, 1976) and the materialist analysis that it exists in economic and ecological conditions (Harris, 1979). By contrast, conceptions of culture as private or subjective knowl-

edge are prominently exemplified by Levi-Strauss's (1966) account of encultured thinking as "bricolage" based on elemental frames or constructs, and by ethnoscience studies on the cognitive structures organizing cultural beliefs about domains such as kinship or disease (for a review, see D'Andrade, 1995).

A second divide concerns whether to take the insider perspective of ethnographers who strive to understand a particular culture from "the native's point of view," or the outside onlooker perspective of researchers who strive to compare various cultural groups in terms of some objective standard. Pike (1967) designated these approaches the emic and etic perspectives, respectively, by analogy to phonemic and phonetic approaches to language. The question is whether cultures are described in terms of constructs near to the experience of insiders-constructs that may be specific to the culture and not useful for describing other cultures-or in terms of constructs that are distant from the experience of insiders-constructs which may apply equally well to many or all cultures (Headland, Pike, & Harris, 1990).[1]

While some theorists have simply opted for eclectism, suggesting that culture both surrounds and infuses individuals, most have taken sides with regard to these dilemmas. The problem is that there have been few principled ways of integrating insights concerning public and private aspects of culture, or of simultaneously working with emic and etic constructs. As we shall see, psychological research on culture taking the trait approach commits itself to an emphasis on private culture and to etic constructs. The constructivist approach has a similar emphasis on private rather than public cultural forms, yet its strength is that it gracefully incorporates both etic and emic constructs. The dynamic constructivist approach that we advocate retains this capacity to incorporate etic and emic constructs and, moreover, it goes beyond previous models in integrating public and private components of culture.

APPROACHES TO MODELLING CULTURE AND NEGOTIATION

TRAIT APPROACH: CULTURAL DIFFERENCES REFLECT VALUE-ORIENTATIONS

A long tradition of anthropological and psychological efforts to model culture has drawn on the concepts of personality psychology. There is an

1. Some scholars have used the terms *emic* and *etic* in ways that depart from Pike's definitions (see Headland, Pike, & Harris, 1990). A narrower usage refers to the contrast between culture-specific vs. culture-general constructs. This misses the essence of the distinction in that culture-specific constructs do not necessarily resonate with cultural insiders' self-understandings. Nor do Emic constructs have to be specific to a culture. The key is that they are experience-near rather than experience-distant.

unflagging intuitive appeal to the notion that the diverse set of behavioral differences across cultures can be traced to a few cultural traits-general, stable characteristics inculcated during socialization. An early model of cultural traits was the notion of "national character" (e.g., Mead, 1935). Psychoanalytically inspired tracts about Japanese national character, for instance, were sponsored by the U.S. government for inclusion in World War II era guides for diplomats and generals (see Druckman, Benton, Ali, & Bagur, 1976). The psychoanalytic view of personality traits has receded in light of more anthropological approaches to conflict, yet conflict resolution tendencies are still explained in terms of internal, stable characteristics having context-general consequences. An example is the thesis that non-Western cultures instill a harmony orientation (Nader, 1969).

Within psychology, the most influential model of cultural traits has been Hofstede's (1980) dimensional analysis of the values distinguishing national cultures. Chief among these is the dimension of individualism-collectivism, on which American and Chinese cultures are polar opposites. Triandis and colleagues (1986) developed a survey instrument to measure individual differences on this dimension. Scores on this instrument have been empirically associated with the American versus Chinese cultural differences in negotiation behaviors such as distributing rewards (Leung & Bond, 1984) and making concessions (Chan, 1992). This instrument has been used by Graham and colleagues in numerous studies attempting to account for differences in bargaining patterns between North American and East Asian samples, sometimes successfully (Adler, Brahm, & Graham, 1992; Graham, Mintu, & Rodgers, 1994) and sometimes not (Graham, 1983). Although unrivaled in its influence, the individualism-collectivism construct has come under increasing critique on conceptual (Ho & Chiu, 1994) and empirical grounds (Takano & Osaka, 1999).

A different model of cultural values has been identified by Schwartz (1992) through more psychometrically exacting procedures, resulting in somewhat more specific value dimensions having sounder construct validity. In comparative research with this value survey instrument, Americans are distinguished from other cultures by high levels on the autonomy factor, while the Chinese are distinguished on the social conservatism factor. Country differences in self-reported conflict styles can be explained by differences in these value factors; specifically, American managers' more competitive style was a function of their higher autonomy values; Chinese managers' more avoidant style was a function of their higher social conservatism values (Morris, Williams, Leung, Larrick, Mendoza, Bhatnager, Li, Konds, Luo, & Hu, 1998).

Evaluating the Trait Approach . Models of cultural differences in negotiation as a reflection of traits are a considerable advance over purely de-

scriptive treatments of cultural differences. There is tremendous parsimony and heuristic value promised in the possibility that myriad differences in negotiator behavior can be explained in terms of a few dimensions of values-values that also could be linked to cultural differences in other behavioral domains. Moreover, within the trait research tradition, one can see a progressive refinement toward more specific constructs having greater construct validity. But the evidence for a causal role of traits in producing cultural differences in conflict behavior is weak, and there are some inherent conceptual limitations to the model.

A key failing is the inability of trait models to capture when culture has a strong influence and when it has a weak influence on a given individual. The evidence of everyday life reveals that sometimes individuals act in culturally typical manners and sometimes not, yet a trait model, much like a stereotype, implies a pervasive, continual influence of culture. A problem with cultural trait models may be their overemphasis on private rather than public aspects of culture, just as personality trait models suffered from overemphasis on internal forces and blindness to roles of situational factors. Sociologically minded scholars have critiqued trait explanations for cultural differences in conflict resolution behavior, offering alternative explanations in terms of social structure that capture the context-specificity of cultural patterns.2 Another problem inherent with the trait model approach of individual difference scales is its need to focus on etic constructs, such as abstract value dimensions, which can be measured with equivalent operations in the two cultures. This method bars the inclusion of the most unique aspects of the psychology of conflict in specific cultures, which can

2. An example of this kind of cultural influence can be seen in the work of Hamilton and Sanders (1988) on differences in retributive justice judgments among Americans and Japanese. They found that Japanese apply relationship restorative sanctions (the perpetrator offers reparations and an apology to the victim) widely in response to workplace incidents whereas Americans apply these sanctions almost exclusively within the family. This difference seemed to arise, however, not from different styles of thinking about which sanctions are appropriate in which kinds of relationships, but from the fact that Japanese are more likely to find themselves in cohesive family-like relationships at the workplace. Similarly, Yamagishi, Cook, and Watabe (1998) challenge the notion that cooperative traits lead Japanese to be more trusting than Americans and instead argue that the difference is caused by an external, public aspect of Japanese society—its system for sanctioning defectors from groups. Consistent with this, they find Japanese, compared with Americans, are more trusting toward an ingroup member but less trusting toward a stranger. In sum, cultures differ in structures or relationships and also in individuals' subjective beliefs about how to respond to these structures (Morris, Podolny, & Ariel, 1998).

only be captured in emic terms.3 In sum, failings of the trait approach can be understood as arising from both its concepts and methods.

CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH: CULTURAL DIFFERENCES REFLECT KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURES

A constructivist approach to cultural differences is inherently less parsimonious than a trait approach because cultural differences are not traced to a single source; the mechanism adduced to explain culturally distinct conflict resolution behaviors is a disjoint list of knowledge structures—implicit theories, mental models, scripts, and so forth—rather than a monolithic, integrated trait or value-orientation. These knowledge structures guide judgments and decisions and, ultimately, direct actions. Constructivism has a long precedent in cognitive anthropology (Levi-Strauss, 1966) and social psychology (Bruner, 1956; Heider, 1958). An ever-increasing theme in basic research on implicit theories, scripts, and other crucial knowledge structures is their domain-specificity (Schank & Abelson, 1977; Hirshfeld & Gelman, 1994), yet a psychologically informed constructivist approach to cultural knowledge has emerged only recently as anthopologists have drawn on cognitive psychology (D'Andrade, 1995; Shore, 1996; Sperber, 1996) and psychologists have turned to culture (Bruner, 1990).

Within the domain of negotiation, the constructivist approach focuses on two pivotal judgments: judging the type of conflict and judging the character of one's counterpart. A negotiation begins when parties judge the event as a conflict amenable to some sort of jointly pursued resolution and apply some event concept or script to plan their actions (Bazerman & Carroll, 1987). Yet even basic event concepts are culturally bound (Morris & Murphy, 1990). One constructivist approach is the ethnographic study of consequential distinctions between types of conflict events (Goldman, 1994; Shore, 1996). Another approach examines consequences of metaphors such as the ones Americans draw to individual sports (leading to competition) and Japanese draw to family relations (leading to compromise). Another approach employs factor analysis to uncover the implicit dimensions used to categorize everyday conflicts (Gelfand et al., 1998). Other researchers have used etic constructs to capture the role of knowledge structures, such as cognitive frames that a given event is ripe for power, rights, or interests-based bargaining tactics (see Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994). Several studies with

3. Methodological treatises in this literature have accorded emic constructs a role in early theory development process but not in the final model (Berry, 1990; Lytle, Brett, Barness, Tinsley, & Janssens, 1995; c f Morris, Leung, Ames, & Lickel, 1999).

simulated business negotiations have found that Americans are more inclined to apply interest frames and Japanese, power frames (Brett and Okamura, 1998; Tinsley, 1998). [4]

The second pivotal judgment in negotiation is interpreting one's counterpart. The knowledge structures most relevant to these judgments are beliefs about causal relationships in the form of general theories or specific expectancies. Substantial evidence suggests Americans are more likely than East Asians to attribute negative behavior by other persons to corresponding personality dispositions because of an implicit theory that individuals control their behavioral outcomes (Morris & Peng, 1994; Menon, Morris, Chiu & Hong, 1999). The potential for this to create cultural differences in negotiation style is clear, given that conflicts evoke negatively-valenced behaviors, such as disagreement. A negotiators attribution of a counterpart's behavior to a personality low in agreeableness gives rise to decisions to resolve the conflict through competitive procedures, such as arbitration, rather than cooperative procedures, such as informal bargaining (Morris, Larrick, & Su, 1999). An influential study by Leung (1987) found that Chinese versus American differences in decisionmaking about procedures were driven by differing expectancies about how to produce harmony, not by differences in the value placed on harmony. Further, Morris et al. (1995) found that Americans' more pessimistic expectancies about bargaining reflected their greater tendency to believe that the counterpart's negative conflict behavior was caused by a personality low in agreeableness. Another cultural difference arising from expectancies about personality was noted by Bond and Forgas (1984), who found that Chinese and Australians differ with respect to which perceived personality characteristics, such as conscientiousness, foster trust. Additionally, Shapiro and Rognes (1996) found that Americans expect more competitiveness than Norwegians and, perhaps as a result, do not suffer lowered success in negotiations as a function of their opponent's actual level of competitiveness, as Norwegians do. Overall, a variety of specific expectancies about negotiation counterparts have been shown to produce cultural differences in negotiators' behaviors.

4. Many constructivist researchers have not emphasized or investigated the domain-specificity of the knowledge structures they propose, yet studies that have compared behavior across domains, such as workplace versus family, find evidence that qualitatively different scripts are followed. For example, Americans are more oriented toward relationship harmony in family than work conflicts, yet Japanese respondents report that they handle family conflicts in a much less harmonizing manner than they handle work conflicts (Kim, 1994). Moreover, domain-specificity follows from the concept of scripts as detailed guides to action. Just as stage actors need specific scripts for each play they perform, lay people need specific scripts for different domains of life.

Evaluating the Constructivist Approach. While not parsimonious, the proposal that cultural differences in negotiation reflect the influence of many discrete knowledge structures has several virtues. First, knowledge structures, such as scripts and expectancies, are well documented; they do not suffer from the dubious construct validity that plagues trait proposals. The methods used to establish the role of knowledge structures can allow for emic or etic constructs (Gelfand et al., 1998). Also, this constructivist approach captures the context-sensitivity of cultural differences. Because knowledge structures are restricted in applicability to particular kinds of stimuli, their impact is limited to specific phases or specific kinds of conflicts in which negotiators encounter a given stimuli or task. Hence, a constructivist account is capable of capturing the domain-specificity of cultural differences.

Nevertheless, the constructivist accounts of culture and negotiation offered in recent research still suffer some sharp limitations. While they explain why a negotiator handles one kind of situation differently than he or she handles a different kind of situation, they do not explain why a negotiator may handle the same kind of situation differently on different occasions. For instance, a Chinese negotiator may handle a problem in a culturally typical manner one day, such as by seeking a harmonious compromise, but on the next day may handle the same sort of problem in a different way, such as attempting to persuade the other with analytic cost/benefit arguments. Although some researchers have emphasized that cultural patterns vary as a function of the stimulus situation, such as whether one's counterpart in the conflict is a member of the ingroup or outgroup (Leung & Bond, 1984), researchers have not explored the other factors moderating knowledge structure activation, the factors that vary from occasion to occasion even when the stimulus situation is unchanged.

DYNAMIC CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH: CULTURAL INFLUENCE THROUGH KNOWLEDGE ACTIVATION

We propose that a more comprehensive and empirically precise model of how culture influences negotiation is possible by incorporating the insights of social cognition theorists, such as Higgins (1996) and Kruglanski (1990) concerning the factors affecting the activation of knowledge structures. One central assumption is that possessing a particular knowledge structure does not entail constantly relying on it (in situations to which it applies). Knowledge structures influence judgments only when they come to the fore of the mind—when they are activated as a guide to the interpretation of stimuli. One determinant of this is the structure's chronic level of "accessibility," and cultures may vary

more in which structures are highly accessible than in which structures are cognitive available. In plainer language, the same conflict frame or script may be conceivable to negotiators in the two cultures but in one of cultures it may be more likely to come to mind and guide the negotiator's judgments and actions.[5] The likelihood of a knowledge structure being activated is a function of other aspects of the negotiator's state of mind; it depends on factors in the negotiator's social context; and, finally, as previous constructivist approaches have begun to consider, it depends on the specific stimulus the negotiator encounters. We can summarize the factors that affect this in terms of properties of the individual perceiver/negotiator, the perceiver's social context, and the social stimulus or negotiation task. For each of these three variables, we derive hypotheses about how they interact with differences in the chronic accessibility of knowledge structures in order to produce particular patterns of cultural variation. In Figure 1 we provide an overview of how cultural influence on negotiator behavior is conceived from a dynamic constructivist perspective.

Moreover, in drawing attention to the roles played by the social context that surrounds negotiators and the social stimuli that they encounter in moderating whether the negotiator's knowledge structures will influence his or her behavior, the dynamic constructivist approach highlights how elements of culture outside of the focal individual's head influence the individual's behavior and thus shape cultural differences. In this way, the dynamic constructivist account provides a way of integrating private elements of culture (differing structures in the minds of American and Chinese negotiators) with public elements of culture (the differing social worlds that surround them) in a model of the factors determining when cultural differences will be exhibited. Given that this side of culture has received relatively little attention in previous psychological models, it is worth reviewing elements of the external cultural setting, before deriving the hypotheses that constitute our model.

Elements of Public Culture. We use the term *public culture* to refer to components of culture that lie outside of a given negotiator's subjective knowledge but nonetheless affect that negotiator's behavior. One reason that trait and constructivist approaches have failed to fully capture how culture affects negotiators is that they take into account only how a given negotiator's internalized subjective culture drives that person's behavior; that is, they don't take into account how elements of public culture (out-

5. This issue is orthogonal to the question of how widely or consensually a belief is shared, an important issue for quantitative anthropologists (Romney & Moore, 1988) and for those distinguishing subcultures from cultures (Martin, 1992). It concerns when a belief is likely to come to the fore of consciousness and exert influence as opposed to staying in the background without exerting force over behavior.

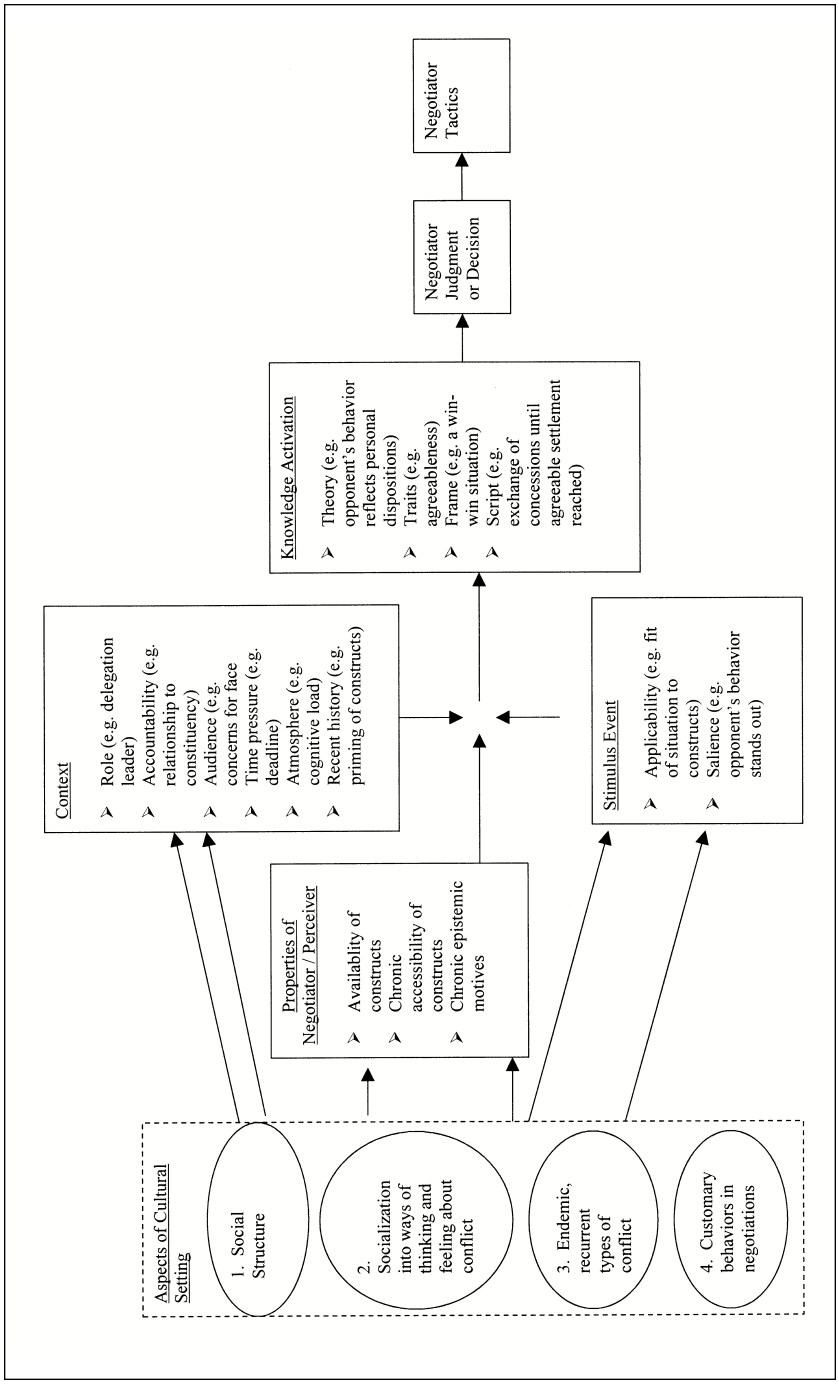

FIGURE 1. A Dynamic Constructivist Approach to Cultural Influence on Negotiator Behaviors

side of the focal person's head) act as causes of the focal person's behavior. To illustrate, an individual who does not personally value harmony may negotiate in a more harmonious fashion after seeing other people negotiate harmoniously (if these others serve as stimuli triggering harmony-maintaining scripts) or when facing a counterpart with whom he or she shares many friends in common (if this social context triggers concerns about one's relationships and reputation). In other words, correlations between an individual's private values or traits and the individual's behavior are low because that person's behavior is driven by variables in the external setting, which are part of culture. Turning to our case of American versus Chinese differences, negotiators behave differently because they are embedded in different social structures and immersed in different customs (for a review, see Su et al., 1997). To analyze how this works, we can divide the elements of public culture into several (somewhat overlapping) categories or forms that illustrate different ways that public elements of culture influence negotiator behaviors.[6]

The first form, social structure, can be discussed at several levels. Negotiators are affected by the macro-level structure of society—the distribution of wealth and power, and the system of social categories, such as class or caste. They similarly are influenced by micro-level social structure—by patterns of relationships and roles. In recurrent negotiations, such as those between labor and management, negotiators on both sides are highly constrained by the elaborate roles and norms (Goffman, 1969; Friedman, 1994). In many industries these norms become institutionalized (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) through encoding into formal and informal rules, such as legal procedures, protocols, standard operating procedures, or rituals. There are official props and symbols that mark these interactions from other more improvised interactions in the flow of everyday social life. In terms of our model, these are various forms of social structure that determine the social contexts in which negotiators will find themselves when negotiating.

A second form is culture socialization practices. Parents, schools, and organizations have a role in inculcating particular cognitive and emotional responses to interpersonal conflict. Besides shaping the private

6. It should be noted that in the usage preferred by some cultural theorists, social structure and practices are distinguished from culture per se, which is reserved for reference to shared knowledge (Rohner, 1984). Given that many cultural theorists require that beliefs be transmitted generationally in order to count as culture, it seems that reference to public culture or the co-constitution of culture and social structure and practices is unavoidable. Overall, there is no consensus in the definition of *culture*, and scholars tend to err on the side of more or less inclusion according to the goals of their project. Our goal is modelling how differences associated with national cultures arise, and so it makes sense to err on the side of inclusion.

subjective knowledge structures inside a negotiator's head, socialization also influences a negotiator's psychology in other ways, such as shaping motives. Socialization practices also shape the experience of social contexts in that the same social structural position is often reacted to differently as a function of culture (Morris, Podolny, & Ariel, 2000).

The third form is the distribution of types of conflicts that occur in a society. This form of public culture emerges out of the other two. For example, the American economic structure creates opportunities for many consumer decisions, and Americans are socialized to express internal preferences; hence, a predictably frequent form of conflict in the United States is between individuals debating which movie to see, which restaurant to enter, and so forth. In Chinese culture, conflicts frequently arise between persons to whom competing obligations are owed, such as mothers and spouses. Cultural variation in which kinds of conflict are endemic in everyday life have an influence on negotiators by influencing which knowledge structures are chronically accessible as a result of frequent use. Also, somewhat obviously, it influences the kinds of stimuli or tasks that a negotiator is likely to encounter.

A final form is the set of cultural customs about how to behave in particular kinds of negotiations. This affects the kinds of behaviors that one is likely to encounter, and so one way it influences a focal negotiator is by setting the stimulus. In sum, the external, public elements of society that carry culture have many points of impact on individual negotiators.

Properties of the Perceiver. The activation of knowledge structures is the central mechanism that produces cultural differences in our model. How does culture affect this? One path is by determining which knowledge structures are available in a culture. Many beliefs are held because they were taught to us by credible teachers rather than because the world presents perceptual evidence for them. Such beliefs are likely to be unavailable in some cultures.[7] A second path is by determining which beliefs are highly accessible in a culture.[8] As we have argued, the accessibility of knowledge structures is determined by socialization as well as

7. Ethnography, with its bias toward looking for unique aspects of cultures, has centered on uncovering forms of conflict behavior that may hinge on cultural differences in the availability of constructs. For instance, the thoughts and feelings that drive an Iimgot headhunter are not available to North Americans and hence challenge an ethnographer's empathy and imagination (Rosaldo, 1989). These availability-based differences are hidden by the methods of etic researchers who reject constructs that cannot be measured equivalently in the cultures under comparison (Morris, Leung, et al., 1999).

8. This path liberates one from the limitations of conceptualizing knowledge structures as dichotomous variables (present versus absent) as opposed to continuous variables. Many differences that have been portrayed as all-or-none differences in the knowledge structures, such as the self-concept, that individuals possess may be better understood as differences in the level of accessibility of these structures.

by the frequency of particular types of conflicts in the cultural setting. In either case, activated knowledge structures can be understood as the mediating variable that accounts for the effect of the independent variable (cultural setting) on the dependent variable (negotiator judgment). While identifying these knowledge structures is a crucial first step, the distinctive contribution of our dynamic constructivism lies in identifying the moderating or triggering conditions (Morris, Menon, & Ames, 2001).

We predict that several properties of the perceiver/negotiator moderate whether culturally varying knowledge structures are activated. For each perceiver constructs vary in "temporary accessibility" as well as baseline or "chronic accessibility." For instance, the phenomenon of priming occurs through a rise in temporary accessibility after the recent use of a construct or other constructs associated with it (Higgins, 1996). Perceivers from different cultures will differ in their recent experiences and in their associations, so different constructs will be primed for them in a given negotiation. Images, symbols, and words that are free of associations for one side may be powerful primes for perceivers on the other side. For example, a contract involving sales of a perfume called "Opium" would have no particular associations for American negotiators, but it might trigger associations of exploitative colonialism for Chinese negotiators and, in turn, a win-lose frame for conceptualizing the negotiation.

Motives of the perceiver/negotiator are another set of moderator variables. The motive to deny one's mortality, for instance, leads individuals to embrace cultural symbols (Arndt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Simon, 1997). This suggests the hypothesis that in conflicts involving danger-wartime negotiations, for example-parties would be particularly likely to rely on the negotiation-relevant knowledge structures associated with their own culture. This hypothesized dynamic might be a barrier to conflict resolution across cultures.

Other motives concern one's own epistemic activity, such as the desire for a definite answer, which has been called Need for Closure (NFC) (Kruglanski, 1990). Need for closure varies between people as a stable individual difference (it separates decisive, ambiguity hating people from indecisive, ambiguity loving types) and as a function of the situation (e.g., under time pressure, everyone becomes higher in NFC).[9] Past research has found that NFC activates chronically accessible knowledge

9. The individual difference operationalization of NFC is a trait model of epistemic motives. There is no contradiction between our rejection of the notion that cultural values reduce to trait dimensions and our willingness to accept that epistemic motives are traits. Importantly, results do not show that individual differences in NFC mediate country differences; rather, they moderate country differences.

structures, such as stereotypes, in negotiation (de Dreu, Koole, & Oldersman, 1999). A link to cultural differences was drawn by Chiu, Morris, Hong, and Menon (2000), who found that NFC magnifies perceivers' reliance on the implicit theories chronically accessible in their culture. When attributing the cause of social outcomes, Americans who are chronically high in NFC (or who are in a situation producing NFC) are more likely than otherwise to attribute a person's action to dispositions, whereas NFC does not affect this tendency for Chinese. This suggests that NFC amplifies Americans' tendency to attribute opponents' conflict behavior to personality dispositions and then to decide (on the basis of personality-related expectations) in favor of competitive rather than cooperative tactics.

Consistent with the hypothesis that the impact of cultural knowledge structures is magnified by NFC, Fu and Morris (2000) found that the greater tendency of Americans than Chinese to have a competitive style of managing conflict (e.g., Morris, Williams, et al., 1999) is driven by high NFC Americans rather than low NFC Americans. Like in the attribution findings, NFC does not affect this tendency for Chinese, presumably because the chronically accessible knowledge structures of these perceivers do not dictate competitiveness. In another study, Fu and Morris (2000) investigated another manifestation of the difference between the American competitive style and the Chinese harmonizing style; namely, when choosing a third-party to act as a mediator, Americans prefer a stranger whereas Chinese prefer a person with ties to both disputing parties. As in the study of bargaining styles, the culturally distinctive patterns are magnified among high NFC respondents. In general, the epistemic motive of NFC is a magnifier of cultural divides. As we shall see, some properties of social context and stimuli work as moderators in the same fashion.

Properties of the Social Context. Some aspects of a negotiators social context are role expectations relevant to the setting, accountability, audience, time pressure, and atmosphere. The impact of these context variables on knowledge activation is likely to vary across cultures. That is, the same objective context factors will trigger different cognitive structures and ultimately evoke different behaviors as a function of culture.

The moderating role of subtle social context variables may help to resolve inconsistencies in past findings about cultural differences. Context variables may turn on or turn off particular expectations. For example, the cultures identified by Hofstede (1980) as high in Power Distance, such as India, socialize their members to display deference and to expect it in the context of hierarchical roles. Hence, when negotiating in such a context where hierarchical roles are defined, their behavior would be very different from that of negotiators from a more egalitarian culture. This difference would not appear in the absence of this role context. For

another example, the proverbial Chinese concern for "face" is often confusing to Western negotiators who expect it to operate uniformly in all situations. This stereotypical view fails to recognize that concern for face becomes salient only in particular social contexts, such as those involving an audience of subordinates (Ho, 1980).

Several features of social context seem to influence negotiations in a parallel fashion to that of the motives of moderators discussed previously; that is, they magnify negotiators tendency toward culturally normative or typical patterns by means of increasing reliance on chronically accessible knowledge structures. In some cases this allows a reinterpretation of past findings from past negotiation research in the United States. Consider findings about accountability. Past research had concluded that accountability to constituents makes negotiators more competitive because it creates concern for one's reputation of toughness (Carnevale, Pruitt, & Britton, 1979). Gelfand and Realo (1999) hypothesized that accountability increases reliance on norms and thus should have a different effect in more collectivist contexts where cooperative norms are more predominant, and they found evidence for this predicted divergence in effects of accountability. Effects of stress and time pressure in making negotiators more competitive may similarly result from reliance on cultural norms (because of increased NFC), so the impact of these social context variables may also diverge across cultures.

Another way that social context matters is through priming. The atmosphere and setting of negotiations vary in many details, including the structure of the table and room, the level of formality, the persons present, the language spoken, the drinks consumed, background music, and so forth. Details which negotiators subconsciously associate with their culture will prime related knowledge structures and induce culturally typical behaviors. The atmosphere or setting is an aspect of the social context that negotiators can manipulate if they want to control the extent to which an opponent's traditional cultural knowledge is primed.

Properties of the Stimulus or Task. A final set of moderators of cultural differences are the stimuli and tasks presented by the behavior of negotiation counterparts. Conflicts feature a range of behavioral stimuli such as the following: aggressive demands, reluctant concessions, requests for generosity, long silences, emotional outbursts, and so forth. Responses to these stimuli are guided by particular knowledge structures, so these stimuli produce cultural differences in behavior by interacting with differences in the accessible knowledge structures that are evoked by the stimuli.

Can we predict which stimuli will evoke culturally varying knowledge structures? Several insights follow from past research. First, perceivers are more likely to draw on knowledge structures when interpreting stimulus that are ambiguous. Stimuli that are relatively unam-

biguous, such as extreme anger from the opponent after one's extreme demand, are more likely to evoke a relatively direct, emotionally driven response, such as an appeasing display of embarrassment, rather than a knowledge-based judgment process (Morris & Keltner, 2000). Thus, ambiguity increases the chances for culturally divergent responses reflecting different knowledge structures.

Second, any given knowledge structure is applicable to a fixed domain of stimulus events and will not be evoked by events outside of this domain. A demonstration of this comes from a study by Wittenbrink, Hilton, and Gist (1998), who primed participants with a stereotype of a group believed to be aggressive and then asked the perceivers to interpret several kinds of social stimuli, some fitting the stereotype and some not, with the result that the priming manipulation affected interpretations only when the stereotype was applicable. A similar result was found in recent experiments priming cultural theories of agency (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2001).

A third aspect of stimulus or task that moderates the activation of knowledge structures and hence the manifestation of cultural differences is the need to give rationales or reasons for one's response. This requirement to provide reasons often changes people's judgments and choices in that the search for the best option gets obscured and replaced by the search for the best reason (Wilson & Schooler, 1991). Reasons often appeal to generic decision rules rather than to the particular details of the problem at hand, and cultural knowledge is the primary source of these generic reasons. In a study of intrapersonal conflict, Briley, Morris, and Simonson (2000) found decision rules in favor of compromise are more prominent in Chinese than American culture, as measured by their rates of occurrence in proverb dictionaries, in the proverbs that participants endorse, and in the reasons that participants prefer. An experiment found that requiring decision makers to state reasons made Chinese participants more likely to compromise whereas it made American participants less likely to compromise. A content analysis of participants' reasons showed invocation of different decision principles mediated the ultimate cultural difference in compromise decisions. Trait measures of culture, such as collectivist values, did not mediate this effect. Overall, the factor of whether a reason or rationale is required may be another magnifier of cultural differences in conflict resolution behavior. This suggests that a useful lever in influencing one's counterpart to follow culturally prominent decision rules is demanding the opponent provide rationales.

Another relevant aspect of the negotiator's task is the amount of distraction or cognitive load placed on the negotiator. Negotiations can be quite attentionally demanding, such as when one has to interpret a counterpart's actions while at the same time calculating what sort of offer to

propose. Social perception and decisionmaking tend to be driven more by knowledge structures under conditions of high cognitive load (Macrae, Hewstone, & Griffiths, 1993). Consistent with this, Knowles, Morris, Chiu, and Hong (2000) found that cognitive load increases differences between American and Chinese judgments in an attribution task. Related properties of tasks, such as time pressure or ambient noise, have a similar effect in that they increase an individual's state of NFC (Ford & Kruglanski, 1995). Studies have found that time pressure magnifies cultural differences in attribution biases (Chiu, et al., 2000). These findings allow predictions about when cultural differences should appear in negotiations, and they also suggest that negotiators can manipulate the extent to which an opponent behaves consistently with cultural theories through changing the levels of task variables such as attentional load, time pressure, ambient noise and so forth.

SUMMARY

The dynamic constructivist model that we have sketched has several notable limitations and strengths. The first limitation is that most of its empirical support comes from post hoc reinterpretation of findings rather than from a priori tests. Second, there is a need to proceed carefully when using social cognition principles to investigate nuances of cultural differences because these principles themselves may not have a common meaning across cultures; they may not be etic constructs.[10] In assessing this matter, there are procedures for examining the equivalence of measuring instruments such as scales (Berry, 1990). Some social cognition constructs, such as NFC, have been submitted to these procedures and have been found to have parallel factor structures and convergent and discriminant validity across American and Chinese cultures. Our view is that a common meaning can be identified for properties of knowledge structures such as availability, accessibility, and applicability; for properties of the social context such as audience or accountability; and for properties of tasks such as ambiguity, the requirement of reasons, and time pressure. Yet this can only be tested by running a number of studies with relevant manipulations. Undoubtedly, some principles that North American social cognition researchers have regarded as basic are culturally bound (for a review of possibilities, see suggestions

10. This debate is often framed as a question of whether social cognition *processes* differ across cultures as opposed to merely its *content*. We think that this is an unhelpful frame because differing content necessarily implies differing process, at some level of description. The real question is whether the same deep *principles* are at work even when superficial processes differ.

by Markus, Kitayama, & Heiman, 1996), and so research must proceed carefully with an eye to contributing to cross-cultural research while also contributing to basic social cognition research.

Despite the forgoing limitations, there are a number of strengths of the dynamic constructivist model. Compared with the trait model that has dominated cross-cultural psychology research on conflict, and even compared with past constructivist models, the dynamic constructivist model generates more interaction-effect hypotheses about the factors that determine when negotiators' thoughts and behavior will be affected by culture, rather than main-effect hypotheses. It generates hypotheses about how aspects of the perceiver, context, and stimulus increase reliance on the knowledge structures that produce culturally varying behavioral patterns. Main effects of these factors would not threaten a trait model, but divergent interaction effects of the kinds we have reviewed are not amenable to an explanation in terms of traits. In sum, the first advantage of the dynamic constructivist model is that it provides more empirically precise answers to the question that cross-cultural researchers have been asking—namely, how and when does culture affect people?

The precise behaviors predicted by the model turn on which culturally relevant knowledge structures are involved. Hence it is premature to fully delineate these, even within the case of American versus Chinese negotiations. The model's capacity to generate fruitful coherent predictions is more easily appreciated by abstracting away from the content of particular cultural differences and instead focusing on when the question of when the impact of culture is strong as opposed to weak. Many of the variables we have reviewed can be thought of as magnifiers of cultural differences because they increase the probability that an accessible knowledge structure will be activated to guide the negotiator's decisionmaking. These spreading interactions occur with aspects of the perceiver (e.g., chronic NFC), social context (e.g., accountability to constituents), and task (e.g., a reasons requirement). Research has not yet examined all these variables simultaneously, so we cannot say whether their effects are additive or not, but the model provides a heuristic guide to researchers seeking to identify cultural differences in negotiation and their moderating conditions.

Another advantage of the dynamic constructivist model is that it incorporates a number of constructs relevant to culture within an integrated model. In drawing attention to social context and stimuli as triggering conditions that evoke knowledge activation, our analysis ties public cultural elements to private or subjective elements. This corrects a narrowness of previous approaches in psychology, which view the causes of cultural differences almost exclusively in terms of the contents of the focal negotiator's head. Because the model can describe knowledge structures that differ in availability and or in accessibility, it incor-

porates the kinds of cultural differences traditionally captured by emic analyses as well as etic analyses. In addition to providing precise answers to empirical questions, the model allows for theoretical integration.

Finally, the dynamic constructivist model illuminates some new questions that have not been amenable to analysis in terms of trait models or more static constructivist models. For instance, several hypotheses have been suggestive with regard to how negotiators work with culture—how they use their knowledge of their own culture and the opponent's culture. In regard to themselves, negotiators may control perceiver variables (such as their recent priming), context variables (such as the presence of an audience), and stimulus variables (such as their cognitive load) in order to free themselves or commit themselves to cultural norms and principles. In regard to others, negotiators can increase the other's likelihood of culturally typical responses through the presence of context variables, such as atmosphere, and stimulus task variables, such as time pressure or rationale requirements. These possibilities for responding to the role of culture in negotiation become even more complex in an inter-cultural negotiation.

NEGOTIATING CULTURES: INSIGHTS ABOUT ADAPTATION IN INTER-CULTURAL NEGOTIATIONS

Heretofore we have made an assumption almost always made in the literature on culture and negotiation-the assumption that each negotiator exemplifies a single culture. While scientific models always involve simplification, this is a gross oversimplification because it flies in the face of a time-honored working assumption of those who practice inter-cultural negotiation: negotiators are selected in part for their competence in multiple cultures. Just as individuals are bilingual or multilingual, they can internalize more than one culture. A few applied studies of intercultural negotiations have investigated the effects of adapting to the cultural style of the opponent (Francis, 1991; Harnett & Cummings, 1980). Negotiation theory suggests reasons why these negotiations fail in the lack of adaptation, such as the mismatch of scripts for information exchange (Brett & Okamura, 1998).

However, the dominant approaches to modeling cultural influence have had little to say about how an individual can internalize multiple cultures and how the individual can adopt his or her patterns to those of an opponent. It is easy to see why the trait approach has not yielded insights about these questions, because it starts from the assumption that cultures can be described as positions on dimensions. When researchers in this paradigm have wanted to make predictions about groups such as Asian Americans, the natural assumption has been that they are

half-way in between the two groups on the relevant dimension, an assumption that implies a blended cultural identity (Berry, 1980). The constructivist approach has some advantage in modeling the phenomenon, in that it can describe an individual with diverse, even contradictory, pieces of cultural knowledge. The selective, context-appropriate activation of knowledge structures enables bicultural individuals to switch between the cultural styles they enact, rather than by blending or inter-mixing actions associated with the two cultures.

Compared with previous approaches, the dynamic constructivist approach allows more insight into the organization of knowledge and behavioral performances in bicultural individuals. A key premise is that individuals can internalize knowledge structures from two cultures. At least in the case of biculturals who move between distinct cultural settings, knowledge structures from each culture may exist in separate clusters or networks.[11] Some evidence for this comes from findings that when bicultural individuals are exposed to iconic images (Briley et al., this issue; Hong et al., 2000) or role models (Fu, 2000) associated with each of their cultures, there follows an elevated accessibility of other knowledge structures distinctively associated with that culture.

A first principle of multicultural negotiators implied by this research is automatic activation of a cultural network as a function of exposure to cultural cues.[12] Hong et al. (2000) analyzed the phenomenon of frame switching in a set of experiments and found that cultural images trigger the activation of associated knowledge structures. For instance, when facing the counterpart from a culture that the negotiator has assimilated, the knowledge structures specific to that particular culture would be cued or primed, raising their accessibility.

A second principle that may govern multicultural negotiators is compartmentalization. Fu (2000) studied how bicultural communities selectively assimilate values from the second culture. She found that Hong Kong university students who are exposed to Anglo-American culture against a backdrop of Chinese culture appropriate Western constructs in the domain of work achievement but not in the domain of mo-

11. Importantly, the subjective elements of a culture need not be thematically integrated or logically consistent in order to be associated in a network. Also, it may be that biculturals who alternate between two cultural settings develop tighter inter-associations between the elements of each of their cultural meaning systems than biculturals who live in a culturally blended setting.

12. We use the language and imagery of associative networks, but other models of memory organization would serve as well. It may be that culture is like a feature or tag attached to every single cognitive element in a memory file. When the individual needs to retrieve structured knowledge in order to interpret a behavior observed within a given cultural setting, the culture tag would be an easy and convenient retrieval cue.

rality. This may reflect the incompatibility of Chinese and Western moral systems, or it may simply reflect that cultural eclecticism provides adaptive advantages in the work domain that do not accrue in the moral domain. In any case, it suggests that second culture assimilation can occur in a compartmentalized manner (Yang, 1996). Hence, one may learn a cultural approach to negotiation without learning its approach to other domains.

A third principle is that negotiators who are savvy about their multicultural competence may strategically and deliberately control their cultural adaptation. Weiss (1994) suggested that when choosing a negotiation strategy in cross-cultural negotiation setting, negotiators have several strategic options in considering whether to follow the scripts of their home culture or whether to adapt. It is not always the case that "When in Rome, do as Romans do." Most flexible is one negotiating with Romans who has a "high familiarity with 'Roman' culture—knowing the cognitive and behavioral elements of a Roman negotiating script and being able to use the script competently" (p. 100), because such a negotiator can do as the Romans do, ask the Romans to adapt, or meet the Romans half way. There are several reasons why savvy negotiators do not always adapt as much as possible. First, it can offend an opponent to presume that they do not want to be the one who adapts (Weiss, 1994). Second, adaptation in some respects but not others can be counterproductive in that expectations are raised and then disappointed-as has been observed in the case of negotiators who speak a language but have not mastered the associated nonverbal patterns (Molinsky, 1999).

Finally, bicultural negotiators may select cultural scripts that are advantageous in the given bargaining position. For instance, in an American-Chinese negotiation, if it would benefit the American side to follow a compromising rather than a competitive script, the American side should do everything possible to instantiate Chinese negotiation scripts. The dynamic constructivist approach suggests a number of ways that they might accomplish this. They could send a bicultural representative, perhaps someone from China who would prime Chinese negotiation scripts. They could hold the talks in a traditional Chinese setting. The language in which a negotiation is held is another obvious factor that may be used to prime cultural scripts. This raises an interesting caveat, however, in that language can be a transparent or blatant prime that provokes reactance (see Hong et al., 2000). Social context, such as audience pressure, and task properties, such as requests for reasons, are other ways that a Chinese compromising style might be evoked from the Chinese counterparts. Overall, the dynamic constructivist model elucidates the variables that might underlie the practices of savvy international negotiators in adapting to and working with the cultural backgrounds of their counterparts.

CONCLUSION

We have argued that the literature on culture and negotiation benefits from incorporation of social cognition principles. Not only does the dynamic constructivist approach engender more empirically precise and theoretically integrated answers to traditional questions such as how cultures differ, but also it opens new topics for research such as the dynamics of bicultural negotiators in adapting to different cultural settings.

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