

MOVING TOWARD UNDERSTANDING

The Relationship of Open Expression to Empathy

by

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For the Department

No one is wrong. At most someone is un-
informed. If I think a man is wrong, either
I am unaware of something, or he is. So
unless I want to play a superiority game
I had best find out what he is looking at.

"You're wrong" means "I don't understand
you" - I'm not seeing what you're seeing.
But there is nothing wrong with you,
you are simply not me and that's not
wrong.

Hugh Prather

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I:	
A RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF EMPATHY AS	
A BASIC COMPONENT OF THE INTERPERSONAL	
COMMUNICATION PROCESS	6
Review of Literature	6
A Reconceptualization of Empathy	16
Differences From Previous Conceptualizations	
of Empathy	27
CHAPTER II:	
THE RELATIONSHIP OF OPEN EXPRESSION TO	
EMPATHY: HYPOTHESES FOR STUDY	33
Definition and Criteria for Open Expression	33
Open Expression as it Relates to Empathy	37
Hypotheses For Study	42
CHAPTER III:	
METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES	44
Preparation of the Stimulus Material	45
The Pilot Study	46
Subjects	47
Procedures	48
Measures	50
CHAPTER IV:	
RESULTS	53
Report on Manipulation Checks	53
Analysis of Empathic Communication	56
Analysis of Empathic Attitude	57
Summary of Demographic Data	66
Summary of Results	68
CHAPTER V:	
OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	73
A review of Hypotheses and Findings	74
Significance of the Present Study	81
Limitations of the Present Study	83
Suggestions for Future Research	85
Conclusion	87
REFERENCES	88
APPENDIX A: STATEMENTS USED AS STIMULUS MATERIAL	91
APPENDIX B: CONSENT STATEMENT	94
APPENDIX C: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDY	95
APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE	96
APPENDIX E: INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBJECTS' RESPONSE EVALUATION	100
APPENDIX F: SUMMARY OF INTERJUDGE RELIABILITY SCORES	101
APPENDIX G: EIGENVALUES OF FACTORS	102
APPENDIX H: VARIMAX ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX	103

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this project is to present a framework for viewing empathy as a basic component of the interpersonal communication process. While the term "empathy" has become a part of the working vocabulary of our age, the concept itself remains rather vague and ill-defined to many communication practitioners. While significant books, articles, and dissertations have been written on the subject of empathy, much of the research has been somewhat "static" in its orientation. That is, it has focused mostly on the characteristics of the "good" or "poor" empathizer, and only rarely has it focused on the characteristics of the situation or the person being empathized with. Because communication is viewed as a dynamic process, many writers on the subject of interpersonal communication find it difficult to include meaningful discussions of empathy as it is usually defined. It is hoped that this study will contribute toward a further systematization of the concept of empathy as it relates to the process nature of interpersonal communication. Attempts will be made to show the dynamic and circular nature of empathy, to present a method of "measuring" the degree of empathy present in an interaction, and to relate the basic meaning of empathy in terms readily understood by communication practitioners. Before beginning this task, it is important to discuss some basic assumptions about the nature of man and the nature of communication.

Some Basic Assumptions

In developing the discussion of empathy in this study, a particular

image of man is adopted. Termed the "constructivist view of persons" (Swanson and Delia, 1976), it sees the essence of living human activity to be the person's orientation toward his/her world as an interpreter or construer. In other words, the person builds internal understandings of the external world by focusing attention on significant parts of that world which seem to be important and require explanation and understanding. It is important to note that the person actively builds understanding - it is not poured into the head of the passive "receiver". Each person develops a system of personal dimensions that are used in selecting the stimuli to which he or she responds and in giving meaning to those stimuli.

This implies that each person has a somewhat different "personal construct system" (Kelly, 1963). No two persons will have had exactly the same experiences, and no two persons will attach identical meaning to the same event. It is not possible, then, for one person to ever completely understand another and totally see the world as the other sees it. This makes the construct "reaching understanding" a somewhat misleading one. Perhaps a more appropriate term, and the one that will be employed in this study, is the construct "moving toward understanding". This allows discussion to focus on degrees of empathy.

In discussing the nature of interpersonal communication, a "transactional" approach (Wilmont, 1975) is adopted. The approach to interaction as a series of simple mechanistic reactions to messages has been questioned by other communication theorists. In the words of Dean Barnlund (1970): "Linear causality, with its sharp demarcation of independent and dependent variables, no longer gives sensible

structure to observation" (p. 91). Stewart (1973) illustrates the weakness in the linear approach with the following example:

. . . think about the last time you had a conversation with someone you know. What was the stimulus that caused you to greet the other? His greeting? His look? Your expectations about his eagerness to talk with you? Was your greeting a response to him or a stimulus for his next utterance? Or was it both? What caused you to say what you said next? . . . Are you able to distinguish clearly between the stimuli and responses in that conversation, or between the actions, the hypotheses about the reactions, and the reactions? (p. 10)

The argument that interpersonal communication is complex is given credence by Berlo (1960), who said that communication, as a process, "does not have a beginning, an end, a fixed sequence of events. It is not static, at rest. It is moving. The ingredients within a process interact; each affects all of the others" (p. 24). Wholes are not simply the sum of their parts, so knowing something about each of the participants in interaction does not allow us to predict how they will behave in dialogue with each other. Persons are not the same communicators in different communication contexts. Our existence and our nature as communicators are functions of the communication event we're participating in (Stewart, 1973, p. 12).

These assumptions about the nature of man and the nature of communication have a couple of implications for this study. First, they allow discussion to be directed to the process occurring between participants in communication and not just to the characteristics of the participants. It is what happens when communicators interact with each other that provides the focus of this study. Second, these assumptions underscore the fact that communication is a difficult process and requires one's best efforts. With the constructivist view of persons in mind, it is easy to see why "plain talk" is not

adequate for moving toward understanding. Thus "effort" becomes an important variable in discussing empathy.

Thesis Outline

Following the introduction, Chapter I reviews the literature on interpersonal communication especially as it relates to the process of moving toward understanding. Using the language and ideas of these scholars, a conceptual framework for empathy as a basic component of the interpersonal communication process is presented. Characteristics of empathy as it relates to interpersonal communication are discussed, and differences from previous conceptualizations are pointed out.

Chapter II discusses the effects of a particular communication variable, open expression, on empathy. The concept of "open expression" as originally defined by MacDoniels (1972) and later adapted by Millar and Millar (1976) is presented. An explanation of how open expression is thought to be related to empathy is given, and several hypotheses are suggested for study.

Chapter III discusses the design and procedures for the study testing the hypotheses suggested in Chapter II. The level of open expression is varied at three levels, and responses made by subjects to these written criticisms are analyzed for degree of empathic communication. Subjects also respond to a number of Likert-type statements in order to assess degree of empathic attitude.

Chapter IV reports the results of this study. Subjects' responses were judged on five bipolar scales each defined on a seven-point continuum. The end points of the scales are evaluative/descriptive, control orientation/problem orientation, unreceptive/receptive,

self orientation/other orientation, and non-caring/caring. A one-way analysis of variance between experimental conditions was performed on each scale. Subjects' responses to the Likert-type statements were factor-analyzed to determine which strong factors emerged from the questionnaire. A one-way analysis of variance was performed on the combined score of questions which loaded on each of the interpretable factors.

Chapter V discusses the results. Several limitations of the findings are noted, and the significance of the results are discussed. Several suggestions for future research are made.

CHAPTER I

A RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF EMPATHY AS

A BASIC COMPONENT OF THE INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS

If I have my categories through which I interpret and experience the world and if you have your categories, how is it possible that we may know something about one another's individual experience? Or, if experience is subjective in its possession by a single person, how is intersubjective - that is, shared - experience or knowledge possible? In short, can two persons ever hope to communicate? (Swanson and Delia, 1976, p. 19)

Decentering: The Approach of Dance and Larson

Dance and Larson (1976) point out that interpersonal communication can be viewed as both perilous and miraculous. On the one hand one can become dismayed by the many ways in which our language deceives us, by the array of environmental, cultural, sociological, and psychological variables that interfere with interpersonal understanding, and by the many ways in which the perception of being understood by another can be, and often is, erroneous. On the other hand one can look in amazement at the countless occasions on which people reach mutually acceptable levels of understanding by simply making sounds with their mouths and movements with their bodies. The authors take the position that which point of view holds for which specific communicative event or encounter depends largely upon the extent to which "decentering" is operating. By decentering Dance and Larson mean that we focus attention on the other, "spend relatively more time attending to and considering the implications of what the other is saying and doing, and spend relatively less time attending to our own wants, needs, and intentions" (1976, p. 117). This shift in focus, they say, increases the likelihood that interpersonal understanding will occur.

This process of decentering, where we enumerate in our own mind a hypothetical set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and motives, and then attribute these imagined characteristics to another, is the method by which subjective experience is made intersubjective. This is especially true where there are significant differences between the subjective worlds of two participants in a communication event. As long as we are communicating with someone who has developed relatively similar constructs for viewing the world, we can engage in relatively satisfactory communication on the basis of projection. Dance and Larson say that "much of what passes for interpersonal understanding in our daily encounters with others may in fact be a form of projection" (1976,p. 126). Much interpersonal communication can proceed on the basis of projection, then, and in most cases such a basis is reasonable - we usually talk to people who are involved in the same kind of work that we are in, live in the same kind of neighborhood we live in, attend the same school we attend, are members of the same social organization, enjoy the same kind of leisure activities, and so on. But, the authors point out, for heightened degrees of interpersonal understanding projection is insufficient - decentering is the fundamental process that must operate. They say that "when decentering occurs and we focus our attention on the unique characteristics of other people, the likelihood of our correctly identifying differences between us increases. . . . But in the absence of decentering the discovery of differences is unlikely to occur at all" (1976, p. 126).

Social Perspective-Taking: The Approach of Swanson and Delia

Swanson and Delia (1976), whose quote appears at the beginning of this chapter, say that the constructivist view of persons, as described

in the introduction to this paper, leads us to the trying, puzzling plight which some have termed "the categoricentric predicament". Stated most simply, the categoricentric predicament poses the question, "how can one person understand another?". The authors answer this question by saying that the predicament is "best overcome in the face-to-face situation in which two persons, each engaging in explicit, systematic perspective-taking, constantly communicate with sensitivity to the perspective of the other" (1976, p. 31). The authors call this process "social perspective-taking". This term is used to refer to "all the interpretive processes by which a person represents another's perspective or point of view on a situation" (1976, p. 29). This is not achieved, they say, by any magical projection of the self into the other's world. Rather, one must use his or her own personal constructs or categories to construe the other's understanding. As will be stressed later, this requires effort on the part of the construer.

The concept of social perspective-taking has two important implications for the reconceptualization of empathy in this study. First, it points to the fact that understanding is a building process. It does not occur simply because one happens to accurately predict another's certain value or attitude. Rather, it occurs when we constantly communicate with sensitivity to the perspective of the other. Again, effort becomes an important characteristic of understanding another. Second, the concept of social perspective-taking is extremely important in intercultural situations. A problem encountered by communicators of different cultures is the potential lack, or total lack, of overlapping interpretations and understandings. People of different cultures may lack any common basis for communicating with understanding. As was pointed out earlier,

it is impossible in this case to move toward understanding solely on the basis of projection. Attempts must be made to figure out where the other is coming from. This is certainly not an easy task, and it requires the effort that was discussed above. As Swanson and Delia appropriately say:

. . . we are all egocentric to some extent. We put aside fundamental beliefs about what the world is like only with the greatest of effort and difficulty. To "enter" the symbolic world of another, particularly a person from a radically different culture, may be one of the most ambitious and demanding tasks we can undertake as human communicators. Yet that is precisely the skill that is required, in varying degrees, in every communicative context - intercultural or otherwise. (1976, p. 46).

The Psychological Level of Analysis: The Approach of Miller and Steinberg

Assuming that human communication involves people in the making of predictions about the effects or outcomes of communicative behavior, Miller and Steinberg (1975) suggest that such predictions can be made at three levels: the cultural level, the sociological level, and the psychological level. Predictions at the cultural level are based upon the total set of characteristics attributed to a large group of people having a common set of norms and values. Predictions at the sociological level are based upon assumptions about particular groups within the cultures. Predictions at the psychological level are based upon encounters with particular individuals and assumptions about the unique characteristics or properties of those individuals. The authors say that when predictions are based primarily on a psychological level of analysis, the communicators are engaged in interpersonal communication.

In light of our earlier discussion on decentering and social perspective-taking, the "psychological level of analysis" can be viewed as the method by which two individuals move toward interpersonal understanding. By

moving beyond our own sets of ideas and really trying to discover the unique characteristics of the other individual, we can come to see the perspectives of that person.

Role-Taking: The Approach of Mead

One of the earliest theorists to write about the communicative aspects of two persons moving toward understanding was George Herbert Mead. He conceptualized what he called "role-taking", and suggested that communication involving "participation in the other" is the basic principle of human social organization. He expounded a theory regarding the development of the self, of thought, and of social order revolving around the concept of role-taking. The development of the role-taking capacity is seen by Mead as involving four stages:

1. In the first stage of role-taking, the infant actually plays other people's roles without interpretation. He imitates the behavior of others.
2. In the second stage of role-taking, the infant plays other people's roles - with understanding. He begins to put himself in other people's shoes, as when children have a make-believe party. He looks at himself as the object of behavior.
3. In the third stage, the child begins to put himself in other people's shoes symbolically, rather than physically. He hypothesizes what it would be like to behave as others do. He infers their roles, he takes their roles in his own mind, rather than playing the roles physically.
4. In the fourth stage, the child begins to generalize the roles of others. He starts to get a general concept of how other people behave, how they interpret, and how they act toward him. (Berlo, 1960)

Role-taking, in Mead's terms is an internal, imaginative activity.

Couter, a social psychologist influenced by Mead, described the process as one:

. . . by which a person momentarily pretends to himself that he is another person, projects himself into the perceptual field of the other person, imaginatively puts himself in the other person's place, in order that he may get an insight into the other person's probable behavior in a given situation. (in Katz, 1963, p. 77)

Mead's approach to understanding, then, involves "putting one's self in the place of the other person's attitudes, communicating through significant symbols" (1934, p. 327). Experience teaches a person how to anticipate the responses of the other and to control his/her own activity by the double process of injecting himself/herself into the role of others and experimenting with the possible responses they might have to an action he/she is contemplating. This requires, Mead says, "the appearance of the other in the self, the identification of the other with the self, the reaching of self-consciousness through the other" (1934, p. 253). By taking the role of the other we can come to understand the outlooks of the other.

Mutual Employment of Empathic Skills: The Approach of Berlo

In any communication situation the source and receiver are interdependent. A affects B, and B affects A. In other words, there is a reciprocal and mutual dependence between any two interactants. Berlo (1960) identifies four levels of communicative interdependence. At one level communication involves only a physical interdependence. In a dyad, the source and receiver require each other for their very definition. When two people are communicating, they rely on the physical existence of the other for the production or reception of messages - you cannot define a receiver without defining a source, and you cannot define a source without defining a receiver.

At a second level of complexity, interdependence can be analyzed as an action-reaction sequence. Responses are utilized by communicators as feedback and thereby affect subsequent responses. Feedback provides the source with information concerning his/her success in accomplishing

his/her objective, and so exerts control over future messages which the source encodes.

At a third level of analysis, interdependence involves expectations. Individuals have the capacity to make trial responses within the organism, to anticipate how others will respond to their messages, to develop expectations about their own behavior and the behavior of others. We infer the internal states of others by comparing them to our own attitudes and predispositions. We project ourselves into the internal states or personalities of others in order to predict how they will behave. This process is called empathy and is the basis for Berlo's fourth level of interdependence - interaction.

At this fourth level, the process involves reciprocal role-taking, the mutual performance of empathic behaviors. The two individuals make inferences about their own roles and take the role of the other at the same time. Their communication behavior depends on the reciprocal taking of roles.

For Berlo, then, empathy is the mechanism that makes understanding possible between any two individuals. He sums up his discussion this way:

Communication represents an attempt to couple two organisms, to bridge the gap between two individuals through the production and reception of messages which have meanings for both. . . . When two people interact, they put themselves into each other's shoes, try to perceive the world as the other person perceives it, try to predict how the other will respond. Interaction involves reciprocal role-taking, the mutual employment of empathic skills. (1960, p.130 - 131)

Construing the Other's Constructions: The Approach of Kelly

For George Kelly (1963), every person is a scientist. That is, we are each interested in prediction and control of our environment. We look at our world through transparent patterns or templets which

we create and attempt to fit over the realities of which the world is composed. He gives the name "constructs" to these patterns, and says that without these constructs "the world appears to be such an undifferentiated homogeneity that man is unable to make any sense out of it" (1963, p. 9). With these constructs, we are able to predict to some degree the course of events, including the behavior of another. Kelly says that we come to understand our world through an infinite series of successive approximations. We formulate a construct, test it for its usefulness, and either maintain it or reformulate the construct. It is, of course, then retested time and again.

An important point of Kelly's theory for purposes of this study is that different persons construe the universe in different ways. Even if a person has experienced the same events as another, the two will not necessarily construe them in the same way. At the same time, two people can have similar constructions even if they have each been exposed to quite different stimuli. Therefore we can never assume that we have similar psychological processes as another because of similar experience, nor can we assume that we do not have similar processes because of different experience. Rather, we must constantly inquire into the way in which the other construes his/her world if there is to be effective communication between us.

Kelly speaks of social interaction as involving interpersonal understandings, and not merely common understandings. He says that the person who is to play a constructive role in a social process such as interaction need not so much construe things as the other person does as he/she must effectively construe the other person's outlooks. In other words, for us to be able to effectively communicate with each other

on an interpersonal basis, it takes more than a similarity or commonality in our thinking - it means that we must seek to understand the other's way of looking at the world. This requires, of course, an "infinite series of successive approximations" as discussed above. In summary, then, Kelly view interpersonal understanding as involving a mutual construing of the other's constructions.

Intergration of These Approaches

The question posed at the beginning of this chapter - "Can two persons ever hope to communicate" - has been discussed by various authors in different ways, as reviewed above. There are, however, some commonalities in these approaches. In many cases the authors are simply using different words to describe similar processes of moving toward understanding.

Basic to all of these approaches are the following:

- (1) The assumption that every person construes events in different ways, with some persons being more or less similar to each other and others being different to varying degrees.
- (2) The realization that it becomes more difficult for two persons to move toward understanding as differences in construing increases between them.
- (3) The contention that moving toward understanding involves focusing attention on the other, trying to see the situation from the other's perspective.
- (4) The fact that understanding is an emergent process, involving an infinite series of successive approximations of the other's outlooks.
- (5) The insight that the process of moving toward understanding requires a degree of effort on the part of the participants - whether this effort is consciously put forth or is spontaneous.

Only one of the authors whose approach was discussed above (Berlo) gave the name empathy to the process of moving toward understanding. It is felt, however, that the concepts of decentering, social perspective-

taking, the psychological level of analysis, role-taking, mutual employment of empathic skills, and construing the other's constructions all refer to a similar process. For the most part the process referred to is identical with traditional uses of the term empathy as it is usually discussed as a theoretical construct. The differences between the above concepts and the usual employment of the term empathy lie mainly in the ways empathy is usually discussed for "measurement" purposes. It seems that most attempts to conceptualize empathy for measurement purposes have equated the term with accuracy of prediction of another's values, attitudes, beliefs, etc. It is the contention of this study that while accuracy may very well be an outcome of empathic communication, equating empathy with accuracy causes us to lose sight of the processes involved in moving toward understanding. Therefore, the next section will present a "reconceptualization" of empathy which focuses more on the processes involved than the outcomes. It is the position of this study that the following presentation of empathy, while perhaps departing somewhat from the "normal" use of the term, will make it a more useful concept for students of interpersonal communication.

A Reconceptualization of Empathy

A Model of Empathy

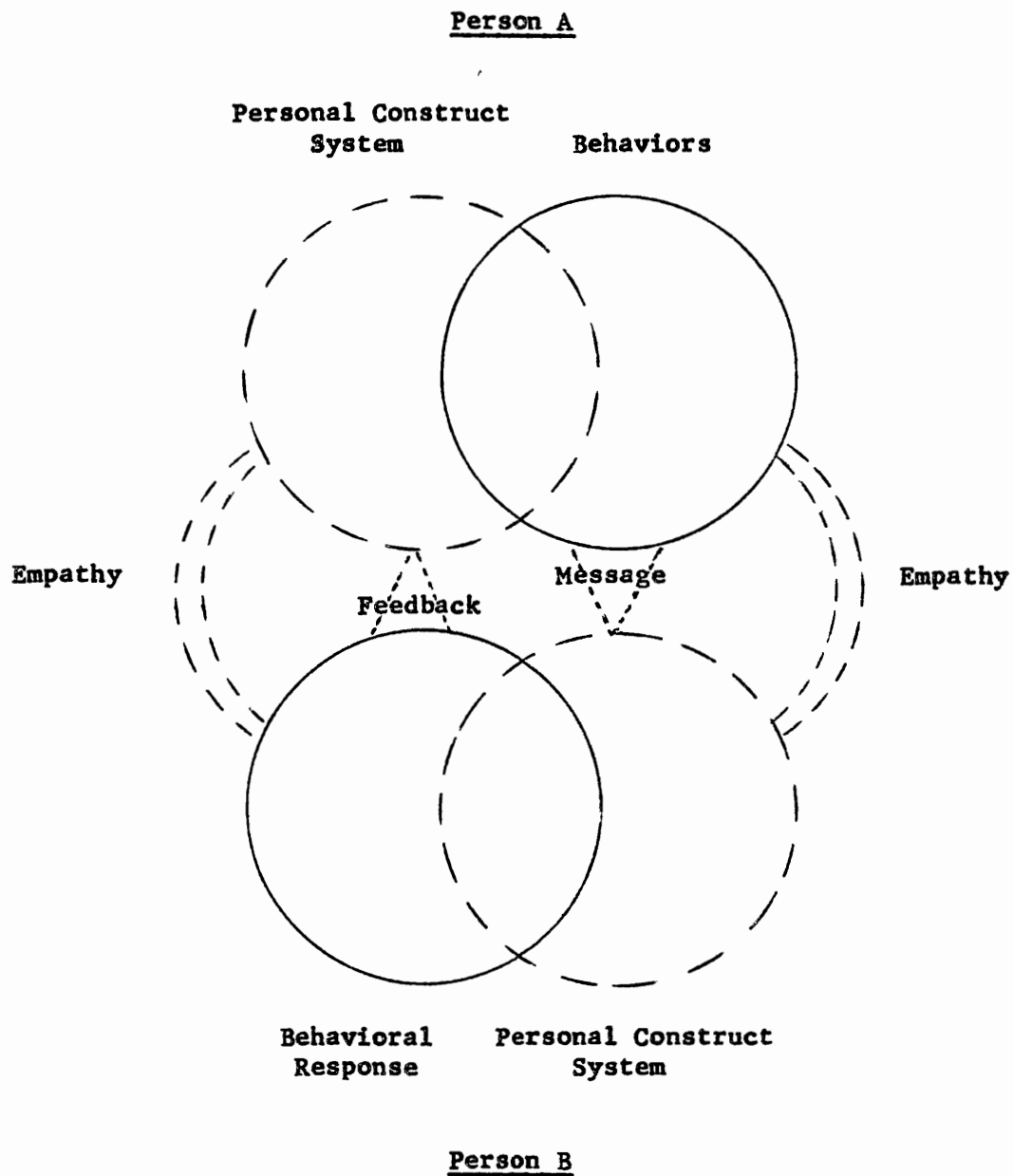
The model of communication presented in this section is an adaptation of the Patton and Giffin model (1974), modified to include the empathy component. The model is depicted in figure 1. The two participants in interpersonal communication are each represented by two overlapping circles, one with solid lines and one with broken lines. The broken-line circles represent the personal construct system of the individuals, as discussed earlier by Kelly. The solid-line circles stand for the observable communicative behaviors of the individuals. Arrows connecting each person's communicative behaviors to the other's personal construct system represent the message and feedback components of the process. Empathy, the characteristics of which will be discussed shortly, is portrayed as being on-going, dynamic, and circular.

Of course, it must be realized that no model can accurately portray communication as a process. It seems redundant to discuss all the limitations and/or advantages of using models to represent complex processes, but these must be kept in mind (as well as the limitations of using language to describe the models) during the discussion of empathy.

Presented next is a definition of empathy, followed by an elaboration of certain characteristics of empathy as it relates to the interpersonal communication process. These characteristics are presented using the ideas and language of the authors discussed in the preceding section.

Figure I.

**A Model of Empathy in the
Interpersonal Communication Process**



Definition of Empathy

Empathy is defined here as the component of the interpersonal communication process which allows participants in an interpersonal encounter to move toward understanding. Empathy involves focusing of attention on the other's needs, wants, and intentions during interpersonal interaction. It involves putting forth effort, intentionally or spontaneously, to continuously construe the other's point of view. The "presence" of empathy in interaction is defined on a continuum and can be observed in the encounter to varying degrees as long as the participants are constantly seeking each other's perspective. It's presence can be "determined" both by examining the nature of the communication that takes place between two individuals and by questioning the internal state of the individuals involved in the encounter.

Characteristics of Empathy

It involves focusing attention on the other. As has been continually emphasized in this paper, persons construe their worlds from particular points of view. A common tendency is to see things almost exclusively from our own point of view. We don't often really think about the fact that others may have different ways of interpreting experience, and we often fail to seek the other's perspective when we do realize this. To the extent that we focus on our own point of view during interaction, we can say that we are egocentric (Swanson and Delia, 1976). Empathy is the opposite of egocentrism in that it involves focusing attention on the other's needs, wants, and intentions rather than on our own. It means that we get away from our own perspective somewhat and direct our thoughts toward the other's way of looking at things.

It involves effort. Focusing attention on the other person is not at all an easy thing to do. While we have the capacity to interpret the interpretive systems of others, the act of doing so requires some degree of effort. As discussed above, we have a very natural tendency to be egocentric in communicating with others. It becomes important that the participants in an encounter are committed to moving toward some kind of mutual understanding. A desire to discover and learn about the other person seems almost necessary for empathy to be at work. This effort may not always be conscious and/or intentional, but it is required to various degrees. Whether or not participants move toward understanding through empathy will depend to a great extent, then, on the efforts of the communicators to take each other's point of view.

It involves a series of "guesses". Empathy is not an "all-or-nothing" phenomenon, something that one does or does not do. It involves an "infinite series of successive approximations" to use Kelly's terms. When we are trying to determine another's frame of reference, we first make a "guess" as to where that person is coming from. We then seek more information and make another guess, and another, and so on, until some kind of satisfactory understanding is approached as to the person's point of view. In other words, empathy entails formulating a construct about the other's frame of reference, testing it for its usefulness, and either maintaining it or reformulating the construct. It is then retested time and again.

It is not an absolute process. While empathy involves such things as "seeing the world through another person's eyes" or "putting ourselves in another person's shoes", this can never be completely accomplished. We can never become another person. As Swanson and Delia (1976) point

out: ". . . total and complete understanding between persons is probably a goal never achieved" (p. 19). We can, however, erect a structure within the framework of which the other's interpretation of the world or of us as a communicator takes shape or assumes meaning. This is a continuous process and is what we mean when we say "take the role of the other", "construe the other's constructions", or "seek the other's point of view". When Kelly speaks of construing the other's constructions, he means that we note features in a series of behaviors which characterize some of the behaviors and are particularly uncharacteristics of others. Thus we erect constructs of similarity and contrast. This is never an absolute process, but is an approximation of what is "really there", so to speak. As discussed above, these constructions must be continually adjusted during interaction. Thus, empathy allows two individuals to move toward varying degrees of understanding.

It is influenced by variables in the communication process. As part of the communication process, empathy may be influenced by the variables in that process. Our efforts to continuously seek the other's point of view may be more persistent in some situations than in others. Because empathy is not an all-or-nothing phenomenon, it is continually influenced and modified by the feedback in the communication process. The other's feedback, both conscious and unconscious, both verbal and non-verbal, allows us to determine how well we have construed the other's perspective. We correct and adjust our perceptions and messages, allowing us to seek some degree of intergration. Empathy, then, is part of an on-going, corrective process that is dynamic and circular. In this way, it reflects the interdependence of participants and the transactional nature of communication. Type of feedback, perception of the other, possession of

certain abilities or skills in responding, experience in interpersonal communication, general state of being at the moment, and many other factors may influence the presence of empathy in an encounter. It becomes an important task of research to explore these and other variables which might affect empathy.

It is measured by looking at communication and attitude. Few communication researchers can claim to directly measure the complex constructs with which we are concerned in the field. The same is true for the concept of empathy. Because it is essentially an intrapsychic process, it is doubtful that we will ever have a direct measure of its presence in interaction. We may, however, be able to determine whether or not empathy is characteristic of an encounter. It seems that this can be done in two ways. First, we can look at the nature of the communication between the participants. If constant attempts are being made to seek the other's point of view, these attempts should be reflected in the verbal messages that are exchanged between the communication participants. Keeping in mind the problems of self-report measures, if there is a desire present to discover or learn about the other's perspective, we should be able to ask the communicators if this attitude is present. The nature of this communication and the characteristics of this attitude will be discussed in the next section.

Summary of characteristics. In summarizing these characteristics of empathy, we have said: (1) It involves the focusing of attention on the other person; (2) It requires a degree of effort and commitment to interaction; (3) It involves an infinite series of successive approximations of the other's constructions; (4) It allows us to move toward a varying degree of understanding; (5) It is influenced by variables in

the interpersonal communication process; and (6) Its presence in a communication event can be determined by looking at the nature of the communication and the attitudes of the participant.

The Nature of Empathic Communication

Descriptive. Barnlund (1974) says that communication is facilitated when there is a capacity to create a nonevaluative atmosphere. Defenses are provoked, he says, not so much by the expectation of difference as by the expectation of criticism. When we evaluate, we are focusing attention on our own wants, needs, and intentions. We are looking at the situation from our own point of view. Our tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve, or disapprove the statements of another person is a barrier to effective communication. On the other hand, says Barnlund, we are more likely to express and examine a wider range of differences when the communication is descriptive rather than evaluative. When the intent is to comprehend rather than to attack, there is indication that the participants are seeking the other's perspective, focusing on the other's point of view. Gibb (1961) says that descriptive communication involves the presentation of feelings, events, perceptions, or processes which do not ask or imply that the receiver change behavior or attitude. Barnlund says that non-evaluative communication allows individuals to ". . . participate in each other's experience, sharing the assumptions, the perspectives, and the meanings that events hold for them" (1974, p.40). One characteristic of communication that is empathic, then, is its degree of descriptiveness.

Problem Oriented. Closely related to the problem of evaluation is the problem of control in a relationship. When we have evaluated someone

as not holding the "right" attitude, value, or belief, our very natural tendency is to change the other person's mind, to get the other to do something to change, or in some way to influence the other. In this way we take responsibility for getting the other person to see things as we see them. As evaluation means that we are viewing the situation from our own perspective, control oriented communication means that we are trying to get the other person to see it the way we do. Gibb (1961) says that communication which is used to control another invokes resistance. Problem oriented communication, on the other hand, implies that we have no predetermined solution, attitudes, or method to impose. When we communicate a desire to collaborate in defining a mutual problem and in seeking its solution, there is indication that we are seeking the other's perspective and focusing attention on the other's frame of reference. Problem oriented communication, then, is another characteristic of interaction involving empathy.

Receptive. Another barrier to communication which allows participants to move toward understanding is unreceptivity. When we seem to know all the answers, we communicate that we are not willing to enter into a shared problem-solving relationship. We indicate that we do not want to know what the other is thinking or where the other is coming from. No attempt is made to focus attention on the other. On the other hand, when we are receptive we indicate a need for additional data; we seek for clarification of the problem. We focus attention on the other; we indicate that we want to know what the other person is thinking and where the other is coming from. A third characteristic of interaction involving empathy, then, is the extent of receptivity of the communication.

Other Oriented. It has been argued throughout this paper that

viewing situations solely from our own frame of reference - a "self" orientation - is a barrier to making individual, subjective experience intersubjective or shared. Therefore, a primary characteristic of empathic communication is the degree to which we indicate that we take into account the other's frame of reference in responding. "Other" oriented communication, then, provides a fourth indication that empathy is at work in the interaction.

Caring. It has also been consistently pointed out that a lack of effort or commitment to interaction is a barrier to effective communication. It is not easy to focus attention on the other. It requires hard work and takes energy. Therefore, another primary characteristic of empathic communication is the degree to which we indicate that we are putting forth effort to understand. Empathy involves a degree of caring about whether or not the two of us move toward an understanding of each other's viewpoints. Communication of a caring attitude - in the sense that we want to move in the direction of understanding and are putting forth effort to do so - is a fifth indication that empathy is at work in the interaction.

Summary of characteristics. The nature of empathic communication is (1) descriptive, (2) problem oriented, (3) receptive, (4) "other" oriented, and (5) caring. It is not claimed here that these are the only characteristics of communication which might indicate whether or not empathy is involved in the encounter. Until further research, these will provide the make-up of one of our measures of empathy. The other measure will be the attitude of the participants, and this will be discussed in the next section.

The Nature of an Empathic Attitude

Seeking the frame of reference of another person involves some kind of desire to learn about that person. An attitude of "discovery" on the part of the participants in an encounter would seem to indicate that empathy is involved in that encounter. In some ways, an empathic attitude is one that meets the conditions for learning about someone else. If empathy is at work, we hear what the person says and we are interested in why that person said it. We wonder what the causes of the other's perception are. We would like to know the reasons for the other's statements. We feel receptive to more feedback from the person, and we feel that our attributions are flexible and may change as we acquire more information. In essence, we feel a real desire to know more, a motivation to discover where the person is coming from. In absence of this motivation it is doubtful that we will focus attention on the other person, putting forth effort to seek the other's frame of reference. Therefore, a strong indication that empathy is at work in an interpersonal encounter is the desire of the participants to know more about the other's statements, the motivation to learn where the other is coming from.

The question may arise at this point of "if we want to know whether or not a person is focusing attention on the other and putting forth effort to understand, then why don't we just ask that person?" Several considerations keep us from posing this direct question to participants. In the first place, the participants may not be aware of this process operating in them. In the course of a normal conversation, empathy may be quite spontaneous and unconscious. Second, there has been much discussion of empathy as a "desirable" form of communication in the past few years. Almost everyone knows that they "should" try to view

things from the other's perspective, and most of us would like to believe that we do. Third, a person who has made a defensive response and is aware of that defensiveness may insist that he/she was really putting forth effort to understand, because that person wants to resolve the dissonance created by the realization of the defensive response. Of course, all of these criticisms could be applied to the self-reports proposed previously. However, it is felt that questions about desires and feelings are less reactive than questions about socially desirable qualities.

A Transition Note

Because this paper has attempted to reconceptualize empathy in terms useful for communication practitioners, emphasis has been on a dynamic, on-going process. As such, it differs on some points from previous approaches to the study of empathy. The next section attempts to point out some of these differences.

Differences From Previous Conceptualizations of Empathy

Commitment to Interaction is Stressed Rather than Accuracy of Prediction

With empathy viewed as involving an infinite series of successive approximations to the other's point of view during social interaction, there is not as much concern with accuracy as in previous approaches. Most "measurements" of empathy seem to equate the concept with accuracy of prediction of another's attitudes, values, and beliefs. This is pointed out in the survey of empathy by Gompertz (1960). He says:

Underpinning most empathy tests, prediction of responsiveness or derivation of operational definition, is the effort of a subject to predict the ordinal or cardinal position of another individual or group on a scale of defined psychological dimension. These scales are based upon psychological dimensions such as abilities, attitudes, character, ego-involvement, ideals, insight, interests, morale, morality, mores, motives, social distance, social sensitivity, and tastes. (p. 359)

The term "accuracy" is an ambiguous one anyway, and most studies of perceptual accuracy have been criticized on a number of grounds. Not only is it difficult to determine the criteria for accuracy, but what appears to be accuracy may be merely projection of one's own characteristics to another who happens to be similar.

"Accuracy" in judging others may also be due to what Cronbach (Hastorf, Schneider, Polefka, 1970) calls the four components of an accuracy score - elevation, differential elevation, stereotype accuracy, and differential accuracy.

The present formulation of empathy does not concern itself as extensively with the ability of one to accurately perceive the emotional and/or personality characteristics of another as it does with the efforts one makes to continually construe the other's construction system in a way that leads toward understanding. Constant attempts to seek the other's

point of view, and continuous use of feedback in formulating messages, allow two persons to engage in effective interpersonal communication. Agreement is made here with Dance and Larson (1976) who say: "In the absence of displacement or decentering, the question of accuracy is irrelevant. Before the issue of accuracy may even be raised, decentering must have occurred" (1976, p. 118). A commitment to interaction, then, is more important than "accuracy in judging others".

Empathy is Described as a Predominately Cognitive Process

Many of the previous views of empathy seem to dwell on the affective or emotional aspects of behavior. The therapist tries to sense the other's "confusion or his timidity or his anger or his feelings of being treated unfairly" (Rogers, 1967, p. 92-93). Some have defined empathy as "an observer's reacting emotionally because he perceives that another is experiencing or is about to experience an emotion" (Stotland, et. al in Bebout, 1974, p. 395). Rogers quotes Radskin to point out that a counselor's job becomes "an active experiencing with the client of the feelings to which he gives expression" (1951, p. 29). For some writers, an attempt to be rational may interfere with empathy, preventing one from experiencing the other's feelings. In this paper, the "classical threefold division of psychology into cognition, affection, and conation" (Kelly, 1963, p. 130) is not employed. This is not to say that one does not have feelings or that they need not be understood, but it is to agree with Piaget, who said that, with regard to cognitive and affective aspects of behavior:

. . . while these two aspects cannot be reduced to a single aspect, they are nevertheless inseparable and complementary. For this reason we must not be surprised to find a marked parallelism in their respective evolutions . . . (in Bebout, 1974, p. 403).

The conceptualization of empathy presented in this paper certainly allows for one to experience feelings similar to the other in empathy, but the focus is on the process of arriving at integrative understandings of another's perceptual field by a predominately cognitive assimilation of the other's values, meanings, symbols, intentions, etc. As understanding begins to take place between the two communicators, they come to know the organization of each other's world or self view, and this includes feelings and emotions.

The Notion is Rejected That Similarity is Necessary for Empathy

In many of the previous conceptualizations, empathy is facilitated by similarity between the communicators and hindered, and perhaps rendered impossible, by major differences between communicators in values, attitudes, beliefs, experiences. As Katz (1963) says: "We find it more difficult to empathize with strangers. . . . It is a matter of common experience that we find it more difficult to establish empathy with those who are different from us. . . . We tend to empathize with those who are familiar to us or whose life situation is most similar to our own" (p. 6-7).

The present conceptualization of empathy recognizes that similarity of constructs may aid in understanding, but it rejects the idea that similarity is essential for empathy. Kelly (1963) points out that even if a person has experienced the same events as another, the two will not necessarily construe them in the same way, and two people can have similar constructions of reality even if they have each been exposed to quite different phenomenal stimuli. The important point, however, is that empathy does not rest on the assumption of similarity, but instead makes possible the bridging of differences. Every person will construe

reality in different ways, and we cannot always create a sense of understanding by referring to a common experience in the past. Empathy in interpersonal communication reduces the tendency to use ourselves as lightning rods, to judge others by our own feelings, choices, and preferences (Stewart, 1976). Assuming similarity turns our attention back on ourselves, and this preoccupation with our own feelings blunts our sensitivity to others. Empathy, where two participants are each seeking the other's point of view, allows us to communicate on a deeper level and apprehend the other person more completely.

As was pointed out in previous sections, the continuous attempt to take the role of the other is necessary for moving toward understanding in any situation, but is particularly important in intercultural situations, where few similarities can be assumed. Stewart (1976) points this out when he says that "empathy is the necessary interface in intensive interactions of intercultural communication" (p. 109).

Importance is Placed on Factors in Addition to Empathizer Characteristics

Past attempts to develop more effective empathy have focused mainly on characteristics of the empathizer. Hogan (1969) points out five items most characteristic of the empathizer: (1) This person is socially perceptive of a wide range of interpersonal cues; (2) This person is skilled in social techniques of imaginative play, pretending, and humor; (3) This person seems to be aware of the impression he/she makes on others; (4) This person has insight into his/her own motives and behavior; and (5) This person evaluates the motivation of others in interpreting situations. Grief (1973) suggests that empathic persons are characterized by a potent and forbearing nature, affiliative but socially ascendent

tendencies, and by liberal and humanistic political and religious attitudes. Katz (1963) talks about the effective empathizer as being one who respects the integrity of others, accepts himself/herself, is capable of spontaneity, tolerates anxiety, and has courage and patience to suspend judgment.

While all of these are certainly valid and useful, they were written with a unidirectional view of empathy in mind. The writers were concerned with primarily one person empathizing with another. The present view of empathy is co-directional, involving both participants in an interpersonal encounter, each seeking to construe the other's construction system for purposes of moving toward understanding. While persons possessing certain characteristics may be more adept at this than others, it is also important to consider characteristics of the encounter itself. It seems that the interpersonal climate would especially affect the efforts of the communicators to understand each other, and as there is interdependence of sender and receiver, the characteristics of the sender seem certain to affect the listener. These points are well illustrated in the following quote from Katz (1963):

Psychological understanding, as Reik observed, comes to us in a round-about way. It accrues to us - we cannot go after it. It emerges when certain conditions are ripe. . . . A most important variable in empathic understanding is . . . the response of the subject to the practitioner. Any description of empathic activity on the part of the professional presupposes his ability to establish an open and free relationship with his client. There must be an exchange of messages, of cues, both verbal and nonverbal, as well as some elusive sense of presence or personal confrontation. The patient must be willing to open himself and reveal his feelings (p. 40).

With empathy viewed in this manner, it is easy for one to see the importance of researching factors which may influence the communicators' efforts to seek each other's point of view.

Summary of Differences

The conceptualization of empathy in this paper differs from previous views on the following points: (1) More emphasis is placed on commitment to interaction, to continuous efforts to seek the other's point of view, than on accuracy of judging another's internal state; (2) The focus is on a predominately cognitive, not emotional, assimilation of the other's construct system; (3) An assumption of similarity is not essential for empathy to occur, as empathy provides for the bridging of differences; (4) Importance is given to factors in addition to empathizer characteristics, such as interpersonal climate and sender characteristics.

A Concluding Note

This chapter has presented the approaches of various authors in the field of communication and related disciplines who talk about moving toward understanding, followed by the presentation of a reconceptualization of empathy based upon the ideas of these authors. The purpose of this "rethinking" of the concept of empathy is to make the term "useful" to those involved in the study of interpersonal communication.

Now that attention has been drawn to factors other than empathizer characteristics, and now that an adequate framework exists for exploring these factors, a study is proposed to research one such factor - manner of expression. The next chapter presents the rationale and hypotheses for such a study.

CHAPTER II
THE RELATIONSHIP OF OPEN EXPRESSION TO EMPATHY
HYPOTHESES FOR STUDY

Definition and Criteria for Open Expression

MacDoniels (1972 and 1974), in his discussion of the type of feedback considered most facilitative to learning and personal growth in the small group laboratory learning experience, combined the literature on openness, or self-disclosure, with the guidelines specified by Egan (1970) and Bradford, et. al (1964) for facilitative feedback, to construct an operational definition of the construct "openness". Specifically, he coined the term "open expression" and defined it as "the offering of personal (owned) information (feelings and perceptions) about events (actions, behaviors, expressions) which are mutually relevant (related to the 'here and now') in an unambiguous manner" (MacDoniels, 1974, p. 4). An open expression, then, refers to a type of verbal statement which states the speaker's personal perception or feeling of something or someone concerning self, others, events, or behaviors that is important in the immediate situation and which includes some behavioral evidence or reason for the perception or feeling (Millar and Millar, 1976). What follows is an elaboration of the characteristics of an open message.

The Speaker's Own Personal Point of View is Expressed

An open statement has a high degree of "I-ness" contained within the verbal message. The more the individual takes clear responsibility for the perception or feeling expressed, the more open the message. When the speaker "owns" his/her statement, the listener is explicitly informed

where the speaker stands on the issue, and the listener can readily evaluate where he/she and the speaker stand in relationship to each other. The criteria for judging the openness of messages forms a continuum from "I" to some unidentified "other" (see figure 2). When generalized sources are stated to believe or feel something, the listener cannot assess the information in the message, nor can he/she understand the speaker's stance on the particular belief asserted. Therefore, the listener cannot readily determine where he/she stands in relationship to the speaker. Understanding thus becomes more difficult.

The Origin of the Perception, Feeling, or Thought is Specified

In an open statement the speaker directs his/her statement specifically to the person he/she is talking about, or he/she pin-points what events or what aspects of the event are being discussed. The more that the origin is specified, the more open the expression. When the speaker specifies the source or origin of his/her statements, the listener can more easily understand him/her, because clearer data are presented. The dimension of specificity forms a continuum from identifying a particular individual or event to referring to a vague, unidentifiable collection of people (see figure 2). When the latter end of the continuum is used, it is difficult to determine what the speaker is basing his/her perception or feeling on, and it may be difficult to move toward understanding.

The Immediate Situation is Addressed

An open message has immediate space-time relevance. The more the statement expresses something relevant to both participants at the present time, the more open the message. When statements address the immediate

	OPEN - - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	NOT OPEN
DEGREE OF "I-NESS"	Speaker clearly takes responsibility for the perception or feeling. "I think . . .", "I feel . . ."	Speaker includes himself in a group. "We feel . . .", "We think . . ."	Speaker identifies some group, but doesn't clearly include himself: "Some of us . . .", "Some People . . ."	Speaker identifies some large collection of people: "The American Public. . .", "This culture . . ."	
ORIGIN OF FEELING OR PERCEPTION	A particular person/object is referred to:	An identifiable group is specified which clearly includes that person/object:	An identifiable group is specified, but the person/object is not clearly included.	A vague, unidentifiable collection of people/objects is referred to.	
(Person)	"John, you . . ."	"Susan, your work group . . ."	"Some people at Operation Friendship. . ."	"Americans . . ."	
(Object)	"The American custom of shaking hands. . ."	"American greeting customs . . ."	"American customs . . ."	"All these things that Americans do . . ."	
SPATIAL-TEMPORAL REFERENCE	Speaker refers to here and now: "Right now I feel . . ."	Speaker refers to there and now: "I still feel confused about what happened . . ."	Speaker refers to there and not now. "I really felt like going home . . ."	Speaker gives no spatial-temporal reference "I remember how I used to believe . . ."	
CITATION OF BEHAVIORAL EVIDENCE	A specific behavior is cited "I feel confused when my teacher speaks so fast".	A class or set of behaviors is referred to: "My advisor's mannerisms make me upset".	A class or set of behaviors are implied, but no specific behavior is mentioned: "Some of the things my roommate does make me angry"	No behavioral reasons are given, no justification is given. "I really don't like Americans!"	

Figure 2

OPEN EXPRESSION

Summary of Criteria

situation, it has relevance for both participants and helps them evaluate their current level of understanding and relationship to one another. A continuum of mutual relevance can be specified ranging from the "here and now" to no spatial-temporal reference given (see figure 2). When expressions are not relevant to both participants in the current interaction, the listener has no way of knowing if the feeling or perception is currently operative, and misunderstanding may result.

Behavioral Evidence is Cited for the Information Expressed

An open statement refers to why the speaker feels, thinks, or intends what he/she does. The behaviors are cited on which the speaker bases the information he/she transmits. The more behaviorally specific the justification given for the perception or feeling expressed, the more open the expression. When the speaker explicitly states why and on what behaviors his/her perceptions or feelings are based, the listener can understand his/her messages more readily. The continuum for this characteristic ranges from citing a specific behavior to implying a class or set of behaviors (see figure 2). When no reasons, rationale, or cause is cited for the perception or feeling, the expression may be perceived as a judgment (see discussion below), and defensive responses may result.

Summary of Criteria

An open expression is one which: (1) Expresses the speaker's own personal point of view; (2) Clearly specifies the origin of the perception, feeling or thought; (3) Addresses the immediate situation; and (4) Cites behavioral evidence for the information expressed. Figure 2 illustrates these characteristics on a continuum of open to non-open expression.

Open Expression as it Relates to Empathy

When statements are owned by the speaker, communication is possible which focuses on the speaker's perspective rather than on each participant defending his/her own view and trying to persuade the other. As the origin of the information is clearly specified, the listener can know where the speaker is coming from and may be inclined to probe further. Statements that address the immediate situation directly involve the listener as well as the speaker, and therefore may be more likely to elicit the listener's attention and involvement. Finally, citing behavioral evidence for the perception or feeling implies that the speaker is flexible and welcomes input from the listener.

It is suggested, then, that open expression enhances empathy by triggering a desire to learn more about a person's statements, and by facilitating the use of descriptive, problem oriented, receptive, "other" oriented, and caring communication. What follows is an elaboration of why open expression may enhance empathy.

A Decision is Implied Rather than a Judgement

Millar and Millar (1976) discuss the difference between a thoughtful decision and a judgment. The distinction between judgments and decisions is a subtle one. A judgment expresses a belief, perception, or evaluation which is claimed to be absolutely true, implying that the speaker will not change his/her mind. Judgments state an absolute property of something or a person; they assert some belief which is assumed to be true. A judgment includes the implication that evidence is provided, but it is not necessarily stated. The speaker may find reasons which support his/her view, but his/her mind is set before looking for supporting evidence.

A decision, on the other hand, states that because of a certain set of reasons, behaviors, observations, etc., the speaker has decided to accept a certain perception as the most accurate one. The speaker recognizes that there is more than one way of appraising the situation, and so a different decision may be possible. Decisions are more tentative than judgments since they specify a probable relationship between some set of behaviors and some assertion. The possibility of reaching a new and different decision remains. Decisions are similar to scientific hypotheses because they are consciously made.

When statements are expressed in an open manner, it indicates that the speaker has put thought and energy into making a decision. Because decisions can be discussed and negotiated in a relatively non-threatening manner, the listener may feel free to respond and further seek the speaker's perspective. The listener may be drawn toward the speaker and his/her point of view rather than toward himself/herself and a defense of his/her ideas.

The Uniqueness of the Communicator is Expressed

There are certain pitfalls in being either too "nice" or too defensive in one's statements. Gibb (1961) deals with the result of defensive communication, which he defines as evaluation, control, strategy, superiority, and certainty. When messages are characterized by any of these, the listener may be prevented from concentrating upon the message, because he/she is "on guard" (i.e. defending himself/herself).

On the other hand, if two persons are constantly trying to say something "nice" to one another, then over time the topics of conversation may become severely limited because agreement, not understanding, becomes

the prime criterion for talk. The individuals may never come to know each other when the principal concern becomes "not-making-the-other-upset" (Millar and Millar, 1976). Differences between persons are inevitable, and they must be discussed and explored if understanding is to be approached. When conversations are geared to being nice and not open, then the individuality of each person is denied and/or avoided, and empathy is not working in the interaction. Open expressions transmit the uniqueness of each communicator's self, involving them with each other in seeking understanding.

Useful Information About the Speaker is Disclosed

Watzlawick, et. al (1967) believe that all messages contain information about the speaker's perception about the relationship between himself/herself and his/her listeners. For example, nuances of word choice and nonverbal properties of the voice enable listeners to draw systematic inferences about the speaker (Pearce and Sharp, 1973). Under some conditions, however, individuals consciously make themselves the subject of their messages. Communication behavior in which the speaker deliberately makes himself/herself known to the other is called "self-disclosure" (Pearce and Sharp, 1973). Several scholars point to the importance of self-disclosure in interpersonal relationships. Their reasoning is usually based in the principle that the receiver will be most likely to create the meaning intended by the speaker if he/she knows a good deal about that person.

Open expression, having a high degree of "I-ness", involves some degree of self-disclosure by the speaker. Several authors indicate that self-disclosure is helpful as persons attempt to move toward understanding.

Egan (1973) says that self-disclosure "draws the listener out of himself and toward the speaker" (p. 48). Pearce and Sharp (1973) say that self-disclosure "consists of descriptions of the speaker's experience which invite the listener to share and respond empathically" (p. 415). Tubbs and Baird (1976) say that ". . . disclosures in which the discloser shows a genuine, sincere, and subjective personal involvement about present events, encourage genuine and empathic involvement from the listener" (p. 10). Haney (1974) points out that "even if there are genuine differences, under conditions of openness people find themselves more capable of dealing with them maturely" (p. 203). According to Millar and Millar (1976): "If we are to share parts of our experience, we must be open and honest with others and with ourselves. . . . In so doing we learn about ourselves and others" (p. 129-130). Finally, Brooks and Emmert (1976) talk about the relation of self-disclosure to understanding in the following way: ". . . by engaging in open, honest, and revealing communications about ourselves, we enable people to know us better . . . (and) they may respond to us in a more open manner" (p. 86).

Since open expressions contain a degree of self-disclosure, then, the efforts of two persons seeking understanding may be enhanced. Revealing feelings and perceptions to one another in an open and honest way may help communicators to seek each other's point of view. When one participant discloses something relevant to the other, the listener may be invited to respond empathically.

Summary of Relationship

Open expression may be related to empathy because of the following reasons: (1) It implies a decision rather than a judgment; (2) It is

neither too "nice" or too defensive; (3) It involves self-disclosure of the speaker.

A Note on the Appropriateness of Open Expression

The making of open statements is both time consuming and risky. Often there is not the time nor is it appropriate to state the basis for one's beliefs. Statements that encourage discussion and negotiation should not be made unless one is willing to discuss and negotiate. This implies, of course, a willingness to change one's point of view, the courage to be imperfect, and the willingness to accept one's mistakes. Open statements, then, are a matter of choice. One criterion that Millar and Millar (1976) suggest for making this choice is the existence of a person-to-person relationship, rather than a role-to-role relationship. They argue that open statements are appropriate when two individuals are attempting to establish, maintain, or change a personal relationship. They maintain that open expression may be either irrelevant and/or detrimental when the relationship is teacher-to-student, employer-to-employee, etc. The information may be used against the speaker in the competitive politics of an organization, or it may cause the "reverse halo effect" discussed by Egan (1970, p. 211). Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that open expression may enhance the process of empathy when the relationship is person-to-person and one (or both) of the participants is (are) motivated to understand the other (each other).

Hypotheses for Study

The preceeding discussion has attempted to show how open expression may act to enhance the empathy process in the sense of drawing the listener toward the speaker, inviting the listener to seek the speaker's perspective, and encouraging the listener to sustain his/her efforts in making an infinite series of successive approximations of the speaker's outlooks. Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses are suggested for study:

A. Empathic Communication Hypotheses

- I. When one of the participants in an interpersonal encounter makes statements using a high degree of open expression, the other participant's response will be more descriptive than evaluative, than when statements with similar content are made using non-open expression.
- II. When one of the participants in an interpersonal encounter makes statements using a high degree of open expression, the other participant's response will be more problem oriented than control oriented, than when statements with similar content are made using non-open expression.
- III. When one of the participants in an interpersonal encounter makes statements using a high degree of open expression, the other participant's response will be more receptive than unreceptive, than when statements with similar content are made using non-open expression.
- IV. When one of the participants in an interpersonal encounter makes statements using a high degree of open expression, the other participant's response will be more "other" oriented than "self" oriented, than when statements with similar content are made using non-open expression.
- V. When one of the participants in an interpersonal encounter makes statements using a high degree of open expression, the other participant's response will be more caring than non-caring, than when statements with similar content are made using non-open expression.

B. Empathic Attitude Hypothesis

- I. When one of the participants in an interpersonal encounter makes statements using a high degree of open expression, the other participant will report a greater desire to know more about that person's statements, than when statements with similar content are made using non-open expression.

The next chapter will report the design and procedures of a laboratory study designed to test these hypotheses.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Following a pilot study, the hypotheses which were developed in the last chapter were tested in a single experiment involving three conditions. The three conditions were: (1) low-level of open expression (non-open); (2) high-level of open expression (personal-open); and (3) high-level of open expression (non-personal open). The context for the experiment involved American students' responses to foreign students who made criticisms of various aspects of American culture. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions and instructed to read what was supposedly an excerpt from tapes we had made in the laboratory of American and foreign students discussing their roommate problems. All subjects were informed that the statements they were reading were made by the foreign student to their American roommate. All statements read by the subjects were criticisms of some aspect of American life. Subjects in condition one read criticisms which were stated in a non-open manner; subjects in condition two read criticisms which were stated in a very open manner and addressed to issues directly involving the roommate; subjects in condition three read criticisms which were stated in an open manner and addressed to issues involving a friend down the hall. The content of these criticisms was randomly varied over three topics. The topics were: (1) discrimination against minorities; (2) lack of knowledge of other cultures; and (3) energy waste. An analysis of variance was conducted between these three content areas to insure similarity of content. The procedure and results are reported in the next chapter. All subjects were first asked to write down their

response to the foreign student who had made these statements. They were then asked to respond to a thirty-three item questionnaire. All subjects were debriefed following the collection of data. A total of 90 subjects responded to the questionnaire.

The remainder of this chapter contains a more detailed explanation of the procedures used in the experiment.

Preparation of the Stimulus Material

The criticisms which were used as stimulus material were gathered using a three-step process. First, interviews were conducted with four foreign students from the countries of Saudia Arabia, Iran, Venezuela, and Thailand. The purpose of these interviews was to get a general idea of the basic criticisms that foreign students generally express about the United States. From these interviews, four basic criticisms were selected as the ones which were made by all four interviewees and expressed with some degree of intensity. These were: (1) inappropriate ideas concerning friendship; (2) discrimination against minorities; (3) lack of knowledge of other countries; and (4) energy waste.

Second, these four criticisms were discussed with foreign graduate students in the Department of Speech and Drama. Each of these persons was asked to choose one of the criticisms and restate it in their own words, using a one-paragraph format. The graduate students who restated the criticisms were from the countries of Taiwain, Nigeria, Israel, and Germany.

Third, these four criticisms were each reworded three different ways to fit the three conditions of the experiment. Each rewording carefully followed the definitions of open-expression as presented in chapter II.

A careful attempt was also made to keep the content the same in all three rewordings. Informal checks with graduate students and professors in the Department of Speech Communication confirmed the validity of these attempts.

The first criticism (inappropriate ideas concerning friendship) was used in the pilot study. The other three were used as stimulus material for the experiment. Appendix A contains a transcript of each of the nine rewordings used in the experiment.

The Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted for two reasons. First, there was some doubt as to whether simply reading statements made by a foreign student would have experimental realism for the subjects. It was reasoned that reading the statements would offer more control than listening to the criticisms on tape, but that hearing the criticisms would have greater experimental realism. If the procedure of reading the statements could be shown to have equal experimental realism as the procedure of playing the tapes, the former procedure would be used.

Second, it was felt that a "practice run" would be desirable in order to locate any major flaws in the procedures. Finding out about these "trouble spots" before the actual experiment was conducted seemed worth the effort of a pilot study.

Two stimulus tapes were prepared by having a graduate student from Taiwan audio-record the same criticism (inappropriate ideas concerning friendship) worded in an open manner and a non-open manner. The tape was re-recorded several times until it was felt that the statements sounded natural and spontaneous. Fifteen men and twelve women from the

basic speech program subject pool volunteered for the study as participants. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: (1) taped stimulus/open expression; (2) written stimulus/open expression; (3) taped stimulus/non-open expression; and (4) written stimulus/non-open expression. All subjects responded to a written questionnaire which included various questions related to the hypotheses and related to the question of experimental realism. All subjects also informally discussed the realism of the cover story and stimulus material with the experimenter.

No significant differences were found from the questionnaire between the taped stimulus and the written stimulus ($t=.95$, $p>.10$). The informal discussion with the subjects supported this finding. Therefore, it was decided that written stimulus statements, which controlled for extraneous variables such as reactive effects of sex, accent, nationality, etc., would be more appropriate for the experiment than taped stimulus statements. The procedures for the experiment were carried out smoothly, so no significant changes were made.

Subjects

Fifty-eight women and thirty-two men (N-90) enrolled in the introductory speech classes at the University of Kansas volunteered for the experiment and received course credit for their participation. Subjects were scheduled in groups of various sizes from one to eight. Subjects within each group were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions. Two questionnaires were eliminated from the study because the subjects did not follow directions, leaving a total of eighty-eight responses to be analyzed.

Procedures

After each group of subjects arrived and were seated, the Experimenter distributed Consent Forms required by the Advisory Committee on Human Experimentation (Appendix B).

The Experimenter began,

"Before we begin here, let me ask you to please read and sign the Consent Form I have given to you. It says, essentially, that you are volunteering for this study. I'll come around and collect them to get them out of your way."

After collecting the Consent Forms, the Experimenter continued,

"Now let me pass out a sheet which gives you some background information and purpose of this study. After you have read it, I will go over the main points with you to make sure the procedures are clear".

After passing out the background information (Appendix C) and giving subjects time to read over the handout, the Experimenter continued,

"As you can see, what we are interested in is your impression of the foreign student who discussed his/her roommate problems with his/her roommate in our laboratory last semester. We want to know what kinds of impressions you form and how you would react to that person based on the limited knowledge of a few statements that you will read. Of course, we're going to ask you to make a lot of inferences based on a limited amount of information, but it's something we do all the time. When we meet someone at a party, we quickly decide whether or not to continue talking with that person. The same principle works here.

"What I will do, then, is give you an excerpt from the tapes that we made last semester, and ask you to read the statements carefully. I'll then collect these statements and hand out a questionnaire. Before I do that, let me emphasize that we are not interested in your individual answers. We are not trying to figure out if you would make a good roommate for this foreign student. All the data will be combined statistically, so it is important that you are honest in giving your answers.

"OK, if there are no questions, I will pass out the excerpts. Please be sure to read them carefully."

After the excerpts (Appendix A) had been passed out, read, and collected again, the Experimenter handed out the questionnaire (Appendix D).

As these were being passed out, the Experimenter continued,

"You can see that the first question asks you to respond to the foreign student as if he/she had said these things to you. That is, imagine that you are the American roommate. Be sure and respond to the foreign student as if you were talking to this person. That is, don't simply give your opinion of the statements you read, but write down what you would say to this person in response to what he/she said. OK, you can begin now, and I will let you know when five minutes are up."

When the five minutes were passed, the Experimenter said,

"OK, you can turn the page and complete the questionnaire. Take your time, as you will need to wait until everyone is finished to do one more thing."

When all subjects had completed the questionnaire, the Experimenter collected them and begin the debriefing as follows:

"Now let me explain a little more about my research. I've been working with foreign students here for about three years now. My job consists mainly of promoting American and foreign student relationships. As you probably know, there are many barriers to effective cross-cultural interaction. One thing that seems to present a particularly difficult barrier is the criticisms that foreign students make about the United States. We don't exactly care for an outsider to criticize things that are important to us. Now it would be naive for me to advocate that foreign students would make more American friends if they would criticize less. I think that criticisms are both natural and healthful. However, one thing that I do think makes a difference is the manner in which one states a criticism.

"What I've tried to do is define a continuum of what is called open expression, and I've used this continuum to state criticisms in various ways. Some of you received statements which were worded in a very closed manner, such as this . . . (example given). Others of you received statements which were worded in a very open manner, such as this . . . (example given). Basically, open expression is defined as . . . (explanation given).

"The overall construct I am interested in here is empathy. I want to know if people will put forth more effort to understand someone when they use open expression rather than non-open expression. If this study supports my hypotheses, then I can perhaps use this in orientation programs for new foreign students. That is, I can teach about the use of open expression and argue that it may help Americans to try and understand them.

"Although these statements you read were not actually from tapes of roommate discussions, they do represent actual criticisms made

by foreign students. However, let me emphasize that we purposefully focused in this study on criticisms. I don't want to leave you with the impression that foreign students have only bad things to say about the United States. I assure you that they are very interesting people to get to know, and I hope that you will have the opportunity to become friends with someone from another country.

"Thank you for your participation in the study. I appreciate your cooperation very much and I hope you have gained some insights into why people do research and how it is done. Hopefully, this should give you a better basis for evaluating the findings reported in your textbooks. Many of the statements made there are based on research such as this. If you have any more questions, I will be glad to talk with you. The only other thing I need to ask is that you do not talk with anyone about this experiment until after Spring break. You can easily see that a person who knew about the purpose of the study could bias the results. Again, thank you very much."

Measures

Following the presentation of the stimulus, subjects in all three conditions responded to a three-part questionnaire (see Appendix D). They were first asked to write their response to the foreign student as if he/she had made the statements to them in the context of a roommate relationship. They were next asked to indicate their extent of agreement/disagreement to a number of Likert-type statements. Finally, they were asked to give certain demographic data. A more detailed description of the three parts of the questionnaire, along with the procedures for analyzing the data from these instruments, is given below.

Empathic communication measures. As indicated above, subjects were asked to write down their response to the person who made the statements they had read. Following the completion of the data gathering process, four graduate students in the Department of Speech Communication and Human Relations were recruited as judges for rating the subjects' responses on 5 seven-point bi-polar scales. The scales were constructed

from the hypotheses stated earlier and included the following dimensions: (1) evaluation/description; (2) control orientation/problem orientation; (3) unreceptivity/receptivity; (4) "self" orientation/"other" orientation; (5) non-caring/caring. The judges were trained on the meaning of each of the scales by means of the following: (1) a handout giving a description of each end of the scale (see Appendix E); (2) examples of responses which would be rated at the high end of each scale; and (3) a short practice run to make sure everyone understood. In addition, the judges were experienced in the use of these concepts through graduate study in human relations and teacher-experience in the basic interpersonal communication course. Each judge received a number of responses which he/she rated alone, and each judge rated a number of responses together with every other judge. From those responses which were rated by two judges (a total of 46 responses), an interjudge reliability score (using Pearson product moment correlations) was calculated to determine if there were significant differences between judges. An overall inter-rater reliability coefficient of .847 was found. This indicates that judges agreed among themselves as to the rating particular responses should be given. It also indicates that the criteria for judging the responses were relatively clear and unambiguous. Appendix F contains a more detailed description of the inter-rater reliability.

The scores received from the judges' ratings were analyzed using a one-way analysis of variance between the three experimental conditions. Where judges differed on a particular rating, the mean of their ratings was used as the score to be included in the analysis.

Empathic attitude measures. Several Likert-type statements were included in part two of the questionnaire which were thought to be a way

of tapping the empathic attitude which was discussed earlier in this paper. These statements were embedded in a longer questionnaire which included other Likert-type statements (see below). These were all scored on a seven-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The mid-point was defined as undecided. Subjects were asked to indicate their agreement/disagreement with each of the statements by circling their choice of answers. The statements were randomly worded positively or negatively to discourage a positive or negative response set. The responses to these statements were analyzed first by factor analysis and then with one-way analyses of variance between experimental conditions of the scale score of those questions which loaded on interpretable factors.

Other "interesting" measures. As a way of embedding the statements thought to tap empathic attitude into a longer questionnaire, and as a way of making other comparisons based on intuitive speculations, a number of other Likert-type statements were included in the questionnaire. These statements related to attraction, trust, perceived self-disclosure, character of speaker, and emotional arousal. None of these questions dealt specifically with the hypotheses proposed for this study.

Demographic data. The final part of the questionnaire asked for various information about the subject. Again, none of these questions were related to the experimental hypotheses. They were included as a way of reporting subject characteristics.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The results of the experiment are presented in four sections. First, a report is given on the manipulation checks. Then, the results of the judges' ratings of the subjects' responses are reported. Next, results of the questionnaire dealing with empathic attitude are examined. Finally, a summary of the demographic data is presented.

Report on Manipulation Checks

Two different checks were included in the experiment. First a series of one-way analyses of variance were conducted for the five empathic communication scales across the three message content areas to check on similarity of content of the criticisms. Second, the degree of experimental realism was assessed by the last item of the questionnaire.

Similarity of message content. As reported earlier, three message content criticisms were used as stimulus material in the experiment. These were: (1) discrimination against minorities; (2) lack of knowledge of other countries; and (3) energy waste. Each of the five scales of empathic communication was used to conduct a series of one-way analyses of variance between these message content areas (Table 1). The five one-way analyses of variance yielded only one significant main effect; an F ratio of 3.313 (df=2,87, $p < .04$) was obtained for the problem oriented / control oriented scale. However, on the multiple range test none of the pairs of means differed significantly from each other.

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF ANALYSES OF VARIANCE FOR
EMPATHIC COMMUNICATION SCALES BY
MESSAGE CONTENT

SCALE 1 - DESCRIPTIVE / EVALUATIVE

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	12.2326	6.1163	1.417	.247
WITHIN GROUPS	85	366.9619	4.3172		
TOTAL	87	379.1945			

SCALE 2 - PROBLEM ORIENTED / CONTROL ORIENTED

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	27.3143	13.6571	3.313	.040
WITHIN GROUPS	85	350.3865	4.1222		
TOTAL	87	377.7008			

SCALE 3 - RECEPTIVE / UNRECEPTIVE

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	22.5530	11.2765	2.533	.083
WITHIN GROUPS	85	378.4669	4.4526		
TOTAL	87	401.0199			

SCALE 4 - "OTHER" ORIENTED / "SELF" ORIENTED

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	16.9386	8.4693	2.168	.118
WITHIN GROUPS	85	332.1196	3.9073		
TOTAL	87	349.0582			

TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

<u>SCALE 5 - CARING / NON-CARING</u>					
SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	15.2871	7.6436	1.917	.151
WITHIN GROUPS	85	338.9601	3.9878		
TOTAL	87	354.2472			

Degree of experimental realism. The final item of the questionnaire asked subjects if they were able to imagine a foreign student speaking to them when they read the excerpts. The mean response to this item was 5.205, indicating that a good deal of experimental realism was achieved. In fact, 62.5% of the subjects indicated a high or very high degree of experimental realism. Evidently, then, subjects had no trouble picturing a foreign student talking to them and giving these criticisms. Also, the degree of experimental realism was similar in all conditions. The mean response in condition 1 was 5.133, in condition 2 was 5.107, and in condition 3 was 5.367.

Analysis of Empathic Communication

It was hypothesized that open expression would elicit responses that would be judged to be more descriptive than evaluative, more problem oriented than control oriented, more receptive than unreceptive, more "other" oriented than "self" oriented, and more caring than non-caring. As described in the last chapter, these hypotheses were tested by having judges rate subjects' responses to a foreign student (written statements) who criticized various aspects of American culture in either (1) a non-open manner, (2) an open/personal manner, or (3) an open/non-personal manner. It was expected that subjects in condition two and three would respond more positively than subjects in condition one. That is, open/personal and open/non-personal statements were expected to elicit the highest degree of empathic communication. Non-open statements were expected to elicit the least degree of empathic communication. For each of the five scales, a one-way analysis of variance between experimental conditions was carried out, and a multiple range test was employed.

Table 2 reports the results of the judges' ratings of the subjects' responses. The analysis of variance showed highly significant ($p < .001$) results on each of the five scales. Table 3 reports the results of the multiple range tests (Tukey-B procedure). In every case the non-open condition received significantly ($p < .001$) lower ratings than the other two conditions. In every case, also, the open/personal condition received higher ratings than the open/non-personal condition, although this was significant only for the descriptive/evaluative scale and the receptive/unreceptive scale. The differences on these two scales between the open/personal and open/non-personal conditions was not hypothesized.

In summary, then, the results strongly support the hypotheses that responses to open expression will be judged more empathic than responses to non-open expression. A significant F ratio was obtained on each of the five empathic communication scales, with the mean of the non-open group significantly lower than the means of each of the open groups. Interestingly, on two of the scales the mean of the open/personal group was significantly higher than the mean of the open/non-personal group. Thus, responses to open expression were more descriptive, problem oriented, receptive, other oriented, and caring than responses to non-open expression.

Analysis of Empathic Attitude

It was hypothesized that subjects who were exposed to open expression would report a more empathic attitude toward the speaker than subjects who were exposed to non-open expression. As described in the last chapter, this hypothesis was tested by having subjects respond to a thirty-three item questionnaire in which several questions

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF ANALYSES OF VARIANCE FOR
EMPATHIC COMMUNICATION SCALES

SCALE 1 - DESCRIPTIVE / EVALUATIVE

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	100.3765	50.1883	15.300	<.001
WITHIN GROUPS	85	278.8180	3.2802		
TOTAL	87	379.1945			

SCALE 2 - PROBLEM ORIENTED / CONTROL ORIENTED

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	84.5259	42.2629	12.253	<.001
WITHIN GROUPTS	85	293.1749	3.4491		
TOTAL	87	377.7008			

SCALE 3 - RECEPTIVE / UNRECEPTIVE

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	76.5455	38.2727	10.026	<.001
WITHIN GROUPS	85	324.4744	3.8173		
TOTAL	87	401.0199			

SCALE 4 - "OTHER" ORIENTED / "SELF" ORIENTED

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	67.4492	33.7246	10.179	<.001
WITHIN GROUPS	85	281.6090	3.3130		
TOTAL	87	349.0582			

TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)

<u>SCALE 5 - CARING / NON-CARING</u>					
SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	61.3603	30.6801	8.904	<.001
WITHIN GROUPS	85	292.8869	3.4457		
TOTAL	87	354.2472			

TABLE 3
 MULTIPLE RANGE TESTS (TUKEY-B PROCEDURE) FOR
 EMPATHIC COMMUNICATION SCALES¹

SCALE	TYPE OF STIMULUS STATEMENT		
	<u>Non-open</u>	<u>Open/Personal</u>	<u>Open/Nonpersonal</u>
<u>Descriptive/Evaluative</u>	1.98	4.60	3.47
<u>Problem oriented/ Control oriented</u>	2.23	4.61 _a	3.76 _a
<u>Receptive/Unreceptive</u>	2.43	4.73	3.57
<u>Other-oriented/ Self-oriented</u>	2.38	4.29 _a	4.17 _a
<u>Caring/Non-caring</u>	2.83	4.61 _a	4.58 _a

¹Means in the same row which share the same subscript do not differ significantly at $p < .05$.

were embedded related to desire to know more about what the speaker meant by his/her statements. It was expected that subjects who were exposed to open expression would report a more positive attitude than subjects who were exposed to non-open expression. In the first step of analyzing the results, a factor analysis of the entire questionnaire was performed to determine those questions which did not load on any of the factors. Questions which were not interpretable on any of the factors were eliminated, and a second factor analysis was performed using the questions which remained. Those questions which loaded on factor one, which was labeled "Empathic Attitude", were combined to form a single score, and a one-way analysis of variance between conditions was performed, along with a multiple range test. This same procedure was used for factor two, the only other interpretable factor, which was labeled "Negative Affect".

The first factor analysis. The responses to the 33-item questionnaire were used to establish a correlation matrix for a factor analysis. An orthogonal rotation using the Kaiser normalized varimax procedure produced ten factors which accounted for 69.9% of the total variance. When factor loadings greater than 0.50 (and 0.30 higher than the item's loading on any other factor) were required to assign items to factors, ten of the items failed to load on any of the ten factors and were eliminated from further analysis.

The second factor analysis. The 23 items remaining were re-analyzed with the Varimax orthogonal (see Appendix G for Eigenvalues and see Appendix H for factor matrix) rotation, as well as with an oblique rotation. Table 4 lists the means and standard deviations of the 23 items. From this factor analysis, six factors emerged

TABLE 4
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE 23 ITEMS (N=88)

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
2*	4.125	2.033	20*	5.11	1.114
3*	5.318	1.758	21	4.363	1.349
4	5.568	1.529	22	5.420	1.141
5*	4.965	1.457	23*	5.465	1.164
6	5.340	1.618	24*	5.647	0.971
7*	3.738	1.860	25	5.204	1.415
10	4.602	1.542	26	5.261	1.636
11*	5.677	1.493	28*	4.477	1.755
14*	4.806	1.346	29	5.522	1.268
15*	5.011	1.816	30*	5.227	1.428
16	4.647	1.971	32	4.965	1.607
19	3.988	1.542			

*Reverse scored

accounting for 67.4% of the total variance. Of this partial variance, factor one accounted for 65.5% of the remaining variance, and factor two accounted for 10.2% of the remaining variance. Using the same criteria as earlier for assigning items to factors, only the first two factors consisted of more than two items. Factor one was composed of six items, and factor two was composed of three items. The Varimax and oblique rotations yielded approximately the same results. Items composing each factor and their associated factor loadings from the orthogonal and oblique solutions are given in Table 5 (for factor one) and Table 6 (for factor two). Factor one was labeled "Empathic Attitude", and factor two was labeled "Negative Affect". These two factors showed a correlation (from the oblique solution) of +.209.

Items on factor one reference a desire to learn about the speaker for purposes of understanding him/her. High scores on this factor represent a desire to know more about what the speaker said, interest in getting to know the speaker better, and expression of motivation to understand the speaker.

The three items loading on factor two assess the degree of negative feelings aroused by the speaker's statements. High scores on this scale represent a low need to change the speaker's opinion, a low degree of anger, and a low degree of irritation.

One-way analyses of variance. A scale score was computed for each individual by summing responses to all items on factor one. Responses were coded 1 for Strongly Disagree through 7 for Strongly Agree. Items stated in a direction opposite to the scale label were scored in reverse. A one-way analysis of variance between experimental

TABLE 5

FACTOR ONE AND ASSOCIATED LOADINGS: EMPATHIC ATTITUDE

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ORTHOGONAL</u> (Varimax)	<u>OBLIQUE</u>	
		<u>Pattern</u>	<u>Structure</u>
3. If interaction continued, I don't think the 2 of us would be able to reach an understanding of each other's point of view.	.508	-.441	-.551
4. If this person invited me to his/her room to become better acquainted, I would accept the invitation.	.730	-.573	-.781
6. The foreign student's statements made me want to know more about why he/she feels this way.	.641	-.706	-.662
11. When I heard the foreign student's statements, I felt as if I had heard all I wanted to from this person.	.708	-.683	-.760
25. If this foreign student was leading a discussion group in my speech class, I would be eager to join it.	.635	-.641	-.640
32. I have a real desire to learn more from this person.	.659	-.628	-.708

SCALE CHARACTERISTICS:

<u>Variance</u> <u>Accounted for</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>of Items</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Reliability</u>
38.4%	6	31.888	7.089	.845

TABLE 6

FACTOR TWO AND ASSOCIATED LOADINGS: NEGATIVE AFFECT

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ORTHOGONAL</u> (Varimax)	<u>OBLIQUE</u>	
		<u>Pattern</u>	<u>Structure</u>
2. In stating my opinions, I felt that I wanted to show the foreign student how he/she must be wrong or mistaken.	.576	-.523	-.586
15. The foreign student's statements made me feel angry.	.676	-.630	-.731
26. Generally, I don't feel irritated by the foreign student's statements.	.647	-.634	-.694

SCALE CHARACTERISTICS:

<u>Variance</u> <u>Accounted for</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>of Items</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Reliability</u>
7.9%	3	14.406	4.419	.725

conditions was conducted for this scale score. An F ratio of 2.538 (df=2,87, $p < .083$) was obtained. Table 7 contains a summary of the analysis of variance. While group 1 ($X=29.63$) was lower than group 2 ($X=32.46$) and group 3 ($X=33.56$), the difference was not significant.

A scale score was also computed for factor two, and a one-way analysis of variance (Table 7) was conducted for this scale score. An F ratio of 9.150 (df=2,87, $p < .001$) was obtained. A multiple range test showed that subjects in the non-open condition held significantly more negative attitudes toward the speaker than did subjects in the other two groups; the latter groups did not differ significantly.

Summary of analysis of empathic attitude. The factor analysis produced two interpretable factors which were labeled Empathic Attitude and Negative Affect. Results do not completely support the hypothesis that subjects exposed to open expression will report a more empathic attitude than subjects exposed to non-open expression. The tendency was in the right direction for the Empathic Attitude scale, but not significant at the .05 level of probability. However, a highly significant difference was obtained for the Negative Affect scale, indicating that less negative feelings are aroused by open expression than by non-open expression.

Summary of Demographic Data

As was reported earlier, a total of ninety subjects responded to the questionnaire, with two responses being eliminated because subjects did not follow directions. This left thirty-one men and fifty-seven women. All of these subjects were enrolled in the introductory

TABLE 7
 SUMMARY OF ANALYSES OF VARIANCE FOR
 INDIVIDUAL SCALE SCORES FROM QUESTIONNAIRE

<u>FACTOR ONE - EMPATHIC ATTITUDE</u>					
SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	246.3271	123.1636	2.538	<.083
WITHIN GROUPS	85	4125.2797	48.5329		
TOTAL	87	4371.6250			

<u>FACTOR TWO - NEGATIVE AFFECT</u>					
SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARES	F RATIO	P
BETWEEN GROUPS	2	300.9988	150.4995	9.150	<.001
WITHIN GROUPS	85	1398.0808	16.4480		
TOTAL	87	1699.0796			

speech classes at the University of Kansas. Questions asked of the subjects in the demographic section (see questionnaire, Appendix D) included age, year in school, type of living arrangements, size of birthplace, number of foreign student friends, amount of travel outside the United States, overseas living experience, and attitude toward foreign students. A summary of the subjects' responses to the demographic data questions appears in Table 8.

As Table 8 indicates, most of the subjects were under twenty years of age, and were freshmen or sophomores. Most of them lived in either a dorm or apartment, and most indicated that they had grown up in a large city. The majority of the subjects indicated they had few or no foreign student friends. Very few had traveled outside the United States, and only fifteen percent had lived overseas. Finally, most reported a neutral attitude toward foreign students in general.

In summary, then, the subjects appeared to be representative of the population to which the study is generalized - the "typical" college student.

Summary of Results

Report on manipulation checks. Overall, the three message content areas appeared to elicit similar responses from the subjects. Also, the stimulus material appeared to have a high degree of experimental realism.

Analysis of empathic communication. Judges' ratings of subjects' responses strongly supported the hypotheses that open expression elicits communication that is more descriptive, problem oriented, receptive, other oriented, and caring than does non-open expression. On all

TABLE 8
SUMMARY OF SUBJECTS' DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Age of Subjects

<u>AGE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>
18	26	30.1	26	2	2.3
19	23	26.1	27	1	1.1
20	17	19.3	28	1	1.1
21	4	4.5	29	1	1.1
22	3	3.4	31	1	1.1
23	1	1.1	33	2	2.3
24	2	2.3	Missing	4	4.5
			TOTAL	88	100.0
<u>MEAN AGE</u>	<u>STD DEV</u>				
20.23	3.30				

2. Year in School

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>
FRESHMAN	38	43.2	SENIOR	6	6.8
SOPHOMORE	31	35.2	SPECIAL	1	1.1
JUNIOR	8	9.1	MISSING	4	4.5
			TOTAL	88	100.0

TABLE 8 (CONTINUED)

3. Type of Residence

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>
DORM	37	42.0	WITH PARENTS	4	4.5
APARTMENT	29	33.0	OTHER	5	5.7
FRATERNITY	10	11.4	MISSING	3	3.4
			TOTAL	<u>88</u>	<u>100.0</u>

4. Birthplace

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>
LARGE CITY	51	58.0	RURAL	10	11.4
SMALL TOWN	24	27.3	MISSING	3	3.4
			TOTAL	<u>88</u>	<u>100.0</u>

5. Friends who are foreign students

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>
MANY	13	14.8	NONE	19	21.6
SOME	19	21.6	MISSING	2	2.3
FEW	35	39.8	TOTAL	<u>88</u>	<u>100.0</u>

TABLE 8 (CONTINUED)

6. Overseas Travel

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>
A LOT	15	17.0	NONE	43	48.9
SOME	8	9.1	MISSING	2	2.3
LITTLE	20	22.7	TOTAL	<u>88</u>	<u>100.0</u>

7. Overseas Living Experience

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>
MORE THAN 3 MTH	13	14.8	MISSING	2	2.3
LESS THAN 3 MTH (Not at All)	73	82.9	TOTAL	<u>88</u>	<u>100.0</u>

8. Attitude Toward Foreign Students

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>PCT</u>
POSITIVE	30	34.1	NEUTRAL	44	50.0
NEGATIVE	12	13.6	MISSING	2	2.3
			TOTAL	<u>88</u>	<u>100.0</u>

of the scales, responses to non-open expression received significantly lower ratings than responses to either open/personal or open/non-personal expression. The indication, then, is that open expression invites a higher degree of empathic communication than does non-open expression.

Analysis of empathic attitude. In contrast to the strong differences found in the behavioral measure, the self-report measure did not completely support the hypothesis that open expression invites a more empathic attitude than non-open expression. Subjects did indicate that the open expression criticisms produced less anger, irritation, and desire to control than non-open expression.

CHAPTER V

OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

An attempt has been made in this study to show the dynamic and circular nature of empathy, to present a method of "measuring" the degree of empathy present in an interaction, and to relate the basic meaning of empathy in terms readily understood by communication practitioners. Primary emphasis has been placed on the notion that factors in addition to listener abilities or characteristics influence the process of empathy. Using the framework for conceptualizing empathy that was presented in Chapter I, several hypotheses were tested in an experimental study. It was hypothesized that open expression, a communication variable, would influence the "presence" of empathy in a particular communication event. This study on open expression was conducted primarily as a way of illustrating the notion that other variables in the communication process in addition to empathizer characteristics influence one's attempts to take another's point of view. Insufficient research on the influence of such variables as characteristics of the situation, characteristics of the message, and characteristics of the receiver is thought to be one of the reasons for a general confusion among practitioners concerning the nature of empathy and its role in interpersonal communication.

The remainder of this chapter discusses in detail the implications of the results as they bear upon the major hypotheses of the study. This discussion is carried out by (1) reviewing the specific findings, (2) pointing out the significance of these findings,

(3) noting the limitations of the study, and (4) suggesting future areas of research.

A Review of Hypotheses and Findings

Empathic communication. It was predicted that subjects who read criticisms by foreign students stated in an open manner would respond with more descriptive, problem oriented, receptive, "other" oriented, and caring communication than subjects who read criticisms stated in a non-open manner. The five hypotheses related to this prediction were each strongly supported by the results of the study. Judges rated responses to non-open criticisms as being significantly less empathic than responses to either open/non-personal or open/personal criticism. On two of the scales (descriptive and receptive) open/non-personal criticism drew responses that were rated significantly less empathic than responses to open/personal criticism.

Earlier it was suggested that open expression may elicit empathic communication because: (1) It implies a decision rather than a judgment; (2) It expresses the uniqueness of the communicator; and (3) It discloses useful information about the speaker. Further research and thought on the subject suggests other reasons. Of course, each of these may be considered "alternative explanations" rather than additional rationale, but the distinction is left to the reader.

Argyle (1969) says: "During social interaction it is very common for an act by A to be followed by a similar act from B" (p. 171). He calls this "response matching", and this is similar to what others have called the "reciprocity phenomenon" (Brooks and Emmert, 1976, p. 165). Basically, it is felt by these theorists that communication of one kind

tends to elicit a similar type of communication; jokes lead to jokes, giving opinions leads to the other person giving opinions, self-disclosure leads to self-disclosure, etc. Since open expression would probably be rated high on all of the five scales used in the study, perhaps a reciprocity effect is operating here. That is, open expression may elicit empathic communication because empathic communication is similar in type to open expression. The difficulty encountered in separating which leads to the other is fully in agreement with the transactional view of communication adopted earlier.

Most theorists would agree that empathy is of little benefit unless it is communicated to the receiver, at least in terms of two persons moving toward understanding. It seems to be very important that the participants perceive each other as putting forth effort to construe each other's frame of reference. That is, our attempts to understand need to be viewed by the other as such before much real "progress" is made in the interaction. This fact may be recognized by a participant who is consciously or unconsciously "deciding" whether or not to focus on the other. It is likely that the listener will "decide" to decenter when he/she perceives the other as likely to recognize and appreciate attempts to do so. A person using open expression may be perceived as more likely to perceive attempts to understand. Open expression may communicate a willingness to listen and to collaborate in defining a mutual problem. Open expression may have elicited empathic responses, then, because the communicator was perceived as being more "open" to receiving this empathic communication. This is an interesting question for further research.

A third rationale (or alternative explanation) involves the nature

of the content of the statements as it interacts with the manner of expression. All of the statements read by the subjects were criticisms of some aspects of the United States and/or American people. Criticisms are usually considered threatening when they speak to values and beliefs which are important to us. Dance and Larson (1976) suggest that we may try harder to understand someone when we feel threatened by them. It is quite possible that subjects responded with empathic communication to open criticisms because they felt more threatened when the remarks were addressed to them personally or to a personal friend of theirs. That is, criticisms stated in a non-open manner may not have been threatening, because they were addressed to "Americans in general" and therefore may not have been perceived by the subjects as applying to them or anyone they knew. Open statements, on the other hand, were directed to the subjects about themselves or a friend of theirs. It may be that these were somewhat more threatening, causing the subject to "decenter" and focus on the other. While this explanation is somewhat different from the other reasons given, it remains a possibility. Of course, future research could focus on this question.

In summary, then, it appears that open expression may have elicited responses that were descriptive, problem oriented, receptive, "other" oriented, and caring because of several reasons. Each of these reasons serve both as further rationale for the effects of open expression and as alternative explanations for the findings. Whichever approach one takes to these explanations, the important point is that they suggest further research. Other suggestions will be discussed later in this chapter.

Empathic attitude. It was predicted that subjects who read

criticisms by foreign students stated in an open manner would report a more "empathic attitude" than subjects who read criticisms stated in a non-open manner. While the results of the study tended to be in the predicted direction, the necessary confidence level (.05) for the analysis of variance between conditions was not reached. Therefore, we cannot say with any degree of certainty that open expression elicits a more empathic attitude than non-open expression. However, it is useful to consider some reasons both of why the necessary confidence level was not reached and of why the results tended in the predicted direction. Also, it will be recalled that a second factor resulted from the factor analysis which we called Negative Affect. As there was a significant difference between conditions on this factor, it is useful to consider the implications of this finding.

The first, and probably obvious, reason why subjects did not report a more empathic attitude when exposed to open criticism stems from the nature of self-report measures in general. The problems of asking subjects to report characteristics of their internal state have been the topic of much discussion among researchers. Carlsmith, Ellsworth, and Aronson (1976) point out three main problems with verbal measures: (1) They are measures of what the subjects say about themselves. What a subject says about the variable which interests the experimenter may not correspond to a more direct measure of that variable (as is evidenced by the present study); (2) The subjects almost always know that something about themselves is being measured. They know they are providing data for someone, and they may alter their responses in the light of that knowledge; and (3) The verbal measure is less involving for the subjects. Not being totally wrapped up in what they are doing,

they may either not consider their responses at all or may take the time for the sort of rumination that might lead them to censor their answers. While care was taken to design questions which would minimize the effects of the above problems, the empathic attitude measure remained a verbal measure, and certain problems accompanied this.

A second consideration in interpreting the lack of significance of the verbal measure is that the questionnaire was an "original" one. That is, it was designed specifically for this study, and it will need much additional work and refinement before a true measure of Empathic Attitude will exist. Hopefully, the questionnaire can be administered several more times, with more and different types of items contained in it.

It is significant that two interpretable factors emerged from the factor analysis. These were labeled Empathic Attitude and Negative Affect and will be discussed in that order. Factor one contained six items (Table 4) that related to learning more about the other for purposes of moving toward understanding. Some may comment that the items look very similar to "attraction" statements, and maybe this factor should have been labeled Attraction rather than Empathic Attitude. Several considerations lead to its present name. First, item three gives us some indication as to why subjects wanted to learn more about the other. It indicates that subjects thought that the two of them would be able to reach an understanding by continuing interaction. Second, the strong attraction items (number 28 and number 30, Appendix D) did not load on factor one. This indicates that something more than attraction was at work here. Third, it was argued earlier that an empathic attitude is in many ways one that meets the conditions for learning about another

person (see chapter one). Therefore, it was decided to label factor one Empathic Attitude.

Factor two contained three items related to a low degree of negative affect toward the other. Analysis of variance between conditions on this factor showed a clear difference between non-open and open expression. While these items are not directly involved in the definition of empathic attitude given earlier, their emergence from the factor analysis as an interpretable factor may mean that a low degree of anger, irritation, and desire to control facilitates an empathic attitude. It seems reasonable that we find it easier to focus on understanding another when we are not angered by what they say to us. When we feel a strong need to show the other how he/she must be wrong or mistaken, we may be focusing on our own wants, needs, and intentions. If a low degree of negative affect is facilitative of empathic attitude, then perhaps other conditions may be facilitative also. This is an interesting question for further research.

While the desired level of significance was not reached in the analysis of variance of factor one, the tendency was in the predicted direction. Further refinement of the measuring instrument may allow us to reach a more appropriate level of confidence. If this happens, the question may be raised as to why this occurs. It seems useful in this regard to mention a study reported by Hodges and Byrne (1972) which shows similar results when asking a somewhat different question. These authors hypothesized that responses on a verbal measure of attraction-rejection would be more positive toward a dissimilar stranger whose attitudes were expressed in open-minded, rather than dogmatic, terms. Results of their experiments supported this hypothesis. When strangers

disagreed with subjects in open-minded ways (as defined by Rokeach, 1960), they were considered more attractive than strangers who disagreed in a dogmatic manner. Perhaps subjects viewed the foreign students in the present study as more attractive when they used open expression than when they used non-open expression, and this attraction is what caused the desire to learn more about the other.

The tendency of open expression to elicit an empathic attitude might also be considered in light of Berscheid and Walster's (1969) comments. They reasoned that individuals might more often choose to associate with dissimilar others if there was no fear that they would not be well-liked by the stranger. They proposed that if students were confident that dissimilar others would like them, they would be anxious to associate with them. Results of their study supported this prediction. Perhaps, then, open expression communicated to the subjects that the foreign student would be likely to accept them and receive them in a positive manner. This anticipation of being liked may have caused the subjects to want to learn more from this person.

Thus, while it cannot be said with the desired level of confidence that open expression elicits a more empathic attitude than non-open expression, the tendency is in the appropriate direction, and there is reason to believe that future research may allow us to refine the measuring instrument such that the appropriate level of confidence is reached. The above speculations suggest that both low negative affect and high attraction may facilitate an empathic attitude. Further research is necessary in this area.

Significance of the Present Study

Pragmatic. The fact that dissimilar persons often reject each other has long been recognized. One of the strongest and most consistent findings in the social interaction literature is that we are attracted to those who are similar to us and we reject those who are dissimilar to us (Byrne, 1969 and 1971). The need is often recognized for increased tolerance of dissimilarity. The present study points to a method for increasing tolerance for dissimilar views. It suggests that when opposing views are made using open expression rather than non-open expression, responses will tend to be empathic rather than defensive. The question, of course, is whether or not it is possible to teach ourselves to express our views in an open way. Hodges and Byrne (1972) ask the question:

Can people learn to think and speak so as to express the idea: "There are arguments for X and arguments for Y. There is no way to determine conclusively whether X or Y is correct. Intelligent individuals of good will may come to support X or to support Y. I am strongly in favor of X for what I believe to be excellent reasons, but I may be wrong, and I respect your right to support Y."? Offhand, it appears much easier for people to learn to think and speak dogmatically and to reject their opponents with insulting epithets, rotten eggs, rocks, and bullets. (p. 317)

The findings in this study might have direct and immediate application to foreign student initial orientation programs. As was explained to the subjects in their debriefing, criticisms are both natural and healthy - they help us to see things from a different point of view. Since foreign students will naturally have criticisms of the United States, it would be useful to explain different ways of expressing these criticisms and the effects they have on listeners. Of course, there is the same need to explain this to Americans. This could go a long way toward enhancing American and foreign student relationships.

Theoretical. The present study was conducted within the framework of a reconceptualization of empathy. It was argued both that factors in addition to empathizer characteristics influence empathy and that empathy is best measured by considering the process (effort) rather than simply one of the possible outcomes (accuracy). The process approach to empathy seems to have been neglected in much previous research, and the present study points to the significance of considering variables in the communication process when studying empathy. It has been strongly suggested by the results of this study that open expression influences the degree of empathic communication. This not only points to the importance of researching other variables which may influence empathy, but it also shows how empathy is an important concept for interpersonal communication theorists to include in their discussion of interaction. As this study gives some validity to the reconceptualization of empathy presented earlier in this paper, it allows us to use this reconceptualization in discussing interpersonal communication.

Methodological. Following from the above discussion, the present study provides a methodology for researching variables which influence empathy. An empathic communication measure was developed which produced strong results in the present study, and an empathic attitude measure was explored which has possibilities for refinement. Most significantly, a methodology was developed which does not focus on "accuracy of judgment" as the empathy measure. The process focus of the present study makes the research of empathy "useful" to communication scholars. It is now possible to research empathy in a manner congruent with other communication research.

Limitations of the Present Study

Several limitations of the present study should be noted, and the findings are to be interpreted in light of these. First, while it was repeatedly argued that communication is a transactional process, the present study focused on only one aspect of that process. The receiver's response to a speaker was measured, but the study did not allow us to directly look at the dynamics of interaction. Of course, it is necessary to limit the situation for purposes of researching interaction, because otherwise there would be little control and many rival hypotheses. However, one is never sure how the results of a "static" study apply to dynamic interaction. At any rate, this limitation must be kept in mind when interpreting the results of this study.

Second, the present research represents only a single study. Theory building is a long process, and involves many studies. The findings reported in this paper represent only a single aspect of one variable which influences empathy. Nothing "conclusive" can be drawn from these results as they stand alone. It is only when we can put them together with other findings that we can begin to develop a suitable framework for viewing empathy.

Third, only the verbal aspects of open expression were considered in the present study. When someone interacts with another it is obvious that more than verbal cues are involved. It is possible that a person could nonverbally "override" the effects of open or non-open expression. While the present results are certainly applicable to written letters, memos, documents, etc., it is with less certainty that we generalize these findings to face-to-face interaction. Many more variables are operating here, and further research is necessary.

Finally, it must be kept in mind that the subjects in the present study responded in the context of a specific situation. They were asked to write down (not speak) their response to a foreign student (not just any individual) who made certain specific criticisms (not just any criticisms or just any opinion) to them in the context of a roommate relationship (not a casual acquaintance or stranger). While there is some reason to believe that these results might be generalizable to other situations, we do so with caution.

A note on the "caring" scale. Scale number five used by the judges in rating the subjects' responses was labeled caring / non-caring. Caring communication was defined as responses which give some indication that effort is being put forth to understand the other. That is, the person seems to "care" whether or not the two of them move toward understanding. The rationale was that a desire to move toward understanding, interpreted in light of scores on the other dimensions, indicates that a person is likely to be "trying" to understand what the other is saying. However, it appears that this may be an unusual definition of the word "caring", causing some to have trouble with this particular dimension of the scale. Caring seems to draw up images of affection and warmth toward the other. Therefore, it seems reasonable that the name of this scale may need to be changed in the future. Perhaps the label "shows concern for understanding" is more appropriate. At any rate, the ambiguity associated with the word caring may have affected the judges' ratings, and they should be interpreted in light of this possibility.

Suggestions for Future Research

Several suggestions have already been made for continuing our inquiry into variables which influence empathy. While the number of suggestions are perhaps endless, it seems useful to point out a few additional ones here.

The next step in continuing research on empathy is to further develop and refine the empathic attitude measure. The present study employed an original and crude instrument which did not quite tap the difference that was hypothesized. Because of the strong results on the behavioral measure in this study, it is felt that the difference was probably there, but it failed to show up on the verbal measure due to its weakness. Therefore, as part of future studies it is suggested that attempts be made to develop a more reliable measure of empathic attitude.

There has been some discussion in this chapter of the relation between attraction and empathy. The question is raised: "Can I empathize with someone if I am not attracted to them?". While some problems exist with the concept "attraction", it would be useful to design a study in which a person's attractiveness is varied and the subjects' degree of empathic communication and empathic attitude are measured.

Earlier it was noted that Dance and Larson (1976) suggest that under conditions of threat a person may focus attention on the other. They also say that under conditions of high trust a person may focus more on one's self than on the other. That is, when the interpersonal responses of another signal acceptance of self (trust), then the self feels free and safe. From this position of relative safety the individual may open up more, may disclose more to the other. The focus may be

on things that are for that person the most interesting, that have to do with his/her feelings, beliefs, likes and dislikes. Perhaps a study could be designed to test this notion. One might set up conditions of high threat and high trust and note the subjects' tendency to empathize in communication and attitude.

This same reasoning might apply to the person who has already made strong attributions of another. In one sense, empathy arises out of our need to organize our perceptions of another. When we first meet a person we may have a greater desire to know where that person is coming from than we will have later in the relationship when we already have the person "figured out" to our satisfaction. That is, once we feel that we "know" someone, we may not put forth as much effort to take that person's point of view as we did in the beginning of the relationship, at least on matters that have to do with expressing opinions. It would be interesting to design a study testing the relation of empathy to degree of familiarity with another.

In one sense, empathy may be perceived of as a social reward. We may see it as rewarding to another person when we put forth effort to understand him/her. When we want to impress someone or get to know someone better we may do this by trying to communicate to that person that we hear them and we are interested in knowing more about their frame of reference. It would be useful to test whether or not a person will put forth effort to understand another when there is a need to socially reward him/her.

It should be clear that a whole host of factors might act to influence one's attempts to take another's frame of reference. The task now is to begin researching these factors.

Conclusion

It is difficult, of course, to ever conclude a major undertaking. Much thought and much work has gone into this paper, and the task is certainly not finished. As others read and comment on what is presented here, new insights will be developed and loopholes will be discovered. The attempt has certainly not been to present the "final word" on empathy, but to simply "throw new light" on the subject. Of course, it is felt that this "new light" is very important. Hopefully, a beginning has been made in providing a useful framework for researching empathy in interpersonal communication. Claims will not be made here that empathy is "the most important of human activities", but the feeling is that empathy is an important communication variable and should not be overlooked in researching human interaction.

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APPENDIX A
STATEMENTS USED AS STIMULUS MATERIAL
FOR EXPERIMENT

TOPIC 1 - MINORITY DISCRIMINATION

Non-Open: "Americans are not really democratic, they just like to think they are. They might have 'All Men are Created Equal' in their official documents, but they certainly don't go by this rule in their behavior. They treat members of ethnic groups as if they were less than equal, always discriminating against them. The whites are in control in this country, and they are not about to give up their power advantage. But it certainly can't stay this way very long, whether they like it or not. A change is obviously coming soon, even if Americans are blind to what's happening."

Open / Personal: "_____, it seems to me that you may not really be democratic, although you tell me that you think of yourself that way. I've noticed the sign that you have on your desk that says 'All Men are Created Equal', but I don't feel that you always behave that way toward me. My skin color is different from yours, and sometimes I feel treated somewhat less than equal by you, like when you avoid me around your friends. Perhaps this is only my perception, but sometimes I do feel inferior to you, and I really wish that we could see each other on more equal terms. I think that we need to talk about making some changes in our relationship, even though I realize that this will not be very comfortable for you. From my point of view these changes seem necessary, even though I know this is hard to see from your standpoint."

Open / Non-Personal: "You know, I was thinking a while ago about some of our friends on the hall. It seems that they may not really be democratic, although they tell me they think of themselves that way. I've noticed the sign that our neighbor has on his(her) desk saying 'All Men are Created Equal', but it doesn't seem that he(her) always behaves that way, at least toward me. My skin color is different from his(hers), and sometimes the things he(her) does indicate that I am less than equal to him(her) - like when he(her) avoids me around his(her) friends. Perhaps this is only my perception, but sometimes he(her) treats me inferior, and it would really be nice to see each other on more equal terms. We need to talk about making some changes along this line, even though it will not be comfortable for him(her). These changes seem necessary, even though it is probably hard to see this from his(her) point of view."

TOPIC 2 - LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER COUNTRIES

Non-Open: "Americans demonstrate a profound ignorance of other countries and other cultures. This is compounded with a naive and vulgar belief that everything has to be the 'American Way' - or else it is not worth knowing. Hence, they show no desire to learn other languages. Even when they go abroad they always take organized, short, 'round-up' tours in which they take a lot of pictures, but do not try and really encounter other people. And here, when they meet foreigners, they maintain an attitude of superiority that stems not out of knowledge, but out of ignorance. It's impossible to get to know Americans, since they don't know anything about foreign students and don't want to learn."

Open / Personal: "_____, I really wish that you knew more about my country and about my culture. Right now, I get the feeling that you want everything to be like you have always known it to be or else you're not interested in learning about it. At least this is my perception. I feel especially upset that I see you as having little desire to learn about my language - at least I never hear you ask me about it. And the other day, when you were showing me all the slides you took in Europe last summer - well, I was glad that you got to see a lot while you were there, but I was disappointed that you didn't even spend a weekend with the family I gave you the names of, and really get to know them. And now, in our relationship, I get the feeling that I am inferior to you. I don't feel that you really know me, but that you see me this way because you have heard _____ and _____ talk about 'foreign students from my country'. I really want us to be friends, but I find this difficult when I perceive you in this way - as not knowing about me and as not wanting to learn about me."

Open / Non-Personal: "You know, it's interesting. Many of the people I've met here in the dorm don't seem to know a lot about my country and my culture. Sometimes it seems that they want everything to be like they've always know it to be or else they're not interested in learning about it. At least this is the way it appears to me. It is especially upsetting to me that they show little desire to learn about my language - I never hear them ask about it. And the other day, when our neighbor was showing all the slides he/she took in Eurpoe last summer - well, it made me glad that he/she got to see a lot, but it was very disappointing to me that he/she didn't really get to know anyone there. And here in the dorm, I feel inferior to them. They don't seem to really know me, but they seem to act toward me in this way because they have heard others talk about foreign students from my country. It is very difficult to get to know them when I perceive them this way - as not knowing about me and as not wanting to learn."

TOPIC 3 - ENERGY WASTE

Non-Open: "Americans simply waste too much energy - look at the oil crisis and the natural gas shortages if you want proof. Other people can do alright with less. They don't need big cars with 8 cylinders, and air-conditioning running all the time - what a waste. And Americans drive everywhere. They can't even walk a little way to the store to get a loaf of bread. They even hop in their gas-guzzlers to go half-a-block to play tennis! And they think they're too good to walk or take the bus. Americans are simply selfish, they don't care about the poor countries that need energy just for plain survival. Americans are only interested in their own comfort."

Open / Personal: "_____, I was thinking just now about the present oil crisis and natural gas shortage, and I felt really disturbed about the amount of energy I see you using. I guess I compare you with myself, as I don't have a car, but it seems to me to be a waste of energy to drive an 8-cylinder car with air-conditioning. It makes me feel a little discouraged when I see you driving places that I usually walk to - like the short distance to the store for a loaf of bread. And I especially can't understand why you drive the half-block to get some exercise playing tennis. I guess I would feel better if I saw you walking or taking the bus more. So sometimes, _____, I perceive you as more self-centered than I see myself to be. I guess I've experienced the conditions in my home country, where my family lacks enough energy for even the necessities of life. This causes me to view you as mainly interested in your own comfort."

Open / Non-Personal: "You know, I was thinking the other day about the recent oil crisis and natural gas shortage, and it really disturbed me to remember all the energy my friends use. I get along without a car, so I think it's a waste of energy for them to drive 8-cylinder cars with air-conditioning. It makes me a little discouraged when my friends drive places I usually walk to - like the short distance to the store for a loaf of bread. And it's especially non-understandable why my neighbor drives the half-block to get some exercise playing tennis. It would probably make me feel better to see them walking or taking the bus more. So sometimes, my friends seem more self-centered than I am. I've experienced the conditions in my home country, where many people lack enough energy for even the necessities of life. This makes my friends seem interested mainly in their own comforts."

APPENDIX B
CONSENT STATEMENT

The Department of Speech and Drama feels that persons should participate in studies only if they want to do so. Therefore, we wish to tell you something about this study and ask for your consent to participate. We also wish to inform you that you may withdraw from this study at any point if you wish to do so. You will not be penalized for withdrawing.

This particular study has to do with intercultural communication. You will be asked to read some statements made by a foreign student. Then you will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire about what you read. You are not to put your name on these questionnaires, as your name will not be associated with this study. Before you leave I will explain the nature of this study, and I will describe how you have helped me in this investigation of communication between American and foreign students.

I encourage and appreciate your participation, but I fully respect your right to choose not to participate.

Thank you very much.

Ben Broome
Principal Investigator

I, the undersigned, have read the Consent Statement and agree to participate as a subject in this study.

X

APPENDIX C

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDY

Last semester we conducted research on American and foreign student roommate situations. We asked a number of American and foreign students who are roommates to come to the lab and discuss the problems they encounter because they are from different cultures. We recorded these discussions (with their agreement) on audio-tape. We were interested both in what seems to be the most common problems in this situation and in how these problems are handled. We asked both the foreign student and the American to be as real and honest as possible. Now we are carrying our research a little further. Hopefully, the present study will help us in matching American and foreign students as roommates in the future. That is, we want to be able to predict who will get along best together as roommates.

Therefore, we have taken excerpts from these tapes and have transcribed them onto paper. In another study, we will be asking foreign students to read statements made by the American roommate. In this study we will be asking you to read statements made by the foreign student roommate. We are interested in your impression of the foreign student, your reaction to his/her statements, and some of your predictions of what he/she would do in certain situations. We want to know what kinds of impressions, reactions, and predictions you will give based on the limited knowledge of a few statements from the foreign student.

Statements made by a foreign student will be presented to you, then, and we will ask that you read them carefully, imagining that the foreign student is talking to you. We will then ask you some questions about yourself, and some questions about the foreign student. Hopefully, when we complete the study, we can determine what kinds of Americans get along best with what kinds of foreign students.

It is important to note that we are not interested in individual cases as such. In other words, we will be combining all the data statistically to come up with a "generalized" foreign student and a "generalized American student. None of your responses will be considered as individual cases, then, so it is important that you put down what you really feel or believe.

In order to make our study valid, we ask that you read carefully what the foreign student said and consider each question carefully. Give an honest and well-thought answer to each question.

Thank you.

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I. Assume that the statements you just read were made to you by the foreign student. What would you say in response? Assume that you are talking to the foreign student as you respond. Take 5 minutes and write down your response below. I will let you know when 5 minutes have passed. If you finish before the time is up, do not turn the page. Please wait until I tell you to do so.

STOP HERE. WAIT UNTIL I TELL YOU BEFORE YOU TURN THE PAGE.

Part II. Carefully consider each of the statement below. Then, after you have given them careful thought, indicate your agreement/disagreement with each statement by circling your choice of answers. You will have plenty of time to complete this questionnaire, so take all the time you need to complete each statement.

- - The following scale appeared beneath each statement:

Strongly		Slightly		Slightly		Strongly
Agree	Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

1. In responding to the foreign student, I felt as if I was really trying to see things from his/her point of view.
2. In stating my opinions, I felt that I wanted to show the foreign student how he/she must be wrong or mistaken.
3. If the interaction continued, I don't think that the two of us would be able to reach an understanding of each other's point of view.
4. If this person invited me to his/her room to become better acquainted, I would accept the invitation.
5. This foreign student would not listen to my opinions if I expressed disagreement with him/her.
6. The foreign student's statements made me want to know more about why he/she feels this way.
7. If continuing the discussion with the foreign student meant missing a movie with my friends, I would not want to continue the interaction with the foreign student.
8. I feel that I know why the foreign student said these things about the United States.
9. I would not feel free to reveal my feelings to the foreign student concerning what he/she said about the United States.
10. I see the foreign student as an informed and knowledgable person.
11. When I heard the foreign student's statements, I felt as if I had heard all I wanted to from this person.
12. If our discussion continued, I think that my image of the foreign student would change.
13. The foreign student must have said these things because of some recent experiences with Americans.

14. If I told an important secret to this foreign student, I could not depend on him/her to keep it in confidence.
15. The foreign student's statements made me feel angry.
16. The foreign student seems to be open in his/her view of Americans.
17. I feel that the foreign student is not speaking from his/her own experiences, but is merely repeating what he/she has heard others say.
18. I feel that this foreign student is risking the disapproval of his/her roommate by making statements such as this.
19. This foreign student would allow me to differ in opinion from him/her, and would not attempt to change my attitude.
20. This foreign student is a negative kind of person, always having something bad to say about everything.
21. If someone was violently disagreeing with me on an important subject, this foreign student would stand up for me rather than allow me to be hurt.
22. This foreign student would welcome input from me regarding the statements he/she has made.
23. If I made an obvious mistake in front of this foreign student, he/she would try to make me feel bad or embarrass me.
24. If I had a problem that was bothering me, this foreign student would not take the time to listen to me.
25. If this foreign student was leading a discussion group in my speech class, I would be eager to join it.
26. Generally, I don't feel irritated by this foreign student's statements.
27. In talking with this person, I feel that I would know "where I stand".
28. If this person was looking for an American roommate, I would have no desire to live with him/her.
29. I feel that this foreign student has a desire to share himself/herself with others.
30. I don't think that I would like this person very much.
31. I agree with what the foreign student has to say about the United States.
32. I have a real desire to learn more from this person.
33. When I read the statements, I was able to imagine a foreign student speaking.

Part III. Please answer the following questions about yourself.

Age _____ Major _____ Sex: male _____
female _____

1. What is your year in school?

- _____ Freshman
- _____ Sophomore
- _____ Junior
- _____ Senior

2. Where do you live?

- _____ dorm
- _____ apartment
- _____ fraternity, sorority, or scholarship hall
- _____ with parents

3. Where did you grow up?

- _____ large city
- _____ small town
- _____ rural area

4. How many friends do you have who are foreign students?

- _____ many
- _____ some
- _____ few
- _____ none

5. How much have you traveled outside the United States?

- _____ a lot
- _____ some
- _____ a little
- _____ not at all

6. Have you ever lived (for more than 3 months) outside the U.S.?

- _____ yes
- _____ no

7. What is your general attitude toward foreign students?

- _____ Positive
- _____ Neutral
- _____ Negative

APPENDIX E

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBJECT RESPONSE EVALUATION

The following are to be used for defining the categories of the scales which you will use for evaluating the subjects' responses:

Scale #1

Evaluative: This person was passing judgment on the foreign student by blaming or praising; by questioning his/her moral standards, values, or motives; or by making moral assessments of the foreign student.

Descriptive: This person was non-judgmental; he/she asked questions which were genuine requests for information; he/she did not ask or imply that the other change behavior or attitude.

Scale #2

Control oriented: This person wanted to change the foreign student's attitude or behavior; he/she implies that the foreign student shouldn't think or act that way.

Problem oriented: This person's response communicates a desire to collaborate in defining a mutual problem and in seeking its solution.

Scale #3

Unreceptive: This person seems to know all the answers, to require no additional data in defining or solving the problem and in seeking its solution.

Receptive: This person indicates a need for additional data; he/she seeks for further clarification of the problem.

Scale #4

"Self" oriented: This person seems to view the situation from his/her own frame of reference solely; he/she seems to be looking at the situation only from his/her own point of view; he/she doesn't take into account the way the foreign student sees the situation.

"Other" oriented: This person seems to take into account the foreign student's frame of reference; he/she seems to be looking at the situation from the foreign student's point of view; he/she seems to be taking into account how the foreign student sees the situation.

Scale #5

Non-caring: This person gives no indication of putting forth effort to understand the foreign student; he/she doesn't seem to care about whether or not the two of them reach an understanding of each other.

Caring: This person seems to be "trying" to understand what the foreign student is saying; he/she seems to care about whether or not the two of them reach an understanding of each other's viewpoints.

APPENDIX F

SUMMARY OF INTERJUDGE RELIABILITY SCORES

<u>PAIR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF ITEMS JUDGED TOGETHER</u>	<u>CORRELATION COEFFICIENT</u>
JUDGES 1 & 2	16	.639
JUDGES 1 & 3	10	.894
JUDGES 1 & 4	4	.795
JUDGES 2 & 3	10	.915
JUDGES 2 & 4	3	.874
JUDGES 3 & 4	3	.964
<u>TOTAL ITEMS JUDGED BY PAIRS</u>		<u>MEAN INTERJUDGE RELIABILITY</u>
46		.847

APPENDIX G
EIGENVALUES OF UNROTATED FACTORS

<u>FACTOR</u>	<u>EIGENVALUE</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF VARIANCE</u>	<u>CUMMLATIVE PCT</u>
1	8.82166	38.4	38.4
2	1.82139	7.9	46.3
3	1.34995	5.9	52.1
4	1.31312	5.7	57.9
5	1.18408	5.1	63.0
6	1.00983	4.4	67.4

EIGENVALUES OF ROTATED FACTORS

<u>FACTOR</u>	<u>EIGENVALUE</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF VARIANCE</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE PCT</u>
1	8.44343	65.5	65.5
2	1.31359	10.2	75.7
3	0.99389	7.7	83.4
4	0.85583	6.6	90.1
5	0.74409	5.8	95.8
6	0.53736	4.2	100.0

APPENDIX H

VARIMAX ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX

ORTHOGONAL LOADINGS

ITEM	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>	<u>Factor 4</u>	<u>Factor 5</u>	<u>Factor 6</u>
2	.015	.576	.020	.179	.027	.208
3	.508	.130	.138	.217	.038	.043
4	.729	.148	.362	.362	-.119	-.007
5	.407	.012	.216	.116	.367	.346
6	.641	.118	-.042	-.010	.113	.187
7	.403	.110	.115	.106	.435	.101
10	.173	.185	-.054	.613	.429	.018
11	.708	.225	.095	.166	.021	.196
14	.441	.073	.188	.348	.139	-.085
15	.372	.656	.060	.101	.218	.134
16	.097	.097	.128	.585	.005	.148
19	-.102	.289	.109	.016	.403	.022
20	.269	.267	.183	.156	.106	.598
21	.421	.469	.129	.401	.079	-.185
22	.490	-.036	.410	.298	.277	.239
23	.079	.323	.579	.130	.004	.199
24	.311	.079	.854	.100	.275	.005
25	.635	-.055	.111	.053	.105	.004
26	.172	.647	.243	.065	.173	-.033
28	.557	.376	.318	.354	.059	.017
29	.390	.263	.373	.408	-.030	.179
30	.547	.417	.342	.545	-.168	.063
32	.659	.336	.152	.095	-.033	.131