EFFECTS OF RELATIONAL CONTEXT ON PERCEPTIONS OF VERBALLY RUDE

MESSAGES

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this paper to my family who taught me that there is more than one way to say "I love you."

I would further like to dedicate this paper to my niece, McKenzie Lee Ha'aheo and my nephew Gregory Steuart Kaleo in hopes that they are able to know that nearly *anything* is possible.

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the differences in perceptions of verbally rude messages as a function of relational closeness are examined. Due to the lack of a sufficiently useful definition of verbal rudeness in extant research, a new definition of verbal rudeness is suggested. Research on relational development provides the theoretical framework through which verbal rudeness is examined. Several hypotheses are formulated, predicting that verbally rude messages will be regarded as more typical, playful and appropriate, and less offensive in close friendships than in interactions between acquaintances. Statistical analyses revealed a lack of empirical support for the hypotheses. A discussion of why the data did not support the hypotheses as well as directions for future research in this vein are presented.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Of ongoing interest to researchers in the field of human communication are the communicative changes that occur in relationships as they move through stages of increased closeness. Scholars have found that communication changes as relationships become closer, transitioning from communication concerned largely with appearing socially appropriate into communication that is organized more around the expectations of relational partners (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Knapp & Vangelisti, 2000). As such, communication between close relational partners, including close friends, generally adheres less to expectations of socially appropriate behavior than does the communication between non-intimates.

For example, conflict is a communicative phenomenon in which strangers are expected not to engage. It is, however, quite common between close relational partners (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2000). Wilmot and Hocker (2001) further argue that conflict arises in close relationship by virtue of the increased interdependence and shared goals between relational partners.

In addition to conflict becoming an increasingly prevalent form of unpleasant communication in close relationships, teasing and insulting are also more common in close relationships than they are in communication between strangers (Baxter, 1992). Baxter's (1992) taxonomy of relational play suggests that partners involved in close relationships, while recognizing their risk, will playfully use teasing and insults as a show of intimacy in the relationship.

Given that the increased interdependence and closeness of close relationships increase the possibility of unpleasant communication forms such as conflict and teasing and insulting, it is possible that other forms of unpleasant communication may also be more prevalent in close relationships as well. Of particular interest in the current investigation is the increased use and perceived acceptability of verbal rudeness in close friendships, as compared to interactions between acquaintances.

Much of the existing research on interactions in close relationships focuses on interaction between romantic partners. While the study of romantic relationships is of tremendous importance, the study of friendships is a vein of research deserving of specific attention as well. Friendship has been empirically found to have important impact on the lives of individuals throughout the course of the lifespan. Friendships are important and influential factors in a child's socialization, and feelings of social acceptance by peers. Further, having friends has been linked to children's improved academic performance, (Vaughn, 2001; St. Clair Pond, 1998; Doll, 1996). Moreover, friendships have been shown to affect young adults' college completion rates and their choice of social activities (Boulter, 2002; Fink & Wild, 1995), as well as young women's perception of their own and others' sexuality (Griffin, 2000). The importance of friendships endures into later adulthood at which point having friends has been empirically shown to decrease feelings of depression and loneliness while increasing life satisfaction (Antonucci, 2001; Tilburg 2000).

In addition to the strong positive influence friends have across the lifespan, the unique characteristics of cross-sex friendships further increase the importance of the empirical examination of friendships. The extant research on cross-sex friendships is characterized by a debate over whether friendships between members of the opposite sex are inherently different or

more complicated than friendships between members of the same sex. Researchers have argued that cross-sex friendships are complicated by increased levels of overall uncertainty, particularly about the state of the relationship, as compared to other relational contexts (Afifi & Burgoon, 1998). Further, the possibility of sexual or romantic interest between heterosexual opposite-sex friends can further complicate a cross-sex friendship, especially in the event that the sexual or romantic interest is felt by only one partner in the friendship (Reeder, 2000). These potential challenges in maintaining a cross-sex friendship may change the way cross-sex friends interact with one another in comparison to same-sex friends.

On the other hand, however, other empirical investigations suggest that sexual contact can actually manage feelings of sexual tension in cross-sex friendships (Afifi & Faulkner, 2000), thus rendering the communication in cross-sex friendships no different than other platonic relationships. Consequently, additional research that can allow increased understanding of cross-sex friendship should be pursued – a goal of the current investigation.

In addition to restricting the current study friends rather than lovers, careful consideration was taken when deciding to compare communication between friends and communication between acquaintances, rather than strangers. The primary reason for this choice stemmed from the fact that the rules guiding stranger interaction are highly constraining. Consequently, rudeness in interactions between strangers would be perceived as so aberrant and unacceptable that statistical results of such a comparison would be a less-than-noteworthy contribution to the body of research related to relational development and negative communication.

The rules guiding communication between acquaintances, however, are not as clear as those that define the communication between strangers. Knapp's model of relational development (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2000) does not discuss acquaintanceships as a relational

stage, likely assuming that it is at some point between an initial interaction and the formation of a close relationship that acquaintanceship is passed through. Moreover, scholars seem unable to agree as to whether the term "acquaintance" refers to a close relationship or a non-intimate one. Much of the research available on the influence of peer groups on individual behavioral choices combines acquaintances into a larger category consisting of "friends and acquaintances" (Brent et al., 1994; Deutsch, 1988). In other cases (Newman, 1980), acquaintanceships have been categorized as "intimate". These definitions of "acquaintance" indicate that some researchers hold the belief that acquaintances are more similar to friends than strangers.

Other research, however, makes a definite distinction between friends and acquaintances, referring to it as a relational stage that is different from both friendship and stranger (Zencius, & Wesolowski, 1999; Johnson, 1989). Because of the tremendous gray area into which acquaintanceship falls, the current investigation seeks to offer greater insight into the differences between friends and acquaintances.

The final goal of this investigation is to expand the research related to the examination of rude communication. Rudeness is a largely unstudied communication form, with most empirical references to rudeness taking the form of the conceptual opposite of politeness. While, intuitively, rudeness and politeness should be conceptual opposites, they are indeed separate constructs. Politeness refers to adherence to norms for socially appropriate behavior where rudeness is characterized by the making of a deliberate decision to behave in socially inappropriate ways (Tracy & Tracy, 1998). Conceptualizing rudeness as the opposite of politeness implies that rudeness is merely a failure to engage in socially appropriate behavior. Instead, rudeness is the result of intentional and purposeful choice to be inappropriate. For this

reason, a definition that treats rudeness as a construct independent of politeness is necessary in order to most effectively study and understand it as a communicative event.

Consequently, a non-politeness based definition of rudeness will be proposed as one of the conceptual foundations for the current investigation. In developing and applying a new definition of rudeness, the current paper will increase our knowledge of rudeness as a communicative phenomenon as well as its role in interpersonal communication. Additionally, this investigation may perhaps provide a stepping-stone for other work that may be done on rudeness but has not been previously accomplished for lack of a clear conceptualization.

The following section will first address problems with the existing conceptualization of rudeness, followed by the advancement of a new, modified definition. Following, the extant literature related to rudeness will be reviewed.

Review of Literature

Defining rudeness. Most of the current definitions of rudeness are based on Goffman's 1967 work *On Facework*. Goffman proposes the term "face", which is defined as "an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (p. 12). In other words, an individual's face is based on the degree to which an individual engages in behaviors and communication that cause others and themselves to appear socially appropriate. Goffman argues, then, that it is the preservation and presentation of face that motivates our communicative choices. Goffman goes on to state that in spite of our interest in maintaining our own and others' face, some messages found in our everyday conversation have the potential to damage our own or other's face.

Goffman (1967) describes three kinds of face-threatening messages. The first type of face threat occurs accidentally, and generally would not have occurred had the communicator been aware, in advance, that the message would be face threatening. The second type of face

threatening message occurs as an unfortunate byproduct of communication. Generally, a communicator in this situation knows that a message will likely cause a threat to face, but conveys the message anyway in order to achieve another goal. The third type of face threatening communication is the focus of the current investigation, and what may have otherwise been termed "rudeness." This type of face threat occurs because the communicator intends to cause the loss of face – it is the goal of the communication.

Stemming from Goffman's research on face and appropriate communication, Tracy and Tracy (1998) define rudeness as "judgment that a person's communicative actions intentionally display contempt and lack of respect" (p. 226). Tracy and Tracy's definition corresponds with Goffman's conceptualization of intentional face-threat. Moreover, Tracy and Tracy's definition of rudeness effectively limits itself to communicative acts, and provides the components of intent, and conveyance of lack of respect and contempt. It does not, however, provide a standard by which the content of a message would be judged as being contemptuous. Effective application of the definition requires that a standard be employed to judge the level of contempt and lack of respect being conveyed in a message – an important function which Tracy and Tracy's definition fails to provide.

Goffman's definition of face-attacking messages regards such communication as inherently aberrant, making it biased, and thus crippling it from being effectively applied to communication that may be common in close relationships. Tracy and Tracy's definition fails to suggest an objective standard by which rudeness should be measured. Consequently, a revised definition that will better enable us to study the construct of rudeness must be formulated. Thus, for the purposes of the current study, verbal rudeness is defined:

as any communicative act, that when judged according to expectations of appropriate behavior within that context, has the potential to convey contempt or lack of respect on the part of the sender toward the receiver of the utterance within the context of the communication episode.

Beyond Goffman's (1967) description of face threat and Tracy & Tracy's (1998) definition of rudeness, there has been very little research done on rudeness. What literature that does exist in the extant research on rudeness, however, is restricted to task-oriented contexts rather than between individuals involved in personal relationships (Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Braithwaite, 1997). The following section will review these studies.

Extant literature on rudeness. Braithwaite (1997) studied the consequences of the routine violation of conversational rules in a plasma donation clinic. He found that the technicians, who were expected to simultaneously complete numerous tasks as well as engage in conversation with donors, frequently failed to adhere to rules for appropriate interaction. Each time a technician began a new task with a donor, an interaction was initiated, and in nearly all cases, technicians committed some communication violation (e.g. failure to finish conversations, abruptly leaving conversations, talking to more than one person at a time, being non-responsive). Technicians were not unaware of the rules of appropriate communication, but rather engaged in inappropriate communication behaviors incidentally while trying to accomplish the technical tasks required of them.

Braithwaite (1997) found that those donors who came to the clinic and interacted with technicians on a regular basis were more accepting of and less upset by the technicians' violations of communicative norms than were donors who had not previously donated. Braithwaite suggests that regular donors eventually came to accept the task-over-communication

situation at the clinic as the norm for communication in that particular context, and regarded the ordinarily rule-violating communication as acceptable. Those donors who had never been to the clinic before were not aware that the norms for communication were different in the clinic than in ordinary society, and were therefore bothered by the communication of the technicians.

The results of this study suggest that repeated interaction between individuals may cause the development of communicative norms that (a) are specific to the particular relationship and (b) do not necessarily reflect socially accepted communicative norms. This trend reflects the findings of relational theories and models that argue that communication between relational partners is often bound by rules that apply only to interaction between them. This argument will be further expounded in the following section.

Like Braithwaite, Tracy and Tracy (1998) focused their investigation of rudeness on the task-oriented contexts of 911 calls. More specifically, they were interested in the types of verbally rude communication of 911 operators toward callers when they were unable to obtain necessary and/or adequate information from callers. Tracy and Tracy take a linguistic approach to identifying numerous types of face-attacking verbal messages the 911 operators used in their interactions with disagreeable callers.

Among the kinds of utterances identified by Tracy and Tracy as face-attacking were strings of assertions/counterassertions, in which the caller would state something like "Yes, I am," and the operator would rebut with an opposing "No, you're not." Strings may go on for several rounds. Another of the type of rude utterance the researchers identified was what they called metacommunicative directives which were either explicit or implicit demands for either more or improved communication, and included such examples as "Listen to me," and "Do you understand?".

Of the several types of verbally rude utterances employed by the 911 operators in their interactions with difficult callers, metacommunicative directives were identified as being the most "context-tied" (p. 233). In the context of the 911 calls, coders rated demands for better or more communication as face attacking. However, in the context of communication between teacher and student, for instance, the same kinds of communicative behavior would not be regarded as face attacking, but rather as a show of empathy or concern (Tracy & Tracy, 1998).

Braithwaite's (1997) findings, as did those of Tracy and Tracy (1998), indicate that the existence of modified relational rules are an important factor affecting the perception of rudeness. While these studies focus on communication between non-intimates in a task-oriented situation, it is likely that the relational rules established by intimates will also affect perceptions of verbal rudeness so that intimates perceive rude utterances differently than non-intimates in a situation in which the accomplishment of a task is not a high priority.

Relational Development and its Communicative Consequences

One of the fundamental premises of the study of relational development is that communication in relationships changes as relational partners become closer to one another. An examination Knapp's model of relationship development (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2000), and Altman & Taylor's (1973) social penetration theory yield the discovery of two major changes that communication in relationships go through as they become increasingly close: that communication becomes more idiosyncratic and communication becomes more negative.

Communication in early relational stages is characterized primarily by adherence to social norms (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Knapp & Vangelisti, 2000) which means that communication should be pleasant and polite. Knapp's model of relationship development

specifically notes that communication during initial encounters should be characterized by small talk, and polite communication.

Similarly, according to Altman and Taylor (1973), social norms for appropriate communication also dictate the types of self disclosures we are allowed to exchange in early relational stages. Specifically, Altman and Taylor argue that self disclosures between non-intimate communicators should be about general, non-personal information that communicators feel comfortable sharing with a non-intimate and that will help communicators in early relational stages begin to get to know each other.

In sum, both Knapp's model of relational development and Altman and Taylor's social penetration theory suggest that communication between non-intimates is defined by rules of social appropriateness, thus resulting in communication that is, above all else, pleasant, polite and devoid of overly personal information exchange. As relationships progress, however, rules of social appropriateness have less bearing on the types of communication that is exchanged between partners.

Rules and norms for socially appropriate communication become less influential as the communication between intimates is examined. According to Knapp and Vangelisti (2000), communication that occurs between close relational partners is characterized not only by a decrease in the use of politeness, but also by an increase in the use of negative forms of communication like conflict and criticism. Moreover, Altman and Taylor (1973) contend that self disclosure patterns change as relational partners grow closer to one another. Self disclosures that were once restricted to a small number of "safe" topics begin to include self disclosures that may include negative information about one's self. Self disclosures, even those which contain

unflattering information, between close relational partners may also be characterized by increase in depth and detail.

In addition to the necessary increases of conflict, criticism and unflattering self disclosures, other forms of negative communication have been empirically shown to increase in frequency in close relationships as compared to acquaintanceships.

Other Negative Communication Forms Prevalent in Close Relationships

Social penetration theory (Altman & Taylor, 1973) and Knapp's model of relationship development (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2000) suggest that it is by virtue of the increased closeness between relational partners that allows for increases in conflict, critical communication and unflattering self disclosures. It may be argued that these negative communication forms are "necessary evils" in the relationship development process. Relational partners must be able to exchange a certain amount of negative information with one another (i.e. relational conflicts, important but negative self disclosures) for the survival of the relationship.

Some of the negative communication engaged in by partners in a close relationship, however, is not as necessary as the negotiation of conflict or the disclosure of unflattering personal information. Some negative forms of communication exchanged between intimates are engaged in the spirit of play. Baxter (1992) argues that playful behaviors not only serve as an index of intimacy and closeness between intimates, but that the enactment of play actually "promotes relational intimacy rather than simply reflecting it" (p. 337).

Baxter further argues the importance of play in intimate relationships by suggesting that playful communication is one of the defining characteristics of relational partners' idiosyncratic culture, implying that playful communication is necessary for the development of a relational culture. The pervasiveness of playful communication between close relational partners is further

indicated by the fact that Baxter performed 102 interviews for her 1992 study. Of 102 participants, 100% of them were able to recount some instance of playful communication in their relationships.

In addition to demonstrating the overall pervasiveness of general playfulness, Baxter was able to identify eight distinct types of play as well as determine the functions that each play type appeared to fulfill in close relationships. One of the types of play that emerged from the study was verbal teasing. Verbal teasing was rated high on a factor labeled "dangerous play", meaning that participants felt that verbal teasing had an anti-social component and might have negative impact on the relationship. Yet, in spite of the rating of "dangerous" that verbal teasing received, participants also indicated that verbal teasing was the third most used form of playful behavior, with 17% of reports of playful behavior taking the form of verbal teasing. Moreover, in addition to being rated as dangerous, verbal teasing was rated as being as or more indicative of intimacy in relationships than six of the seven other types of play.

The results of Baxter's investigation indicate that playfulness, including types of playfulness rated as having the potential to have negative impact on the relationship, contributes to the development of a relational culture as well as the intimacy between relational partners. Moreover, the results of this study reveal that dangerous or negative forms of communication are prevalent in close relationships.

Sharkey (1997) presents similar findings in his study of intentional embarrassment. Sharkey defines embarrassment as the "short-lived emotional/psychological response of social chagrin (i.e. anxiety or fear due to negative sanctioning or lower evaluations from others) or uneasiness that occurs as a result of a discrepancy between one's idealized role-identity and one's presented role-identity and the uncertainty that follows an incident" (p. 58). Based on this

definition, embarrassment is a highly negative social experience. The fact that a person might

wish to intentionally bring about this experience for another seems impossible, yet Sharkey's

(1997) research finds that the opposite is true.

Sharkey (1997) reports that 75.5% of participants report remembering at least one

occasion in the last six months in which they had intentionally embarrassed someone. This result

indicates that intentional embarrassment of others is a rather frequent occurrence. Even more

interesting than the prevalence of reports of intentional embarrassment, Sharkey (1997) reports

that friends and intimate partners are more likely to employ intentional embarrassment than any

other relational type.

Sharkey goes on to report that participants indicate that there are numerous goals

underlying the choice to intentionally embarrass someone. Among these goals is the intent to

socialize or initiate others into a social group and to demonstrate solidarity between partners.

Sharkey has also found that the demonstration of solidarity is embarrassors' most frequently

reported goal in their choice to employ intentional embarrassment. Further, embarrassees

reported that they perceived the embarrassors' goal to be a show of solidarity, indicating that

there is an understanding between close friends that intentional embarrassment will have a

positive impact on the relationship.

These findings indicate that intentional embarrassment, a form of communication that,

objectively speaking, is highly negative; can actually have positive effects on a close

relationship. Moreover, these results also indicate that the use of intentional embarrassment as a

technique to increase solidarity between intimates is not uncommon. These findings are

consistent with those of Baxter (1992), lending further support to the possibility that negative

communication, in general, is a communication form that is prevalent in and typical of close relationships.

As with verbal teasing and intentional embarrassment, verbal rudeness is a communication form that is regarded as objectively negative. Both verbal teasing and intentional embarrassment are forms of negative communication that people in close relationships commonly rate as being prevalent in their communication with close significant others. This is consistent with the increase in other types of negative communication described by Knapp and Vangelisti (2000) and Altman and Taylor (1973). Given empirically consistent findings that individuals in close relationships report the use of negative communication in their interactions with close significant others, it is likely that individuals would also be inclined to rate other negative forms of communication as typical of their interactions with close friends. Thus, it is proposed that (H1) verbal rudeness will be perceived as more typical of communication between close friends than between acquaintances. It is unclear, however, whether perceptions of typicality of verbal rudeness in cross-sex friendships will be similar to or different from perceptions of typicality in same sex friendships. Thus, (RQ1) asks will there be a significant difference between cross-sex friendships and same-sex friendships or acquaintanceships on perceptions of typicality of verbal rudeness?

Additionally, it was earlier argued that intentional embarrassment and verbal teasing are negative forms of communication that have been reframed in the context of a close relationship as playful forms of communication intended to build intimacy and solidarity. Thus, it is contended that verbal rudeness, another form of negative communication, may also be reframed in the context of close relationships. It is unlikely that acquaintances would be willing or able to reframe rudeness as playful because of the absence of a well-established relationship with unique

communicative rules. Acquaintances would have little choice but to use the rules guiding socially appropriate interaction for the interpretation of communication. Consequently, it is proposed that (H2) verbal rudeness will be perceived as more playful in communication between close friends than between acquaintances. Again, the lack of empirical foundation to hypothesize such a difference, (RQ2) asks whether there will be significant differences on perceptions of the playfulness of verbally rude utterances between cross-sex friends and either same-sex friends or acquaintances.

Models of relational development as well as research on play and intentional embarrassment lay the foundation for the argument that negative communication forms are prevalent in close relationships. What research on relational development, play, and intentional embarrassment do not readily do, however, is explain why such negative forms of communication are able to build solidarity and intimacy in close relationships. The development of an idiosyncratic relational culture between close relational partners may offer an explanation as to how negative forms of communication come to have positive impact on close relationships.

Idiosyncratic Rules and the Increased Tolerability of Negative Communication

As Goffman, social penetration theory and Knapp's model of relational development all argue, communication in early stages of relationships is determined by rules of acceptable behavior as defined by a social group. Social norms guide what is expected and allowed in communication with strangers, acquaintances and other non-intimates. As relationships develop, the rules that guide appropriate interaction between non-intimates become less applicable to the increasingly close relationship. Partners involved in close relationships establish parameters for communication that are idiosyncratic to their relationship, thereby creating a new set of rules that guide their patterns of communication (Strzyzewski, 1992). Among the newly established rules

for communication in the relationship may be rules that increase the acceptability of negative communication.

One reason that idiosyncratic rules may allow more negative communication in close relationships may be that expectations for communication in the relationship shift from being based on stereotype to being based on personal information. Burgoon (1978) suggests that communicators have expectations of others' communication in interactions. These expectations, in the case of strangers and other non-intimates, about whom we lack specific psychological data, are based on stereotypes. In close relationships, however, expectations for communication are based on specific psychological data that communicators obtain about one another through interaction over the course of the relationship's development.

Because, as argued previously, developed relationships are characterized by increases in negative communication, it is likely that the expectations of relational partners and their communication will include negative communication. If this is so, then negative communication will be unlikely to cause a violation of communicative expectations, thus increasing its tolerability in close relationships as compared to interactions with non-intimates.

In addition to the increased expectancy of negative communication in close relationships, Cronen, Pearce, and Harris' theory of the coordinated management of meaning (1967) may offer an explanation as to why negative communication may be likely to increase as relationships develop. This theory suggests that a verbal utterance can have meanings on several levels of abstraction. In other words, as in the example provided by Cronen et al., "you are beautiful" is a speech act – a compliment, which may also perhaps carry a sarcastic meaning, thus giving the utterance meaning on two levels.

This theory has important implications for the increased tolerability of negative communication in close relationships in that what may be, objectively speaking, a rude utterance, the idiosyncratic rules between relational partners may allow for such an utterance to have meaning as an insult *as well as* a tool for being playful or increasing a feeling of closeness, intimacy, or solidarity in their relationship.

Because idiosyncratic rules describe the ways in which communication in close relationships change, allowing for increased tolerability for negative communication as well as the reframing or reinterpreting of what might be objectively negative messages into messages that have beneficial relational consequences, it is possible that the development of idiosyncratic rules in a relationship may allow for the greater tolerability and reframing of rude verbal utterances. The idiosyncratic culture between close friends, then, may allow for the reframing of verbally rude utterances, thus causing them to be perceived as less negative overall. Thus, it is proposed that (H3) verbal rudeness will be perceived as less offensive in communication between close friends than between acquaintances. Similarly, (RQ3) asks whether there are significant differences on the perceptions of the offensiveness of verbally rude messages between cross-sex friends and either same-sex friends or acquaintances.

Typicality and reframing of negative communication may decrease the overall negative impact of negative communication between close relational partners. Considering that negative communication forms may be regarded as less negative overall, and that they may contribute to solidarity and intimacy in close relationships, it makes sense that the overall evaluation of negative communication between intimates may actually shift from negative to positive. Thus, it is proposed that (H4) verbal rudeness will be perceived as more acceptable in communication between close friends than between acquaintances. (RQ4) asks whether there are significant

differences in the perceptions of the acceptability of verbal rudeness between cross-sex friends

and either same-sex friends or acquaintances.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

The current study was conducted at a large state university in the Pacific. Participants were undergraduate students enrolled in introductory level Speech classes. 201 students participated on the study. Participants included 80 males and 116 females (four participants declined to indicate their sex). Participant ages ranged from 17 years to 43 years, M = 20.50. Participants reported cultural identifications as follows: 24.9% Caucasian, 25.4% Japanese, 13.4% Chinese, 11.9% Mixed with Hawaiian, 11.9% Filipino, 3.5% Korean, 2.5% Mixed without Hawaiian, 1.5% Pacific Islander, 1% African American, 1% Hispanic. 1% of participants reported a cultural identity other than the ones listed on the survey. An additional 1% of respondents did not indicate a cultural identification.

Procedure

Participants were asked to complete a self-report measure of their perceptions of verbally rude utterances. Students were asked to take the surveys home and return completed surveys to their class instructors on the next class meeting. Students were offered extra credit by their instructors for their participation in the study.

Experimental Conditions

The primary variable of interest in this study is that of relational context. The researcher manipulated relational context on the instrument in order to compare perceptions of verbal rudeness in communication between close same-sex friends, close cross-sex friends and acquaintances. Approximately one-third of participants were asked to complete one of three

versions of the instrument, with each version representing one of the three relational contexts of interest.

Measures

Development of the instrument. Prior to the collection of data for the current investigation, a set of scenarios demonstrating the use of verbally rude utterances had to be constructed. The goal in developing the scenarios was to create a set of communication episodes in which different types of rude communication were being enacted. It was important to generate scenarios in which different forms of verbal rudeness were communicated in order to control for any effects that any one particular type of rude remark would create in comparison to other types of rude remarks. It was also important that the scenarios were created using rude remarks that potential participants would consider legitimately rude.

Consequently, a sample of 19 undergraduates enrolled in an introductory Speech class were asked for their participation in a preliminary open-ended survey. This sample was not recruited for participation in the final study. Participants were asked to list as many offensive or rude remarks that they could think of. Responses were collected and categorized by type. Any behaviors that were non-verbal in nature were excluded from the set because of the current study's focus on rude verbal behaviors. Frequencies of each type of rude remark were compiled and the three types of verbally rude behaviors reported with the greatest frequency were used in the creation of the scenarios. The three most frequently occurring types of rudeness were insults, commands or demands, and bragging.

A specific utterance exemplifying each of these types was created and incorporated into each scenario used on the final instrument. Scenarios further included information about where the communication took place, the tone with which the rude remark in each scenario was

delivered, and with whom the interaction was taking place. See Appendix A for each of the three scenarios.

Perceptions of verbal rudeness. Upon completion of the development of the scenarios, a set of items was developed to assess participants' perceptions of the verbally rude remark occurring in each scenario. Participants were asked to report on the degree to which they perceived each verbally rude remark as typical, playful, offensive, and acceptable, in their relationships with a specific other.

Each perception was measured using a set of four 7-point Likert-type scales. Scale items measuring typicality asked participants to rate the degree to which they agreed that each rude remark was (a) typical, (b) frequent, (c) common, and (d) likely to occur. Items measuring perceptions of playfulness asked participants to rate the degree to which they agreed that each remark was (a) playful, (b) lighthearted, (c) funny, and (d) amusing. Scale items measuring participant perceptions of the offensiveness of each remark asked participants to rate the degree to which they agreed that each remark was (a) rude, (b) offensive, (c) upsetting, (d) hurtful. Finally, scale items devised to assess participants' perceptions of the acceptability of each remark asked participants to rate the degree to which they agreed that each remark was (a) appropriate, (b) acceptable, (c) permissible, and (d) allowable. Appendix B contains a complete list of the Likert-type items.

Scenario realism. Each set of items measuring participant perceptions of typicality, playfulness, offensiveness, and appropriateness was followed by a single item assessing the degree to which participants felt that the scenario (as opposed to just the rude remark) was realistic. This was measured with a single item because it is not a variable of interest, but rather

serves as a check to insure that the scenarios were realistic enough to participants to allow for

their data to be used in making generalizable conclusions from their responses.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Alpha Reliabilities

Overall Alpha reliabilities were calculated for items measuring each of the four

perceptions by computing the scale items measuring a single perception in all three scenarios.

Additionally, reliabilities were calculated for items measuring perceptions of individual rude

remarks by calculating items measuring each perception for each scenario. Alpha reliabilities for

items measuring each of the four dependent variables ranged from .78 to .90, indicating that all

of the scales measuring dependent variables are reliable and therefore suitable for use in

statistical analysis. Table 1 shows a summary of all reliability values.

Table 1: Scale Alpha Reliabilities

Dependent Variable	Overall (12 Items)	Bragging	Demanding	Insulting
Typicality	$\alpha = .85$	$\alpha = .88$	$\alpha = .90$	$\alpha = .86$
Playfulness	$\alpha = .85$	$\alpha = .81$	$\alpha = .81$	$\alpha = .83$
Offensiveness	$\alpha = .78$	$\alpha = .85$	$\alpha = .83$	$\alpha = .85$
Acceptability	$\alpha = .80$	$\alpha = .89$	$\alpha = .88$	$\alpha = .88$

Statistical Analysis of Hypotheses and Research Questions

Perceptions of typicality (H1/RQ1). A MANOVA was performed on the data to

determine whether there were significant differences in perceptions of the four dependent

variables of typicality, playfulness, appropriateness and offensiveness between the three

relational contexts. Overall, none of the four hypotheses related to the dependent variables found

statistical support. See Table 2 for means and standard deviations.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that, overall, participants would rate verbal rudeness as more typical of communication between close same sex friends than between acquaintances. This hypothesis was unsupported, $\underline{F}$ (2, 198) = .62, $\underline{p}$ = ns; ε^2 = .006.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Perceptions of Typicality of Verbal Rudeness

Scenario	All Scenarios	Bragging	Demanding	Insulting
Acquaintance	$\underline{M}$ = 3.77 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.02	$\underline{M}$ = 3.92 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.28	$\underline{M}$ = 3.60 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.45	$\underline{M}$ = 3.79 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.33
Same-Sex Friend	$\underline{M}$ = 3.61 $\underline{SD}$ = .93	$\underline{M}$ = 3.39 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.31	$\underline{M}$ = 3.92 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.42	$\underline{M}$ = 3.53 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.26
Cross-Sex Friend	$\underline{M}$ = 3.61 $\underline{SD}$ = .87	$\underline{M}$ = 3.66 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.23	$\underline{M}$ = 3.68 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.38	$\underline{M}$ = 3.51 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.30

The above results were calculated using data collapsed across all three scenarios. Additional analyses were performed to determine whether there were differences in perceptions of typicality of verbal rudeness within each of the three scenarios. These additional analyses failed to yield results in support of H1.

In order to answer the related research question one, which examined whether there would be significant differences between cross-sex friends and either same-sex friends or acquaintances on perceptions of typicality of verbally rude remarks, Tukey post hoc analyses were performed. These analyses revealed no significant differences between cross-sex friends and either same-sex friends or acquaintances on perceptions of typicality. However, an interesting finding did emerge between acquaintances and same-sex friends in the opposite direction than expected. A mean difference of .54, $\underline{p}$ < .05 was found between acquaintances ($\underline{M}$ = 3.9) and same-sex friends

($\underline{M}$ = 3.4) such that acquaintances perceived bragging as more typical of communication than did same-sex friends. This finding is in direct contrast to the predicted outcome and will be addressed in the discussion section of this paper.

Perceptions of playfulness (H2/RQ2). Hypothesis 2 predicted that, overall, participants would rate verbally rude remarks as being more playful in communication between close same sex friends than in communication between acquaintances. Similarly, research question two was designed to examine whether there would be differences between cross sex friends and either acquaintances or same sex friends on perceptions of typicality of verbally rude utterances. A MANOVA performed on data collapsed across all three rude scenarios revealed that none of the relational contexts significantly differed from one another with regard to participant perceptions of verbally rude utterances, F (2, 198) = .91, p = ns; ε^2 = .009. Table 3 presents a summary of means and standard deviations for analyses related to H2.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations for Perceptions of Playfulness of Verbal Rudeness

Context	All Scenarios	Bragging	Demanding	Insulting
Acquaintance	M = 3.12 SD = .98	M = 3.81 SD = 1.27	M = 2.96 SD = 1.20	M = 3.17 SD = 1.29
Same-Sex Friend	M = 3.18 SD = 1.04	M = 3.20 SD = 1.32	M = 3.08 SD = 1.44	M = 3.26 SD = 1.52
Cross-Sex Friend	M = 3.35 SD = 1.38	M = 3.46 SD = 1.33	M = 3.40 SD = 1.33	M = 3.18 SD = 1.39

An additional MANOVA was performed in order to determine whether differences in perceptions of the playfulness of verbally rude remarks would emerge between same-sex friends and acquaintances within each of the three rude scenarios. Again, no statistical support was found for hypothesis two, with results of the MANOVA indicating no significant differences between acquaintances and same-sex friends on perceptions of playfulness of verbally rude utterances.

In order to answer RQ2 which was designed to examine differences between cross-sex friends and either acquaintances or same-same sex friends on perceptions of playfulness of verbally rude utterances, Tukey post hoc analyses were performed. Results of these analyses

revealed no significant differences in participant perceptions of the playfulness of verbally rude

messages between between cross-sex friends and either of the other two relational contexts.

Perceptions of offensiveness (H3/RQ3). Hypothesis three predicted that, overall,

participants would rate verbal rudeness as being less offensive in communication between close

same sex friends than in communication between acquaintances. The results of a MANOVA

performed on data collapsed across all three scenarios failed to yield statistical support for this

hypothesis,

$\underline{F}$ (2, 198) = 2.33, $\underline{p}$ = ns; ε^2 = .02. An additional MANOVA was performed to determine

whether there were differences between same-sex friends and acquaintances on perceptions of

the offensiveness of verbally rude messages within each scenario. These analyses failed to

provide statistical support for H3. Means and standard deviations of perceptions of offensiveness

are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations for Perceptions of Offensiveness of Verbal Rudeness

Context	All Scenarios	Bragging	Demanding	Insulting
Acquaintance	$\underline{M}$ = 4.16 $\underline{SD}$ = .93	$\underline{M}$ = 3.68 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.56	$\underline{M}$ = 4.26 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.38	$\underline{M}$ = 4.53 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.28
Same-Sex Friend	$\underline{M}$ = 3.94 $\underline{SD}$ = .94	$\underline{M}$ = 3.88 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.60	$\underline{M}$ = 3.80 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.45	$\underline{M}$ = 4.14 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.38
Cross-Sex Friend	$\underline{M}$ = 3.80 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.00	$\underline{M}$ = 3.51 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.41	$\underline{M}$ = 3.77 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.41	$\underline{M}$ = 4.13 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.63

Research question three was intended to examine whether participants would perceive

differences between close cross-sex friends and either close same-sex friends or acquaintances

on perceptions of offensiveness of rude remarks in communication. Post hoc Tukey analyses

found no differences between close cross-sex friends and either same-sex friends or

acquaintances on perceptions of offensiveness of rude utterances.

Perceptions of acceptability (H4/RQ4). Hypotheses four predicted that, overall, participant perceptions of acceptability of verbally rude utterances would be higher in interactions between same-sex friends than acquaintances. A MANOVA performed on data collapsed across all three scenarios revealed no significant statistical differences between same-sex friends and acquaintances on perceptions of the acceptability of verbally rude messages, $\underline{F}$ (2, 198) = 2.10,

$\underline{p}$ = ns; ε^2 = .02.

An additional MANOVA was performed to determine whether there would be differences within each scenario between perceptions of acceptability of verbal rudeness in communication between same-sex friends and acquaintances. The additional analyses did not reveal any significant differences.

Table 5: Means and Standard Deviations for Perceptions of Acceptability of Verbal Rudeness

Context	All Scenarios	Bragging	Demanding	Insulting
Acquaintance	$\underline{M}$ = 3.54 $\underline{SD}$ = .89	$\underline{M}$ = 3.79 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.51	$\underline{M}$ = 3.12 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.26	$\underline{M}$ = 3.70 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.31
Same-Sex Friend	$\underline{M}$ = 3.80 $\underline{SD}$ = .95	$\underline{M}$ = 3.74 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.44	$\underline{M}$ = 3.56 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.40	$\underline{M}$ = 4.13 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.32
Cross-Sex Friend	$\underline{M}$ = 3.82 $\underline{SD}$ = .89	$\underline{M}$ = 4.07 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.32	$\underline{M}$ = 3.59 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.40	$\underline{M}$ = 3.80 $\underline{SD}$ = 1.55

Research question four was designed to examine whether there are differences in perceptions of the acceptability of verbally rude utterances between same-sex friends and acquaintances. Tukey post hoc analyses revealed no significant differences between perceptions of verbal rudeness in communication between close cross-sex friends and either same sex friends or acquaintances.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Summary and Interpretation of Findings

Statistical analyses were unable to provide support for any of the four hypotheses

presented. Hypothesis 1 predicted that participants would perceive verbally rude remarks as

more typical of communication between close friends than between acquaintances. Statistical

analyses revealed no differences between close friends and acquaintances with the exception of

the bragging scenario. In the case of the bragging scenario, participants rated the rude remark as

more typical of communication between acquaintances than between friends. Possible

explanations for this result are explored later. Statistical analyses further showed no differences

in perceptions of verbally rude remarks between cross-sex friends and either same-sex friends or

acquaintances.

Hypotheses 2 predicted that participants would perceive verbally rude remarks as being

more playful in interaction between close friends than between acquaintances. Again, the data

showed a lack of statistical support for this hypothesis. Additional analyses further showed no

differences in perception of the playfulness of verbally rude comments between friends and

acquaintances.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that participants would perceive rude remarks as less offensive in

communication between close friends than between acquaintances. Hypothesis 4 predicted that

participants would perceive rudeness as more acceptable in communication between friends than

acquaintances. Again, the data were unable to yield statistics in support of these hypotheses.

Further, no differences were found in perceptions of either offensiveness or acceptability of

verbal rudeness in communication between friends and acquaintances.

While none of the hypotheses were supported, an interesting significant finding did emerge. Analyses revealed that the bragging rude remark was rated to be more typical of interactions between acquaintances than same-sex friends. This may be because in the case of acquaintances, where communicative partners do not yet have highly developed perceptions of one another, that an assertive statement of one's expertise in a particular field, as in the case of the bragging scenario, would be taken simply as informative rather than as inappropriate bragging. Moreover, the bragging in the scenario happens in the context of offering help, thereby possibly changing the valence of the situation such that the bragging, which may have otherwise been construed as rude, became neutral.

Altman and Taylor (1973) may suggest that the disclosure of such a piece of information is of the impersonal nature by which early relational stage disclosures are characterized. Further, the nature of self disclosure has been argued (Altman & Taylor, 1973) to be highly reciprocal, that one party's self-disclosure is likely to incite a disclosure from the communicative partner. In the case of the bragging scenario, the first party's self-disclosure about having difficulty with a software program may have been perceived to have simply motivated the other partner to disclose similarly. Consequently, it is reasonable that bragging, i.e. the disclosure about one's talent and interest in a discipline was shown to be statistically more typical in communication between acquaintances than between friends. Further study in this vein should utilize utterances beyond bragging in order to eliminate the confound presented by the type of utterance used in the scenario.

Beyond this single significant result, however, none of the hypotheses expecting differences between close friends and acquaintances on perceptions of rude communication were supported. It is possible that the reason that no differences were found in perceptions of verbal

rudeness between friends and acquaintances is that there is, in fact, no difference. The means representing all of the dependent variables were below the midpoint on the 7-point scale. This indicates that regardless of scenario and regardless of relational context that all of the verbally rude messages were perceived as offensive, and with the exception of the one finding discussed above, not typical, playful or acceptable. This may be because of a natural bias against rude communication, in which case only the most unusual of circumstances would allow for rude communication to ever be perceived positively.

While it is possible that there are no differences to be found, it seems more likely that this study was marred by Type II error. The discipline of relational communication is grounded on the basic assumption that communication in early stages of relationships is different than at later stages. (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2000). Further, Baxter (1992) and Sharkey (1997) give us reason to believe that closeness in relationships can alter perceptions of negative communication, shifting them from negative to positive. Consequently, it is more logical to believe that there are, in fact, differences in perceptions of rude communication across relational contexts that the design of this study was unable to find. The following section describes the potentially limiting factors of this study that may have prevented the emergence of differing perceptions of verbal rudeness across relational contexts.

Limitations of the Current Study

One explanation as to why this study did not yield expected results may be ineffectiveness of the methodology used in this experiment. Participants in the current investigation were asked to rate hypothetical communication in hypothetical situations in which they may or may not have been able to effectively see themselves actually engaging. While laboratory studies can be criticized for over-controlling communication to the point that

mundane realism is diminished, in the case of studying perceptions of and reactions to rude communication, a laboratory study may be conducive to getting more realistic data.

In the laboratory setting, an actual interaction can occur and participant perceptions of actual rude communication may be measured. Engaging in actual communication would allow participants to offer real perceptions of actual communication, an accomplishment that the current study was unable to achieve. Further, by inducing interaction with a specific, live, *tangible other, the salience of the relational context in question would increase substantially,* thus further increasing a laboratory study's ability to elicit the kinds of results this study was unable to yield.

Another alternative for studying this communicative phenomenon while still using a survey methodology is to alter the scenarios so that participants are rating perceptions of communication between two other people, rather than between themselves and another person. Participants, in this case, would not have to feel as though they were engaged in the communication, and the decreased need for participants to feel that the scenario would be a realistic communication situation *for them* may generate different perceptions of the communication.

Another factor which may have severely diminished the effectiveness of the instrument used in the study was the small sample size of 19 participants recruited for the initial survey used to develop the scenarios. It is likely that 19 participants were unable to yield a large enough set of rude remarks to effectively determine what kinds of comments were most likely to be regarded as rude, therefore diminishing the possibility that the list generated by this sample would reflect what most people regard as rude communication. Further, the sample was not asked to give specific information about the degree to which each comment was considered rude

– a factor which may have been important to consider when trying to attain a broad range of rude remarks to be included on the instrument.

Directions for Future Research

There is still much to understand about the differences between friends and acquaintances and their perceptions of verbally rude remarks. It may, however, be important to learn more about verbal rudeness as a communicative phenomenon before attempting to understand the different ways it is perceived in different relational contexts. Perhaps the first step in understanding the verbally rude utterance may be to do the challenging work of discovering what types of verbally rude utterances are enacted in communication. In obtaining data by way of extensive open-ended surveys about the kinds of rude communication participants have experienced, researchers would have a more concrete, empirically founded starting point from which to study perceptions of rude remarks and how those perceptions differ across relational contexts. Having such a taxonomy to start from, researchers may be able to refine their research focusing on different types of rude communication rather than rude communication as a whole.

Further, the current study focused on receiver perceptions of verbal rudeness. Further research may wish to expand research into the investigation sender motivations and intent for engaging in rude communication. Research should investigate whether communicators who utilize verbal rudeness in their interactions are in fact motivated by improving or increasing levels of closeness in the relationship as suggested by the play and intentional embarrassment research (Sharkey, 1997; Baxter, 1992). Moreover, further research conducted on sender perceptions of verbally rude communication should delve into the intentionality of rude communication. Researchers may wish to answer the question as to whether the enactment of

rude communication in a relationship is intentional or consciously performed versus incidental or inadvertent as a result of more relaxed communicative regulations.

Similarly, in addition to changing the communicator point of view from which verbal rudeness is studied, the study of rudeness may also be expanded into relational contexts other than friendships and acquaintances. While no differences emerged between acquaintances and friends, it is possible that there may emerge a difference between friends and lovers in the ways that rude messages are perceived.

In addition to studying perceptions of verbally rude behaviors, future research may wish to examine the role of a person's natural inclination to be rude or not. Verbal aggressiveness, for instance, may be a personality trait that might make an individual more inclined to engage in verbally rude behavior and therefore perceive it as less offensive and more acceptable than someone with lower trait verbal aggressiveness. Also, research may wish to investigate the communicative outcomes of an interaction in which one partner has a high propensity to be rude or verbally aggressive and the other partner has a low propensity to be rude or verbally aggressive. What impact might the individual-level differences have on the success and effectiveness of the communication in such a situation? This is a question that future researchers may wish to attempt to answer.

Finally, future research may wish to investigate relational outcomes of the use of verbal rudeness. By measuring participant perceptions of verbally rude remarks, researchers are able to gain insight into the ways that expectations for communication change with the development of relationships. Examining relational outcomes, however, can demonstrate the actual impact that engaging in verbally rude utterances can have on relationships. Relational outcome variables

such as levels of closeness, solidarity, intimacy and satisfaction can be measured to determine whether verbal rudeness is detrimental or helpful to a relationship.

Conclusion

Although the current investigation was unable to increase the knowledge we possess about rude communication forms, it may have offered insight into new, more effective ways in which rude and negative communication can be studied. It is important to continue research in this arena as it is hard to ignore the fact that communication in long-term, close relationships is not devoid of negative communication. Understanding the relational processes that allow for negative communication to occur and be perceived differently by intimates than acquaintances is essential to understanding the phenomenon of communication in relationships.

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APPENDIX A

SCENARIOS

Bragging Scenario

You and a(n) [acquaintance/close same-sex friend/close opposite-sex friend] are talking about using a computer program to create a slideshow presentation for a class. You tell your acquaintance that you were having trouble figuring out how to use the program. Your acquaintance says in response, in a matter-of-fact tone, "I'm going to do you a favor and help you. I am extremely talented at working with computers. I have never been in a situation when I couldn't make the computer do whatever I wanted."

Demanding Scenario

You and a(n) [acquaintance/close same-sex friend/close opposite-sex friend] are doing homework together in the library. Your acquaintance is in the midst of taking a lot of notes from a book so that s/he can finish a major paper that is due in two weeks. In the middle of taking notes, your acquaintance's pencil breaks. Your acquaintance, noticing that you have a pencil in your hand, looks at you and says in an assertive tone, "Hey, gimme your pencil."

Insulting Scenario

You and a(n) [acquaintance/close same-sex friend/close opposite-sex friend] have gone to a restaurant for lunch. You have ordered your food and are waiting for the server to bring your meal. When the server arrives, you and your acquaintance notice that the server has forgotten to bring your beverage. You are very thirsty so you find the fact that your drink was forgotten very annoying. You sharply demand that the server bring your drink immediately. In response to your behavior, your acquaintance says to you, in a sarcastic tone, "I hope the server comes back quickly, maybe then you'll stop being such a jerk."

APPENDIX B

SURVEY ITEMS

Please respond to the following items while thinking about your [acquaintance's/close same sex friend/close opposite-sex friend]'s behavior in the above scenario. Based on your [acquaintance/close same-sex friend/close opposite-sex friend]'s behavior in this situation, please answer the following questions on a scale of Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7). In this situation, you feel that your [acquaintance/close same-sex friend/close opposite-sex friend]'s comment would be:

Typical[t]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Likely to occur[t]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Frequent[t]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Common[t]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Playful[p]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Funny[p]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Amusing[p]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Lighthearted[p]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Rude[o]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Offensive[o]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Upsetting[o]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Hurtful[o]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Acceptable[a]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Allowable[a]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Appropriate[a]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Permissible[a]	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree

Now, rate the degree to which you felt that this scenario was realistic.

Very realistic   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Not at all realistic

[t] Items measuring typicality
[p] items measuring playfulness
[o] items measuring offensiveness
[a] items measuring acceptability