Abstract

There is little research today that shows attempts at bridging cross-linguistic interactions. Numerous studies analyze intercultural communication and the way it may bridge or divide different people. Additionally, evidence between different people groups exists in their unique cultural values. Within these interactions exists a great amount of uncertainty between communication participants as well. Taking this into consideration, the amount of uncertainty between two strangers who speak different native languages is bound to have greater uncertainty. To overcome these barriers, people utilize specific uncertainty reduction strategies in a greater concentration. By analyzing practices such as nonverbal communication, shared experiences, and commonalities, a more effective means of communicating cross-linguistically is discovered in the current study.

Keywords: cross-linguistic communication, uncertainty reduction theory, nonverbal communication, intercultural communication

Using Uncertainty Reduction Theory to Analyze Intercultural Communication between Strangers

Who Speak Different Native Languages

Introduction

The uncertainty reduction theory has been fundamental in analyzing the trends in people's initial encounters. The basic premise lies in people's discomfort due to uncertainty felt towards strangers, which causes people to reduce uncertainty through interaction (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). However, there are few studies that show how differences in language can contribute to this uncertainty and the implications that can be drawn from it. Essentially, I wish to analyze how intercultural communication during cross-linguistic interactions can impede or assist the reduction of uncertainty in initial encounters (Neuliep, 2012). If interactive approaches are the best way for individuals to reduce feelings of uncertainty, then language barriers make this difficult to accomplish (Theiss & Solomon, 2008).

Through this research, I plan on utilizing interviews that seek to capture the effects that differences in language can have on levels of uncertainty felt towards others. Specifically, questions will be aimed at analyzing people's psychological states when interculturally communicating. Interviews will seek to understand people's level of comfort, anxiety, stress, confidence, and other characteristics that affect feelings of uncertainty. Interviews will be aimed at distinguishing peoples' cognitive uncertainty felt prior to and during cross-linguistic interactions. These questions will seek to understand people's beliefs and attitudes toward their cross-lingustic counterparts. Typically, people seek out ways to reduce cognitive uncertainty through opportunities for prediction, decisiveness, and structure (Kruglanski, 2004; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996).

Furthermore, I am interested in discovering how a person's tendency for uncertainty avoidance changes when faced with intercultural communication. These different tendencies can possibly be explained by examining different factors that include intercultural communication, nonverbal communication, and acculturation (Aikins, 2011; Berry, 2005, 2013; Gudykunst, 1989). The empirical literature review of these characteristics as they pertain to cultural differences, intercultural interactions, and cross-linguistic relationships are the foundation for my research. In our globalized society, the necessity for improving cross-linguistic interactions is of utmost importance. The key to improvement lies within the communication techniques utilized by people who have already developed a cross-linguistic relationship.

Literature Review

Uncertainty Reduction Theory No matter the context of an interaction between two individuals, uncertainty will exist in some level. Due to the nature of intercultural interactions, differences are bound to exist between individuals. The theory created by Berger and Calabrese seeks to understand the ways in which individuals reduce uncertainty or increase predictability when interacting with a stranger (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). It highlights the strategies utilized during an interaction as communication participants learn about each other. Uncertainty reduction was linked to a set of seven other variables present in interpersonal interaction including verbal communication, non-verbal affiliative expressiveness, information seeking, intimacy level of communication content, reciprocity, similarity, and liking. Two additional variables that have been added since the initial formation of the theory are shared networks and communication satisfaction (Berger & Gudykunst, 1991; Neuliep & Grohskopf, 2000). Through these variables a set of axioms and theorems were created to analyze the impact they had on reducing uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1975, p. 100-105).

Existing within interpersonal relationships are numerous types of uncertainty. These types are dependent on the focal point of the interaction. For example, cognitive uncertainty relates to uncertainty felt toward another's thoughts as well as our own; behavioral uncertainty focuses on uncertainty in predicting or rationalizing someone's behavior, or in how we should behave during an interaction (Redmond, 2015). Relational uncertainty is defined as the degree of confidence people have in their perceptions of involvement within close relationships (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999). Upon initial interaction, an individual's level of uncertainty for another is at its highest.

Three phases were identified during relational development including an entry phase, a personal phase, and an exit phase (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). The entry phase focuses on the way people communicate as they withhold certain societal norms, behaviors, and standards. This can be introducing oneself and providing basic demographic information to become acquainted. The personal phase unveils more personal information as participants communicate attitudes, values, and beliefs on a variety of topics. Lastly, the exit phase is a determinant one in which participants decide whether to continue or terminate the relationship. This phase is dependent on a cost-benefit analysis of the uncertainty reduction process (Berger, 1979). Uncertainty arises when people cannot anticipate potential rewards and costs of interaction with a relational partner. The greatest uncertainty that individuals can feel in interpersonal relationships occurs when interactants communicate interculturally.

Intercultural Communication Intercultural communication is when different cultures interact and create shared meanings through their use of symbolic, interpretive, transactional, and contextual processes (Lustig & Koester, 2007; Arasaratnam, 2013). Despite the lack of studies focused on language, there are a myriad of studies conducted on the relationship between

intercultural interactions and uncertainty reduction (Gudykunst, 1984, 1985, 1989, 2000; Redmond, 2015). A study conducted by Gudykunst and Nishida (1984) found that uncertainty reduction strategies such as intent to interrogate, self-disclose, and display nonverbal affiliative expressiveness are most effective in intercultural interactions. These specific strategies are aimed at gathering information to reduce uncertainty and mitigate the effects of cultural differences. Depending on the type of relationship, different strategies are utilized more frequently than others. Throughout all intercultural relationships, attitude similarity, interpersonal attraction, frequency of communication, and the use of interactive strategies have a positive impact on attributional confidence (Gudykunst, 1985). These variables explain the likeliness that two culturally different individuals will communicate.

There are three hypotheses regarding the nature of intercultural communication including the multiculturalism hypothesis, the integration hypothesis, and the contact hypothesis (Berry, 2013). The *multiculturalism hypothesis* attributes a large pluralistic society to numerous cultural groups living together within a civic arrangement. Each group seeks to co-exist through constant negotiation, compromise, and mutual accommodations. Instead of a majority and minority division there are ethnocultural groups that offer their own cultures to a complex society. Neither group is mandated to change their way of life for the sake of another. The *integration hypothesis* champions engagement with both cultures. An individual maintains their own culture in high esteem, while interacting and forming relationships with people of another culture. This model highlights a cultural group whose participants are secure in their own culture and confident in learning from others. The *contact hypothesis* encourages contact and sharing between cultural groups for the sake of mutual acceptance. This ensures equality and voluntary contact but does not allow intercultural appreciation, but rather intercultural acceptance (Berry, 2013).

Acculturation Acculturation is described as the way in which "groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 149). This working definition focuses primarily on the physical aspect of interactions; however, acculturation was later separated between the physical and the psychological. Physical acculturation is a change in the culture of the group, while psychological acculturation is a change in the psychology of the individual (Graves, 1967). Each depends on a person's perspective as the dominant or non-dominant culture within a specific context. The acculturation strategy of *assimilation* is when non-dominant groups or individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and instead seek daily interactions with other cultures. *Separation* is when non-dominant groups or individuals place a value on holding on to their original culture and wish to avoid interaction with others. *Integration* is when non-dominant groups or individuals withhold their own native cultures while constantly interacting with other cultures. Lastly, *marginalization* is when non-dominant groups or individuals exhibit limited maintenance of their own culture and limited interaction with other cultures (Berry, 1997). Depending on an individual or group's association with the dominant culture, and their level of cultural maintenance to withhold their own culture, a classification in one of the four types of acculturation strategies will occur.

Depending on the individual or group of people, four different acculturation strategies are utilized when interacting interculturally (Berry, 1997). Each strategy is dependent on the level of cultural maintenance, or the extent one's cultural identity and characteristics are considered important, and their level of contact and participation, or the extent one becomes involved in other cultural groups or remain primarily their own (Berry, 1997).

Nonverbal Communication Nonverbal communication consists of eight main types that include proxemics, kinesics, occulesics, physical appearance, haptics, paralanguage, olfaction, and chronemics. *Proxemics* communicates distance and consists of four proxemic zones as examined by Edward Hall (Hall et al., 1968). Firstly, the intimate zone involves any space ranging from 0 to 18 inches and is reserved for people closest to us such as family members and close friends. Secondly, the personal zone involves a space ranging from 18 inches to 4 feet and allows for contact with friends and acquaintances. Thirdly, the social zone involves a space ranging from 4 to 10 feet and consists of less intimate interpersonal relationships such as those with business partners or acquaintances. Lastly, the public zone involves a space ranging from 10 to 25 feet and is meant for the least intimate communication. The public zone is within public spaces such as presenting in front of people (Hall et al., 1968).

Kinesics refers to how people utilize movement of their face, body, arms, and legs and this concept can be applied to interactions. When people communicate, they tend to utilize gestures to relate to their physiological or communicative needs. Adaptive behaviors can be shown by actions such as foot tapping or pen clicking and insinuates uneasiness or impatience in social situations (Hans & Hans, 2015). *Occulesics* focuses on eye movement and can indicate where someone's attention lies. In high power distance cultures, it is considered rude to make eye contact with a superior. In contrast, in low power distance cultures, where people are treated as equals, eye contact is appropriate and encouraged (Gudykunst, 1998).

Physical appearance includes dimensions such as body shape, body image, physical attractiveness, clothing, cosmetics, hair, and accessories (Moore & Hickson & Stacks, 2010). Whenever two people meet, appearance is the first characteristic of a person that is noticed. In fact, appearance may be the initial reason that two people communicate at all (Berger &

Calabrese, 1975). The way someone dresses may communicate what group or people they surround themselves with. *Haptics*, the study of touch, occurs when people come into physical contact with one another. Although there is limited scholarship of this nonverbal cue, Weitz says that "the logical end of proxemics [study of space] is touching. Once two people touch, they have eliminated the space between them, and this act usually signifies that a special type of relationship exists between them" (Weitz, 1974).

Paralanguage describes all unspoken attributes of verbal communication and includes vocal inflection, tone, speed, and utterances. These different expressions of voice during a conversation create different messages for the receiver to interpret. Linguistic communication relies on the recognition of intentions and the ability to decipher all aspects of voice (Wharton, 2016). *Olfaction* is the sense of smelling and has potential explanations for whether people choose to communicate. Three types of odors are taken into consideration when communicating with people. These are natural, unnatural, and diplomatic odors (Gaby & Zayas, 2017). Natural odors are innate odors unique to the individual. Unnatural odors are acquired throughout one's daily life. Diplomatic odors are modified scents such as perfumes and colognes utilized for personal needs.

Chronemics is the study of how time pertains to communication. Cultures are described as monochronic and polychronic. For example, Americans have a monochronic view, focusing their attention on one thing at a time. Time commitments, deadlines, and schedules have a pivotal role in society and are taken seriously (Hall & Hall, 1990). In contrast, polychronic cultures can perform multiple tasks at once. Additionally, time is less permanent, and individuals are not expected to meet deadlines perfectly.

Research Questions Understanding what variables influence the use of uncertainty reduction strategies is crucial to interpreting a person's behavior. Factors such as differences in language and culture can affect someone's use of specific uncertainty reduction strategies in social interactions. Two research questions are posited for this study considering the effects that differences in language will have on the uncertainty reduction process.

Research Question 1: How does speaking a different native language hinder the uncertainty reduction process when communicating?

Research Question 2: What uncertainty reduction strategies do people use to develop intimacy with strangers who speak different native languages?

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Method

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Participants Evaluations of two different groups were conducted primarily to examine the uncertainty reduction strategies that people utilize during cross-linguistic interactions. A combination of convenience and snowball sampling were applied. Specifically, two Spanish speaking participants and two English speaking participants were contacted directly through text or email. In addition, participants were asked if they knew anyone who had formed cross-linguistic relationships. Only participants who had communicated cross linguistically with a Spanish or English speaker were considered. Once selected, interviewees determined the place where the interview would occur. A free meal was given as compensation to all participants; therefore, most interviews were conducted at a restaurant of their choice.

In total eleven participants ($N = 11$) were gathered for an interview. The first group consisted of five native Spanish speakers, all of which were Hispanic. Three of the five Hispanic were bilingual in the Spanish and English language. Participants had an age range of 21-57 years old and were all native to Mexico. Two participants were female and three were male. The

second group consisted of six native English speakers. The six speakers only knew English. Five participants were of European heritage with four being White and one being Hispanic. The last participant from this sample was Middle Eastern. The participants, aged 19-60 years old, were all native to the United States, except for the Middle Eastern participant, who was born in Iran. Two participants were female, and four were male. Participants came from different socioeconomic backgrounds, ranging from lower class to upper middle class.

Interview Protocol The examination of both groups was conducted through a semi-structured interview, with questions relating to which influences shaped a participant's ability to form a cross-linguistic relationship. Participants were asked to keep a friend in mind throughout the interview. This friend was required to have a different native language in order to examine the relational development between the two. Additionally, participants signed a consent form to allow the use of an audio recorder during the interview. Interviewees were informed of their rights and told their names would be deidentified in the final findings of the research. The three bilingual Hispanic interviewees were given the option of conducting the interview in English or Spanish. Two chose English and one chose Spanish. The interviewer had an intermediate mastery of Spanish, meaning enough to conduct an interview. For the last two interviews conducted entirely in Spanish, a friend of the interviewee translated during communication errors. It is important to note that the interviewees agreed to have this translator prior to the interview. The interview length varied between 40 and 58 minutes. Differences in interview length were dependent on how interviewees responded to questions, the rate at which the interviewee spoke, how thorough answers were, and if answers were repetitive. The approval of the study protocol was obtained by the university's Institutional Review Board.

Transcription and Data Analysis After all interviews were conducted, the audio was sent via two websites for transcription purposes. The three interviews that occurred in Spanish were sent to TranscribeMe for transcription; while the eight interviews that occurred in English were sent to Temi for transcription. TranscribeMe is a transcription service that is manually transcribed, while Temi is done by an automated machine. After receiving the transcription for the Spanish interviews, the written data was inputted to Google Translate for a final English transcript. The author revised and edited the English transcript after Google translation to account for any errors in the data.

Once transcripts were confirmed accurate, they were put into a qualitative data analysis software called Atlas.ti. Using this software, codes were made to highlight important insights that offered answers to the research question. A full code list of significant findings, as well as the frequency of its appearances within all interviews, is provided in Table 2. In total, 726 significant codes were created after examining every interview transcript.

Results

Commonality One of the first themes found within each interview was the importance of finding a commonality when building a cross-linguistic relationship. In both groups participant's cited instances in which language differences were mitigated through commonalities and shared activities. The importance of finding a commonality within the relationship was evident. Participants' desired commonalities existed as demographics, interests, and experiences, depending on the participant.

Participant A spoke about a commonality of having a family that made interactions more meaningful. "There's a point at which if you have things in common and you care about each other and care about even finding [out more about each other] … I would feel comfortable

hanging out [more often] if the opportunity arose." Participant E highlighted the importance of having a commonality if no shared language existed. Speaking the same language made it "a little bit easier to pick up [the conversation] … [however, in cross-linguistic interactions] realizing that y'all have nothing in common and…the other person kind of gets that idea… it's really, really hard to come back from that."

Without commonality, there seemed to be little reason to continue the conversation. The interview data suggests that commonalities are more important in developing a relationship than shared language. Participant G spoke about an experience overseas in which they built a relationship with an individual despite a difference in language. "We brought her a gift…even though we live on different sides of the world, like we still have similar objects and like we still use objects to communicate in the same way." The similarity in communication and simple necessity was enough to develop and grow a relationship in this scenario. Likewise, Participant I spoke about common activities having a greater effect on friendships with others. "With the fact of having that in common, the activities that one does is what makes a friendship. And the language comes later, and the conversation is given by the fact that we have the same interest." Similar language came secondary to the common activities that people partake in.

Mitigated Role of Language Participants' shared level of fluency did not seem to impact the pursuit of similarities and commonalities of axiom six in the uncertainty reduction process. Even so, the shared level of fluency between two individuals appeared to show insignificant worth in asking questions and signifcance in self-disclosing information. Participant K spoke about a problem communicating with his doctor and the difficulty he had asking questions. "There are problems, because as I say, you do not know much of the language and to ask questions of a doctor about something he does not speak..." This instance shows that asking a question serves

little purpose if there is no shared fluency. As the level of fluency decreases so does the amount of interrogative communication.

Participant J expressed concerns in asking questions. "I can greet the person, ask any short question, but as for a kind of conversation without me being unable to understand..." If questions are asked cross-linguistically, they are often shorter and less specific due to the language barrier. Most Spanish-speaking participants knew some English (aside from the billingual speakers) and vice versa; however, it was not sufficient for full conversations. Participant A confirms this when stating that "to have a conversation…to ask questions or whatever, is necessary for that interaction…if it's obvious meaning that they tell me they don't speak any English…we negotiate." Due to differences in language, interrogative communication is deemed less effective in reducing uncertainty. These differences in language created environments in which communicators were less likely to self-disclose. For example, when put into a cross-linguistic situation participant B said "I'm definitely going to be more shy and more reserved in starting a conversation." With little conversation came little self-disclosure and ability to express one's self. Reflecting on their transition to American life and failing to connect with English speakers, participant F relayed their thoughts. "You go back into that little shell of like, if I just don't speak, I won't be noticed and end, you know, it's a good tactic." There appears to be limited attempts amongst participants to interact cross-linguistically and even less attempts at self-disclosure.

Participant C captures a key reason why cross-linguistic relationships are difficult to maintain apart from language. "There's more uptime to try and get to know somebody who is cultural with that language barrier in place. Whereas with somebody who does speak English, I

know it's going to be a smooth conversation." The amount of time and effort for expected miscommunications creates an environment where less self-disclosure is bound to occur.

The participants of the study acquainted differences in language to be almost synonymous with a difference in culture. Research question number one produced similar findings when considering differences in both language and culture. While participants rarely found similar cultural values in their cross-linguistic counterparts, there were still similarities in values aside from culture. Participant D shared an annecdote about how he "sold the alarm systems for ADT… [and] for a lot of slammed doors" he learned valuable communication skills. When participant D became a restaurant manager, a non-English speaking man asked for a job. Participant D expected this potential employee to have a strong work ethic, and because of this shared value, he hired him. Through that, a friendship was made. Self-disclosure and interrogative communication increased despite the difference in language. "We would maybe go watch some movies or something like that, but we would always just go somewhere and hang out. Or sometimes we would just go and talk… [but] he didn't speak any English," explained participant D. The relationship between the two grew as they began to laugh with each other. "You get to know someone else's personality, [when] you get to know someone intimately," exclaimed participant D.

Acculturation There is limited data on the acculturative measures that Spanish speaking participants have taken to adjust to a new culture. Of the five interviewed, only two fell into the integration category of acculturation. Even so, it appears that people who are more integrated have a greater use of self-disclosure and interrogative communication based on these participants. Participant E shared of his experience expressing himself, despite not knowing any English. "I love to laugh and I love to smile and no matter what language you speak, like that's

universal and I think people can pick up on that type of energy." Despite the difference in language, participant E expressed himself and self-disclosed through his actions. In response to his thoughts on others he shared, "I would imagine that people take a little bit longer to come out of their shell, if they don't share the same language." This participant's statement applied to the three non-integrative participants that demonstrated less self-disclosure in cross-linguistic interactions.

Participant I revealed his integrative nature as he "[had] the curiosity and desire to learn the language." He later explained that through his ability to speak two languages he could relate to a diverse group of people. "If they don't speak English, they speak Spanish and it gives me more opportunity to have contact and more friendship with people." Participant I also stated, "conversation is given by the fact that we have the same interest." These interests are discovered by disclosing himself to his friend. The use of interrogative communication increased due to the necessity for contact and learning. In the case of participants E and I, questions were not always taken wholeheartedly. "Many people get offended when - maybe something I usually do, a question or a conversation, maybe they - in other cultures - don't take it the same," said participant I. There is a clear desire to communicate, but the difference in culture does not allow it to occur. Additionally, participant E reflects on occurrences where simple questions were met with confused responses. "And so every time that I wanted to go use the restroom and I had a question, I would have to use my bilinguist to talk to the teachers and try and get that idea across." He speaks further on the lack of intelligibilty between the two despite efforts at furthering the question through body language, such as pointing.

Nonverbal Communication This study brought numerous insights as to what techniques work best when developing cross-linguistic relationships. Some common practices to consider include

mental rehearsal, concise speech, reduced slang, shared experiences, and utilizing nonverbal communication. Participant J focuses on her course of action before an expected cross-linguistic encounter. "What I am going to say comes to mind," and this allows her to better prepare for techniques for interpretability. Likewise, participant F describes a cross-linguistic encounter of a simple task. "Kind of how a number one with fries and a large Coke, like you have to rehearse that before." Through mental rehearsal and preparation, these tasks become more doable, allowing for smoother communication.

Participant A uses simple and unconvuluted speech to ensure that communication is as easy as possible. "I don't wanna say speak slower, but in some ways I think just clear, clearer and more concise." Through this approach, receivers are given more opportunity to rationalize and interpret messages with context clues and basic language skills. By limiting slang, cross-linguistic messages are more decipherable, and this allows more recognizable words to surface. Participant D spoke on his friend's interpretation of slang as "he didn't really catch on to the slang because he understood more English formal… that's what he was taught in ESL." In order for classes such as ESL to be effective, it is up to the communicator to code a message in an interpretable and formal way. Lastly, nonverbal cues are among the most effective approaches at bridging language gaps. Participant H spoke in response to communicating with a Spanish speaker. "I think it goes back to the environment and [using] the visual cues around if there is a difficulty with [communicating]." This strategy is imperative because it allows receivers to gather information to conclude what is being shared.

Furthermore, participant K displays that nonverbal cues can explain what verbal communication cannot. "There are many ways of speaking languages, such as signs, gestures, mimes. It is how to imagine or how to express things [that is important]." Nonverbal cues are not

limited to direct conversation, but can also be from shared activites that communicators engage in. Every participant sited instances in which shared activities allowed for relational development. Whether this was through sports or another source, the act of participation nonverbally communicated satisfaction and commonality between interactants.

Limitations While this research offers some insights as to better practices in bridging language differences, there are still limitations to consider. Due to the nature of the small sample size, generalizations are difficult to make. In the future, a sample size of at least 30 individuals would be more representative of an individual's communication practices in the researched situation. Secondly, the sample was collected through convenient measures and 7 of the 11 were direct friends of the author. Following the snowball sampling method, the last four participants of the interview were friends of the first seven interviewed. This created little diversity amongst the interviewees and thereby is less representative of a more diverse population. Thirdly, each interviewee did not receive completely identical questions. Since the interview was semi-structured, following a participant's response, appropriate probing was done. Although a minor limitation, the general theme of questions was still followed. Additionally, the questions provided in Table 1 of this paper were the framework for the interview and were closely followed.

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Discussion

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This research offers an inside perspective as to how people communicate cross-linguistically. While differences in language are a barrier, there are countless others to consider. Cultural differences, inability of relational depth, and dissimilar interests are all worries that participants face. Despite the importance of language for smooth communication, it does not appear to be a necessity for relational development. Similar values and commonalities shared

amongst individuals prove to be crucial to the initial formation of a relationship. As the relationship progresses, additional shared meanings of experience are necessary for relational satisfaction. Participant H stated it well by saying "If you are able to put each other first and communicate that way…I think you can connect, and you can have a deep friendship without speaking the same language." Ultimately, cross-linguistic relationships come down to the commitment both interactants have in trying to overcome barriers. Miscommunication and misinterpretations are inevitable, but by utilizing appropriate techniques relational development is achievable.

Conclusion

The future of cross-linguistic interactions rests in the ability of people to bridge gaps in communication. Continuing research on this subject will offer more explanation about the benefits of cross-linguistic relationships. Teaching people proper communication techniques equips them to form relationships with people vastly different from themselves. An opportunity to learn and grow one's cultural awareness and communication presents itself in any cross-linguistic interaction. Language itself is the same as any other difference, and cross-linguistic interactions offer unique chances to individuals. Through this study, insight towards greater communication satisfaction was found. This satisfaction was represented by the time and patience that these relationships required. Our increasingly globalized world can flourish through developing our relationships with those who speak different languages than ourselves.

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Table 1

Interview Question Appendix

Q1) What strategies do you use to reduce uncertainty when you meet a stranger?
Q2) How do you distinguish between a stranger and a friend?
Q3) How does the level of uncertainty you feel influence your relationship with someone?
Q4) How have your thoughts and feelings toward your friend's culture changed over time?
Q5) How did differences in culture effect your relationship with your friend?
Q6) What communication barriers do you face when trying to build a relationship with your friend who speaks a different language?
Q7) How do you overcome these barriers? (In reference to question 5)

Q8) Do you have a preference of talking to people from your same culture or different cultures? Why?

Q9) How does the language you speak influence or relate to your culture identity? How does it influence your social identity?

Q10) How has your language skills effected your socio-economic status?

Q11) How do you reduce uncertainty when talking with a health provider who speaks a different native language than you?

Q12) Does your personality change when you communicate to someone of a different native language?

Q13) What expectations did you hold of your friend prior to meeting? In what ways did they fulfill those expectations or break them?

Q14) Were there any difference in communication behavior between you and your friend?

Q15) What shared activities did you and your friend participate in?

Q16) How important is language in developing a relationship?

Q17) Is it possible to form a friendship without a common language?

Note. Some of these questions were not asked to participants. Some of these questions were asked to participants.

Table 2

Code: Frequency

Acculturation: 12
Feelings of anxiety: 15
Communication barriers: 42
Connecting with someone: 63
Cross-linguistic relationship building: 82
Cultural differences: 29
Culture & language: 21
Social media & relationships: 19
Expectations: 33
Humor: 12
Importance of language: 104
Intimacy Increase: 21

Miscommunication: 11
Preference for Communication: 17
Proxemics: 7
Speaking someone's native language: 13
Stereotypes: 9
Sports: 18
Shared meanings of experience: 50
Uncertainty reduction strategies: 148