The emphasis in all the articles is to promote a better understanding of what the technologies are capable of doing, how they might support learning activities and under what conditions and costs. What theory there is in the collection is concentrated on educational matters. Thus, the interested reader will not find many references to Gordon Pask or Doug Englebart’s work. Englebart wrote *Augmenting Human Intellect* in 1962. It was and still is a farsighted vision of how computers might be used to augment human information handling capacities.

While the anthology articles are primarily concerned with discovering realistic uses of interactive video and mapping the limitations of the technology, the authors are equally concerned about whether or not the technology is an effective educational tool or merely another shiny hi-tech gadget. It is precisely this educational focus that sets these articles apart from the deluge of articles on multi-media technologies or information machines found in popular computing magazines like Byte or MacUser.

Taken together the two books from Educational Technology Publications provide a broad overview of some of the general problems involved in designing, producing and evaluating educational applications of computer-based technologies as well as highlighting some practical solutions.

Reviewed by: Geoffrey Gurd

University of Montreal

*Interethnic Communications: Current Research*

Young Yun Kim, ed.

*International and Intercultural Communication Annual, Vol.X,*


Over the past decade, volume titles of the *International and Intercultural Annual* of the Speech Communication Association reflect the development of this field in themes related to communication theory, methodology and applications. This anthology is the first to draw together research in interethnic relations focusing entirely on communication, a process defined for the purposes of this book as "sending, receiving and interpreting verbal and non-verbal messages...between members of different ethnic groups within societal boundaries." The range of interdisciplinary work in this volume suggests both the importance of studying interethnic communication and the limitations of dominant research approaches.

This anthology contains 11 articles which apply largely empirical research methods drawn from psychology, sociology and anthropology to specific cases of (with one exception) interethnic communication in the United States. The first four articles analyze differences in message-decoding patterns in interethnic exchange, focusing on the implications of different patterns of cognitive and affective
orientations. In "Stereotypes and Interaction Conventions of Eskimos and non-Eskimos", Stephen McNabb identifies and analyzes variables of Alaskan interaction and communications, concluding that non-native stereotypes and judgements of Inuit character are the result of "faulty inferences about the meanings of communication conventions." Rosita Daskal Albert analyzes the greater importance placed upon attributions of shame by Hispanics in comparison with Anglo-Americans in an article drawn from research on teacher and student responses to story episodes. Tzeng, et al., use semantic differential ratings of blacks' and whites' affective attributions associated with intergroup distances to substantiate ingroup separation and favoritism and interethnic alienations. Stella Ting-Toomey reports on the nature and frequency of gender-related styles in the conflict communication of black and white college students.

The second section of the book contains five articles on research related to language and verbal and non-verbal behaviour in interethnic interaction. Howard Gillies and Patricia Johnson analyze the language behaviour of Welsh-speaking adolescents to determine that perceived threat and ethnic commitment are factors related to their use of Welsh during interethnic interaction. In the most imaginative article in the anthology, William Starosta and Larry Coleman develop a rhetorical analysis of Jesse Jackson's 1984 "Hymietown" speech and the process of apology, arguing that "Jackson attempted to overcome a gaffe by means of a 'degradation ritual' in order to show himself as honoring widely accepted American values." Working through research framed in the tradition of ethnography of speaking, Thomas Kochman analyzes the structure regulating Black verbal dueling strategies, concluding that their cultural placement within boundaries of play and non-play differs from whites' and contributes to conflict in social interaction. Donald Rubin expands the ethnographic method to the setting of the school, comparing classroom and community speech to suggest that certain patterns of classroom questioning operate to the disadvantage of non-mainstream ethnic students. A second ethnographic study of the school focuses on dance in Judith Hanna's interesting analysis of dance/play among black children as expressions of ethnic identity in dealing with white children.

The final section of this anthology contains two articles which discuss ethnicity in the development of interpersonal relationships. William Gudykunst uses uncertainty reduction theory to analyze ethnicity as a factor influencing the patterns of disclosure and attributional confidence in interpersonal relationships between persons of the same and of different ethnic groups. William Hammer applies a multivariate analysis to determine that attitude and ethnic similarity are important factors influencing social penetration during initial social interactions.

Taken together, these articles contain little that is inspiring or even surprising for the reader. The volume moves toward broadening the dominant research framework of interethnic communication by including ethnographic studies and
rhetorical analysis along with the heavy emphasis on quantitative research. But in general, the efficacy of the research results demonstrates that quantitative methods of interethnic analysis face a decided challenge from the perspectives put forth in critical analysis and cultural studies. These approaches inform from different premises. But the focus they place on context and history and discourse contributes a vital perspective to the study of signification, intersubjectivity and interaction. Current research in interethnic communication is much more varied and insightful than this anthology suggests.

Reviewed by: Gail Valaskakis
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*Communication, Gender and Sex Roles in Diverse Interaction Contexts*
Lea P. Stewart and Stella Ting-Toomey (eds.)
Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1987
Norwood, New Jersey

To those interested in communication and the sexes, the title of this book is both luring and exciting. It studies the complex interplay of language, non-verbal behaviour, gender and sex roles, and in so doing, contains promise of being at the "leading edge" of scholarly work in the area. Equally as enticing are the editors' goals for the volume which are to assemble a representative array of conceptual and methodological approaches used in the study of communication, gender, and sex roles and to display the wide range of scholarship pertaining to these issues. Fueling this initial interest and excitement is a brief but good introduction to the pragmatics of gender-related communication by one of the editors. In her description of the status of research in this area, Ting-Toomey raises some important issues such as the need for good descriptive studies, for the study of the same phenomenon across settings, and for sound conceptual frameworks and theories to understand current research and guide future investigations.

Unfortunately, this is where the excitement ends. In short, this book is disappointing for several reasons. First, those researchers interested in exposure to an array of methodological approaches will not find it here. For the most part, the chapters are either based on data derived from questionnaires, surveys, and/or interviews, or are descriptive essays. Second, and related to the first reason, there are very few direct measures of communicative behaviour. Those studies that are empirically-based have predominantly measured perceptions of communicative behaviour rather than the behaviour itself. Third, many of the studies do not have strong conceptual or theoretical bases and are seriously flawed methodologically. Fourth, there is simply not much that is new for people who are already familiar with the area.