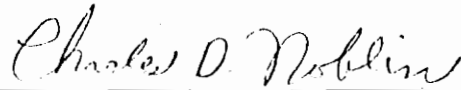REFERENT COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN MARRIAGE:
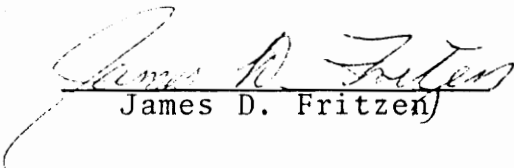
SPOUSES AS SPEAKERS AND LISTENERS

by

Quintin L. Gustin

Thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
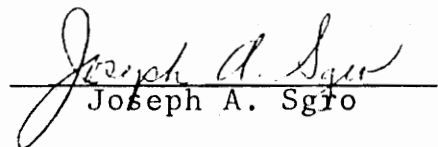
MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Psychology

APPROVED:

_____
Charles D. Noblin, Chairman

_____   _____
James D. Fritzen   Joseph A. Sgro

Blacksburg, Virginia

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Without the help and encouragement of many people, this paper would have been diminished considerably. In particular, I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee: Dr. Charles D. Noblin, Dr. Joseph A. Sgro, and Dr. James D. Fritzen. Each gave their own unique skills and perspectives which served, I think, to enhance both the professionalism and readability of this work.

Dr. Charles D. Noblin should be credited with the original idea around which this thesis grew. Dr. Joseph A. Sgro's suggestions regarding the choice of statistical methods, as well as help in the mechanics of paper writing, were most appreciated. Dr. James D. Fritzen's patience and aid in the tedious writing and rewriting of this thesis were invaluable.

Of course, this work could not have been undertaken without the cooperation of the many married couples who freely gave their time to participate in the study. To them, I owe a special debt.

To my mother and father, whose continued demonstrations of love and encouragement to me extend well beyond the boundaries of this paper, no words can satisfy the thanks or the love I have for them.

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

vi

INTRODUCTION

Theory

Theorists on marital adjustment contend that communication is one of the primary factors related to adjustment or satisfaction in marriage. In a discussion paper on the subject, Adams (1973) held that trouble related to communication between spouses is the biggest problem brought to marriage counselors. Adams argues that communication is of extreme importance to marital relationships because: (a) communication is an integral part of, and not separate from, an interpersonal relationship; (b) the quality of communication within a relationship often reflects where that relationship is in its development; (c) acts of communication represent a striving toward fulfilling "something" within each individual; and (d) communication is a never-ending attempt to understand and be understood. Likewise, Ard (1971) said that, in the context of marriage, the most serious problem is inadequate communication.

Folsom (1958) underscored his view of the importance of communication in marriage by stating that "the patterns of marital and sexual behavior cannot be

adequately described, classified, or ethically evaluated
until we put their communication aspects into the picture."

Addressing this issue in the context of marital
therapy, Jones (1969) suggested that the most important
job of the psychologist involved in marital therapy is to
help increase communication between marital partners which
ultimately will lead to personal growth on the part of
both.

Communication is an extremely broad topic with a
number of different aspects which must be considered in
order to arrive at an adequate understanding of the manner
in which marriages are affected by it. Several theorists
have responded to this need for greater specificity by
discussing various facets of, or factors relating to,
communication in the context of the marital dyad.

For example, Davis (1970) theorized that communi-
cation is one of six dimensions important to intimate
relationships and that those who become intimates attempt
to re-integrate what essentially is an ever-disintegrating
relationship, in part, by means of meta-intimate conversa-
tions and by arguments. Harper (1958) posited that the
most significant problems, both in marriage and in mar-
riage counseling relate to problems in the communication
of feelings. Rabkin (1967) stated that, in the practice
of marital therapy, he has observed unique communication

codes among married couples and has noted that these codes, which are not unlike the codes found in all sociocultural systems in that they contain unique slang and word meanings, appear to be very important to individual family systems. The problem as Wittich (1974) summarized it, is that considerable import has been placed on the institutional, rather than the companionate, aspects of marriage, thereby de-emphasizing the importance of communication.

Following a study involving 116 married university students, Petersen (1969) posited that communication was important to problem solving behaviors within the marital framework.

Efficiency

A number of studies have demonstrated the importance to the marital dyad of efficiency of communication. Such studies generally have viewed efficiency in either of two ways. First, efficiency is often explored in terms of how well a couple communicates. These studies tend to use time spent in communicating as well as communication accuracy as measures of efficiency. However, other studies describe communication efficiency by more subjective measures such as the cooperation demonstrated between partners during and following the interaction process.

Hawkins (1971) studied communication processes in 24 paid volunteers. Using the Burgess-Locke-Thomas Marital

Adjustment Inventory, it was found that communication efficiency, as measured by accuracy scores and conservation of time on a problem solving task, was positively related to marital adjustment. Kahn (1970) found that non-adjusted couples reported less accuracy in their non-verbal communications than did adjusted couples on a marital communication scale.

Goodman and Ofshe (1968) studied stranger dyads, engaged pairs, and married couples in the context of a "Password" type game and role-playing situation. Their findings indicated that communication accuracy, especially for family related words, was greatest for marital pairs, less high for engaged pairs, and lowest for strangers. However, these differences were not significant. Pinsley (1967) demonstrated that both adjusted and non-adjusted couples identified negative emotional communications from their spouses with greater accuracy than positive emotional communications.

However, after exploring the communication process in a similar way, Pinsley (1967) concluded that accuracy of perception of emotional expression between spouses affords only a limited degree of mutual understanding compared to the broader understanding provided by the effective performance of well-defined role expectations specific to marriage.

Using a mixed-motive task called Ravich's Inter-
personal Game Test, Griswold (1972) analyzed the conversa-
tions of 48 paid volunteer student couples, half of whom
were parents and half of whom were not. In one of the
few studies of its kind, Griswold paired each parent, in
one instance, with his or her spouse and, in another in-
stance, with a parent of the opposite sex who was a
stranger. Results indicated that males spent more time
in conversation than females. Also, parent spouses were
less efficient than non-parent spouses in their interac-
tions as measured by cooperation measures. However, when
parents were paired with strangers, this lack of coopera-
tion was not in evidence.

In another study using marital couples participat-
ing in counseling, Kahn (1970) compared the interactional
processes of 21 student counselee couples with 21 non-
counselee student couples. It was found that both husbands
and wives have unique systems of non-verbal communication
which can be transferred with varying degrees of effective-
ness to extramarital interactions. Kahn had subjects
fill out a marital communication scale and discovered
that non-adjusted couples reported less accurate communica-
tion on a non-verbal level than did adjusted dyads.

Finally, Clements (1968) determined that poorly
adjusted couples were no less productive than normals on
an assigned task of producing stories to TAT cards.

Power and Control

Tenuously related to the cooperative facets of the communication process are the issues of power and control within the dyad and their influence on adjustment. Kolb and Straus (1974) studied the relationship between power-based interactions and marital satisfaction in a problem solving task with 63 husband-wife-child groups. High or low power exhibited on the part of wives apparently had no relationship with either marital adjustment or the assigned task. However, low power on the part of husbands was associated with low problem solving ability on the part of the family unit.

In a study using pathological couples, Duhamel (1971) compared the interactions of couples in which the husband was alcoholic with interactions of normal couples on a mixed motive game known as Battle of the Sexes. It was found that, although wives of alcoholics did not describe themselves as more controlling or managerial than normal wives, alcoholic husbands described their spouses as being more controlling than normal husbands did.

Openness

Openness between marital partners has been one of the most widely researched areas in the field of marital communication. It should be noted, however, that openness,

as used here, is an extremely broad concept which subsumes several facets of the communication process. First, and perhaps most obviously, openness refers to the amount of information which one partner chooses to disclose to the next. However, openness has meaning not only for the communicator but may also encompass the willingness of the listener to be receptive to communication.

Studies which deal exclusively with amounts of information disclosed or received are undoubtedly somewhat simplistic in nature. As a result, most studies which focus primarily on openness usually explore specific topic areas about which information is passed. Most, but not all, such studies deal in some manner with the ways in which openness is related to marital adjustment.

A multitude of studies have pointed out specific differences in communication factors between husbands and wives. Several studies (Jourard and Lasakow, 1958; Jourard and Landsman, 1960; and Jourard, 1961) have found that husbands tend to reveal less personal information about themselves than wives do.

Levinger and Senn (1967) found that when spouses were asked how much their mates disclosed, wives were perceived as disclosing significantly more.

Komarovsky (1964) also found that a higher proportion of wives than husbands indicated a desire to share

personal experiences with their mates. In fact, wives generally disclosed more than their husbands did. However, the relationship between adjustment and disclosure behavior was unclear since some dissatisfied wives were high disclosers, while men, in general, tended to be low disclosers.

Parsons and Bales (1955) reasoned that perhaps wives were higher disclosers than husbands because the role of the husband in marriage is essentially instrumental, while the wife's role may be described as expressive.

One study by Selby (1973) discovered no significant relationship between marital adjustment and openness. Selby attempted to measure the effects of a doctoral program on marriage. Pre-tests and post-tests of both the Marital Communication Inventory and the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale were given to graduate students and a matched control group. Results indicated that control group husbands scored significantly lower than the other three groups on both the pre- and post-tests of the Marital Communication Inventory. However, this apparently had no effect on marital adjustment scores.

Jourard and Richman (1963) explored disclosure in terms of amounts received from sources outside the marital dyad and found that women received more disclosure from both friends and relatives than did husbands.

As mentioned earlier, the types of information disclosed is an important one in exploring the openness

variable. Interestingly, few studies have found positive communication to be important to marital adjustment. Fineberg and Lowman (1975) demonstrated that adjusted couples communicate more affection and submission than non-adjusted couples.

On the other hand, several studies have dealt with either the presence or absence of negative communication. Clements (1968) compared 15 adjusted and 15 poorly adjusted couples with regard to the interactional processes they employed in making up stories to TAT cards. Using Bale's system of Interaction Process Analysis, Clements found that poorly adjusted couples displayed more negative emotional reactions than did well adjusted couples. More specifically, non-adjusted pairs displayed significantly more tension, disagreement, and antagonism and exchanged verbal communication less frequently.

Horowitz (1970) compared clinic and non-clinic marital pairs and found that openness on the part of wives was related to hostility in both samples. Horowitz found that when husbands' communications were judged to be attacking or critical, wives were less open. In general, it was demonstrated that clinic couples were less friendly in their marital interactions than non-clinic couples, suggesting that wives from the clinic sample were correspondingly less open.

Cutler and Dyer (1965), in a study related to initial adjustment processes in newlyweds, obtained data indicating that wives, more often than husbands, told their spouses of violations of personal expectations. Interestingly, there was also an indication that this often resulted in dissatisfaction on the part of the husbands and, resultingly, had a negative effect on the relationship overall.

Katz et al. (1963) found that wives revealed anxiety to their husbands more frequently than their husbands did in return. There was also evidence to support the notion that an association between disclosure of such personal information and marital satisfaction was present for wives but not for husbands.

Vincent (1973) compared 12 couples reporting marital difficulties and 12 normal couples, all of whom were paid volunteers, and found that problem couples reported significantly fewer pleasing communications and significantly more displeasing communications.

Stimson (1966) studied the verbal interactions of 20 married couples and found that the two most powerful predictors of marital satisfaction in both husbands and wives were wives' intolerance for disagreement and wives' lack of tension and hostility. In the previously mentioned study by Kahn (1970), it was determined that the four highest marital communication scale scores were earned by dissatisfied

couples, causing Kahn to theorize that some non-adjusted couples may be overly sensitive to certain types of communication occurring within their dyads. However, a rather small sample size made any real conclusions in this area impossible.

On the contrary, Kind (1968) explored communication processes among 25 marriage counselee couples and 25 paid volunteer couples. These couples were administered the Burgess-Locke-Thomas Marital Adjustment Inventory in order to ensure adjustment differences between the two groups. Results indicated that happily married subjects were more receptive to certain types of threatening communication and perceived their spouses to be more accepting of such communications as well.

Levinger and Senn (1967) employed a questionnaire dealing with marital disclosure in a study with 32 married couples, 15 of whom were clients of a family agency involved in the treatment of marital and child difficulties. The group of 17 normal couples were parents of school children in the community whose help was enlisted for the purposes of the study. An analysis of the disclosure questionnaire results suggested some support for the theory that wives disclosed more than husbands did. Wives offered more disclosures of both a pleasant ($p < .10$) and an unpleasant ($p < .01$) nature.

Pinsley (1967) provided some insight into the manner in which the adjustment of married couples was related to

types of disclosure. In a study of adjusted and non-adjusted couples, it was determined that both groups identified negative emotions with more accuracy than positive emotions. Data also indicated that problem couples displayed a greater sensitivity to emotional communications, perhaps, Pinsley suggested, because of increased emotional sensitivity due to more highly charged emotional experiences associated with marital conflict. There were no differences between husbands and wives.

In other studies researchers have explored less specific types of disclosure. For example, Levinger (1966) found that high satisfaction couples exceeded less satisfied couples in frequency of disclosure in most but not all types of communication. Altman and Haythorn (1965) suggested that superficial exchanges of information were more common than intimate ones.

Bienvenu (1970) in a study involving 172 married couples, determined that factors related to good communication include the expression and handling of anger and individual differences, tone of voice, good listening habits, and self-disclosure. Factors contributing to poor communication are nagging and conversational discourtesies.

Navran (1967), using the Locke-Sabagh-Thomas Primary Communication Inventory and the Locke Marital Relationship Inventory, compared 24 high adjustment couples and 24 low

adjustment couples. He found a high (r = 0.82) correlation between the two measures, indicating a positive relationship between good communication and marital adjustment. Both verbal (r = 0.91) and nonverbal communication (r = 0.66) was highly correlated with adjustment scores. These and other findings led Navran to the conclusion that happily married couples differed from unhappy couples in that they:

(a) had a wider range of subjects available to them,

(b) showed more sensitivity to each others' feelings,

(c) and personalized their language symbols.

Navran also discovered that happy couples talked more to each other, kept communication channels open, and conveyed the feeling they understood what was being said to them.

Psychopathology

Several studies have demonstrated a relationship between marital adjustment and factors having to do with personal adjustment.

For example, Hofman (1970) administered the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale and the Family Concept Inventory to 15 couples involved in therapy with problem children and 15 non-clinic couples. Results indicated that spouses tended to be equally well- or mal-adjusted and that

individual adjustment was related positively to marital adjustment. There was little difference between groups on interaction measures.

In an in-depth study relating personal and marital adjustment, Dean (1966) correlated his Emotional Maturity Scale with the Nye Scale of Marital Adjustment for 117 couples who were obtained from randomly mailed requests for participation. Results indicated that husbands' marital adjustment scores were signficantly correlated with their self-rated emotional maturity ($r = 0.28$), their spouse-rated emotional maturity ($r = 0.52$), and their rating of their wives' emotional maturity ($r = 0.29$). Marital adjustment for wives was significantly related to their own ratings of their emotional maturity ($r = 0.35$), their spouses' ratings of their emotional maturity ($r = 0.39$), their ratings of their emotional maturity ($r = 0.39$), their ratings of their spouses' emotional maturity ($r = 0.55$), and their spouses' ratings of their own emotional maturity ($r = 0.23$). Interestingly, the only factor that did not relate to marital adjustment was the wives' self-ratings of their own emotional maturity. This factor did not relate to marital adjustment in husbands.

In a study involving 100 couples, Pond and Ryle (1963) used the Cornell Medical Index and an interview in

assessing the relationship between neurosis and marital adjustment. Their data indicated that the marital adjustment of husbands was independent of neurosis, while the marital adjustment of wives was significantly related to neurosis.

Crago (1972) pointed out that marital interaction may be a causal factor in the development of psychopathology in married couples. Crago gave power to this argument by pointing out that when emotional disorders occur within married couples, there is a tendency for both partners to display some degree of disturbance.

Burgess and Wallin (1953) concluded in a book based on interview data with hundreds of married couples that the wife is required to make the most personal adjustments to the marital situation, if the marriage is to succeed.

However, in contrast to previously mentioned research, Pineo (1961), analyzing the data of Burgess and Wallin (1953), concluded that a gradual reduction in marital adjustment was not necessarily accompanied by an equal loss of personal adjustment.

Perceptual Congruency and Prediction

Couples' ability to perceive the same information in the same way would appear to be linked with communication between spouses. In addition, accurate prediction of a

mate's perceptions or responses also seems tied to communication processes.

In a study comparing clinic and non-clinic samples, Clements (1967) explored the relationship between marital interaction and marital stability in 40 stable marriages and 40 unstable marriages. Results indicated that spouses in both groups had a better than chance awareness of the effects of their communicative behaviors upon the marriage, with no differences between groups. Clements suggested that this perhaps meant that the awareness of the effects of one's communications were not so critical as a willingness to change such detrimental behaviors.

Taylor (1967), in research involving adjusted and non-adjusted couples found that low perceptual discrepancy between spouses was positively related to marital adjustment.

Luckey (1960), in a study conducted through the mail with 116 high satisfaction and 116 low satisfaction respondents, found that marital satisfaction was positively related to the congruency of the husbands' self-concept with that held of them by their wives. However, satisfaction was not related to the self-concept of wives. By inference, this data suggested that satisfaction in marriage was associated with wives seeing husbands as husbands saw themselves.

Luckey (1960), in a study conducted through the mails involving 454 respondents who were former students of the University of Minnesota, found that high scorers on Locke's Modified Marital Adjustment Scale got greater agreement of perceptions in regard to perception of self and perception of self by spouse.

Dymond (1954) had 15 couples answer and then predict spouses' answers to 55 MMPI questions. Couples reporting marital satisfaction were more accurate at this prediction task than unsatisfied couples.

Zieff (1971) used a self-report questionnaire and an inter-spouse prediction task to measure the quantity and openness of marital communications. It was found that the degree of open communication and the accuracy of inter-spouse prediction were significantly related. However, examination of individual spouse scores revealed that, while husbands' predicting ability and wives' "openness" were a logical, albeit theoretical, interrelationship, wives' predicting ability was not related to husbands' "openness." This suggested that wives may depend on sources other than direct communication for gaining knowledge of their spouses.

However, Drudge (1969) studied changes in perception during marital therapy in 54 unsatisfied and marginally satisfied couples, as determined by the Locke-Wallace Marital

Adjustment Scale. Using the Leary Interpersonal Checklist, Drudge found no relationship between perceptual congruence changes and changes in marital satisfaction and concluded that treatment apparently "only" resulted in increased tolerance for disparate perceptions.

Murstein and Glaudin (1966) compared the interpersonal perceptions of 26 couples beginning marital therapy and 24 couples active in several different community clubs. Findings indicated that husbands' responses on the interpersonal perception checklists, for the most part, were not related to marital adjustment. However, unhappy husbands described their wives as competitive and narcissistic. Wives' responses, on the other hand, were related to marital adjustment, with perceptions of goodness and dominance for their spouses and a lack of rebelliousness and a lack of distrustfulness for themselves being related positively to marital adjustment.

Finally, in one of the more rigorous studies of interpersonal perception and marital adjustment, Murstein and Beck (1972) had couples rate themselves and their spouses on a series of personality characteristics and then had each spouse guess how his or her mate responded to the ratings questionnaire. That is, subjects rated themselves, their ideal-selves, their spouses, and their ideal-spouses on the same

personality characteristics, and then attempted to guess or predict how their spouses responded in each category.

Murstein and Beck recognized six types of perception scores available from different combinations of the data: (a) actual similarity, (b) perceived similarity, (c) self-acceptance, (d) perceived compatibility with spouse, (e) accuracy of prediction, and (f) actual role-compatibility.

It was found that similarity, self-acceptnace, accuracy in predicting partner's responses, and role com-patibility were all positively related to marital adjustment.

From the above review of the relevant literature, it seems clear that there is some relationship between com-munication and adjustment in married couples. However, perhaps due to such factors as sample size, varying intra-personal factors between different subject populations or experimental techniques, there is some difficulty in putting together a concise, coherent summary of previous research. In general, either sample size or sampling techniques limit the power of any conclusions that can be made. However, the bulk of literature which addresses the topic strongly suggests that "good" communication is important to marital adjustment and that, in general, it is the wife who is burdened with the responsibility of making any personal adjustments required to facilitate communication.

One area of research in the field of marital communication that, for the most part, has been overlooked is that of accuracy of communication between spouses in a non-competitive, non-threatening situation involving words which have no special or emotionally-charged meaning within the marital dyad. The intent of the present research is to address this question.

Rosenberg and Cohen (1964) developed a word communication task (see Table 1) which enabled them to study the processes of both speakers and listeners engaged in attempting to communicate accurately. The task consists of a speaker subject's attempt to communicate a referent word from a pair of synonyms by giving a one word clue. The listener subject is then shown the two synonyms and is required to "guess" which of the two words the speaker was attempting to communicate. This task was later used by Cohen and Camhi (1967) in a study contrasting communication performances of normal and schizophrenic subjects. Later, Cohen and Klein (1968) used this task to demonstrate differing degrees of language development in three grades of elementary school children. This communication task is an obvious choice for a practical test of verbal communication accuracy between spouses.

Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that adjusted husbands and wives will communicate more accurately on the communication task than non-adjusted husbands and wives.

In accord with Murstein and Beck's (1972) findings, the following predictions are made regarding the personality perception and prediction task:

(a) Similarity will be significantly correlated with marital adjustment,

(b) self-acceptance will be significantly correlated with marital adjustment,

(c) accuracy in predicting the partner's responses will be significantly correlated with marital adjustment,

(d) accuracy in predicting the partner's responses when the husband is the perceptual target will be more closely associated with marital adjustment than is the case when the wife is the perceptual target, and

(e) role compatibility will be significantly associated with marital adjustment.

To this end, it is predicted that adjusted couples will score significantly higher on the communication accuracy task used in this study and that these adjusted couples, who communicate more accurately, will also demonstrate a better ability at perceiving and predicitng their spouses' responses on a personality questionnaire. This

latter hypothesis will be explored through the aforemen-
tioned replication of Murstein and Beck (1972).

Therefore, this study seeks to demonstrate through
the use of two different, but logically related, tasks
that adjusted couples communicate more accurately than
non-adjusted couples.

Method

Subjects

The subjects (S̲s) consisted of 72 couples from the Blacksburg, Virginia area. Names of S̲s were obtained from the rolls of community, church, or university organizations, or were given by prior participants in the study. S̲s were contacted by telephone and the purpose and methods of the study explained. Approximately 62% of those contacted agreed to participate. All S̲s were married one year or more and had at least one child. The average age of wives in the study was 32.6, while the average age for husbands was 34.3. The average length of time married was 9.8 years. A large portion of the husbands in the sample were university professors. However, several other occupational groups such as nurses, restaurant owners, graduate students, teachers, and mechanics were represented. In general, the sample may be regarded as a fairly homogeneous group of individuals from middle class backgrounds.

Scales

Each S̲ took the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale (LW-MAS), a measure of marital adjustment frequently used in the field. The reliability of this test, computed by the split-half technique and corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula, is reported to be 0.90. For the

purposes of the study, couples in which both husband and wife had LW-MAS scores of above 100 were considered adjusted or to possess high adjustment. Likewise, couples in which both husband and wife had LW-MAS scores of below 100 were considered non-adjusted or to possess low adjustment.

The LW-MAS was followed by several background questions regarding the S's age, schooling, job, number of years married, and number of children.

Following the administration of the LW-MAS, Ss were administered a personality perception measure which was a 20-item, bipolar adjective checklist (BAC) used earlier by Norman (1963) and Murstein and Beck (1972) (see Table 2). Each S was required to rate each bipolar adjective pair on an eight-point scale, which was situated between each pair and allowed S to respond in favor of one pole or the other. Each S made bipolar adjective pair ratings in eight different response sets. These response sets included ratings of self, ideal self, spouse, ideal spouse, and the prediction of how partner responded to each of these categories.

The BAC yielded a person perception score for each spouse pair on 28 husband-wife combinations of the eight response sets described in the preceding paragraph (see Table 3 for these combinations). This person perception score involved the sum of the absolute discrepancies over

the 20 items of the BAC between each of the 28 response set combinations. Each response set combination involved the comparison of one response set by the male member of a marital pair with one response set of the female member of the same marital pair.

Each of the 28 person perception scores were then correlated with the LW-MAS scores of both husbands and wives, as was done by Murstein and Beck (see Table 3).

Procedure

After agreeing to participate in the study, an appointment was made to meet with each couple in a laboratory setting set aside for the purposes of this study. Ss were administered the LW-MAS, background questions, and BAC. Subsequent to this, each S was randomly chosen to be either a speaker or a listener S. In this way, 12 adjusted husbands communicated as speakers to their wives and, later, to 12 adjusted wives to whom they were not married. Likewise, 12 adjusted women communicated with their husbands and, later, with 12 other adjusted husbands to whom they were not married. Non-adjusted Ss participated either as speakers or listeners in the same way by communicating with other non-adjusted Ss. No speaker ever participated as a listener, and no listener ever participated as a speaker. In a secluded room, speaker Ss were asked to give clues

to a referent word for each of the 24 communication task word pairs. Following this, in a room excluding spouse or other Ss, listeners were asked to try and guess the referent word from each of the 24 word pairs, using the clue word which the experimenter (E) read aloud. Reaction times were taken for both speakers and listeners on each word pair during the communication task.

Results

On the LW-MAS, the adjusted husband group earned an average score of 126.97, while the average score for adjusted wives was 126.83. For the non-adjusted groups, husbands averaged 78.36, while wives averaged 78.08.

A 2 x 2 x 2 (adjustment x sex x spouse status) factorial design used for listener accuracy scores for the total communication task (see Table 4) yielded a significant adjustment x sex ($F = 7.37$, df = 1/88, $p<.01$) interaction. Since all $\underline{S}$s in the study were married, the term "spouse status," whenever used, refers to whether a listener was married to the speaker $\underline{S}$ or not. In each case, a speaker communicated both with his or her spouse and with another listener to whom he or she was not married. Scheffé Method comparisons on the simple effects involved in this interaction indicated that adjusted female listeners were significantly more accurate ($p<.05$) than adjusted male listeners. Likewise, when sex was held constant, it was demonstrated that adjusted female listeners were significantly more accurate ($p<.05$) than non-adjusted female listeners (see Figure 1). There were no other significant differences between groups. Listener accuracy score means for both the total communication task and for synonyms are reported on Table 5.

A 2 x 2 x 2 (adjustment x sex x spouse status)

factorial design was used for listener accuracy scores for the 18 word-pairs in which each word was similar in meaning to its pair-mate (see Table 6). This analysis also indicated a significant adjustment x sex ($F = 7.26$, $df = 1.88$, $p<.01$) interaction. Scheffé Method comparisons on the simple effects involved in this interaction indicated that adjusted female listeners were significantly more accurate ($p<.01$) than adjusted male listeners (see Figure 1). There were no other significant differences between groups. These results suggest that the 18 similar word-pairs account for much of the difference obtained when using the total communication task of 24 words.

A 2 x 2 (adjustment x sex) factorial design and a 2 x 2 x 2 (adjustment x sex x spouse status) factorial design was used on speaker latency scores (measured in seconds) and listener latency scores, respectively (see Tables 7 and 8). There were no significant differences ($p>.05$). Speaker and listener latency means are reported on Table 9.

On the Murstein and Beck replication (see Table 3), only two of the 16 Similarity measures were significant, and these were significant in the unpredicted direction. Therefore, the hypothesis that similarity between spouses will be positively correlated with marital adjustment was rejected.

The second hypothesis, that Self-Acceptance by each spouse will be positively related to marital adjustment,

was found to be supportable only in that the husband's marital adjustment was positively related to the wife's Self-Acceptance.

The hypothesis that Accuracy of Prediction of Partner's responses will be positively related to marital adjustment was, in part, confirmed since seven of the 16 correlations were significant.

The results of the test of the hypothesis, that accuracy of predicting partner's responses will be more closely related to marital adjustment when the husband is the perceptual target than is the case when the wife is the perceptual target, were unclear. When the husband's adjustment scores were related to congruency measures using him as the perceptual target, two scores were positive and two were negative. There were no significant correlations between the wife's congruency measures and her marital adjustment scores when using the husband as the perceptual target.

However, when the wife was the perceptual target, two of the four correlations involving the husband's marital adjustment were positive and significant. On the other hand, when the wife was the perceptual target, two of the correlations involving the wife's marital adjustment and congruency measures were positive, while two were negative.

Finally, there was no real evidence that role

compatibility was significantly related to either the husband's or the wife's marital adjustment scores.

Finally, a 2 x 3 (adjustment x listener type) factorial design was used on the BAC Accuracy of Prediction congruency measures (see Tables 10-17) as a check on the assumption that the different listener types are equivalent in how well they can predict their spouses' responses on the Murstein and Beck task. To make this determination, listeners were typed in one of three categories: (a) female listeners whose husbands acted as speakers; (b) male listeners whose wives acted as speakers; and (c) spouses whose mates participated only as listeners. These three listener types were then compared across both levels of adjustment for the eight Accuracy of Prediction items (see Table 3). There was a significant interaction (F = 6.39, df = 2/66, p<.01) on the /Ideal Spouse$_H$--H Sees Ideal Spouse$_W$/, but no other measures were significant (p>.05).

It would appear that the listener types are comparable in the prediction of spouses' responses on the Murstein and Beck scales. The lack of significance for the adjusted versus non-adjusted variables was not anticipated. Accuracy of Prediction score means are reported on Table 18.

Discussion

The results of the total communication task, which served as a measure of listening skills to non-emotionally charged stimuli, revealed an adjustment x sex interaction wherein higher accuracy scores were obtained when adjusted females served as listeners than when either adjusted males or non-adjusted females served as listeners.

These results suggest two possibilities. First, it might be hypothesized that adjusted male speakers give better or more precise clues than either adjusted female speakers or non-adjusted male speakers on a communication task such as the one employed in this study.

On the other hand, it might be inferred from this data that adjusted wives are, for some reason, better listeners or are somehow more able to perceive meanings of various communications than either their husbands or non-adjusted wives.

However, as will be explored more fully in this section, the latter hypothesis seems more plausible, based on prior research in the area.

Since communication is a process which necessitates both speaking and listening skills, these findings support the notion that wives in adjusted marriages are better communicators than their husbands. Interestingly, while the

31

communication accuracy scores for wives was significantly lower for non-adjusted wives than for adjusted wives, there was a slight, albeit insignificant, difference between adjusted and non-adjusted husbands' scores in that non-adjusted husbands were slightly more accurate listeners than adjusted husbands. This tenuously suggests the possibility either that husbands tend to improve listening skills when wives' skills are low or that wives tend to employ less accurate listening skills in response to high levels of skill on the part of husbands.

These findings do not fully support the results of previous research (Jourard and Lasakow, 1958; Jourard and Landsman, 1960; Jourard, 1967; and Levinger and Senn, 1967) which indicate that both husbands and wives in adjusted marriages disclose more than do husbands and wives in non-adjusted marriages. Other research has demonstrated that both partners in adjusted marriages tend to be more receptive to certain types of threatening communications received from their mates than non-adjusted couples (Kind, 1968). Fineberg and Lowman (1975) found that both adjusted husbands and wives communicated more affection and submission than non-adjusted couples. Finally, Kahn (1970) found that non-adjusted couples reported having less accurate communications than adjusted couples. The present findings disagree with this research since the adjustment x

sex interaction in the present study indicates that adjusted wives and husbands do not enjoy the same level of skill in the communication process.

However, studies by Luckey (1960) and Dean (1966) have demonstrated that in successfully adjusted marriages, it is the wives rather than husbands who tend to demonstrate more frequent and skilled communication-related behaviors. These findings, as well as those of the present research, support the theory put forth by Burgess and Wallin (1953), based on a summary of findings from their book, that in marriage it is the wife who must endure most of the burden of making the marriage a success.

These findings would also be in line with the hypothesis of Parsons and Bales (1955) that wives can be expected to be better communicators, since their role in marriage is, in general, an expressive one, whereas the role of their husbands is not.

Since other research has suggested that, in adjusted marriages, the burden of role adaptation and behavioral adjustment is the job of the wife, it is not difficult to infer that perhaps the job of becoming a good listener is also an adaptation that wives, in adjusted marriages, must make. In addition to the various other roles which such wives must undertake, it is likely the wives must also assume the role of family communicator. That is, wives in

adjusted marriages are not only required to be the most proficient speakers in their marriages but they must also be the most proficient listeners as well.

It might further be argued that since wives are generally considered to have more at stake in their marriages because of husbands' self-concepts being influenced by more extramarital factors such as their professions, business associates, and the like, adjusted wives must be very skilled at communicative processes in order to reap the most from their marriages.

In addition, other research which suggests that husbands in adjusted marriages are the most powerful member of the marital dyad tends to support the notion that husbands have less reason to be skillful communicators. In fact, such research suggests a necessity on the part of wives to both speak and listen with great accuracy because husbands, on account of their higher power status, have less need to do so.

The power notion, which labels the husband as the most powerful dyad member in adjusted marriages, also indicates the reverse for non-adjusted marriages. That is, in non-adjusted marriages, the woman is the most powerful dyad member or, at least, as in Duhamel (1971), the issue is confused. It might be inferred from this concept that, when power is in doubt, there is a communication disturbance

which corresponds with lower marital adjustment. The
marital communication process might then be characterized
by these non-adjusted husbands' working harder than ad-
justed husbands do at communication processes because of
their wives' greater power. Likewise, wives with in-
ordinate amounts of power would have less reason to prac-
tice and employ good communication skills.

The significant interaction obtained on the com-
munication task for highly similar words suggests that,
in general, differences on this task may be obtained by
using only the 18 similar word-pairs. The six words on
the task which are dissimilar in meaning appear to serve
little purpose as a communication accuracy discriminator.
However, the synonyms did not discriminate differences in
listening skills between adjusted and non-adjusted wives
as did the total communication task.

The data related to the person perception task
differed from that obtained by Murstein and Beck (1972)
in several significant ways (see Table 3).

First, Similarity scores, which Murstein and Beck
found to be significantly related to marital adjustment for
10 of 16 sets, six to husbands' adjustment and four to
wives' adjustment, were not positively related to marital
adjustment in the present study. There were, however,
two significant relationships between similarity scores

and husbands' adjustment in a negative direction.

According to the current data, Self-Acceptance on the part of wives was related to adjustment of husbands. These are indeed unexpected results since self-acceptance is theoretically tied to personal adjustment which has been shown to be related to marital adjustment. It would certainly be expected that self-acceptance by both husbands and wives would be linked to marital adjustment by both. In fact, if only one significant relationship were observed, it would be expected that wives' adjustment would be dependent upon husbands' Self-Acceptance rather than the reverse which the present research has indicated.

In general, Accuracy of Prediction was found to be related to marital adjustment in both spouses. Where Murstein and Beck found seven positive relationships on this factor, the present study also found seven positive factors. In addition, the current study also demonstrated four negative relationships.

However, there did not seem to be any support for the hypothesis that marital adjustment was related more closely to Similarity scores when the husband was the perceptual target. Only three of the seven positive scores previously noted were related to adjustment when the husband was the perceptual target.

Finally, Actual-Role compatibility measures which

Murstein and Beck found to be significantly related to
marital adjustment were not found to be positively related
to adjustment in the current study. Indeed, where Mur-
stein and Beck found 13 positive relationships, the cur-
rent study found only five, four of them negative.

It is difficult to explain the differences be-
tween Murstein and Beck's data and its attempted replica-
tion in the present study. However, differences in the
sampling population could account for some of these dif-
ferences. The $\underline{S}$s in the current sample were, on the
average, older and had been married longer than the Mur-
stein and Beck sample. In addition, all the $\underline{S}$s in the
current sample had, at least, one child, while not all
the couples in Murstein and Beck's sample had children.
Finally, Murstein and Beck used only $\underline{S}$s who volunteered
to participate, a sampling technique that, by their own
admission, tended to restrict the range of adjustment
scores to the higher end of the continuum. Undoubtedly,
any of these factors or an unascertainable interaction
between them could account for the differences incurred
between the two studies.

Another explanation is possible, however. In
recent years, there has been much emphasis placed on the
development of a partnership arrangement in marriage where
each spouse possesses equal rights, responsibilities, and

powers in the relationship. Implicit in this idea is the right of each spouse to explore new dimensions of his or her personality, to grow, to become different.

If this were the case, the need for spouse simi-larity measures to be related to adjustment obviously would be diminished. Further, the requirement that Ac-curacy of Prediction with the husband as the perceptual target and the need for Role-Compatibility to be related to marital adjustment would also be diminished as wives began to share more of the privileges of husbands and began to try-out varying roles. Since the current population was a rather sophisticated and well-educated one, this ex-planation may hold some validity.

How this all fits in with the communication task results is unclear, since the explanation of the results of that task seems to be counter-intuitive to the expla-nation for the person perception results. Perhaps, although both tasks relate to communication, different marriage-related factors are involved in the two tasks. Or perhaps, although person perception scores are easily modified by social trends or personal changes, communica-tion processes are more resistant to such factors.

Areas for future research should include attempts to determine if person perception between spouses is being changed by social trends affecting marriage. Implications

from the current research also poses questions of great import for marital counselors and therapists involved in personal growth groups dealing with married couples. Since improvement of communication processes appears to be one of the goals of most marital therapies and growth groups, what will be the effect of such treatment on marriages when husbands learn to demonstrate communication skills equal to those of their wives? Are couples, in fact, changing in ways such as to make partners equals with the same rights and freedoms? Are roles and communicative behaviors, as a result, being modified? Whatever the answers, there should be a great number of marital therapists and professionals in related fields waiting for the verdict.

REFERENCES CITED

40

REFERENCES CITED

Adams, W. J. The marriage counselor and interspousal communication. Western Psychologist, 1973, 4(4), 112-117.

Altman, I. and Haythorn, W. W. Interpersonal exchange in isolation. Sociometry, 1965, 28, 411-426.

Ard, B. N. Communication in marriage. Rational Living, 1971, 5(2), 20-22.

Bienvenu, M. J. Measurement of marital communication. The Family Coordinator, 1970, 19, 26-31.

Burgess, E. W. and Wallin, P. Engagement and Marriage, Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1953.

Clements, W. H. Marital interaction and marital stability: a point of view and a descriptive comparison of stable and unstable marriages. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1967, 29, 697-702.

Clements, W. H. Marital adjustment and marital interaction. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1968, 29(5-B), 1839.

Cohen, B. D. and Camhi, J. Schizophrenic performance in a word-communication task. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 1967, 72, 240-246.

Crago, M. A. Psychopathology in married couples. Psychological Bulletin, 1972, 77, 114-128.

Cutler B. R. and Dyer, W. G. Initial adjustment processes in young married couples. Social Forces, 1965, 44, 195-201.

David, M. S. Intimacy: dispassionate explorations of personal relation. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1970, 31(1-A), 479.

Dean, D. Emotional maturity and marital adjustment. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1966, 28(4), 454-457.

Drudge, W. J. The relationship between self-spouse perceptions and marital satisfaction. Dissertation Abstracts, 1969, 29(12-A), 4558-4559.

Duhamel, T. R. The interpersonal perceptions, interactions, and marital adjustment of hospitalized alcoholic males and their wives. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1971, 31(10-B), 6254.

Dymond, R. Interpersonal perception and marital happiness. Canadian Journal of Psychology, 1954, 8, 164-171.

Fineberg, B. L. and Lowman, J. Affect and status dimensions of marital adjustment. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1975, 37(1), 155-160.

Folsom, J. K. Communication in marriage and marriage counseling. Marriage and Family LIving, 1958, 20, 113-120.

Goodman, N. and Ofshe, R. Empathy, communication efficiency, and marital status. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1968, 30, 597-603.

Griswold, P. Interaction patterns of married and nonrelated dyads. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1973, 33(6-B), 2809-2810.

Harper, R. A. Communication problems in marriage and marriage counseling. Marriage and Family Living, 1958, 20, 107-112.

Hawkins, N. E. The relation of similarity of interpersonal to communication efficiency and marital happiness. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1971, 32(3-B), 1843-1844.

Hofman, K. C. Marital adjustment and interaction, related to individual adjustment of spouses in clinic and non-clinic families. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1970, 31(5-B), 2987.

Horowitz, D. B. The relevance of individual interpersonal expectations, styles of response to provocation, and interaction factors, to interpersonal behavior and satisfaction in marriage. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1970, 31(4-B), 2255-2256.

Jones, W. L. Marriage: Growth or disaster? American Journal of Psychiatry, 1969, 125(8), 1115-1119.

Jourard, S. M. Age and self-disclosure. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 1961, 7, 191-197.

Jourard, S. M. and Landsman, R. Cognition, cathexis, and the "dyadic effect" in men's self-disclosing behavior. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 1960, 6, 178-186.

Jourard, S. M. and Lasakow, P. Some factors in self disclosure. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1958, 56, 91-98.

Jourard, S. M. and Richman, P. Disclosure output and input of college students. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 1963, 9, 141-148.

Kahn, M. L. Nonverbal communication as a factor in marital satisfaction. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1970, 30(10-B), 4794.

Katz, I., Goldston, J., Cohen, M., and Stucker, S. Need satisfaction, perception, and cooperative interaction in married couples. Marriage and Family Living, 1963, 25, 209-214.

Kind, J. The relation of communication-efficiency to marital happiness and an evaluation of short-term training in interpersonal communication with married couples. Dissertation Abstracts, 1968, 29(3-B), 1173.

Kolb, T. M. and Straus, M. A. Marital power and marital happiness in relation to problem solving. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1974, 36(4), 756-766.

Komarovsky, M. Blue-Collar Marriage. New York: Random House, 1964.

Levinger, G. Sources of marital dissatisfaction among applicants for divorce. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1966, 36, 803-807.

Levinger, G. and Senn, D. J. Disclosure of feelings in marriage. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 1967, 13(3), 237-249.

Lisman, S. A. and Cohen, B. D. A word-association analogue. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 1972, 79, 181-188.

Luckey, E. B. Marital satisfaction and congruent self-spouse concepts. Social Forces, 1960, 39, 153-157.

Luckey, E. B. Marital satisfaction and its association with congruence of perception. Marriage and Family Living, 1960, 22, 49-54.

Murstein, B. and Beck, G. Person perception, marriage adjustment and social desirability. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1972, 39(3), 396-403.

Murstein, B. I. and Glaudin, V. The relationship of marital adjustment to personality: A factor analysis of the interpersonal checklist. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1966, 28(1), 37-43.

Navran, L. Communication and adjustment in marriage. Family Process, 1967, 6, 173-184.

Norman, W. T. Toward an adequate taxonomy of personality attributes: Replicated factor structure in peer nomination personality ratings. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1963, 66(6), 574-583.

Parsons, T. and Bales, R. F. Family Socialization, and Interaction Process, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1955.

Peterson, D. M. Husband-wife communication and family problems. Sociology and Social Research, 1969, 53, 375-384.

Pineo, P. C. Disenchantment in the later years of marriage. Marriage and Family Living, 1961, 23, 3-11.

Pinsley, A. M. Emotional communication and marital compatibility. Dissertation Abstracts, 1967, 27(11-B), 4132-4133.

Pond, D. A., Ryle, A. and Hamilton, M. Marriage and neurosis in a working class population. British Journal of Psychiatry, 1963, 109, 592-598.

Rabkin, R. Uncoordinated communication between marriage partners. Family Process, 1967, 6, 10-15.

Rosenberg, S. and Cohen, B. D. Referential processes of speakers and listeners. Psychological Review, 1966, 73, 208-231.

Shelby, J. E. Marital adjustment and marital communication of doctoral students and their wives. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1973, 33(10-A), 5502-5503.

Stimson, A. S. Marital interaction patterns, effective communication and satisfaction: an exploration of problem solving behavior. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1966, 27(3-A), 836-837.

Taylor, A. B. Role perception, empathy, and marriage adjustment. Sociology and Social Research, 1967, 52(1), 22-34.

Vincent, J. P. The relationship of sex, level of intimacy, and level of marital distress to problem solving behavior, and exchange of social reinforcement. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1973, 33(12-B), 6095.

Wittich, E. Individuals constructions of meanings and communication problems in marriage. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, 1974, 10(3), 164-169.

Zieff, R. Communications effectiveness in marriage: its measurement in younger married dyads and its relationship to other interaction and demographic variables. DAI, 1971(D), 32(6-B), 3656-3657.

APPENDIX

Table 1

Communication Task Word-Pairs

(left word = referent)

---

fortune	lucky
gather	collect
powerful	strong
journey	voyage
raise	lift
little	small
pity	mercy
odor	smell
criminal	convict
remedy	cure
lunacy	insanity
destroy	ruin
hard	difficult
talk	answer
distant	shy
clear	huge
pretty	beautiful
believe	entertain
buy	attach
rough	rugged
swift	fast
thief	robber
scared	afraid
whole	feast

Table 2

Bipolar Adjectives Used in Checklist

talkative	silent
open	secretive
adventurous	cautious
sociable	reclusive
goodnatured	irritable
not jealous	jealous
gentle	headstrong
cooperative	negativistic
tidy	careless
responsible	undependable
scrupulous	unscrupulous
persevering	quitting
poised	nervous
calm	anxious
composed	excitable
not hypochondriacal	hypochondriacal
artistically sensitive	artistically insensitive
intellectual	unreflective
refined	crude
imaginative	simple, direct

Table 3

Person Perception Scores and Their Correlations with Marriage Adjustment

for Husbands and Wives (N = 144)

Type of Source	Variable	Present Study		Murstein & Beck	
		Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Actual Similarity	$Self_W$--$Self_H$	- .03	+ .19	.29*	.13
	Ideal $Self_W$--Ideal $Self_H$	- .04	+ .01	.20	.13
	$Spouse_W$--$Spouse_H$	- .42**	- .19	.43**	.30**
	Ideal $Spouse_W$--Ideal $Spouse_H$	- .13	+ .01	.28*	.15
Perceived Similarity	$Self_W$--$Spouse_W$	- .17	- .13	.33**	.29*
	Ideal $Self_W$--Ideal $Spouse_W$	- .27*	- .10	.38**	.37**
	$Self_H$--$Spouse_H$	- .22	- .12	.41**	.27*
	Ideal $Self_H$--Ideal $Spouse_H$	.02 - .02	+ .12	.04	.06
Self-acceptance	$Self_W$--Ideal $Self_W$	+ .31**	+ .08	.53**	.43**
	$Self_H$--Ideal $Self_H$	- .07	- .10	.30**	.39**

Table 3 (continued)

Type of Score	Variable	Present Study		Murstein & Beck	
		Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Perceived Compat-ibility with Spouse	$Spouse_W$--Ideal $Spouse_W$	-.18	+.08	.55**	.49**
	$Spouse_H$--Ideal $Spouse_H$	-.10	+.15	.41**	.38**
Accuracy of Prediction	$Self_H$--H Sees $Self_W$	+.30*	+.18	.28*	.37**
	Ideal $Self_H$--H Sees Ideal $Self_W$	+.27*	-.15	.23*	.18
	$Spouse_H$--H Sees $Spouse_W$	+.66**	+.25*	.06	.15
	Ideal $Spouse_H$--H Sees Ideal $Spouse_W$	+.34**	+.28*	.16	.14
	$Self_W$--W Sees $Self_H$	-.20	-.27*	.01	.10
	Ideal $Self_W$--W Sees Ideal $Self_H$	-.20	-.28*	.14	.04
	$Spouse_W$--W Sees $Spouse_H$	-.30**	+.30*	.33**	.28*
	Ideal $Spouse_W$--W Sees Ideal $Spouse_H$	-.32*	-.09	.23*	.34**

Table 3 (continued)

Type of Score	Variable	Present Study		Murstein & Beck	
		Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Actual Role-Compatibility	$Self_W$--$Spouse_H$	- .21	- .12	.03	.06
	$Self_W$--Ideal $Spouse_H$	- .30*	- .22	.32**	.22*
	Ideal $Self_W$--$Spouse_H$	- .25*	+ .02	.41**	.35**
	Ideal $Self_W$--Ideal $Spouse_H$	- .06	- .18	.23*	.15
	$Self_H$--$Spouse_W$	+ .11	- .03	.23*	.38**
	$Self_H$--Ideal $Spouse_W$	+ .27*	- .02	.38**	.30**
	Ideal $Self_H$--$Spouse_W$	- .52**	- .40**	.44**	.43**
	Ideal $Self_H$--Ideal $Spouse_W$	+ .21	+ .14	.33**	.29*

*p < .05

**p < .01

Note: All signs have been inverted so that lower discrepancy scores will represent a positive relationship with higher marital adjustment scores.

Table 4

Source Table for Communication Task (Total)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Adjustment (A)	5.04	1	5.04	0.93
Sex (S)	3.38	1	3.38	0.62
Spouse Status (SS)	6.00	1	6.00	1.10
A X S	40.04	1	40.04	7.37*
A X SS	0.17	1	0.17	0.03
S X SS	2.67	1	2.67	0.49
A X S X SS	6.00	1	6.00	1.10
Within Cells (error)	478.33	88	5.44	
Total	541.63	95		

*p < .01

Table 5

Listener Accuracy Score Means for Total Communication

Task and for Synonyms

Listeners	Total Task Score Means	Synonyms Score Means
Adjusted Female Spouse	19.83	13.92
Adjusted Male Spouse	17.33	11.58
Adjusted Female Non-Spouse	18.41	12.83
Adjusted Male Non-Spouse	17.58	11.75
Non-Adjusted Female Spouse	17.5	12.25
Non-Adjusted Male Spouse	18.58	13.17
Non-Adjusted Female Non-Spouse	17.42	11.58
Non-Adjusted Male Non-Spouse	18.00	12.25

Table 6

Source Table for Communication Task (Similar Words)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Adjustment (A)	1.04	1	1.04	0.20
Sex (S)	5.04	1	5.04	0.98
Spouse Status (SS)	9.37	1	9.37	1.81
A X S	37.50	1	37.50	7.26*
A X SS	0.67	1	0.67	0.13
S X SS	1.50	1	1.50	0.29
A X S X SS	3.38	1	3.38	0.65
Within cells (error)	454.84	88	5.17	
Total	513.33	95		

*$p < .01$

Table 7

Source Table for Speaker Latencies

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Adjustment (A)	3.55	1	3.55	0.08
Sex (S)	13.46	1	13.46	0.30
A X S	0.32	1	0.32	0.007
Within Cells (error)	1959.32	44	44.53	
Total	1976.65	47		

Table 8

Source Table for Listener Latencies

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Adjustment (A)	1.02	1	1.02	0.56
Sex (S)	0.06	1	0.06	0.30
Spouse Status (SS)	2.44	1	2.44	1.82
A X S	0.62	1	0.62	0.34
A X SS	0.01	1	0.01	0.01
S X SS	2.38	1	2.38	1.31
A X S X SS	0.62	1	0.62	0.34
Within Cells (error)	160.11	88	1.819	
Total	167.25	95		

Table 9

Speaker and Listener Latency Means for

Communication Task (in seconds)

Type	Adjusted	Non-adjusted
Male Speaker	12.2	11.8
Female Speaker	11.3	10.6
Male Listener (Spouse)	3.1	3.2
Female Listener (Spouse)	2.8	3.0
Male Listener (Non-spouse)	3.2	3.1
Female Listener (Non-spouse)	3.3	3.8

Table 10

Source Table for /Self$_H$--H Sees Self$_W$/

Congruency Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Listener Type (LT)	23.58	2	11.79	0.48
Adjustment (A)	24.50	1	24.50	0.99
LT X A	6.58	2	3.29	0.13
Within Cells (error)	1634.84	66	24.77	
Total	1689.50	71		

Table 11

Source Table for /Ideal Self$_H$--H Sees Ideal Self$_W$/

Congruency Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Listener Type (LT)	2.86	2	1.43	0.01
Adjustment (A)	7.35	1	7.35	0.06
LT X A	470.53	2	235.26	1.84
Within Cells (error)	8428.59	66	127.71	
Total	8909.32	71		

Table 12

Source Table for /Spouse$_H$--H Sees Self$_W$/

Congruency Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Listener Type (LT)	36.69	2	18.35	0.32
Adjustment (A)	105.13	1	105.13	1.85
LT X A	20.58	2	10.29	0.18
Within Cells (error)	3748.59	66	56.80	
Total	3910.99	71		

Table 13

Source Table for /Ideal Spouse$_H$--H Sees Ideal Spouse$_W$/
Congruency Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Listener Type (LT)	121.75	2	60.88	0.99
Adjustment (A)	51.68	1	51.68	0.84
LT X A	788.86	2	394.43	6.39*
Within Cells (error)	4071.58	66	61.69	
Total	5033.88	71		

*$p < .01$

Table 14

Source Table for /Self$_W$--W Sees Self$_H$/

Congruency Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Listener Type (LT)	25.86	2	12.93	0.25
Adjustment (A)	130.68	1	130.68	2.49
LT X A	29.19	2	14.60	0.28
Within Cells (error)	3468.59	66	52.55	
Total	3654.32	71		

Table 15

Source Table for /Ideal Self$_W$--W Sees Ideal Self$_H$/

Congruency Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Listener Type (LT)	245.78	2	122.89	1.67
Adjustment (A)	224.01	1	224.01	3.05
LT X A	22.11	2	11.06	0.15
Within Cells (error)	4851.09	66	73.50	
Total	5342.99	71		

Table 16

Source Table for /Spouse$_W$--W Sees Spouse$_H$/

Congruency Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Listener Type (LT)	238.08	2	119.04	1.68
Adjustment (A)	2.35	1	2.35	0.03
LT X A	10.20	2	5.10	0.07
Within Cells (error)	4678.25	66	70.88	
Total	4928.88	71		

Table 17

Source Table for /Ideal Spouse$_W$--W Sees Ideal Spouse$_H$/

Congruency Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Listener Type (LT)	10.11	2	5.06	0.13
Adjustment (A)	21.13	1	21.13	0.56
LT X A	100.33	2	50.17	1.35
Within Cells (error)	2499.75	66	37.88	
Total	2631.32	71		

Table 18

Accuracy of Prediction Discrepancy Score

Means of Listeners

Type	Adjusted	Non-adjusted
/S_H--H sees Self$_W$/		
Male Spouse Listener	25.8	24.3
Female Spouse Listener	24.6	22.8
Non-spouse Listener	24.2	23.8
/Ideal Self$_H$--H sees Ideal Self$_W$/		
Male Spouse Listener	29.6	31.9
Female Spouse Listener	29.3	32.9
Non-spouse Listener	34.6	26.8
/Spouse$_H$--H sees Spouse$_W$/		
Male Spouse Listener	21.6	24.6
Female Spouse Listener	23.1	26.4
Non-spouse Listener	23.0	23.9
/Ideal Spouse$_H$--H sees Ideal Spouse$_W$/		
Male Spouse Listener	26.3	25.8
Female Spouse Listener	25.8	31.5
Non-spouse Listener	30.9	20.6

Table 18--Continued

Type	Adjusted	Non-adjusted
/Self$_W$--W sees Self$_H$/		
Male Spouse Listener	21.6	25.4
Female Spouse Listener	23.1	26.4
Non-spouse Listener	23.0	23.9
/Ideal Self$_W$--W sees Ideal Self$_H$/		
Male Spouse Listener	22.1	27.2
Female Spouse Listener	18.7	21.6
Non-spouse Listener	20.7	23.3
/Spouse$_W$--W sees Spouse$_H$/		
Male Spouse Listener	28.5	28.0
Female Spouse Listener	29.8	30.1
Non-spouse Listener	32.0	33.3
/Ideal Spouse$_W$--W sees Ideal Spouse$_H$/		
Male Spouse Listener	36.5	32.3
Female Spouse Listener	34.6	36.0
Non-spouse Listener	35.1	34.7

Table 19

Source Table for Speaker Adjustment Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Sex (S)	123.51	1	123.51	0.27
Adjustment (A)	36575.51	1	36575.51	79.24**
S X A	2.54	1	2.54	.006
Within Cells	20308.42	44	461.56	
Total	57009.98	47		

*p<.01

69

Table 20

Source Table for Listener Adjustment Scores

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Adjustment (A)	45501	1	45501	258.32**
Sex (S)	240.7	1	240.7	1.37
Spouse Status (SS)	92.0	1	92.0	0.52
A X S	96.0	1	96.0	0.55
A X SS	1.0	1	1.0	0.006
S X SS	1.5	1	1.5	0.009
A X S X SS	1.5	1	1.5	0.009
Within Cells (error)	15500.3	88	176.14	
Total	61434	95		

**$p < .01$

REFERENT COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN MARRIAGE:
SPOUSES AS SPEAKERS AND LISTENERS

by

Quintin L. Gustin

(ABSTRACT)

Seventy-two volunteer married couples were cate-
gorized as either adjusted or non-adjusted on the basis of
scores on the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale and
then participated in a communication task developed by
Rosenberg and Cohen (1964). In order to examine differences
in communication accuracy between adjusted and non-adjusted
married couples, 12 husbands and 12 wives from both adjust-
ment groups attempted to communicate with their spouses and
with other married persons. Each subject ($\underline{S}$) served as
either a speaker or a listener but not as both. A bipolar
adjective checklist was administered to each $\underline{S}$ under eight
different response sets (self, ideal self, spouse, ideal
spouse, and the prediction of how $\underline{S}$'s spouse responded to
those sets) in the manner developed by Murstein and Beck
(1972).

An analysis of the Rosenberg and Cohen communication
task results yielded a sex X adjustment interaction in which

adjusted females were more accurate as listeners than either adjusted males or non-adjusted females. Results on the bipolar adjective checklist indicated that wives' self-acceptance was positively related to husbands' marital adjustment and that accuracy of predicting spouses' responses was positively related to marital adjustment in both husbands and wives.

The implications of these results for marital therapists and for exponents of personal growth groups are discussed. Areas deserving of future research are suggested.