



Introducing Communication Theory: Analysis and Application

Fourth Edition

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Face-Negotiation Theory

Chapter Overview

- FNT at a Glance
- Introduction
- About Face
- Assumptions of FNT
- Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures
- Managing Conflict across Cultures
- Integration and Critique

FNT at a Glance

- Cultures manage conflict negotiation differently due to differing face concerns
- Face, as an extension of one's self-concept, is negotiated in interactions

Introduction

- Face-Negotiation Theory combines principles of
 - Intercultural communication
 - Conflict
 - Politeness
 - Facework

About Face

- **Face** is a metaphor for the public image people display
 - Pervades all aspects of social life
 - Can be maintained, lost, or strengthened
 - Can be interpreted in two ways
 - Face concern: Interest in maintaining face
 - Face need: Desire to be associated/dissociated from others

About Face

- Face and Politeness Theory
 - People will use a politeness strategy based on their perceptions of face threat
 - A single message can simultaneously threaten and/or support multiple types of face
 - Types of universal face needs
 - Positive face: Desire to be liked, included
 - Negative face: Desire to be autonomous and free from obligations

About Face

- **Facework** is the actions taken to make behaviors consistent with face
- Types of facework
 - Tact: Respecting authority
 - Solidarity: Accepting another as a member
 - Approbation: Focusing on the positive

Assumptions of FNT

- Self-identity is important in interpersonal interactions, with individuals negotiating their identities differently across cultures
 - **Self-identity** is the personal features of character attributes of an individual

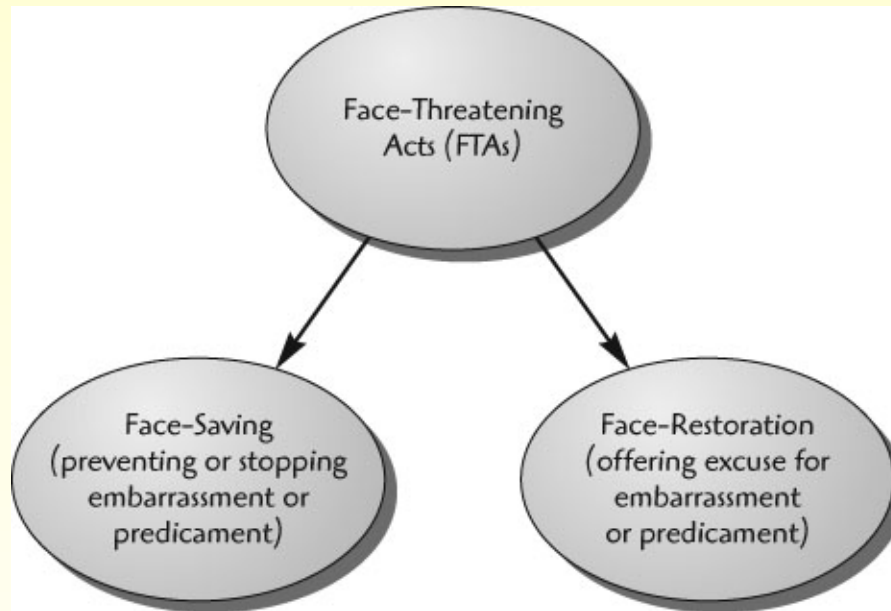
Assumptions of FNT

- The management of conflict is mediated by face and culture
 - Conflict can damage face and reduce relational closeness
 - U.S. culture promotes openly airing differences
 - Other cultures handle conflict discreetly

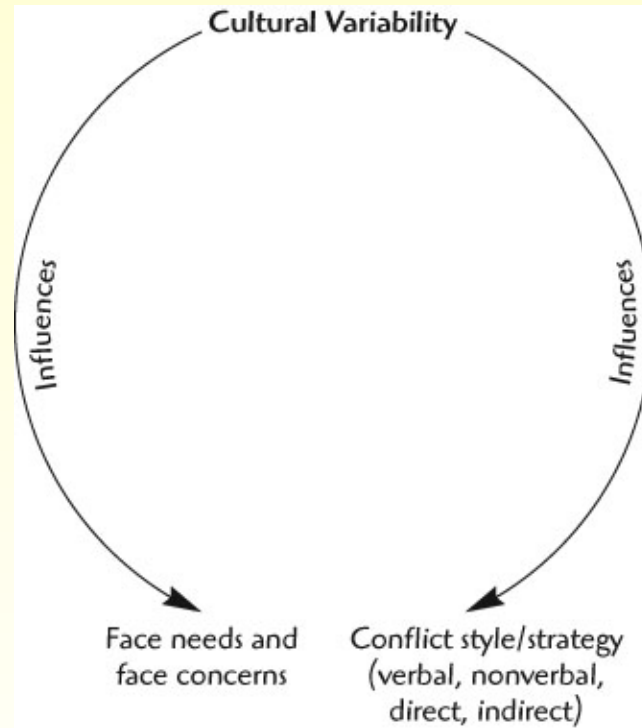
Assumptions of FNT

- Certain acts threaten one's projected self-image (face)
 - Face-threatening acts (FTAs)
 - Face-saving actions
 - Face restoration actions

Assumptions of FNT



Cultural Variability



Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures

- Cultural variability
 - Individualism places a premium on individual identity, preferences, and needs
 - Collectivism emphasizes group identity, preferences, and needs

Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures

- Face management in individualistic cultures
 - Preserve authenticity of their own face
 - Negative face
- Face management in collectivistic cultures
 - Preserve their own face and the face of others
 - Adaptability
 - Positive face

Managing Conflict Across Cultures

- Primary conflict management strategies
 - Avoiding
 - Obliging
 - Compromising
 - Dominating
 - Integrating

Managing Conflict Across Cultures

- Examples of preferred conflict management styles across cultures
 - Americans use more dominating
 - Taiwanese use more integrating
 - Chinese and Taiwanese use more obliging
 - Chinese use more avoidance and compromising

Integration

- Communication tradition
 - Socio-psychological
- Communication context
 - Cultural
- Approach to knowing
 - Positivistic/empirical

Evaluating FNT

- Logical Consistency
 - Differences of individualistic and collectivistic cultures is not enough
 - Positive and negative face labels too general
- Heurism
 - Several key features have been studied