

# The Influence of Gender on Behaviors and Outcomes in a Retail Buyer-Seller Negotiation Simulation

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*Successful negotiations between retail buyers and manufacturer representatives are an important ingredient in retailer success. Women are well-represented in retail industries, raising the question of how gender affects buyer-seller negotiations. In an investigation of this question, more than 100 businesspeople participated in a buyer-seller negotiation simulation. All participants completed a questionnaire and 29 negotiations were tape recorded. Gender differences were discovered in both negotiation performance and behavior. For example, men achieved higher individual profits. Men were also found to use more questions, self-disclosures, conversational repairs, interruptions, and first person, plural pronouns ('we'). The linguistic and practical salience of the discovered differences is discussed.*

More than half of the retail buyers for general merchandise stores are women. For apparel and accessories, the great majority of retail buyers are female. Conversely, manufacturers' sales representatives are predominantly male. For example, salesmen of apparel and accessories outnumber saleswomen by over three to one (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1984). To be an effective retail buyer, it is important to know how to negotiate with salespeople to obtain the most favorable terms of sale possible. Differences have been found between men and women in the ways they communicate and negotiate; thus, the potential exists for misunderstandings and less-than-ideal purchase agreements when the female buyer negotiates with the male salesperson. Moreover, retailers should understand how men and women communicate and negotiate in order to train their employees to be more effective buyers.

The purpose of this paper is to explore empirically the gender difference hypothesis. That is, do businesswomen negotiate differently than businessmen? This question is explored in the context of a simulated buyer-seller negotiation involving more than 100 businesspeople. Twenty-nine of the negotiations were tape recorded and content analyzed. The remainder of the paper is divided into four sections. First, the theoretical perspective is presented. Next, methods are described. Results are reported in the third section. The paper is concluded with a discussion of the findings.

### THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Buyer-seller negotiations are a fundamental marketing phenomenon. As such, the topic has received increasing attention from marketing scholars (e.g., McAlister, Bazerman, and Fader 1986; Schurr and Ozanne 1985; Soldow and Thomas 1984; Clopton 1984; Dwyer and Walker 1981). Most recently, negotiation outcomes have been hypothesized to be the result of several factors which can be classified into three categories or kinds of theoretical constructs: individual characteristics (e.g., gender, intelligence, self-esteem, attractiveness, power, and cultural background); situational constraints (e.g., company goals, time limitations, unequal power relations); and process measures (e.g., problem solving strategies, tactics, and behaviors); (see Sawyer and Guetzkow 1965; Rubin and Brown 1975).

Some past studies have focused on the process of business negotiations (for example, Farley and Swinth 1967; Pennington 1968; Olshavsky 1973; Pruitt and Lewis 1975; Lewis and Fry 1977; Dwyer and Walker 1981). Graham (1983) has defined process measures as "qualitative and quantitative descriptions of the activities involved in a business negotiation—for example, bargaining strategies." Based on an extensive review of the negotiation literature, Rubin and Brown (1975) conclude that the behaviors of bargainers during the negotiation process affect negotiation outcomes. The kinds of behaviors they list are initial approaches, responses, types of arguments, and the like. But little work has been done to investigate relationships among process measures and negotiation outcomes, individual characteristics, and situational constraints.

#### Gender as an Explanatory Variable

The influence of gender on buyer-seller negotiations has not been specifically addressed in the marketing literature. Issues related to women in selling roles have been considered, however. For example, Kanuk (1978)

reports that 22 percent of sales vice-presidents surveyed in two SIC industries believe salesmen's work performance to be better than saleswomen's (76 percent reported no difference and 2 percent abstained). Swan et al. (1978a) found that, when controlling for longevity, saleswomen scored lower on a job-related self-confidence scale. Caballero and Pride's (1984) results indicated that pictures of attractive saleswomen in print ads weakly influenced purchases of the product advertised. Swan et al. (1984) report purchasing agents perceived gender differences in several job-related skills of salespeople.

In social psychology, gender has been the most frequently studied bargainer characteristic. Although the findings from this plethora of studies are quite equivocal, Tedeschi, Schlenker, and Bonoma (1973) take a stand on gender differences in negotiation behavior, saying, "Sex roles as learned in the socialization process, at least in the United States, dispose the two sexes to develop different styles in interacting with others." The authors cited research that indicates that females are more influencable, more dependent on others, less aggressive, and have fewer problem-solving skills than males. Further, Tedeschi et al. found that, in bargaining situations, females are more likely to react dramatically to both the situation's demands and the other party's behavior. They state, "If the adversary cooperates, females will cooperate more than would male bargainers, but if the adversary competes, uses threats, or aggressively administers punishments, females will react vindictively, outcompeting their male counterparts."

Alternatively, in their review, Rubin and Brown (1975) report that a number of studies conclude that there is no systematic relationship between gender and bargaining:

1. In terms of the relative frequency with which males and females behave cooperatively in two-person games;
2. In terms of the relative frequency with which males and females behave cooperatively in coalition (3 or 4 persons) games;
3. In terms of the frequency with which males and females reward someone of the same sex; and
4. In terms of the extent to which males and females tend to be suspicious of another's honesty.

Rubin and Brown also found a large number of experiments reporting that males behave more cooperatively than females. For example, Rapoport and Chammah (1965) explain that women make up their minds more quickly than men. However, Rubin and Brown report an even greater

number of experiments conclude that females bargain more cooperatively than males.

Toward reconciliation of the disparate findings of others, Rubin and Brown (1975) posit women to be more interpersonally oriented (IO), that is, more responsive to the strategies of negotiation partners than men. Women, like persons highly interpersonally oriented (and cooperative high IOs in particular), are sensitive and reactive to the interpersonal aspects of their relationship with the other. Males, like persons less interpersonally oriented, orient themselves not to the other, but to the impersonal task of *maximizing their own earnings*. When earnings can best be maximized through the use of a competitive strategy, males tend to compete; however, when a cooperative strategy seems most likely to maximize own earnings, males cooperate.

Pruitt (1981) reviewed several studies regarding gender and negotiations. The most pertinent are cited here. Sex differences in opening offers and frequency of concessions ordinarily have not been found (e.g., Love, as cited in Druckman, Rozelle, and Zechmeister 1977; Frey and Adams 1972). However, sex differences did emerge in a study by Wall (1976). Women were found to be more conciliatory than men. The most consistent sex difference is that male subjects are more comfortable with, and more interested in, tasks labeled "negotiation" than are female subjects (Druckman, et al. 1977; Kimmel, et al. 1980; Magenau 1980).

Consistent with the above findings, Mullick and Lewis (1977) suggested that women are more conflict avoidant than men. Women with traditional male-dominant sex-role attitudes did particularly poorly in comparison to those with more modern, egalitarian attitudes. However, in studies of same-sex stranger dyads (Kimmel, et al. 1980), no sex differences were found in outcomes.

Finally, Duncan and Fiske (1977) observed and coded several linguistic structural variables during five-minute, non-task-related conversations between graduate students at the University of Chicago. Each person participated in two interactions—one same-sex and one cross-sex pairing. They reported several differences in observed behaviors: Males held the floor longer than females in cross-sex pairs. Females smiled longer and more often than males; females also laughed more often; females spent more time gazing at their partner than did the males. Males shifted their seat position more often. Males showed discomfort more by bodily movements while females showed discomfort by smiling and laughing. Zimmerman and West (1975) add that males interrupt more than females in mixed-sex interactions. West (1980) found that males initiated 96 percent of all interruptions when negotiating with women. These findings suggest that

gender differences in interactions could potentially lead to cross-sex negotiations resulting in less-than-satisfactory outcomes.

The reader will note that hypotheses are not formally stated. The emphasis here is on exploration of gender differences in buyer-seller negotiations. Thus, we have included a broad range of performance measures and behaviors as dependent variables. The discovered differences are discussed in the context of the literature reviewed above.

### **Dependent Variables—Negotiation Outcomes**

In practice, outcomes of marketing negotiations are often difficult to measure and compare. Sale versus no sale is one obvious measure of bargaining effectiveness and has been used by Pennington (1968) in a field study of buyer/seller interactions. However, researchers have sought richer measures which make possible comparisons to a variety of effectiveness criteria. Negotiation outcomes have been employed in a number of ways in different studies. In the hundreds of bargaining experiments conducted by social psychologists, an often-used measure is economic reward or profit attained by bargainers in negotiation simulations (cf. Rubin and Brown 1975). Profits (both individual and joint) in negotiation simulations have been used as dependent measures in several of the studies (e.g., Pruitt and Lewis 1975; Lewis and Fry 1977; Dwyer and Walker 1981). Dwyer and Walker (1981) also suggest negotiator satisfaction, measured using a post-exercise questionnaire, to be a meaningful negotiation outcome. In the present study, *profits* attained by bargainers in a negotiation simulation, and *satisfaction* measured using a post-exercise questionnaire, are the primary dependent variables. More information about the negotiation simulation and the reliability and validity of these measures is provided in a later section of the paper. Table 1 contains a listing of all the dependent variables.

Because negotiation between retail buyers and manufacturer representatives is an intricate human interaction often requiring that participants meet again and again at the bargaining table, it is essential that participants achieve satisfactory profits and are satisfied enough with the process to warrant further business. More specifically, Weitz (1981) suggests that the seller must achieve a high profit and the buyer must be satisfied with the outcome. Without both sellers' profits and buyers' satisfaction, there would be no motivation for the two to meet again. So, we agree with this conceptualization of effectiveness. The most appropriate goals of a sales negotiation will be twofold: maximization of sellers' profits and buyers' satisfaction.

TABLE 1

## Measures and Results, Questionnaire Data, Group Means (Standard Deviations)

Category	Variable	Symbol	Description and Measure	Group I (questionnaire data only)		Group II (questionnaire and observational measures)	
				Men ( <i>n</i> = 74)	Women ( <i>n</i> = 30)	Men ( <i>n</i> = 24)	Women ( <i>n</i> = 34)
<u>Negotiation Outcomes</u>	Source's Profits	$\$_i^s$	Source's (either buyer's or seller's) individual profit level associated with final agreement of Kelley's (1966) negotiation game, range = 28 to 80	45.0 (11.8)	43.7 (8.6)	49.2 (7.4)	44.1 (10.6)*
	Target's Satisfaction	SAT <sub>t</sub>	Target's satisfaction with the outcome of the negotiation, 4 items, range = 4 to 20, Cronbach $\alpha$ = .80	14.5 (3.0)	14.1 (3.8)	15.5 (2.9)	15.2 (2.5)
	Time	TIME	Number of minutes spent negotiating	30.5 (14.8)	27.6 (15.1)	27.9 (13.8)	21.6 (9.4)*

TABLE 1 Cont'd

Category	Variable	Symbol	Description and Measure	Group I (questionnaire data only)		Group II (questionnaire and observational measures)	
				Men ( <i>n</i> = 74)	Women ( <i>n</i> = 30)	Men ( <i>n</i> = 24)	Women ( <i>n</i> = 34)
<u>Process Variables</u>	Bargaining Strategies	PSA <sub>ss</sub>	Problem-solving approach to negotiations (i.e., strategies), 4 items, range = 4 to 20, Cronbach $\alpha$ = .73	12.2 (3.4)	11.6 (3.0)	11.6 (3.0)	12.6 (3.1)
	Interpersonal Attraction	ATT <sub>st</sub>	Ratings of interpersonal attraction, 3 items, range 3 to 15, Cronbach $\alpha$ = .77	11.7 (2.5)	11.9 (2.1)	12.5 (1.8)	12.4 (2.2)
	Interpersonal Orientation	I01 <sub>s</sub>	Impression formation accuracy = ABS (PSA <sub>tt</sub> - PSA <sub>ts</sub> ), lower values equal greater accuracy	2.9 (2.3)	2.4 (1.9)	3.0 (2.1)	3.0 (2.1)
		I02 <sub>s</sub>	Strategy adjustment (similarity) = ABS (PSA <sub>ss</sub> - PSA <sub>tt</sub> ), lower values equal greater similarity	3.4 (2.8)	3.2 (2.3)	3.0 (2.1)	2.5 (1.9)

<sup>1</sup> Subscripts: <sub>s</sub> = source, <sub>t</sub> = target, <sub>ss</sub> = rating of source by source, <sub>st</sub> = rating of source by target  
\* The difference between the means is statistically significant, ( $p < 0.05$ )

A final outcome measure considered is the time spent during negotiations. Although time might be conceived as a process measure (e.g., Green, Gross, and Robinson 1967), in this research, time will simply be treated as an outcome of the negotiation, since the focus is on gender differences. And to the extent that retail buyers and sales representatives have limited time, time management becomes a crucial task in and of itself.

### **Process Measures (Survey Methods)**

Three of the negotiation process-related variables considered in this study are measured using a post-exercise questionnaire. Each is discussed in detail below and in Table 1. Process variables measured using observational methods are described in the next section.

*Problem-Solving Approach.* The problem-solving approach (hereafter PSA) to marketing negotiations involves first an emphasis on questions and getting information from clients about their needs and preferences. Second, once the buyer's requirements and circumstances are fully understood, then the seller accommodates the product/service offering to the client's needs. A PSA then can be concisely defined as a set of negotiation behaviors that can be described as cooperative, integrative, and information-exchange oriented.

The relationship of a problem-solving approach and negotiation outcomes has been frequently investigated during the last twenty years. Different researchers have used different labels for the PSA concept (e.g., integrative bargaining strategies—Walton and McKersie 1965; cooperative orientation—Rubin and Brown 1975, and Williams 1983; problem-solving orientation—Pruitt and Lewis 1975, Menkel-Meadow 1984, Murray 1986; representational bargaining strategies—Angelmar and Stern 1978; and direct/open influence tactics—Weitz 1981), but findings have been relatively consistent. Generally, PSA has been found to positively influence *joint* negotiation outcomes.

*Attractiveness.* Although more properly classified as a moderator variable than a process measure, negotiator attractiveness is discussed in this section. Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer (1970) suggest "the relationship between attraction to a source (like-dislike, friendly feelings, etc.) and attitude change has received scant attention." Rubin and Brown (1975) conclude that, generally, interpersonal attraction enhances bargaining outcomes (cf. Berscheid and Walster 1978; Benton 1971; Morgan and Sawyer 1967; and Swingle 1966).

Interpersonal attraction might be conceived as an exogenous construct



—determined before negotiations begin, as a part of the combination of the negotiators' characteristics. It can also be argued that attraction is a consequence of the negotiation, a dependent construct. However, in this study, attractiveness of the seller is considered a process-related, endogenous construct. This is consistent with the views of Evans (1963) and Zunin and Zunin (1972). Evans suggests that similarity of buyers and sellers leads to higher levels of interpersonal attraction, which in turn leads to more favorable negotiation outcomes (i.e., a sale). Zunin and Zunin suggest that during the first few minutes of conversation "decisions" are made about interpersonal attractiveness and whether to continue the interaction.

*Interpersonal Orientation.* Related to negotiation outcomes are the abilities of bargainers to size up the honesty of their negotiation opponents and respond accordingly. Rubin and Brown (1975) posit an important negotiator characteristic to be interpersonal orientation (IO). They suggest that a high IO bargainer is "responsive to the interpersonal aspects of his relationship with the other. He is both interested in and reactive to variation in the other's behavior." High IO's would tend to behave competitively with a competitive partner, and cooperatively with a cooperative partner. Alternatively, a low IO is "characterized, first and foremost, by *nonresponsiveness* to the interpersonal aspects of its relationship with the other" (Rubin and Brown 1975). Low IO's tend to behave the same regardless of their negotiation partners' approaches.

Two behaviors are key here: forming an accurate impression of the opponent; and adjusting one's own bargaining strategies accordingly. If A and B are bargaining, B's self-rating of her negotiation strategies might be compared to A's rating of B's strategies. Such a comparison would yield a measure of A's abilities to form an accurate impression of B's strategies (i.e., to the extent that B's self-rating is accurate). Adjustment of negotiation strategies might be measured by comparing A's self-rated strategies to B's self-rated strategies. High IO's would be expected to use bargaining strategies more similar to those of negotiation partners.

### **Process Measures (Observational Methods)**

Simply stated, the *content* of conversation is *what* is said, while the *structure* is *how* it is said. The distinction is both theoretically and practically a fuzzy one. Several researchers have developed schemes for categorizing the *what* aspects of negotiations (e.g., Bales 1950; Pennington 1968; Walton and McKersie 1965; Pruitt and Lewis 1975; Bonoma and

Felder 1977; Angelmar and Stern 1978), and used these schemes to analyze the verbal content of bargaining interactions.

The *how* of meaning has also been considered. From linguistic and sociological studies of various types of interactions, we know that salient information about the interaction is not necessarily contained uniquely within the overt, stated message. Analyses of patterns in conversation (i.e., the conversation structure) have shown that *how* something is said can convey meaning just as salient to our understanding of an interaction as the *what* of the message. Therefore, in this study, both content and linguistic structural variables are coded for men and women and compared. Researchers in a variety of fields have commented on the theoretical significance of the several variables defined below. Space does not allow for a complete discussion of their reasons. Instead, the applicable studies are cited after each definition. Additionally, more detail regarding each variable is provided by Neu (1985).

### **Content Variables**

Angelmar and Stern's (1978) content analysis scheme was selected as one of the bases of the study for two reasons. First, it is the most relevant to the topic of buyer-seller negotiations. Second, it has strong theoretical underpinnings. However, during the coding and reliability check processes, the scheme was modified substantially. Theoretically, one should be able to distinguish between the twelve bargaining behaviors Angelmar and Stern define. But when it comes to the realities of analyzing transcripts of businesspeople negotiating, theory bows to practicality.

A comparison of Angelmar and Stern's scheme and our coding system appears in Table 2. Consistent with Graham (1985a), normative appeals, rewards, and punishments simply were not used often enough to code reliably. Angelmar and Stern (1978), looking at written communication, found, as did we with conversational data, that it was not worthwhile differentiating between threats and warnings. Promises and commitments were found to be indistinguishable. Their categories of recommendations and commands were also collapsed into one variable: suggestions.

Alternatively, in two cases we found it useful to extend Angelmar and Stern's (1978) scheme. Consistent with the approaches of linguists, three kinds of questions were coded: requests for clarification, requests for information, and initiations. Self-disclosures were divided into two categories: disclosures in response to others' questions and unsolicited disclosures. Finally, seven other verbal content behaviors were coded: ad-

TABLE 2

**Bargaining Categories**

Categories Used in The Present Study	Angelmar and Stern's (1978) Scheme
Questions	Questions
a. Of clarification	
b. Requests for information	
c. Initiations	
Self-disclosures	Self-disclosures
a. In response to others' questions	
b. Unsolicited	
Admonitions	Threats and Warnings
Commitments	Commitments and Promises
Prescriptions	Recommendations and Commands
(infrequent occurrence, therefore not included in the analysis)	Normative Appeals, Rewards, and Punishments

monitions, commitments, prescriptions, hedges, use of "we," positive/negative reactions, and presumptive "you."

**Structural Variables**

The content variables are the *what* of communication; the structural variables are the *how*. These variables are derived from how participants manage the conversation (i.e., take turns at talk, interrupt, give feedback, etc.). Fifteen such variables were coded and analyzed: repairs, simultaneous talk, pauses, speech rate, loudness, pitch, laughter, acknowledgement, and echo. The content variables and the structural variables are described in detail in the Appendix.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this section, the procedures of inquiry are presented. The discussion begins with a brief description of the sample of businesspeople participating in the research. Next, the laboratory setting is described. Finally, data collection and coding procedures are discussed.

## Participants

The participants in the simulation were 162 U.S. businesspeople, all with at least two years business experience. The average age of participants was 32.5 years. To gain some estimate of the participants' interorganizational negotiation experience, each was asked, "What percentage of your work involves contact with people outside your firm?" The mean of the responses was 52 percent. Ninety-eight men and sixty-four women participated. The two gender groups were different in neither age nor experience. Twenty-nine dyads were tape recorded for a separate and more detailed analysis.

## Laboratory Setting

In the negotiation game (developed by Kelley 1966; and used by Pruitt and Lewis 1975; Lewis and Fry 1977; and Clopton 1984), a dyad, one retailer/buyer and one wholesaler/seller, bargains for the prices of three commodities. The game has mixed-motive qualities; that is, the joint profits for both players, as well as profits for individual players, vary. Differing amounts and types of background information can be included with the basic pay-off matrices, depending on the focus of the research. In this study, however, there was no experimental manipulation. The game is simple enough to be learned quickly, but complex enough to provide usually one-half hour of face-to-face interaction. More detail regarding the game, including pay-off matrices and instructions, is provided in Graham (1986).

## Data Collection Instruments

*Dependent Variables.* Several outcome variables are associated with Kelley's (1966) negotiation simulation (see Table 1). The focus of this study is sources' profits ( $\$_s$ ) and targets' expressed satisfaction ( $SAT_t$ )<sup>1</sup>. Individual profits are a direct result of the negotiation agreements. Expressed satisfaction is measured using four five-point itemized-category scales included in the questionnaire administered immediately following

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<sup>1</sup> The terms source and target are from Bonoma and Rosenberg (1978). The first subscript denotes the user of the bargaining behavior. The second subscript denotes the person rating the behavior. For example,  $PSA_{ts}$  means the problem-solving approach used by the target and rated by the source.  $PSA_{ss}$  is the problem-solving approach used by the source and rated by the source (i.e., self-report).

completion of the exercise (see Table 1 and Graham 1986 for more details). Finally, each negotiation was timed (TIME).

*Process Variables.* Four of the process variables were measured using a post-exercise questionnaire (see Graham 1985b, 1986 for all the questions).  $PSA_{ss}$  was measured using sources' self-report responses to four five-point items.  $ATT_{st}$  was measured using a three-item scale completed by targets.  $IO1_s$  was calculated by taking the absolute value of  $PSA_{tt}$  less  $PSA_{ts}$ .  $IO2_s$  was calculated by taking the absolute value of the difference between  $PSA_{ss}$  and  $PSA_{tt}$ . (See Table 1 for descriptions of these process variables.)

### Data Development (Observational Measures)

Several steps are necessary in the conversion of conversations to numbers. First, twenty-nine of the simulated negotiations were audio-tape recorded. Next, the tapes were transcribed, including coding of the linguistic structural variables. Third, the content analysis was done. Fourth, the reliability of the coding was checked. Finally, behaviors of each negotiator were counted for statistical comparisons across the sexes.

*Transcriptions.* All negotiations were audio-taped and transcribed by one of the principal researchers using a modified version<sup>2</sup> of the notational system developed by Jefferson (Schenkein 1978). The Jefferson system permits an in-depth analysis of how participants in conversations structure their talk. As transcription required approximately 40 minutes for each minute of talk (with an average negotiation being 30 minutes long, requiring 580 hours to transcribe the data) this is a major practical difficulty with conducting this kind of research.

*Content Analysis.* As described in an earlier section, a modified version of Angelmar and Stern's (1978) content analysis schema was used. Additionally, seven other content variables were coded. Again, one of the principal researchers coded all the interactions.<sup>3</sup>

*Reliability.* Reliability checks were performed by two different researchers—one considered the linguistic structural variables and the other the content analysis. Each had previous experience in coding transcripts using similar schema. The results of the reliability checks are reported in Table 3 and discussed in the results section to follow.

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<sup>2</sup> The notational system was modified for use with Micropro's Wordstar for the IBM-PC.

<sup>3</sup> Utterances may be multiply coded. A promise, for example, may also give information about the speaker and may thus be coded as a self-disclosure.

*Analysis.* One-way analysis of variance was used to determine the gender differences in outcomes and behaviors. The reader should note that during the analysis we also considered a number of interaction effects using two-way ANOVA with gender of the source and gender of the target as effects. However, the results proved to be uninteresting and are not reported here for the sake of simplicity.

## RESULTS

### Qualities of the Measures

An important consideration is the external validity of one of the outcome measures, individual profits. Kelley's negotiation game (1966) and such measures have been used in other studies, but how well the game represents actual buyer-seller negotiations is problematic. Any laboratory experiment is open to criticism regarding external validity; this research is no exception. See Dwyer and Walker (1981) and/or Schurr and Ozanne (1985) for detailed arguments regarding the generalizability of negotiation experiments and simulations. The questionnaire measures all proved to be reliable (i.e., Chronbach  $\alpha > .65$ , see Table 1 for details).

The coding reliability was assessed using the approach outlined by Angelmar and Stern (1978). As can be seen in Table 3, in almost all cases, agreement among the coders was well within the standards discussed by Angelmar and Stern. Upon closer examination by the authors, the larger discrepancies (i.e., clarification and acknowledgements) appear to be the result of errors made by the checkers, not the principal coder.

### Gender Differences

The subjects were divided into two groups and analyzed separately. As indicated in Table 1, only questionnaire data were available for Group I. For Group II, both questionnaire and observational measures were available. Men tended to achieve higher individual profits ( $\$_s$ ) in the simulation in both groups, but the difference was statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) only for Group II. Men also spent more time (TIME) negotiating than did women, and the differences were statistically significant for Group II. No gender differences were discovered in levels of target satisfaction ( $SAT_t$ ).

No differences were discovered in any questionnaire-derived process measures. Women tended to behave more cooperatively ( $PSA_{ss}$ ) and to display higher interpersonal-oriented behaviors ( $IO1_s$  and  $IO2_s$ ) than men, but the differences were not statistically significant.

Of the fifteen content variables examined, only a few statistically signif-

TABLE 3

**Results, Observational Data, Means (standard deviation)**

Symbol	Negotiation Behaviors	Marginal Reliability (difference between scores/ sum of scores)	Group II	
			Men (n = 24)	Women (n = 34)
<b>Content Variables</b>				
	Questions (V1 + V2 + V3)	.03	37.8 (23.7)	24.6 (14.5)**
V1	a. Clarifications	.67	8.3 (6.9)	4.7 (3.9)**
V2	b. Information	.07	18.7 (16.1)	12.9 (11.1)
V3	c. Initiation	.18	10.8 (5.8)	7.1 (4.4)**
	Self-disclosures (V4 + V5)	.10	47.4 (25.5)	34.6 (23.9)*
V4	a. Disclosures in response	.08	14.0 (9.1)	11.4 (8.6)
V5	b. Unsolicited disclosures	.10	33.5 (20.3)	23.1 (17.8)**
V6	Admonitions	.00	2.5 (2.4)	3.1 (2.8)
V7	Commitments	.18	13.1 (8.7)	10.4 (6.1)*
V8	Prescriptions	.05	12.0 (7.3)	8.9 (6.1)
	Hedges (V9 + V10)	.10	25.8 (19.3)	20.6 (18.3)
V9	a. Approximators	.14	7.9 (6.5)	6.6 (7.6)
V10	b. Shields	.08	17.9 (13.6)	14.0 (11.4)
	Use of "we" (V11 + V12)	.04	58.1 (49.7)	32.0 (18.5)**
V11	a. Inclusive	.21	16.9 (12.7)	10.2 (6.3)**
V12	b. Exclusive	.11	41.2 (48.9)	21.8 (17.1)
	Reactions (V13 + V14)	.08	6.5 (4.5)	7.2 (6.4)
V13	a. Positive	.14	2.5 (1.8)	2.4 (2.0)
V14	b. Negative	.00	4.0 (3.7)	4.8 (5.4)
V15	Presumptive "you"	.07	2.3 (2.8)	2.7 (4.5)
<b>Structural Variables</b>				
V16	Repairs	.09	80.6 (77.5)	42.4 (28.9)**
V17	Simultaneous Talk	.04	26.1 (28.1)	15.3 (9.2)**
V18	Filled Pauses	.07	81.6 (69.1)	58.6 (47.8)
V19	Silent Periods (>10 sec.)	.00	3.0 (3.3)	3.2 (4.0)
	Speech Rate Changes (V20 + V21)	.00	6.8 (5.0)	7.4 (3.5)
V20	a. Slower	.00	1.6 (1.8)	1.8 (1.8)
V21	b. Faster	.00	5.1 (4.1)	5.6 (3.4)
	Volume Changes (V22 + V23)	.01	18.3 (11.6)	16.2 (14.3)
V22	a. Softer	.00	16.6 (11.7)	13.3 (11.8)
V23	b. Louder	.05	1.8 (3.6)	2.9 (5.7)
	Pitch Changes (V24 + V25)	.00	3.2 (4.7)	2.6 (3.4)
V24	a. Higher	.00	2.5 (3.3)	2.5 (4.5)
V25	b. Lower	.00	0.7 (1.5)	0.1 (0.3)**
V26	Laughter	.00	3.9 (4.9)	5.3 (5.8)
V27	Laughing	.14	1.6 (2.5)	3.5 (4.6)*
V28	Acknowledgement	.27	41.6 (38.3)	29.2 (23.7)
V29	Echo	.20	7.1 (6.9)	4.8 (5.9)

\*\* The difference between the means is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

\* The difference between the means is statistically significant ( $p < 0.10$ ).

icant differences in negotiation behaviors of men and women were observed and are reported in Table 3. Men tended to use more questions, clarifications and initiations (V1 and V3) and self-disclosures, particularly unsolicited ones (V5). Men also used commitments (V7) and the word "we" (V11 + V12) more frequently than the women did. No significant differences were found between men and women in the numbers of requests for information, self-disclosures in response, or in the use of admonitions or prescriptions. Males and females also did not differ significantly in the use of hedges, the numbers of positive or negative reactions given, or the use of presumptive "you."

Regarding the linguistic structural variables, men tended to use more repairs (V16), simultaneous talk (V17), changes to lower pitch (V5), and fewer instances of laughing (V27). Men and women did not differ significantly in filled pauses, silent periods, speech rate or volume changes, laughter, acknowledgements, or in the use of echoes.

## DISCUSSION

In one sense, the results of the study are surprising given the extensive literature finding gender differences. Despite the wide net we cast, we found few differences in negotiation behaviors across the gender groups. But in another sense, our findings are most encouraging. That is, the comments of Tedeschi, et al. (1973) and others suggesting substantial differences between the sexes are simply not supported by our data. Indeed, one explanation for the discrepancy between our findings and those of the social psychologists may be due to differences in participants. They primarily used undergraduate psychology majors as subjects; we used experienced businesspeople. Perhaps sex differences in interaction styles fade as people gain experience in the workplace. Such a conclusion is consistent with Mullick and Lewis' (1977) findings that women with more modern, egalitarian attitudes performed better in conflict situations than other women.<sup>4</sup>

The larger and statistically significant gender differences discovered (i.e., profits and time) for Group II compared to Group I may be in part caused by the tape-recording process itself. Other researchers have also reported surveillance effects (i.e., effects due to observation by third parties). For example, Benton (1975) found that for men, surveillance retarded cooperation, and for women surveillance enhanced cooperation.

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<sup>4</sup> Relatedly, one should note that because sex roles vary considerably across cultures, our findings should not be generalized to other cultures.



TABLE 4

**Relationships of Variables to Negotiation Outcomes (Pearson  
Correlation Coefficients)**

	Group II, <i>n</i> = 58 (Group I, <i>n</i> = 104)	
	Source's Profits (\$s)	Target's Satisfaction (SAT <sub>t</sub> )
Target's Satisfaction (SAT <sub>t</sub> )	-.043 (.121)	—
Time	-.057 (-.330**)	-.295** (-.463**)
Bargaining Strategies (PSA <sub>ss</sub> )	-.053 (.059)	-.024 (.231**)
Interpersonal Attraction (ATT <sub>st</sub> )	-.085 (-.050)	-.063 (.261**)
Interpersonal Orientation (IO1 <sub>s</sub> )	-.267** (-.025)	-.103 (.018)
(IO2 <sub>s</sub> )	.031 (.009)	.029 (-.076)
Questions (V1 + V2 + V3)	.172*	-.265**
a. Clarifications (V1)	.175*	-.197*
b. Information (V2)	.156	-.248**
c. Initiation (V3)	.056	-.146
Self-disclosures (V4 + V5)	-.007	-.211*
a. In response (V4)	.054	-.295**
b. Unsolicited (V5)	-.033	-.140
Admonitions (V6)	-.165	-.289**
Commitments (V7)	-.068	-.166
Prescriptions (V8)	-.066	-.215
Hedges (V9 + V10)	-.072	-.180*
a. Approximators (V9)	-.045	-.156
b. Shields (V10)	-.087	-.182*
Use of "we" (V11 + V12)	-.089	-.270**
a. Inclusive (V11)	-.009	-.082
b. Exclusive (V12)	-.091	-.261**
Reactions (V13 + V14)	.094	-.217*
a. Positive (V13)	-.008	-.023
b. Negative (V14)	.116	-.249**
Presumptive "you" (V15)	-.325**	.011
Repairs (V16)	.002	-.450**
Simultaneous talk (V17)	-.094	-.438**
Filled pauses (V18)	.098	-.287**
Silent Periods (V19)	.165	.133
Speech Rate Changes (V20 + V21)	.166	-.035
a. Slower (V20)	-.013	.162
b. Faster (V21)	.195*	-.118

His findings are completely consistent with the differences in PSA across Groups I and II reported in Table 1.

Despite the overall similarity discovered, a few differences in negotiation outcomes are consistent with the conclusions of others. Men tended to achieve higher individual profits in the simulation, although the relationship did not hold for Group I. No gender differences were found in target satisfaction levels. Thus, only weak support is provided for the comments of Tedeschi, et al. (1973), "Women . . . are less adept at problem-solving skills." Alternatively, men took longer to reach agreements and did more talking. In Table 3, the reader will notice that men scored higher on several of the content variables. Such findings are consistent with the conclusions of Rapoport and Chammah (1965) suggesting that women make up their minds more quickly than men; and the findings of Duncan and Fiske (1977) that men hold the floor longer than women.

The differences in interpersonal orientation (IO) predicted by Rubin and Brown (1975) and Rapoport and Chammah (1965) were not found. And no differences were found in cooperativeness, despite the conflicting predictions of several of the social psychologists.

A few differences in the conversational behaviors observed were noteworthy. Men tended to ask more questions and provide more information about themselves and their companies' needs and preferences (i.e., self-disclosures). And to the extent that more information leads to better problem solutions, this may have worked to their advantage, perhaps yielding higher individual profits. Men tended to use the word "we" more frequently, particularly exclusive "we." Exclusive "we's" may serve to enlist the power of one's company in support of arguments, thus yielding higher economic rewards.

The data in Table 4 are not focused upon in this study, but are instead provided to aid in the interpretation of the gender differences discovered. This last table reports the relationships of the various process and behavioral variables to the two principal outcome measures, individual profits and target satisfaction. The reader will note the weak, but positive relationship between asking questions and achieving higher individual profits. This finding, combined with the previously reported sex differences, is consistent with the causal chain of gender→questions→profits. That is, men tended to ask more questions and thereby tended to achieve higher profits in the negotiation simulation.

Contrarily, we note that almost all the behaviors that males displayed more frequently than women (i.e., questions, self-disclosures, the use of "we," repairs, simulations, talk, lower pitch and the use of more time) were negatively correlated with target satisfaction. For example, consis-

This suggests that tape recording can prove to be a powerful diagnostic, as well as pedagogic tool in sales training programs.

Finally, our findings suggest that men and women negotiators both get the job done. Therefore, gender should not be a criterion for buyer-seller assignments based not only on legal considerations, but also practical ones.

## APPENDIX

### Descriptions of Content and Structural Variables

#### Content Variables

*Questions.* These are defined as utterances that require a response. They may or may not be characterized by traditional question syntax (i.e., verb before subject, tag questions), but are characterized by question intonation. Questions may consist of complete sentences or fragments of sentences; some may even be one-word questions (cf. Karrass 1970; Angelmar and Stern 1978; Weitz 1978; Bonoma and Felder 1977).

Three kinds of questions were analyzed:

- a. Clarification (V1): Request for speaker to repeat, restate, and/or explain utterance.
- b. Information (V2): Request for speaker to provide information.
- c. Initiation (V3): A statement requiring a response.

*Self-disclosures.* Any information given by speaker A about him/herself. Two kinds of self-disclosure were coded: information given in response to a question and information volunteered. The two can be distinguished only with reference to preceding talk of the other speaker.

- a. Disclosures in response (V4)
- b. Unsolicited disclosures (V5)

*Admonitions (V6).* Speaker A predicting a negative consequence will result from B's action. The consequence may be under the control of Speaker A (i.e., a threat in Angelmar and Stern's (1978) schema), or not (i.e., a warning; cf. Rubin and Brown 1975; Frazier and Sommers 1984).

*Commitments (V7).* A guarantee to do something which the listener would want done (cf. Bonoma and Rosenberg 1978; Angelmar and Stern 1978; Frazier and Sommers 1984).

*Prescriptions (V8).* Speaker A recommends or commands B to take a certain action. Prescriptions differ from admonitions in that no negative consequences are included (Bonoma and Felder 1977; Angelmar and Stern 1978).

*Hedges.* Any word or phrase which causes "fuzziness." There are two kinds of hedges examined in this study (cf. Lind and O'Barr 1979).

TABLE 4 Cont'd

	Group II, <i>n</i> = 58 (Group I, <i>n</i> = 104)	
	Source's Profits (\$s)	Target's Satisfaction SAT <sub>t</sub>
Volume changes (V22 + V23)	.136	.013
a. Softer (V22)	.132	-.017
b. Louder (V23)	.048	.076
Pitch changes (V24 + V25)	-.064	-.102
a. Higher (V24)	-.056	.004
b. Lower (V25)	-.036	-.400**
Laughter (V26)	.114	.143
Laughing (V27)	-.009	-.015
Acknowledgement (V28)	-.012	-.393**
Echo (V29)	.089	-.217**

\*\* *p* < 0.05  
\* *p* < 0.10

tent with the findings of West (1980), males used more interruptions than females. Yet, the expected consequence of reduced client satisfaction apparently did not materialize. This issue deserves more attention. For example, what other behaviors of male negotiators serve to mitigate the usually strong inverse relationship between frequent interruptions and client satisfaction reported by others? Is it somehow all right for men to interrupt, but not women? All such issues deserve more focused attention in future studies.

### Management Implications

Contrary to the predictions of other researchers, gender appears to only weakly influence buyer-seller negotiations between experienced businesspeople. Men did achieve higher profits, but were less time efficient in reaching agreements. The negotiator's sex had no effect on the client's satisfaction with the agreement. Men might improve their negotiation performance by generally talking less and by consciously trying to reduce their number of interruptions. Alternatively, women might improve their negotiation results by asking more questions.

The observational methods used in this study have been most revealing.

a. Approximator (V9): Affects the propositional content of the utterance, but not the speaker's commitment to it.

b. Shield (V10): Affects the speaker's commitment to an utterance.

*Use of "we."* Brown and Levinson (1979) suggest that the use of "we" in English either reflects a powerful group behind the speaker (exclusive "we"), or a partnership between speakers (inclusive "we").

a. Exclusive "we" (V11): The use of "we" to indicate the speaker and another party not present in the interaction.

b. Inclusive "we" (V12): The use of "we" to indicate the speaker and the other(s) present in the interaction.

*Positive/negative reactions.* Related to Bales (1950) content categories of "agrees" and "disagrees" are positive and negative reactions.

a. Positive reactions (V13): Speaker B responding positively to something said by speaker A.

b. Negative reactions (V14): Speaker B responding negatively to something said by speaker A.

*Presumptive "You" (V15).* When one speaker defines the other's reality for her/him by inventing a story told in the second person. Such creation of another's reality may be viewed as a presumptuous infringement on one's "conversational rights." Graham (1985a) suggests the importance of this variable.

### Structural Variables

*Repairs (V16).* Any "problems" that occur in speaking: false starts, hesitations, etc. Repairs may also occur where no apparent "problems" exist. Three kinds of repairs were coded. Because they were highly correlated, the three were collapsed to form one variable. For more detail regarding repairs see Schegloff, et al. (1977).

a. Substantive other-repair: Where the listener initiates a repair of something said by the speaker. This may be "filling in" for the speaker when the speaker stumbles or it may also be correcting content matter.

b. Substantive self-repair: Where the speaker initiates a repair of something s/he has said.

c. Non-substantive self-repair: Where the speaker repeats portions of words, whole words, or phrases.

*Simultaneous talk (V17).* Instances when both negotiators are talking at the same time. Three kinds were coded, then collapsed together to form this category.

a. Overlap: Stretches of simultaneity initiated by a "next" speaker just as the current speaker arrives at a possible transition place (West 1980;

indicated by //). Graham (1987) has reported that overlaps are inversely related to partners' satisfaction.

b. Interruptions: Simultaneous speech that intrudes more than a syllable away from a possible turn-transition place (West 1980; indicated by []).

c. Simultaneous startup: Where both speakers A and B begin speaking at the same time (Indicated by = []).

*Pauses.* There are two kinds of pauses: those that are filled with utterances such as "uh," "ah," "um," and those that are unfilled, i.e., silent periods. These two types of pauses function differently in conversation. See Shimanoff and Brunak (1977) for a detailed discussion of the importance of pauses in conversations.

a. Filled pause (V18): Any utterances such as mentioned above.

b. Silent period (unfilled pause) (V19): Any period of silence of 10 seconds or greater.

*Speech rate.* Stretches of speech that were judged to be faster or slower than the average for that speaker in the interaction were coded (cf. Giles and Smith 1979).

a. Slower (V20)

b. Faster (V21)

*Loudness.* Portions of words, words, and stretches of talk that were either louder or softer than the average for a speaker in an interaction were coded (cf. Brown, et al. 1980).

a. Softer (V22)

b. Louder (V23)

*Pitch.* Portions of words, words, and stretches of talk that were either higher pitched or lower pitched than the average for a speaker in an interaction were coded (cf. Brown, et al. 1980).

a. Higher (V24)

b. Lower (V25)

*Laughter.* There was a differentiation made in the coding between when a speaker laughed and did not speak (only laughed), and when a speaker laughed while speaking (i.e., more breathiness). Please see Duncan and Fiske (1977) for more detail.

a. Laughter (V26): When a speaker laughed and did not speak.

b. Laughing (V27): When a speaker laughed and spoke at the same time.

*Acknowledgement (V28).* Indicating that the listener has heard what the speaker has said (cf. Schegloff 1982).

*Echo (V29).* Halliday and Hasan (1976) suggest the importance of lexical repetition or echoes—the same word/phrase repeated either by the same speaker or by the other.

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