

BOUNDARIES OF CULTURAL INFLUENCE
Construct Activation as a Mechanism
for Cultural Differences in Social Perception

YING-YI HONG
University of Illinois

VERÓNICA BENET-MARTÍNEZ
University of Michigan

CHI-YUE CHIU
University of Illinois

MICHAEL W. MORRIS
Columbia University

Cross-cultural studies usually compare the psychology of people from different countries and thus focus on how cultures influence people's psychology. In contrast, in 2000, Hong, Morris, Chiu, and Benet-Martínez demonstrated the dynamics of cultural influence within individuals who have been exposed extensively to two cultures (biculturals); they showed that exposing Chinese American biculturals to Chinese or American cultural icons activated the corresponding cultural (Chinese or American) knowledge systems, which, in turn, affected the biculturals' attributions (the cultural priming effects). This article further examines how *applicability* of activated cultural knowledge moderates the cultural priming effects. In two studies, the authors manipulated the individual versus group salience of an ambiguous social display and found that only when the individual versus group contrast was made salient was the group agency belief applicable and thus showed the cultural priming effects. As such, applicability sets the boundary condition for the dynamic construction of meaning under cultural influence.

Keywords: culture and cognition; biculturalism; applicability; group agency; attributions

It is a truism that cultures are largely defined by their boundaries; the influence of a given cultural attribute becomes noticeable when we can compare people who possess that trait and are affected by it to people who are not. Yet models of cultural influence differ sharply with regard to what kinds of boundaries to look for. Cross-cultural psychology has traditionally focused on territorial boundaries, usually those of nations, and has taken country differences as evidence for cultural influences on cognition. Many social perception variables have been found to differ between countries such as China and the United States (e.g., attribution, categorization), and researchers have suggested that these many divergences in judgment may ultimately reflect underlying differences in a few broad cultural traits, such as individualistic as opposed to collectivistic value orientations (Triandis, 1990) or holistic versus analytic attentional styles (Nisbett, Peng, Choi, & Norenzayan, 2001). Although parsimonious, this trait approach to culture is sharply limited by the assumptions that make it so. It assumes that people internalize culture in the form of broad motivational or attentional orientations—ever-present lenses that color all of our social perceptions. For this reason, trait the-

AUTHORS' NOTE: Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Ying-yi Hong, Department of Psychology, University of Illinois, 603 East Daniel Street, Champaign, IL 61820; phone: (217) 333-0344; fax: (217) 244-5876; e-mail: yyhong@uiuc.edu.

JOURNAL OF CROSS-CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY, Vol. 34 No. 4, July 2003 453-464
DOI: 10.1177/0022022103254201
© 2003 Western Washington University

ories are silent about the issue of why people's culture can affect them dramatically in one situation or on one occasion and then have no effect whatsoever in the next situation or on the next occasion.

Whereas the trait approach equates culture with the differences seen across territorial boundaries, the constructivist approach looks for the influence of culture across other kinds of boundaries. The critical way in which this approach differs is its assumption that culture is internalized in smaller pieces, in the knowledge structures or mental constructs that social perceivers use to interpret ambiguous stimuli (Bruner, 1990). A version of this, which we have called the dynamic constructivist approach to understanding cultural influence, draws on recent insights about the dynamics through which knowledge structures become operative in social cognition (Higgins, 1996; Wyer & Srull, 1986). That is, a knowledge structure or construct that we have internalized does not continuously guide our information processing simply because it is somewhere in our minds; the construct only makes a difference if it is activated (or brought to the fore of one's mind). A construct should be activated in response to a stimulus if it is, first, accessible (meaning easy to retrieve, which central cultural constructs would be) and, second, applicable (meaning that it structurally fits the stimulus that we are interpreting). The boundaries across which to notice the effect of culture, then, are conditions that make a given culturally conferred construct accessible and applicable. In this article, we review initial attempts to do so in past research and report two studies that test, for the first time, the interaction of availability and applicability boundary conditions on cultural influence that is predicted by the dynamic constructivist approach.

EMERGING EVIDENCE FOR A DYNAMIC CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH

In reviewing the accumulating evidence that construct activation is a mechanism for cultural influence on social perception, it is worth reviewing the basic hypotheses of construct activation models and the established evidence for each, and then to examine whether this kind of evidence has been found with regard to the activation of cultural constructs. Let us start with accessibility. The chronic level of accessibility of a construct ranges from high (if it is a frequently used construct that retains activation or stays on top of the mental stack) to zero (if it is a construct that the individual has never internalized). A straightforward form of evidence for chronic accessibility comes from findings that individuals are more likely to use a construct, in a given case, if they have used the construct frequently in the past (e.g., Higgins, King, & Mavin, 1982). Adapting this to the cultural level, Hoffman, Lau, and Johnson (1986) found that American participants, who are from a culture in which the person construct "liberal" is frequently used, were more likely to let this construct guide their interpretation of an ambiguous person description than were Chinese participants, from a culture in which this construct is not frequently used. Although such findings point to the specificity of cultural differences and in this way support a constructivist approach, they do not elucidate the dynamics of construct activation.

Another kind of evidence for cultural differences in chronic accessibility hinges on the interaction of accessible constructs with epistemic motives. The epistemic state of desiring cognitive closure (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996) makes individuals more likely than otherwise to rely on chronically accessible constructs. Both individual differences in this need and situational inductions of this need reliably shift social cognition in the direction of being more top-down, knowledge driven, and showing the signature biases of knowledge

structures such as stereotypes and schemas (Chiu, Morris, Hong, & Menon, 2000; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). Evidence from interactions with need for closure (NFC) has proved a fruitful way of establishing the role of chronically accessible cultural constructs in driving cultural differences in social judgment. Morris and Peng (1994) proposed that Chinese culture favors conceptions of group agency, whereas American culture favors conceptions of individual agency, and, in support of this, they found that stimuli of ambiguous individual-group interactions were more likely to be interpreted by Chinese perceivers as cases of groups influencing individuals than by American perceivers. Chiu et al. (2000) found that NFC interacted with this difference in that individuals high in NFC exhibit magnified cultural differences (Study 1) and that individuals induced to feel NFC through time pressure also exhibit magnified cultural differences. Knowles, Morris, Chiu, and Hong (2001) found that inducing NFC through cognitive load had the same effect of increasing cultural differences, as predicted from the idea that it increases their interpretive reliance on cultural knowledge structures.

Besides investigating the role of chronic accessibility, researchers have designed studies to examine how temporary elevations in accessibility enable the activation of a construct. The “priming” method involves exposing perceivers to images that are associated with the construct of interest (thereby sending excitation and elevating its accessibility) with the expectation that, as a result, the construct becomes more likely to guide subsequent processing (Higgins, Rholes, & Jones, 1977; Lombardi, Higgins, & Bargh, 1987).¹ An application of this method to culture was developed by Hong and colleagues (Hong, Chiu, & Kung, 1997; Hong, Morris, et al., 2000) who were interested in the construct accessibility dynamics of bicultural individuals. These individuals, who have internalized two sets of cultural constructs, often report automatically switching between cultural frames as they move between cultural settings. Hong, Morris, et al. (2000) tested a priming interpretation—that, for example, when a Chinese American bicultural individual enters a traditional Chinese setting, her Chinese social constructs will receive excitation as a function of the images she encounters and thereby will become more accessible; when the same individual enters a mainstream American setting, her American social constructs will be raised in accessibility. To prove these priming mechanisms, Hong, Morris, et al. (2000) used a nontransparent social perception task that had no obvious connection to the cultural images as primes (the Capitol vs. the Summer Palace). This was the task of interpreting cartoons of interactions between a single fish and a group of fish, which Morris and Peng (1994) developed to elicit different attributions from American and Chinese perceivers, as a function of their differing penchants for conceptualizing individuals or groups as causal agents. Across four studies, Hong, Morris, et al. (2000) found that, for these biculturals, Chinese cultural icons seemed to increase the accessibility of the group agency construct central to Chinese culture, and American cultural icons, the individual agency construct central to American culture.

Although there is strong evidence that bicultural individuals shift between the interpretative capacities of two cultures, the influences of a culturally conferred construct on cognition may be bounded by its *applicability*, another criterion of construct activation (Higgins, 1996; Higgins & Brendl, 1995; Strack & Mussweiler, 1997). Applicability is operationalized in terms of the mapping between “the features of a stored construct and the attended features of a stimulus” (Higgins & Brendl, 1995, p. 220). The perceiver can only fit a construct to a stimulus having a matching structure. However, no previous studies (to our knowledge) have tested the applicability principle of knowledge activation in culture’s effect on cognition. Two studies reported in this article aim to fill this research gap by testing the applicability of

the activated cultural theory as a boundary condition for the cultural knowledge activation effect described in previous research.

In this research, to investigate the boundary conditions of cultural influences on the interpretation of ambiguous stimuli, we again used the Morris and Peng (1994) stimuli, that is, animated presentations of a fish swimming ahead of a school of fish. After the participants were shown the stimuli, they were asked to explain why the one fish was swimming ahead of other fish. As noted, in previous cross-cultural studies (Chiu et al., 2000; Menon, Morris, Chiu, & Hong, 1999; Morris & Peng, 1994), Chinese participants made more external (group) attributions than did North American participants, who in turn made more internal (individual) attributions.

As noted, one possible interpretation of the cultural priming effects described in the Hong, Morris, et al. (2000) experiments involved the activation of cultural theories regarding whether the individual or the group is the primary agent of social action (Chiu et al., 2000; Menon et al., 1999). Thus, whether or not these cultural theories are applicable to the judgment context may depend on whether or not the fish stimuli highlight a tension between individual and group agency. Consistent with this idea, Choi, Nisbett, and Norenzayan (1999) maintained that cross-cultural differences in internal versus external attributions would surface only when the perceiver faces a stimulus featuring a tension between an internal factor and a salient social context. Hence, the applicability of cultural theories should be greatest when the stimuli involve clearly distinct individual versus group actors. To test this idea, in two studies, we manipulated the salience of individual versus group actors by changing the color of fish displays so that a lead fish was unique in color from a school of fish behind (i.e., high salience because the lead fish could be seen as a distinct individual, see the top panel of Figure 2) or not (i.e., low salience because the lead fish was less distinctive from the school of fish behind, see the bottom panel of Figure 2). The effect of priming American as opposed to Chinese causal theories should be optimally shown in the high-salience condition in which both the individual and group causal theories were applicable (cf. Blanz, 1999; Higgins, 1996).

STUDY 1

METHOD

Participants were 120 Hong Kong Chinese undergraduates who had extensive knowledge about Chinese culture and Western culture. Hong Kong was a British colony for more than a century until 1997 and, thus, has been highly Westernized. Most Hong Kong students start to learn the English language in kindergarten. The teaching medium in many high schools and almost all universities is English. In addition, Hollywood movies and such TV series as “ER” or “Ally McBeal” are popular among Hong Kong young people. Thus, Hong Kong college students have arguably been exposed extensively to Western social beliefs and values. Under this sociocultural context, the participants could be considered as bicultural individuals.

The participants were randomly assigned to the American culture priming, Chinese culture priming, or the control condition. In the American (Chinese) priming condition, participants saw eight pictures of American (Chinese) icons and then wrote 10 sentences about the American (Chinese) culture. Participants in the control condition saw eight pictures of natural landscapes and wrote 10 sentences about the landscapes. The cultural icons used in this study included those shown in Figure 1. The priming manipulation lasted for 15 minutes.

Then, participants responded to the attribution measure. After viewing each of the four cartoon presentations, participants were asked to interpret the event in the cartoon. They indicated their response on a single scale, which ranged from 1 (very confident that “it is because the one fish is being chased by the other fish”—group attribution) to 12 (very confident that “it is because the one fish is leading the other fish”—individual attribution).

To manipulate the salience of the individual versus group relation, in two of the cartoon presentations (see bottom of Figure 2), the fish swimming ahead had the same color as the school of fish behind, creating a low-salience condition. In the remaining cartoons (see top of Figure 2), the fish swimming ahead had a different color from the school of fish behind, creating a high-salience condition. In the high-salience condition, because both the individual and the group stood out from the background, participants were likely to pay attention to the individual or the group as the major causal agent. Thus, we expected the culture priming effect to be more pronounced in the high- than in the low-salience condition.

RESULTS

A 3 (priming) \times 2 (salience) MANOVA performed revealed a significant Priming \times Salience interaction, $F(2, 118) = 6.32, p < .01$. As predicted, in the high-salience condition, but not in the low-salience condition, priming had a significant effect, $F(2, 118) = 8.13, p < .001$. Also as predicted, when the fish swimming ahead was different in color from the school of fish behind (high-salience condition), participants in the American cultural priming condition were less confident in the group attribution ($M = 5.62, SD = 3.01$) than those in the Chinese cultural priming condition ($M = 4.36, SD = 1.98$), $t(79) = 2.24, p < .05$, or those in the control condition ($M = 3.49, SD = 2.05$), $t(80) = 3.76, p < .001$.² When the fish swimming ahead had the same color as the fish behind (low-salience condition), participants in the three priming conditions did not differ in their attributions ($M = 9.94$ for the American priming condition, $M = 10.35$ for the control condition, and $M = 9.86$ for the Chinese priming condition).

STUDY 2

METHOD

A second study provided a conceptual replication with different participants and stimuli. Participants were 100 Chinese-born students who attended UC Berkeley. They were selected for having lived at least 5 years in the United States and at least 5 years in People’s Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, or Singapore. In our sample, the average length of residence in the United States and in a Chinese society was 8.67 years ($SD = 4.42$) and 11.70 years ($SD = 5.62$), respectively. In addition, these students on average reported similar levels of English ($M = 4.4, SD = .7$, on a 6-point Likert-type scale) and Chinese language proficiency ($M = 3.9, SD = 1.0$), and also similar levels of identification with the American identity ($M = 4.0, SD = 1.1$, on a 6-point Likert-type scale) and the Chinese identity ($M = 4.6, SD = .9$). Judging from this information, this group of students should have acquired both the Chinese and the American cultural theories.

Participants were randomly assigned into the American cultural priming, Chinese cultural priming, or the control condition. The priming procedure was the same as that in Study 1, except that we selected only the five icons that were most immediately recognized by

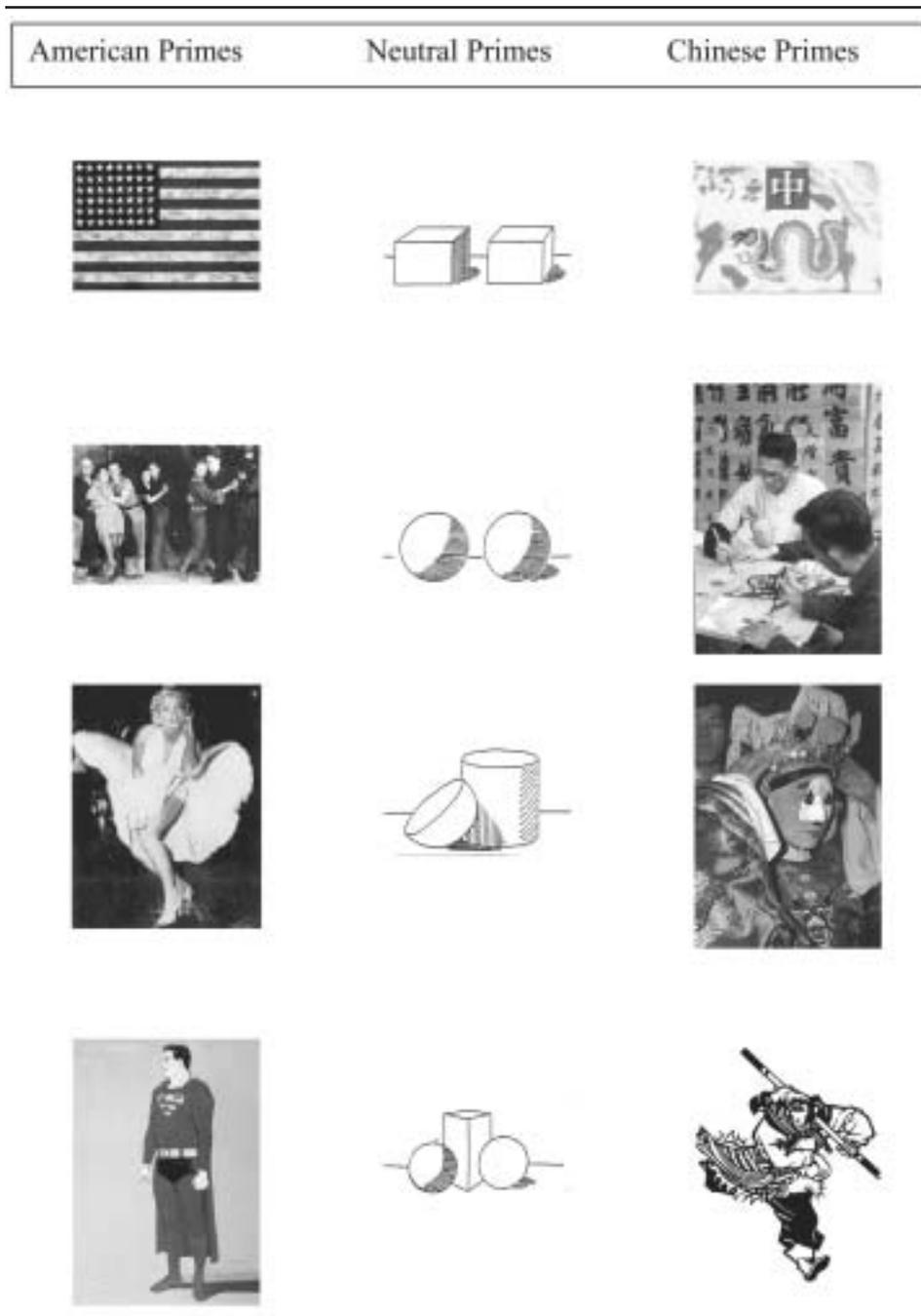


Figure 1: Samples of the American, Neutral, and Chinese Primes

participants in pretesting (Mickey Mouse vs. a Chinese dragon, the U.S. Capitol Building vs. the Chinese Emperor's Summer Palace, a cowboy vs. a rice farmer, Mt. Rushmore vs. The Great Wall, and the Statue of Liberty vs. a painting of a mythical Chinese goddess). In the

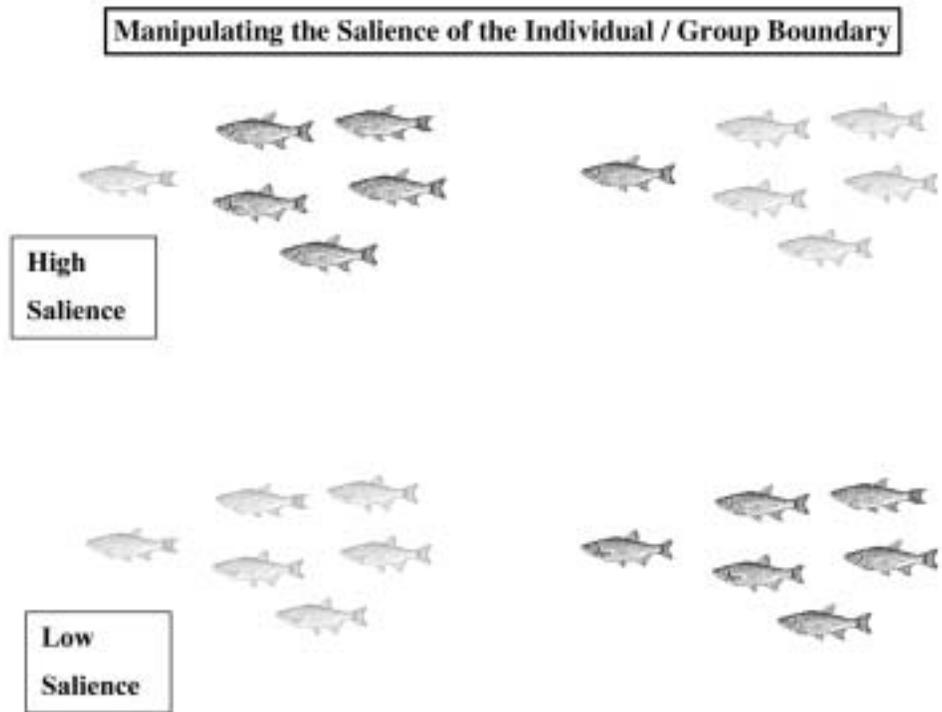


Figure 2: The Manipulation of the Salience of the Individual/Group Boundary

control condition, five pictures of environmental scenes were used as primes. The high-salience condition was achieved with displays like those in the high-salience condition in Figure 2. The low-salience condition was achieved with displays featuring a cluster of fish, each of which had a different color. This was intended to create a social stimulus in which the cluster of fish was harder to be seen as a coordinated group that might plausibly cause the behavior of the fish in front. After seeing each cartoon, participants were asked how much they agreed with the group attribution statement, “The one fish is being somehow influenced by the group (e.g., is being chased, teased, or pressured by the others).” They were also asked to consider an individual attribution statement, “The one fish is influenced by some internal trait (such as independence, personal objective, or leadership).” Participants gave their responses on a 9-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*disagree completely*) to 9 (*agree completely*).

RESULTS

The findings basically replicated those found in the first study. A 3 (priming) \times 2 (salience) MANOVA performed revealed a significant priming \times salience interaction, $F(2, 96) = 4.31, p < .05$. Again, cultural priming effect was significant only in the high-salience condition. Participants in the American priming condition made fewer group attributions ($M = 5.07, SD = 2.37$) than did participants in the Chinese priming condition ($M = 6.24, SD = 2.25$), $t(97) = -2.02, p < .05$, or those in the control condition ($M = 6.66, SD = 2.36$), $t(97) = -2.64, p = .01$. No priming effects were found in the low-salience condition ($M = 4.57, SD = 2.59$ for

the American priming condition, $M = 3.82$, $SD = 2.43$ for the control condition, and $M = 3.62$, $SD = 2.30$ for the Chinese priming condition), $F(2, 97) = 1.30$, ns. The priming effect on the individual attribution measure, however, was not significant in either the high-salience condition or the low-salience condition.³ This is again consistent with Choi et al.'s (1999) argument that the influence of culture is seen less when the weight is placed on individual dispositions than when the weight is placed on salient social contexts.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

We predicted that the activation of cultural theories and the resulting biases in attribution in bicultural individuals are a function of the temporary *accessibility* of specific knowledge structures and *applicability* of such structures. In two studies, we obtained the predicted pattern: seeing American versus Chinese cultural primes affects perception of stimuli featuring a salient individual versus group agency. Specifically, American cultural primes elicited fewer attributions to the group in the high-salience but not the low-salience condition.

It is interesting to note that participants in both studies were slightly more confident about the group attribution in the control condition than in the Chinese cultural priming condition. However, this difference was not statistically reliable. There are three possible explanations for the lack of significant difference between the control condition and the Chinese cultural priming condition. First, the Chinese cultural primes might not be as effective as the American cultural primes in eliciting the cultural knowledge in the respective cultures. However, previous studies using the same Chinese cultural primes (Hong, Chiu, & Kung, 1997; Hong, Morris, et al., 2000) have found reliable cultural knowledge activation effect. Therefore, this explanation is not very plausible.

Second, there is evidence from both basic social cognition research and cultural priming research that priming could produce an assimilation or contrast effect, depending on whether the participants are aware of the connection between the primes and the dependent measure (see Krauss & Chiu, 1998). Specifically, priming will produce an assimilation effect when the participants are not aware of the connection between the prime and the dependent measure, and a contrast effect when the participants are aware of the connection. Thus, if some participants in Study 1 perceived a connection between the Chinese primes and the group attribution measure, they might have displayed a contrast effect and significantly lowered the mean level of group attribution in the Chinese cultural priming condition. If some participants displayed an assimilation effect and some a contrast effect in the Chinese cultural priming condition, the standard deviation in this condition should be relatively high. However, as reported in the Results section, the standard deviation on the group attribution measure was not higher in the Chinese cultural priming condition than in the other two conditions. In fact, in both studies, compared to the other two conditions, the Chinese cultural priming condition had the smallest standard deviation.

Finally, a more parsimonious explanation for the lack of difference between the Chinese cultural priming condition and the control condition is that the Chinese cultural knowledge system was more chronically accessible to the participants. Thus, the participants in the control condition tended to make group attributions even when they were not primed with Chinese cultural icons. This explanation is consistent with previous findings that group dispositional attribution is a chronically accessible attributional style among Hong Kong Chinese and Chinese Americans (Chiu et al., 2000; Menon et al., 1999). Interestingly, from the perspective of the dynamic constructivist perspective, even the chronically more

accessible Chinese cultural knowledge system could be overridden by the American cultural knowledge system when the participants were primed with American cultural icons.

Together with our earlier works (Chiu et al., 2000; Hong, Morris, et al., 2000; Menon et al., 1999), findings from this research illustrate the added theoretical utility of the dynamic constructivist approach over the more traditional approaches to cross-cultural psychology. Previous cross-cultural research has sought to document relatively stable and context-independent effects of culture on cognition. The dynamic constructivist perspective complements these research traditions by investigating the cognitive mediation of cultural differences. We posit that cultural differences in causal attributions are partly mediated by shared domain-specific cultural theories activated in specific situations. Moreover, activation of such cultural theories follows well-documented principles of knowledge activation. According to these principles, culture does not have sweeping effects on social cognition. Instead, its social cognitive consequences are bound by the accessibility and applicability of the cultural theories in specific judgment contexts. Consistent with the dynamic constructivist approach, findings from the present research have illustrated how domain-specific causal theories could be activated by environmental cues and be applied to situations in which the individual versus group relation is made salient.

The speed of global development has greatly increased both the frequency and intensity of multicultural contacts. Applying a less monolithic and static view of culture, the dynamic constructivist approach helps us understand the processes through which multicultural knowledge influences cognition. This approach makes both theoretical and methodological contributions to the study of cultural influences on cognition. Specifically, it demonstrates that multicultural minds can be found among individuals who have been extensively exposed to multiple cultures. Using the cultural priming paradigm, the dynamic constructivist approach allows us to examine the concrete details of and circumstances under which specific cultural differences appear. Recently, we found that cultural priming could also influence overt behaviors. Specifically, Wong and Hong (2002) have shown that participants were more likely to cooperate (vs. compete) with a friend in a prisoner dilemma game after being exposed to Chinese cultural icons than to American cultural icons. However, this difference disappeared when the partner in the game was a new acquaintance. Thus, the culturally shared norm of cooperation is applied only to the relevant target (a friend) when the Chinese cultural knowledge is activated, suggesting again the applicability of accessible cultural constructs in the context at hand plays a crucial role in conducting cultural effects on behaviors.

One interesting issue related to bicultural experiences and cognition is whether individuals' levels of acculturation would moderate their responses to cultural priming. The dynamic constructivist approach predicts that acculturation would strengthen the preferred style of attribution in the culture under some circumstances only. To elaborate, acculturation makes a cultural knowledge system available. In addition, prolonged exposure to a culture should increase the chronic accessibility of the shared knowledge in the culture. However, as shown in the present research, availability and chronic accessibility are necessary but not sufficient for knowledge activation to affect attribution. The activated cultural theories must be applicable in the context for them to impact attribution.

Thus, we predict that the level of acculturation and the strength of the preferred attributional style in the culture are related only when (a) the relevant cultural knowledge system is activated or primed *and* (b) when the activated cultural knowledge is applicable in the context of judgment. For example, in Study 2, when the Chinese American participants were primed with American cultural icons and when the individual versus group contrast was made salient, the level of acculturation to American culture (which is related to chronic

accessibility of the American cultural knowledge system) should be associated with more individual dispositional attributions. When these participants' American cultural knowledge system was not activated, or when the activated American cultural theories were not applicable in the context of judgment, acculturation might not affect attribution. Unfortunately, the participants in Study 2 were screened for their identification with American culture and proficiency in English. Hence, there was not enough variance in these acculturation measures to conduct a fair test of the above predictions. It would be interesting to find out in a future study (e.g., a sample survey of Chinese Americans with varying levels of cultural experiences in the United States) how acculturation might moderate the effect of cultural priming on attribution.

We hope that the findings presented here could stimulate future research that provides even more refined predictions of how culture affects the individual, namely, studies that take into consideration individuals' chronic or temporary epistemic needs, bicultural identity dynamics, and other idiosyncratic factors that may affect how cultural knowledge is used.

To conclude, the dynamic constructivist approach, by locating the boundary of culture's cognitive consequences in the congruence between features of the cultural theories and those of the judgment context, may offer new insights into how multicultural individuals could go beyond the narrow confines of a single cultural perspective and switch interpretive frames to meet the perceptual demands of the specific judgment situations.

NOTES

1. In this method, it is, of course, important that the prime images have no direct semantic relationship to the construct, or else they may function as hints to the experimenter's wishes rather than as elevators of construct accessibility. In the initial studies that employed priming methods to study culture, this was not clear cut. Descriptions of individualistic and collectivistic behaviors were found to influence subsequent self-ratings on dimensions semantically related to individualism and collectivism (Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991).

2. We noted that participants in this study (and in Study 2 as well) were slightly more confident about the group attribution in the control condition than in the Chinese cultural priming condition, although this difference was not reliable. We will try to explain this unexpected finding in the General Discussion section.

3. The individual attributions were not significantly different for the three priming groups toward the high-salience display ($M = 5.54$, $SD = 2.03$ for the American priming condition, $M = 5.06$, $SD = 2.40$ for the control condition, and $M = 4.65$, $SD = 2.47$ for the Chinese priming condition, $F(2, 97) = 1.16$, *ns*, nor toward the low-salience display ($M = 6.21$, $SD = 2.39$ for the American priming condition, $M = 7.03$, $SD = 1.72$ for the control condition, and $M = 6.84$, $SD = 1.80$ for the Chinese priming condition, $F(2, 97) = 1.43$, *ns*).

REFERENCES

- Blanz, M. (1999). Accessibility and fit as determinants of the salience of social categorizations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *29*, 43-74.
- Bruner, J. S. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Chiu, C. Y., Morris, M. W., Hong, Y., & Menon, T. (2000). Motivated cultural cognition: The impact of implicit cultural theories on dispositional attribution varies as a function of need for closure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *78*, 247-259.
- Choi, I., Nisbett, R. E., & Norenzayan, A. (1999). Causal attribution across cultures: Variation and universality. *Psychological Bulletin*, *125*, 47-63.
- Higgins, E. T. (1996). Knowledge activation: Accessibility, applicability and salience. In E. T. Higgins & A. E. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles* (pp. 133-168). New York: Guilford.
- Higgins, E. T., & Brendl, C. M. (1995). Accessibility and applicability: Some "activation rules" influencing judgment. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *31*, 218-243.

- Higgins, E. T., King, G. A., & Mavin, G. H. (1982). Individual construct accessibility and subjective impressions and recall. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 43*, 35-47.
- Higgins, E. T., Rholes, W. S., & Jones, C. R. (1977). Category accessibility and impression formation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 13*, 141-154.
- Hoffman, C., Lau, I., & Johnson, D. R. (1986). The linguistic relativity of person cognition: An English-Chinese comparison. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 1097-1105.
- Hong, Y., Chiu, C. Y., & Kung, M. (1997). Bringing culture out in front: Effects of cultural meaning system activation on social cognition. In K. Leung, U. Kim, S. Yamaguchi, & Y. Kashima (Eds.), *Progress in Asian social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 139-150). Singapore: John Wiley.
- Hong, Y., Morris, M., Chiu, C. Y., & Benet-Martínez, V. (2000). Multicultural minds: A dynamic constructivist approach to culture and cognition. *American Psychologist, 55*, 709-720.
- Knowles, E., Morris, M. W., Chiu, C. Y., & Hong, Y. (2001). Culture and the process of person perception: Evidence for automaticity among East Asians in correcting for situational influences on behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27*, 1344-1356.
- Krauss, R. M., & Chiu, C. Y. (1998). Language and social psychology. In D. Gilbert, S. Fiske-Emory, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 41-88). New York: Guilford.
- Kruglanski, A. E., & Webster, D. M. (1996). Motivated closing of the mind: "Seizing" and "freezing." *Psychological Review, 103*, 263-283.
- Lombardi, W. J., Higgins, E. T., & Bargh, J. A. (1987). The role of consciousness in priming effects on categorization: Assimilation versus contrast as a function of awareness of the priming task. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 13*, 411-429.
- Menon, T., Morris, M. W., Chiu, C. Y., & Hong, Y. (1999). Culture and construal of agency: Attribution to individual versus group dispositions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 76*, 701-717.
- Morris, M. W., & Peng, K. (1994). Culture and cause: American and Chinese attributions for social and physical events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67*, 949-971.
- Nisbett, R. E., Peng, K., Choi, I., & Norenzayan, A. (2001). Culture and systems of thought: Holistic versus analytic cognition. *Psychological Review, 108*, 291-310.
- Strack, F., & Mussweiler, T. (1997). Explaining the enigmatic anchoring effect: Mechanisms of selective accessibility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73*, 437-446.
- Trafimow, D., Triandis, H. C., & Goto, S. G. (1991). Some tests of the distinction between the private self and the collective self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60*, 649-655.
- Triandis, H. C. (1990). Cross-cultural studies of individualism and collectivism. In J. J. Berman (Ed.), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, 1989: Cross-cultural perspectives. Current theory and research in motivation* (Vol. 37, pp. 41-133). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Wong, R. Y., & Hong, Y. (2002). *Effects of cultural priming on cooperation in prisoner's dilemma among bicultural individuals*. Unpublished manuscript, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.
- Wyer, R. S., & Srull, T. K. (1986). Human cognition in its social context. *Psychological Review, 93*, 322-359.

Ying-yi Hong, a native of Hong Kong, pursued a Ph.D. in social psychology at Columbia University, New York. Right after receiving her Ph.D. in 1994, she returned to Hong Kong to teach at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, where she conducted studies to examine cultural priming effects, and also social identifications of Hong Kong people in responding to the 1997 political transition. Her experiences growing up in Hong Kong, a cosmopolitan city where the East and the West meet, and living in Japan and New York City have piqued her interest in culture and psychology. Her training in social cognition has equipped her with experimental methodologies to examine the dynamic aspects of cultural influences. She has demonstrated in her research work the circumstances under which cultural effects appear, disappear and even reverse. Starting from 2002, she joined the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as an associate professor in the Department of Psychology.

Verónica Benet-Martínez received her Ph.D. (social-personality psychology) from the University of California at Davis and currently works as an assistant professor of psychology at the University of Michigan. Her research falls into the following three areas: (a) biculturalism: sociocognitive and personality processes involved in the integration of two or more cultural identities, (b) representational aspects of culture: cultural priming; culture and perception of social symbols, and (c) culture and personality: identification and measurement of culture-specific and -general personality constructs.

Chi-yue Chiu received his Ph.D. in social-personality psychology from Columbia University (New York) in 1994. He had taught in the Department of Psychology of the University of Hong Kong for 8 years, before he moved to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2002. He has researched on the cognitive and

interpersonal processes that underlie personality coherence, achievement motivation, interpersonal perception, intergroup relations, social communication, and multicultural cognition. His current research projects focus on the social psychology of culture, personality process, and language and cognition.

Michael W. Morris, native New Yorker, pursued his Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of Michigan, after studying cognitive science and English literature at Brown. His early research focused on the cognitive structures and processes involved in people's intuitive understandings of events and causal relationships. His dissertation identified the role of culturally conferred knowledge in shaping some social cognitive tendencies formerly thought to reflect hardwired perceptual mechanisms. From 1992 to 2001, he taught in the Organizational Behavior Group at Stanford's Graduate School of Business. At Stanford, he continued basic research in social judgment and cross-cultural research on causal judgment and related topics such as responsibility assignment, justice assessments, and self-conceptions, as well as topics further afield such as relationship networks in work organizations. He also launched a third major research program on the emotions and social judgments that determine people's strategic and tactical decisions when resolving conflicts. In 2001, he returned to New York to join Columbia as a professor in the Graduate School of Business and the Psychology Department. For more information about his research, see the Web page www.michaelwmorris.com.