

DOCTORAL THESIS

Persuasiveness of sex: a comparison between generation-Y in China and Poland in Langerian act-based terms

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Date of Award:
2014

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ABSTRACT

This study applies the act paradigm to identify, explain, and compare persuasiveness of sex among generation-Y in China and generation-Y in Poland, to provide insights for communication practitioners, and to enhance future scientific research.

In the conceptual part of the thesis, persuasion, sex, and culture were reconceptualized under the act paradigm. Sex was defined as a form of interpersonal involvement. It was measured in reference to its four stages: attraction, courtship, arousal, and allegiance. Culture was defined as a form of group involvement. It was measured in reference to the country's ideology (parents and teachers) and religion. Persuasion was defined as a form of communication aiming at involvement. It was measured in reference to sex ideas at generation-Y and culture levels. The ideas were examined and selected as persuasive based on their strength and pressive relations with other ideas.

For the purpose of collecting data, a structured interviewing protocol was designed and pilot-tested. Analytical methodology using in-depth interviews was conducted. Thirty-four generation-Y males and females, 17 from China, 17 from Poland, were interviewed during November and December 2013.

In addition to culture, intimacy was also found to shape individuals' sexual conduct. This new finding required further extension of the conceptual framework. Along with it, intimacy was defined as a form of conceptual involvement between two people that primarily occurred through verbal disclosure. Sex was further defined as a form of biological involvement between two people that primarily occurred through interactional touch.

It was found that in China, ideology (parents and teachers) primarily shaped sexual conduct of young people. In Poland, the role was in the hands of religion (the Roman Catholic Church). In both countries, ideas about sex and intimacy were expressed through the same actions and artifacts; intimacy dominated over sex, which was attributed to cultural influence. While intimacy was stronger in China than in Poland, sex was stronger in Poland than in China. Conflict between the Church and generation-Y was identified in Poland. The only issues identified in China were the results of past tensions.

The dissertation introduced and applied a new paradigm for social sciences—Langerian act-theory. In addition, the study initiated the building of previously nonexistent knowledge of Poland, and enriched the already growing knowledge of China. As a result, the application of its findings was provided for various communicators and academic disciplines.

Keywords: Persuasion, sex, sex appeal, intimacy, culture, religion, ideology, China, Poland, generation-Y, Langer, act theory, act paradigm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all those who made it possible for me to complete this dissertation. I would particularly like to thank my principal supervisor, Professor Kara Chan for her valuable and constructive suggestions during the planning and development of this work. Her advice on both my research and my career has been invaluable.

I would also like to thank my co-supervisor, Professor John Powers for his inspiration. His introduction to, and his passion for Susanne Langer's philosophy not only guided my research, but has also had a lasting effect on my personal life.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Hong Cheng, Professor Chen Ling and Professor Ringo Ma for broadening my scientific horizons through their teaching and advice. Many thanks as well to Ms. Eve Cheung for her exceptional dedication in assisting me with the administrative tasks necessary to complete my doctoral program.

Finally, special thanks to my family. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my mother, father, brother and grandparents, and to all of my friends. Their continuous faith in me and unconditional support encouraged me to strive towards my goal, despite hardships.

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