FACE-Negotiation Theory
Stella Ting-Toomey (1988)
FACE

- Combines principles of intercultural communication, conflict, politeness, and “facework”.
- Goffman (1967) and Ho (1976) "face" as a metaphor for examining self-image.
- Face is a metaphor designed to explain the boundaries that we establish with others.
- Face can be maintained, lost, or strengthened.
TING-TOOMEY : TWO QUESTIONS

1. “Do I want to draw attention to myself or others?"

2. "Do I want to be associated with others [inclusion] or disassociated [autonomy]?"
The management of conflict is mediated by face and culture.

1. Ting-Toomey (1994) views conflict as potentially damaging to face and reducing the amount of relational closeness between people.
2. Culture teaches us how to manage conflict.
3. The U.S. - openly airing differences.
FACE-THREATENING ACTS (FTAs)

- Face-saving involves the effort to prevent the occurrence of events that may elicit vulnerability or damage one's self-image.
- Face restoration occurs after the loss of face has happened. Examples include excuses and justifications.
Face-Maintenance

Face-Threatening Process

Face-Restoration Acts

Face-Saving Acts

Face-Honoring Process

Face-Giving Acts

Face-Assertion Acts
INDIVIDUALISM

- Individualism refers to the tendency for people to highlight individual identity over group identity, individual rights over group rights, and individual needs over group needs—as in the United States.
INDIVIDUALISTIC CULTURES AND FACE

a. Members are primarily concerned with preserving the authenticity of their own face.

b. Authenticity refers to the ability to preserve autonomy (negative face) and set one's own boundaries for behavior.

c. Freedom, honesty, comfort, and personal equality (among others) are valued most.
Collectivism

Collectivism refers to the emphasis of group goals over individual goals, group obligations over individual rights, and in-group needs over individual wants—as in East Asian countries.

a. Collectivistic societies typically differentiate between in-groups and out-groups.

i. In-groups are groups whose norms and rules are considered important to the survival of the group.

ii. Out-groups are groups whose norms and rules are considered to be secondary to the functioning of the group.

b. East Asian countries distinguish strongly between in-groups and out-groups compared to their North American counterparts.
COLLECTIVISTIC CULTURES AND FACE

a. Members are primarily concerned with preserving both their own face and the face of others. Adaptability is the key issue.

b. Adaptability refers to the ability to form interdependent bonds with others (positive face).

c. Harmony, respecting parents’ wishes, and fulfillment of others’ needs (among others) are valued most.
FIVE PRIMARY CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ACROSS CULTURES

1. Avoiding (AV)-interactants stay away from unpleasant exchanges and disagreements with others.

2. Obliging (OB)-interactants employ a passive accommodation that attempts to satisfy the needs of others or goes along with suggestions made by others.

3. Compromising (CO)-interactants try to find a "middle ground" to resolve conflicts and employ a give-and-take approach.

4. Dominating (DO)-interactants employ behaviors that involve using influence, authority, or expertise to get ideas across and make decisions.
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

4. Dominating (DO)-interactants employ behaviors that involve using influence, authority, or expertise to get ideas across and make decisions.

5. Integrating (IN)-interactants try to collaborate with others to find a solution to a problem in order to satisfy expectations.
1. Americans use more dominating styles (DO) of conflict management.
2. Taiwanese use more integrating styles (IN) of conflict management.
3. Chinese and Taiwanese use more obliging styles (OB) of management.
4. Chinese use more avoidance styles (AV) than other cultural groups.
5. Chinese use more compromising styles (CO) than other cultural groups.