



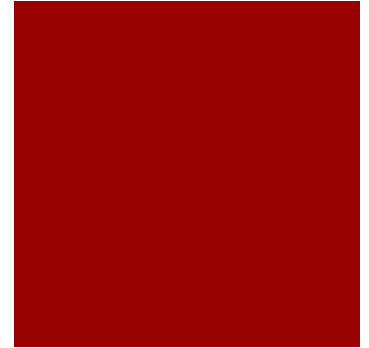
# Overlooked Methodological Issues in Cross- Cultural Research

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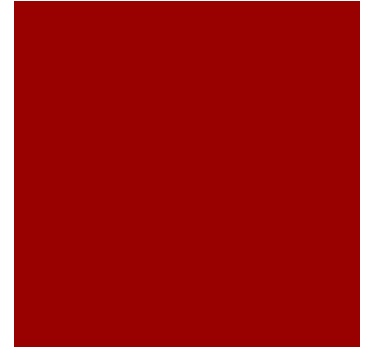
# Problem

- With the “global village”, health psychology theories based on predominantly North American samples need to be examined for their utility in other cultures
- Pain literature has made advances in our understanding of cultural differences in pain over the past 10 years



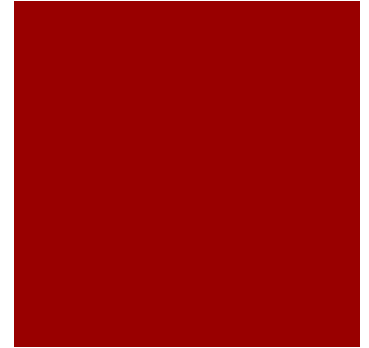
# Problem

- In conducting studies utilizing cross-cultural comparisons, researchers must be cognizant of the potential pitfalls of an ethnically biased methodology during participant assessment



# Issues

- Foreign language translation
- Single item self-report assessments of ethnicity often used in pain and quality of life research
- Other factors that may act as confounds with culture or country of origin (e.g., differences in response tendencies or biases)



# Research Strategies



- There are several research strategies that can be employed to help rule out competing hypotheses in cross/cultural research.
- Back translation of measures (i.e., translated into another language and then back again to the original as a check on meaning)
- Multi-cultural scale development

# I know not of what you speak?



- Sapir-Whorf hypothesis – language is the filter between the individual and the objective reality that surrounds them.
- Must rule out language as a “definer” of effect obviously different language / different culture
- Even in English language countries, this can mean different things (US vs Australian vs India)

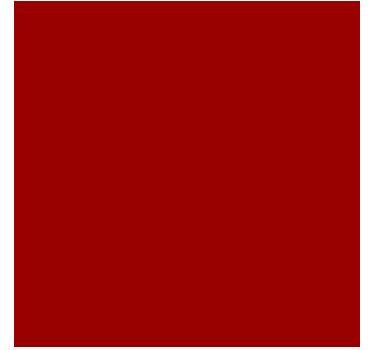
# I know not of what you speak?



- Going across language even more difficult... "I love my job" vs "Yo amo mi trabajo"
- "amar" (to love)... confined to people
- Likert type scales also can be trouble...  
"very much agree" = "muy de acuerdo"
- Try "agree slightly" ...

# Construct equivalence?

- Accurate translation but construct is different
- Received far less attention as a worry
- Confrontation items are good examples... in US interpersonal challenges may be quite accepted but not in China



# Response Biases

- Sometimes people from some countries will use extreme values or response sets more readily than others
- Japanese much less likely to endorse extremely “+” worded items than US but not for extreme “-” worded items
- Do they avoid due to cultural modesty?



# Multi-Cultural Scale Development?



- Enlist researchers in multiple countries
- Each be fluent in common language
- Process...
  - A clear definition of construct must be defined
  - Each team writes separate set of scale items
  - Items jumbled and given to sample of subjects, use factor analysis for item selection
  - Do translation and back translation then give to samples in host countries to verify factor structure
  - Validation studies in multiple countries (similar and dissimilar)

