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Lay beliefs about who can bridge the Black-White racial gap during interracial exchanges

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Abstract

For group discussions about fraught racial topics between Black and White Americans to be beneficial, conversation participants must view the person who facilitates as effective at communicating both the perspectives of Black and White Americans. We identify a biracial advantage in this domain. In three studies (total N=710), we tested how a facilitator's race affects their perceived effectiveness in communicating with both Black and White Americans. Both Black and White participants expected Black and White monoracial facilitators to more effectively engage with racial ingroup than racial outgroup members. However, they expected Biracial facilitators to be equally effective in communicating with both Black and White groups. Both Black and White participants also expected biracial facilitators to use productive learning strategies (perspective taking, showing empathy) more than White facilitators, and either more than or equally to Black facilitators, suggesting one reason why people expect biracial facilitators to perform well in these moments.

Lay beliefs about who can bridge the Black-White racial gap during interracial exchanges

In the U.S., challenging–but necessary–conversations about race relations are being organized in academic and organizational settings. Protests at Yale University spurred campus-wide, guided exchanges about race relations, and more than 175,000 Starbucks employees participated in racial bias trainings following the 2018 unjust arrest of two Black men. Dyadic conversations about racial issues can reduce bias (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Richeson & Shelton, 2007). However, past research largely focuses on *informal* cross-group conversations (e.g., among peers, within work groups), studying predictors of intergroup interactions, or consequences for bias reduction (Hässler et al., 2020; Toosi et al., 2012).

Here, we explore a type of intergroup interaction not commonly studied, but which occurs increasingly often: facilitator-led conversations where members of racial majority and minority groups discuss intergroup issues in society (not restorative justice; Wenzel et al., 2008). Specifically, we investigate how race shapes people's basic assumptions about who can effectively lead formal interracial conversations concerning one of the largest, most intractable U.S. racial conflicts: the Black-White color line (Lee & Bean, 2010). It is critical to understand the psychology that individuals bring into facilitated conversations about complex racial issues. People may withdraw from conversations from the start if they have fundamental reservations about the person leading it, which would undermine the efficacy of such facilitated conversations in the first place (Kalev et al., 2006).

There is an obvious, yet unexplored, tension at the core of these conversations. People generally represent and favor views that cast their racial *ingroup* in a positive light (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996; Pettigrew, 1979). Yet, to effectively lead conversations across racial lines, people must see a facilitator as able to effectively understand and fully express the perspectives

of members of multiple groups (Dovidio et al., 2007; Miller & Donner, 2000; Nagda & Zúñiga, 2003; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Past research offers different predictions for who people would view as able to do so. In matters concerning race, Americans across racial/ethnic groups view White Americans as biased, suspect, and judgmental (Bergsieker et al., 2010; Kunstman et al., 2016; Skinner et al., 2020), and White Americans derogate, delegitimize, and patronize Black Americans for speaking out (Dupree & Fiske, 2019; Gulker et al., 2013; Kaiser & Miller, 2001; Schultz & Maddox, 2013). Consequently, it is possible that both Black and White Americans would see monoracial Black and White facilitators as better able to communicate with racial ingroup versus racial outgroup members. We describe this as the monoracial bias hypothesis (H1). At the same time, White Americans also avoid talking about race (Apfelbaum et al., 2008), and look to members of racially minoritized groups to address racial issues (Crosby et al., 2008; Kawakami et al., 2009). Therefore, we also tested the alternative hypothesis that Black and White Americans would see Black monoracial facilitators as better able to communicate about race with both ingroup and outgroup members than White monoracial facilitators.

These possibilities are legitimate but overlook Black-White biracial individuals, who span both identity groups involved in these cross-race discussions. We explore empirically, for the first time, whether or not people perceive Black-White biracial individuals as able to communicate effectively across racial lines about fraught racial topics. Biracial people are projected to comprise over 20% of the U.S. population by 2050, with Black-White biracial people a significant portion of that group (U.S. Census, 2012). Past research shows that biracial people are sometimes categorized and perceived as more similar to their lower (vs. higher) status monoracial parent group (Chen et al., 2018; Ho et al., 2017; 2011; Peery & Bodenhausen, 2008). This work suggests that a Black-White Biracial facilitator could be seen as “more black” (Wilton

et al., 2018), and thus better able to communicate the concerns of Black people than White people. We test this possibility, but also explore an alternative.

People also view others through the lens of multiple social identities simultaneously (Crisp & Hewstone, 2007). When 'gateway groups' such as Arab Israelis are viewed as holding a dual identity, Israelis showed improved intergroup attitudes toward Palestinians (Levy et al., 2017). Biracial people are indeed more likely than monoracial people to engage in cross-cutting communication in their everyday lives, creating more racially-diverse friendships and romantic relationships (Bonam & Shih, 2009; Doyle & Kao, 2007; Quillian & Redd, 2009). They also see themselves–and are seen by others–as moving among racial categories depending upon the social context (Gaither, 2015; Pauker et al., 2018). Extending this work, we propose that Black and White Americans will view biracial people as uniquely able to communicate the concerns of both Black and White people equally effectively. We describe this as the biracial bridging bias hypothesis (H2).

The current research builds upon existing biracial and intergroup relations research to provide a more complete picture of how social factors shape intergroup relations. While the field of intergroup relations has long known that social and institutional authorities are key to positive intergroup contact (Allport, 1954), our research advances beyond previous perspectives by investigating how the racial background of those authorities may shape their perceived effectiveness.

In sum, we hypothesized that both Black and White people would see a Black-White biracial (vs. monoracial Black and monoracial White) facilitator as uniquely effective at communicating and engaging both Black and White community members ("biracial bridging hypothesis", H2). We also hypothesize that Black and White people will see monoracial Black

and monoracial White facilitators as more able to communicate and engage racial ingroup (vs. outgroup) members ("monoracial bias hypothesis", H1). Finding this would showcase how racial identities can provoke lay assumptions about when others are unbiased, versus biased, in discussions of racial issues.

Why might facilitator race shape perceptions of their effectiveness? Past work has found that learning-oriented strategies, such as displaying empathy and actively contemplating others' psychological experiences, can reduce racial bias and increase recognition of discrimination (Neel & Shapiro, 2012; Todd & Galinsky, 2014; Todd et al., 2011; Tropp & Barlow, 2018). We explored the possibility that these types of learning-oriented strategies might explain the effect of facilitator race on perceptions of facilitator communication effectiveness (Study 1), and might be associated with preference for and beliefs about facilitator effectiveness (Studies 2-3).

In the Supplement, we report all measures and manipulations (including measures not reported in the main text; Table S6), interrcorrelations among variables (Tables S2-4), and two additional studies. We preregistered all studies (S1: https://osf.io/kfmra; S2: http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=bs4c8b; S3: https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=fc9kr7; preregistration study numbers do not correspond to those in the manuscript); data and code available upon request. All sample sizes were determined a priori. Data collection occurred in April 2018 (Study 1), August 2018 (Study 2) and October 2020 (Study 3), and concluded before analysis.

Study 1

Participants

We oversampled with the intention of having at least 228 participants (sufficient to detect a small effect size f=.11 with 80% power and .05 alpha); participants initiated the survey via

TurkPrime, which enabled us to preselect by race and U.S. location. As pre-registered, we excluded participants who identified as biracial or who did not indicate any race, and for failing two or more attention checks (n=41; see SOM), leaving 223 U.S. participants (114 Black, 109 White; M_{age}=38.44, SD_{age}=12.44; 112 women; 111 men).

Procedure

After providing informed consent, participants read they would evaluate a candidate for the position of director of a Campus Intergroup Relations Association (CIRA) at a state university. The directions stated that "a major goal of the CIRA is to reach out to the campus community and address racial tensions through effective mediation across racial/ethnic lines," and that the recommended candidate "must excel at communicating across racial divides." To ensure attention, participants read this information a second time before proceeding. They also described the key qualities of an ideal candidate. All participants described an ideal candidate in a manner that was coherent and on-topic.

We randomly assigned participants to next review either a White, Black, or Black/White Biracial candidate. Other than the experimental manipulation of race, all information about the candidate (and position) was the same across conditions. The candidate was Michael Williams, who graduated with a 3.3 G.P.A. in Management and Labor Relations from a large State University, and had 3 years of experience working as a Community Relations Specialist. The race manipulation was presented among other bullet-pointed details in the candidate's profile: "Michael self-identifies as [*Biracial (50% Black and 50% White)/Black/White]* and is committed to racial dialogue." After reviewing the profile, participants completed a manipulation check to ensure that they correctly remembered his race (the key manipulation), gender, and years of experience. Then, participants completed the dependent measures described below. Finally,

participants reported their age, gender, and race, and were fully debriefed, thanked, and compensated $1.

Materials

The scale anchors for all dependent measures ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Effective communication with [Black, White] community members ($\alpha_{\text{Black facilitator}}$=.91, $\alpha_{\text{White facilitator}}$=.90, 4 items each). Participants rated how much the candidate would be able to communicate with and take the perspective of Black and White community members. Specifically, they completed two sets of ratings for effective communication, one for communicating to Black community members and one for communicating to White community members, by indicating whether the [White, Black] facilitator would be able to "communicate with [Whites, Blacks]," "truly listen to and understand the concerns of [Whites, Blacks]," "wholeheartedly take the perspectives of [White, Black] community members," and "without bias or reservation, communicate [Black, White] community members' perspectives to [White, Black] community members." This was our focal dependent variable.

Candidate Qualification (α=.90, 3 items). Participants indicated how much they viewed the facilitator as qualified for the position by rating, "I would recommend hiring this candidate above all others," "I am confident this candidate is the most qualified for this position," and "This candidate is uniquely qualified for the position." This measure was exploratory and not a primary dependent variable.

Learning Strategies. Participants also reported how much they believed the facilitator would: "try to take the perspective of the other person(s)," "try to empathize with the other person/people," "try to figure out what's going wrong so they could fix it," and "ask what the

other person(s) is thinking." The first two items measured indirect learning strategies, and the last two items measured direct learning strategies (Neel & Shapiro, 2012). We averaged these items to comprise one measure (α=.89) because exploratory factor analyses suggested they load onto a single factor explaining 74.88% of the variance.

Results

Main Analyses. We conducted a 2(Communication: with White Community versus Black Community) x 3(Facilitator Race: Black, White, or biracial) x 2(Participant Race: Black, White) mixed model ANOVA, treating Communication as a within-participants variable, with follow up Bonferroni comparisons (Table 1). There was no significant main effect of communication or participant race, Fs≤.63, ps≥.43. However, there was a significant main effect of facilitator race, $F(2,217)=8.25$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.07$, and a significant interaction of facilitator race and communication condition, $F(2,217)=60.45$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.36$. Consistent with the monoracial bias hypothesis (H1), the Black candidate was expected to communicate more effectively with Black than White community members, and the White candidate was expected to communicate more effectively with White than Black community members (ps≤.001).

The biracial candidate's perceived ability to communicate with Black and White community members did not vary significantly, $p=.12$, which is consistent with the bridging hypothesis (H2) and contrary to the idea that biracial people might be seen as more Black in this context. Notably, we conducted two additional studies using Study 1's design and measures; one yielded the same pattern of results as Study 1, the other did not. A mini meta-analysis across these three studies, reported fully in the Supplement, also supports the biracial bridging hypothesis (H2, Z=1.40, $p=.16$, two-tailed).

The data also showed that the Black and Biracial facilitators were both expected to communicate with the Black community more effectively than the White facilitator (both *p*s≤.001); the Black and Biracial facilitators did not differ significantly (*p*=1.00). And, the White (*p*=.02) and Biracial (*p*=.01) facilitators were expected to communicate with the White community more effectively than the Black facilitator (the White and Biracial facilitators also did not differ significantly, *p*=1.00). No other two-way or three-way interactions were statistically significant (all *F*s>.63, *p*s≥.43).

We also conducted 2(participant race: White, Black) x 3(facilitator race condition: Black, Biracial, White) ANOVAs on the candidate qualification and learning strategies measures (Table 2). We found a significant main effect of facilitator race on both candidate qualification, $F(2,216)=19.17$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.15$, and learning strategies, $F(2,217)=10.12$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.09$). Consistent with the bridging hypothesis (H2), participants rated the Biracial candidate as more qualified and more likely to use learning strategies than both the Black facilitator (qualification: *p*=.003, Cohen's *d*=.58, 95%CIs[.17, 1.07]; learning strategies: *p*=.03, Cohen's *d*=.47, 95%CIs[.03,.79]) and the White facilitator, (qualification: *p*<.001, Cohen's *d*=1.03, 95%CIs[.70, 1.61]; learning strategies: *p*<.001, Cohen's *d*=.76, 95%CIs[.34, 1.10]). The Black facilitator was also rated as a better candidate than the White facilitator, *p*=.01, Cohen's *d*=.44, 95%CIs[.09, .98], though the Black and White facilitators did not differ in their expected use of learning strategies, *p*=.15, Cohen's *d*=.29, 95%CIs[-.07, .68]. There were no significant main effects of, *F*s≤3.76, *p*s≥.054, or interactions with, *F*s≤1.65, *p*s≥.20, participant race for either measure.

Table 1.

Means and Standard Deviations of Main Study Variables by Facilitator Race Condition, Study 1.

	Communication					
Within Subjects	with Black Community	with White Community	*t*	*df*	Cohen's *d*	95%CIs
Black facilitator	5.88 (.99)^{a,1}	5.13 (1.00)^{b,1}	6.34***	76	.71	[.52, .99]
Biracial facilitator	5.77 (.93)^{a,1}	5.67 (1.02)^{a,2}	1.60	69	.21	[-.22, .02]
White facilitator	4.58 (1.23)^{a,2}	5.61 (1.11)^{b,2}	7.11***	75	.78	[.74, 1.31]

Note. Within each row, means not sharing the same letter superscript differ significantly at p <.05 after Bonferroni corrections; within each column, means not sharing the same number superscript differ significantly at p <.05 after Bonferroni corrections. ***p < .001.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for the Qualification and Learning Strategies Measures, Study 1

	Biracial Facilitator	Black Facilitator	White facilitator
Facilitator qualification	5.40 (.94)^{a}	4.78 (1.19)^{b}	4.24 (1.28)^{c}
Learning strategies	6.04 (.76)^{a}	5.63(0.96)^{b}	5.33 (1.08)^{b}

Note. Within each row, means not sharing the same letter superscript differ significantly at p<.05 after Bonferroni corrections.

Exploratory Mediation. Given support for the biracial bridging hypothesis (H2), we also explored whether Black and White Americans viewed the (male) Biracial facilitator, relative

to the monoracial facilitators, as more qualified and a more effective communicator, via expected use of learning strategies. Specifically, we used the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) Model 7 to test an indirect effect of facilitator race (X: 1=biracial, 0=either Black or White monoracial) via learning strategies (M) on each dependent variable in turn (Y: communication with Black community, communication with White community, qualification), dependent on participant race (V). The indirect effect of facilitator race (biracial vs. monoracial) through learning strategies on each variable (Black communication, White communication, and candidate qualification) was supported (95%CIs exclude zero; Table 3), but were not moderated by participant race (95%CIs include zero; Table 3; see also Table S5). These results should be interpreted with caution because they are exploratory and based on cross-sectional data (Maxwell et al., 2011). Yet, they provide preliminary evidence that engaging in learning strategies may be associated with Black and White Americans' beliefs that biracial facilitators can effectively support interracial dialogues.

Table 3

Confidence intervals of the Indirect (Mediated) Paths by Participant Race, Study 1.

	Black Ps	White Ps	Moderated Mediation
Study 1			
Facilitator Race → LS → Communication with Black Community	.14, .60	.21, .86	-.23, .54
Facilitator Race → LS → Communication with White Community	.10, .51	.17, .70	-.19, .44
Facilitator Race → LS → Facilitator Qualification	.10, 47	.17, 62	-.18, .39

Note. Facilitator Race (1=Biracial, 0=Monoracial); LS=Learning Strategies.

Study 2 and Study 3

In Study 2 and Study 3, we explored people's beliefs about who can lead conversations about race when they expect to participate in the exchange. We report the two studies together because our methods and analysis are similar. We modified the design to allow all participants to see and evaluate the monoracial Black, monoracial White, and biracial Black-White facilitators. Treating facilitator race as a within-participants variable may more closely capture how real-life decisions about candidate selections occur. It also overcomes potential demand concerns in Study 1 (i.e., seeing one, objectively qualified facilitator might demand higher ratings for effectiveness and qualification). We also further explored whether learning strategies were associated with participants' beliefs about each facilitator's perceived communication effectiveness, as well as with participants' facilitator preference. H1 and H2 were exploratory in Study 2 but pre-registered and confirmatory in Study 3.

Participants

We again oversampled to aim for an analytic sample size of 228 (sufficient to detect an effect size f=.11 with 80% power and .05 alpha) after excluding participants who did not meet preregistered inclusionary criteria (see SOM for all exclusions). The final analytic samples included 212 (Study 2: 104 Black, 108 White; M_{age}=36.91, SD_{age}=11.10; 109 women; 98 men; 5 other gender) and 275 (Study 3: 134 Black, 141 White; M_{age}=38.31, SD_{age}=12.44; 147 women; 126 men; 2 other gender) participants.

Procedure and Materials

Participants were recruited via TurkPrime to a study about the effectiveness of online diversity training seminars. Upon providing informed consent, participants were told: "imagine that you are participating in an online diversity training session" with a facilitator and a group of

other people on a later date. The directions stated that the facilitator's goal would be to lead a discussion to "address racial and ethnic tensions in the U.S., discuss how to build positive intergroup interactions in communities, and teach strategies on how to effectively mediate disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to racial, ethnic, or cultural discrimination." To increase the ecological validity of the study cover story, participants completed filler questions about their experiences with technology and the online webinar format (e.g., "Do you think a webinar is a good alternative to in-person training?").

Next, participants reported the key qualities, attributes, and skills of an ideal diversity webinar facilitator. Then, after a reminder that their chosen facilitator should be the person whom they believe is best able to communicate both with people from their racial background and members of other racial groups, participants read a short description of three potential facilitators. The three men facilitators were described as having equivalent qualifications (e.g., 2-3 years of relevant experience) and their race (White, Black, or White/Black Biracial) was listed on the profile. We presented only male facilitators because gender can shift expectations about how people should engage in social interactions; for example, facilitation is a leadership role, which can provoke backlash against women (Rudman & Glick, 2001). Participants read the information about all three facilitators together on a single page (in randomized order). Then, they saw the same information for one facilitator at a time (re-presented in randomized order) and rated that facilitator on the dependent measures (see supplement for details and additional measures). Participants rated each facilitator on the key dependent measures of communication effectiveness (4 items, e.g., "How much do you think this facilitator would be able to communicate equally with both you and members of other racial groups about race and diversity?"; S2: $\alpha_{Biracial}$=.94, α_{Black}=.92, α_{White}=.94; Study 3: $\alpha_{Biracial}$=.91, α_{Black}=.94, α_{White}=.94)

and the learning strategies measure used in Study 1 (S2: $\alpha_{Biracial}$=.92, α_{Black}=.91, α_{White}=.91; S3: $\alpha_{Biracial}$=.87, α_{Black}=.90, α_{White}=.88). Participants also rated how much they would prefer each facilitator to lead their training (3 items, e.g., "I would prefer working with this candidate above all others"; $\alpha_{Biracial}$=.89, α_{Black}=.89, α_{White}=.90; S3: $\alpha_{Biracial}$=.89, α_{Black}=.92, α_{White}=.91). Last, participants completed demographic questions, and were fully debriefed and compensated ($1 Study 1; $1.50 Study 2).

Results

Main analyses. To test our main hypotheses, for each measure we conducted a 3(Facilitator Race: Black, White, or biracial) x 2(Participant Race: Black, White) mixed model ANOVA, treating Facilitator Race as a within-participants variable, with follow-up Bonferroni comparisons (descriptive statistics, Table 4).

Study 2. Participant race and facilitator race interacted significantly on communication effectiveness, $F(2,420)=10.51$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.05$, facilitator preference, $F(2, 420)=6.66$, $p=.001$, $\eta^2_p=.03$, and learning strategies, $F(2, 420)=6.30$, $p=.002$, $\eta^2_p=.03$. White perceivers rated the Biracial facilitator as a more effective communicator than both the White facilitator, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.43$, 95%CIs[.33, 1.08], and the Black facilitator, $p=.001$, Cohen's $d=.32$, 95%CIs[.12, .68]. Black perceivers also viewed the Biracial facilitator as significantly more effective than the White facilitator, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.87$, 95%CIs[.88, 1.68], but equally effective as the Black facilitator, $p=1.00$, Cohen's $d=.02$, 95%CIs[-.29, .36]. Black perceivers rated the Black facilitator as significantly more effective than the White facilitator, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.83$, 95%CIs[.82, 1.67], whereas White perceivers did not rate the perceived communication effectiveness of the Black and the White facilitators as significantly different, $p=.06$, Cohen's $d=.23$, 95%CIs[-.005, .62].

Both White and Black participants significantly preferred the Biracial facilitator over the White facilitator (White participants: $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.35$, 95%CIs[.17, 1.17]; Black participants: $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.77$, 95%CIs[.79, 1.63]), but not the Black facilitator (White participants: $p=.13$, Cohen's $d=.19$, 95%CIs[-.07, .79]; Black participants: $p=1.00$, Cohen's $d=.03$, 95%CIs[-.45, .38]). They both also rated the Biracial facilitator as significantly more likely to use learning strategies than the White facilitator (White participants: $p=.001$, Cohen's $d=.30$, 95%CIs[.11, .69]; Black participants: $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.62$, 95%CIs[.49, 1.16]), but not the Black facilitator (White participants: $p=.29$, Cohen's $d=.15$, 95%CIs[-.07, .39]; Black participants: $p=1.00$, Cohen's $d=.01$, 95%CIs[-.27, .29]). Black participants preferred Black facilitator over the White facilitator, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.79$, 95%CIs[.81, 1.67], and expected he would use learning strategies more than the White facilitator, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.66$, 95%CIs[.49, 1.14]). However, White participants' preferences, $p=.26$, Cohen's $d=.17$, 95%CIs[-.12, .75], and expectations for learning strategy use, $p=.10$, Cohen's $d=.20$, 95%CIs[-.03, .51], did not vary significantly.

Thus, in Study 2, both Black and White participants expected the biracial facilitator to be a better communicator, to use learning strategies more, and preferred him more, than the White facilitator. White, but not Black, participants rated the biracial facilitator as better than the Black facilitator on communication, and Black and White participants did not rate him significantly differently from the Black facilitator on learning strategies and preference. White and Black participants also varied in their appraisals of the monoracial facilitators relative to each other. Taking these results together, Black and White participants agreed more about communication effectiveness, learning strategies, and their preference for the biracial facilitator, supporting H1 and H2.

Study 3. Only a significant facilitator race main effect emerged on communication effectiveness, $F(2,546)=108.72$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.29$, facilitator preference, $F(2,546)=90.90$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.25$, and learning strategy, $F(2,546)=43.87$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.14$; the participant race main effect and interaction were non-significant. Participants rated the Biracial facilitator as a significantly more effective communicator, and as significantly more likely to use learning strategies, than both the Black (communication: $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.40$, 95%CIs[.28, .66]; strategies: $p=.01$, Cohen's $d=.20$, 95%CIs[.04, .34]), and White (communication: $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.93$, 95%CIs[1.06, 1.53]; strategies: $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.57$, 95%CIs[.46, .80]) facilitators. The Black facilitator was expected to be a significantly more effective communicator, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.57$, 95%CIs[.61, 1.03], and to be significantly more likely to use learning strategies, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.36$, 95%CIs[.27, .62], than the White facilitator. Participants also preferred both the Biracial, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.81$, 95%CIs[1.10, 1.63], and Black, $p<.001$, Cohen's $d=.66$, 95%CIs[.86, 1.37], facilitators over the White facilitator. However, they did not prefer the Biracial facilitator significantly over the Black facilitator, $p=.07$, Cohen's $d=.01$, 95%CIs[-.01, .51].

Study 3 thus offers further support for the monoracial bias hypothesis (H1) and the bridging hypothesis (H2). Black and White Americans see a Biracial facilitator as more effectively communicating and using learning strategies in interracial dialogues about race than monoracial facilitators, and they prefer a Biracial over a White facilitator and equally to a Black facilitator.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for all dependent measures, Studies 2 & 3

	White Participants			Black Participants		
	Biracial Facilitator	Black Facilitator	White facilitator	Biracial Facilitator	Black Facilitator	White facilitator
Study 2						
Effective communicator	5.45 (1.22)[a]	5.05 (1.12)[b]	4.75 (1.22)[b]	5.43 (1.16)[a]	5.40 (1.10)[a]	4.15 (1.47)[b]
Facilitator preference	4.94 (1.43)[a]	4.58 (1.36)[a,b]	4.27 (1.43)[b]	5.25 (1.19)[a]	5.29 (1.15)[a]	4.05 (1.45)[b]
Learning strategies	5.55 (1.14)[a]	5.40 (1.11)[a,b]	5.16 (0.99)[b]	5.59 (1.12)[a]	5.58 (1.05)[a]	4.77 (1.26)[b]
Study 3	All Participants					
Effective communicator	5.59 (1.00)[a]	5.11 (1.20)[b]	4.30 (1.29)[c]			
Facilitator preference	5.19 (1.24)[a]	4.94 (1.31)[a]	3.82 (1.40)[b]			
Learning strategies	5.60 (0.94)[a]	5.41 (1.06)[b]	4.96 (1.00)[c]			

Note. Within each row (by participant race for Study 2), means not sharing the same letter superscript differ significantly at $p < .05$ after Bonferroni corrections. We display the means by facilitator race condition and participant race for Study 2 because those variables interacted at levels of statistical significance; we display the overall marginal means for Study 3 because we found a main effect of facilitator race condition (and no effects of participant race or interaction).

Exploratory Mediations. Given the additional support for the biracial bridging hypothesis (H2) with facilitator race as a within-subjects variable, we again explored whether preferences for and beliefs about the biracial facilitator (relative to the monoracial facilitators) were associated with people's greater expectations that they would use learning strategies. To test this, in a set of exploratory multilevel linear models (which account for repeated responses within participants, Hayes, 2006; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002), we explored whether the significant differences in facilitator preference and communication effectiveness between the Biracial facilitator and each of the monoracial facilitators could be accounted for by perceived differences in learning strategies. We found that learning strategies partially mediated the effect of facilitator race on preference between the Biracial and White facilitators (Study 2: *indirect effect*=-.59, $p<.001$, 95%CIs[-.77, -.42]; Study 3: *indirect effect*=-.59, $p<.001$, 95%CIs[-.74, -.45]), and on communication effectiveness between the Biracial and the White (Study 2, *indirect effect*=-.55, $p<.001$, 95%CIs[-.72, -.40]; Study 3, *indirect effect*=-.38, $p<.001$, 95%CIs[-.70, -.44]) and Black (Study 3, *indirect effect*=-.17, $p=.01$, 95%CIs[-.61, -.16]) facilitators. We also calculated indexes of moderated mediation (Hayes, 2015) for each of these models to explore whether these indirect effects were dependent upon participant race. The indirect effects on preference, *index*=-.21, 95%CIs[-.37, -.05], and communication effectiveness, *index*=-.19, 95%CIs[-.35, -.04], were weaker for White compared to Black participants in Study 2, though they were significant for both groups ($ps\leq.001$). None of the indirect effects in Study 3 were moderated by participant race ($ps>.05$). The complete analysis strategy, full models, and full reporting of the statistics are presented in the SOM (Tables S7-8; Figures S1-4). Though these data are exploratory and based on cross-sectional data, they provide further evidence of how expected use of learning strategies may be involved in associations of effective facilitators.

General Discussion

We find that people enter formal discussions about complex racial topics with different expectations based on the facilitator's race. Both Black and White Americans rated monoracial facilitators as better able to communicate with their racial ingroup than the outgroup (H1). Consistent with the bridging hypothesis (H2), both Black and White Americans did not rate biracial facilitators as significantly different in their ability to effectively communicate with racial ingroups and outgroups. Participants expected a biracial facilitator to use productive learning strategies (perspective taking, showing empathy) more than a White facilitator, and either more than or as equally as a Black facilitator. When given the opportunity to choose a diversity training facilitator, the biracial facilitator was the only candidate that both Black and White participants chose equally (Study 2, 3). These effects emerged consistently, both when participants were forming impressions of a facilitator individually (using a between-subjects design, Study 1 and SOM studies), and when participants formed impressions of multiple facilitators simultaneously (using within-subjects designs, Studies 2-3).

Our results provide some of the first empirical evidence that the growing biracial population may be viewed as uniquely poised to contribute to challenging conversations about race (Love & Levy, 2019). Indeed, this lay perception emerged among Black and White monoracial participants, and had important behavioral implications—people preferred biracial facilitators for diversity training about difficult racial issues. Thus, our research advances intergroup relations both by investigating an important but understudied type of interracial interaction that is on the rise in American society, and by identifying a set of consequential lay beliefs about race that affect perceptions of who can effectively lead this type of interaction.

Our work also suggests that perceptions of learning strategies may be critical to understanding why these lay beliefs matter and how facilitators, regardless of race, can support effective cross-racial communication. Across studies, both Black and White Americans saw biracial facilitators as more likely to use learning strategies than White facilitators, and either more than or equally to Black facilitators. In Study 1, when participants only evaluated a single candidate, learning strategies explained why biracial facilitators were expected to be more effective. In Studies 2 and 3, when participants evaluated all three candidates, learning strategies partially accounted for differences in the facilitators' perceived effectiveness in intergroup conversations about race. Learning strategies was also associated with Black and White Americans' preferences for working with a facilitator. These data also fit with recent field studies that suggest perspective taking is an important aspect of effective diversity trainings (Ragins & Erhardt, 2020). Future research should investigate what signals (e.g., cross-group friendships; Davies et al., 2011) monoracial facilitators can exhibit to illustrate learning strategies, which might thus allow them to also bridge racial divides.

These findings are substantive but have important limitations. We only tested our hypotheses in the context of discussions about Black-White U.S. American relations led by a male facilitator. These results may differ for conversations about ongoing racial dynamics amongst different minority-White or minority-minority groups, or when accounting for gender and/or intersectionality dynamics that were outside the scope of the current work (e.g., stereotypes about women as empathic or men as leaders; Rudman & Glick, 2001). Future work should also test whether biracial people's own perceptions of effectiveness vary by facilitator race, which is particularly interesting because of the potential subjectivity and complexity related to who biracial people consider to be part of their ingroup versus outgroup (Gaither, 2015;

Pauker et al., 2018; Wilton et al., 2013). Given evidence that Israeli Arabs facilitate Israeli-Palestinian relations (Levy et al., 2019), there is potential for bridges to smooth intergroup interactions outside of the American context, though more research is needed.

Indeed, a natural next research question is: will the expectations about a facilitator's effectiveness translate into actual effectiveness? It is possible that White and Black participants would be more willing to engage in discussions around race, and that these discussions would be thus more effective, when led by a biracial individual. Alternatively, if monoracial and biracial facilitators embody effective learning strategies through behavior, would they be equally successful in eliciting contributions from Black and White discussion participants? In line with top-down processing, participants' a priori lay beliefs arising from a facilitator's race could shift evaluations (e.g., a White facilitator who effectively deploys learning strategies could be viewed as especially effective because it is unexpected). Given the challenges associated with effectively implementing diversity trainings (Paluck, 2006), additional behavioral research is necessary to address these pressing questions about how people's lay beliefs—formed before and during a facilitated discussion—will affect the actual outcomes of such conversations.

Finally, we hasten to emphasize that biracial people should not be expected to assume a facilitating role in intergroup communications, nor is it the case that Black or White facilitators are ineffective in these types of facilitated conversations. Indeed, it is up to all people, regardless of racial background, to participate equally in conversations and activities designed to mitigate inequality. Our work joins recent field studies (Ragins & Erhardt, 2020) in suggesting that empathizing and perspective taking are key strategies for interracial dialogue. Our research begins to unveil a lay perception that could pose a barrier before such conversations even start.

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Supplementary Materials

Lay beliefs about who can bridge the Black-White racial gap during interracial exchanges

Table of Contents

Exclusions

Study 1. 265 participants initiated the survey via TurkPrime, which enabled us to preselect by race and U.S. location. As pre-registered, we excluded participants who identified as biracial (n=2) or who did not indicate any race (n=29), and for failing two or more attention checks (n=11).

Studies 2-3. Our preregistered inclusionary criteria were that participants must be 18 years or older, fluent in English, U.S. resident, monoracial Black or White, pass two out of three attention checks. As pre-registered, we excluded participants who identified as biracial (N_{S2}=6; N_{S3}=8), who did not indicate any race (N_{S2}=20), or who did not identify as Black or White (N_{S3}=10), and for failing two or more attention checks (N_{S2}=13; N_{S3}=10) or not completing questions beyond filler questions about technology (N_{S2}=40; N_{S3}=23). As pre-registered, we excluded participants who identified as biracial (N_{S2}=6; N_{S3}=8), who did not indicate any race (N_{S2}=20), or who did not identify as Black or White (N_{S3}=10), and for failing two or more attention checks (N_{S2}=13; N_{S3}=10) or not completing questions beyond filler questions about technology (N_{S2}=40; N_{S3}=23).

Manipulations

Study 1

Please imagine the following scenario: A State University is hiring the director for their Campus Intergroup Relations Association (CIRA). A major goal of the CIRA is to reach out to the campus community and address racial tensions through effective mediation across racial/ethnic lines. Therefore, the candidate whom you recommend must excel at communicating across racial divides. Below, please read about the position and the desired candidate.

CAMPUS INTERGROUP RELATIONS ASSOCIATION (CIRA)

WHAT WE DO: HELP OUR CAMPUS PROMOTE RACIAL AND ETHNIC HARMONY

The Campus Intergroup Relations Association (CIRA) was established because of our increasing diversity and need to help students understand each other's perspectives. We work with the

campus community (students, faculty, and staff) to resolve disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to racial, ethnic, or cultural discrimination.

WHO WE WANT: LEADER DEDICATED TO EQUALITY AND INTERRACIAL DIALOGUE

We seek a director for the campus office who will lead efforts to address racial and ethnic tensions, build positive community-wide intergroup interactions, and mediate disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to racial, ethnic, or cultural discrimination. **This person will need to effectively work with members of majority and minority groups on campus, hear and understand their perspectives, and find ways to bridge between them. The person must be committed to equality, able to see and communicate across all sides of an issue, and be an effective mediator.**

PLEASE READ THIS INFORMATION ONE MORE TIME.

Please imagine the following candidate has applied for the position at CIRA: Michael Williams

Highlights of the candidate's profile:

- Michael has a degree in Management and Labor Relations and 3 years of experience working as a Community Relations Specialist at Olney Group.
- He graduated with a 3.3 G.P.A. from a large State University.
- Michael self-identifies as ***[Biracial (50% Black and 50% White)/Black/White]*** and is committed to racial dialogue.

**Note: Italics and bold text presented above only to highlight the candidate race manipulation.*

Studies 2 - 3

Instructions: We are interested in testing the effectiveness of online diversity training. If you agree to take the survey, we will ask you to imagine that you are participating in an online diversity training session with a group of other MTurkers at a later date. During this survey, we

ask you to envision that you will join a video webinar with one facilitator who will lead a discussion to address racial and ethnic tensions in the U.S., discuss how to build positive intergroup interactions in communities, and teach strategies on how to effectively mediate disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to racial, ethnic, or cultural discrimination. Today, in this survey, we will simply ask you questions about yourself and your previous experiences with online seminars/webinars, as well as your opinions of different facilitators for the online diversity training seminar. Do you wish to continue?

[Filler Questions Completed here].

Now, imagine that you are invited back to participate in the diversity training video webinar, and your session will be facilitated by one of three facilitators from Inclusion Group, LLC (an online HR and training consulting company). The facilitator's role is to help ease effective dialogue between members of both majority groups and minority groups by listening to and understanding their perspectives to find ways to bridge between them. This person is expected to be committed to equality, able to see and communicate across all sides of an issue, and be an effective mediator. In your own words, please describe the key qualities, attributes, and skills that an ideal diversity webinar facilitator would possess.

Below, you will see some background information on some of our facilitators. We are interested in who you think would make the best facilitator for this diversity training; this person should be the person whom you believe is best able to communicate both with people from your racial background and members of other racial groups

Michael Williams, *Expert Facilitator (2.5 years with Inclusion Group)*

- Degree: B.A. in Management and Labor Relations
- Prior Experience: 3 years working as a Community Relations Specialist
- Race: Biracial (50% White, 50% Black)
- Gender: Male

Todd Nolan, *Expert Facilitator (3 years with Inclusion Group)*

- Degree: B.A. in Communications
- Prior Experience: 2.5 years of working as an Advocate for Public Concerns
- Race: White
- Gender: Male

Kamal Harris[1], *Expert Facilitator (2.5 years with Inclusion Group)*

- Degree: B.A. in Psychology
- Prior Experience: 3 years working as an Urban Outreach Consultant
- Race: African American
- Gender: Male

[1] We recognize that there is overlap between the name that we selected to for the Black facilitator and the current U.S. Vice President. We used the name Kamal Harris in data collections occurring in August 2018 (Study 2) and October 2020 (Study 3); Kamala Harris was elected Vice President in November 2020. The Vice President's national prominence and recognizability undoubtedly rose between these two time points, yet the main results remained consistent across these two timepoints (see main text). Future research should replicate this work with a different name for the Black facilitator.

Full Scales of Measures Used.

*unless otherwise indicated, all anchors are 1 = *strongly disagree*; 7 = *strongly agree*

Study 1

In your own words, please describe the key qualities, attributes, and skills that an ideal CIRA candidate would possess? (open ended)

What was the candidate's gender?

- Male
- Female

How many relevant years experience does the candidate have?

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

How does the candidate self-identify in terms of race?

- Black
- White
- Latino
- Black/White Biracial

Candidate Qualification

- I would recommend hiring this candidate above all others.
- I am confident this candidate is the most qualified for this position.
- This candidate is uniquely qualified for the position.

Effective communication with White communities. Thinking about the candidate's ability to communicate with and take the perspective of **White community members**, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- This candidate would be able to communicate with Whites.
- This candidate would be able to truly listen to and understand the concerns of Whites.
- This candidate would be able to wholeheartedly take the perspectives of White community members.
- Without bias or reservation, this candidate would be able to communicate White community members' perspectives to Black community members

Effective communication with Black communities. Thinking about the candidate's ability to communicate with and take the perspective of Black community members, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- This candidate would be able to communicate with Blacks.
- This candidate would be able to truly listen to and understand the concerns of Blacks.
- This candidate would be able to wholeheartedly take the perspectives of Black community members.
- Without bias or reservation, this candidate would be able to communicate Black community members' perspectives to White community members

Learning Strategies (Neel & Shapiro, 2012)

1. Try to figure out what's going wrong so they could fix it
2. Ask what the other person(s) is thinking
3. Try to take the perspective of the other person(s)
4. Try to empathize with the other person/people
5. Try to pretend that the interaction is going well
6. Try to be extremely nice—nicer than they normally would be
7. Try to end the interaction

Note: In Neel & Shapiro (2012), items 1-2 = direct learning strategies; 3-4 = indirect learning strategies; 5-6 = overcompensation strategies; 7 = escape strategy

Comfort/Familiarity

- I would feel comfortable talking about race with this person
- I would feel at ease discussing complex issues of race in the US with this person
- I would be uncomfortable discussing contemporary racial issues with this person
- I would feel uneasy talking about racial bias with this person
- I believe the person would treat me fairly

- I believe this person would treat me with respect
- I believe this person would try to understand my point of view
- I think this person will share the same experiences as me
- I think this person will share the same attitudes as me
- I think this person will share the same behaviors as me

Concerns about Revealing Prejudice (Carr, Dweck, & Pauker, 2012). When talking with this person about issues related to race and diversity, I would be...

1. worried that I might say something that would make me look prejudiced
2. very concerned that they would consider something that I say or do to be prejudiced concerned about trying to act nonprejudiced
3. worried that they would interpret something that I said or did as being prejudiced.

Respect/Liking. If you had to choose between being liked and being respected by this person, which would you regard as more important? 1 = Liked; 4 = Equal, 7 = Respected

Studies 2 – 3

Filler Questions:

- Have you ever participated in an online seminar or video webinar? (Yes/No)
- If so, were there any glitches or technical difficulties? (Yes/No/Did not participate in a webinar)
- Please rate your experience with the webinar overall (1 = Bad; 7 = Good; Did not participate in a webinar)
- Do you think a webinar is a good alternative to in-person training? (Yes/No)
- Please rate your level of experience with online video-chat and similar technology (1 = inexperienced; 7 = Experienced)

Communication effectiveness. How much do you think this facilitator would...

- be able to communicate equally with both you and members of other racial groups about race and diversity?
- be able to truly listen to and understand both your and members of other racial groups' concerns with regard to race?
- wholeheartedly take the perspectives of both your racial group and other racial groups?
- without bias or reservation, communicate the concerns of different racial groups' to the others?

Facilitator preference. Please rate the above facilitator on the following statements.

- I would prefer working with this candidate above all others
- I am confident this facilitator is the most qualified person to work with
- This facilitator is uniquely qualified to lead the online training

Learning Strategies. (Neel & Shapiro, 2012). How much do you think this facilitator would….

- Try to figure out what's going wrong so they could fix it
- Ask what the other person(s) is thinking
- Try to take the perspective of the other person(s)
- Try to empathize with the other person/people

Objectivity (Study 3 only). To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- People in the session will be able to see this facilitator as being objective
- This facilitator will be able to be objective about the issues people in the session may express
- People in the session will see this facilitator as biased to a particular community's perspectives (*recoded*)

Black/White Racial Identification (Study 3 only). To what extent to you think the facilitator…

- Identifies with being [Black/White]?
- Connects with being [Black/White]?
- Sees himself as being [Black/White]?

Which of these three facilitators would you rank as your top choice to be the facilitator for your session? If we can do so, we would prioritize this person for your session.

Demographic & Attention Check Questions (All Studies)

Most modern theories of impression formation recognize the fact that knowledge along with situational variables can greatly impact impression formation. In order to facilitate our research on impression formation we are interested in knowing certain factors about you. Specifically, we are interested in whether you actually take the time to read the directions. If not, then some of our manipulations that rely on changes in the instructions will be ineffective. So, in order to demonstrate that you have read the instructions, please ignore the food question below. Instead, please write "branch" (all lowercase) in the space below to proceed to the next screen. Thank you very much. What is your favorite food?

How would you describe your racial or ethnic identity? Please select ALL that apply.

- American Indian and/or Native American and/or Alaska Native
- Black and/or African American
- Caribbean
- East Asian
- Latino and/or Hispanic
- Middle Eastern
- Native Hawaiian and/or Pacific Islander
- South Asian
- White and/or European American
- Biracial (feel free to specify)
- Mixed-Race and/or Multi-Race and/or Multi-Ethnic (feel free to specify)
- Not Listed (feel free to specify)

How would you describe your gender? Please select ALL that apply.

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Not Listed (feel free to specify)

What is your age?

What is the highest level of education that you have received?

- Less than high school
- High school graduate
- Some college
- 2 year degree
- 4 year degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate

Do you have any comments or concerns about the study or your participation today?

What do you think the study was about? (Study 3 only)

Additional Studies Not reported in the Main Text

Pilot Study

Participants

Sixty-five White (M_{age}=33.31, SD_{age}=10.15; 34 women; 30 men; 1 other gender) people participated in this study via TurkPrime in exchange for $1. This study was conducted in 2016, so we set a predetermined goal of 60 participants, based on Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn's (2011) at-the-time minimum acceptable guideline for between subjects designs without a priori effect sizes (20 participants per cell, but see Nelson, Simmons, & Simonsohn, 2018 for updated conventions). No participants were excluded from analyses for failing to pass a manipulation check (see below).

Procedure and Materials

The methods and materials the same as those described in Study 1 reported in the main text. Participants completed the same measures of perceived communication effectiveness with both White (α = .91) and Black (α = .88) community members, as well as a candidate qualification (α = .87). Data were collected July, 2016.

Results

Effective Communication

We conducted a mixed-model ANOVA with the White and Black effective communication variables entered as a within-subjects factor, and condition as a between-subjects factor. This analysis revealed that there were no main effects of either communication effectiveness, $F(1,62)=.07$, $p=.80$, or candidate race condition, $F(2,62)=.42$, $p=.66$, but those two

predictors did significantly interact, $F(2,62)=27.61$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2_p=.47$. To decompose this interaction, we conducted post hoc Bonferroni comparisons. Consistent with the monoracial bias hypothesis, the Black candidate was expected to communicate more effectively with Black than White community members, $p<.001$, and the White candidate was expected to communicate more effectively with White than Black community members, $p<.001$. The biracial candidate alone was expected to communicate equally well with both Black and White community members, $p=.09$, which provided evidence in support of H2 (the bridging hypothesis). The Black ($p\leq.001$) and Biracial ($p=.01$) facilitators were also expected to communicate with the Black community more effectively than the White facilitator (the Black and Biracial facilitators did not differ, $p=.46$). The White facilitator was also expected to communicate with the White community more effectively than the Black facilitator ($p=.03$); the Biracial facilitator did not differ significantly from either the White ($p=.21$) or Black ($p=1.00$) facilitators. Thus, this analysis provides initial evidence in support of the idea that people viewed biracial people as being uniquely capable of bridging racial groups (all statistics reported in Table S1).

Table S1.

Means and Standard Deviations of Communication Effectiveness Ratings, by Condition.

	Communication Effectiveness					
	with Black Community	with White Community	*t*	*df*	Cohen's *d*	95% CI
Pilot						
Black facilitator	5.99 (0.85)[a,1]	4.98 (1.51)[b,1]	4.27***	21	1.86	[.52, 1.50]
Biracial facilitator	5.54 (1.01)[a,1]	5.27 (0.85)[a,1,2]	1.75	23	.73	[-.59, .05]
White facilitator	4.53 (1.27)[a,2]	5.91 (0.88)[b,2]	4.77***	18	2.25	[.77, 1.99]

Candidate Qualification

A one-way ANOVA revealed no significant main effects of condition on the candidate's perceived suitability for the position, $F(2,62)=2.97$, $p=.06$, $\eta^2_p=.09$, Biracial: $M=4.85$, $SD=1.02$; Black: $M=4.71$, $SD=1.25$; White: $M=4.00$, $SD=1.32$.

Study SOM1 (http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=uv23bn)

Participants

One hundred sixty-six White participants participated in this study via TurkPrime in exchange for $1. We aimed to have 50 participants per cell (Simmons et al., 2011). We excluded five participants who self-identified as biracial, and another three participants for failing to pass a manipulation check (see below), leaving a final analytic sample of 158 White (M_{age} = 41.70, SD_{age} = 11.80; 86 female; 72 male) participants. Power analyses indicate this sample size is sufficient to detect a slightly-less than medium effect size *f* (.22) at 80% power (given α = .05 and 3 groups).

Procedure

The methods and materials the same as those described in Study 1 reported in the main text. Participants completed the same measures of perceived communication effectiveness with both Whites (α = .93) and Blacks (α = .92), as well as a candidate qualification (α = .92), as described in the pilot. Data were collected December 2017.

Results

Effective Communication

We again conducted a mixed-model ANOVA with the White and Black communication variables entered as a within-subjects factor, and condition as a between-subjects factor. This analysis revealed that there were two main effects of both communication, $F(1,155) = 5.28$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2_p = .03$, and condition, $F(2,155) = 3.29$, $p = .04$, $\eta^2_p = .04$, as well as a significant condition x communication interaction, $F(2,155) = 85.06$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .52$. To decompose this interaction, we conducted post hoc Bonferroni comparisons (of the Black and White communication variables) separately by condition. This analysis showed that, as expected, the Black candidate was expected to communicate better with Black ($M = 6.21$, $SD = .76$) than White ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.47$) community members, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 2.46$, $t(55) = 9.11$, 95% CI [1.20, 1.88], and the White candidate was expected to communicate better with White ($M = 5.70$, $SD = .72$) than Black ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 1.28$) community members, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 2.06$, $t(51) = 7.36$, 95% CI [.97, 1.70]. In other words, the monoracial bias hypothesis (H1) was again supported. Contradicting the Study 1 results, the biracial candidate was also expected to communicate better with the Black ($M = 5.65$, $SD = .90$) versus White ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 1.27$) community members, $p \leq .001$, Cohen's $d = .39$, $t(49) = 3.83$, 95% CI [.20, .65], which does not support the bridging hypothesis (H2).

Candidate Qualification

We also conducted a one-way ANOVA on the candidate qualification measure. We found a significant main effect of condition on the candidate's perceived suitability for the position, $F(2,155) = 8.44$, $p \leq .001$, $\eta^2_p = .10$. The Biracial candidate ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 1.47$) was viewed as a significantly better candidate than the White candidate ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.32$), $p \leq .001$, Cohen's $d = .74$, 95% CI [.39, 1.69], but not the Black candidate ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 1.29$), $p =$

1.00, 95% CI [-.42, .86]. The Black candidate was also viewed as a better candidate that the White candidate, $p = .006$, Cohen's $d = .63$, 95% CI [.19, 1.46].

Mini-Meta Analysis

Because the Pilot Study (above, in the Supplement) and Study 1 (main text) found that the Biracial candidate was seen as equally capable of communicating with Black and White community members (in support of H2: bridging hypothesis), but Study SOM1 (above, in the Supplement) found that the Biracial candidate was seen as better able to communicate with Black community members versus White community members, we conducted a mini meta-analysis of the effects across the three studies. Following Goh, Hall, & Rosenthal's (2016) procedures, we used Stouffer's formula to calculate a summary p-value for all of the studies, testing whether the biracial candidate was seen as differentially effective at communicating with Black versus White community members. First, we transformed each study's p-value into its corresponding Z (standard normal deviate). Then, we calculated a combined Z of 1.399. Last, we converted the combined Z to a p-value; assuming an alpha of .05 and a two-tailed test, the combined p-value is .16 (not significant). Thus, across the three studies, the data provide evidence in support of the bridging hypothesis (H2), suggesting that a Biracial candidate is viewed as able to communicate with Black and White community members equally effectively.

Table S2

Zero order correlations between all measures, Study 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Effective Comm. with Black Community	--	.41**	.65**	.62**	-.14*	0.02
2. Effective Comm. with White Community		--	.58**	.51**	-.19**	-0.07
3. Learning Strategies			--	.67**	-.15*	-0.04
4. Comfort				--	-.43**	0.04
5. Concern About Revealing Prejudice					--	-0.04
6. Respect/Like						--

Table S3

Zero order correlations between all dependent measures, Study 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Comm. Effectiveness (Biracial Fac.)	--	.37**	.16*	.73**	.16*	.02	.86**	.49**	.32**
2. Comm. Effectiveness (Black Fac.)		--	.16*	.18*	.64**	.06	.39**	.76**	.17*
3. Comm. Effectiveness (White Fac.)			--	.05	-.03	.72**	.06	.10	.68**
4. Facilitator Preference (Biracial Fac.)				--	.07	-.01	.64**	.22**	.12
5. Facilitator Preference (Black Fac.)					--	.06	.15*	.57**	-.04
6. Facilitator Preference (White Fac.)						--	-.06	-.02	.46**
7. Learning Strategies (Biracial Fac.)							--	.57**	.31**
8. Learning Strategies (Black Fac.)								--	.33**
9. Learning Strategies (White Fac.)									--

Table S4

Zero order correlations between all dependent measures, Study 3

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**
1. Comm. Effectiveness (Biracial Fac.)	--	.29**	.03	.63**	.12*	-.09	.76**	.38**	.19**	.72**	.29**	0.06	-.06	.15*	-.25**
2. Comm. Effectiveness (Black Fac.)		--	.30**	.06	.71**	.11	.30**	.76**	.17**	.23**	.72**	.30**	-.02	-.07	-.02
3. Comm. Effectiveness (White Fac.)			--	-.08	.16**	.65**	.08	.18**	.65**	.03	.22**	.70**	-.06	-.24**	.23**
4. Facilitator Preference (Biracial Fac.)				--	.01	.07	.52**	.10	.05	.48**	.13*	-.02	-.10	-.01	-.08
5. Facilitator Preference (Black Fac.)					--	.16*	.11	.58**	.01	.10	.63**	.22**	-.07	-.12	.05
6. Facilitator Preference (White Fac.)						--	-.09	.00	.39**	-.08	.14*	.58**	-.13*	-.39**	.32**
7. Learning Strategies (Biracial Fac.)							--	.46**	.27**	.63**	.24**	.08	-.01	.17**	-.25**
8. Learning Strategies (Black Fac.)								--	.29**	.32**	.63**	.20**	.03	.05	-.08
9. Learning Strategies (White Fac.)									--	.18**	.15*	.58**	-.02	-.05	.10
10. Objectivity (Biracial Fac.)										--	.29**	.06	.00	.15*	-.17**
11. Objectivity (Black Fac.)											--	.33**	-.05	-.08	.03
12. Objectivity (White Fac.)												--	-.06	-.23**	.19**
13. Identification (Biracial Fac.)													--	.16**	.01
14. Identification (Black Fac.)														--	-.54**
15. Identification (White Fac.)															--

Note.

Table S5

Confidence Intervals for Mediation Models Computed for Three Variables Not Reported in the Main Text, Study 1.

	Black Ps	White Ps	Moderated Mediation
Study 1			
Fac. Race→Comfort→Effective Comm. with Black Community	-.00, .40	-.08, .32	-.36, .20
Fac. Race→Comfort→Effective Comm. with White Community	-.00, .43	-.11, .35	-.39, .21
Fac. Race→Comfort→Candidate Qualification	-.01, .40	-.08, .33	-.35, .20
Fac. Race→Concern→Effective Comm. with Black Community	-.03, .15	-.13, .05	-.23, .04
Fac. Race→Concern→Effective Comm. with White Community	-.03, .19	-.14, .06	-.26, .03
Fac. Race→Concern→Candidate Qualification	-.05, .07	-.05, 04	-.09, .08
Fac. Race→Respect/Like→Effective Comm. with Black Community	-.04, .04	-.04, .07	-.06, .09
Fac. Race→Respect/Like→Effective Comm. with White Community	-.04, .05	-.09, .02	-.11, .03
Fac. Race→Respect/Like→Candidate Qualification	-.04, .04	-.07, .04	-.09, .05

Note. Fac. Race = Facilitator Race (1=biracial, 0=monoracial); Comfort (e.g., "I would feel comfortable talking about race with this person"); Concerns = Concerns about revealing prejudice (Carr, Dweck, & Pauker, 2012, e.g., "I would be worried that I might say something that would make me look prejudiced"); Respect/Like (Bergsieker, Shelton, & Richeson, 2010, e.g., "If you had to choose between being liked and being respected by this person, which would you regard as more important? 1 = Liked, 4 = Equal, 7 = Respected.). These exploratory analyses show that comfort with the facilitator, concern about revealing prejudice, and preference for respect versus liking do not explain the link between facilitator race and effective communication or candidate qualification.

Table S6.

Full reporting of ANOVA results for variables not reported in Study 3

Study 3	Main Effect, WS variable	Main Effect, Participant Race	Interaction
Objectivity	$F(2,546)=61.44$, $p\leq.001$, $\eta^2_p=.18$	$F(1,273)=1.35$, $p=.25$	$F(2,546)=2.63$, $p=.07$
Racial Identification (Difference Score)	$F(2,546)=1036.07$, $p\leq.001$, $\eta^2_p=.79$	$F(1,273)=5.25$, $p=.02$, $\eta^2_p=.02$	$F(2,546)=8.18$, $p\leq.001$, $\eta^2_p=.03$

Note. Objectivity (e.g., "People in the session will be able to see this facilitator as being objective" 3 items); for the Racial Identification measure, participants indicated the facilitator's [Black/White] identity, (e.g., "the facilitator sees himself as being Black/White]; 3 items each for the Black and White measures); we created a difference score wherein scores above 0 indicate greater Black (versus White) identification.

Within Subjects Mediations

Studies 2-3

Exploratory Analysis Strategy. Participants' repeated responses in facilitator conditions were nested within person. Thus, we used a multilevel linear modeling strategy (Hayes, 2006; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) to account for the non-independence of participants' responses and to assess the within-person effect of facilitator race (level 1) on communication effectiveness (level 1) and on preference (level 1) through learning strategies (level 1). This strategy also enables us to test whether these indirect effects are dependent upon participant race (level 2). We used Bauer, Preacher, and Gil's (2006) approach for assessing mediation within a 1-1-1 multilevel model, and Hayes and Rockwood's (2020) approach for assessing moderated mediation within a first-stage and direct effect conditional process model.

Within-person effects were assessed on the basis of dummy-coded values of the independent variable (i.e., facilitator race)—where the Biracial facilitator is the reference condition—and person-centered scores of the mediator variable (i.e., learning strategies). We calculated indexes of moderated mediation (Hayes, 2015) for each model to test whether the indirect effects were contingent on participant race. If the index was significant, we ran separate multilevel mediation analyses centered around each level of participant race (White = -1, Black = 1). If the index was nonsignificant, indicating no moderation, we ran one multilevel mediation analysis centered around the average participant (i.e., participant race = 0). Monte-Carlo simulations were used to assess the indirect effects (Bauer et al., 2006). These analyses were run in SPSS utilizing the MLMed macro (Hayes & Rockwood, 2020; Rockwood & Hayes, 2019) designed specifically for computing such analyses. See Tables S7-8 and Figures S1-4.

Study 2. When comparing the White and Biracial facilitators, participant race significantly moderated the indirect effect of facilitator race on preference, *index of moderated mediation*=-.21, 95% CIs[-.37, -.05] and communication effectiveness, *index of moderated mediation* =-.19, 95% CIs[-.35, -.05]. For both Black and White participants, lower perceived use of learning strategies mediated the effect of facilitator race on preference (White participants: *indirect effect*=-.38, $p \leq .001$, 95%CIs[-.61, -.16]; Black participants: *indirect effect*=-.78, $p \leq .001$, 95%CIs[-1.05, -.56]) and effectiveness (White participants: *indirect effect*=-.36, $p \leq .001$, 95%CIs[-.57, -.15]; Black participants: *indirect effect*=-.75, $p \leq .001$, 95%CIs[-.98, -.53]), such that indirect effects were larger for Black participants.

Study 3. Participant race did not moderate the indirect effect of facilitator race on effectiveness between the Biracial and the White facilitators, *index of moderated mediation*=-.01, 95% CIs[-.14, .11], or the Biracial and Black facilitators, *index of moderated mediation*=.07, 95% CIs[-.05, .19], nor the indirect effect on preference between the Biracial and the White facilitators, *index of moderated mediation*=-.01, 95% CIs[-.14, .11]. Across participants, learning strategies partially mediated differences in preference between the Biracial and the White facilitators, *indirect effect*=-.59, $p \leq .001$, 95%CIs[-.74, -.45], as well as differences in effectiveness between the Biracial and the White, *indirect effect*=-.38, $p \leq .001$, 95%CIs[-.70, -.44], and the Black facilitators, *indirect effect*=-.17, p=.01, 95%CIs[-.61, -.16].

Table S7.

Unstandardized REML Regression Estimates for Variables Predicting Learning Strategies, Facilitator Preference, and Communication Effectiveness in Study 2.

	Learning Strategies		Facilitator Preference		Communication Effectiveness	
	Coeff.	95% CI	Coeff.	95% CI	Coeff.	95% CI
Within-Person Effects						
Black	-.08(.08)	-.25, .08	-.08(.10)	-.28, .11	-.14†(.07)	-.28, -.001
White	-.61***(.08)	-.78, -.45	-.35***(.10)	-.56, -.14	-.44***(.07)	-.59, -.29
Participant Race*Black	.07(.08)	-.09, .24	.13(.10)	-.07, .32	.12(.07)	-.02, .25
Participant Race*White	-0.0168	-.38, -.05	-.06(.10)	-.26, .13	-.10(.07)	-.24, .04
Learning Strategies			.96***(.06)	.85, 1.10	.91***(.04)	.83, .99
Between-Person Effects						
Participant Race	-.03(.06)	-.14, .09	.14**(.05)	.05, .24	-.03(.04)	-.10, .05
Learning Strategies			.46***(.06)	.35, .57	.77***(.04)	.69, .86

†p<.10, ∗p<.05, ∗∗p<.01, ∗∗∗p<.001

Note: Learning Strategies was person-centered before analysis. Facilitator race condition was dummy-coded for the presence (1) or absence (0) of the Black and White monoracial facilitators, and participant race is coded as Black (1) or White (-1).

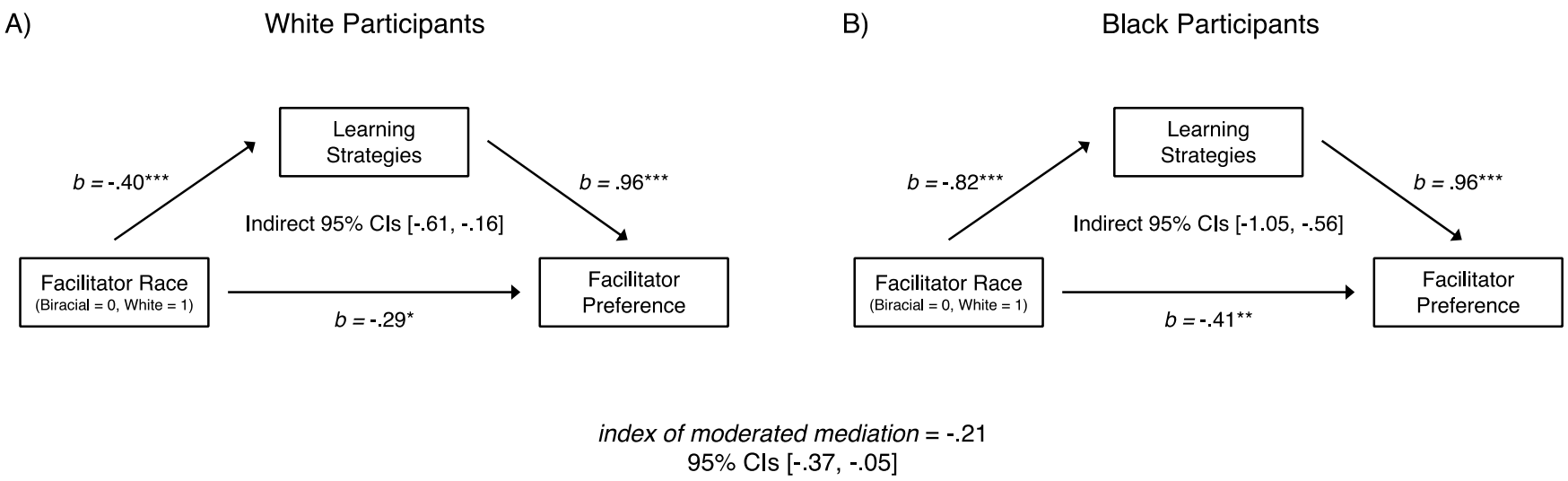
Table S8.

Unstandardized REML Regression Estimates for Variables Predicting Learning Strategies, Facilitator Preference, and Communication Effectiveness in Study 3.

	Learning Strategies		Facilitator Preference		Communication Effectiveness	
	Coeff.	95% CI	Coeff.	95% CI	Coeff.	95% CI
Within-Person Effects						
Black	-.19**(.07)	-.32, -.05	-.07(.09)	-.24, .10	-.31***(.06)	-.43, -.18
White	-.63***(.07)	-.77, -.50	-.78***(.09)	-.96, -.59	-.73***(.07)	-.86, -.59
Participant Race*Black	.08(.07)	-.06, .21	.08(.09)	-.09, .25	.05(.06)	-.08, .17
Participant Race*White	-.01(.07)	-.15, .12	.20*(.09)	.03, .37	.01(.06)	-.11, .14
Learning Strategies			.93***(.05)	.83, 1.03	.89***(.04)	.82, .97
Between-Person Effects						
Participant Race	-.02(.05)	-.11, .07	.14**(.05)	.05, .23	-.01(.03)	-.07, .06
Learning Strategies			.43***(.06)	.31, .55	.79***(.04)	.70, .88

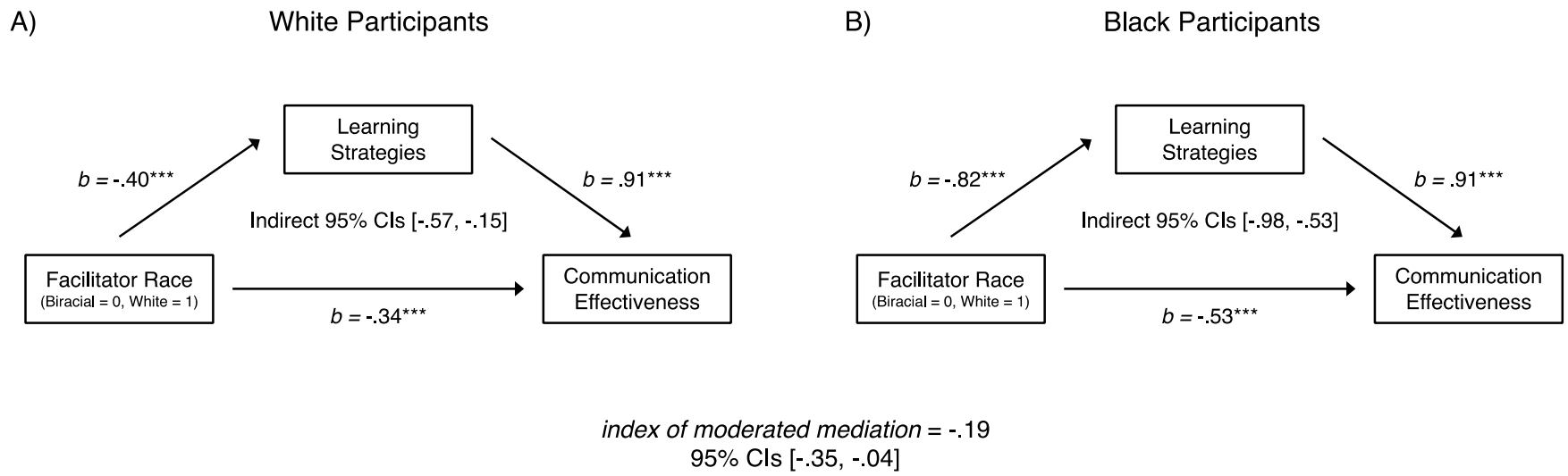
†p<.10, ∗p<.05, ∗∗p<.01, ∗∗∗p<.001

Note: Learning Strategies was person-centered before analysis. Facilitator race condition was dummy-coded for the presence (1) or absence (0) of the Black and White monoracial facilitators, and participant race is coded as Black (1) or White (-1).



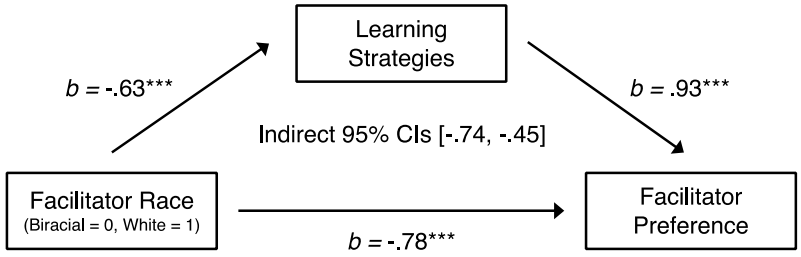
†p<.10, ∗p<.05, ∗∗p<.01, ∗∗∗p<.001

Figure S1. Unstandardized regression coefficients for the relationship between facilitator race (Biracial vs. White) and facilitator preference as mediated by learning strategies for White (panel A) and Black (panel B) participants in Study 2. The index of moderated mediation is presented beneath both panels.



†p<.10, ∗p<.05, ∗∗p<.01, ∗∗∗p<.001

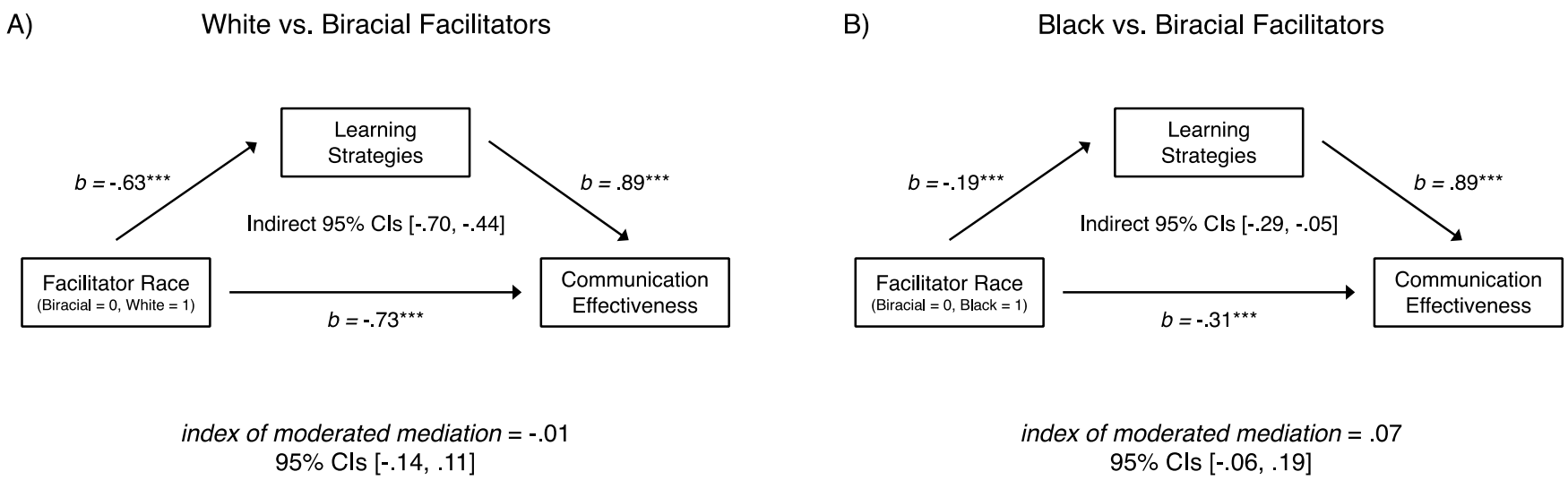
Figure S2. Unstandardized regression coefficients for the relationship between facilitator race (Biracial vs. White) and communication effectiveness as mediated by learning strategies for White (panel A) and Black (panel B) participants in Study 2. The index of moderated mediation is presented beneath both panels.



index of moderated mediation = -.01
95% CIs [-.14, .11]

†p<.10, ∗p<.05, ∗∗p<.01, ∗∗∗p<.001

Figure S3. Unstandardized regression coefficients for the relationship between facilitator race (Biracial vs. White) and facilitator preference as mediated by learning strategies across all participants in Study 3. The index of moderated mediation is presented beneath the figure.



†p<.10, ∗p<.05, ∗∗p<.01, ∗∗∗p<.001

Figure S4. Unstandardized regression coefficients for the relationship between facilitator race (panel A: White vs. Biracial; panel B: Black vs. Biracial) and communication effectiveness as mediated by learning strategies across all participants in Study 3. The indexes of moderated mediation are presented beneath each panel.