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TO BUSINESS COMMUNICATION THEORY.

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TO BUSINESS COMMUNICATION THEORY

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CHARLES D. IRWIN
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ELEMENTS OF CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY APPLICABLE
TO BUSINESS COMMUNICATION THEORY

APPROVED BY:

Anthony P. Lis

Brian O'Leary

Raymond R. White

Heather Williams

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

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ELEMENTS OF CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Instruction in communication theory and skills has become somewhat universal in human education systems. Although some educational objectives are subject to considerable controversy, the educational objective of communication competence is seldom questioned. What is more, the need for communication expertise becomes even greater as societies develop into more complex systems with virtually unlimited mechanical means of transmitting messages.

Business educators have, since early in this century, recognized that businessmen work in demanding communication situations. Accordingly, special instruction in business English was part of the first business education programs set up in private business schools. Today, business communication courses are commonly found in the curricula of collegiate schools and departments of business. Many schools include business communication as a core

requirement for business majors. Those schools without specific business communication courses likely include particular courses in composition, literature, and psychology with a concern for development of communication competence.

Although the need for instruction in communication is widely accepted, the means for accomplishing the end is debated with much vigor. Traditionally, "speaking" and "writing" have been considered fairly basic skills that were relatively easy to analyze and to teach. Courses in grammar and composition provide the basic skills. Literature courses are important to development of reading skill; speech courses provide techniques and experience in oral presentation. Business communication courses have involved applying basic and other skills to particular and demanding written business communication situations.

The traditional approach to instruction in communication relies rather heavily upon correct use of grammar and logical organization of ideas as the means of attaining communication competence. Business communication instruction involves explicit analysis of a communication situation with prescription of psychologically strategic approaches to the developmental structure of the respective communication.

In very recent years, however, the literature of various disciplines includes occasional research data and

theory related to various factors in the communication act. Generally, such literature is concerned with both the symbology and the structure of complex communication systems. Like the Gestalt and field theories in psychology, recent theory of communication relates to a dynamic and complex process.

The disciplines most frequently involved with communication studies are anthropology, English, psychiatry, psychology, sociology, speech, and philosophy. Business communication, as a more specialized discipline, has explored numerous practical and theoretical broad communication concerns through the American Business Communication Association. Another group, the general semanticists, utilize various descriptive data from the disciplines to draw a set of prescriptions for improved communication.

Scholars from various disciplines take membership in the International Communication Association, an organization that provides structure for interdisciplinary study. Through the organization's periodical, The Journal of Communication, its occasionally published "Proceedings," and the effort of the various committees, much is being done to develop a science of human communication. There is as yet, however, no attempt to complete a field-by-field analysis to determine the relative involvement of the fields. Furthermore, the scholars in each of the disciplines continue their probes with only a secondary interest in

the application of their findings to the practical day-to-day communication concerns of other groups like those of business communication.

Collections of essays like Dimensions in Communication¹ and Human Communication Theory² to some extent synthesize the findings from the various fields. The principal theme of such collections is the complexity of variables inherent to the communication act. Although such complexity seems beyond any meaningful quantification, a composite of variables may be an eventuality. The popular collections of essays are possibly strong forerunners to the development of a communication variables composite.

Methodical examination of each of the several disciplines is preliminary to the development of a composite. Narrowing an examination to one particular field as it relates to another is a logical intermediate step. The purpose of this study, then, is to select one interdisciplinary field, i.e., cultural anthropology, and to examine that field for descriptive information and theory that can be applied to the practical concerns of instruction in business communication.

¹James H. Campbell and Hal W. Hepler, Dimensions in Communication (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1965).

²Frank E. X. Dance, ed., Human Communication Theory (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967).

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to determine the nature and the application of topics in the field of cultural anthropology to the field of business communication. This task is a part of a larger problem of ascertaining additional possibilities of an interdisciplinary approach to the nature and the teaching of business communication.

As a prominent field in the study of human communication, cultural anthropology offers potential for providing particular data that relate to the instructional objectives of business communication. Identification of relevant topics and demonstration of their applicability may provide immediate implementation value, as well as suggest the need for similar study of other behavioral science fields.

This exploratory study represents a pioneering attempt to identify relevant topics from one human communication field and then to apply those topics to the instructional framework of another field.

Delimitations

The scope of this study was limited to identifying and describing the relevance of cultural anthropology topics for use in business communication instruction. There was no attempt either to quantify or to weight the various data reported in terms of communications consequence. Furthermore, there was no attempt to demonstrate the relevance

of the described topics to any field other than the field of business communication.

Sources of Data

The data for this study were derived primarily from literature in anthropology. Other literature essential to perspective development included the books and periodicals in business communication, as well as material in behavioral science disciplines.

Procedure

Due to the nature of the study, the first step involved general reading in business, human communication, and the behavioral sciences. Literature relating to business communication, business management, human communication problems and theory, and anthropology was examined. Special attention was given to cultural anthropology for its general relevance to business communication theory.

The second step consisted of outlining the fundamental aspects of the field of business communication. The information indicated the scope of business communication and the nature of business communication theory.

The third step involved methodical examination of the literature in cultural anthropology to determine the relevance of such literature to business communication theory. The sub-divisions of cultural anthropology were individually probed through the methodological approach of

an anthropology authority¹ and the business communication framework established in the second procedural step of this study. A professional anthropologist² was utilized for review and advice regarding the use and interpretation of anthropological sources.

The final step involved preparing concluding statements regarding the potential of cultural anthropology as a source of descriptive data relevant to business communication instructional objectives.

Formal preparation and presentation of the research report concluded the project.

¹Dell Hymes, "The Anthropology of Communication," Human Communication Theory, ed. Frank E. X. Dance (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967), pp. 1-39.

²Dr. George A. Agogino, Professor in Anthropology, Chairman, Department of Anthropology, Director of Paleo-Indian Institute and Anthropology Museums, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico.

CHAPTER II

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTION

Business communication courses are a common part of the business curriculum in many colleges and universities in the United States. Often,¹ at least one business communication course is included in "core" requirements for the baccalaureate degree with a business major. Some metropolitan high schools offer an introductory course.

Although instruction in writing itself was an early part of American education, business educators from the start of formal instruction in business have sought to help business students obtain even greater skill in this essential aspect of business activity. The forerunner of the present-day business communication program was the "business English" course that first appeared in private business schools in this country around the turn of the century. Business English courses, which for the most part involve rigorous training in the basics of English grammar, are included in

¹Herta A. Murphey indicates that in 1962, 53% of 250 colleges responding to a poll of 350 schools require a basic business communication course; see, "Why College Training in Letter Writing for All Business Students?" Collegiate News and Views, XVII (December, 1963), 11-15.

some college business department curricula even today and apparently serve an important function in extending basic skills.

In most schools of business, however, the business English course has evolved into business communication courses of rather sophisticated forms. The typical basic course is devoted to the development of proficiency in working with the most typical writing situations in business. Other courses include specialized considerations of sales and public relations correspondence, as well as report writing.

Because the basic course is the one often included in the core requirements for business majors, that course naturally receives the greatest attention in various professional literature.

Although the content of the course continues to change as new information and concepts are related to it, the usual content is built around basic psychological considerations involved in developing particular business communication. For example, a "good news" type message is supposedly more effective when organized in particular ways; "bad news" is theoretically better received when the message follows certain structural routines. Thus, in addition to extending skills in grammar, the student in the basic business communication course masters psychological approaches to writing various kinds of messages.

Typical business message types treated in basic business communication textbooks¹ are as follows:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Situation</u>
Goodwill	Granting favors and requests; remittances, acknowledgments; congratulations; appreciation; promotion.
Persuasion	Sales materials--letter series, and so forth.
Bad News	Refusing adjustment; credit denial; refusing request.
Good News	Extending credit; providing requests and favors; adjustment approval.

In varying degrees, textbooks also include material on writing style, writing qualities, and format. Some include appended material on basic grammar and word usage. To facilitate basic course content variation among colleges, many texts include short units on report writing; a few books include complete report writing units.

¹Robert R. Aurner and Morris P. Wolf, Effective Communication in Business (5th ed.; Cincinnati: South-Western Publishing Co., 1969); Frank J. Devlin, Business Communication (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1968); Harvey E. Drach, American Business Writing (New York: American Book Co., 1959); William C. Himstreet and Wayne M. Baty, Business Communications (2d ed.; Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1964); J. Harold Janis, Writing and Communicating in Business (New York: MacMillan Co., 1964); Raymond V. Lesikar, Business Communication: Theory and Application (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1968); J. H. Menning and C. W. Wilkinson, Communicating through Letters and Reports (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1967); Norman B. Sigband, Communication for Management (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1969); Walter Wells, Communication in Business (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1968).

The most recent development in text content is the inclusion of essentials of logic, strategy, general statements about communication theory, and the currently quite popular material from general semantics. The general semantics material provides rather practical prescriptive communication theory. Among other items, the student is taught through this material to "index" his communication generalizations about both behavior and things. The student is made aware of the complexities of communication behavior and learns to recognize the potential of human communication theory for describing communication problems.

New content found in either recently revised or new textbooks is illustrated by the following selections. The topics selected include identification of author and page numbers to show coverage of each topic.

<u>Books</u>	<u>Topics</u>
Aurner-Wolf <u>Effective Communication in Business</u> (1969)	Communication inside and outside firm (channels), pp. 6-7; perception and interpretation, pp. 9-13; logic, pp. 34-37.
Devlin <u>Business Communication</u> (1968)	General communication theory, pp. 3-11; application of, pp. 13-23.
Lesikar <u>Business Communication: Theory and Application.</u> (1968)	Model of process, pp. 17-31; perception and reality, pp. 35-46; filter of the mind, pp. 48-59; words and meaning, pp. 61-77; some malfunctions of communication, pp. 80-95.

(New content in textbooks, continued)

<u>Books</u>	<u>Topics</u>
Sigband <u>Communication for Management</u> (1969)	Communication theory, pp. 5-6; the process of communication, pp. 8-9; barriers, p. 10; feedback, pp. 17-19; nonverbal, 19-23.

With the possible exception of Lesikar's book, the topics are generally and briefly treated in these textbook samples. The total pages of these books range from about 500 pages to over 700 pages, with the major part of each devoted to coverage of traditional topics. Not all new and revised books have added material of this nature.

As the course has changed, its title has also changed from the once popular "business correspondence" designation to "business communication." The new title is intended apparently to denote a broader concern for the effectiveness of all business communication. Accordingly, the popular professional association of the field has changed its name from the "American Business Writing Association" to the "American Business Communication Association."

In light of the general trend to revise approaches to instruction, interest in broader-based content is likely to continue. Inasmuch as the study of human communication has not been isolated to any one particular field, a broader content base for business communication instruction will come from several disciplines. Furthermore, the possibility appears unlikely that any one of the disciplines will devote

particular effort to applying descriptive data to specific instructional needs of fields like the field of business communication.

Application of communication theory is complicated, therefore, by the lack of a definite lodging of responsibility for the synthesis of new understandings. The formation and the utilization of concepts are both somewhat neglected. Academic groups are prone to "go it alone" unless an organizational framework combines their efforts. The International Communication Association provides a structure for synthesizing a great deal of human communication information, of course. But the society draws its membership unevenly from the various disciplines with a few fields having relatively few members in the organization. In the academe, scholars tend very much to look to their own "speciality" organizations for professional affiliation and involvement.

Recognizing the need for application, at least two behavioral science disciplines have developed what they call "applied" branches. There are, as examples, "applied anthropology" and "applied psychology" divisions within the respective disciplines. The literature in these specialities indicates little application to communication instruction, however.

There was during 1970 no recorded attempt to apply communication information and understanding from a specific

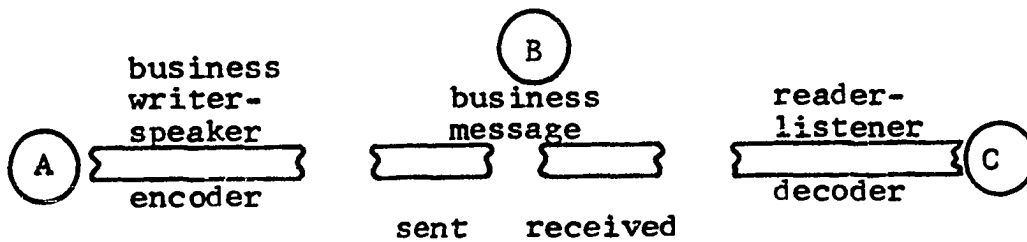
behavioral science field to the practical situation of business communication. Obviously, the apparent search for broader-based theory in business communication would be greatly simplified if such material were available. This need provides the basis for the present study: an analysis of one field, cultural anthropology, to determine what categories of cultural anthropology have potential for application to business communication course content. Eventually, all other behavioral science fields should be analyzed in a similar fashion so that a more realistic composite of communication variables in the business communication situation may be developed for incorporation into business communication course content.

Essentials of Business Communication Theory

The following description of business communication theory will facilitate analysis of cultural anthropology topics for relevance to business communication instruction. The description includes a model with details regarding the principal components of the model.

The business communication model may be detailed as follows.¹ Principal components are labeled "A," "B," and "C."

¹Adapted from a model in "Writing and Communicating in Business", J. Harold Janis (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1964), p. 17. The adaptation primarily involves the addition of the term "business" to make clear the application in this study.



The scope of business communication messages (component B in the model) is indicated in the following list by Janis.¹

Abstracts	Educational Literature
Administrative Orders	Employee Publications
Advertisements	
Agenda	Financial Analyses
Agreements	
Announcements	Goodwill Literature
Annual Reports	
Applications	Handbills
	Handbooks
Bill Enclosures	House Organs
Booklets	
Bulletins	Inquiries
Business Articles	Instructions
Business and	Introductions
Financial News	Invitations
Catalogs	Laws and by-laws
Certificates	Leaflets
Circulars	Legal Briefs
Citations	Letters
Commemorative	
Literature	Manuals
Complaints	Market Surveys
Contracts	Memorandums
Coupons	Minutes
Data Sheets	Orders and Order Forms
Directories	
Direct-Mail Advertising	Package Copy
Dividend Notices	Policy Statements

¹ Janis, Writing and Communicating in Business, p. 5.

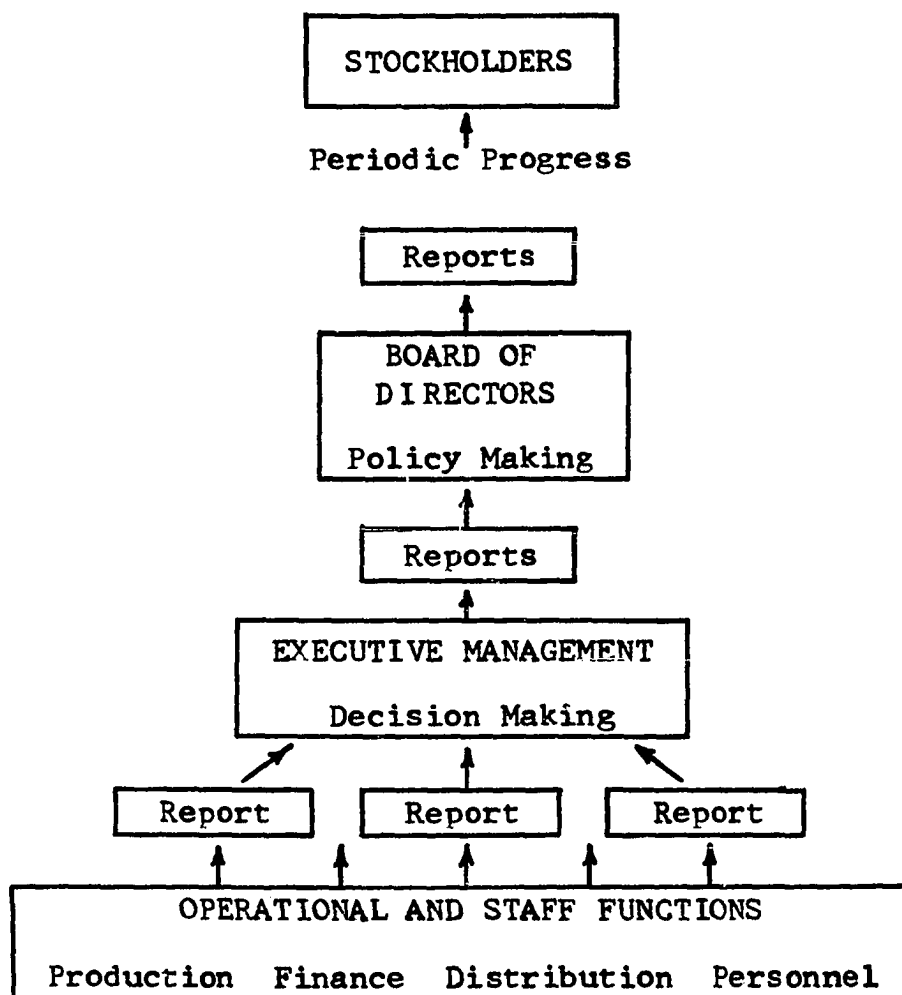
(Scope of business messages, continued)

Posters	Resumes
Press Releases	Reviews of Business
Procedures	Books and Articles
Programs	
Prospectuses	Sales Presentations
	Signs
Radio and Television	Speeches
Commercials	Suggestions
Reading Rack	
Literature	Tags and Labels
Recruitment Literature	Technical Papers
References	Telegrams
Replies to Inquiries	Training Aids
Reports	
Research Studies	Wills
Resolutions	

Janis' comprehensive list of written business messages also includes the types of oral messages transmitted in business. Conferences, councils, and "grapevine" activity may be added as important oral message situations. The messages transmitted in such situations are not easily labeled.

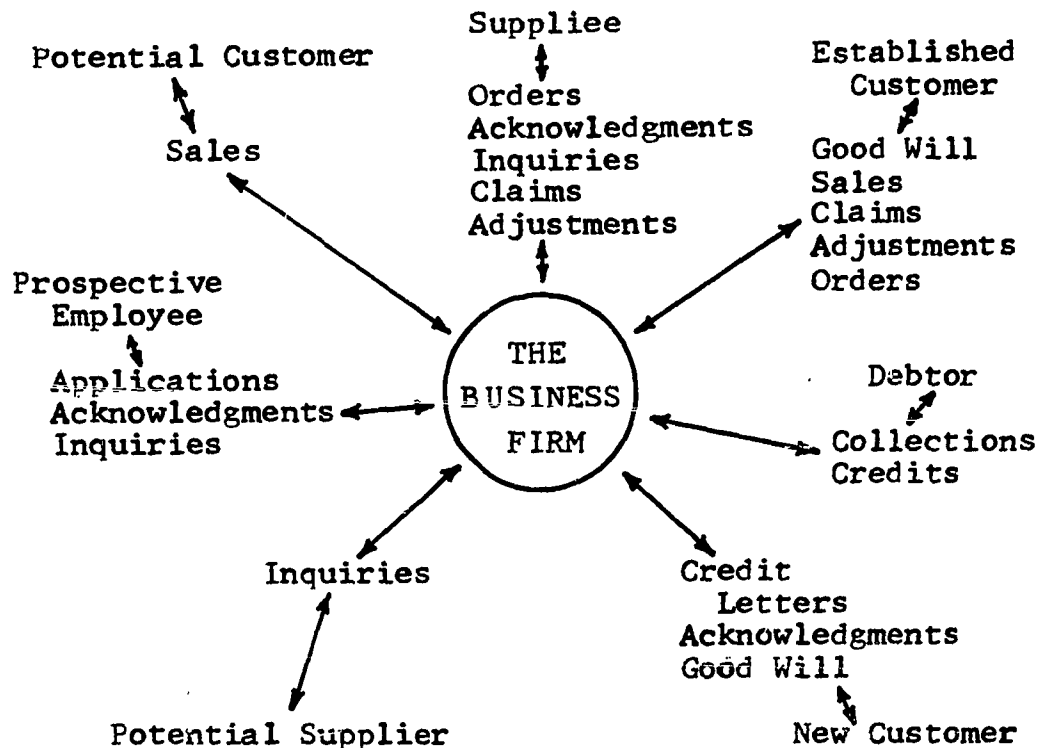
The sender (speaker-writer) and the receiver (listener-reader) in the business communication model (components A and C, respectively) are identified in the following illustrations. Any two individuals at any interface may be either a sender or a receiver. The chart presents the numerous possibilities for sender-receiver relationships within the structure of the business firm. Some firms are not incorporated, of course, and would not have the stockholders and board of directors as shown.

Although the arrows in the chart indicate upward flow, much communication may come down from the top echelons. Other communication may move horizontally at any particular level.



Source: William C. Himstreet and Wayne M. Baty, Business Communications (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1964), p. 18.

The following illustration points out numerous possibilities for communication to move both ways between the firm and the individuals outside the firm.



Source: Himstreet and Baty, Business Communications, p. 19.

In summary, the business communication situation involves either a business writer-reader or business speaker-listener who is engaged with another person either within the firm or outside the firm to deal with some aspect of a business transaction. The business message takes its form in any of the message types listed on pages 14 and 15 of this chapter. For purposes of instruction, these types are grouped by textbook authors according to structural similarity and purpose. Various logical and psychological

considerations are employed to develop messages in the several broad categories. Recent textbooks have included short communication theory units to support a broad based interest in communication.

CHAPTER III

HUMAN COMMUNICATION THEORY

Human communication theory deals with those aspects of human behavior that relate to the sending and the receiving of communicative information. There is apparent agreement among scholars that human communication is a complex phenomenon. Conversely, man's general attitude toward communication ability has probably been one of oversimplification and underestimation. This situation may well be a product of the change in man's cultural circumstance and the concomitant change in his need realization.

One of the most prominent characteristics of man is that he continuously extends his knowledge of his behavior and the events of the world in which he lives. In a somewhat adaptive fashion, he tends to extend knowledge of his environment as his need to do so dictates. One of man's first concerns, of course, was subsistence. Accordingly, he extended his knowledge of subsistence possibilities--best illustrated, perhaps, in his developing fire with an immediate value of his being able to cook and consume meat which was otherwise not suited to his gastronomical system. Subsistence

and other survival knowledge was probably followed much later with a deep concern for the nature of his metaphysical self. Eventually, his concern moved to a broad and technical concern for the world about him; natural science knowledge was the result. The sciences were complemented by quantification knowledges; technological expertise soon followed. Technology, along with population growth, accounts directly for increasingly complex societies and human relationships. Now man is apparently turning to a pursuit of knowledge in the behavioral sciences to help him adapt to complex human relationships.

Behavioral science is in a very real sense a new area of knowledge. As recently as 1964, Berelson and Steiner completed an "inventory" of research in human behavior. Their findings point up the relative development of behavioral sciences.

Anthropologists of all branches have been so preoccupied with field work that the profession has not organized and assimilated what is in fact "known."¹

Ernest Hilbard is quoted in the same source as follows:

The state of (factual knowledge) is not very satisfactory; neither is it very easy to remedy. The number of dependable "facts" in the various fields of psychology are not very impressive.²

¹Bernard Berelson and Gary A. Steiner, Human Behavior: An Inventory of Scientific Findings (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1964), p. 4.

²Ibid., p. 4.

The newness of behavioral science is further supported in the following statement by Edward Shils:

Nothing is more necessary at present than the systematic collation and "shaking down" of American sociological research results to discover what they amount to, to weigh the evidence on crucial problems and to see what is really known on the basis of adequate evidence and what is still unsettled.¹

There is rather obvious immediate value for new data in the behavioral sciences. Practical applications are made in psychology, psychiatry, religion, education, and business. Managerial literature,² for one example, has in recent years been rather significantly affected by behavioral science material. Some college of business core curricula are based on broad behavioral science courses.

As one of the behavioral science topics, human communication theory is limited in immediate usefulness by its newness, incomplete state, and lack of thorough synthesis. As noted in the preceding chapter, human communication theory is plagued by not having a clearly identifiable parentage. Traditional fields that have in some way explored communication theory in recent years include the following: anthropology, education, English, business communication, philosophy, sociology, and speech. The general semanticists

¹Ibid., p. 4.

²Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" is a major aspect of the widely read theories of Douglas McGregor, an eminent managerial theorist.

represent another relatively new group with immediate concern for human communication. This group, however, is not fully developed as an academic discipline. With these several disciplines somewhat involved in the search for more nearly complete knowledge, the responsibility for synthesis seems painfully elusive.

A few major universities in the United States have added departments of communication. Sometimes, however, these departments are primarily concerned with mass communication media (radio and television) and only incidentally concerned with the behavioral aspects of communication study.

The various disciplines have approached communication study from both similar and different perspectives. General statements of respective group interest in communication are presented on the following pages.

Anthropology

Anthropologists have taken several approaches to the study of communication. The basic approaches include information theory (the basics of how much information is carried in what types of messages), social theory (the effect of social structure and roles on exchange), animal communication (inasmuch as communication is any act by which one organism triggers another, animal communication data have potential for analysis of human communication), and linguistics (the study of the various modalities of communication accompanying

speech, and of the codes in terms of which they are interpreted). Also included are paralinguistics and kinesics (the study of voice qualities and of body motion, respectively), and ethnography (the study of particular cultures and societies.)

Clearly, the anthropologist's involvement with communication has been a rather broad one. What is missing is the conscious effort to recast anthropological study generally in terms of communication. Hymes reports:

The full range of studies that are needed to describe the communication system--studies of gesture, paralanguage, use of body motion and space, native canons of rhetoric, logic, and poetics, norms for the communicative use of settings--are needed equally to guide practical work in communication, whether a matter of literacy and fundamental education, of religious and political persuasion, or of administration and technological change.¹

Business Communication

As noted in chapter 2, business educators included communication skill in the curricula of early business training programs. Although business communication programs represent but a small part of the total business curricula, the literature in business periodically includes reports on efforts to improve communication in general and business communication in particular.

¹Dell Hymes, "The Anthropology of Communication," Human Communication Theory, ed. Frank E. X. Dance (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967) p. 31.

Most notable in the business literature are the publications of the American Business Communication Association. Topics explored in this literature include research on the very practical (most commonly used words) to the complexities of factorial analysis in communication research. In general, the human communication aspects of business education research deals with analysis of specialized communication situations. The content of the application letter-resume set and the consequences of different structural designs for persuasive letters are two examples of business communication research.

English

Within this discipline, English scholars are primarily concerned with language skills and the use of language style and facility to communicate cultivated human perception of experience. An involvement with perception study leads rather quickly to analysis of human systems of meaning. Studies of meanings as products of cultural phenomena account for much research by English scholars in human communication.

Except for a few works,¹ English scholars are very much like the scholars in other subject fields: communication theory is reported in the literature but relatively unapplied outside the discipline.

¹An exceptional work would be C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards' The Meaning of Meaning.

Philosophy

A fairly recent movement in philosophy has involved an analysis of symbolic meanings as they relate to philosophical interests. Essentially, the movement has developed a system that places man's capacity for symbolic transformation¹ at the center of philosophical systems. Inasmuch as philosophical inquiry is basically concerned with the structure of meaning, the theory that man's symbology directly affects his meaning systems becomes a philosophical concept, as well.

Communication theory, of course, by its nature involves the analysis of meaning systems. Units of meaning are basic to all communication. Symbology is necessary for identifying units of meaning. This relationship of symbology to meaning is of consequence to the philosopher and is the basis for his involvement in human communication study.

Psychology

The central nervous system, human perception, and human behavior are principal concerns of the field of psychology in communication study. Communication theory is relevant to the psychologist in his study of the involvement of the central nervous system in the perception of

¹Symbolic transformation is a central concept in Susanne K. Langer's Philosophy in a New Key.

of information, the storage of information, and the transmission of information. Basically, the psychologist notes that perception is a kind of transaction between subject and object. Things appear as they do and are communicated as they "are" as results of human structural systems.

Educational psychologists relate to communication theory as they explore learning theory. The various aspects of accumulation of information and reinforcement are essentially communication problems. Learning is, thus, a product of some level of communication. Analysis of either learning or communication, then, may be a partial analysis of both.

Psychology, like other fields, has a limited commitment as noted by Parry:

Since 1950 psychologists have touched communication problems at a number of points, but few if any attempts have been made to set them in relation to one another, to draw as it were a sketch-map of communication as an area of psychological study, showing where effort has been directed and where there are areas that remain untouched.¹

The area of psycholinguistics is perhaps the closest in its involvement with human communication theory. Through the study of linguistic structure, psycholinguists approach the problems of perception, integration, and ontogenesis of language.

¹John Parry, The Psychology of Communication (New York: American Elsevier Publishing Company, Inc., 1968), p. 16.

General psychological research has been directed to descriptions of the characteristics of both sender and receiver, as well as to channel characteristics. Complete descriptive information of this type can, among other things, help in stipulating conditions under which particular categories of individuals might accept change advocated in persuasive communication. Psychological theory is also being developed to explain such things as "consistency" models of attitude change to support predictive type information. Then too, models are extended to methods of categorizing group interaction. The flow of communication within groups may be predicted upon analysis of various group member factors--sex, role, status, personality "mix," group size, amount of discrepancy in individual opinion, and group attractiveness for its members.¹ Such behavioral study is very much related to the study of human communication.

Sociology

According to their literature, sociologists have possibly been the least interested group in pursuing the relationship of their discipline to communication thought. Some sociologists still hold, in fact, that how humans communicate relates either incidentally or secondarily to how they relate as social beings. Duncan summarizes the argument by stating

¹Jack M. McLeod, "The Contribution of Psychology to Human Communication Theory," Human Communication Theory, ed. by Dance, p. 225.

that "class exists and then is expressed, it does not arise in expression."¹ This issue is apparently one that has extended over many years. A view contrary to Duncan's is expressed by John Dewey in a sociology text copyrighted in 1921.

Society not only continues to exist by transmission, by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication. There is more than a verbal tie between the words, common, community, and communication.²

Elsewhere, Duncan suggests a view compatible with Dewey's.

Society exists in and through communication, because it is through the use of significant symbols that we take the attitudes of others, as they, in turn, are able to take our attitudes toward them.³

Explaining material from Mead's The Philosophy of the Present, Duncan indicates that the " . . . organized attitudes of the group exist in significant symbols, and it is through them that group life becomes possible."⁴

The following are selected propositions from a list enumerated by Duncan to indicate sociological relationships to communication theory:

Society arises in, and continues to exist through, the communication of significant symbols.

¹Hugh Dalziel Duncan, "The Search for a Social Theory of Communication in American Sociology," Human Communication Theory, ed. by Dance, p. 237.

²Ibid., p. 242.

³Ibid., p. 243.

⁴Ibid., p. 244.

Symbols are the only directly observable data of meaning in social relationships.

Hierarchy (in social relationships) consists of the symbolization of superiority, inferiority, and equality in passage from one position to another. This passage is expressed as an upward way to some ultimate principle of social order upon which the whole system rests.

Relationships between authorities, symbol manipulators, publics, and critics, may be distinguished by asking to what degree communication among them is open or closed.¹

Duncan's enumeration is comprehensive and includes these three categories of propositions: axiomatic, theoretical, and methodological. The examples listed are suggestive of the sociological interest in human communication theory. In general, they indicate that symbolic forms constitute social reality; the "how" of human communication is also the "how" of human relationships.

Speech

The relative role of the field of speech in human communication study may be superficially estimated by noting its relative representation in the International Communication Association. This interdisciplinary group has members from numerous academic areas. Speech scholars number second only to the total for the "other groups" not typically considered in academic discipline categories.

¹Ibid., pp. 252-59.

Considering recent agreement that language is primarily oral and secondarily written, the involvement of the speech discipline seems quite obvious. The basic purpose of the field is " . . . to deal with influence as exerted through oral discourse."¹ Language is, of course, central as a communication topic.

In the process of in-depth analysis of language structure, speech scholars have worked extensively with units of meaning. Most obvious in such study is the concern for the rhetorical structure of a total message. Interest does not stop with rhetoric, however, but continues to the smallest unit of meaning, as well as all other units of meaning. In attempts to determine how much information is in what unit of language, the speech scholar becomes involved with information theory--another topic of human communication study.

General Aspects of Human Communication Theory

In a quite broad sense, human communication is any verbal behavior that triggers a response in another human. Nonverbal behavior may also be human communication in that nonverbal symbology is dependent upon previous verbal symbology for meaning.

¹Robert T. Oliver, "Contributions of the Speech Profession to the Study of Human Communication," Human Communication Theory, ed. by Dance, p. 265.

The basic model¹ for communication typically resembles the following:



The principal elements in the model include:

A source: which may be most any kind of transmitter--a person or thing that encodes.

A message: something that is transmitted for some purpose . . . the encoder composes it.

A channel: the means of communicating the message.

A receiver: the person or thing decoding the message.

Although the study of human communication theory may well have had a considerable impetus from the structuring of a basic model, the model itself merely provides a framework for analysis of considerably complex communication factors. Communication effectiveness, for example, might generally be held to be dependent upon how closely the message encoded is the message decoded--but the meaning of the message is dependent upon broad cultural, as well as sub-cultural group and individual structural systems. Even perception of particular channel signals may be dependent upon structural systems.

¹The basic model and its elements are usually credited to Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver, The Mathematical Theory of Communication.

The process of "sending" and "receiving" is far more complex than the simple model implies. Birdwhistell indicates that the simple dyadic frame of sender-receiver " . . . has impeded the systematic investigation of the larger system of which the dyadic situation is little more than incidental."¹ He explains that communication is multi-level--a continuous process with diverse types of messages that can be independently analyzed. Watzlawick indicates a similar view in stating his three basic premises essential to communication analysis:

1. One cannot not communicate.
2. Communication is multi-level . . . communication becomes meaningless if reduced to one level, i.e., bereft of context.
3. (The) . . . message sent is not necessarily the message received.²

The complexity of human communication is indicated by Berlo also:

Communication theory reflects a process point of view. A communication theorist rejects the possibility that nature consists of events or ingredients that are separable from all other events. He argues that you cannot talk about the beginning or the end of communication or say that a particular idea came from one specific source, that communication occurs in only one way, and so on.³

¹Ray L. Birdwhistell, "Communication," International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, ed. David L. Sills, Vol. 3, pp. 24-29.

²Paul Watzlawick, An Anthology of Human Communication (Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1964).

³David K. Berlo, The Process of Communication, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 24.

Thayer also describes the complex nature of communication in his explanation of the nature of communication:

A . . . reason for the general inadequacy of our definitions and explanation of communication is that they imply far too much rationality and conscious awareness. We have inadvertently established a link between communication and ideas for thoughts which is simply too restrictive. People react (even reliably and predictably) to far more than words or symbols as such. And they react in far more than purely cognitive ways. A general feeling of uneasiness about someone or some situation is often a major determinant of our behavior in those situations.¹

Human communication is, then, both complex and basic to human relationships, as well as probably the most basic human behavior. Each of the behavioral sciences, then, may relate to aspects of communication in its own unique way.

This same diversity accounts for the lack of a unified theory of communication that conceivably could provide a composite of variables affecting the communication act. Presently, each one of the several behavioral science disciplines is probing various aspects of potential variables.

An enormous challenge has been laid for behavioral scientists in resolving the problems of human communication. Although considerable information is being accumulated, little is being done to take inventory of the potential for application to particular types of day-to-day communication problems. The purpose of the next unit of this study is to analyze one of the major areas, cultural anthropology, for its relevance to the practical problems of effective business communication.

¹Lee O. Thayer, Communication and Communication Systems, (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1968), p. 14.

CHAPTER IV

ELEMENTS OF CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY APPLICABLE TO BUSINESS COMMUNICATION THEORY

Anthropology is perhaps one of the most recent of the several social sciences. The term "anthropo" is from the Greek word anthropos, meaning the "human being". or "man." The term "anthropology" is defined as the science of man. A more precise definition from Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary is: "The science of man in relation to physical character, distribution, origin, classification, and relationship of races, environmental and social relations, and culture."¹ Thus, a broad range of study is carried on by scholars in the field of anthropology.

Like some other disciplines, anthropology is divided into several subgroups. Although various classification schemes may be used, the total field may generally be divided into the following two major groups and subgroups:

Physical Anthropology--generally involved with genetically transmitted characteristics. Man's inherited biological characteristics are described through human evolution and race studies.

¹Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1960), p. 38.

Sub-topics include:

Human paleontology--study of fossil remains of prehistoric man and near man.

Racial anthropology--biogenetically inherited differences; anatomical, physiological, and psychological among different groups; human genetics.

Comparative primatology--similarities and differences among primates.

Constitutional anthropology--studies different body builds, possible relationships to temperament, diseases, etc.; human growth.

Cultural Anthropology--generally involved with socially learned traits. Human traits learned by people as members of groups; embraces both prehistoric and primitive cultures.

Branches include:

Prehistoric archaeology--seeks to learn about extinct ways of life through the excavation and interpretation of their material remains.

Ethnology--descriptive and comparative study of the world's cultures; usually nonliterate or other exotic cultures, for the purpose of formulating generalization about human nature; includes the study of techniques, economic organization, kinship association, government, law, religion, art, folklore, and other aspects of culture. Ethnologists who emphasize aspects of relations among groups, such as family kinship organization, law, and political and economic relations are identified as social anthropologists.

Cultural dynamics--the study of cultural stability and change.

Applied anthropology--the practical use of information to help administrators with problems.

Linguistics--intensive description and analysis of characteristics and peculiarities in language structure. Linguistics is a major branch of cultural anthropology; identification is with ethnology.

As a scientific study of man, anthropology is devoted to the description of various aspects of human life. Physical anthropology maintains a primary concern for genetically transmitted characteristics; cultural anthropology encompasses prehistoric archaeology, ethnology, and cultural dynamics. Generally, cultural topics include those studies that describe and analyze socially learned traits.

Although communication study is quite pervasive and is at least occasionally addressed in nearly all anthropological divisions, cultural anthropology topics produce greater relevant information about communication than physical anthropology topics. Genetically transmitted characteristics, as the central theme to physical anthropology, would hold prima facie less potential for communication material than the "socially learned traits" theme of cultural anthropology. Cultural study provides considerable insight into the complexities of human social structures and the meaning systems that underlie those structures. Both the aspect of meaning systems and the analysis of linguistic structure relate directly to human communication theory and are popular areas of discussion in communication study.

A useful classification is provided by Hymes in his identification of the following four anthropological sources of communication information:

1. The linguist's measurement of language units. A viable unit in that communication theory's most basic unit is a study of information flow.
2. The physical anthropologists information on animal communication has been useful not only in defining communication but also in analysis of basic codes of communication.
3. The cultural anthropologist and linguist have produced considerable information on modalities of communication other than speech. Paralinguistics, kinesics, and proxemics are the general "nonverbal" communication means.
4. The application of linguistic data to various social sciences--ethnolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics--provides another source of contributing data. Specifically, such study starts with a description of a speech community and proceeds to the verbal repertoires of individuals who compose it.¹

Hymes' sources make general reference to the broad divisions of anthropology. Except for archaeology, the subgroups are in various ways identified as sources for communication information. Cultural studies and linguistics are the most obviously relevant sources. Overlapping of interest and study is evident among the anthropology divisions, however, and each in at least some way contributes information to the study of human communication. Even the most unlikely relevant of the groups, archaeology, makes a contribution through its involvement with man's

¹Dell Hymes, "The Anthropology of Communication," Human Communication Theory, ed. by Dance, pp. 8-17.

cultural adaptability. The processes of adaptation and communication are significantly interrelated.

The study of communication by some anthropologists has become a central factor in cultural analysis. Hall¹ maintains that culture is communication. Essentially, communication and culture are related through their common dependence upon the role of human meaning systems. Cultural studies involve description of particular coded systems of human organization and behavior. The "meaning"--from philosophical to pragmatic--is the substance of culture. Similarly, recent communication study specifically addresses the meaning potential of communication acts. Furthermore, the meaning communicated is a culturally ascribed meaning. The relationship is complemented even further by the total dependence of culture upon the communication system for propagation of human species.

Communication-culture analysis in these terms is obviously of different dimension from the traditional speech-oriented analysis. Hymes reports:

Any behavior and object may be communication, and the range that does serve communication in a given case is far greater and more significant than our common focus on speech reveals²

¹Edward T. Hall, The Silent Language (Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1959), pp. 93-98.

²Hymes, "Anthropology of Communication," p. 25.

Hymes then organizes the cultural study of communication by setting out four basic questions to be answered in analyzing communication acts. The questions are relevant to the analysis of this study as well. The questions are:

1. What are the communication events, and their components in a community?
2. What are the relationships among them?
3. What capabilities and states do they have, in general, and in particular events?
4. How do they work?¹

Inasmuch as "message" is the central communication aspect used by Hymes in couching the analytical question scheme, he provides the following description of "message":

. . . the sharing (real or imputed) of (1) a code (or codes) in terms of which a message is intelligible to (2) participants, minimally an addressor and addressee (who may be the same person), in (3) an event constituted by transmission of the message, and characterized by (4) a channel or channels, (5) a setting or context, (6) a definite form or shape to the message, and (7) a topic and comment, (the message says something about something.)²

The business communication system is applicable to this scheme. Business messages, inasmuch as they relate to the business culture of a highly industrialized society like that of the United States, may, in fact, uniquely apply to the scheme. A generalized application follows:

¹Ibid., p. 25.

²Ibid., pp. 25-26.

Item 1: The communication events and their components in the business community.

Application: The events of business communication are categorized by various business communication scholars from a few generalized categories (p. 10) to elaborate enumerations (pp. 15-16). The communication events of business are divided into those outside the firm and those inside the firm (pp. 17-18.) Within each group there are particular types of messages that can be identified--good news, bad news, collection, sales, and so forth.

Item 2: What are the relationships among them?
(Hymes explains the relationships variable as the determination of the way in which rules of proscription and prescription constitute a communication system by providing that it is not the case that anyone can say anything to anyone in an form by an channel in any code in any setting of time and place.)

Application: In a popular business communication text, Sigband argues:

We all exist in a social situation and our society has established certain patterns We participate in a social situation when people communicate with each other and their behavior is organized around a common task. Each person within that social situation assumes and carries through a role which is usually acceptable to him and to those around him at that time.

These roles are usually agreed upon by all parties involved. In social situations, status is also important, but it is often designated by certain conventions, habits, and patterns in a

society. The company president has more status than the foreman; the ambassador enjoys higher status in a political situation than his secretary. And in most societies there exist symbols which give us clues to status; job titles, office size and decor, uniforms, clothing, type of car, and so on. Recognition of roles and status is important, for it influences the rules of our verbal and nonverbal communication. The perceptive individual, aware of roles, status, and rules, constantly makes adjustments in his communication to achieve his goals.

The rules of communication vary from society to society. However, if one is to accomplish his goals, he must communicate according to the social situation and the rules. These tell him to whom he may communicate, for how long, in what way, and with what expectation of success.¹

Item 3: What capabilities and states do they have, in general, and in particular events? (Hymes explains this variable as one differentiating competence and performance of the components (code, participants, channel, setting, form of message, and topic) in relation to each other, and the functions which messages serve for them, including the purposes with which they enter into communications. Hymes further indicates that Item 3, along with Item 4 which follows, is in effect an application of the informational theoretic concern to measure capacity and the cybernetic concern with feedback.)

Application: A presumed aspect of managerial experience is that of knowing the competence and the performance of various communication codes, settings, channels, individuals, and so forth, as they relate to communication with individuals

¹Norman B. Sigband, Communication for Management (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1969), p. 7.

both inside and outside the firm. A nonverbal code, for example, might be more effective than a verbal code for communication in a particular situation with an employee. Particular channels are sometimes considered more effective than others for certain types of communication. The company "grapevine", for example, is considered more or less effective for various types of messages. Managerial experience contributes to the understanding and ability to use particular message components. Such experience may relate to the learning of business subculture norms.

Item 4: How do they work? (Hymes concern in question 4 is with determining something of the activity of the system--both in individual events and as a whole, and the modifications, monitoring, and the like that occur.)

Application: The activity of business communication systems has been a subject of analysis and discussion by several writers. Whyte's Organization Man is probably the classic example of an analysis of the operation of the system that Hymes defines.¹

In total, the approach used by Hymes is useful for business communication study. Generally, the approach provides a guide for the search for descriptive data useful in communication analysis. The approach is relevant for the

¹Other examples include Executive Success by Eugene E. Jennings, The Executive Strategist by Robert Weisselbert and Joseph Cowley, Human Behavior in Organizations by Leonard Sayles and George Strauss, The Effective Executive and The Practice of Management, both by Peter Drucker.

purpose of this study--the study of one behavioral science field, cultural anthropology, to identify those descriptive data of practical value in business communication analysis. In the pages that follow, cultural anthropology topics are examined to determine what description is provided that is relevant to business communication theory in terms of the basic questions.

Cultural anthropology covers a variety of topics. Topics common to text or major unit length coverages are economics, language, personality, social organization, and religion, myth, morals, and ritual. Ethnographies, the descriptions of particular cultural groups, typically treat one or more of these topics. Data are accumulated first of all for descriptive purposes. Analysis of data extends to cross-cultural analyses that provide insight into group variation and into basic elements of human behavior. Hymes' questions provide a scheme for examination of each of the cultural topics to determine their relationship to business communication theory.

Economics

The interrelatedness of economics to cultural anthropology has been a point of issue between the two disciplines. Generally, the controversy relates to the validity of extrapolating economic theory of Western culture origin

to non-Western cultures. Business communication is an economic activity most notable in industrialized Western cultures.

Inasmuch as technological and economic aspects of cultures are among the central areas investigated by cultural anthropologists, "economic anthropology" has apparently survived earlier controversy. As a subtopical field of cultural anthropology, descriptive data are compiled on both unique and common economic aspects of particular cultures.

The anthropologist's involvement with economics is representatively described by Taylor as follows:

Economics sometimes is used to include technology, but it is better employed to refer to the ways in which people, time, and materials are organized for the purposes of producing, distributing, and consuming goods and services. It is apparent that the linkages between technological and economic customs are both numerous and strong; and it is quite impossible to discuss one of these without slipping frequently into the other.¹

The factors of production, distribution, and consumption, then, are the primary focal points for anthropological study of economics. The subtopics of these basic subjects are listed by Taylor as:

- Work and Labor--peculiarities of attitudes toward each.
- Specialization--the assumption of particular kinds of work by particular members of society--age, sex differences, etc.
- Property--private and communal ownership of various types.
- Distribution and Exchange--methods and objectives of each.

¹Robert B. Taylor, Cultural Ways (Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn Bacon, Inc., 1969), p. 66.

Consumption--patterns, motivation, functions of capital, credit, and interest--extent of employment of each and attitudes toward each.¹

Various information included in treatments of these economic topics relates to business communication in terms of the communication analysis framework. Most basically, the data delimit the business communication group through description of economic-cultural factors like the following:

Only where population density is appreciable, and some degree of specialization is present, do we find the market as a formal element in the economy.²

Small-scale societies are small-scale because they lack means of long-distance communication, of which a common medium of exchange is one. Lacking this, they lack the means to conduct the kind of once-for-all transactions that we call buying and selling, transactions in which the parties need never meet, or if they do, it is only for a few minutes across a counter.³

The entrepreneur has willingness to take risks by committing his assets, trusting in his deductive reasoning, and acting against the odds

However, the entrepreneur does all this in a specific social environment--his niche Niche is defined as the position occupied in relation to resources, competitors, clients.⁴

Frequency of communication (or interaction) can be used to define the boundaries of many social

¹Ibid., p. 75.

²Melville J. Herskovits, Cultural Anthropology (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), p. 150.

³Lucy Mair, An Introduction to Social Anthropology (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 45.

⁴Ronald Frankenburg, "Economic Anthropology," in Themes in Economic Anthropology, ed. Raymond Firth (New York: Tavistock Publications, 1967), p. 62.

groups. If the group is not too large, interactions can actually be counted. Subgroups can also be established on this basis, and various types of communication other than direct speech (letters, government directives, or radio broadcasts) can be utilized to define large groupings.¹

Application: These references generally indicate that the business communicator is a member of a cultural subgroup in a larger group characterized by dense population, specialization, a market system, and definite communication patterns, including a medium of exchange that serves as a communication means. The business communicator may thus be said to belong to a "community" like that described by Hymes. The communication patterns of the community are enumerated on pages 15 and 16 of this dissertation; they generally include inquiries, favors, answers, various credit messages, sales correspondence, and good-will type messages.

Components of such messages (Hymes' code, participants, channel, setting, form, and topic) are in various degrees described in other economic-cultural material. The following pages indicate application of such data to business communication component description.

Communication "code" information is found in the following statements regarding the exchange of gifts and the use of money.

¹Philip K. Bock, Modern Cultural Anthropology (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 266.

Trade in the form of exchange of gifts is on the whole extremely common in Australia. McCarthy mentions the following cases in which it takes place: (1) as a result of family obligations; (2) when disputes are settled; (3) in compensation either for other things, for participating in feats, for permission to extract ochre, etc., on foreign territory; (4) in the exchange of certain objects which, like the kula treasures pass from hand to hand and are only kept temporarily.¹

Application: These "purposes for trade" indicate that at least some economic activity has communication code significance. An act associated with an economic transaction may itself signal meaning interpretable by the particular individuals involved in the act.

Money is the symbol of prestige, as well as the means of acquiring commodities.²

To concentrate attention on what all monies have in common is to discard those clues--how monies differ--which are surface expressions of different social and economic organization. Money is not an isolated case. Much the same can be said for external trade and market places, which (like money) also are made use of in economies differing markedly in organization.³

Armstrong notes that social requisites determine who may use upper ndap shells, but he does not see this as a symptomatic difference between Rossell and Western money, i.e., between non-commercial means of (redistributive) payment and

¹Kaj Birkett-Smith, The Paths of Culture, trans. by Karin Fennow (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), p. 168.

²Kerskovits, Cultural Anthropology, p. 145.

³Jesse D. Jennings and E. Adamson Hoebel, Readings in Anthropology (2d ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1966), p. 383.

our Western media of impersonal (commercial) exchange.¹

Most societies have a dual economy, one for the satisfaction of material needs, and one directed toward satisfying the desire for prestige. The prestige economy can only operate where production provides more than is needed for the requirements of living.²

The prestige economy is a system in which gain comes through expenditure rather than through saving, and the highest position is reserved for those who most conspicuously spend the contributions of the less privileged, for the vicarious enjoyment of the contributors.³

Application: The possession and use of money is recognized generally to have communication code significance beyond its basic function. Essentially, cultural anthropologists who make distinctions in function concur with the conspicuous consumption theory of Thorstein Veblen. Money is used, among other functions, to communicate symbolically a status of some sort. Status, of course, sets up rules of prescription and proscription that affect communication channel access. The business communicator's money, or lack of it, may affect the communication channels to which he has access. Money is, then, coded to communicate particular rules relative to business communication.

As a regular participant in economic activity that has "code" significance, the business communicator may be

¹Herskovitz, Cultural Anthropology, p. 160.

²Ibid., p. 164.

involved in coding situations like the following:

The individuals concerned must make choices regarding the persons with whom they wish to maintain social relations, the kinds of social relations they wish to maintain, and the kinds and amounts of goods and services they can afford to involve in this transference.¹

To the extent that our possessions are projection carriers, they are more than what they are in themselves, and function as such. They have acquired several layers of meaning and are therefore symbolical.²

Application: The business communicator's consumption choices of goods and services both for himself and for the firm function as a code regarding status and prestige. His choices regarding his home, automobile, and so forth, as well as his office furniture and office equipment communicate particulars about his perceived status. The absence of other objects like filing cabinets in the office is also communicative. Rules of prescription and proscription may be derived in part from such codes and affect the business communicator's access to particular channels of communication.

Because the firm's products and services may also be "coded" in either prestige or status consumption categories, sales correspondence and oral sales presentations may be analyzed in terms of special code.

¹Raymond Firth, Themes in Economic Anthropology (New York: Tavistock Publications, 1967), p. 3.

²Ibid., p. 16.

Specific application examples of the function of certain consumption choices are found in the following statements regarding gift giving and in the implications of the statement regarding clothing.

Mauss's theory of the gift applies most clearly to primitive and peasant societies It also has some applicability to modern conditions in our own type of society.

Motivation for donating, receiving, and repaying gifts may be much more complex than Mauss has allowed. In particular, presence or absence of status competition is very significant.¹

The earliest forms of protective clothings were probably animal skins draped about the body, but ornamentation of the body may have preceded this practice by thousands of years. Chimpanzees are said to be indifferent to clothing, though they appreciate a blanket in which to wrap themselves at night; however . . . they voluntarily drape themselves with strings and rags, wearing these for hours or days The heightening of . . . bodily consciousness appears to be what gives the pleasure. Chains or strings or pendants that swish and sway with the motion of the body are favored. These observations confirm what has long since been concluded from observation of men; namely, that human dress for protection and for human adornment spring from separate sources of motives.²

Applications: Whenever the business communicator is involved with either clientele or firm personnel in gift exchange, such economic activity may have code significance. Consumption choices related to clothing may also have code significance.

¹Ibid., pp. 11-15.

²Peter B. Hammond, Cultural and Social Anthropology (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1964), p. 238.

In summary, the economic system in providing means for the production, distribution, and consumption of the goods and the services of society also sets up unique codes that are associated with economic activity. Such codes may communicate, among other things, particular status information about those who participate in economic activity. The business communicator is affected in terms of his own consumption patterns both personally and for the firm, as well as in terms of code implications that relate to the consumption of the firm product or service. In distribution, certain factors of prestige are intrinsic to making particular types of product available to particular members of the society. The market specialist working with sales promotion of a particular product will devote considerable effort to analysis of the "code"--the communication potential for different types of products for particular groups of individuals. Similarly, communication codes are obvious in the motivation of particular individuals to purchase particular products from particular firms. The retailer probably should carefully consider what his clientele might wish to communicate through the consumption of his products.

The economic system, then, sets up a complex of communicative codes. These codes are typically mastered as an aspect of enculturation. The business communicator

may learn them as a part of his total pattern of experience with a firm. In fact, the mastery of economic related codes may be the primary value of business experience.

Description of participant proclivities is also provided in economic anthropology literature. The numerous approaches to analysis of the participants in economic activity are shown on the several pages that follow:

The notion that human behavior is somehow oriented toward a maximization of some desired end has appeared in a great range of social science theory Not even entrepreneurs always strive to maximize money profit, but that sometimes they may prefer something else--leisure, conceivably even good human relations--rather than more money. This is not to deny that these entrepreneurs are trying to maximize something.¹

The individuals of a society . . . are busily engaged in maximizing their own satisfactions--desire for power, prestige, sex, food, independence, or whatever else they may be, in the context of the opportunities around them, including those offered by their own culture. Since one makes choices partly with an eye to the expected choices of others, it is not unreasonable to view this pursuit of satisfactions as a great and continuing game of strategy.²

Application: The business communicator may be motivated in complex ways rather than merely by the profit motive. In communicating about economic events, the businessman may relate to his peers, associates, and firm customers in varying patterns.

¹Jennings and Hoebel, Readings in Anthropology, p. 399.

²Ibid., p. 401.

In the most complex form of society there is a . . . machine technology which is continuously changing, partly as a result of the organization of science and partly as a result of pressures within the economy itself. The division of labour, a necessary concomitant of this technology, cuts across domestic groupings and, indeed, most other ties in the society. Each individual is involved in many networks of interpersonal and impersonal relationships, which are governed by different and specific norms and interests. No one participates in all or even most social activities, and participation in any social activity is frequently partial. Consequently, different individuals, groups, or categories of people internalize different norms and different sets of norms. Even if each individual personality is under some pressure to produce some consistency between the different norms, the patterns of normative consistence will themselves vary.¹

Application: Participants in business communication may have norms and interests that vary substantially. Prediction and generalization about reaction to particular communication must make allowance for such variation.

Similar application may be made using the following statements by Jennings-Hoebel:

Exchange, like maximization, is certainly close to the heart of economics, and in fact an exchange model of society is remarkably similar to conventional economic analysis, even though it takes into account far more than our primitive notion of economics. It should be possible to speak of the supply of prestige, the demand for power, and the cost of authority. I see no reason why one should not even speak of the marginal utility of loving care. Each man can be regarded as an entrepreneur,

¹Percy S. Cohen, "Economic Analysis and Economic Man," in Themes in Economic Anthropology, ed. by Firth, p. 112.

manipulating those around him, trading his products of labor, attention, respect, etc., for the most he can get in return.¹

In the general conduct of affairs, in the everyday handling of resources and the application of labour to enterprises, maintenance of status in the eyes of other is important.²

Application: This material analyzes economic activity from the very basic functional level of the participant. The business communicator may be an entrepreneur of special sorts--his environment is his market place, his status and other return become profit, his colleagues and clients are the adversaries. He may look for "maintenance of status" in the eyes of others through his communication with others.

Frankenburg discusses different strategy for accomplishing like purposes in the following statement:

The occasional need for repudiating relationships points to a possible connection between entrepreneurship and factionalism or social stratification. Both these forms of social division imply limitations or discontinuities of obligation and commitment. They are thus social barriers which may give strategic scope to certain kinds of enterprise, and may even be generated by the entrepreneur where the advantages he gains (and can offer to those who follow him) outweigh the costs of repudiating the relevant relationships.³

Application: The business communication event may carry complex meaning outside the meaning of the message; the

¹Jennings and Hoebel, Readings in Anthropology, p. 401.

²Ibid., p. 274

³Frankenburg, "Economic Anthropology," in Themes in Economic Anthropology, ed. by Firth, p. 64.

businessman may in his communication be employing particular strategy for accomplishing particular objectives.

In summary, cultural anthropology's description of economic systems and behavior includes particular references to the participants in economic activity. Although quite limited and probably better substantiated by such other fields like psychology, somewhat useful generalizations are possible. Such information describes the business communicator as a person who may involve himself with economic activity for other than economic reasons. His motivational base for both inter- and intra-firm communication may be quite complex. Much of his communication may relate to attempts to control his own situation as well as the firm situation. The business communicator, then, is a part of the economic system as a participant in it; his participation is of consequence to him personally.

In addition to the communication event components of code and participants, Hymes includes an event, a channel, a setting, a definite form, and a topic. The basic event of business communication is a message regarding the peripheral details of a transaction (within the firm communication). Anthropological study of economics describes economic events, but typically the description relates to the exchange aspects of economic events in primitive or peasant economies. Thus, the events of exchanging shells and barter provide

the most descriptions in this category. The literature does not describe events as they either might occur in or apply to the modern business communication situation in the United States. The implication of primitive and peasant economic events is that events themselves may have broad and varied meanings. A business communicator's message about a particular transaction (event) may accordingly be studied for its ramifications.

Hymes indicates that the channel component in his model includes speaking, writing, printing, drumming, blowing, whistling, singing, face and body motion, smelling, tasting, and tactile sensation. Business communicators utilize the basic channels of communication characteristic of the culture of this country--writing, speaking, and the basic nonverbal channels not yet cataloged. Cultural anthropologists have not focused on the modern economic communication channel. Therefore, no data can be reported on this component from economic anthropology.

The "setting or context" component of Hymes' model is concerned with where communication is either permitted, enjoined, encouraged, or abridged. Applied to business communication, the principal setting is the business firm. Although specific settings within the firm may be identified, the setting of consequence to the business communicator educated in the collegiate school of business is the business

office. Considerable business communication is carried on outside the firm, of course, with settings for written correspondence including in some instances the homes in which such communication is received.

Description of business settings or contexts is somewhat limited in economic approaches to cultural anthropology. Economic activity in primitive and peasant economies apparently may transpire almost anywhere but would likely go on around the central habitats. Places of business are somewhat less common, although central areas of villages may sometimes be utilized as markets.

What likely occurs in settings for modern business communication is that the sub-cultural group of businessmen (communicators) develops its own socio-setting characteristics. Social organization factors are discussed in another analytical division of this study.

According to Hymes, the form of a message may be anything from single sentences to diacrities of sonnets, sermons, salesman's pitches and any other organized routines and styles.

The forms of business messages in this country do not differ greatly from the typical cultural forms. Written messages in business (letters, memoranda, and reports) as a rule conform to the conventions of English grammar. Oral messages would include instructions, interviews, conferences, and sales presentations. Material in economic anthropology

does not relate to business message form.

In his discussion of the topic and comments component, Hymes indicates that the message says something about something. Business messages may be categorized rather completely in terms of topics. The lists on pages 15 and 16 of this study (listing business messages from "abstracts" to "wills") are indicative of the topics of business communication.

The topics of business communication in economic anthropology are not categorized. Accordingly, description of topics is not available for relevancy study under this division.

After describing the components, Hymes uses relationships as the next step in his communication study procedure. Relationships among the components are implied to determine the ways in which rules of proscription and prescription constitute communication as a system in the community. For most communication, a system may operate to determine relative right or access to form, channel, code, and time of communication.

Such rules of prescription and proscription, no doubt, exist for business communication. Most obvious would be the rules that follow protocol based primarily upon the status hierarchy of the participants. Communication outside the organization follows prescriptions based upon relevancy and consequence of the transaction. Personnel

assigned to "appliance sales" in a multi-product form, for example, would have relevance involvement with communication regarding appliances. Individuals from other divisions of the firm would generally accept having either limited involvement or access to communication related to appliances. In another sense, the consequence potential of the communication would dictate whether a clerk, the chief executive, or someone at some level in between might handle communication in a particular situation. Then, too, even within a firm, some individuals specialize in the types of correspondence that they prepare.

Information about relationships in economic anthropology literature applies mostly to the participants component. The relatedness of economic structure to social relationships is the theme of the references that follow. Specific economic situations are also cited that illustrate the relation of social structure to economic activity.

It is important, then in economic anthropology to examine the economic role of a person in a particular situation against his social role, and against that of the system of groups of which he is a member. Economic anthropology deals primarily with the economic aspects of the social relations of persons.¹

Firth states essentially the same view in the following reference to economic and social interdependence:

¹Raymond Firth, Elements of Social Organization (3d ed.; Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), p. 138.

The anthropologist is interested in the structure and organization of economic activity for two reasons: most social relations have an economic coefficient; many social relations are primarily concerned with economic values. His (the anthropologist's) task is to examine how these principles work in specific social or cultural contexts.¹

Application: The business communicator's reference frame for communication is a product of his economic role, his social role, and his role as a member of a particular group or groups. His relationship with other participants is a complex one.

Moral values are cited as critical in the analysis of economic transactions (or participants) in the following approach:

Interest tends to be concentrated as much upon the set of ideas and emotional attitudes associated with the transaction as upon its formal qualities. To an anthropologist, the recognition that any specific economic system has a corresponding set of moral values is taken for granted.²

Application: The participants in the transaction are affected by the relationship of the transaction to their own moral values. Thus, a transaction-participant, as well as a participant-participant, relationship exists in economic activity.

Other material describing factors of relationships includes the following:

¹Ibid., p. 122.

²Firth, Themes in Economic Anthropology, p. 4.

The economic basis of differences in status is known wherever the technology permits production to rise above subsistence requirements . . . The prestige role of the pecuniary symbol in establishing prestige has similarly been carried to a point far beyond anything found in any other culture.¹

Application: The participant-relationship differentials of the business communicator in the United States have an economic basis. The pecuniary symbol establishes relative prestige. Such differentials are of consequence in determining rules of prescription and proscription in communication.

How economic systems relate to the total social system is a question of major theoretical importance.

Economic activity derives its meaning from the general values of the society, and people engage in economic activity for rewards often extrinsic to the economy itself. From this point of view there are no economic motives, but only motives appropriate to the economic sphere.

The functional interdependence of economy and society stems from the fact that the same persons are actors in the economic, the kinship, the political, and the religious spheres.²

Application: The business communicator's involvement in economic activity may be based on complex relationships and motivation.

¹Herskovitz, Cultural Anthropology, p. 144-45.

²Jennings and Hoebel, Readings in Anthropology, p. 387.

Firth and Cohen provide other generalizations regarding the complexity of socio-economic participant relationships:

In all this, the fact of sociality is vitally important. The choice, the behavior, the values of any one person are all conditioned by other people. They, too, are exercising their choices. They compete for a common set of resources.¹

One aspect . . . is a state of intense social cohesion: for all social relationships are governed by a number of different norms and interests; powerful forces of social control are therefore inherent in interpersonal relations. . . . The norms of economic conduct are embedded in a total set of norms; there is relatively little autonomy for economic criteria of evaluation.²

Application: Inasmuch as norms of economic conduct are embedded in a total set of norms, business communicator norms may also be embedded in a superior norms system.

The cultural anthropologist's challenge in describing participants in economic acts is indicated by Firth:

He must expose the social factors which are of most relevance in the preference scales of the members of the society. He must make clear--ultimately, if possible, by quantitative demonstration--the regularities and irregularities in the system of wants He must indicate that this competing use for an item of capital has very definite restrictions placed upon it by social convention. It is not simply a sporadic, incalculable individual act.³

¹Firth, Elements of Social Organization, p. 124.

²Cohen, "Economic Analysis and Economic Man," in Themes in Economic Anthropology, ed. by Firth, p. 112.

³Firth, Elements of Social Organization, p. 129.

Application: When done, the quantification of such factors will add significantly to the understanding of business communicator relationships and contribute to more effective business communication.

At a more applied level, economic literature in cultural anthropology describes participant relationships by indicating the peculiarities of labor specialization.

Economic specialization of some kind and degree is found in every culture, but sexual division is the salient feature in nonliterate groups Functionally, the important thing about sexual division of labor is that it maintains reciprocal dependency between men and women, thus providing a strong bond between husband and wife.

The universal physiological factor underlying division of labor is age difference. Obviously, there are some tasks for which the youngest and the oldest members of a society lack the strength, endurance, or other performance qualifications. . . . Many cultures manifest little in the way of specialization other than the sexual dichotomy and age differentiation, but other forms are by no means absent.¹

Application: Some business communication participants may be categorized as a result of basic labor specialization based on age and sex. The participants in some messages, for example, may have contrasting male-female role relationships. Women still maintain certain household specialization responsibilities in this country. Women, then, are more likely to be the first readers of written business

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, pp. 68-69.

communications sent to home addresses. Conversely, correspondence from the firm to other firms will likely be received by men.

Participant relationship characteristics useful to business communication analyses are provided in other ways. The following material illustrates effects of kinship on economic participants.

We often say that relatives should not engage in business transactions because they are bound to quarrel; some go further and say they won't have business dealings with their friends. Implicit in this attitude is the recognition that in trade or business you are trying to make the best bargain you can, you are entitled to something you can legally claim¹

The relationships of those who communicate regarding economic transactions are examined in specific ways by some anthropologists. The material that follows consists of citations from gift exchange discussions that relate to this study.

It is unlikely that the origin of the tradition of exchange of goods or services will ever be established. Mauss has derived it from the psychology of gift giving; that is, a present, however freely given, entails an obligation of reciprocal return In our own culture, the obligation to return a dinner invitation or a wedding present comes to mind at once.²

¹Mair, An Introduction to Social Anthropology, p. 158.

²Herskovitz, Cultural Anthropology, p. 150.

Gift giving . . . is not a spontaneous expression of affection by the giver but a socially expected component of certain relationships.

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What Salisbury's account shows is that the type of exchange is determined primarily by the structural relationship between the parties.

.

Levi-Strauss's theory of structural anthropology, which sees all social relationships in terms of exchange, draws on both these principles and holds that the exchange of women is closely analogous to the exchange of goods.

.

These exchanges maintain partnerships between equals. In other cases a gift which cannot be repaid in kind creates a relationship of inequality, and in societies where political authority is not vested in recognized offices the deployment of superior wealth is one of the roads to leadership.¹

Application: These generalizations about gift exchange contribute understanding to participant relationships in economic exchange. Structural relationships, both within and outside the firm, are central in analysis of motivation and communication. The gift itself communicates verification of structural relationships.

American business communication may in some instances take its form in economic activity or exchange. There is, for example, a set of prescriptions regarding gift exchange in this country. The following illustrates such protocol:

¹Mair, An Introduction to Social Anthropology, pp. 159-66.

The obligation to give is based primarily upon sanctions of social status, though in charitable giving the sanctions of religion may be very important. Economic and political sanctions appear with varying clarity in different types of transaction.¹

Application: The analysis of gift exchange relationships provides insight into relationship structure that may relate to business communication structure.

In summary, the study by cultural anthropologists of economic factors regarding the "relationships" category describes the interdependence of economic relationships and social relationships.

Inasmuch as the economic environment is interrelated with the social environment, the relationships of economic participants are not simply "economic." Moral and pecuniary values affect economic relationships; economic behavior and values, moreover, relate to the general values of society.

Varying social values and norms are maintained through particular economic behavior. Gift giving, for example, is more a form of socio-economic exchange than an act of generosity with most people. To some extent, labor specialization and employee-employer relations may be similarly affected by social relationship norms, as well as economic relationship norms. Such relationship factors

¹Firth, Themes in Economic Anthropology, p. 10.

are clearly present in the businessman's efforts to communicate with other participants in economic activity. The businessman may well look to socio-economic relationships to determine relationships among communication components (channel, time, code, and so forth).

Items 3 and 4 in Hymes' framework are, in effect, applications of the information-theoretic concern to measure capacity and the cybernetic concern with feedback in communication. Item 3 (what capabilities and states do they have in general and in particular events) implies the determination of differential competence and performance of the components in relation to one another, and the functions that messages serve for them, including the purposes for communicating. Cultural anthropologists have not addressed Item 3 capabilities and states in their involvement with economic inquiry.

On the other hand, Item 4, which implies determining something of the activity of the system, both in individual events and as a whole, and the modifications, monitoring, and the like that occur, is in general ways discussed. The following items indicate economic study relevant to "how they work" analysis of communication components.

The importance of trade in cultural development can simply not be measured. Trade means that people meet and associate with one another, and the association makes it possible for them to

learn from one another. Trade routes therefore become routes of cultural development.¹

Application: Through his economic activity, the business communicator is involved in an ongoing cultural system characterized by his influence on others and their influence on him.

In addition to this description of the result of trade (business activity--about which businessmen communicate), a detailed description of the transaction is provided by Firth:

A material transaction is usually a momentary episode in a continuous social relation. The social relation exerts governance: the flow of goods is constrained by, is part of, a status etiquette. . . . the connection between material effort and social relation is reciprocal because a specific social relation may constrain a given movement of goods, but a specific transaction suggests a particular social relation. So much would be generally agreed by all economic anthropologists. Economists too might well concur. Indeed, in their insistence upon the significance not only of goods but also of services as elements of economic magnitude, economists have indicated their awareness of the importance of relationship, though they have been relatively uninterested in its social aspects.²

Application: The transactions with which the business communicator is involved consist of connections between material effort and social relations. Accordingly, concep-

¹Birkett-Smith, The Paths of Culture, p. 170.

²Firth, Themes in Economic Anthropology, p. 3.

tualization of any particular transaction should properly account for the reciprocal nature of the structures involved.

Firth is even more precise in describing aspects of how the system works in terms of the individual.

One may say that in such a peasant economy economic ties are personalized--that is, relationships as economic agents depend on the social status and relationships of the persons concerned. Put another way, labour is given as a social service, and not simply an economic service. Its reward is therefore apt to be calculated in terms of the total social situation, and not merely the immediate economic situation. Economic means tend to be translated into social ends.

Contrast this with economic relations in an industrial system. In the latter the individual has normally a high degree of anonymity, of impersonality in the economic situation. Even if he is not merely a number on a pay-roll, it is his function as an energy factor, a provider of capital, or of organizing capacity that is of prime importance. As such it is his specific industrial characteristics, not his total social characteristics, that matter. He is deemed to be replaceable. It is the magnitude and quality of his contribution to the economic process, irrespective of his personal status or position in the society, that defines him. In primitive communities the individual as an economic factor is personalized, not anonymous. He tends to hold his economic position in virtue of his social position. Hence, to displace him economically means a social disturbance.¹

A broader approach to system analysis is provided in this reference:

Economic organization is a type of social action. It involves the combination of various

¹Firth, Elements of Social Organization, p. 137.

kinds of human services with one another and with non-human goods in such a way that they serve given ends.¹

In summary, description in anthropology related to how the business system works concerns broad aspects of the relationship between individual events and the total system. The individual economic event is a part of a dynamic social system and should be analyzed in this context. Although very much a part of the total system, the individual business communicator in an industrial system may be thought of as an economic factor of production. The system works, then, through a functional interdependence of economy and society.

In total, the study of economics by cultural anthropologists provides descriptive data that may be applied in varying degrees to business communication analysis. The primary areas of application are: recognition of business as a sub-cultural community, description of possible codes for that community, description of participant peculiarities and explanation of relationship complexities for business groups. Channel, setting, form, topic, system capabilities, and total system operation are topics not treated in economic literature to suggest application possibilities to business communication analysis.

¹Ibid., p. 123.

Language

Of the several major areas of scholarly interest in cultural anthropology, language is among the universally prominent. Such prominence is not surprising, inasmuch as language is a prominent characteristic among the distinctions between men and other existents. With sophisticated language systems, man has been able not only to interact economically and socially but also to transform his very existence into symbolic schemes. In spite of the vital role that language has in man's existence, its peculiarities account for substantial miscommunication leading to inter- as well as intra-personal misunderstanding. The business communicator is subject to language complexities as they affect the group(s) to which he belongs and the members of the groups with whom he daily communicates.

Linguistics, a major area of cultural anthropology, is for obvious reasons a major source of information about language systems. Traditionally, however, the linguistic efforts of cultural anthropologists centers upon the structural characteristics of all languages and unique characteristics of particular languages. The potential of such description for analysis of more complex human communication factors has only recently been probed. Coding systems and the intra-relatedness of sub-social structural

systems are principal topics that recently depend upon language structure description for theoretical support.

The traditional structural analysis produces important descriptive data regarding language characteristics. Language is, first of all, an arbitrary system of vocal symbols. Written communication is analytically a product of spoken language. Spoken language consists of systemized sound units; writing is a sophisticated form of speech.

According to the linguist, language is as old as any other aspect of culture and is also at least as diverse as any other aspect. There are thousands of distinct languages with each one in its own way being as sophisticated and adequate for the culture it serves as any other language.

To study language, linguists cross-analyze language structure. Aspects of descriptive linguistic analysis are clearly stated in Taylor's enumeration:

1. Phonetic analysis is used to determine the minimal sounds used.
2. Phonemic analysis is used to determine how the phones can be classified into meaningful units known as phonemes.
3. Morphological analysis is used to identify the morphs and morphemes of the language and the ways they are used to form words.

4. Syntactical analysis is used to determine how words are combined with one another to form phrases and sentences.¹

Taylor explains the conceptual involvement of linguistic study through these definitions:

Transformational-Generative Grammar: taken from the fact that the kernel sentences of a language can be modified or transformed in various ways to generate the infinite variety of utterances possible in all languages.

Comparative and Historical Linguistics: Careful comparisons of languages with one another in terms of their phonetic, phonemic, morphological, and syntactical characteristics enable linguists to classify languages into families according to their varying degrees of similarity.

Metalinguistics: How people think about and perceive the world in which they live is thought by some to be largely a consequence of the way they refer to their environment linguistically. The branch of metalinguistics of greatest concern to anthropologists is ethnolinguistics, which has to do with the linkages between linguistic customs and non-linguistic elements of cultures. Problems in this area frequently are discussed under the rubric language and culture, though it always must be kept in mind that linguistic traits are learned and multi-individual just as surely as any other cultural trait. Language is an aspect of culture.²

Concepts sought through studies in these categories are obviously, for the most part, quite broad and not immediately concerned with the language affairs of a small subgroup like the business communication group.

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, p. 47.

²Ibid., pp. 47-50.

Other study falling generally under the category of language study, however, at least looks to occasional business communication type situations to illustrate study points. The most obvious study in this category is the study of nonverbal communication codes. Although there is at least some controversy over whether or not nonverbal communication is a language-based code, there is convincing theory to warrant acceptance of the critical role of language in nonverbal communication.

Even though a scientific calculation has not been made, legitimate estimates indicate that considerably more than half of human communication is nonverbal. The following list is a somewhat complete accounting for the various types of nonverbal communication now at early or exploratory stages of study:

kinesics	plastics
proxemics	tectonics
pictics	melodics
vidistics	haptics
glyptics	aromatics
edectics ¹	

The first two items are presently the most often studied. Birdwhistell has been a leader in the study of kinesics--the coding of communicative body movement. Hall provides

¹Randall P. Harrison, "Other Ways of Packaging Information," in Communication-Spectrum '77: Proceedings of the 15th Annual Conference of the National Society for Communication, ed. by Lee O. Thayer (National Society for the Study of Communication, 1968), p. 132.

similar leadership in the study of proxemics--the coding of distance factors as communicative. Pictics is analysis of pictorial code; vidistics is an analysis of cinema. The other codes in various ways describe nonverbal communication effected through various human behavior.

Kinesics includes the study of communicative aspects of laughter, smiling, greeting expressions, kissing, positioning of the tongue, pointing, whistling, hand gestures, facial gestures, politesse gestures (expressed particularly through manipulation of clothing), and conversational gestures with fingers, hands, and face. Various positions of the hands in relation to other parts of the body are used to communicate various reactions ranging from very complimentary to severely insulting.

Proxemics is explored by Edward T. Hall, among others, by careful analysis of space concepts. Much meaning is assigned to space relationships among humans. The topic has become a useful one in analysis of particular cultures. Such study generally holds that social distance pervades all social relationships. The following statements illustrate social distance application:

The kind of social distance that is best known to us, be it under the rubric of joking, reserve, avoidance, or antipathy, is that which obtains between certain categories of role players and

which is part of expected behavior in specific interaction settings . . . This I would term role specific distance.¹

Except for kinesics and proxemics, nonverbal codes are essentially not included in the literature of cultural anthropology. Current information supports a strong need for the pioneering exploitation of the most neglected areas and intensified descriptive work in kinesics and proxemics.

In addition to consideration of language structure and multi-codes, language study includes postulation about the relative role of language in other social structures. The following paragraphs from Levi-Strauss illustrate the relationship of language study to other types of structural study:

Certain of the American Indian languages offer a relatively high number of elements which succeed in becoming organized into relatively simple structures by the structures assuming asymmetrical forms.

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If the general characteristics of the kinship systems of given geographical areas, which we have tried to bring into juxtaposition with equally general characteristics of the linguistic structures of those areas, are recognized by linguists as an approach to equivalences of their own observations, then it will be apparent, in terms of our preceding discussion, that we are much closer to understanding the fundamental characteristics of social life than we have been accustomed to think.

The road will then be open for a comparative structural analysis of customs, institutions, and accepted patterns of behavior. We shall be in a

¹Morton H. Fried, Readings in Anthropology, Vol. II: Cultural Anthropology (2d ed.; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968), p. 367.

position to understand basic similarities between forms of social life, such as language, art, law, and religion, that on the surface seem to differ greatly. At the same time, we shall have the hope of overcoming the opposition between the collective nature of culture and its manifestations in the individual, since the so-called "collective consciousness" would, in the final analysis, be no more than the expression, on the level of individual thought and behavior, of certain time and space modalities of the universal laws which make up the unconscious activity of the mind.¹

Much of cultural anthropology relates to various approaches to analysis of language structure, nonverbal communication, and the structural interrelatedness of language to other cultural aspects. Although the nature and the conceptual methodology of such study could perhaps be used to analyze specific subcultures, the "state of the science" has not progressed to this possibility. The business communication subgroup, then, is not systematically studied in the literature.

Much description is relevant to business communication theory, of course. At least a few examples come from business situations; other examples fit with minor extrapolation into a business framework. The development that follows includes selections from language expositions that fit into the analytical framework of this study.

¹Claude Levi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology, trans. by Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1963), pp. 64-65.

Obviously, the literature in cultural anthropology devoted to the study of language relates primarily to Hymes' "code" component. Participants and relationships are analyzed in fundamental ways only. The following information may be applied to business communication code situations.

An educated middle-class American frequently communicates his place of origin by his manner of speech--he speaks, for example, like a Mississippian, New Englander, etc.¹

Application: This statement indicates that coding sounds differ geographically. The business communicator may consider geographic origin as a clue to analysis of communication code, particularly for communication outside the firm.

The system of meanings that prevails in a speech community, like the culture of which it is a part, is not determined by science or logic but is an inventory developed quite unconsciously by generations of speakers and, like the structural features of language, subject to change.²

Of similar import is Bloomfield's concept of the speech-community--a "group of people who interact by means of speech." The speech-community, Bloomfield holds, is "the most important kind of social group," since "all the so-called higher activities of man--our specifically human activities--spring from the close adjustment among individuals which we call society, and this adjustment, in turn, is based upon language." Speech-communities vary enormously in size, and merge sometimes imperceptibly into one another

¹Ralph L. Beals and Harry Hoijer, An Introduction to Anthropology (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965), p. 605.

²Ibid., p. 630.

as in the case of minor dialectic differences, such as distinguish the speech of the South from that of the Middle West in the the United States.¹

Application: The business community may be classified as a speech community with a developing inventory of language peculiarities.

Languages are always associated with groups of individuals; they never belong exclusively to a single individual. An individual acquires his language from the group with which he lives. If he deviates widely in speech from other members of the group, he runs the risk of being misunderstood or of not being understood at all.²

Application: The business communicator may have multi-group affiliation and thus have conflicting speech patterns. The universal nature of business activity will necessitate the business communicator's interaction with individuals with varying group backgrounds.

Words may show different geographic distributions. Words are not only restricted geographically and socially; they are often restricted as to styles of speaking and writing.³

Application: These facts indicate the need for the business communicator to select words judiciously--particularly where his communication is clearly inter-group, i.e., communication outside the firm.

¹Herskovitz, Cultural Anthropology, p. 289.

²Samuel Rapport and Helen Wright, Anthropology (New York: New York University Press, 1967), p. 176.

³Robert Lado, Linguistics Across Cultures (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957), p. 79.

An important concept to convey would be that speech activity, like sex and religion, must be treated as a cross-cultural variable.¹

Application: There is potential for diverse speech activity among diverse business communication contacts.

I suspect that we are more likely to demand that our neighbor make an analysis for meaning of the words that he uses than to make it for ourselves. When we do get around to attempting such an analysis, I think we discover that we have certain ideals for our meanings; we are not satisfied with a mere factual description of the conditions under which we do actually use our words, but we want our usage to satisfy certain restrictions.²

Application: Due to regular involvement with other groups, the business communicator may be particularly subject to slighting the analysis of meaning that other groups assign to words.

The conference was not intended to produce a unified statement as to what "style" is or how it must be studied. It was, as Jakobson says . . . , the sort of "scholarly discussion where disagreement generally proves to be more productive than agreement," where one is trying to find out "what problems are the most crucial and the most controversial," and where the participants are learning "how to switch our codes" . . . in order to prevent misunderstandings with people using different departmental jargon.³

¹Dell Hymes, "The Teaching of Linguistics in Anthropology," in The Teaching of Anthropology, ed. by David G. Mandelbaum, W. Lasker Gabriel and Ethel M. Albert (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 286.

²Percy W. Bridgman, "Words, Meanings, and Verbal Analysis," in Science and Language: Selected Essays (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1966), p. 29.

³J. L. Fischer, review of Style in Language by Thomas Sebeok (ed.) in the American Anthropologist, Vol. 66, Number 2 (April, 1964), p. 479.

Application: Although used in this statement for specific description, the "codes" generalization illustrates the recognition given by anthropologists of the need to analyze codes. The business communicator regularly is involved in situations quite similar to the one described. "Code switching" may be critical to effective business communication in such situations.

Traditionally, relatively simple communication concepts were based on the fairly basic assumption that communication was primarily (if not totally) verbal and was used primarily (if not totally) to exchange information. The fact that even verbal language may have meaning and function outside the literal meaning of the words used is illustrated in the following itemization of functions of communication.

Phatic Communication. Small talk, inspired greetings, and idle chatter . . . To show that we welcome communication, that we are friendly, or that we at least acknowledge the presence of another person, we exchange words In phatic communication, the specific words exchanged are not important. . . . We do not request specific information in phatic communication and we are not expected to reply with precision or accuracy.

Prevention of Communication. . . . dismissal reactions, guarded utterances . . . brief snips of uninterested responses will end a conversation, and often large hunks of verbiage will achieve the same end.

Recording-Transmitting Functions. Simple transmission by one and recording by another.

Instrumental Communication. Causing something to happen as a result of speaking.

Affective Communication. Communicating emotional feelings of the speaker toward a listener. Compliments, praise, and flattery, and also snide and cutting remarks . . . many women seem to use affective communication more than men. Where tradition has not given women authority in all situations, women have had to achieve their goals indirectly. And this indirection may be reflected in instrumental desires disguised in affective language. . . . Affective language is also convincing language. In many cases a person would not do something if asked to do it directly; he would be too aware of reasons that he might not be able to accept. We seem to prefer to do things we think we want to do, not things we are told to do.

Catharsis. Anger or hurt feelings are expressed through particular pronunciations that have a cathartic function Because expressions of catharsis have no referential meaning, any word may serve the cathartic function.

Magic. . . . the believe that thinking or saying words will have some effect on what the words stand for

Ritual. Through ritual, a person may symbolically take part in an event that would exclude his actual participation. . . . Conventions of many kinds, political, social, and academic many times serve more of a ritual function than the function of exchanging information or achieving some instrumental goal.

Metacommunication. . . . cues that indicate to the persons how the spoken words are to be interpreted. . . . may be vocal reflections and expressions. Even clothing and the distance between speakers may provide clues for interpreting the message correctly. . . . These clues may reinforce the meaning of the words, may sometimes distract from the words spoken, or may even contradict what the words seem to mean.¹

¹John C. Condon, Jr., Semantics and Communication (New York: MacMillan Company, 1966), pp. 88-107.

Applications: The business communicator utilizes phatic code for both inside the firm and outside the firm communication. There is something of a universal expectation that the businessman will initiate phatic communication to establish an initial, positive relationship. Similarly, verbiage coded to prevent communication may be a necessary strategy for the business communicator who must discourage development of some relationships. Recording-transmitting functions are important to the business communicator in terms of keeping essential records. Thus, initial papers, like minutes of official meetings, as well as final business reports, serve the functions of recording and transmitting.

Instrumental communication is important to the business communicator in giving instructions to subordinates for tasks to be completed. Affective communication may be strategy for those messages intended to persuade a business client or an employee. Catharsis as a function does not apply in a unique and direct way to the business communication model. Magic and ritual functions are manifest in certain conventions of manners and appearances in business situations. Metacommunication offers considerable promise for unique codes in business communication. Such codes have not yet been described, however.

Functions of communication as described suggest other codes, generally identified as nonverbal communication. Nonverbal codes may account for a significant

portion of the total amount of communication accomplished by individuals in particular circumstances. Although quantification would for obvious reasons be difficult, some estimates of relative quantity indicate that more than 50 per cent in typical exchanges is nonverbal. In some exchanges, verbal communication may account for as little as 10 per cent of the total communication.

The need for complete information regarding non-verbal communication is stressed in the following statement:

The theoretical and systematic study of communication has serious limitations, inasmuch as scientific thinking and reporting are dependent upon verbal and digital language systems whereas human interaction, in contrast, is much more related to nonverbal systems of codification. Although most people are familiar with the rules that govern verbal communication--logic, syntax, and grammar--few are aware of the principles that apply to nonverbal communication.¹

A similar view is held in the following statement from Spectrum 7:

The scholarly tradition established for communication is a verbal legacy. The importance of the formal language system has cast a shadow upon the role of less visible subsystems in the process of communication. Even such volumes as The Silent Language are preoccupied with linguistic analysis. They offer no taxonomy or detailed descriptive system for nonverbal behavior which might parallel that developed for formal language in linguistics.²

¹Jurgen Ruesch and Weldon Kees, Nonverbal Communication (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), Foreword--not numbered.

²A. Berkley Driessel, "The Boundaries and Domains of Communication," Communication--Spectrum '7, ed. by Thayer pp. 20-21.

Birdwhistell, a noted anthropology scholar in non-verbal communication is credited with these views:

The key to human existence is shared experience. Verbal behavior, since it is an awareness and most easily abstracted, has been largely assumed to be THE channel of interaction and social inheritance. Formal language is a special florescence, but it has not replaced the remainder of the communication system. . . . Body motion and facial expression belong to a learned, coded system; there is a "language" of movement comparable to spoken language both in its structure and in its contribution to a systematically ordered communicative system. Kinesics--mainly the study of body positions and movement, but also interested in the related anatomical processes involving the skin, muscles, and fatty tissue; proxemics--the human use of space arrangements as a coded system of transaction process; and streptistics--the ordering and operating codes of the various channels in structural relation to one another; are part of the growing interest in and knowledge about the larger structure which is communication.¹

Communication is seen as a complex system made up of interdependent codes transmittable along all influenceable sensorily-based channels, as a continuous process made up of overlapping discontinuous segments which, in multi-sensory arrangement, maintain the interactive process.²

Another source indicates similar views in setting out the following categories:

Human beings communicate both digitally and analogically. The digital is the arbitrary assignment of words to objects; the analogic includes

¹R. L. Birdwhistell, "Communication without Words," abstract by Harvey Sarles, International Journal of American Linguistics, XXXIV (October, 1968), pp. 282-83.

²R. L. Birdwhistell, "Communication as a Multi-Channel System," ibid., XXXIV (October, 1968), p. 283.

virtually all nonverbal communication, including posture, gesture, facial expression, voice inflection, and the sequence, cadence, rhythm of words themselves, and so forth, occurring in the context of communication.¹

A rather practical application of visual communication is illustrated in this generalization:

The impact of visual communication on culture has only recently been explored. Traditional emphasis has been on the verbal rather than on the nonverbal forms of communication. Most meaningful communication, however, is predominantly nonverbal Visual symbols provide us with the bulk of our experience, although they exist about us in elusive simplicity.

In a study completed at Pratt Institute with Arnold Friedman, interior designer, the relationship between chair designs and personal values was explored. The results revealed interesting trends. For example, those who were high in theoretic value had preference for chairs that were free and comfortable. Those who were high in economic values preferred even more comfort. Those high in religious values preferred more conservative type chairs and also showed a preference for such details as quilting and curved backs. . . . Those high in social values preferred chairs which thrust them forward, as if the person were ready to participate in conversation.²

Application: Much business communication is nonverbal; in fact, the business communicator may be involved with the various types of nonverbal communication more than he is with verbal communication.

¹P. B. Watzlawik, Janet H. and D. D. Jackson, Pragmatics of Human Communication, abstract by Harvey Sarles, International Journal of American Linguistics, XXXIV (October, 1968), p. 287.

²Elwood Whitney, Symbology (New York: Hastings House, 1960), pp. 136-37.

Actual application of nonverbal communication theory from anthropology to business communication situations is limited. Studies like the Pratt Institute study of chair design preference are quite applicable, of course, but studies of such direct application are very few. Hall utilizes "businessmen" to illustrate a few points regarding the conceptualization of time. The following generalizations about one minor nonverbal communication code suggest the immediate application value of nonverbal information to business communication:

It is not necessary to leave the country to encounter significantly different time patterns. There are differences between families and differences between men and women; occupational differences, status differences, and regional differences. In addition, there are two basic American patterns that often conflict, I have termed these the "diffused point pattern" and the "displaced point pattern." The difference between them has to do with whether the leeway is on one side of the point or is diffused around it.

Contrasting the behavior of two groups of people participating in the two patterns, one observes the following: Taking 8:30 A.M. as the point, participants in the "displaced" point pattern will arrive ahead of time anywhere from 8:00 A.M. to 8:27 A.M. (cutting it fine), with the majority arriving around 8:25 A.M. Diffused point people will arrive from 8:25 A.M. to 8:45 A.M. As can be seen, there is practically no overlap between these two groups.

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When a shift occurs in an office from diffused point to displaced point, people feel strongly about it. The diffused point people never really feel comfortable with the other pattern. Such

shifts are often interpreted as robbing professional people of status. That is, they feel they have been lowered in the esteem of the boss. This is because of the use of this same pattern when meeting dignitaries and when great social distance exists between individuals. The displaced pointers, on the other hand, regard everyone else as very unbusinesslike, sloppy, and as having poor organizational morale. They feel the lack of control and are distrustful of the academic types who are so cavalier about being "on time." Persistent efforts to restrict scientists to the displaced point pattern by enforcing rigid schedules is one of the many things that helped drive many scientists from government work in the last few years.¹

Application: These findings quite obviously relate to the business communication situation. Business communication with prospective clients, clients, prospective employees, and employees in various situations could be affected significantly by varying meaning assigned through observance of time patterns. The individual who "arrives" at a particular time might easily be "saying" one thing while his respondent might well be "hearing" another. The difference could be consequential.

Another example from Hall's work discusses the communication code of space. The application to business communication within the firm is readily apparent:

Another example has to do with the arrangement of offices. In this case one notices great contrast between ourselves and the French. Part of our overall pattern in the United States is

¹Edward T. Hall, The Silent Language (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett World Library, 1959), pp. 143-44.

to take a given amount of space and divide it up equally. When a new person is added in an office, almost everyone will move his desk so that the newcomer will have his share of the space. This may mean moving from positions that have been occupied for a long time and away from favorite views from the window. The point is that the office force will make its own adjustments voluntarily. In fact, it is a signal that they have acknowledged the presence of the new person when they start rearranging the furniture. Until this has happened, the boss can be sure that the new person has not been integrated into the group.¹

In summary, the involvement of cultural anthropologists in language study regarding codes applies in more general than particular ways to business communication. Analysis of verbal communication is primarily concentrated on structure, structural comparisons, and the nature of language and culture. In addition, the critical role of nonverbal codes in all communication is made quite obvious.

Business communication theory can undoubtedly benefit much from the possibilities of a continuing study of nonverbal codes. The business situation examples found in the literature are useful; complete description and analysis of nonverbal business communication codes is needed, however. Examples themselves serve more to support description rather than to become descriptions. As scholars in cultural anthropology and other social science fields accumulate relevant description, an anthology of nonverbal business communication codes may and should be developed.

¹Ibid., pp. 156-57.

Language study by cultural anthropologists has evolved to include analysis of relatively complex structural relationships of language to other cultural factors. Although theoretically general, this material relates to Hymes' communication event component "participants" and to the category of "relationships."

Levi-Strauss, a noted anthropologist in the study of structural linguistics, indicates the following as one of four basic operations of the structural method in linguistic analysis: " . . . structural linguistics shifts from the study of conscious linguistic phenomena to study of unconscious infrastructure."¹ Structural analysis at the unconscious infrastructure level describes complex interrelationships among cultural-linguistic phenomena.

Language systems have been regular subjects of study by anthropologists. The subject is used as a starting point for the following paragraphs that provide detail regarding the structural relationship of language to other cultural factors.

Among all social phenomena, language alone has thus far been studied in a manner which permits it to serve as the object of truly scientific analysis, allowing us to understand its formative process and to predict its mode of change. This results from modern researches into the problems of phonemics, which have reached beyond the superficial conscious and historical expression of

¹Levi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology, p. 33.

linguistic phenomena to attain fundamental and objective realities consisting of systems of relations which are the products of unconscious thought processes Is it possible to effect a similar reduction in the analysis of other forms of social phenomena?

Fashion actually is, in the highest degree, a phenomenon that depends on the unconscious activity of the mind. We rarely take note of why a particular style pleases us or falls into disuse Kroeber has thus shown how each such a highly arbitrary aspect of social behavior is susceptible of scientific study.

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The question may be raised whether the different aspects of social life (including even art and religion) cannot only be studied by the methods of, and with the help of concepts similar to those employed in linguistics, but also whether they do not constitute phenomena whose inmost nature is the same as that of language.

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If the general characteristics of the kinship systems of given geographical areas, which we have tried to bring into juxtaposition with equally general characteristics of the linguistic structures of those areas, are recognized by linguists as an approach to equivalences of their own observations, then it will be apparent, in terms of our preceding discussion, that we are much closer to understanding the fundamental characteristics of social life than we have been accustomed to think.¹

Application: Although not noticeably immediate in applicability, such study can be foreseen ultimately to include a structural study of the complex of structural relationships in the business environment. Business communication component relationships would be either outlined or largely described through such development.

¹Ibid., pp. 58-65.

A similarly broad approach involves proposing an essential relationship between culture and language. Henle discusses this topic in these statements:

. . . the study of language . . . may even provide the focal point about which the social sciences can best be integrated.

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What is the relationship between the mechanisms of language such as vocabulary, inflection, and sentence formation on the one hand and either perception and organization of experience on the other? . . . In dealing with the relationship between vocabulary and the interests of a society there is enough direct evidence to indicate such a correlation, but hardly so with any of the other relationships. In these cases, collateral evidence must enter and, in part, must take the form of showing reason to believe that a correlation would be found if more evidence were available.

To claim a causal relation between language and culture is not, of course, to say which influences the other. Either may be the causal agent, both may be joint effects of a common cause, or there may be mutual causal action.

Sapir points out that what holds for the physical environment, holds even more clearly for the social. Status systems in various cultures, however complex, and differentiations due to occupations are all mirrored in language.¹

Application: Inasmuch as these generalizations are intended to apply only to broad concepts regarding the relationship of language to culture, the primary application to business communication is also broad. Such application

¹Paul Henle, "Language, Thought, and Culture," reprinted in Culture and Social Anthropology, edited by Peter B. Hammond (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1964), pp. 379-81.

would provide an understanding of business codes as they relate to the structured interests of society. Application could also provide a mirror for status differentials among occupations.

In summary, literature on language in cultural anthropology is at the conceptualization stage regarding structural relationships of language to other cultural isolates. The following paragraph from an abstract in an anthropology journal clearly indicates the potential for describing business communication component (in this case, participant) relationships through structural analysis.

In the progression toward intimacy of unequals the superior is always the pacesetter initiating moves in that direction. The superior is the pacesetter because the willingness of the person of low status to enter into association can be taken for granted and there is little risk that the superior will be rebuffed whereas the risk would be great if the inferior were to initiate acts of association. Such variant forms of address as the title alone, the last name alone, and the use of multiple names are fitted into a model that purports to describe the temporal progression of address from acquaintance to friendship. Each new step towards friendship is, in this mode, initiated by the person of higher status.¹

Application: In addition to providing the basic symbology for business communication, the language system provides a system through forms of title and address that recognizes varying participant relationships.

¹R. Brown and Marguerite Ford, "Address in American English," abstract by Dana Keil, International Journal of American Linguistics, XXXIV (January, 1968), p. 50.

In total, the study of language contributes description relevant to business communication primarily in the categories of code and "how they work" aspects of participant communication systems. To some extent, the codes are described in terms of the function of participant relationships--i.e., some codes (like the use of titles and forms of address) prescribe channel access in terms of who may communicate what to whom and in what form. Capabilities and states are not analyzed.

The study of language provides strong evidence that the businessman utilizes an elaborate scheme of codes to communicate both within and outside the firm. Although such codes are generally identified, they are not applied specifically to business communication events except for occasional, illustrative purposes.

Social Organization

Social study in cultural anthropology identifies rather closely with sociology among the social science fields. The distinctions between the areas have, however, been the subject of at least minor debate in the literature. Both the uniqueness and the compatibility of the fields are now generally accepted, with sociology apparently concentrating on societies with more technology and anthropology emphasizing those with less technology.

Both fields maintain a concern for the various ways in which man relates himself to other objects and existents in his environment. Man-to-non-man relations are considered to be primarily technological relations and are treated by scholars with technical interests, like the economist and economic anthropologist. Man-to-man relationships are social concerns and include kinship and group structure, political, associational, religious, and economic customs as well as others as topics of study.

Man-to-man relations in cultural anthropology are studied rather extensively through elaborate description and identification of variations in both kinship and community structures among cultures. On the surface, the nature of social organization analysis at kinship and community levels suggests that such study would apply to communication situations only occasionally found in business communication circumstances. To the contrary, the functional and structural analyses that grow out of such study are relevant to business communication analysis in several basic ways.

Social organization material regarding the nature of social groups, group roles, and group control apply most readily to business communication analysis. Application is possible primarily through identification of business participants as a social subgroup (community) and description of individual-group relationships.

The existence in social organization of a business subgroup is a possibility according to the following citations:

As field work became the accepted method by which anthropological material was gathered, the emphasis gradually shifted from a study of societies as wholes to particular communities or segments of societies.¹

Social institutions may be broadly interpreted to include economic and political orientations as well as those based on kinship and free association.²

Modern mass-societies, indeed, are made up of a bewildering variety of social worlds. Each is an organized outlook, built up by people in their interaction with one another; hence, each communication channel gives rise to a separate world.³

Though it is quite correct to say that each human society has its own culture, different when viewed in its entirety from the culture of any other society, it is also true that anthropologists frequently apply the term culture to groups both larger and smaller than a single society.⁴

It should be noted that there has been a tendency for the units of study to shrink; from the limitlessness of the Wanderlust school to just a few villages (or even only one) in a tribal society, or a branch of a trade union, and so forth.⁵

¹A. L. Epstein, The Craft of Social Anthropology (London: Tavistock Publications, 1967), p. 130.

²Melville J. Herskovitz, Cultural Dynamics (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), p. 15.

³Herbert H. Hyman and Elanor Singer, Readings in Reference Group Theory and Research (New York: The Free Press, 1968), p. 109.

⁴Reals, An Introduction to Anthropology, p. 267.

⁵Epstein, The Craft of Social Anthropology, p. 146.

Application: Hymes' communication analysis framework calls first of all for identification of a "particular community." The business community in the United States involves organized interaction regarding economic transactions. Groups of comparable size and nature are included as social units with unique characteristics.

Generalizations regarding the nature of groups may also apply to the business community. The following statements describe group nature.

We are driven to go outside the village, if only because the questions that matter today are questions of the relation between the village and the wider world. What can we contribute here? We can take a small area of a great society--a factory or a trade union, or a political party. If we do this we are invading the field of other specialists--economists or political scientists. But we can add something to their analysis by using the anthropologist's concept of social structure. This leads us to see the links between political or economic relationships with those dependent on kinship or on ritual duties.¹

In describing social systems . . . we must deal with categories rather than individuals and with general plans for action rather than specific acts.²

Every social world has some kind of communication system--often nothing more than differential association--in which there develops a special universe of discourse, sometimes an argot. Special meanings and symbols further accentuate differences and increase social distance from outsiders. . . . the particular combination of social worlds differs from person to person. . . .³

¹Mair, An Introduction to Social Anthropology, p. 7.

²Bock, Modern Cultural Anthropology, p. 85.

³Hyman and Singer, Readings, p. 110.

Any enterprise, including that of scholarship, scientific or otherwise, forms a social order of its own with a conceptual apparatus of ideas and values which make it, in some respect, a thing in itself.¹

Application: The business subgroup may have structural links to other cultural isolates. Business group activity may be described in categories, including a special communication system with special meanings and symbols. This system accentuates the business group's distinctive qualities and the individual businessman's unique characteristics.

Social organization literature provides particular description of the nature of groups that is of value in basic analysis of business subgroups. Groups exist, first of all, to fulfill particular functions. The following three-way classification of group functions relates to possible functions of business communication groups.

1. Task Function: the orientation of the group toward producing objective effects on its physical, biological, or social environment; for example, producing a product, exploiting or protecting a resource, winning a war or a game.
2. Control function: the orientation of the group toward maintaining its own internal structure (and growth) through conformity to behavioral and recruitment norms; for example, enculturating and disciplining group members and (when relevant) recruiting qualified new members.

¹James A. Clifton, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1968), p. 268.

3. Expressive function: the orientation of the group toward satisfying the psychological needs of its members, including those needs which result from individual participation in the task and control activities.

Every human group is oriented toward one or more of these functions, and analysis will generally show that all three functions are present to some degree, if not explicitly, then implicitly.¹

Application: Business communication groups exist primarily to accomplish a task function--either producing a product or providing a service. The business group, as a rule, sets up its recruitment and behavioral norms. In addition, the group activity may provide expression for the psychological needs of its members. Intra-group business communication will be a product of the interaction of group members as one or more of the functions is fulfilled.

Social organization analysis also includes involvement with the ranking of groups and individuals. Taylor discusses this type of analysis in the following:

Differentiation in prestige among individuals and/or groups within a community or larger unit is a universal of human culture, but many cultures lack well-defined groups of different rank. . . . Many sociologists believe that there are five or six classes in most American communities, with the main criteria of differentiation being occupation and wealth. Here as in many other societies, however, it is difficult to classify many families. There is enough movement among the classes so that many families are transitional or intermediate.²

¹Bock, Modern Cultural Anthropology, pp. 120-21.

²Taylor, Cultural Ways, pp. 104-05.

Application: The business communicator in the United States is certain to have group memberships that are "ranked" or "categorized" according to cultural norms. Hymes' communication analysis procedures imply that the business communicator's relative rank may be consequential in analysis of relationships. Thus, "who may say what to whom" prescriptions may be determined in part by prestige differentials among individuals and groups.

Intrarelationships of individuals within groups and related group characteristic analysis are discussed by Bock.

In any genuine social group, the members are tied to one another by certain reciprocal rights and obligations; that is, they play social roles relative to one another according to categories and plans that are shared within the group. Groups differ, however, in the degree to which their members feel committed to one another and to continued membership in the group.

Groups also differ in their degree of formality. This characteristic may be measured in a number of ways. A highly formal group is one in which some or all of the following characteristics are found: elaborate division of labor, explicit status differences with symbolic expressions of these differences, clear-cut rules for recruitment and advancement, and explicit agreements concerning the boundaries and scheduling of group activities. Informal groups either lack these characteristics or have them developed to only a slight degree.¹

Application: The members of business communication groups are tied together by certain rights and obligations. The

¹Bock, Modern Cultural Anthropology, pp. 118-19.

group relationships are structured to include prescriptions and proscriptions regarding communication opportunities. The business communication group has the characteristics of a formally structured group--elaborate division of labor, explicit status differences, symbolic expression of status differences, as well as other definite rules and agreements.

Various other description relating to participants in groups is obvious in these statements:

We think of persons (other than relatives) primarily in terms of their jobs . . . ¹

A close relationship has been found between variations in judgment of another person's performance and the social standing of the performer.²

In order to understand what goes on in an individual, it is necessary to consider his attitude toward his fellow men. The relationships of people to one another in part exist naturally and as such are subject to change. In part they take the form of institutionalized relationships which arise from the natural ones.³

In another discussion of trends in individual-group relationships, the following generalization is made:

The major character of this trend, as contrasted with the individualistic emphasis, is the realization that group situations generate differential effects

¹Ibid., p. 107.

²Mazafer Sherif and Carl I. Hovland, Social Judgment (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 83.

³Hyman and Singer, Readings, p. 247.

of significant consequence. Group interaction is seen as the major determinant in attitude formation and attitude change, and other phenomena of vital consequence to the individual.¹

Applications: The business communicator may be identified in large measure in terms of his job. His social standing is an additional factor in the reactions that others have to his communication. The attitude that the business communicator has toward his fellow communicators and they, in turn, toward him is basic to understanding either person. The relationship of the business communicator to others is subject to change; the relationship in part takes institutionalized form.

Participant description is also found in kinship material relating to status and roles. Both the nature and the pervasiveness of status are indicated in these statements:

A status probably is most usefully understood as a label by which some kind of member of a group is identified, either by a participant in the group or an outside observer. The status is some aspect of some kind of person's relationship with another kind of person, which is useful for identifying the person's total set of relationships with the other.

A significant aspect of the status-role concept is the difference from one kind of member of a group to another. The husband does not behave toward his wife in just the same ways that she behaves toward him. In other words, they occupy different statuses (identification roles), and they live out different but complementary roles

¹Ibid., p. 85.

in relation to one another. This status-role differentiation and consequent interdependence binds members of groups together.

In economic organization . . . roles differ from person to person. Men perform different tasks from those of women; adults perform tasks different from those of children, and some persons specialize in one or another craft.¹

Application: The business communicator is a member of a distinct group defined by his job and his relationship with others in the business. His role is defined by his position within the business as he relates to both other employees and firm clients. His most basic group characteristics, however, relate to his age, sex, and occupation position.

Although anthropologists are, as a group, uncertain as to whether all cultures have political groups, analysis of those cultures with political and governmental organizations is popular. Information produced is diverse but includes concepts relevant to communication participant description. Taylor describes administrative leaders in the following:

Administrative leaders are those who have been granted influence over group affairs because of various personal qualifications such as age, experience, wealth, bravery, supernatural ability, or generosity--different groups emphasizing different combinations of qualities.²

Speaking of a primitive tribe in Africa, Taylor cites these related facts:

They commonly made extensive use of symbols of authority such as palaces, escorts, and special clothing.

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, p. 77. ²Ibid., p. 108.

Some kind of centralized government seems necessary for the largest tribal groups, but tribes of tens of thousands of persons can function politically without centralized government. . . . There is here a hierarchy of segmented relations.¹

Application: These generalizations are at best only suggestive of possible extrapolation to the business communication situation. They indicate that the business communicator may be related to his fellows in any of several ways in a leadership capacity, that leadership may be symbolized in various ways, and that organizational control is essential for business groups.

Social groups set up particular rules governing the relationships of the individuals who belong to them. The following items illustrate "social control" concepts developed by the cultural anthropologist.

By virtue of the very fact that cultures differ from one another it follows that they vary in the content of their legal norms and the relative severity of the sanctions applied to violators.

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Another extensively used means of social control is the bringing of shame upon the violator.

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Another technique of social control is what has been called logic. A person is reminded directly or indirectly, that violation or contemplated violation of the norms is incompatible with a belief that he shares with his fellows.

These are only a few of the significant means by which violators of cultural norms may be kept at a minimum and the consequent disorganization of social relations avoided. When such violations

¹Ibid., p. 109.

are so frequent that members of a society cannot predict and therefore count on the behavior of their fellows, it becomes difficult if not impossible for the people to accomplish the culturally defined goals of life, a state which sociologists sometimes refer to as social disorganization.¹

Application: Business communication rules of prescription and proscription (relationships) may in part be patterned after social control norms. A unique set of norms, including techniques for controlling violators, may arise in the business community. Business communication within the firm may in some instances be controlled by such norms; in other instances, communication may be of a special type to enforce norms.

In summary, as a social subgroup, the business communication "community" can be described in these terms: the internal structure of the group is both unique and complex; the group is related to various other structural systems; the group exists to fulfill particular functions; prestige and status differentials are derived from and exist in group structure for both individuals and groups; individual relationships calling for various normative behavior are set up and enforced through group structure. These social organization concepts are useful in establishing the business communication group as a social "community" by providing description of communication participants (within the firm) and demonstrating the complexity of intra-group relationships.

¹Ibid., pp. 112-13.

Individual-Personality Traits

Study of cultural phenomena by anthropologists includes analyses of both group structure and individual behavior. Considerable emphasis in cultural study is understandably placed upon cultural groups; interest in describing individual behavior peculiarities and patterns seems less likely for the anthropologist. Both areas, however, receive attention--possibly because of their mutual interdependence. Adequate study of an individual requires study of his group affiliations and, similarly, adequate study of groups calls for study of individuals who comprise particular groups. The processes of enculturation and acculturation account for reciprocal influences between group and individual.

The exact role of cultural anthropology in personality study has not been clear among social science scholars. Herskovitz explains the particular historic distinction made between two of the social sciences as " . . . anthropology is concerned with groups, psychology with individuals."¹ In other explanation, he indicates that the traditional approach of the cultural anthropologist is to study culture as a series of institutions without reference to the role of characteristics of individuals. Psychologists, on the other hand, study the individual and mental processes with little reference to the cultural aspects of personality.

¹Herskovitz, Cultural Anthropology, p. 332.

Herskovitz argues convincingly for support of a "middle ground" of common concern. Essentially, this middle ground is the focus point for considerable study in cultural anthropology and social psychology. The rationale for a common ground is explained as follows:

It is a middle ground of common concern, long neglected, that we treat here. Such fundamental processes as motivation and adjustment cannot be separated from the situations in which they take place, nor can they be studied without reference to individuals who are motivated and who must respond to approval, seek security, strive to conform to accepted modes of behavior, or reach pre-eminence, their culture dictates what ends they will seek and what they must do to achieve them.¹

Applying the Hymes' model to the business communication situation, there is obvious value to personality and individual behavior description in this "common ground" area. Specifically, Hymes calls for description of "participants" in the communication event. Personality-individual traits data provide information regarding factors that affect business men (participants) as they transmit and interpret messages. The business communicator, for example, who knows the nature of personality-culture relationships will likely know more about what to expect from communication structured in particular ways. He should not only "send" more intelligently but also "receive" with greater understanding and insight.

¹Herskovitz, Cultural Dynamics, p. 33.

The references and the applications that follow involve application of anthropological study of personality to business communication participant analysis. The role of culture in the analysis of individuals is indicated as follows by Herskovitz:

To differentiate the individual from his culture leads inevitably to a distorted perspective on behavior. To be effective, all those elements that, at a given moment, figure in the total setting of an individual or of a group must be considered. In this, of course, the culture in which the life of the subject is lived assumes a place of greatest importance.¹

Application: Important information regarding business communication participants is available through an analysis of the total characteristics of the individual's cultural circumstance.

Analysis of the "total setting" of an individual is obviously a substantial task. Furthermore, some of the most apparent distinguishing characteristics between individuals and groups may be the least useful in such analysis. Oswalt makes these points:

National, religious, geographical, linguistic and cultural groups do not necessarily coincide with racial groups and the cultural traits of such groups have no demonstrated connexion with racial traits. Thus, race, language, and culture do not form an inseparable triumvirate but are much more likely to vary independently of one another.

The scientific material available to us at present does not justify the conclusion that

¹Ibid., p. 334.

inherited genetic differences are a major factor in producing the differences between the cultures and cultural achievements of different peoples or groups. The physical environment appears to have more important effects on cultural developments than does any other factor.¹

Application: The unique qualities of particular cultural environments are probably of most consequence in describing individual participants. Racial, genetic, national, and religious distinctions do not necessarily account for cultural distinctions. The business firm itself may provide more useful information than racial characteristics in analysis of business communication participants.

Another statement serves to support the validity of looking to individual peculiarities within particular group affiliations:

In any social situation from a sewing bee to a nation the individual participants can be counted. Persons so counted may be classified roughly by kinds; every individual is a specific organic kind and also one or more behavior kinds. Those organically alike can be classified inductively by age, sex, physical fitness, and bodily characteristics.²

The specific relevance of the business group in analysis of individuals is apparent in this statement:

The ascription of personality types to given cultures has given way to the study of personalities in a society. The concept of basic personality has come to be thought of as modal personality.

¹Wendell H. Oswalt, Understanding Our Culture (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), pp. 50-51.

²Douglas G. Haring, Personal Character and Cultural Milieu (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1956), p. 114.

And there has been the further recognition that even within a culture, characteristic personality sub-types may develop from the differing situations of the lives of persons who play different roles in a given group. These are what Linto terms status personalities, defined as "status-linked response configurations."¹

Application: The business communicator is undoubtedly involved with "status-linked response configurations" as he communicates both within and outside the firm. Participant analysis in this instance extends even further to the relationships of the participants. The nature of such relationships alone results in a particular type of communication; information about the participants is obviously of consequence in the relationships.

The relevance of the business group in analysis of individual participants is demonstrated in other basic ways. Hammond indicates:

The development of characteristically human psychological structure (mind or personality) is fundamentally dependent upon social mediated experience in interaction with other persons.²

Herskovitz explains the result of interaction with other persons as follows:

In the course of the enculturative experience, the individual tends to be molded into the kind of person his group envisages as desirable. Complete success is never achieved; some persons are more pliant than others, some resist the

¹Herskovitz, Cultural Anthropology, p. 343.

²Peter B. Hammond, Cultural and Social Anthropology (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1964), p. 453.

enculturative discipline more than their fellows.¹

Obviously, the individual learns from and is affected by his group affiliations. Herskovitz indicates one result of such learning in this explanation:

The learning process is a conditioning process, or, in later years, one of reconditioning. If this were not so, a human being could not function, for his time would be spent in assessing each situation he might meet, instead of responding "without thinking," as we say.²

Application: The business communicator learns from and is molded by his group experiences. He learns particular codes, as well as facts regarding other participants and participant relationships, through interaction with his peers. His experiences with other groups are similarly useful to him.

Malinowski states that "Each institution, that is, organized type of activity, has a definite structure."³ Through analysis of such structure, the business communicator utilizes his experience with all groups, including his own, to learn about particular aspects of participants. This dynamic of individual and group interaction extends to relative influence, as well; as the individual is affected by the group, he in turn affects the group. Sheriff indicates:

The ego of the individual is not self-generated. Despite its highly affective and motivational character, emergence of self is conditional upon processes

¹Herskovitz, Cultural Anthropology, p. 331.

²Ibid., p. 337.

³Bronislaw Malinowski, A Scientific Theory of Culture (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 54.

of development and learning in interaction and communication with other individuals in specific physical and social settings.

Indeed, no man is an island. His very self owes its chief characteristics to processes of give-and-take with other individuals and to physical and conceptual encounters with the world he lives in. Among the significant features of that world are the human groups in which he moves from childhood on: family, play groups, school; friendship clusters; neighborhood, church, occupational, professional and work groups; and political groups.¹

Other evidence that the business communicator can look to group affiliation for information about individual communication participants is offered in this statement:

Many patterns of cultural behavior are not observable completely in the performance of any individual. Only as numerous persons coordinate their activities are these more complex patterns effected.²

Other analysis related to the use of group affiliation for describing participants is provided by Haring.

Every human community, grouping, or social-situation is unique.

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Relatively few individuals devise completely new ways of thinking or acting. The behavior of parents and associates provides models that children copy consciously or unconsciously. Even the rare innovator speaks the language of his companions, eats, dresses, and plays as they do. Upon analysis innovations turn out to be rearrangements and new combinations of cultural behavior already current.³

¹Muzafer Sherif, Social Interaction (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967), p. 227.

²Haring, Personal Character and Cultural Milieu, p. 115.

³Ibid., pp. 110-11.

Application: Thus, the business communication group is obviously of consequence in the development of the businessman's personality. The business communicator must then look to group affiliations of those with whom he communicates to obtain information about their individual peculiarities. Although at best superficial, such information may well provide the most substantial source of available information for participant analysis.

The extent to which the individual business communicator may be affected by his group and inter-group experience in communication is described in the following discussion of ethnocentrism:

A contrast of "me" with "you" or "us" with "them" may be simply an objective assessment of the differences between cultures. If, however, the distinction is of the boastful type ascribed to the Eskimo and the citizen of the United States, it is based on subjective evaluations of similarities and differences. To hold one's own cultural ways up as the norm for measuring those of others is to reflect a bias in favor of one's own. In some respects this is desirable, for it gives one a full and meaningful sense of identity and assurance. In other ways it is harmful because it encourages intolerance. A bias in favor of one's own culture is termed ethnocentrism, and if one's culture is perfect in all contexts, an ethnocentric view is reasonable. If, however, there are areas in which one might profitably learn from other peoples, then in the long run an ethnocentric stance may be detrimental to one's entire way of living.¹

Application: The business communicator may be involved with an ethnocentric view regarding the relation of his group

¹Oswalt, Understanding our Culture, p. 20.

to other groups. An awareness of the subjective nature of ethnocentric views could promote tolerance in the business communication act and stimulate consideration of other group meanings.

The need for tolerance is a factor in Sherif's discussion of the "anchor" function of groups.

When individuals face a situation in which they have an established level of achievement but are also made aware of the achievement of other groups whom they regard as superior or inferior, the position of their own group relative to the group in question serves as the main anchor--or standard, if you like--in setting goals for their own performance.¹

Application: The business communicator should recognize, then, the tendency to be ethnocentric and the tendency to use one's own group as an anchor group in making judgments about other groups and other participants. He will communicate more effectively to the extent that he recognizes and makes allowance for these participant tendencies in his own communication behavior, as well as the communication behavior of others.

Material that provides specific individual-group analysis techniques directly applicable to business communication is not in the literature in significant measure. There is, however, representative material used primarily to illustrate concepts and theory. Generally, this material indicates that the business communicator's message may produce varying reactions depending upon both the

¹Sherif, Social Interaction, p. 232.

sender's and the receiver's respective peculiar personality traits. If differences in personalities are of a particular type and degree, a message structured by a sender as a friendly one might well be interpreted by the receiver as an aggressive one. Resulting interaction might well be aggressive. On the other hand, a particular "neutral" message might be interpreted as complimentary by the receiver and thus he may react with cooperation or even with submission to the sender's views. To the extent that the communicator can accurately appraise his fellow's peculiar personality make-up and vary his own communication strategy accordingly, he will use communication more effectively.

These generalizations apply to managerial strategy, as well. Haring demonstrates the specific relevance in the following:

A possibility for producing a change through communication might be that of stating a position which differs so slightly from the individual's own position that it falls at the limits of his latitude of acceptance or perhaps within a non-committal area between the latitudes of acceptance and rejection.

Another device which may be used by the communicator would be to compare the position he advocates with one even more extreme, thus making the difference between his position and that held by the recipient appear smaller.¹

In summary, the study of individual traits in cultural anthropology is primarily applicable to analysis of

¹Sherif and Hovland, Social Judgment, p. 195.

participants in the communication act. Relationships of participants is to some degree described.

To analyze participants adequately, the business communicator must look to careful analysis of group affiliations. Individual structural systems (for beliefs, values, attitudes, and so forth) are reflected in group structural systems. This approach to participant analysis is more logical than an approach using nationality, race, or language for information regarding participants. Inasmuch as the individual's "system" is in part a product of the "total system," relationships be studied through individual study.

Ritual.

In varying degrees, ritual anthropology includes study of beliefs. Included in such study are morals, and magic. Particular aspects relate to Hymes' communication components, but for the most part such application is limited. The application possibilities that do exist relate to participant description primarily with some relevance to relationships.

The relevance of ritual study to analysis of today's business communicator is stated generally by Taylor:

Ritual is of much functional significance in every aspect of life and occurs in much more daily activity than is usually recognized. Much ritual is religious, but a great deal occurs

participants in the communication act. Relationships of participants is to some degree described.

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Ritual, Religion, and Beliefs

In varying degrees the field of cultural anthropology includes study of cultural customs and beliefs. Included in such study are ritual, religion, morals, and magic. Particular aspects of such study relate to Hymes' communication components, but for the most part such application is limited. The application possibilities that do exist relate to participant description primarily with some relevance to relationships.

The relevance of ritual study to analysis of today's business communicator is stated generally by Taylor:

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in technological, economic, kinship, political and other activities.

Any society's members have culturally defined feelings about all kinds of things, and people of all cultures are inclined to symbolize these feelings in standardized ways. Ritual behavior is an economical means of expressing or reinforcing important sentiments. Political leaders, for example, are recognized as functionally important persons who must maintain some degree of authority and respect if they are to be effective.¹

Application: Accordingly, then, business communicators may look to particular types of ritual behavior for maintenance of certain authority and respect. At least some business communication may have as its either conscious or unconscious effect the performance of ritual for this purpose.

Firth's definition of ritual is useful in establishing the relevance of this type behavior to analysis of business communication participants.

Ritual may be defined as a kind of patterned activity oriented towards control of human affairs, primarily symbolic in character with a non-empirical referent, and as a rule socially sanctioned. Some kinds of ritual . . . attempt to control by a process of admonition.²

The functions of ritual in business communication activity may be implied in the following itemization by Taylor:

Much ritual, obviously, is conducted in group situations. Simply the enjoyment of doing things together provides the participant with a sense of belonging. Beyond this the ritual may be designed

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, p. 114.

²Firth, Elements of Social Organization, p. 222.

specifically to express and reinforce group ties. Whichever way it works, ritual has the consequence of unifying the group.

Ritual also aids status change. Passage rituals, particularly, may be concerned with acquainting the person with the roles he is to perform in his new status and motivating him to perform them well. Political leaders assuming office and young people entering married life often are adjured to acquit themselves well and advised as to how they are to behave. Initiation into tribal fraternities often involves extensive education to the secrets of manhood.

. . . speeches may be delivered which allude to group values in conventional kinds of statements, reminding the people of what they are supposed to be committed to and, perhaps, even praising them for their correct attitudes and behaviors. In this sense, ritual has a social control function.¹

Applications: Communication within the business firm may serve a ritualistic function of either expressing enjoyment or reinforcing group ties. Communication resulting from the status change event may in some measure be ritualistic, with the purpose of describing relationships and expectations. Managerial speeches to employees may be ritualistic with a social control function.

Finally, ritual may take the form of nonverbal, as well as verbal communication. The following nonverbal techniques suggest applicability to business communication situations.

The techniques and objects employed in ritual are highly diverse. Manipulation of the body is

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, pp. 115-16.

frequent, and nearly any bodily movement or physiological activity may have ritual significance. Among these are the folding of the hands to show reverence for God, weeping to express solidarity, spitting to show contempt, clapping the hands to show approval, and bowing to manifest subordination. Various dance movements also are used to express sentiments. Cultures vary in respect to the meanings of ritual actions. Placing the palms together indicates an attitude of prayer in some places, but in others it is a gesture of respect.¹

Application: At least some non-verbal business communication may be classified as ritual performance. Certain physical expressions may express either subordination, rejection, or any of a variety of manifestations.

Much ritual is religious and does not relate to the business communication situation. Religion is more than a ritual, however. The study of religion provides basic types of information regarding individual reference frames that carries over to business communication participant analysis. Firth indicates the scope of religion in this exposition:

Religion is one of the great driving forces in human activity, both individually and socially. Not only does it give occasion for elaborate institutional assemblies, it also gives sanctions for a wide range of conduct. It provides a referent for the explanation of many events in human life which seem obscure and demand a meaning. It can even be appealed to for basic principles of interpretation of history and the existence of the world itself.²

¹Ibid., pp. 114-15.

²Firth, Elements of Social Organization, p. 215.

Application: Inasmuch as religion gives sanction to a wide range of human conduct, the business communicator may be affected in his communication by religious ideals.

The following statement by Taylor supports the application:

Anthropologists have devoted much attention to the study of religion, and they agree that religious customs are found in all cultures. In many, in fact, religious beliefs and practices may play the major role in integrating a way of life into a functional unity. . . . All are alike in that they have to do with the supernatural and perform similar functions. Anthropologists usually define religion as beliefs and practices having to do with the concept of the supernatural.¹

More specific participant description is found in these generalizations regarding the function of religion.

The British anthropologist, Raymond Firth, views religious systems in terms of means for handling the fundamental problems of social organization. " . . . for reducing uncertainty and anxiety, for increasing coherence in human relationships, for assigning meaning to human endeavor, for providing justification for moral obligation." He concludes that it is impossible for human society to exist without some kind of symbolic solutions to such problems which go beyond those based on empirical evidence. The range and variety of such symbolic solutions which have been invented and found functional by man is great.²

Application: The business communicator may utilize symbolic solutions to problems encountered that go beyond

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, p. 118.

²Taylor, Cultural Ways, p. 127, citing Raymond Firth, Elements of Social Organization.

empirical evidence for solution. Business communication regarding such problems may be analyzed in terms of this variable.

Firth provides detail in this statement:

The processes of social living create continual problems, for which solutions are always being sought. Among the qualities that human beings like their solutions to have is a true and not merely apparent correctness. They also like some identifiable relation to other solutions in coherent, intelligible form. Solutions to most kinds of problems can be handled in technical or in symbolic terms--using these expressions in a wide sense.¹

Application: The business communicator is faced with continual problems for which he seeks solutions. True solutions are sought and may be provided by adherence to religious codes.

The following paragraph indicates the magnitude of religion.

Religion is, then, much more than an emotional expression of individual awe, fear, or dependence. It is more than a reflection or symbolic expression of social structure. It is not a unified blanket stretched over a society. It is a complex set of concepts and patterns of behavior of people in interaction, dynamic in conditioning other kinds of behavior, and plastic in being capable of modification to meet individual and group circumstances. Its peculiar quality of the sacred gives it not only authority as a social regulator but enables it to throw out fresh bulwarks of dogma, myth, and miracle when attacked, and to have them speedily absorbed.²

¹Firth, Elements of Social Organization, p. 248.

²Ibid., p. 247.

Application: As a complex set of concepts and patterns of behavior of people in interaction, religion may be a factor in business participant relationships. Religion may, in part, condition business behavior and function as a social regulator.

Herskovitz makes these points regarding both magic and religion:

If we recognize that magic is an integral part of most belief systems, we may then distinguish it from other forms of religion. All are like parts of a single mechanism that helps to assure man his place in a scheme of things so vast, and so complex, that without these varied controls he would be hard put to it to make meaning out of his life, or to achieve a sense of security in it.

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For people living in terms of a system of thought that takes a symbolic group of invisible forces into daily account, belief will not be narrowly framed, and attitudes will be relaxed and natural. Many students have commented on the absence in other cultures of a hushed voice and the restrained movements that mark our approach to the forces of the universe. Where these forces are thought to be all about and never aloof from any part of life, there is no place for such attitudes.

The ways in which men seek to bring themselves into harmony with the powers of the universe are many. They may be intensely personal, or require participation by the entire group. They may be public, or private. They may involve highly keyed emotional improvisation, or demand precision of movement, set by an ancient tradition.

¹Herskovitz, Cultural Anthropology, pp. 222-23.

Application: The business communicator is subject to the use of magic (or forms of it), as well as religion, in assigning meaning to his life. If his group takes a symbolic group of invisible forces into daily account, his belief may be broad and his attitudes will be relaxed and natural. He may seek to bring himself into harmony with the powers of the universe through his group behavior.

Closely related to the study of religion and magic is the study of philosophy. The following statements from Taylor's comments on philosophy provide basic description of participants.

Philosophy ordinarily is thought of as having to do with rather explicit notions of the nature of things.

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Not only may cultures hold views and orientations contradictory to those of alien groups; but the specific elements of world views are highly various. It has been suggested that the American middle class thinks of the universe as a mechanism, which, because it is a mechanism, can be mastered by man.¹

Application: The American business communicator of middle-class background may be oriented toward a mechanistic view of the universe. He may expect that he can master "the nature of things."

Morals are typically associated with religion and philosophy. The cultural nature of morality is also useful

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, p. 130.

in providing basic description of participants. The citations in the next several paragraphs provide application possibilities.

Men must have a moral basis for action To be effective, a moral system must be expressible in symbols which in one way or another can be related to current experience. Religion is often appealed to as the only source of the morality which can measure up to the magnitude of the problems created by modern technological advance.¹

The existence of moral standards involves not merely an acknowledgment of the correctness of the judgements of right and wrong as they are passed. There is also a conviction that it is proper that such judgements should be passed at all. A person's conduct tends to be guided, then, not only by actual judgements given by others, and by his expectations that similar judgements will continue to be given, but also by his own evaluations and by his recognition of the validity of how others might judge were they in a position to do so.²

Applications; Morality is often supported by religious structure. The business communicator may structure his messages and interpret the messages of others in light of his moral-religious background. In addition, he is affected by moral judgments of right and wrong imposed by his own business organization. Inasmuch as he "rightfully" can be involved with moral aspects of behavior, at least some of his communication will be affected by moral standards.

¹Firth, Elements of Social Organization, p. 219.

²Ibid., p. 186.

Morality . . . is not merely subjective. It is objective in the sense of being founded on a social existence which is external to the individual, and to any specific social system. This does not mean that one has to appeal for its validity to some exterior agency absolute and independent of the social world.¹

Application: Inasmuch as morality is not subjective and is dependent upon a social existence external to the individual, the business communicator's social circumstance is a factor in his adopting codes that influence communication.

Specific applications to the business communication situation are found in the following explanation and illustrations.

For the anthropologist, the terms moral and immoral relate to social actions, to social relations. . . . We commonly speak of exchange as an economic action, or worship as a religious action. There is no corresponding category of moral actions, per se. Morality refers to the qualities rather than to the substance of actions. Practically every economic or religious action, for example, has a moral quality. Moral judgements in any society are notable for the ease with which they tend to be uttered. They cost so little; they demand no sacrifice of resources and almost none of energy. It is not surprising, then, that they are pervasive and this is important for social organization.

The pervasiveness of moral judgements may be easily realized by a little consideration of affairs in our modern Western life. . . . Commendation or criticism is continually being formed on the way in which a man behaves at work, his treatment of his colleagues, the way a woman keeps her home, the way she acts in a shop queue, how they spend their income, how they bring up their children, how they let their dog react to their neighbour's cat.²

¹Ibid., p. 214.

²Ibid., p. 184.

Applications: Since practically every economic activity has a moral quality, practically every business communication has a moral quality. The business communicator may analyze both the messages he sends and the messages he receives in terms of their moral qualities. At least some business communication relates to the carrying out of moral judgments. Such communication should be recognized; the business communicator who communicates moral judgment or is a recipient-witness to such communication will ideally be sensitive to its nature.

Religious and moral concepts may provide the basis for specific communication prescriptions. Taylor explains:

. . . standards of truth are universal, but sometimes the truth hurts. Accordingly, in some cultures the ethical principles prescribe that, in ordinary social intercourse, the thing to do is to tell people whatever they wish to hear. . . . Whatever one's personal standards of behavior, it is important to keep in mind the principle of cultural relativism as a way of understanding the values and ethics of culturally alien groups. It should be apparent that this is one of the more difficult areas in which to apply cultural relativism.¹

Application: Ethical principles relating to cultural interpretation of "truth" may result in communication prescriptions. For example, ethical principles may dictate that the business communicator "tell people what they want to hear"

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, p. 132.

rather than telling the truth. The prescription, then, results in communication that has meaning outside the verbal meaning conveyed.

Religious and moral belief systems hold strong positions among the various customs and traits of man that form his structural systems. The strength of such beliefs is demonstrated in part by the considerations described by anthropologists for introducing change. Taylor sets out these change factors:

One of the major tasks facing cultural anthropologists is identification of such factors of change and the development of effective means for assessing their relative effects. A few of the factors which have been explored are noted here.

1. Objectification is a necessary prerequisite to acceptance, for a custom cannot be accepted by a respondent who has not observed an action, artifact, or utterance which expresses the custom.
2. Advocacy . . . Many customs are not borrowed or diffused because no one is advocating that anyone accept it, and no effort is made to convince a respondent of its desirability
3. Personality . . . Many a custom has been rejected because the respondent found the objectifier's personality offensive, even in cases when the respondent was actually attracted to the custom. In other cases respondents have accepted customs they were not especially interested in because of the force of the advocate's personality.
4. Personal relations . . . refers particularly to friendship and kinship. Many respondents will accept a custom advocated by a friend or relative and reject it if it is proposed by a stranger.

5. Majority affiliation is for many respondents a recommendation for acceptance. Many people accept a new idea because "everyone else" is doing so. Majorities tend to be intimidating.

6. Compatibility is a cultural factor of considerable importance in understanding a respondent's reaction. Often an alien custom is simply out of harmony with the respondent's culture, and the proposed trait simply can't co-exist with present items in his way of life.

7. Efficiency The issue is whether the proposed custom does the job it is alleged to do and how well it does it.

8. Cost is one of the commonest deterrents to acceptance. Many an item has been rejected because it requires too much money or the draining off of too many other valued resources in order to put the custom into effect.

9. Penalty, if it is a necessary concomitant of acceptance, may influence the respondent to reject a custom.

10. Advantage Some customs are accepted simply because they provide the respondent with some sort of gain which cannot be obtained otherwise.

11. Mastery of a custom is a significant determinant of a respondent's reaction. . . . To some it simply may not be worth the effort.

12. Functional repercussions may result in rejection. Cultures . . . are not composed of discrete elements but are systems composed of traits which are functionally linked to one another; and a change in one custom may result in a chain reaction in other parts of the culture. If the respondent is unwilling to undergo the secondary changes he may reject the custom which would precipitate them.

These are only a few of the factors which may be considered by students of culture change.¹

¹Ibid., pp. 161-63.

In addition to noting some of the factors of change, Taylor uses the following points to indicate principles of directed change:

No individual can exist normally without . . . prediction of his fellows' behavior on the basis of what he has learned during enculturation. Anthropologists can predict the behavior of people of other cultures by studying those cultures; and since the processes of human thought and behavior are basically similar in all societies, he has an additional basis from which to predict. This does not mean that anthropologists and other social scientists have learned enough about human behavior to predict consistently. The wise anthropologist limits his predictions to those he can make with some degree of certainty, and he qualifies them in terms of the estimated degree of certainty.

This, of course, is in some contrast to the tendency of many people to attempt prediction and control of cultural change on the basis of common sense knowledge only. . . . Edward Spicer has cited several sources of difficulty which appear over and over again as agents of change, trained or untrained, pursue their craft.

1. One of the most elementary principles of change, but one which seems to be difficult to get across to many change agents, is the fact that the customs which comprise a culture are linked to one another and to elements of the cultural field. The fact that cultures are systems, and that modification of parts of a culture may have repercussions which are destructive either to the goals of the change agent or those of the people undergoing change often goes unappreciated until serious mischief is done.

2. Social scientists have found that one of the most effective ways of securing agreement to a desired change is to work through the proper social units.

3. The nature of the relationships between objectifiers and respondents has been found to be one of the most relevant issues of all. Administrators of the Relocation Centers during World

War II often had difficulty securing cooperation from the Japanese inmates because of their insistence on treating them as inferior and untrustworthy. The Japanese reacted by rejection of attempts to get them to participate in organizational, economic, and other projects.

4. Misinterpretation of the customs of culturally different groups because of ethnocentrism . . . is an exceedingly common source of trouble. . . . Americans attempting to secure the cooperation of Pacific Islanders assumed that those persons identified by them as "chiefs" could influence their subjects to do what they wanted. They were puzzled and angered by their inability to do so. Cultural relativism as an approach would have enabled the Americans to learn that islanders of senior rank do not possess such authority and do not consider themselves responsible for the actions of their followers.

5. Finally, a common source of difficulty is the failure of the change agents to bring the members of the respondent's society into the planning and carrying out of a program. It has been found that people often do not like to have ideas imposed on them from outside but want to feel that they have participated in the formulation and execution of whatever changes they accept. Effective agents of change often encourage people to make their own decisions with minimum possible guidance, and many a change has been rejected because of a failure to do this.¹

Applications: Much business communication both within the firm and outside it has as its primary purpose the introduction of some form of change. Within the firm, the executive may see need for particular kinds of changes in procedure or personnel behavior. Communication outside the firm includes sales correspondence, as well as other types

¹Taylor, Cultural Ways, pp. 163-65, including credit to Edward H. Spicer, ed., Human Problems in Technological Change (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1952).

of messages that propose acceptance of some proposal. If the "prediction" that precludes structuring of such communication is based upon superficial considerations, there is less chance that the communication will be effective in accomplishing its purpose. If, on the other hand, the business communicator realizes the factors of change and the principles of directed change and then uses such knowledge for analysis of his respondents and for choice of strategy, he is more likely to succeed.

In total, the study of belief systems--ritual, religion, and morals--indicates that both verbal and non-verbal communication may be ritualistic, religion is a factor in analysis of participant reference frames, moral judgments are factors in communication, and successfully changing customs are attitudes depends in significant measure upon analysis of complex cultural isolates. Such study is useful in business communication for basic description of participant reference frames and participant relationships.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Interest in interdisciplinary communication theory has been high in recent years. Scholars in anthropology, English, psychiatry, psychology, sociology, speech, and philosophy have in varying degrees undertaken research and conceptualization efforts to learn more about the complexities of this unique and important human behavior. Business communication, a more specialized discipline, has evidenced considerable interest in such study.

The potential for application of the findings of human communication theory to practical communication problems is immediately obvious. However, the principal thrust of such study is through providing necessary descriptive data; little effort is directed toward application of information and theory to specific needs. This research activity is a pioneering effort to apply descriptive data from one field, viz., cultural anthropology, to the practical needs of business communication.

The problem of the study was to determine the applicability of topics in the field of cultural anthropology to the field of business communication. The primary sources of information were textbooks and journals in cultural anthropology.

The first step in the investigation was to review the literature in business communication, communication theory, and cultural anthropology. Through study of the literature, a procedure was developed for study of the field of cultural anthropology for material applicable to business communication analysis. Through the use of the framework of business communication and the analytical steps developed by an anthropology authority, each of several relevant areas of cultural anthropology was examined for applicable material. The areas covered are economics, language, social organization, individual traits, and ritual, religion, and morals. The conceptual applicability of the several areas to business communication was thus determined.

Major Ideas Derived from This Study

The developmental scheme of the study involved specific application statements for each of numerous citations from cultural anthropology subtopics. Citations were selected whenever they were related to communication components and could be applied to business communication. After

each subtopical area, explanation is provided of general application relevance to the communication components. The following paragraphs indicate the major application ideas for the areas explored.

Economics. The study of economic anthropology provides material applicable to business communication in describing business as a community, code, participants, and participant relationships. The following enumeration covers the scope of such application.

1. Businessmen in the United States generally comprise a subcultural group.
2. Economic activity may itself function as a communication code; similarly, the possession and use of money may be communicative, in some instances determining communicator relationships and setting up channels of communication.
3. In terms of participant analysis, the business communicator, as well as his respondents, may be motivated toward economic behavior for other than a profit motive.
4. The various factors influencing the motivational base for the business communicator include social, as well as economic roles.
5. Participants in transactions are affected by the relationships of the transaction to their own moral values.
6. The business communicator's norms system is imbedded in a total set of norms rather than being autonomous.
7. Status differentials (relationships) among businessmen and business-men clients may have an economic basis. Age and sex differences among participants also account for relationship distinctions.

8. Whenever practiced by businessmen, gift exchange patterns reflect participant relationship peculiarities. The "flow" of goods for any reason relates to social structure.

9. Economic activity "works" as a part of a total cultural system--the activity is influential in and is influenced by the total social system.

These generalizations from economic anthropology indicate that businessmen form a subcultural community characterized by complex motivational bases, complex and interrelated structure, and various relationship differentials.

Language. Cultural anthropology literature on language is applicable to business communication study primarily through description of code systems and explanation of the relationship of code (language) to other cultural systems. Generalized applications include the following:

1. The business community may be classified as a speech community with an inventory of language peculiarities.

2. The business communicator may either be affiliated or have contact with speech communities other than the business community and, consequently, needs to reconcile speech (code) differences.

3. The business communicator utilizes numerous nonverbal codes--possibly either as much as or more than verbal codes.

4. Analysis of structural relationships between language and other cultural isolates indicates that business communication may, in part, reflect the interests of the business community and the society. Such communication may provide a mirror for other structure--e.g., status differentials among communication participants.

These applications indicate that business communication codes are diverse; nonverbal communication plays a major role in the total communication volume. Participant relationships, as well as other structures, may be reflected in business communication.

Social Organization. The anthropological study of social organization provides additional support for the existence of the business group as a cultural subgroup. The complexity of inter-group relationships--and thus participant relationships--is described. Applications include the following:

1. The business subgroup includes a communication system with particular meanings and symbols. Although the group has structural links to other cultural groups and systems, the subcultural system of business provides distinctive qualities. Similarly, the individual businessman has unique characteristics.
2. The business subgroup exists primarily to accomplish the task function--the manufacturing of a product or the providing of the service.
3. Members of the business group are tied together by certain rights and obligations. Such ties set up relationships that dictate prescriptions and proscriptions regarding communication.
4. The individual business communicator may be identified, in part, in terms of his job. His social standing is a factor in determining the reactions others have to his communication; he, in turn, reacts to others in similar ways.
5. Leadership relationships develop within the business group and may be symbolized.
6. Rules of prescription and proscription may be patterned after social control norms. Unique "rules" may arise within the firm,

including techniques for maintaining intra-group control.

Social organization applications relate primarily to description of the business subgroup and the structural relations of the participants.

Individual-Personality Traits. Factors of individual peculiarities in cultural anthropology literature obviously relate to participant description and participant relationships. Application is generally as follows:

1. The individual business communicator's behavioral peculiarities are to be found in analysis of his total circumstance.
2. Valid analysis of the participant requires examination of his particular cultural environment; immediately obvious distinctions like race, nationality, etc., are useful for superficial analysis only.
3. The individual participant develops status-linked roles that affect the response configurations he adopts in business communication.
4. The business communicator learns particular codes and facts regarding relationships through his interaction with his group peers and other associates. His group experience is influential in molding his business personality.
5. Group affiliations tend to promote ethnocentrism; the individual participant will use his own group as a reference for reaction to other behavior.

To analyze communication participants and the relationships among them, the business communicator must carefully examine individual peculiarities. Important clues to individual structural systems are reflected in

the total circumstance of the individual, including his group affiliations.

Ritual, Religion, and Beliefs. Although not immediately obvious, anthropological description of belief systems and ideology systems is in part applicable to business communication theory. The primary application is in participant description, as indicated in these generalizations:

1. Ritualistic behavior may be found in business communication. Re-enforcing sentiments and expressing recognition of status differentials are ritualistic functions of some business communication. Some communication may function as ritualistic re-enforcement of group ties.
2. Some nonverbal expressions may be a ritualistic means of expressing subordination, rejection, or other "relationship" manifestations.
3. Religion is used by all cultures to accomplish various ends. The business communication may be affected by the businessman's religious ideals. His personal scheme for "ordering" his world may include religious concepts; such concepts may relate to his communication about business transactions.
4. The business communicator is affected by moral judgments of right and wrong imposed by his own business organization as well as those imposed by his religious and social affiliations. Moral judgments probably affect much business communication in terms of the content as well as coding strategy.
5. When business communication has as its purpose eliciting some kind of change, consideration of numerous cultural change factors may be essential to accomplishing the purpose. Individual beliefs or attitudes may be imbedded in complex socio-economic ideology structures that require particular approaches if change is to be accomplished.

Basic beliefs related to the nature and quality of man's existence are probed in the study of religion, ritual, and morals. Inasmuch as man's structural systems are inter-related, belief systems carry over from one aspect of behavior to another. The businessman's economic behavior, then, may be affected by his basic belief systems. Analysis of communication participants requires consideration of the role of belief systems.

Conclusions

Instruction in business communication has in recent years implied development of ability to prepare effective business communication. The primary means for realizing this objective have been the refinement of written coding and selection of appropriate psychological structure. This study indicates that application of material from cultural anthropology to business communication theory could strengthen both these means and possibly add other means for realizing the instructional objective.

In strengthening the coding refinements in business communication, cultural anthropology literature in economics and language may be applied to broaden the effective utilization of codes. Much behavior outside actual verbal behavior may be communicative in economic activity. Indeed, transactions (and related communication) may have neither profit nor utility as the purpose; some transactions may more nearly communicate social obligation or information about

social relationships. In other instances, the selection of office furniture or business attire may function as forms of nonverbal communication. Developing sensitivity to the wide range of communication codes could do much to aid the business student in attaining communication proficiency.

The selection of appropriate psychological structure for business communication is based on the assumption that the communicator can practice empathy. The study of economics, social organization, individual traits, and belief systems provides much description of participant proclivities and the relationships of participants that could do much to improve empathy. With a thorough understanding of the complexities and hazards in evaluating structural systems of others, the business student would have an extra advantage in developing communication proficiency.

In addition to providing useful information about codes and participants, literature in cultural anthropology makes available various descriptions of factors that affect the outcome of the communication act. The application of this information to business communication situations could theoretically do much to improve the effectiveness level of business communication. Thorough study of all variables, followed by careful application of understandings, seems to be the only logical approach to effective business communication.

From an immediately practical point of view, the study offers several analytical tools to both the business communication instructor and the communicator in business. The communicator already in business would not, however, have the advantage that the business communication instructor might provide for his students through organized study and application.

By using cultural anthropological material in economics, the instructor can describe important communication factors related to the economic act and economic participants. The literature concerning language should help the instructor in describing diverse business communication codes, including nonverbal codes, as well as diverse meaning within verbal codes. Some verbal business communication, for example, may indicate status differentials quite aside from the strictly verbal context. Other similar analyses are both possible and potentially important in developing effective business communication.

Business communication instructors have for several years recognized the role of empathy in developing effective communication. Cultural anthropological literature regarding social organization and individual traits provides description that can be important in attempts to practice empathy. Instructing the students to empathize is one thing; providing specific direction in doing so is much more. Finally, the group of topics including ritual, religion, and beliefs can

be immediately useful in demonstrating often overlooked aspects of motivation in business communication. Inasmuch as some business communication may be a product of belief and ideological systems, such analysis is important.

The procedural approach for the use of cultural anthropology topics, as well as others, is worth special attention. If the instructor is to utilize such sources well, he must provide opportunities for the student to use the material in an actual analysis of business communication situations. The procedure is as basic as the axiom prescribing that one should "think" before he "acts." Considerable literature in cultural anthropology details both the nature and the direction of such thought.

Recommendations

Changes in the field of business communication in the period from about 1965 to 1970 include an interest in the behavioral sciences as sources for the description and analysis of business communication. The new interest is in part attributable to a recently developing science of human communication. This study relates to the use of interdisciplinary material in human communication to teach business communication. On the basis of the study, the following recommendations are possible:

1. Scholars in the field of business communication should continue to study the literature of the behavioral sciences and explore the possibilities for utilizing such

literature. The products of such an activity should contribute materially to the realization of business communication instructional objectives.

2. Among other items, important principles relating to the coding of business communication and describing business communication participants are found in the topical areas of cultural anthropology. Those elements of cultural anthropology, therefore; that relate to business communication theory should be utilized in developing the course material.

3. If the instructor is to include "effective business communication" as an expected outcome of the basic business communication course, implementation of variables like those described in cultural anthropology should be included in the course development. Recommending that courses in the behavioral sciences be included in the student's degree program is desirable; using this approach alone, however, would probably be inadequate, as well as undesirable. Scholars in the behavioral science fields are involved primarily in the development of their fields. Detailed application of their findings may be left to the efforts of those who find value in their product. Thus, whatever business message types the business communication instructor includes in course development, he should also include content from the behavioral sciences to enable the student to apply principles essential to the control of the variables that affect the outcomes of business communication.

The realization of effective business communication is undoubtedly very much dependent upon this broad approach. Human communication is obviously a complex phenomenon. In any given communication act, numerous variables affect the outcome of the act. The application of concepts from the field of cultural anthropology could do much to identify and control the variables in the business communication act.

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