

## Toward a perspective on cultural communication and intercultural contact

- Not all communication is cultural & intercultural  
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Consider three examples of situated communication conduct. Each demonstrates poignant moments where communication is culturally tailored from different social fabrics, with each moment motivated by different classes of persons, each conducted through indigenous forms, and each felt deeply as the appropriate conduct to perform. Each example also demonstrates how such action is problematic, at least to one participant in each scene, making immediate coordination of action and meaning difficult if not impossible.<sup>1</sup>

Case 1: An instructor of psychology at a university in America's heartland designed a course on 'race and ethnic relations'. In it, he asked members of self-identified ethnic groups — including Native Americans such as the Osage — to sit together, in groups, and discuss 'matters concerning cultural heritage'. Participants in each group were advanced undergraduate and graduate students, all knowing a great deal about the topic. Yet despite the prodding of the instructor, most students did not participate verbally in the groups. Moreover, those who did participate were least informed, while those most informed made comments like 'I don't know, what do you think?' and 'yeh, I guess that sounds okay to me'.

Case 2: A recent episode of *Sixty Minutes* took correspondent Morley Safer to Antigua, a Caribbean island community. Mr. Safer proceeded to investigate his topic — was it real estate investment and its influences on Antiguan society? — which took him eventually to an Antiguan public gathering. The gathering was 'set up' for the viewer, by Safer, as a kind of Colonial town meeting, where issues relating to the controversial topic would be addressed, progress toward rational conciliation made. What transpired, however, was quite different. Safer asked his first question of the Antiguans, which precipitated what appeared to be a heated exchange with several participants standing almost nose to nose, each talking noisily, independently, and all talking simultaneously. Safer tried to interrupt several times, but was unsuccessful. The participants continued,

giving each other no sign of impropriety. The bewildered Safer was unable to continue any further. He turned to the camera, shrugged his shoulders, and concluded his interview while several Antiguan continued 'conversing' in the background.

Case 3: On the atoll of Ifaluk in the Western Pacific, an American sits outside the house of a sick person whom she has come to visit. During a pause in a chat with a woman next to her, a small girl about four years old approaches. Coming closer, she performs a little dance, makes a funny face, then waits. Thinking she is cute, the American woman smiles at her antics. The Ifaluk woman sitting next to the American woman observes her smile, then reprimands her, saying, 'Don't smile at her — she'll think that you're not justifiably angry'.

The cases sketched here demonstrate the kinds of problems confronted in this essay — the use of cultural patterns to communicate, and deep perplexities that are sometimes generated when cultural patterns of communication contact one another, such as Osage and Anglo norms for classroom interaction, Antiguan and Anglo standards for public debate, and Ifaluk and Anglo premises for what to feel. Each case also raises more general questions: what cultural types of person are being cued in these exchanges? What types of cueing are enabled? In what form is communication conducted? What range of feelings are salient, given that personhood is thus symbolized? communication so shaped?

I will raise these issues, and return to the cases above, as I propose some elements in a cultural perspective on communication. What I hope to achieve is a kind of stock-taking of some recent ethnography of communication research, mainly as it addresses the classic problem of meaning—form variation through ethnotheoretical models of personhood, communication itself, and feelings. What I suggest is an approach to communication in which these three predominantly linguistic phenomena can be investigated through both properties of culturally communicated meanings and indigenous communicative forms. By the end, I hope to have shown how this kind of problem can be addressed through folk models of personhood, communication, and emotions. My point is not of course that all three phenomena must be addressed in all cultural studies, but that each can provide a fruitful avenue for the cultural study of communication, especially as a way of addressing cultural variations in communicative meanings and forms.

The perspective I argue for has diverse predecessors. In communication studies, Carey (1975) has prodded researchers beyond a 'transmission model' of communication, toward a 'ritual model' which interprets communication as a 'sacred ceremony', as 'the maintenance of society in time' (1975: 6). Philipsen (1987) advances a conceptual framework for

cultural communication study in which moments of shared identity are performed and transformed through ritual, myth, and social drama. Similar approaches have been put forward by others, most notably those interested in the ways communication shapes meaningful action in human institutions (Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo 1983; Putnam and Pacanowsky 1983), and its role in performing culture (Fine 1984).

The Cultural Studies school(s) addresses issues of culture and communication through at least three distinct models: production studies, textual analyses, and community studies (Johnson 1986–87). The approach presumes generally that culture is meaning-making, a process intimately linked with social relations of struggle and ideological battle. The dynamics of the process are typically explored through levels of discursive organization, themselves organized according to the relations between those forms and meanings that are dominant and those in opposition (Hall 1980; Fiske 1987).

In performance studies, Bauman (1986) has continued to put forward an ethnographic approach to oral forms, especially by examining moments when persons perform narratives. He explores both the structure of these oral stories and the structure of events so narrated. His main interests revolve around the meanings, forms, and functions of these 'culturally defined scenes'. Bauman traces his performance approach to Goffman (1959), Goffman of course being a central figure in the management of social identities in face-to-face interactions, exploring routine performances of radio shows, telephone conversations, lectures, and so on.

Hymes (1962, 1972) is often credited with founding such ethnographic study of communication as investigates the diverse verbal resources available in particular human communities. While his own empirical work has focused upon Native American ethno-poetics (primarily the inscribing of devices which preserve speech performance and cue cultural themes), the general ethnographic program he initiated spans a rich spectrum of theoretical concerns, from various communicative forms such as joking and wailing to the social classes using each, to the cultural meanings expressed, to their contextual use, and so on, with each such interest grounded in at least one cultural field (Hymes 1981; Philipsen and Carbaugh 1986). Sherzer (1987) has recently proposed a related discourse-oriented approach, making 'a level or component of language use' the main datum of study, especially as it expresses relations between language and culture. Sherzer's program focuses primarily upon texts of verbal art and playfulness through which, he argues, language-culture relations are most fully activated. Both Hymes and Sherzer acknowledge deep debts to the earlier works of Sapir (1921).

Each of these approaches suggests a way of responding to the relationship between communication and culture. Each also has its own preferred objects and methods of analysis. But all share certain fundamental commitments: (1) the nexus of culture and communication warrant serious investigations; (2) such investigation treats some product or property of communication performance as situated in particular social and cultural fields; (3) an understanding of such performance requires attention to levels of discursive form(s), their meaning(s) and social use. Building on what I take to be these common themes, I propose one development of the third commitment: a response to the form-meaning problem which brings cultural models of persons, communication, and feeling into play, both as a way to understand particular social and cultural fields and as a way to theorize at the nexus of communication and culture. I do not propose a full-blown theory of communication, nor of culture. What I aim to do is move toward those general goals. To do so, I will ground the essay in several assumptions about communication and culture. This enables a movement beyond the irritating tautology 'communication is culture', or vice versa. Next, I will propose a tensional base for a cultural approach to communication. Then I will discuss the cultural communication of personhood, speaking, and emotion, with each responding to variations of cultural meanings, forms, and social use. I will conclude by considering the use of the proposed framework in other current and future studies.

### Communication and culture

The view of communication put forth here builds on three basic assumptions: (1) *Communication is the primary social process*. This is to say that social persons, relations, and institutions (be they political, economic, or whatever) can be approached as media and outcomes of communication. Any human creation, from the concepts and actions of 'physicians', 'friends', or 'France', can be explored as resources in, and of, particular communication systems. As Sapir (1931: 78) put it: 'Society is only apparently a static sum of social institutions; actually it is being reanimated or creatively reaffirmed day to day by particular acts of a communicative nature which obtain among individuals participating in it'. Communication thus is the primary social process through which social life is created, maintained, and transformed. (2) *Communication involves structures and processes of meaning-making*. Coupled with the above, communication is constituent of social life, since it involves the human effort to render the world meaningful, or intelligible. Thus, the

foundation laid here suggests not that communication is constitutive of the world, but that communication constitutes *meanings* that are in, of, and about the world. Sometimes the structures and processes of sense-making are held in common, persons act as if they share a common sense; such a sense also may be imperfectly shared or contested. Thus, that communication is meaning-making does not necessarily involve a 'likeness of minds', but it does involve malleable structures and processes of meanings. (3) *Communication is situated action, involving particular forms and multiple functions*. The three parts of this assumption point to communication (a) as situated in contexts, occurring in physical space, between particular (classes of) persons, about identifiable topics; (b) as enacted through particular forms, identifiable devices, acts and act sequences; and (c) as accomplishing multiple functions, from uniting and dividing to stratifying, from directing to proposing. All things persons do with their words are included (Hymes 1962, 1972). Following the above, communication is the primary and situated social process of meaning-making, which occurs in particular forms and yields multiple outcomes.

Culture can be understood on the bases of four assumptions.

(1) *Culture is a system of symbols, symbolic forms, and meanings* (Schneider 1976; Geertz 1973). The assumption derives from Kenneth Burke's (1968: 445) dramaturgic approach, by exploring symbolic action as 'a teministic center from which many related considerations can be shown to radiate'. The approach to 'human relations and human motives is via a methodical inquiry into cycles or clusters of terms and their functions' (Burke 1968: 445; see also Geertz 1973: 453). Rather than words and meanings, it is particular *systems* or clusters of symbols, symbolic forms, and meanings that can be called a culture. Like Burke, Schneider, Geertz, and others use the symbol concept broadly, to point not only to 'terms', but also to nonverbal and material symbols. Further, the use goes beyond mere representations of the natural world, to the constitutive role of symbols in-social life.

(2) *Culture systems have integrative and transformative potential*. The culture system enables a kind of regnance, a placing of 'disparate parts ... into a meaningful whole' (Schneider 1976: 204). Systems of symbols and meanings may be invoked, thus showing how parts fit together into a whole. For example, one irony of the contemporary American culture system, and perhaps postmodernism generally, is that the whole seems somehow to fit together in part because its symbol system says *collectively* 'that there is no such thing as a whole, it is illusory'. What results is an integration through symbols of nonintegration (Carbaugh 1988b). The culture system also enables transformation and change. New forms of action and meaning, if created efficaciously, must be created through an

existing system, thus moving the culture in some directions rather than others.

(3) *The culture system is mutually intelligible, commonly accessible, and deeply felt.* Particular systems of symbols and meanings, or patterns of culture, resonate with the native view. This does not mean that they replicate it (Geertz 1976; and see the issues raised in Clifford and Marcus 1986). What it means is that symbol systems and patterns can be identified which people commonly orient to when acting in, or reporting about, socio-cultural life. Such symbols and patterns are abstracted and/or used — by analysts and/or actors — *as if* they expressed a common sense. Through such a system, the world is made to appear coherent and mutually intelligible, if not agreeable. By commonly accessible, I point to those codes to which persons have access — not necessarily access in the sense that they are performable by them (e.g., not everyone can perform reprimands or weddings), but access in the sense that the code is contacted by them, coordinatable with them. Schutz (1977: 229) has put it this way: 'We, the actors on the social scene, experience the world we live in as a world both of nature and of culture, not as a private but as an intersubjective one, that is, as a world common to all of us, either actually given or potentially accessible to everyone; and this involves intercommunication and language'. Finally, the systems of codes, the discourses of culture, are deeply felt. They suggest that about which feeling is appropriate; the range of things it is sensible to feel, in what degree, with what reaction (Scruton 1979). In these senses, the culture system is mutually intelligible, widely accessible, and deeply felt (Carbaugh 1988a).

(4) *Culture is historically grounded.* As Geertz (1973: 84) has put it, culture is 'an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life'. The culture system is grounded, as highly particular meanings are being projected from a very particular past. Similar symbols and forms may occur in various societies, but the sense which they speak, the system of which they are a part, is of a particular place and time. In this sense, culture is not the history of a symbol, or form, but grounded in historical *systems* of symbols, symbolic forms, and their meanings. In sum: culture is a potentially integrative and changeable system of symbols, symbolic forms, and meanings that is mutually intelligible, commonly accessible, deeply felt, and historically grounded.

The above assumptions help distinguish communication from culture, such that not all communication is culture (in its strong sense), and not all culture is communication. Such a distinction is pertinent especially when

confronted with moments of intercultural contact. For example, there are moments of communication, moments of situated meaning-making, which involve codes that are not mutually intelligible, nor deeply felt, but may in principle at least be accessible to participants. Consider the three cases that introduce this essay. The Osage student when speaking with the Anglo teacher, the Antiguan when speaking with the American reporter, and the Ifaluk woman when speaking with the fieldworker all clearly involve communication — that is, they involve socially situated processes of meaning-making, in particular forms, for particular purposes. And each involves performances of culture; particular systems of symbols and meanings are displayed. But on each occasion, no one uses codes that are, among all participants, mutually intelligible and deeply felt. The social process lacks full qualities of mutual intelligibility and feeling. In this specific sense, there is communication, or socially situated meaning-making, but not culture, if culture involves mutual intelligibility and sentiment. Each person presents culture, but the social process — between them — of communication, while acted through distinctive culture systems, is not itself culture. Further, if communicative processes of repair were initiated by the teacher, Mr. Safer, or the American woman, if additional aspects of each culture system were invoked to offer an account, then perhaps further perplexities would result, such as a deepening of noncoordinated meanings and further misalignment of actions. In such cases, culture systems are involved, but they are not the same as the communication process (although an understanding of them would be essential in order to understand the process).

There are less complex examples. Within any society, moments occur (such as some contemporary family discussions about religion) when persons care little about the ideas, and are not confident as to what they mean. Communication — socially situated meaning-making — has taken place, but culture (in its strong and fullest sense) seems little involved. Again, there is communication, but not a deep sense of culture.

On the other side, there may be culture without communication. Consider the view of culture presented by David Schneider (1980: 127), for example, the concepts and premises of American kinship. From this view, 'the study of culture' is *an abstraction*; it involves 'how [people] define and understand what they are doing', but does not necessarily address how culture affects social action, nor how it is 'articulated in social action'. As an abstraction, the culture system is distinguished from communication; there can be culture, abstracted systems of symbols and meanings, considered outside of communication contexts, away from socially situated meaning-making. Thus, not all communication is culture, fully, nor is all culture communication.<sup>2</sup>

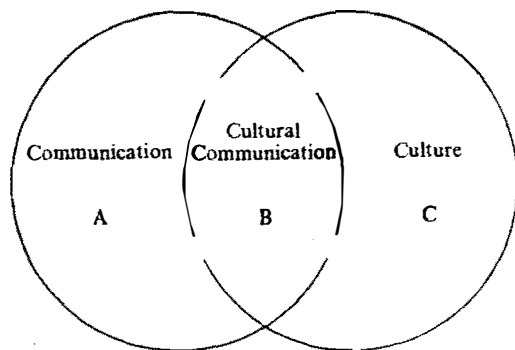


Figure 1. *Communication, culture, and cultural communication*

Note that the approach presented here is one not of concentric circles (communication in the context of culture, or vice versa), but one of intersecting circles. The argument could be summarized: communication and culture are distinctive, but non-exclusive. Above, I pointed to the non-overlapping parts of the circles. Now I wish to discuss their intersection, which is the major concern of the essay (see Fig. 1).

I refer to the intersection of the circles, following Philipsen (1987), as cultural communication. Cultural communication highlights the aspects of socially situated meaning-making that are mutually intelligible, deeply felt, and accessible to persons. Brought into view are properties of communication that are cultural, and in turn, properties of culture that are communicated. Central to cultural communication are the twin accomplishments of mutual intelligibility and shared identity, common meaning and membership. Charles Taylor (1977: 122) summarizes the accomplishment:

Common meanings are the basis of community. Intersubjective meaning gives a people a common language to talk about social reality and a common understanding of certain norms, but only with common meanings does this common reference world contain significant common actions, celebrations, and feelings. These are objects in the world that everybody shares. This is what makes community.

The properties of communication that are so expressed, commonly understood and powerfully felt, are part and parcel of the culture system. When performed, they demonstrate a common sense and shared identity, membership in community, in one group or groups rather than others. Thus, as cultural codes animate communication, there is — at some level — mutual intelligibility and depth of feeling. These of course are only

moments, and sometimes fleeting at that. Nonetheless, communication does involve, at times, the realization of culture in conversation, the display of a penetrating significance. What is expressed? Not only common meanings, but membership; not only coherence, but community (Carbaugh 1988b).

#### A tensional base of cultural communication: Creative evocativeness

Several questions are often raised about a cultural approach to communication: when you say culture pattern of communication, are you saying that people conform to rules? that they are governed by their history? that they follow the standards of a community? that they, in so many words, blindly reproduce already established patterns of action and meaning? I respond to these questions by pointing to a set of tensions in cultural communication. I label the set, collectively, a creative evocativeness, a quality intrinsic in communication which necessitates an equivocal 'yes and no' response to the questions.

The cultural voice of communication *enables and constrains*. Any situated form of saying, such as Israeli griping (Katriel 1985), enables some themes, such as imperfections, while constraining others, such as praise. More generally, discourses of science enable claims of validity and truth, but constrain tales of mystery. Any system of cultural communication, or what Burke (1965) has called 'an orientation' or 'terministic screen', is always, in principle, a partial perspective, legitimizing some meanings and actions while disattending to others, enabling some sayings while constraining others (see Giddens 1984: 25).

Cultural communication swings along moments on a *past-present-future dimension*. As Gadamer (1977) has argued, all persons are born into traditions, historical communication systems, where each has its own 'prejudices', its own standards of morality. The cultural voice, then, always stands in relation to what has been said previously, but always may influence creatively what may be said consequently. Any such saying both draws from and contributes to the historical conditions of its production.

But tradition is not merely an impersonal voice from a past; it is continually reactivated, and potentially transformed, in situated performances. Richard Bauman (1986: 4) puts the dynamic this way: 'the individual and the creative are brought up to parity with tradition in a dialectic played out within a context of situated action, a kind of praxis'. His performance-centered approach to folklore infuses traditional genres of a folk's lore with 'the creative individuality of the performer's

accomplishment' (1986: 8). Thus, cultural communication can express varying degrees of an *individual-communal* voice. Philipsen (1987) has argued similarly that cultural performance addresses a fundamental tension between individual impulses for freedom and the constraints of communal life. Bakhtin (1987: 89) summarizes the tension when he writes about cultural communication and its 'varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of "our-own-ness"'. In all these cases, cultural forms of communication are animated with a voice both individual and communal. The degrees of each may of course vary with each performance, but all cultural communication may express such an individual-communal voice.

Finally, moments of cultural communication *produce and reproduce* their own forms for action, their own patterns of meanings (Giddens 1984). All such communication reproduces some resources, but may also create others. Cultural communication does not require a simple reproduction of templates and schemes, although some moments may be acted as such. What it may also involve is contexted and creative play — a productive addition to, or even a creative transformation of, the cultural voice reproduced.

In sum: the cultural voice is evocative, it does call forth deep feeling from the past, reproducing a communal lore, constraining those present. But it can do more than that. It can ground the recognition of presence, of individual and social creativity, enabling new directions, producing better outcomes. This is the dialectical nature of the cultural voice. It is collective and communal, yes, but it is also particular and personal. It reproduces, yes, but it can also transform. Cultural communication as conceived here embraces such a tensional base, moments where forms for action and patterns of meaning are evoked and creatively played, where persons are engaged socially in a creative evocativeness.

### **Cultural models of personhood, communication, and emotion**

What version of social life is being creatively evoked as persons speak, and how can it be understood? My response to this question suggests looking at three structural elements in cultural communication systems, especially personhood, communication, and emotion, as they demonstrate indigenous forms and their meanings.<sup>3</sup>

Consider once again the case that introduces the essay, the Osage who were asked by an Anglo teacher to discuss in small groups, with other Osage, ideas of their cultural heritage (Wieder and Pratt forthcoming). This classroom scene has designed into it two Anglicized cultural

imperatives for communicating: (1) it is good to gather in small groups to talk; and (2) talk about one's personal and social circumstances, or cultural heritage, should be readily forthcoming because each person is an individual with the right and freedom to speak (Carbaugh 1988b). These rather innocently assumed imperatives are problematic for the Osage who wants to display 'cultural heritage'. The main reason for the problem is that if the Anglo imperatives for talk were fully followed by an Osage, the resulting performance would be assessed, from the standpoint of Osage imperatives, as falling short of the 'real Osage Indian' identity. The two cultural counter-premises that are used interactionally to evaluate such an identity are: (1) if one wants to display a 'real Indian' identity, and one is with other Indians whom one does not know, or with some others of asymmetrical status such as teachers or elders, it is preferable that one be silent; and (2) the semantics of such silence are associated with harmony, modesty, and respect. When in the context with other Osage, as in this classroom, it is preferable for Osage to display their cultural identity. By doing so, they remain silent, or produce appropriately inane comments about their cultural heritage like 'I don't know, what do you think'? This display of cultural identity is important especially because Osage see, hear, and evaluate among themselves different levels of 'Indianness'. Some are said to be 'more Indian' than others, with assessments being made solely on the basis of routine and continuous communicative performance. The Osage's communication, then, if it is to be evaluated as 'real Indian' by peers, must demonstrate the proper cultural forms and meanings of Osage practice, especially in contexts where their 'cultural heritage' is being presented as the topic of discussion. The irony of this case is that the classroom context was created to celebrate cultural heritage, but the common bases used to motivate and evaluate the dominant forms of action (the Anglo) tend to undercut or subvert the cultural tradition of another (the Osage).

Note how this case of intercultural contact involves the display of cultural models of personhood (the Anglo and Osage) through culturally identifiable *forms* (open discussion and silence) and *meanings* (freedom, independence, and expressiveness for the former; harmony, modesty, and respect for the latter).<sup>4</sup> During all such cultural enactments, one can be heard to cue a shared identity deemed important to at least some members. It is this cueing, and the subsequent process of enabling the identity, or suppressing it, that in part animates this Osage-Anglo communication. All such moments may be unravelled by listening to the models of personhood rendered appropriate to the context, the forms available for expressing them, and the meanings of the performance to members and their interlocutors.

Similar intercultural dynamics of the classroom are discussed by Boggs (1985) among Hawaiian students, by Chick (1985) among Zulu and other South Africans, by Michaels (1981) among Black and white children, and by Scollon and Scollon (1981) among Athabaskans and Anglo Alaskans. The communicative role of cultural identities, forms, and meanings is demonstrated further by examining the Teamster male and his use of silence and indirection (Philipsen 1975), Malagasy men and women and their different use of an ideal non-confrontational verbal style (Keenan 1974), Black churchgoers and the call-response form (Daniel and Smitherman 1976), and Israelis' use of griping and a style of direct, straight talk (Katriel 1985, 1986), to list just a few. In all of these empirical studies, the interactional cueing and management of cultural identity occurs through such particular communication forms, with local meanings. By discovering such cultural features as these in communication, we can better understand how personhood is a cultural and interactional accomplishment, and how intercultural contacts involve, at least in part, the display and management of cultural identities.

Consider a second case, the Antiguan 'discussion' broadcast on the popular American television program *Sixty Minutes*. The reporter, Morley Safer, entered the public building, which looked a lot like a New England Town Hall, and witnessed not deliberative argument, but a kind of intense 'conversation' with several participants speaking at once, noisily, giving no sign that the activity was abnormal or a turn away from business as usual. What is interesting about this case, for our purposes, is that Safer's expectations for appropriate communication — along with many viewers — were violated. As symbolic of a typical American viewer, Safer was obviously surprised, expecting such a scene to yield kinds of communication one might call 'public speaking' or 'debate'. Such forms are typically structured, for Americans, so that one issue is addressed at a time, with interruptions dispreferred, turns at talk taken one at a time, turns exchanged at designated points, and some standard forms of logic used — for example, propositions, syllogisms, and analogy. But what Safer found himself immersed in was a different form of talk, a form identified and valued by Antiguan as 'making noise' (Reisman 1974). Such talk involves repetition of themes, lack of a strong norm against interruption, acceptance of two or more voices talking at once, a pattern of entry into the 'noise' by 'knocking' several times, and various personal and expressive associations (Reisman 1974: 124). This Antiguan cultural form enables a performance fraught with meanings of unconviction, antagonism, and non-rationality. That such a form is so diametrically opposed to what many Americans would expect is quite remarkable.

The juxtaposition of the Antiguan and American cases demonstrates

how persons use one sub-system of culture (its terms for talk) to identify and evaluate contextual uses of speech (interactional accomplishments in sequences). In this intercultural situation, the occasion is identified by one actor as appropriate for 'public speaking' or 'debate', but performed by others as 'making noise'. Each uses such terms to say something about talk, to identify its patterning in action and meaning, to describe its formative place in society (Philipsen 1976).

Cultural terms for talk enable actors to mark off some sequences as instances of a kind of intelligible action that is unlike other kinds of action. Such identification operates within a society (for example, identifying the form of communication in an academic course as 'lecture' rather than 'discussion') as much as between societies (for example, 'debate' and 'making noise'). Discovering how actors order their talk, through their own words for it, provides points of access into the cultural modeling of communication itself. Where terms such as 'being a man' or 'a real Indian' express a class of person that is elaborated through cultural forms and meanings, so too do terms for talk such as 'making noise' identify cultural patterns of communication as instances of a cultural form and its meanings.

Several recent works have demonstrated the power of such a focus in cultural studies of communication, including Abrahams and Bauman's (1971) study of seventeen St. Vincentian terms for acts of speech, Sherzer's (1983) description of at least ten Kuna communication patterns that are named indigenously, Rosaldo's (1973, 1982) studies of seven Ilongot terms for talk, Brenneis's (1978, 1984) studies of four Fiji folk genres of speech, Katriel's (1985, 1986) studies of two prominent verbal forms identified and enacted by some Israelis, and two studies of so-called mainstream American terms for talk (Carbaugh 1988b; Katriel and Philipsen 1981). Further, three recent works have comparatively analyzed indigenously identified sequences of talk in order to advance hypotheses about the cross-cultural principles of ceremonial dialogues, especially relations among the cyclical form, contexts of its use, and its socio-cultural functions (Urban 1986), to develop a conceptual framework for distinguishing types of such terms and their message functions (Carbaugh 1989), and to propose a semantic metalanguage for the cultural interpretation and comparative study of such speech acts and genres (Wierzbicka 1985). Such work demonstrates how studies of cultural terms for talk yield indigenous models of communication, can help unravel complexities in intercultural communication, and can provide empirical groundwork for cross-cultural hypotheses about communication.

Consider finally the situation on the atoll of Ifaluk in which the American woman smiles after an approaching small girl performs a dance

and makes a funny face. The American woman expressed a degree of delight and happiness at seeing the child's public play, a kind of emotion expression typical in similar American scenes. But after seeing the American woman smile, the Ifaluk woman sitting next to her reprimanded her by saying, 'Don't smile at her — she'll think you're not justifiably angry' (Lutz 1987: 290). The Ifaluk woman thus evaluated the American woman's emotion expression as inappropriate, and further instructed her that expressions of 'justifiable anger' should be forthcoming. Why should this be the case? For the Ifaluk woman, the sequence has unfolded in this way. The child was heard to express the emotion 'ker', or happiness/excitement, a potential disruption in this Ifaluk situation. Such expression by a child signifies, for the Ifaluk, an act of misbehavior. When one witnesses misbehavior, it is required that one express 'song', or justifiable anger. Since the American woman did not express 'song', the emotion most appropriate after 'ker', she was reprimanded. After this reprimand, both women can and should express the justifiable anger, 'song', so that the child will feel and express 'metagu', or fear and anxiety, which symbolizes for the girl that she recognizes the error in her ways. The girl's expression of fear is, in this case, a positive expression, for it displays that the girl is developing the proper moral awareness (see Lutz 1987).

Displayed in this situation are parts of two cultural systems. With one, the expression of happiness by a child leads to an expression of happiness by an adult; with the other, the expression of happiness by a child leads to an expression of justifiable anger by an adult, leading to a proper fear or anxiety in the child. Any cultural communication system can be understood in part by tracing how expressions of emotion are linked to both situated acts and events, and how emotion expression is ordered sequentially, if so. The approach leads to discovering the range of emotions it is sensible to feel, how and when they should be expressed, and with what intensity. Such an understanding advances knowledge about emotion as culturally situated expression, and how it comes to play in situations of intercultural contact.

Several recent studies have explored emotion from a cultural perspective; for example, as has already been mentioned, Lutz (1987) has explored Ifaluk emotion theory, as well as a set of tensions that run through the Western cultural conception of emotion (1986). Lakoff and Kovecses (1987) elaborate the emotion of anger in American English through its metaphorical structure. Bailey (1983) explores how 'passion', in several American scenes, is an ominous and sensible force in the negotiation of — among other things — person identities and group decisions. R. Rosaldo (1984) has examined the cultural force of emotions

through the grief and rage of the Ilongot. Related studies of Ilongot emotion and its link to Ilongot notions of personhood appear in M. Rosaldo (1982, 1985).<sup>5</sup> These studies are highly suggestive for a cultural communication theory of emotion. They provide empirical instantiation of emotion expression from the standpoint of various culture systems, demonstrating ways to develop cultural communication theory of emotion through further ethnographic and comparative study.

Each of the above phenomena can be made distinct analytically, but all are intimately related. Reflect again on the Osage in the Anglo classroom. 'Being a real Indian' is inseparable from the communicative form of silence that is used to constitute 'real Indianness'. A model of personhood is linked intimately to a communicative form. Elsewhere, the Osage cultural identity is expressed rather differently, especially in some contexts of symmetrical relationships, when a cultural form of 'razzing', a kind of ritual insulting, is performed. A cultural identity fraught with meaning and morality is thus identified culturally through the 'real Indian' phrase, is linked intimately to cultural models for communicating such as silence and 'razzing', is expected to act differently in different social contexts, and is evaluated on the basis of such performance. We have available to us neither the vocabulary and expression of emotion available to this class of person, nor a sense of its role in the above communicative patterns, if indeed it is relevant. But the general point is that in cultural communication, the common structures of personhood, communication, and emotion are identified and evaluated, and the interrelations among them form a powerful vocabulary of motives for communal action.

These three interactional accomplishments are productive for cultural communication study. Most of the studies presented above focus on one of these phenomena, and that is often a major task. Several recent pieces have explored relations between the phenomena — for example, the Ilongot model of personhood and their indigenous conceptions of communication (M. Rosaldo 1982), the Ilongot personhood and feeling (M. Rosaldo 1985), and the Israeli Sabra identity and cultural style of speaking, 'dugri' (Katriel 1986). Others have been investigating the American case, searching for relations between American discourses on personhood such as 'being an individual' and 'having a self', and folk frames for speaking such as 'being honest' and 'sharing' (Carbaugh 1988b), as well as between cultural codes of honor and dignity and their attendant models of speaker and speaking (Philipsen 1986). Regarding the American case, it is interesting to explore how persons, as 'individuals with a self', communicate, by 'sharing inner feelings', with emotions that are greatly varied since they are 'natural' and linked to 'the individual' organism's experience (Carbaugh 1988b; Lutz 1986). How communication constructs and reveals social life through such cultural enactments of



personhood, communication itself, and emotion warrants our continuing serious study.

### Some probes for the cultural analysis of communication

This paper has presented an assumptive base for inquiry into cultural communication, discussed a dialectical tension of creative evocativeness, and presented three structural elements whose forms and meanings provide access to spoken culture systems. In developing the latter, several recent empirical studies were reviewed. Each demonstrates to varying degrees how local standards of coherence are both media and outcome of specific communication practices, and further, how such standards, when applied, give voice to a shared identity in community. Thus, my exposition rests not only on the logic of an assumptive statement, but on the empirical grounds where persons talk. Moreover, if such cultural voices are to be heard and understood, we must position ourselves at a conceptual place that enables us to hear.

Studies of cultural communication must attend to local standards of coherence as they are used communally. This kind of attention can be piqued through three classes of probes: (1) the cultural communication of personhood (what classes of persons are cued? through what verbal forms? with what meanings? which cueings are enabled? by whom? which constrained? how so?); (2) the cultural communication of communication (what sequences of action are identified culturally by participants? what verbal resources are available for discussing communicative actions? through what forms are such acts and sequences performed? what are the meanings of these to participants? how do these folk labelings and enactments of communication relate to classes of persons? social relations? distribution of resources?); and (3) the cultural communication of emotion (what emotions are expressed routinely? through what forms? with what meanings? with what intensity? in what sequences?). Probes such as these provide starting points for inquiry, raising certain moments of communication to the foreground so that we may understand better not only what persons are saying, but also what they are saying about themselves, the kinds of persons they speak, the way they talk their acts and sequences, and what they feel. Addressing such concerns can throw a cultural conversation into some light, making otherwise inscrutable ways more available for scrutiny.

One especially useful kind of study would, like Bauman's (1986) of narratives, give the voices of tension — if audible — an audible voice. Given a cultural communicative practice, what does it enable? What constrain? What from the past is evoked? What from the future por-

tended? To what degree is action animated by egocentric impulses? By sociocentric constraints? To what extent is there reproduction of structures and resources? To what extent is there production, perhaps even transformation? The tensional forces in situated cultural discourses need to be unravelled, when and if they operate.

There is much work to be done. As noted already, there are several current exemplary empirical pieces. I mention empirical pieces since it is my firm belief that general theorizing, while useful for purposes of conceptual organization, direction, and review, should take a seat within the carefully driven empirical car, the one traversing the roads of cultural communication, navigating the geography of speech, trying intensively to chart the discursive terrain. Such an approach gives theory a grounding it cannot have otherwise.

Several stops along the way now should be easier. First, the description and interpretation of communication as it creatively reveals cultural models of persons, communication, and emotion is warranted. Such inquiry — whether focused on one, more, or another of these communicative structures — will provide a record of aspects of cultural systems as they are accomplished interactionally, coherently, communally. Let us understand culture in communication. Second, such study places cultural analysts in a position to understand better moments where culture systems contact one another. Given a grounded understanding, for example, of the 'real Indian' person for the Osage, 'noisy' communication for the Antiguan, or 'justifiable anger' for the Ifaluk, we are better able to describe and explain their use and consequences when played against a university professor, an investigative journalist, and a female fieldworker, respectively. Let us understand cultures in communication. Third, a level of generality is to be gained by juxtaposing cultural communication systems. Such gains are evident in celebrated comparative work like Brown and Levinson's (1978) theory of politeness, or Basso's (1970) theory of silence. In fact, several authors are working comparatively to understand cultural models of personhood (Dumont 1970, 1985; Shweder and Bourne 1984), communication (Carbaugh 1989), and emotion (Wierzbicka 1985). While these studies vary in their contribution to cultural communication study, they do demonstrate cultural phenomena ready to be studied from such a perspective, and the procedures and benefits of such comparative study. Let us understand communication across cultures.

### Notes

1. The first story is reported in Wieder and Pratt (forthcoming); the second is a report of my own, but is given Antiguan cultural force by Reisman (1974); the latter story is reported and analyzed in Lutz (1987: 290).

2. Note, however, that culture can always be retrieved from communication contexts. At some level, a system of symbols, forms, and meanings is operative, even if it is not, for example, deeply felt in the immediate communicative situation. Suggested here is a distinction between — for lack of better terms — 'amplified culture', which is explicitly coded into interactional encounters and retrievable by participants, and 'muted culture', which is more implicitly coded and less retrievable by them. 'Amplified' and 'muted', as used here, refer to the degree to which the structures are common and public in communication, not to actional forces. For example, for some Americans, persons (are said to) 'have' a 'self' which is unique and relatively independent from others. This illustrates an amplified structure of culture which is commonly intelligible, immediately accessible, and deeply felt. But that the category 'self' is itself grounded historically, and provides a social role of conformity for persons, is counter to the 'strong culture' and thus holds a 'muted' quality which is less intelligible, accessible, and felt (Carbaugh 1988b). This is a crucial distinction precisely because some 'muted' elements of culture carry powerful actional consequences. Put visually, and in terms of Figure 1, one can always get from A to C, with the links sometimes unveiling powerful, if (for example) less intelligible, actional forces.
3. Once again, the reader should be alerted to my intended multivocal use of the term *communication*: it refers at different times to the general perspective of inquiry (the Cultural Communication Perspective), to communication principles that span diverse culture systems (in this paper, cultural communication structures, such as personhood, communication, and emotion), and to particular communication practices within a culture (cultural communication practices, such as 'being a man' in Teamsterville, 'sharing feelings' on *Donahue*, expressing the feeling of 'lek' in Bali). As William James pointed out, communication is a 'double-barrelled' term; it both is a practice and affords a perspective on practices. We must try to distinguish the one from the other, placing ourselves in positions better to assess communication perspectives, principles, and practices.  
By discussing personhood, communication, and emotion, and the tension of creative evocativeness introduced above, I intend to develop Philipsen's (1987) general approach by adding three structural phenomena, and dialectical bases, respectively.
4. The interpretations of these two cases derive from more elaborate accounts (Wieder and Pratt forthcoming; Carbaugh 1987, 1988b).
5. A philosophical argument that common culture directs persons as to what to feel, models of how to feel, and with what intensity, as well as specific and general objects of feeling, has also been advanced (Scruton 1979).

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