4

Social Communication Theory: Communication Structures and Performed Invocations, a Revision of Scheflen's Notion of Programs

Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz
University of Wisconsin–Parkside

Stuart J. Sigman
State University of New York, Albany

with
Sheila J. Sullivan
Canisius College

The vision of human action embraced by social communication theory (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1989; Sigman, 1987) is one in which ongoing behavioral productions are structured by, and therefore held accountable to, a repertoire of historically given paradigmatic and syntagmatic constraints. However, behavioral productions are not limited by, nor identical to, these a priori constraints. Social communication theory's essential problem is accounting for ongoing communication as simultaneously the adherence to a priori programs (Scheflen, 1968) and the performance of a unique event. The fact that productions are not completely limited by prior expectations, idealizations, and grammars, and are not identical to such community guidelines for behavior, is why we are able to argue for the consequentiality of the communication process.

In this chapter, we sketch a relationship between persons' ongoing performance of behavior and the sociocultural structures supporting such performance. This relationship between process and structure, or performance and competence, is the location for communication consequentiality (Gumperz, 1984; Hymes, 1971). Communicators enter segmented moments of sociocultural life with expectations, assumptions, and regulations governing what may (not), must (not), and will (not) likely transpire. But the correlations among these expectations, assumptions, and regulations, and what actually transpires, are generally not exact.

This chapter represents both an application and a reconsideration of a theory with which we have been associated for several years (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1989; Sigman, 1987), and which derives from the interdisciplinary efforts of several scholars to forge a sociocultural theory of communi-

cation (Bateson, 1972; Birdwhistell, 1970; Goffman, 1967; Hymes, 1974b). Appropriately, just as the chapter is concerned with how communicators make use of prior sociocultural resources for behavior in both predictable and novel ways, and thus live the essential consequentiality of communication, so the chapter invokes and revises our social communication theory antecedents.

To write of the consequential character of communication is to suggest that, although all human action can be seen against a background of a priori resources, the communication process embodies a dialectic between these general (i.e., transsituational) constraints and communicators' local (i.e., in-the-moment) production of behavior. The communication process is consequential in that it permits, indeed requires, participants to attend to and take account of the actualities of "behavior as performed" by self and others. This behavior as performed is only partially and incompletely governed by a priori grammars, scripts, schemata, and so on. The chapter argues for an analysis of three tensions that comprise and permit the consequentiality of communication: (a) the tension between the lived and the ideal, (b) the tension between a current episode and comparable (past and future) ones, and (c) the tension between the separate lived moments within a single event. The momentary resolution of one, two, or all three tensions is provided for by the communication process (its consequentiality), not simply by the a priori resources.

With regard to the first tension, there are programs (Scheflen, 1968) that define—in some a priori sense—what communicators can and should do in particular situations. Specifically, actors are said to be bound by a priori programs (i.e., idealized scripts) for their communication episodes, which are, at least theoretically, to be faithfully enacted. According to early theorizing by Birdwhistell (1970) and Scheflen, programs are not simply cognitive resources for behavior, but social determinants of it.[1] In this sense, there is a coercive power to programs; they *must* be performed.

Our current thinking suggests that the performance of programs gives rise to its own dynamic and is neither fully predicted by nor adherent to the a priori programs. Thus, the communication process is consequential because communicators are capable of more than blind-faith reenactment of a priori structure, and because their conduct may serve to modify or, in some other way, make creative use of a priori structure. Programs are constantly subject to change according to what actually transpires in each

[1]Ray Birdwhistell must be acknowledged for originating many of the central ideas of this approach to social interaction, although in this case his influence has been personal (as teacher and co-worker of many of the relevant authors), rather than through his publications, which do not address programs explicitly. In particular, Scheflen often noted Birdwhistell's major role in the development of his ideas.

real-time event. In this sense, structure is not a given, but rather continuously under production (cf. Giddens, 1984); communicators do not follow programs rigidly, but rather use past structures as a resource for their current needs and circumstances. This is comparable to Rawlins' (1992) "dialectical conception [which] maintains that any social formation is revealed through and constituted by the endless interweaving of idealistic and realistic factors" (p. 14).

The second tension that communicators face concerns the relationship between behavior within the current episode and behavior from remembered previous and projected future episodes. Social communication theory contends that communicators, as members of sociocultural collectivities, enter bounded episodes with knowledge of history that can be drawn on and "taken for granted" (Schutz, 1967), and anticipations of a future toward which behavior can be directed. History and tradition represent a moral resource for communicators; they may choose to draw on it as a stored value, but may also feel compelled at particular moments to do so. The actual moment-by-moment production of behavior represents the communicators' individual and collective temporary resolution of pressures derived from history and tradition (e.g., to produce consistency and noncontradiction between two or more episodes or identities displayed in these episodes). The consequentiality of communication lies in the temporary nature of such resolution, each moment of which is ongoing and subject to subsequent revisiting, reconsideration, and revision.

The third tension concerns the multiple acts and their connections, which comprise a single communication event. The tension derives from the necessity for each participant to coordinate the multiple behavioral resources, ideologies, and goals with those of others present—more specifically, to fit behavioral contributions into the ongoing flow in a coherent and relevant manner. This third tension is thus produced and resolved by the communicators' ongoing construction of the episode. The focus here is more explicitly on the coordination between individuals in the present communication moment, rather than between past, present, and future (as in the second tension), or between the ideal and the actual (as in the first tension). (See Sanders, chap. 2, this volume; Beach, chap. 3, this volume; as well as our own data for illustrations of this tension and its resolution.)

We propose a revision of Scheflen's notion of *programs* to take into account these and related ideas. Although actors can indeed be seen to live and act within knowledge of antecedent behavioral structures, their conduct cannot strictly be considered the end result of sociocultural programs. Social communication theory recognizes that communication episodes simultaneously function as instantiations of a priori behavioral resources and productions of novel and ephemeral events. Moreover, the theory recognizes that, in addition to linguistic and sociolinguistic competence

(cf. Hymes, 1974), there is a separate skill that communicators evidence as they perform behavior derived from the sociocultural resources in ways fitting each actual moment and in coordination with other persons' behavior. This latter skill permits communicators to employ behavioral resources in sequentially relevant slots, and to influence the ongoing course of interaction through the creation of slots entailing varying degrees of sequential relevance. As such, social communication theory has the potential to make a substantial contribution to discussion regarding the connection between structure and process in communication. However, it must be admitted that, to some degree, social communication theory has been hampered by its structural heritage—a problem we specifically address throughout the remaining discussion.

This chapter proposes that the notion of *programs* be supplemented by that of *performance* because the consequentiality of communication means that communicators perform (produce) a real-time event, rather than merely allow some a priori program to unfold. Actors have a repertoire of communication programs, as well as a set of skills for performing pieces of programs on an ongoing basis in coordination with whatever else is happening. Programs can be thought of as a sociocultural resource, whereas performances can be thought of properly as a communication resource (and product)—as that which permits (and results from) the "doing" of communication or of behaving meaningfully.

This chapter is divided into five sections: (a) examination of the original concept of programs and its influence on social communication theorizing; (b) discussion of several more process-oriented concepts designed as correctives to the original structural thinking; (c) presentation of a case study drawn from ethnographic fieldwork illuminating the difference between a focus on programs and a focus on performances; (d) discussion of a vocabulary for examining *behaving* as an ongoing performance or activity, rather than *behavior* as a static or structured entity; and (e) consideration of how this discussion contributes to our understanding of communication as consequential.

PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL COMMUNICATION THEORIZING

The theoretical conception of *programs*, described most directly by Scheflen (1964, 1965, 1979), draws heavily on the larger research tradition broadly labeled social communication theory. Alternatively named the *structural approach* (Duncan, 1969; Kendon, 1982, 1990; Leeds-Hurwitz, 1987), this tradition takes the analysis of interaction structure as its central goal rather than antecedents or consequents of behavior. Methodologically, interaction is recorded and analyzed after it has occurred, thus permitting the repeated viewing of the behavior under analysis (ideally, of multiple renderings of the target episode or behavior). However, we contend that this method has led to a reification of structure and weak consideration of process. If a particular stretch of behavior on film or videotape is available, and comparisons with similar behaviors in related contexts are as well, then these are the obvious questions to ask: What are the component parts of this particular behavior (or episode)? What are the structural alternants of each behavior unit? The less obvious questions would be: What does it mean that this behavior, rather than another, occurred at this time? How is this behavior new and innovative, and different from prior occurrences? The former two are structural questions, and the latter two are process questions.

The critical research in establishing social communication theory was *The Natural History of an Interview* (NHI; McQuown, 1971a; see also Leeds-Hurwitz, 1987). Originally begun in 1955 at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, the project extended well into the 1960s. Generally well known for its multidisciplinary focus, combining the work of linguists, anthropologists, and psychiatrists in a study of communication, NHI was the first major study to use microanalysis as the primary method of analyzing social interaction. As a result, it was a landmark in the development of both kinesics and paralanguage, and the beginning of what has since been labeled the *structural approach* to communication. The larger study can be divided into four parts: (a) a seminar in the fall of 1955, resulting in a linguistic transcription of a psychiatric interview that had been audiotaped; (b) a seminar in the spring and summer of 1956, where analysis of filmed behavior was begun, emphasizing selection and initial transcription of critical scenes; (c) continued analysis of the filmed behavior between 1956 and 1961 (at irregular group meetings), resulting in divisions of the scenes into major segments; and (d) final detailed transcriptions of the chosen scenes between 1961 and 1968 (primarily at the home institutions of Birdwhistell, Brosin, and McQuown, working with colleagues and students).

Because the researchers involved with NHI took the transcription of the behavior they wished to analyze as their first and major goal, an emphasis on structure was incorporated into the project from its inception; later this was taken for granted and left unquestioned. In the foreword to NHI, McQuown (1971b) wrote that he expects the study to be a first step in working out "a general theory of the structure of human communicative behavior" (p. 5). Apparently, there was no explicit decision made to focus on structure in lieu of process. Indeed, because the researchers were focusing on actual behavior and not psychiatric abstractions, to some degree they considered their work to be directly about the communication

process. For example, Bateson (1971) wrote: "Of all the elements and vicissitudes of formation and re-formation of relationships, perhaps the most interesting is that process whereby people establish common rules for the creation and understanding of messages"(p. 22).

The researchers viewed their work as "a starting point for further research," not as a final statement, a fact generally ignored (McQuown, 1971b, p. 3). Due to its exploratory nature, no description of the structural approach was included in the final NHI document. The most explicit comments were published separately by Scheflen (1964, 1965, 1979), as a result of his collaboration with Birdwhistell during the fourth and final stage of the NHI research, and later expanded by Scheflen's collaborator, Kendon (1982, 1990). Both Scheflen and Kendon did more than record the methods and ideas underlying the NHI group's work; they extended these in unique and original ways. It is Scheflen's theoretical construct of *programs* that is of particular relevance in this regard.

Programs was a central concept in Scheflen's writings over several years, his assumption being that all interactions follow programs. Briefly, *programs* can be defined as "patterns of behavior" that are learned and passed on through cultural transmission (Scheflen, 1979, p. 10). They are "traditional formats or templates, learned and used by each member of a culture, that *determine* behavior" (Scheflen, 1964, p. 317; italics added), alternatively described as "standard units or configurations of behavior" (Scheflen, 1965, p. 12). As generally presented, programs incorporate the following characteristics:

1. Programs provide for performance of standard, recognizable behavioral units, integrated hierarchically and structured to be performed successively in steps.
2. Programs are specific to subcultural categories according to ethnic, class, regional, and institutional traditions.
3. Programs are context specific, that is, a given situation, task, and/or social organization may evoke a given program performance.
4. Programs have variants (or "branches"), alternative units, and prescribed steps to meet common contingencies that may arise.
5. Programs offer common meanings—or function, significance, or purpose—in reference to larger systems of meaning to experienced performers.
6. Programs prescribe social organization and division of labor in the performance, therefore, there are roles and complementary, parallel, and other relations across individuals' actions.
7. Programs consist of elements and sequences that represent the values, purposes, and precepts of the larger social collectivity and cultural tradition.

8. Programs provide for commutative integration through a number of behavior channels, each of which has subdivisions crudely analogous to bands. Collectively, these possibilities organize behavior of different logical types, and into different hierarchies, levels, and orders. (Scheflen, 1968; see also Sigman, 1987).[2]

In short, programs are "'grammars' of action and context" (Scheflen, 1979, p. 14).

The study of programs leads to a focus on events, rather than individual participants within those events, and to an emphasis on what is unchanging and stable across events, rather than what is innovative and distinct (cf. Shokeid, 1992, for a similar observation about research in cultural anthropology). They imply a view of face-to-face interaction as scripted and rule governed, rather than as constructed on a moment-by-moment basis in response to particular acts in the here and now. The value of the social communication approach to these matters is that "it allows us to recognize that a group has an existing structure that determines possible activities rather than allowing us to act as if participants made up group process as they go along" (Scheflen, 1965, p. 7). This assumes that people behave in patterned ways, and that programs are the identifiable building blocks for such patterned behavior. Programs enable interaction to be maximally predictable because they sustain and organize human relationships (Birdwhistell, 1970).

The predictability of sociocultural life derives from programs, which permit participants to consider what has already occurred in a given event, as well as anticipate future possible behavior, based on their knowledge of the a priori structures: "[T]hese anticipations of what *will* happen, determine the action as much as what *has* just happened" (Scheflen, 1965, p. 14; italics in original). This is the essential value of the concept of *programs*: it provides the mechanism by which persons are believed to organize their interactions and their lives in sociocultural collectivities more broadly. Programs, or parts of programs, are presumed to be known by each participant prior to interaction participation, although the cognitive representation of such knowledge is not addressed within social communication theory. From the research vantage point, programs are abstractable by the analyst upon observing sufficient examples of the type of interaction under study. A program is appropriately outlined only after extensive analysis of multiple examples of a particular type of behavior and event.

Even in his original statements, however, Scheflen (1965) recognized

[2]See Scheflen (1965) for an earlier, and substantially different, discussion of the characteristics of programs. We have chosen to make the major published list the focus of our discussion here (Scheflen, 1968), but have tried to consider various comments from previous articles and unpublished papers.

that, "to abstract the program does not do justice to the dynamic complexity of an actual performance" (p. 21). An issue highlighted in later sections of this chapter is that, once persons learn programs, they may join them together in new ways, or adapt them to new circumstances. Whether persons act in accordance with or in contrast to them, programs provide a partial baseline for behavior. Thus, programs are only one part of the story; they are not a complete explanation of social interaction from a behavioral, nonpsychological standpoint. It is this issue that we consider in further detail.

PERFORMANCE PERSPECTIVES

Several correctives to structural thinking have been proposed, more or less directly addressing the issue of how structure and process, or competence and performance, are related. Hymes' (1962) ethnography of communication extends our understanding of structure and many of the elements of process, but in our estimation still maintains a largely structural orientation (Gumperz & Hymes, 1972). This is reasonable, given Hymes' formal training in structural linguistics, but it is not obvious, because he explicitly intended to move beyond that early training. Hymes' (1971) notion of *performance* was an attempt to get away from the earlier linguistic emphasis on *competence*—always an essentially structural conception (see Leeds-Hurwitz, 1984).

Hymes' work sparked a series of attacks on the too-rigid adherence to structural concepts, extending from linguistic anthropology (Bauman & Sherzer, 1974a) to folklore (Ben-Amos & Goldstein, 1975; Paredes & Bauman, 1972) to oral performance (Fine, 1984; Fine & Speer, 1977). Each of these is examined briefly because each contributes to the discussion of the interplay between structure and performance.

Linguistic anthropology was the obvious home of the field that Hymes established in 1962, although it quickly influenced other disciplines as well. Bauman and Sherzer edited their reader in 1974 as the direct result of a conference held in 1972; it was the major inheritor of the research program outlined by Hymes (1962). Although after the fact Bauman and Sherzer (1989) named *performance* "the most central organizing concept" (p. xviii) in their volume, at the time they named "the description of speech acts, events, and situations" as their central concern (1974b, p. 163). This is a good indication of the conflict between the process goals and the structural assumptions inherent in the ethnography of communication.

There is considerable similarity between Scheflen's notion of *programs* and Hymes' division of behavior into acts, events, and situations. One of Hymes' students, Irvine (1974), made this particularly clear when she

included as an appendix to her chapter, a "grammar of rules for greeting" among the Wolof of Senegal. This is essentially an example of a program as outlined by Scheflen. Similarly, and in the same volume, Basso (1974) called for "a grammar of rules for code use together with a description of the types of social contexts in which particular rules (or rule subsets) are selected and deemed appropriate" (p. 428).

In both Scheflen's work and the various examples from the ethnography of communication literature, a clear statement is made that the structures under study are not fixed absolutely, but rather develop and emerge through performance. Bauman and Sherzer (1974b) wrote: "It is important to stress that the acts, events, and situations described by Irvine, Salmon, and Abrahams, and some of those described by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Stross, and Sherzer, are not absolutely fixed in their structure, but rather develop and emerge through performance" (p. 164). However, it is our contention that this and other statements, although appropriate and necessary, are suggestive more than completed, and, in actuality, have gone unheeded by the majority of researchers even within the ethnography of communication tradition. After the performance analysis goal has been stated, actual research into communication patterns rarely emphasizes what can be learned about the creation of structure through performance or the role of performance in the unfolding of structure. In brief, the emphasis to date has been on what might be termed *grammar*, that is, rules for action. It is our recommendation that the next step—investigating the role of performance in the employment and creation of structure (grammar)—be taken.

As Bauman and Sherzer (1989) pointed out in their most recent writing on the subject, two conceptions of performance are used in the ethnography of communication literature: the first is *performance as speaking praxis*, or "the situated use of language in the conduct and constitution of social life" (p. xviii), where everyday life is viewed as a performance; the second is *performance as artful*, a specially marked way of speaking where "the act of speaking is put on display, objectified, lifted out to a degree from its contextual surroundings, and opened up to scrutiny by an audience" (p. xix). The emphasis within early ethnography of speaking research, as documented in the Bauman and Sherzer (1974a) volume, seems to be on the latter of these two types of performance.[3] Our emphasis here, in keeping with a shift to larger concerns with communication in everyday life, is on the former.

[3]See, for example, Hymes' (1974b) explicit comments on the subject, where he discussed structures and uses in some detail. The meaning he gave to *performance* seems to be that of artistic performance; he discussed "the acceptance of responsibility to perform" required of performers by their audiences. The same definition was maintained by Bauman (1977; see also Bauman & Sherzer, 1974c).

The verbal art approach has been influential on oral performance within speech communication studies. Fine's (1984) research into oral performance (see also Fine & Speer, 1977), begun under the auspices of the center for research into the ethnography of communication established by Bauman and Sherzer at the University of Texas–Austin, is one example. Due, in part, to this influence, and in part to traditional emphases within oral performance studies, Fine's focus is on artful practice, rather than on everyday interaction, and on the artistic components of performance, rather than the structure–performance connection (cf. Hymes, 1975). In addition, Fine emphasized the problems of transcription of actual performance, rather than analysis of behavior.

With regard to its role in folklore studies, the idea of performance seems to have been developed jointly by folklorists and Hymes, who cited each other's works (cf. Ben-Amos & Goldstein, 1975; Hymes, 1972).[4] The new emphasis on performance within folklore served as a critique of then-existing research, which had emphasized taking individual items of verbal art, as well as other aspects of traditional behavior such as material culture and belief systems, out of context for analysis (Abrahams, 1968; Ben-Amos, 1971; Paredes & Bauman, 1972). As a result of this early work on performance, the understanding of what constitutes folklore and its appropriate study methods changed: The relationship between the performer and audience became as significant as the artistic form of expression, or genre, itself (Abrahams, 1976). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1975) is often cited as one of the early exemplars of this new shift of emphasis, clearly grounding a particular artistic form, a parable in this case, in its context of telling. Yet despite explicit references to a focus on storytelling performance, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett ultimately provided a structural analysis of the event (see in particular the elaborate charts on pp. 124–125, showing how the various parts of the performance are related).

The concept of *performance* has continued to be of major significance within folklore for the past several decades, with an emphasis on "close analysis of individual communicative events in natural contexts" (Mills, 1990, p. 7) generally taken for granted. Bronner (1988) named *performance* as one of the three key words around which research in folklore to date has

[4]In his earliest discussions of the subject, Hymes (1974b) referred to the fact that "the term 'performance' has come into prominence in recent folkloristic research" (p. 443), specifically citing a Ben-Amos conference presentation from 1967, a Roger Abrahams publication in 1968, and an Alan Lomax publication in 1968. Yet as a student in folklore classes at the University of Pennsylvania with Ben-Amos and Goldstein in the mid-1970s, one of us (Leeds-Hurwitz) is sure that Hymes was always credited with having been responsible for the new emphasis on performance (his chapter in Ben-Amos & Goldstein, 1975, was particularly influential). Clearly there was considerable mutual influence at work.

been organized. His presentation of the most recent trend, which he labeled *praxis*, addresses the issue of those parts of communication falling beyond artistic performances, although it is too soon to tell whether others will elaborate on his brief suggestions.

In brief, ethnography of communication research, in all its various guises, moved away from an analysis of language structure toward observation of multiple channels in context, stating the need for an examination of communication process. However, with observations recorded in the form of field notes, audiotapes, films, or videotapes, and analysis requiring multiple "viewings" of comparable events, what resulted was essentially structural analysis: an emphasis on the parts of the event, or the connections between various grammatical levels (act, event, situation), rather than the process by which individuals creatively make use of the structural resources. Hymes' ethnography of performance tradition extends our understanding of structure, as well as many of the elements of process, yet it is limited by a largely structural framework, and by a clear emphasis on performance as a ritualized or artful event.

Hymes is not the only major author to set a trail away from structure and toward process; several other comparable attempts also exist: ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967), structuration theory (Giddens, 1984), and performance theory (Schechner, 1988; Turner, 1987). In each of these cases, however, the attempt to resolve the connection between structure and process remains incomplete, or the focus is on a particular, limited realm of performance. It is our position that each of these process traditions lacks a rich understanding of structure, inadequately accounting for the structure–process relationship.

Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology eschews grammatical or rules investigations, emphasizing instead the transcontextual interpretive procedures employed by collectivity members as part of making sense of action around them. Garfinkel rejected rules as an a priori explanation of human conduct because this would require a view of persons as "judgmental dopes" wired to behave in certain ways, but unable to make determinations that would fit rules to particular circumstances. As Heritage (1984) summarized this position, "what is being eliminated or suppressed in [the normative] form of theorizing is the range of contingencies, as interpreted by the actor, which may influence the actual outcome of a chain or sequence of actions" (p. 111). Our analysis of the following case study leads us to a similar conclusion—that programs- or rules-based explanations are inadequate—but we take a more moderate position from that of ethnomethodology. We contend that descriptions of programs provide valuable sociocultural insights, but that students of communication must examine the process by which program resources find their way into performance, and not stop at a description of the programs. Therefore,

unlike Garfinkel, we do not abandon the notion of *rules* in favor of interpretive procedures. Rather, we ask how rules are implemented by real-time actors during, and as part of, real-time performance events.

Giddens (1984) also influenced the understanding of the interplay between structure and performance, which he phrased as the ways in which action (performance) and structure intersect. His solution, *structuration theory* is described as "a broad perspective upon the study of action, structure and institutions" (Giddens, 1989, p. 297). However, we are in agreement with Huspek (1993), who wrote that Giddens deemphasized structure as constraining: "[T]here is little if any provision on this account for structure to operate as a determining force.... This ... is consistent with Giddens's general treatment of agency, for to attribute a determining property to structure would be to usurp agency's privileged status within his theory" (p. 10). In contrast, our goal is to explicitly address how structural constraints enter into performance, and how the consequential character of communication recognizes, operates within, and transcends such constraints.

Finally, performance theory, as articulated by Turner (1969, 1974, 1982, 1987) and Schechner (1985, 1988), can be noted. These theorists have a series of mutually influencing books on the studies of ritual performance within anthropology and performance within the domain of theater, respectively. Their interests concern two particular types of performance and the connections existing between them: highly ritualized performances studied cross-culturally (Turner's interest), and theatrical performances (Schechner's interest). Essentially, as with folklore and oral performance, these authors emphasized artful, ritualized performance. In contrast, our goal in this chapter is to account for the enacted structure inherent in less organized, less deliberate performances in everyday life.

In summary, the foregoing overview of previous attempts to discuss the role of performance in the study of structure demonstrates that none of these authors adequately accounts for the way in which a particular performance represents both the implementation of an underlying structure (program) and the creation of a heretofore nonexistent interaction. For the most part, these authors have other agendas, hence this is less a critique of their work than an illumination of the gap in the theoretical literature. In the following pages, we attempt to fill that gap, making suggestions for an initial understanding of the role of performance in establishing, revising, and ultimately maintaining interactional structure. We begin by presenting details of a particular case study. By examining how communication performances simultaneously invoke and transcend sociocultural programs in one particular setting, we illuminate some of the characteristic features of communication that define it as consequential.

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY

Overview

Sullivan (1989) specifically examined the contributions of a priori sociocultural programs to the actual performance of a communication episode, and the relationship between a priori structure and process. The study consisted of ethnographic interviewing and observation surrounding an exclusively female social event, the "basket party"—a combined sales and socializing event involving a sales consultant, a hostess, and a dozen or so invited guests. The research was conducted in western New York state during 1987. Three basket parties were studied, with interviews conducted with participants both before and after each party, and observation and audio recording of interaction for all three parties. The preparty interviews provide evidence for a program for the basket party in the form of participants' reported expectations for the upcoming event based on participation in previous such events or comparable ones.[5] The field notes and transcriptions based on the observed–recorded interactions permit an analysis of what actually transpires at each party and a comparison of these actualities with the a priori (reported) program.

Initial Orientations to the Party

The participants oriented to the basket party in terms of several enticements and functions of the event: (a) the opportunity to visit with one's girlfriends and to make new friends, (b) the availability of a same-sex socializing context approved of by husbands and boyfriends, (c) and the occasion for seeing and purchasing the latest home merchandise.

The preparty interviews revealed that participants oriented to the basket party as a "multifunctional event" (although they did not use that expression). The repeated implication was that the women felt they needed a reason beyond pure socializing to sponsor or attend a women-only gathering. To a large degree, the sales and socializing aspects of the event were joined by the participants. In their reports to the interviewer, the participants referred to the sales aspect of the event in terms of its function to provide a needed excuse for women to gather together.

[5]We recognize problems of treating interview data as the basis for analyzing programs, but, as Sullivan (1989) described, a potential tautology results when the identical interactional data are used to study both structure and implementation. We also acknowledge the choice to summarize across subjects within a category to arrive at the program, rather than treat each subject's report as a separate program. Thus, we compare broad expectations with actual occurrences, not a specific individual's expectations and behavior.

Consultant: Some people do these parties as a reason to get together with their friends.

Int: What kinds of things will go on at the basket party?

Guest: It will be just like a regular party I guess but we need a reason to get together.

Guest: [It] is a chance to be with other girls y'know sit and talk and y'know I like to shop so there's everything all rolled into one.

Guest: That's probably why [women] go to [home parties] is just to get out of the house. I mean husbands don't like you to go to bars; when a woman goes to a bar it's like oh no god o they're gonna be getting into trouble and they're gonna go see male strippers and who knows you know they're gonna be picking up guys. . . . I don't know why it is but husbands don't really care [about home parties] . . . even though you're spending money . . . I don't know of any husband that really objects.

These women seemed to consider themselves socially isolated, and they thought of events such as basket parties as ways to overcome this isolation. For instance, one home-party neophyte who worked as a secretary expected several of the other guests attending a particular party to be co-workers (indeed, the pool of invitees was generally drawn from family members, neighbors, and office colleagues). She pointed to the difficulties in socializing with her co-workers at the office, but noted that a basket party made this possible: "It keeps people busy; it gets people socially together. . . . Besides I just like talking to these girls and that's just the best place to do it I guess and not at work."

This is not to deny the tangible effect held by the sales aspect of the party for the participants. Certainly, this is true for the hostess (who receives complementary baskets based on the total number of sales) and the consultant (whose livelihood is the selling of the baskets). For instance, in the context of talking about hostesses who tell their guests, "Don't feel obligated to buy," the consultant stated that she tries to discourage such sentiments: "Please don't say that to them, and I always try to say not because of me, which is a lie of course . . . but I say because . . . if you're gonna go through all this trouble I want you to benefit by it, which I truly do." Consistent with this, the guests tended to treat the sales aspect of the party as a socially expected, rather than an individually valued, feature of the event. When asked to describe typical occurrences at basket parties, at some point in their responses the participants stated: "And then they'll sell the baskets"; "And then you decide what you want to um if you wanta buy anything and what you wanta buy"; "So you buy something from them when they have a party."

What explains the social pressure to purchase? Although the possible utilitarian and symbolic (prestige) features of the baskets cannot be overlooked (Sullivan, 1989), the pressure exerted by the sets of social relationships from which invitations to hostess and/or attend a party are drawn is also key. The women who were invited to such events, those who hostessed the events, and the sales consultant all seemed to recognize that an invitation functioned implicitly as a request for "help" in constructing a satisfactory sales event. In other words, the event and the preexisting social networks tapped into for the event provided a performance pressure (i.e., to attend, to participate in the games, to purchase, etc.). The consultant acknowledged that already existing friendships explained why some women initially agreed to hold parties: "Some people initially had them because they were friends of mine and they wanted to help me out." Similarly, one former hostess felt obliged both to attend a party and make a minimal purchase for the following reasons: "I've boughten enough now that it may be [I'll] look for something little to buy this time. . . . [I'm going] cause she invited me and she booked the party off a my party so I feel kind of obligated to go."

Furthermore, the informants perceived the triple activities of hostessing, attending, and buying in terms of reciprocal obligations. The help the guests provided to the hostess (i.e., by attending and making purchases) functioned like money in the bank, which could and must be repaid in kind upon request.

In summary, informants reported a series of obligations involved in their participation in the basket party resulting from their friendship with the hostess. These general obligations interacted with their expectations for specific structural units of the event.

The A Priori Program: Reported Expectations

Interviews with the three categories of participants revealed that they held and could talk about a set of expectations for the likely and required events at the upcoming basket party. For those participants who had never attended such an event, or had attended a variant (e.g., a Tupperware® sales party), these expectations were drawn from stereotyped information about such events, others' reports about such events, and their own related experiences.

> As my mother says, "Does a basket party mean you all bring a basket?" [on the analogy of a covered-dish dinner]. I said, "No mother, I think we're supposed to buy them."

> Couple of 'em [guests] wanted to know what a basket party was. I don't know if they figured weave stuff, some of 'em did, said, "We gonna weave or something?"

For those participants with first-hand knowledge of basket parties, the data were perhaps more detailed than, but equivalent to, those in the former group with little prior experience.

Both participant groups offered three activities during the interviews to account for the composition and temporal progression of the event. This is captured by the following informant report: "I think they'll have everybody come in and feel comfortable and then get to know everybody . . . look at baskets and possibly buy a few." (Informants also referred to invitational and preparatory sequences prior to the actual evening, which are not discussed here; cf. Sullivan, 1989.) On the basis of this and comparable reports, it seems that the within-party activities can be segmented into the following three phases: (a) activities expected to occur after guests have first arrived at the party ("Have everybody come in and feel comfortable"), (b) activities during the sales presentation ("Look at baskets"), and (c) activities subsequent to the presentation ("Possibly buy a few").

The three categories of participants held different, but complementary, expectations for the party's starting time. For example, when asked what time she expected to arrive at a party scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m., the consultant stated: "I'll probably be there at 7:00. . . . I'll set up my display. . . . I wanna have it look really nice cause that's the first thing they're gonna see." In contrast, hostesses predicted staggered arrival times. For one party scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m., the hostess stated: "People will probably get here between 7:00 and 7:30."

During the first phase of the party, it appears that socializing activities were in the forefront of the informants' expectations (e.g., greeting, making introductions, chatting, offering and receiving beverages, etc.), whereas sales activities (e.g., the presence of the consultant and her display) were in the background. According to a preparty report from one hostess, the arrival of the first guest set the following sequence in motion: "They come in, of course being greeted by the hostess, and then basically sit around and just talk with other guests that are there. Drink coffee. Talk." A guest invited to this hostess' party provided the nearly identical expected sequence during her preparty interview: "You come in, greet the hostess, everybody else. It's like a little social gathering that goes on for a while; usually there's beverages of some sort, cocktails or whatever."

Informants clearly expected that the role of the consultant and the merchandise she had brought would be highlighted during the second phase of the basket party. Some guests referred to this segment with terse

descriptions (e.g., "Do the baskets," "Go through the baskets," "[Go] through all the baskets"), acknowledging the expected existence of the phase, but not elaborating on its component units. Others provided detailed versions of the activities comprising the presentation phase: "The person doing the show will stand up in front, thank us for being there, go into her spiel showing the different baskets, and she'll say if there are any questions let her know or feel free to browse with the baskets." Others in this camp specified some of the transition and subsequent behaviors on the part of the hostess and guests:

> **Guest:** Probably [the hostess will] introduce the woman who's speaking, the woman will go through her descriptions of the baskets . . . possibly go into some of the uses for the baskets.
>
> **Guest:** You [the guest] generally sit down and listen to what the person [the consultant] has to present.
>
> **Hostess:** During the presentation, they're more interested in what's going on, what the product is and then communicating a little between themselves as far as what they think if they think something jotting it down. . . . I've never been to one where there's dead silence throughout the whole thing.

Finally, it is during the postpresentation phase, according to the informants' reports, that the dual functions of the basket party (sales and socializing) are expected to reemerge and indeed converge. In their reports about postpresentation expectations, participants mentioned such activities as deciding what (or whether) to buy, ordering baskets, talking with the other guests, and enjoying dessert. As the following quotations indicate, the participants articulated a clear sequence—moving from the buying to the socializing subphases, with some intermingling of the two periods reported:

> **Consultant:** And then I invite them to look at the baskets or whatever and they do. And then they bring their little orders in and I figure them out for them, and sometimes people say, "Gee I really gotta go." Sometimes they stick around for an hour just talking and laughing.
>
> **Hostess:** Then they're given time to choose their particular basket. They order it and they pay for it, then they might talk for a while longer and go home.
>
> **Guest:** After [the presentation] it's a matter of deciding what it is you wanta buy and then generally a socialization period afterwards.
>
> **Guest:** After we see them [the baskets], we'll have probably some kind of desserts and we'll order our baskets.

In brief, then, informants were prepared for an event with three recognizable subphases (i.e., prepresentation socializing, the sales presentation, and postpresentation purchasing and socializing), each with its own distinct behaviors and responsible person(s).

Performing the Basket Party: Program Invocations and Emergent Behavior

Space limitations do not permit an exhaustive description of each of the three iterations of the basket parties that were observed. Instead, we analyze the observational materials here by asking about their relationship to the informants' program-based expectations. This discussion permits us to consider how it is that a priori programs come to be enacted, how such enactments can be seen as faithful instantiations of the programs when combining expected and unexpected activities, how elements neither explicitly mentioned nor contained within the informant reports nevertheless are generated as part of program implementation, and how both expected and emergent activities are integrated into the ongoing flow of communication. Overall, this analysis permits consideration of "the uncertainties, the arbitrary, the idiosyncratic, and the private, which contain much of [persons'] struggles and achievements in society" (Shokeid, 1992, p. 241). It is in the comparison of expected and performed behavior that we may locate features of communication consequentiality.

Programs as Potentials. The observational data indicate that the program, as operationalized in this case by the participants' articulated expectations, is treated by them as a set of potential constraints on their actually enacted behavior.[6] We suggest that the program constraints are potential because it was not always the case that actual performances followed through on the stipulations of the reported program.

The constraining nature of the program can be seen in the ways participants oriented to each other's actions and to the unfolding events during a performance. Observations support the earlier informant perspective—that the sales consultant held a different status and was set apart from others at the party, even when they were all neighbors and previously acquainted with each other. For example, guests were expected to stop whatever they were doing when the "main event" was announced by the

[6]We treat the preparty expectations as components of the event program because they were offered by informants as regulations and prescriptions for participation in the event, rather than simply predictors of likely activity. However, our method does not permit assessment of the cognitive or social strength of the programs.

hostess and/or consultant. However, it was not simply expecting the sales presentation that led people to stop their socializing and prepare for it, which would amount to a weak interpretation of the informant data. Rather, the sales presentation was the ostensible "business at hand" and had to be performed. As the interviews revealed, there was an obligation to listen (and, to some degree, to buy).

This does not mean that transitional activity was unneeded for this moral force to be invoked, or that all persons assiduously adhered to this moral force. Indeed, the a priori expectation behind attending to the sales spiel does not, in and of itself, explain its enactment because it is necessary to analyze the actual behavioral contributions of the multiple participants as they oriented to and accomplished this force. Moreover, consistent with our contention that programs represent potential constraints, attention to the sales consultant could just as easily be withheld as granted by the basket party guests. Attention is not automatic, and requires contribution and coordination on the part of all participants.

In one observed instance, for example, guests apparently lost interest in the sales presentation, and the representative shortened it as a result. The consultant began her talk by expressing some nervousness to the group, saying, "I haven't worked in a while but I'll give it my best shot," but then offered some of the usual elements of her narrative (e.g., the history of the basket-making family, a description of the sales convention and factory she had recently visited, a recitation of the basket-making process, etc.). However, subsequent behavior—some of it part of the program, some not—seemed to be treated by the guests as indicative of the presentation's imminent conclusion:

> The activity of distributing the [wish-]lists [and pencils] seemed to be taken by the other participants as a signal to begin talking with one another. While the list distribution and talk were going on another ex-co-worker of [the hostess's], Dora, arrived. After greeting her, Caryn got her a glass of punch and Dora squeezed onto the couch between Genie and Linda, two of her co-workers. When everyone finally had a list and a pencil, and Dora and the co-workers had greeted each other, Carol tried, but seemed to have some difficulty, regaining their attention. (Sullivan, 1989, pp. 123–124)

It may be that the wish-list distribution had different meanings for the consultant and the guests, and that each group followed through in subsequent conduct on the respective meaning of that behavior. For the former, it represented a way her audience members could keep track of which items they were interested in during the course of the presentation; for the latter, it may have represented the actual sales-selection opportunity, and therefore the impending conclusion of the sales talk.

As part of this incident, a modest effort seemed to be made by the various sets of participants to overcome the problem:

> Several times, especially when the [side conversations] became very loud, Carol either turned her back to them for a number of seconds as she apparently searched for a particular basket, or stopped talking altogether and waited for the room to quiet down. . . . [T]he guests seemed to become more interested in their own conversations and less interested in the baskets. It was probably in response to this growing restlessness that Carol "promised" the guests at least three times that she was about done: "We're almost done I promise." (Sullivan, 1989, pp. 124–125)

The sales representative complained to the ethnographer afterward that the guests had been "standoffish" and "rude" to her, both prior to and during the presentation. This reaction would seem to indicate that the program held force for the sales representative, but that the process did not provide her with an avenue for making adjustments beyond the ones described previously. It is likely that she did not use harsher sanctioning because of other features of the program she was trying to enact (e.g., to be friendly and ingratiate herself with her potential customers). Thus, it was not simply a local coordination problem in the event that ensued, but the collapse of the very program (at least for the consultant) underlying the event. Interestingly, only two guests did not purchase baskets at this party, and so the event was financially, if not interactionally, successful for the consultant (see the later discussion on the "inconsequentiality" of communication).

In brief, programs can be assiduously followed, partially attended to, totally abandoned, adhered to by some participants and abandoned by others, and so on. Although background knowledge of program structure may be necessary for researchers and participants to assess particular outcomes, they must also consider what transpires within any single episode in order to account for meaning production (see the later discussion on Garfinkel's, 1967, unique adequacy requirement).

Emergent Behavior. There are varying layers of specificity to the informants' reflections and reports on their expectations, and therefore varying layers of specificity to programs and their enactment. Analysis of the observations reveals that participants may orient to a general "standing concern" (Jacobs, Jackson, Stearns, & Hall, 1991) for the performance event, and/or they may perform a detailed and precise program-based behavioral unit. In other words, there is a difference between participants' adhering to the "sales and socializing expectations" and the "we must greet at this point in the process" aspects of the program, respectively. In the former case, participants implement a general goal or spirit for the event in whatever

way they can and in whatever way they see as appropriate at the moment (cf. Hymes', 1974a, discussion of *key*), whereas in the latter case, they perform a specific behavior or routine in a sequentially appropriate slot.

This distinction between goals and structures as separable features of programs becomes salient as we examine emergent behavior. *Emergent behavior* is defined here as behavior not accounted for, or predictable from, the participants' reported programs. Such behavior might consist of deviations from the program features (e.g., lack of attention paid to the consultant in the earlier example) or the appearance of units not covered by the program altogether. But emergent behavior does not simply happen when unexpected behavior occurs. Rather, for at least some cases in the observational corpus, it appears when the performance of otherwise expected structures might prove "ungrammatical" or "undesirable," given more general and expected goals or outcomes for the event or a subsidiary phase. In other words, emergent behavior can be related to moments when the program cannot or should not be performed. Consider the following incident:

> [The sales consultant] prepared for favor-time as she usually did by writing the names of baskets on the backs of three wish-lists. Her usual strategy was to give small favors to the women who received the specially marked wish-lists. However, during the period of passing out wish-lists, pencils, catalogs, and so on, I [the ethnographer] realized that I had ended up with one of the specially-marked wish-lists. Since I did not want the other guests to suspect that there was any kind of favoritism operating, I signaled my predicament to the consultant by pointing to the back of my wish-list, and she nodded her head at me, apparently indicating that she understood. (Sullivan, 1989, p. 213)

The sales consultant altered the standard program implementation by eliminating favors altogether in this one case.

Existential performance contingencies may give rise to deletions from and/or additions to the program. It is not the contingency that gives rise to the change from the program, but rather its potential meaning or consequence. That is, as in the deletion of party favors because of possible negative repercussions at the one party, there may be some other standing concern or coherence restriction (derived from the program or even more general sociocultural rules) that would be negatively cast on the group's activity should the program be assiduously followed.

A second example provides additional insights into emergent behavior and its appearance as a momentary solution to some of the multiple, often conflicting, goals with which persons enter communication events. The creation of a smoking lounge at one party resulted from conflicts between the hostess' expectations and obligations (for satisfying her guests, provid-

ing ample socializing opportunity, enabling relationship co-members to interact, and protecting her home) and those of her smoking guests.

> She appeared to be unhappy about the idea [of allowing smoking in the house], so it was suggested that the smokers go outside to do their smoking. After Carol had completed her display, she and I went outside [to the front porch] to smoke. . . . [T]he area just outside the front door became the smoking section and throughout the evening, except during the presentation, two or more women could be found there smoking and talking. (Sullivan, 1989, p. 128)

Apparently because this was not a standard feature of the event program, guests had to be repeatedly informed about the decision.

Guest 1: I'll be right back. I'm gonna go out
Guest 2: (sing-song voice:) We know where you're goin.
Guest 3: Look at this gosh the whole house just emptied out.
Guest 4: Where'd they go?
Hostess: [Outside to] smoke.
Guest 3: That's the way to do it.
Guest 4: Didn't you let anybody smoke in here?
Guest 3: It didn't really deter anyone though.
Hostess: [You can smoke but you can't] exhale.

Indeed, the establishment of a no-smoking policy for within the home, and the attendant creation of the smoking area on the front porch, did not prove totally satisfactory for the participants, and both activities were revisited in talk during the course of the evening. For example, on a few occasions when smokers were observed entering or exiting the house, comments were made disparaging the effect this movement was having on sociable interaction.

> [W]hen a group of smokers moved back into the house they were greeted with the following comment from one of the non-smoking guests: "I was gonna say we were gonna move everything outside." The hostess appeared to interpret this as a negative reaction to the emergent (unexpected) no-smoking policy, [a] sanction since her next contribution both supported the guest's comment and suggested a remedy for the situation: "Yeah I mean I was really thinking maybe I should dig up some ashtrays do you want me to?" (Sullivan, 1989, pp. 203–204)

Not everything that is unexpected or nonprogrammatic necessarily produces a disruption in the ongoing behavioral flow. Some unexpected behaviors may be integrated into this flow, perhaps because they adhere to

a set of superarching goals, whereas others may not. In the first example, no mention was made of the wish lists by the consultant, despite its presumably a priori status for her. In contrast, in the second example, the hostess did account for and attempt to remedy the creation of a separate smoking area. We do not mean to imply that the consultant's response to the researcher's receipt of the marked paper was inevitable; we reason that she could have redistributed wish lists, acknowledged the embarrassment, and so on. All such behaviors, although differentially meaningful, share the background of expectations regarding wish lists, complementary gifts, and fairness, but represent different solutions to the posed dilemma.

One aspect of communication analysis must consider the moral force, not only behind the expectations (both sequential and goal oriented) brought to an event, but behind the behavior units actually performed during the event. A crucial issue to consider with regard to the relationship between programs and performances is that deviations from the former result not from unexpected occurrences per se, but rather from unexpected occurrences that provide a priority and coerciveness (e.g., in the form of an interaction frame or activity, which at that moment has to be attended to and/or completely implemented). In this regard, we can note those unexpected items that may have cropped up but were dropped relatively quickly or not explicitly noted, such as the nonappearance of the wish lists or fleeting conversational topics. Their momentary appearance was not compelling enough—did not have a "coercive feature"—to be continued, in comparison with the smoking lounge, which apparently did.

We can also consider the "secondary" influences of both planned and unplanned behavior on the episode being performed. For example, the creation of the smoking lounge appeared to prevent or delay the enactment of certain expected activity at the one party, where women stayed on the porch smoking instead of entering the house and greeting those already arrived. This occurred even when the lounge contained strangers and the house contained friends. Thus, the participants' behavior conformed to one overarching goal of making new friends, as expressed during preparty interviews, and abandoned the second goal of socializing with acquaintances, although both results seemed to be accidental, not deliberately produced.[7] However, the creation and maintenance of the smoking area did not interfere with the accomplishment of another pro-

[7]Implicit here is a distinction between behavior that is performed in the service of (i.e., as part of person's orientation to and implementation behavior of) an a priori program, and behavior that is coincidentally included in reports of a priori structure. We make the distinction on the basis of the apparent normative force that persons express and seemingly attend to during the performance (e.g., an explicit transition statement invoking a program element, vs. no statement that people should be mingling), but recognize the need for further research on this point.

gram element—the sales presentation. The smokers did indeed join the nonsmokers approximately 5 minutes before the presentation began, with some indication that the smokers' voluntary entrance provided the hostess with a signal for beginning the announcement sequence. The smokers remained seated and physically oriented to the sales consultant throughout the presentation, returning to the smoking lounge only after the presentation was completed. The sales presentation, as the official business at hand, served as a powerful constraint on emergent behavior such as using the smoking lounge. The participants acted as if socializing were a more flexibly structured activity (into which unexpected features could be easily integrated) than the sales presentation.

Thus, unplanned-for events may reveal the relative valence or significance attached to the various aspects of the program. For example, during one preparty interview, it was reported that a sales person failed to show up at a Tupperware® party. The informant and others present seemed to prefer it that way, because now they could socialize solidly for 3 hours. Yet at the end of the evening, they perused the catalog and left purchase orders, thus demonstrating the force of at least one part of the event. The ultimate goal, clearly stated and understood by participants, is the purchase of objects. Therefore, that goal may be respected even when a critical participant is missing.

In brief, then, not only is there a tension between the two structures (sales and socializing) of a single basket party, which is worked out during a performance, but a tension between the constituent structures and more general goals. The previous data may indicate that this tension is constantly being oriented to during interaction, producing either momentary adherence to a priori structures and goals or novel forms.

In conclusion, it seems that participants: (a) orient to the implementation of expected features unless or until they are prevented from doing so by the emergence of unexpected features that have some moral weight to them; (b) orient to the implementation of unexpected features as long as the emergent feature is providing interactional constraint and the a priori feature is not; and (c) return to the implementation of temporarily suspended expected features when the unexpected feature is no longer interactionally relevant, or when the expected feature holds a more weighty moral obligation over the participants.

Communication as Irrelevant. There are some prior expectations that seem to demand attention no matter the actual communication performance and the contingencies of this performance. In some respects, this speaks to the inconsequentiality of communication. For example, informants reported that, no matter how poor a particular sales presentation may be, if they feel loyalty or friendship toward the hostess they will make

a purchase anyway. The previous informant quotes reveal the importance of participants' prior relationships with each other for their participation in the various aspects of the event (attendance, purchasing, etc.); they enter with a set of expectations to fulfill without necessary regard for the performance. Even the one party where the sales presentation was given minimal attention by the guests resulted in sales for the consultant. The reported Tupperware® party, at which the sales talk did not occur (although purchases were still made), may also point to the inconsequentiality of some performances.

Having stated this, however, it must be acknowledged that it is potentially misleading to push for the notion of *inconsequentiality,* and to suggest that relationship considerations automatically produce certain behavioral outcomes. It is true that a weak or absent performance by the sales consultant may still occasion purchasing. However, as already noted, it is not the polished persuasive behavior of the consultant that leads to sales behavior, but the carrying out of the set of friendly obligations among the other participants. Indeed, the act of meeting and performing—even in the absence of the consultant in one case earlier and no matter the poor performance quality in another—may be necessary for the participants to fulfill the aforementioned set of friendly obligations to attend parties and make purchases. In other words, the framework of a basket party is still present and valid, and only a single element is missing or badly performed. Thus, we can say that the performance is consequential at one level of analysis (in terms of sheer existence), even if not at another (in terms of the quality of the performance or its faithful adherence to the program).

Coordinating Activity During Performance. The availability of particular participants, their movement through space (e.g., in the form of entrances and exits), and the multiple simultaneous demands that fall on the multiple participants at any one time may determine the order in which program elements are actually performed and the degrees of expansion (i.e., energy or intensity, duration or speed) of these elements.

As noted previously, not all elements of the reported expectations were indeed enacted at any or all of the three basket parties observed. Two possible explanations for this, deriving from the program, are that the degree of moral force behind the expected element may be relatively weak, and/or that the expectation may constitute a mythology or ideal—not one that the participants expect to invoke or implement actively during performance. But these program features are mediated by participants' actual lived experiences and production of an event.

For example, an examination of two basket parties reveals that after guests arrived, engaged in greetings and introductions, and received of-

fers of refreshments, they tended to engage in conversations with previous acquaintances, thus implementing one expectation (that they will socialize with friends and neighbors) at the expense of at least a portion of another (that new friendships will develop). During these two observed parties (excluding the one with the improvised smoking lounge), previously acquainted participants established and maintained spatially bounded areas—face formations (Kendon, 1990)—that resulted in the inclusion of acquainted participants in conversation and the exclusion of unacquainted participants. In other words, although mechanisms for establishing relationships between those previously unacquainted were used by the hostesses and some of their guests (i.e., introductions), these mechanisms apparently did not consistently function as a segue into extended conversation among the unacquainted participants. Both the continual offering of refreshments and the arrival and movement of other guests may have intruded on topic elaborations taking place between any one introduction and subsequent interaction. The constant influx of people, resulting in relatively short introductions, followed by elaborate offerings of drinks and opportunities to "catch up" with friends, may have precluded other interactional arrangements.

Thus, goals and expectations concerning engaging in conversation with all types of participants were not always implemented at junctures where they might have been expected to occur. This suggests that the expectation of talking with unacquainted participants may be a "mythology" about how these women feel they should behave during such gatherings, with minimal force behind it. This minimal force, combined with a chaotic performance atmosphere, resulted in nonimplementation. (The one notable exception to this was the party with smoking on the front porch, where the interaction space permitted or perhaps even forced conversation among unacquainted participants.)

Transitions between particular program elements may not be contained in the program; in both this case and the case where transitions are built into the program expectations, the participants may nevertheless need to produce transitions relevant to the actual moment of their production. As noted earlier, participants expected that, at some point during the party, they would all "do the baskets." It was further expected that "the person doing the show will stand up in front, thank us for being there, [and] go into her spiel." Some transition behavior was specified. For example, for the hostess, it was assumed that "probably she'll introduce the woman who's speaking"; for the guests, it was assumed that they "generally sit down and listen to what the person has to present." But in order for a transition from socializing to the sales phase to be accomplished, participants must signal that now is the time for this to occur. Moreover, all

participants must contribute and coordinate their behavior for this transition to happen. Such coordination involves participants not only integrating their behavior with each other's, but also meshing their current behavioral obligations (to effectuate their piece of the transition) with their immediately preceding conduct (whether they are standing or seated, en route to getting a drink, etc.).

The following illustrates the gradual unfolding of the socializing to sales transition at one basket party:

Consult: Is everybody here?
Hostess: A few more ladies I think they're gonna be late I think the only person that might be missing is my neighbor.
[Untranscribed conversations]
Hostess: Anybody else need an ashtray? You guys all set for ashtrays?
Guest 1: I think so.
Hostess: Anyone like a refill before she starts?
[Untranscribed conversations]
Hostess: Does anybody else need something?
Guest 2: Are you waiting for us?
Hostess: If anybody wants refills. . . .
Consult: Does anybody else want something to drink before I start?
Guest 3: I have to use the bathroom first.
[Untranscribed conversations]
Consult: O.K. Well, I'm just waiting until everybody's all ready.
Guest 1: Are you gonna start officially?
Guest 2: She's starting now.
Consult: I'm gonna start now.

To some degree, the present discussion raises questions about the cognitive structuring of the program. Is it that transitions are not part of the program, or that the cognitive task involved in reporting about expectations does not give rise to reports of transitions? It may be that, although participants recognize that transitions must be enacted, they do not specify how such transitions will or should be enacted because this is dependent on the performance moment and not the program. In this regard, there may be worthwhile distinctions to be made between two types of programs and events: those for which ritualistic transitions are not precoded (e.g., a basket party), and those for which ritualized solutions are provided (e.g., during High Mass). In the former, nonritualized situation, participants choose from a standardized repertoire of transition behaviors that are not specific to, and therefore not program features of, a particular

communication episode. Moreover, they must uniquely perform those behaviors that result in a transition from their then-current activity and location to the next phase's activity and location.

In summary, as with the major periods or activities of an event, so too do the transitions between activities or periods require accomplishment. Regardless of whether the transitions are program based and tied to the target episode, or general and applicable across a variety of episodes, they demand coordination across participants and their behavior in the actual moments of their production.[8]

Performance Summary. The previous discussion reveals a number of insights concerning the relationship between a priori programs and lived performances. First, although programs represent a sociocultural resource for meaningful behaving that contains a variety of degrees of moral force, actual performances may adhere to or abandon some (or all) components of a particular program. Repair work may be initiated when a local coordination problem in the implementation of a program ensues, but the wholesale abandonment of a program by some participants may make it impossible for the other participants to coordinate their behavior with that of the former. Second, performances may realize both the standing concerns and the sequential structures embodied by the program, but at particular moments it may be necessary for the participants to abandon one in favor of the other, and to fill in underspecified features of a program behavior. Thus, the communication process produces emergent behavior that provides a moral coerciveness or constraint of its own. Third, the significance of an event may reside less in its performance quality than in the utter fact of its having been performed, ironically combining the consequential character of communication performance with its inconsequentiality. Fourth, some components of a program may have mythological status for participants, and performance activities may shape the incidental implementation of these components. Finally, transitions between recognized subprograms can be seen to derive from the program itself, from a standardized repertoire of transition devices, and—most important from the vantage point of communication consequentiality—from participants coordinating their

[8]Although it is not possible to totally assess the degree of requisiteness underlying the various reported activities (e.g., whether they represent pieces of an underlying program, stereotyped expectations, presumptions with little moral force, etc.), we can use the transitions to approach such an analysis. For example, different moral orientations are implied by the following invocations: "Let's do this folks and get it over with"; "Here's what's happening next"; "We have to do this or all hell will break loose." The basket party data show the high degree of constraint placed on participants resulting from the transition to the sales talk, and the low degree on the heels of the postpresentation transitions, which revealed a bundle of permissible activities (exiting, smoking, using the lavatory, eating dessert, etc.).

efforts with whatever else they are individually and jointly doing at the moment when transitions are called for.

INTERACTION TENSIONS

Programs represent generalized sociocultural resources for communicators as they confront real-life occasions for behaving. They are both idealizations of communication episodes and organized regulations (constraints) on behavior performed during and as part of these episodes. At the level of a knowledge-based resource, programs represent the competence persons are socialized into, bring to an interaction, and, in varying ways, attempt to execute. However, performances may not be judged exclusively, or even primarily, on the basis of their fidelity to the programs (competencies). This is because real-time behavioral events, as opposed to their idealizations, present communicators with coordination problems and opportunities, with multiple participants and often competing goals. Coherence with and relevance to what else is actually taking place, as opposed to what should occur, are equally powerful standards for judging performance.

Thus, communicators engage in multiple activities: (a) implementing or enacting a program, (b) attending to the actually unfolding behavioral production, (c) aligning this actual conduct with the a priori expectations in cases where the one does not integrate adequately with the other, (d) establishing coherence between sequentially unfolding behaviors (whether programmatic or emergent) both they and others produce, (e) interpreting the present conduct in light of previous episodes engaged in with those or with other coparticipants, (f) projecting and adjusting to the future consequences of current programmatic and/or emergent behavior, and (g) revising their vision of the program based on actual behavior.

In this regard, we propose that there are at least three categories of tensions that communicators experience as they set about producing sociocultural episodes (cf. Montgomery, 1992; Rawlins, 1992, for alternative approaches to communication and dialectical tensions; cf. Turner, 1974, for an anthropological perspective).[9] One set of such tensions derives from the program because, as previously described, the program represents a set of constraints, restrictions, and potentialities on communicators' conduct. As Moore (1975) wrote, "every interaction contains within it elements of the regular and elements of the indeterminate, and both are 'used' by individuals" (p. 221). We contend that there are at least three ways in which

[9]We refer to episodes as *sociocultural* when considering them from the vantage point of their governing programs, and we refer to them as *communicational* when considering them in terms of actual conduct.

communicators respond to, or resolve, the tensions imposed on them by program obligations:

1. *Invocation* involves communicators publicly and explicitly making use of the program (i.e., behaving in ways that call attention to the behavior as being governed, predicted, and/or organized by the program). This involves "following the pattern" in ways that signal recognition that such is indeed occurring. Announcing the transition from socializing to the sales presentation is an example of invocation.

2. *Alignment* occurs when persons find themselves unable or unwilling to adhere strictly to the program restriction. Alignment (Stokes & Hewitt, 1976) permits participants to behave in ways that cohere for the moment without threatening the integrity and applicability of the program. In this way, the program remains as a powerful a priori sociocultural force to be reckoned with on future occasions, but one that is held in abeyance at the immediate time. The consultant's efforts to speed up the sales presentation and solicit attention from the wayward audience members are examples of this.

3. *Revision* combines elements of both invocation and alignment, in the sense that attention is called to the connection between the program (more likely, some subsidiary feature) and possibly deviant behavior. However, in this case, the behavior is not fit to the program, but rather the program is fit to the behavior. With revision, a new structural possibility is announced, proposed, and made available for negotiation. This is comparable to Morris and Hopper's (1980) "legislation" device (see also Cronen, chap. 1, this volume). The in situ creation of a smoking lounge represents a revision of the socializing portion of the basket party. Revision may or may not represent a complete reformulation of the already existing program.

These mechanisms to relate programs and actual conduct are comparable to Moore's (1975) processes of *regularization*. Moore defined these as "attempts to crystallize and concretize social reality, to make it determinate and firm" (p. 234). Individuals engage in such communication practices to establish and affirm rules, customs, and institutions—in short, the sociocultural order. In so doing, a sense of stability, predictability, and ongoing history is gained from the existence of programs as well as their use.

The program–performance tension represents a tension between different layers or levels of behavioral generality or abstractness. As suggested previously, however, communicators confront not only this tension between idealized and actualized levels, but within the level of actual conduct as well. Communicators confront the additional tensions of relating

their behavioral contributions to other interaction episodes (past or projected), as well as relating their behavioral contributions to other behavior within the current bounded episode. In the former case, the second tension, communicators relate their behavior within any given episode to similar episodes at other times and with other people. Such "intertextuality" (Kristeva, 1969), or cross-referencing (Birdwhistell, 1970; Scheflen, 1967), brings past events in particular into the current one, and projects some semantic or functional connection between current and future events. Tensions arise from the obligation to conduct oneself consistently with previous performances (Davies & Harré, 1991–1992; Goffman, 1959) and with agendas established during prior episodes (Sigman, 1991).

Under such circumstances, the boundaries between episodes become inexact and tenuous. One of the chief differences between programs and actual conduct is that the latter may not evidence clearly demarcated beginnings and endings, as it emerges from previous episodes and feeds into future ones, with numerous intertwining links across space and time (cf. Birdwhistell, 1970; Sigman, 1987). In contrast, programs inhabit an idealized sociocultural location, where guidelines for producing and interpreting boundary markers can be rigidly maintained.

Previous encounters among participants may establish shared story repertoires, the result being a constraint on what can subsequently be told and how. These expectations may constrain speech at both the sentential and discourse levels (Tannen, 1978). Finally, current experiences may establish new structural obligations and possibilities for subsequent encounters (Sigman & Donnellon, 1988).

New behaviors—those not expected or part of the original a priori program—may subsequently be "transported" by participants and used for other events. A new structural element (program) may emerge from performed behaviors. In this way, performed behaviors are consequential both in the moment of their production and in the long term. The experience of each new event may be incorporated into subsequent programs; thus, programs are filled with culture-general and experience-specific repertoires.[10]

As can be seen, programs are open to manipulation and adaptation to situational needs and contingencies. Despite the implicit suggestion that programs govern behavior, it is also useful to see them as resources (with entailed moral force) for action. Persons select and (re)combine portions of programs—the consequential character of communication in operation—

[10]See Sullivan (1989) for a discussion of how a repertoire of standard stories is built by the consultant, and how participants learned that a basket party was not analogous to a covered-dish social, but more like a Tupperware® sales gathering.

that are made to work at particular moments of interaction. Each new combination is then available for future manipulation and adaptation, making for a complex and ever-growing system of programs. Moore (1975) labeled this phenomenon processes of *situational adjustment*:

> [P]eople arrange their immediate situations (and or express their feelings and conceptions) by exploiting the indeterminacies in the situation, or by generating such indeterminacies, or by reinterpreting or redefining the rules or relationships. They use whatever areas there are of inconsistency, contradiction, conflict, ambiguity, or open areas that are normatively indeterminate to achieve immediate situational ends. . . . These processes introduce or maintain the element of plasticity in social arrangements. (pp. 234–235)

Invocation, alignment, and revision are three aspects of the same process—acting in the here and now while selectively drawing on the past and rewriting the potential future. Alignment and revision are especially related to the indeterminacy of programs; it is the inability of any program to predict all contingencies that participants may encounter that gives rise to the varying degrees of adherence to or modification of programs (cf. Garfinkel, 1967). Thus, communication is consequential because it demands from participants the competence to enact programs (invocation), and to do so in ways fitting within the immediate moment (alignment and revision) of ongoing behavioral production.

This leads to the third tension, which finds communicators making adjustments in their behavior to what has just been performed, or to what is about to be performed. This tension derives from the immediate, or "local," circumstances of the interaction, and may require the greatest amount of cognitive attention and interactional skill on the part of participants. Certainly, conversation analysis would seem to support this view (see Beach, chap. 3, this volume) because it is here that the negotiation of meaning occurs on a moment-by-moment basis. Ongoing sociocultural life requires effort on the part of members because there is always the potential for things to fall apart if such effort is not forthcoming. Because culturally constituted social order is a human construction, continual and continuous action is required, as is the communicative competence to coherently act and respond in the here and now (see Sanders, chap. 2, this volume). Human constructions cannot exist without humans to maintain them, or without activity.

Attention to this action-to-action tension involves at least the following: *coherence*, *relevance*, *adjacency*, and *formulation*. These discourse devices are used by conversationists to relate their utterances to sequentially prior ones (cf. Heritage, 1984). Relatedly, Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky (1982) referred to interpretive heuristic devices—such as *salience*, *availability*,

recency, and *prototypicality*—as the basis for how people interpret and produce behavior.

Sullivan's (1989) original study (from which the previous case study is derived) analyzed the ways in which the participants engaged in "small talk" with each other, the manner in which greetings and introductions transpired, and how exits into and out of face formations and focused talk were handled. In no cases were such behaviors mentioned in the preparty interviews. This may be due in part to the lack of informant awareness of such microbehaviors, and due, in part, to their nonintegralness to the basket party program. They represent a set of generalized behaviors not specific to the one event or event program. Previous research supports that informants focus their remarks about scenes on motives, goals, and personalities, not constitutive behavioral units (cf. Levy Fogle, 1991; Mathiot, Boyerlein, Rhoda, Levy, & Marks, 1987). Nevertheless, such microbehavior is produced by communicators, and so it is necessary to consider how the unanticipated production of a conversational unit establishes relevant and irrelevant next slots, and how communicators may exploit this feature of communication.

In brief, sociocultural programs, the history of interaction experiences with one's coparticipants, and the actual moment-by-moment production of behavior all constrain and engender communication performances. These performances are consequential because they are not completely predicted by the a priori programs and experiences, and because the ongoing production of behavior (in adherence to and/or in modification of programs and history) establishes its own in-the-moment constraints on the participants. Thus, communication creates and resolves the experiencing of the three tensions in any particular circumstance.

SUMMARY

We contend that social communication theory's notion of *programs* needed revision (and, by extension, all ethnographic and discourse research that generates descriptions of rules and resources, in lieu of descriptions of actual conduct and performance). This revision is not of the concept of programs, but rather of the uses to which the concept is put. We have argued that participants enter communication episodes with a set of expectations for those episodes. These expectations represent a moral force binding the communicators to perform particular sequences of behavior and to reach particular goals, but they are not equivalent to real-time communication events. In this respect, Scheflen's initial articulation of programs represents an appropriate level of sociocultural analysis—that

of the structural resources that regulate and are presupposed by particular moments of behaving. However, communication analysis, in recognition of the consequential nature of the communication process, with provision for varying degrees of adherence to and revision of sociocultural resources, must address the employment or implementation of programs, not merely or primarily the structure of the programs.

This position on the consequential nature of communication, and more specifically on the relationship between programs and performances, is similar to that of Fish (1980) on the meanings derived from reading:

> In [reading], which is the actualization of meaning, the deep structure plays an important role, but it is not everything; for we comprehend not in terms of the [text's] deep structure alone but in terms of a *relationship* between the unfolding, in time, of the surface structure and a continual checking of it against our projection (always in terms of surface structure) of what the deep structure will reveal itself to be; and when the final discovery has been made and *the* deep structure is perceived, all the "mistakes"—the positing, on the basis of incomplete evidence, of deep structures that failed to materialize—will not be canceled out. They have been experienced; they have existed in the mental life of the reader; they *mean*. (p. 48; italics in original)

What Fish implies is true of written texts, but not true of interactions between corporate agents (e.g., persons, organizations). Fish implies that readers are drawn along a somewhat inevitable path toward the text's meaning—that while the meaning is shaped by the path any one reader takes, nonetheless there is some particular meaning waiting at the reading's end, in part as the result of the reader's embeddedness in an interpretive community. The consequential nature of communication *as an interactional phenomenon* belies this because there is no inevitable endpoint for meaning. The meaning of behavior, and of the programs that help structure it, is always subject to negotiation and revision.[11] Indeed, unlike a written text, which is in hand and complete at the time of reading, a behavioral production is not fully known in advance (although the program potentially structuring it may be); rather, it is incomplete and unfinished, and subject to further production and interpretation. Unlike a written text, which comes to the reader without its author available to amend and clarify and dispute, human interaction is inherently multiparticipant (Birdwhistell, 1970). This leads to incompleteness because communication episodes

[11]Fish's (1980) later essays reject an essentialist view of texts, stating that "linguistic and textual facts, rather than being the objects of interpretation, are its products" (p. 9), and "formal units are always a function of the interpretive model one brings to bear (they are not 'in the text')" (p. 13). Nevertheless, we contend that written texts are complete in ways that face-to-face interactions are not.

throughout their occurrence are open to revision by any of the participants. It is the communication process that adheres to (or not) and fulfills (or not) the constraints and potentials represented by programs. As suggested earlier, programs that organize communication episodes represent possible, albeit powerful, constraints; the endpoint of meaning is not definitive, resulting from the process of program implementation, not the program itself.

In this regard, then, we contend that persons possess programlike knowledge for all matter and sort of sociocultural episodes: participating in a basket sales party, going on a date, watching television at home, conducting an employment screening interview, and so on. These and other communication episodes are defined and regulated by programs. In many, and perhaps most, cases, more than one program (or component features from multiple programs) may provide potential constraints on a particular real-time event. Although programs represent routinized solutions to the moment-by-moment problems that communicators face, they also represent abundant and multiple solutions, only one of which can be brought to bear at a particular real-time moment. It is in and during communication that a particular selection from the multiple possible programs is made, each choice being consequential for further selections. Stated differently, although programs represent ritualized solutions, they must nonetheless be enacted and realized during particular moments of sociocultural life, with each specific enactment having a potential for changing both the meaning derived from the particular event and the organization and contents of the presupposed program. From this vantage point, the program is not the given that Scheflen assumed, but rather an original imposition of order constantly available for renegotiation and subject to contingent deviation, thus providing a logic for both stability and revision.

Although it is true that the participants in the basket party followed through on the party program, that they did so must be examined in terms of their performance actions and not the program itself. The participants' actions made the program relevant—the arrival times of the guests, the setup behavior by the hostess and sales consultant, and so on all served to bind the participants to further implementation of the program—simultaneously drawing on (and therefore reifying and continuing) the existence of the program, maintaining its organization and contents, and, in subtle (and not so subtle) ways, redesigning it. Both the invocation and maintenance serve to reify the program, although such reification is always open to further revision.

Garfinkel's (1967) unique adequacy requirement for the description of sociocultural episodes is appropriate here. Garfinkel and Wieder (1992) wrote of this ethnomethodological guideline that "for the analyst to recog-

nize, or identify, or follow the development of, or describe phenomena of order* in local production of coherent detail the analyst must be *vulgarly* competent in the local production and reflexively natural accountability of the phenomenon of order* he[/she] is 'studying' " (p. 182; asterisks and italics in original). To understand how meaning and order are generated in an event, and what that meaning and order are, the analyst as well as the participants must examine the moment-by-moment (local) production of that event, and not take analytic recourse in a priori conceptions of social structure and the like. The position we have adapted from social communication theory is more conservative; it suggests that the observable event is not self-sufficient, and that the programs or rules notion is not altogether adequate either. Although we recognize the consequentiality of the communication process (the local production, as it were), this consequentiality mediates and, in turn, is tempered by programmatic considerations not directly available in any single event (e.g., the sociocultural programs, previous interaction episodes). Although the communication process is consequential, it is not unboundedly so because there are transsituational tensions and constraints placed on local behavioral production. At the same time, it is in the local production of behavior in conformity with or deviation from the three tensions described earlier that consequentiality resides.

Given that the communication process is variously consequential in and to people's lives, the question arises as to the kinds of lives these are. The answer from social communication theory concerns the role of history and tradition—in the form of sociocultural programs—and the processes by which history and tradition are activated and employed in ongoing moments of behavior. Our concern is equally with the processes by which the sociocultural programs are changed, modified, and revised before being "returned" to history. Thus, social communication theory posits that communicators are simultaneously embedded in (constrained by) a sociocultural framework and empowered to behave in ways that momentarily transcend this framework. Communicators are rooted in both structure and process.

We have further suggested that members of social collectivities experience a multitude of tensions that derive from their recognition that each moment of behaving is both a "fitting into" the immediate ongoing flow and a "reference to" or calling up of history. These tensions are not oppressive or fearsome, however, because they permit behavior that is simultaneously conservative and creative. Communicators are empowered to behave with the full recognition that their actions are simultaneously historical and novel, and, in both cases, that their actions are potentially meaningful. As Bateson (1990) wrote: "Composing a life involves a continual reimagining of the future and reinterpretation of the past to give meaning to the present, remembering best those events that prefigured what followed, forgetting those that proved to have no meaning within the narrative" (pp. 29–30). A profound sense of pleasure may actually be gained by communicators when they remember past events, and a profound sense of security may be gained when a priori programs are available and able to be integrated into present events—because in this way they experience membership in a continuous social group and an identity with a recognizable trajectory. As one of us previously wrote: "Thus, relational history and previous interactional experience do not merely constitute a background, a memory box, for discourse [and interaction]; rather, they can be seen to exist in the foreground of discourse [and other] behavior, as a treasure chest of information to be periodically opened, examined, and celebrated" (Sigman, 1987, p. 33).

From this perspective, there is a social existence for members, in which patterned projections of future behaviors, episodes, and relationships are routine. Any current moment of social life can be seen as pushing participants toward new, but not altogether unfamiliar, experiences and terrain. This happens because of the consequentiality of behavior in the moment of its production, and because, in terms of programs, behavior in the moment predictably projects the shape of what is yet to come. In Ervin-Tripp's (1972) terms, each choice influences and subtly interacts with others: Any choice is made out of a selection of possibilities from which only a limited set can become real (rule of alternation). At the same time, every choice limits future choices (rule of co-occurrence). Today's reality entails and constrains tomorrow.

Implied in the previous discussion is a particular conception of the relationship between programs and action—between structure and process. It is time to resolve the connections between and among these terms. *Programs* (a) are institutionalized assumptions of how events will occur, (b) are outlines of behavior that people bring to interaction, and (c) help participants predict what will come next—what choices entail what other choices. They are abstract, exist theoretically, are never made concrete, and are rarely discussed explicitly except by analysts. *Actions* are concrete behaviors that are visible to all participants, as well as analysts. They are immediate, they occur, they have form and content, and they may be directly described by participants and observed by analysts. However, their meaning resides in both the concrete sequential occasioning of their production and in the program that specifies each behavior's likely occurrence and co-occurrence with other behavior.

Traditionally, the relationship between structure and process has been conceived of linearly, with the former underlying, guiding, and indeed producing the latter. Although we still believe that structure (programs), in some senses, forms the background for, and therefore precedes, process,

the relationship is best viewed as a logical, rather than a temporal, one. Performances rely on programs, yet particular performance acts may revise programs for both that moment and the future. As Moore (1975) wrote, "the fixed in social reality really means the continuously renewed" (p. 235). It is not simply that programs produce real-time behavior because it is also real-time behavior that invokes programs, making them available for later revision and (re)use.

Ultimately, any theoretical discussion implies and leads to a set of research questions. Given the preceding discussion, and the aims of social communication theory more generally, a particular set of questions concerning the relationship between sociocultural resources (programs) and the communication process can be made explicit. These questions are not to be answered here—although some initial data from the one case study illuminate aspects of these questions—but may be used to organize future research projects influenced by social communication theory. Unlike some alternative approaches to the study of ongoing sociocultural life represented in this book, social communication theory is committed to uncovering the layers of history and tradition that are enacted on a real-time basis. The goal is not simply to illuminate the behavioral mechanisms by which face-to-face interaction is produced as consequential, but rather how these mechanisms invoke sociocultural programs on the one hand, and represent responses and adjustment bids to the unfolding multiparticipant and multigoal event on the other hand.

Given these concerns, the following questions are raised: How is a program implemented? How do participants signal which program from the repertoire is to be implemented at a given moment? How do participants combine parts of previous programs, and what restrictions, if any, are there on such recombination? How are pieces of the program eliminated, revised, re-run, and so on? How do participants signal which piece(s) of the program they and/or others will be held responsible for? How do participants signal where in the program's progression the actual performance is at any given moment?

From the revised position on social communication theory articulated here, a comfort with both observational and informant data in the study of communication, and a tendency to seek out comparative data across multiple events, naturally flow. Answers to the previous questions, and others yet to be formulated, require two orders of data: data about actual lived experience, and data about sociocultural programs, idealizations, and expectations. Both would be best served by ethnographic fieldwork across repeated events, with an emphasis on direct observation and recording of ongoing behavior, as well as on informant perspectives on observed behavior and its relationship to expectations and past experiences (cf. Arliss, 1989–1990). Detailing program features is exceedingly

complex, however, because analytic choices concerning the boundaries of particular programs are difficult to make. For example, in the case study employed here, we have assumed (along with the original author) that verbalized reports about expectations imply the existence of programs that will structure subsequent behavior. But expectations may sometimes represent mere predictions, without the moral force that programs and their component rules are assumed to have. An alternative methodology, one relying almost exclusively on observations and more in keeping with Scheflen's observational stance, would attempt to derive both structure and process from the same data: "summarizing" and extrapolating across several iterations of an event to derive what is standard (which has been the traditional activity of structural researchers) on the one hand, and concentrating on the particulars within each single event to arrive at the contribution of the communication performance on the other hand (but see our concerns about this technique—based on Sanders' chapter—in chap. 8, this volume).

Although methodological variations have yet to be worked out, we strongly urge that communication scholars not simply study actual communication events to derive what is standard, rule governed, or program based. Communication scholars must uncover how the communication process is consequential in the ways in which this standard, rules set, or program is used, invoked, and lived by sociocultural members. Such a research strategy represents an understanding and appreciation of the consequentiality inherent to communication phenomena.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The data for the case study presented in this chapter are drawn from Sullivan's doctoral dissertation under Sigman's direction; the performance analysis in this chapter has been written jointly by Sigman and Leeds-Hurwitz based on Sullivan's initial observation and write-up.

REFERENCES

Abrahams, R. (1968). Introductory remarks to a rhetorical theory of folklore. *Journal of American Folklore, 81*, 142–158.

Abrahams, R. (1976). The complex relations of simple forms. In D. Ben-Amos (Ed.), *Folklore genres* (pp. 193–214). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Arliss, L. (1989–1990). An integration of accounts and interaction analyses of communication in long-standing relationships. *Research on Language and Social Interaction, 23*, 41–64.

Basso, K. (1974). The ethnography of writing. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking* (pp. 425–432). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Bateson. G. (1971). Communication. In N. A. McQuown (Ed.), *The natural history of an interview* (pp. 1–40). Chicago: Microfilm Collection of Manuscripts on Cultural Anthropology, Fifteenth Series, Joseph Regenstein Library.
Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an ecology of mind*. New York: Ballantine.
Bateson, M. C. (1990). *Composing a life*. New York: Penguin.
Bauman, R. (1977). *Verbal art as performance*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
Bauman, R., & Sherzer, J. (Eds.). (1974a). *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Bauman, R., & Sherzer, J. (1974b). Introduction to part IV: Speech acts, events, and situations. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking* (pp. 163–166). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Bauman, R., & Sherzer, J. (1974c). Introduction to part V: Shaping artistic structures in performance. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking* (pp. 311–314). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Bauman, R., & Sherzer, J. (1989). Introduction to the second edition. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking* (2nd ed., pp. ix–xxvii). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Ben-Amos, D. (1971). Toward a definition of folklore in context. *Journal of American Folklore, 84*, 3–15.
Ben-Amos, D., & Goldstein, K. (Eds.). (1975). *Folklore: Performance and communication*. The Hague: Mouton.
Birdwhistell, R. L. (1970). *Kinesics and context: Essays on body motion communication*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Bronner, S. J. (1988). Art, performance, and praxis: The rhetoric of contemporary folklore studies. *Western Folklore, 47*, 75–102.
Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1991–1992). Contradictions in lived and told narratives. *Research on Language and Social Interaction, 25*, 1–35.
Duncan, S. (1969). Nonverbal communication. *Psychological Bulletin, 72*, 118–137.
Ervin-Tripp, S. (1972). On sociolinguistic rules: Alternation and co-occurrence. In J. J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication* (pp. 213–250). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Fine, E. (1984). *The folklore text: From performance to print*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Fine, E., & Speer, J. (1977). A new look at performance. *Communication Monographs, 44*, 374–389.
Fish, S. (1980). *Is there a text in this class? The authority of interpretive communities*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
Garfinkel, H., & Wieder, L. H. (1992). Two incommensurable, asymmetrically alternate technologies of social analysis. In G. Watson & R. M. Seiler (Eds.), *Text in context: Contributions to ethnomethodology* (pp. 175–206). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Giddens, A. (1989). A reply to my critics. In D. Held & J. B. Thompson (Eds.), *Social theory of modern societies: Anthony Giddens and his critics* (pp. 249–301). New York: Cambridge University Press.
Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction ritual*. Chicago: Aldine.
Gumperz, J. J. (1984). Communication competence revisited. In D. Schiffrin (Ed.), *Meaning, form and use in context* (pp. 278–289). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
Gumperz, J. J., & Hymes, D. (Eds.). (1972). *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Heritage, J. (1984). *Garfinkel and ethnomethodology*. Cambridge, England: Polity Press.

Huspek, M. (1993). Dueling structures: The theory of resistance in discourse. *Communication Theory, 3*, 1–25.
Hymes, D. (1962). The ethnography of speaking. In T. Gladwin & W. C. Sturtevant (Eds.), *Anthropology and human behavior* (pp. 55–83). Washington, DC: Anthropological Society of Washington.
Hymes, D. (1971). Competence and performance in linguistic theory. In R. Huxley & E. Ingram (Eds.), *Language acquisition: Models and methods* (pp. 3–24). New York: Academic Press.
Hymes, D. (1972). The contribution of folklore to sociolinguistic research. In A. Paredes & R. Bauman (Eds.), *Toward new perspectives in folklore* (pp. 42–50). Austin: University of Texas Press.
Hymes, D. (1974a). *Foundations in sociolinguistics*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Hymes, D. (1974b). Ways of speaking. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking* (pp. 433–451). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Hymes, D. (1975). Breakthrough into performance. In D. Ben-Amos & K. Goldstein (Eds.), *Folklore: Performance and communication* (pp. 11–74). The Hague: Mouton.
Irvine, J. T. (1974). Strategies of status manipulation in the Wolof greeting. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking* (pp. 167–191). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Jacobs, S., Jackson, S., Stearns, S., & Hall, B. (1991). Digressions in argumentative discourse: Multiple goals, standing concerns, and implicature. In K. Tracy (Ed.), *Understanding face-to-face interaction: Issues linking goals and discourse* (pp. 43–61). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Kahneman, D., Slovic, P., & Tversky, A. (Eds.). (1982). *Judgment under uncertainty*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Kendon, A. (1982). The organization of behavior in face-to-face interaction: Observations on the development of a methodology. In K. Scherer & P. Ekman (Eds.), *Handbook of methods in nonverbal behavior research* (pp. 440–505). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Kendon, A. (1990). *Conducting interaction: Patterns of behavior in focused encounters*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (1975). A parable in context: A social interactional analysis of storytelling performance. In D. Ben-Amos & K. Goldstein (Eds.), *Folklore: Performance and communication* (pp. 105–130). The Hague: Mouton.
Kristeva, J. (1969). *Semeiotike: Recherches pour une semanalyse*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.
Leeds-Hurwitz, W. (1984). On the relationship of the "ethnography of speaking" to the "ethnography of communication." *Papers in Linguistics, 17*, 7–32.
Leeds-Hurwitz, W. (1987). The social history of *The natural history of an interview*: A multidisciplinary investigation of social communication. *Research on Language and Social Interaction, 20*, 1–51.
Leeds-Hurwitz, W. (1989). *Communication in everyday life: A social interpretation*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
Levy Fogle, J.-A. (1991). *Testing social communication theory through an analysis of participant-respondent data*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo.
Mathiot, M., with Boyerlein, P., Rhoda, F., Levy, J.-A., & Marks, P. (1987). Meaning attribution to behavior in face-to-face interaction: A hermeneutic-phenomenological approach. *Research on Language and Social Interaction, 20*, 271–375.
McQuown, N. A. (Ed.). (1971a). *The natural history of an interview*. Chicago: Microfilm Collection of Manuscripts on Cultural Anthropology, Fifteenth Series, Joseph Regenstein Library.
McQuown, N. A. (1971b). Foreword. In N. A. McQuown (Ed.), *The natural history of an interview* (pp. 1–5). Chicago: Microfilm Collection of Manuscripts on Cultural Anthropology, Fifteenth Series, Joseph Regenstein Library.

Mills, M. A. (1990). Critical theory and folklorists: Performance, interpretive authority, and gender. *Southern Folklore, 47*, 5–16.
Montgomery, B. M. (1992). Communication as the interface between couples and culture. In S. Deetz (Ed.), *Communication yearbook 15* (pp. 475–507). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Moore, S. F. (1975). Epilogue. In S. F. Moore & B. Myerhoff (Eds.), *Symbol and politics in communal ideology* (pp. 210–238). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Morris, G. H., & Hopper, R. (1980). Remediation and legislation in everyday talk: How communicators achieve consensus. *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 66*, 266–274.
Paredes, A., & Bauman, R. (Eds.). (1972). *Toward new perspectives in folklore.* Austin: University of Texas Press.
Rawlins, W. K. (1992). *Friendship matters: Communication, dialectics, and the life course.* Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
Schechner, R. (1985). *Between theater and anthropology.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Schechner, R. (1988). *Performance theory.* Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Scheflen, A. E. (1964). The significance of posture in communication systems. *Psychiatry, 27*, 316–331.
Scheflen, A. E. (1965, December). *Systems in human communication.* Paper presented at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Berkeley, CA.
Scheflen, A. E. (1967). On the structuring of human communication. *American Behavioral Scientist, 10*, 8–12.
Scheflen, A. E. (1968). Human communication: Behavioral programs and their integration in interaction. *Behavioral Science, 13*, 44–55.
Scheflen, A. E. (1979). On communication processes. In A. Wolfgang (Ed.), *Nonverbal behavior: Applications and cultural implications* (pp. 1–16). New York: Academic Press.
Schutz, A. (1967). *The phenomenology of the social world.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
Shokeid, M. (1992). Exceptional experiences in everyday life. *Cultural Anthropology, 7*, 232–243.
Sigman, S. J. (1987). *A perspective on social communication.* Lexington, MA: Lexington.
Sigman, S. J. (1991). Handling the discontinuous aspects of continuous social relationships. *Communication Theory, 1*, 106–127.
Sigman, S. J., & Donnellon, A. (1988). Discourse rehearsal: Interaction simulating interaction. In D. Crookall & D. Saunders (Eds.), *Communication and simulation: From two fields to one theme* (pp. 69–81). London: Multilingual Matters.
Stokes, R., & Hewitt, J. P. (1976). Aligning actions. *American Sociological Review, 41*, 838–849.
Sullivan, S. J. (1989). *The basket party: An ethnography of reported expectations and enacted behaviors for accomplishing a women's sales and socializing event.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo.
Tannen, D. (1978). The effect of expectations on conversation. *Discourse Processes, 1*, 203–209.
Turner, V. (1969). *The ritual process.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Turner, V. (1974). *Dramas, fields and metaphors.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Turner, V. (1982). *From ritual to theater.* New York: PAJ Publications.
Turner, V. (1987). *The anthropology of performance.* New York: PAJ Publications.

The Consequentiality of Communication

edited by

Stuart J. Sigman
State University of New York, Albany

1995