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5

A Theory of Speech Codes

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Every person is connected to other people, whether the connection is obvious or subtle, tacit or announced, strong or weak, active or passive, pleasing or repugnant. These connections always exist in a particular time and place, circumstances that provide not only the sites of human connectedness but the resources as well. Thus, human connections, a universal phenomenon, are realized in particular ways which are contingent upon the milieu in which, and the resources with which, they are constructed. This chapter is about such situated resources, the public, discursive resources in and through which the connections between and among people are thematized, constituted or reconstituted, and managed. Speech codes is the name I apply to such resources. Drawing from selected example of speech codes research, this chapter essays the nature of such codes and their workings in social life. To introduce such research, I begin with a brief mention of three exemplary instances of its practice.

Tamar Katriel reported an Israeli way of speaking which she labeled *dugri* speech. Translated from the Hebrew as straight or direct talk, *dugri* speech refers to an utterance or exchange in which one interlocutor confronts another so as to display images of honesty, assertiveness, naturalness, solidarity, and matter-of-factness. Katriel demonstrated that in saying something like, "I'll tell you *dugri,* I don't like what you're doing," an Israeli speaker implies that the hearer is strong enough to put aside concerns for self in order to accomplish the greater good of correcting a situation that the speaker treats as socially undesirable. The larger social and political context of such an appeal is the interlocutors' shared understanding of Israel as society which must be internally strong so as to preserve its very being. Thus, in speaking *dugri,* the speaker enacts a particular identity, that of the "Sabra," and expresses

a powerful message of shared identity with the other person (Katriel 1983, 1986).

Donal Carbaugh reported a way of speaking which he observed on a television talk show in the United States, the DONAHUE show. In episodes of that show, he found evidence that the interlocutors actively resisted efforts to assert what he calls a transindividual standard. When speakers on the show expressed a social standard (a rule of "society") for guiding conduct, others spoke out against such a standard, arguing instead for the "rights" of others to follow their own personal lights in matters of conduct. Carbaugh quotes the host of the program as saying, on one occasion, "No one is going to deny you your position, but the question is why do you impose it on others? (Carbaugh 1987, 42). In terms of the give and take or argument, the proponents of individual "rights" prevailed over those who advocated a transindividual standard. Although the DONAHUE speakers' insistence on the priority of personal over communal standards of self-presentation is itself a communal standard, it is a different one from that of the Israeli who speaks *dugri* (Carbaugh 1984, 1987, 1988).

Kristine L. Fitch reported the ways Colombians address each other, focusing on how people addressed women, including those with no kinship relation to the speaker, with some form of the word *madre* (mother). She reported, for example, that a male service person, around forty years of age, said to a female stranger, in her fifties, "No, *madre,* sorry but you can't park here. You have to move your car somewhere else." With *madre* forms of address, Fitch found, Colombians not only designate the addressee of an utterance (one of the functions of address terms) but also do a kind of interpersonal work in and through the use of such a term. Fitch shows that the service person, in using *madre* rather than, say, *señora,* was heard by his interlocutor as "asking a favor" rather than "giving an order." It is through such habits of linguistic expression, Fitch shows, that the Colombians not only refer to people and smooth the social process, but also reveal their outlook on types of persons and the proper conduct obtaining among interlocutors (Fitch 1991, 267). By examining some Colombians' modes of address, Fitch discovered a particular sense of social reality which her interlocutors invoke and establish in their talking with each other.

These reports each focus on three interrelated aspects of communication and interpersonal connection, aspects that help to introduce the nature of speech codes.

First, in each instance reference is made to an observed use of a term or notion about communicative conduct. These terms and notions include a symbol about a style of speaking (*dugri*), a rule (that one should not impose her or his "position" on another), and an interpretive principle (that the use of a madre term can be taken as "asking for a favor" rather than as "giving an order"). Such symbols and notions which interlocutors deploy to talk about talk are the elements of the systems I call speech codes.

Second, the words and notions involved in each instance derive from distinctive linguistic and cultural circumstances. *Dugri* is a Hebrew slang term derived from Arabic that has a distinctive meaning in its Israeli (as opposed to its arabic) use. The rule that one should not impose one's "position" on another was found expressed in discourse spoken in English in the United States. The notion about the situated meaning of *madre* was expressed, in Spanish, by a Colombian speaker of Spanish. Although these elements are not necessarily restricted or unique to the places in which they were found, each is an artifact that was constructed in and through a process of social interaction, in a nameable time and place. A speech code is a system of such locally situated, artifactual elements.

Third, in each instance the invocation of a particular term or notion was socially consequential. Such terms and notions, the elements of speech codes, are developed when interlocutors are concerned with thematizing, managing, or negotiating the ends and means of social action. In the reported instances, the use of a culturally distinctive term or notion about talk constituted an expression of social meaning which, in turn, established a particular connection between or among the interlocutors who produced and interpreted it. Those expressions were, in the *dugri* utterance, an assertion of social solidarity and an insistence on the political accountability of one's interpersonal conduct, in the DONAHUE utterance an assertion about the kinds of rhetorical self a proper person should and should not enact, and in the *madre* appellation the expression of deference through the casting of another into a particular persona.

These three instances help to introduce the concept of speech codes and the rationale of speech codes research. The reports suggest that the study of speech codes is motivated, at least in part, by the desire to understand particular, socially constructed discursive worlds, such as those portrayed in the examples, as the historical, spatial, and cultural sites in which human connections are accomplished. Beyond the motive of understanding such discursive worlds for their own sake, there are many practical motives for studying speech codes, including, at least, those of participation, appropriation, critique and defense. That is, the understanding of a particular, socially constructed discursive world can be applied toward such overlapping, potentially conflicting practical ends as participating intelligibly and appropriately in such a world, of appropriating judiciously its resources for one's use, of generating a sound and penetrating critique of it, and of defending it against its critics. Thus, although the study of speech codes, like their use, always serves a practical agenda, the agenda varies with the purposes of the particular application.

The rationale for speech codes research can be developed further by focusing on some of the key questions it has been pressed to answer. From

its inception, speech codes research held out the promise for demonstrating that the kinds of local knowledge people deploy to talk about—to characterize, interpret, or rationalize—their communicative conduct is indeed local, particular knowledge. This suggested *the question of the existence of distinctive speech codes,* and has prompted the search for evidence of distinctiveness, across cultures, in the resources people deploy to invent, characterize, interpret, and rationalize their communicative conduct. If evidence could be found for the existence of such culturally particular resources, then there followed *the question of the substance of speech codes,* whether they provide a vocabulary, as it were, in and through which their users express and constitute distinctively coded social meanings and social worlds. The questions of the distinctiveness and the substance of speech codes suggested, in turn, *the question of how speech codes could be observed and formulated,* a question of method, broadly speaking, of concern to scholarly investigators as well as to those with immediately practical concerns. Finally, given that speech codes appeared to contain resources that interlocutors deploy in the service of practical ends, *the question of the force of speech codes in social life* was raised. The speech codes theory presented in this chapter is an effort to answer those four questions.

The chapter proceeds in three parts. First, the *concept* of speech codes is introduced and explicated. Second, I survey some of the *fieldwork* I have done that has contributed to my understanding of the nature and functions of speech codes. Finally, I propose *five propositions* about speech codes which are supported by my own and others' fieldwork research, and which form the core of speech codes theory.

1

The concept of speech code was fashioned from Berstein's concept of coding principle and Hymes's programmatic approach to the ethnography of communication.

The British sociologist Basil Bernstein (1972) demonstrated that, within the same society, there can exist different social groups or social classes whose communicative practices differ in important ways. Such differences, he argued, go beyond surface features in language use to differences in the coding principles that govern communicative conduct. Furthermore, he argued, ways of speaking are shaped by and, in turn, reinforce speakers' understanding of and affective orientation toward themselves, other people, and social life.

For Berstein, a coding principle is a rule governing what to say and how to say it in a particular context. An elaborated coding principle, for example, directs the speaker to use novel, complex, and diverse linguistic means to

communicate individual intent, to emphasize the communication of unique personal meanings, and to adapt to the unique personal circumstance of listeners. A restricted coding principle directs its speakers to rely relatively less on verbal expression of intent to signal meaning, to rely heavily on (presumed) shared context in the signalling of meanings, and to emphasize the expression and continuing ratification of shared identity—such as shared gender or social status—among interlocutors.

Bernstein's theory links the differential use and valuation of these coding principles to socioeconomic differences at the level of social organization and to correlative differences in family structure and family interaction patterns (Bernstein 1972). His data suggest that the use of these ways is highly sensitive to the socioeconomic background and the situational context of speakers and hearers. In particular, he applied his approach to the study of middle versus lower working-class groups in contemporary England, showing that speakers in these groups made systematically different use of, and differently valued, ways of speaking, even though they spoke the same language. He did not claim that there are only two coding principles or that any social group or class uses only one. He did claim that specifiable socioeconomic conditions influence the degree to which the members of a social group or community use and value such principles. The empirical work of Bernstein and associates (collected in Bernstein 1971 and 1973) contains evidence that speakers from the English middle class were predisposed to use and value an elaborated coding principle, and those from the English lower class were predisposed to use and favor a restricted coding principle, although neither was confined to only one in all circumstances (Robinson 1965).

Bernstein has been criticized on several counts. He was accused of privileging the elaborated over the restricted coding principle, thus revealing a middle class bias (Labov); of objectifying and reifying class membership, thus ignoring nuances of social and personal qualities (Rickford); and of overstating the deterministic effect of socioeconomic conditions on conduct (Cook), thus neglecting the artfulness and diversity that "working class" speakers display in the deployment of their linguistic repertoires (Rosen 1972).

Although I believe Bernstein's critics gloss over the subtlety in his moves, particularly as these are deployed over time (see, for example, Bernstein 1973), it is not my purpose here to defend his program against the specific charges mentioned above. But at the very least it should be said that Bernstein's extensive research program as well as important extensions of it (Douglas 1970; Halliday 1973) show that his work raises fundamental questions about the communication process: (1) Are there different coding principles operative in communication? (2) If so, what are they? (3) How do coding principles influence, and how are they influenced by, the conditions of social life?

Contemporaneous with Bernstein's program, another approach to cultural differences in communicative practices was given a programmatic formulation. In 1962, Dell Hymes, an anthropologist and linguist, introduced "the ethnography of speaking" (1962), an approach to the study of communicative conduct which posits that there is, among the peoples of the world, great variety in culturally distinctive communicative practices and ways of conceptualizing communication. In a series of papers (Hymes 1962, 1964, 1972), Hymes proposed that students of communication direct their attention to the study, *in situ,* of a wide range of societies, in order to discover and describe, in particular cases, how communication is distinctively practiced and conceptualized. Shortly after he made his proposal, several important studies were published that suggested that his assumptions about cultural variety in communicative practices were well founded (see, for example, Abrahams and Bauman 1970; Albert 1964; Basso 1970; Bauman 1970; Philips 1970, and the collections of Gumperz and Hymes 1972 and Bauman and Sherzer 1974). By 1996, Donal Carbaugh and I (Philipsen and Carbaugh 1986) were able to find some 250 studies that had answered Hymes's call for fieldwork, and the number has grown substantially since that time.

The work of Bernstein and Hymes, taken together, suggested to me the possibility that communicative conduct is an activity that is radically cultural—something practiced and formulated distinctively across speech communities and cultures. While both Bernstein and Hymes demonstrated the existence of distinctive communicative practices, Hymes's ethnographic approach differed from Bernstein's approach in two important ways. First, where Bernstein formulated a limited number of communicative possibilities (two coding principles, two socioeconomic strata), Hymes proposed a framework to guide an exploratory search into the variety of communicative practices of a given social milieu. Second, where Bernstein observed the presence of specified objective properties in the speech he examined, Hymes prioritized the meanings, to those who used them, of communicative practices.

In the ethnography of speaking, the emphasis on exploration suggests a belief that when a given world of discourse is examined, it will be found to house discursive particulars (ways of speaking and resources for producing and interpreting communicative conduct) that are locally distinctive. For example, an associate of Bernstein's (writing in a volume edited by Bernstein) suggested that the study of certain worlds of discourse in English life could reveal the use of the term "brow" (as in "highbrow" and "lowbrow"), presumably a term that its users use to characterize or appraise certain communicative acts (Halliday 1971). Where Bernstein's framework had ignored such phenomena, Hymes's was designed explicitly to find and examine them. Where Bernstein made no provision for what speech judged as "highbrow" might mean to someone, Hymes provided explicitly for that. Hymes's approach took the observer "close to the ground" (Hymes's phrase), as it were, to

observe and report the means of speech and their meanings to those who use them in a given circle of discourse.

Halliday's mention of the word "highbrow" was little more than an incidental part of his larger commentary, but I have focused on it here because it helps to reveal something about the study of speech codes, as that study was made possible by the ethnography of speaking. A study of the ways of speaking of a particular speech community can proceed by an investigator's formulating in advance that certain phenomena will be attended to, and the nature of these phenomena can be formulated quite explicitly according to some pre-formulated scheme. The empirical work of Bernstein and his associates exemplifies such an approach. They formulated such concepts as the context-dependence of speech and observed and recorded the degree to which such speech was present or absent in the communicative behavior of people drawn from different social classes. But the ethnography of speaking allows an investigator to hear and then attend to indigenous expressions, such as "highbrow," *dugri,* "sharing," and *madre*. Rather than treating such expressions as ephemera or insignificant local details, the ethnography of speaking provides that such phenomena themselves be made the object of theoretical and practical interest. It is precisely such phenomena which can form the starting point of inquiries which reveal practical resources that are crucial to the lives of individuals and societies. Such phenomena are not only the starting point of inquiries—their discovery, description, and interpretation are as well the ends of investigation, that is, they are phenomena of interest in their own right.

The exploratory search for local, socially constructed resources, patterns, and meanings is an activity that some people would call the study of a culture, and I turn now to the specialized sense in which I use that term. I take culture to refer to a socially constructed system of symbols, meanings, premises, and rules. A symbol is defined as a "vehicle for a conception," and symbols are "tangible formulations of notions, abstractions from experience fixed in perceptible forms, concrete embodiments of ideas, attitudes, judgments, longings, or beliefs. The "conceptions" are the "meanings, notions, definitions, and so forth, which symbols express" (Geertz 1973, 91). Premises express beliefs of existence (what is) and of value (what is good and bad). A rule is a prescription for how to act under specified circumstances.

The definition of culture used here does not equate it with a group, nation, or people. Rather, it focuses on culture as a code–as a system of such code elements as symbols, meanings, premises, and rules. Although, in the course of investigating codes, I initially found evidence for them in the spoken life of nameable groups of people, when I use "culture" it is used in reference not to a group but to a code as a system. Just as the English language is found in many places, and just as many people speak more than one language, so it is with cultures: Culture refers to a particular system and not to the geographic or political unit in which it is found.

Every common culture of which interlocutors might partake, and which they might use in speaking together, includes, among its parts, a part devoted to the symbols and meanings, premises, and rules pertaining to communicative conduct. For this specialized subset of a cultural code, I use the term speech code. *A speech code, then, is defined here as a system of socially constructed symbols and meanings, premises, and rules, pertaining to communicative conduct.*

2

The empirical part of this story begins with the experience of having commonsensical notions about communication tested in the crucible of social life. In 1969, a few years after graduating from college, a degree in communication in hand, I was employed as a youth worker in a neighborhood on the near south side of Chicago. This was a job in which I had occasion to practice such noble arts of communication as persuasion, negotiation, and instruction, as well as the baser but lively arts of detecting deception, deflecting insults, and assessing threats to bodily harm, the body in question frequently being my own. The youths with whom I worked were, in the language I used then, "tough kids," and it was my job to soften them a bit or at least to channel their energies into constructive activities and to provide them with character-building experiences.

In college, I had learned that working effectively with other people was enhanced by the use of certain communicative practices, such as sitting down to talk things through, listening carefully to what people said, and involving other people in decisions that affected them. Although I have stated them rather simply here, these were what could be called theoretically grounded learnings. That is, the use of these strategies was sanctioned by certain assumptions, propositions, and empirical evidence which were widely credited and which were roughly consistent with the positions not only of such writers as Carl Rogers and Irving Lee, but also of the more obviously empirical and theoretical Kurt Lewin.

Although these strategies for encompassing a situation were theoretically and commonsensically legitimated, they were not always effective in the Chicago neighborhood, as they had been elsewhere. In the neighborhood, which I labeled "Teamsterville" (after the modal occupation of its residents: truck driver), these strategies were ineffective not because I or my interlocutors were artless or malicious, but because they and I assigned very different meanings to my actions. Thus, on many occasions, the results of using these strategies were misunderstanding, suspicion, and alienation. After several years of working and studying in Teamsterville, I developed an understanding of a locally deployed speech code such that I realized that much of the misunderstanding and suspicion to which I had contributed centered around cultural

differences in the meanings and value of speaking as a mode of social interaction. Where I valued, and used, speaking as a means to assert influence and secure cooperation, my neighborhood interlocutors heard my acts of speech—in the particular contexts in which they were performed—as a sign of weakness and incompetence in dealing with the adolescent boys and girls who were under my supervision. To the Teamstervillers, a man who merely talked with these young people, instead of using his power to discipline and punish them, was not a proper man.

After spending several months in Teamsterville, I began to notice there a practice, a habitual way of speaking, reinforced by the expressions of Teamstervillers. It was difficult to detect and not much easier to describe, but it was salient enough that it was hard to ignore, both practically and theoretically. That practice consists of infusing a concern with "place" into every conversation. Where persons stand in relation to each other according to a social code of power and position—a person's place in the social hierarchy—was mentioned directly or indirectly in virtually every conversation in which I participated. For example, if one's interlocutor did not know one's "nationality" it would be asked at the beginning of the conversation, and it seemed that every reference to a person included a reference to that person's ethnicity. The same is true for residence: references to where the person lived, or was from, permeated everyday speech.

Teamsterville concerns for social and physical placement were, in their pervasiveness and importance, alien to my ways of thinking and speaking. It took some time for me to notice that there was something there to notice—a pattern of emphasis and salience of the cultural category place, expressed in many symbols and expressions of social and physical space. To the extent that I was learning what potentially significant aspects of the world the Teamstervillers thought and spoke about, and that I was learning the local vocabulary and expressions for symbolizing those experiences, to that extent I was learning about a culturally distinctive system of symbols and meanings, that is, what I would now call a speech code.

The experiences in Teamsterville led to the formulation of two aspects of Teamsterville culture that bear directly on communicative conduct. The first of these pertains to neighborhood norms—rules that were widely endorsed—for the use and non-use of speaking in male role enactment. Teamsterville culture proscribes the use of speaking as the means for encompassing a situation when the participants' social identity relationship is asymmetrical. Such relationships are, for the adult man in Teamsterville, those with a wife, child, boss, outsider to the neighborhood, or a man of different ethnicity. Certainly, Teamsterville men do speak to their wives, girlfriends, children, and employers, but these are not contexts of relationship that call for high quantity of speaking nor are these the natural situations in which to engage others in a state of talk. Thus, speech is proscribed for a man in critical

symbolic ways—as protector and master of a house and as breadwinner. If an assertion of power is deemed necessary, custom sanctions other means of expression than speech. If one's addressee is of lower status—a child, a woman, a member of another Teamsterville ethnic group—the power assertion may rely on nonverbal threat or physical combat. When one's addressee is of higher status—a boss, an outsider from a more prosperous neighborhood, a government official—male power assertion may properly employ personal connections with an intermediary who states the man's case for him.

When the social identity relationship of the participants in a situation is symmetrical, the situation can appropriately realize a great amount of talking by a Teamsterville man. Specifically, the participants in a speaking situation should be matched on such identity attributes as age, sex, ethnicity, occupational status, and location of residence. The participants should be longtime friends. Speaking is a dominant focus of all-male social interaction in corner groups and corner bars. For boys the street corner, and for men the corner bar, is the principal setting for sociability. Speaking is a dominant activity in these settings. Typically, small groups of boys "hang" on their own corner, and groups of men have their own corner bar, a public drinking establishment claimed by them as their "turf," a territory to which outsiders are not invited or welcomed. Teamsterville men seek out other men of like identity, in well-established locations. These are the situations in which it is most appropriate for a man to produce a great quantity of talk.

A second aspect of Teamsterville culture that bears on communicative conduct pertains to a symbolic and ideational thematization of speaking in terms of place or setting. In terms of self-presentation and gender, I had participated in neighborhood life according to a model for action which I brought to the neighborhood, and learned eventually that actions that conformed to my (imported) model could be deeply problematic in Teamsterville. So too, I brought to the experience an understanding of settings which proved to be quite different from the understanding provided by Teamsterville culture. One manifestation of this is a system of indigenous terms for places, including "neighborhood," "street," "corner," and "porch," which designate the settings in which speech is properly conducted. Looking—or listening—for speech in the places where I was accustomed to finding it, and not finding it there, I concluded initially, as had one observer, who said to me, that "there is no communication in Teamsterville." That observer and initially I, too, did not know that Teamsterville culture specified a system of scenes in which speaking can appropriately, and in fact did, occur.

A sense of neighborhood has a deep and compelling significance to the dweller of Teamsterville. The socio-spatial boundaries that residents perceive as "the neighborhood" make up the largest region within which it is considered most appropriate and natural to engage in talk. The residents think of these boundaries as coextensive with a particular style of speaking, which is

characteristic of the community and to which its residents are expected to conform. Definitions of neighborhood as scene, then, relate to indigenous judgments about when to talk and ways of speaking, and both kinds of judgment are linked to cultural views of place.

In addition to locating occasions of speaking within the boundaries of the "neighborhood," Teamstervillers also locate on a scale of social worth the style of speaking they associate with the neighborhood. Awareness of their own speaking style as one distinct from others is reflected in their readily reported assessment, consistent across informants, that their speech is inferior to the Standard English of middle-class people—people who live on "the north side" (of Chicago)—but superior to the speech of, respectively, "hillbillies," "Mexicans," and "Negroes." They respect and resent the speech of people who have a better control of Standard English than they do, are insecure about their own speech outside neighborhood contexts, and find reassurance in what they perceive to be the defects of others presumably lower than they on the socio-economic scale.

For several years after completing the Teamsterville fieldwork, I worked at understanding a second speech code, one that is, so to speak, closer to home. This is drawn, to a great extent, from the culture I brought with me to Teamsterville. It consists of a system of symbols and meanings, premises, and rules which some have labeled "Nacirema" culture ("Nacirema" is "American" spelled backwards: cf. Miner 1956). The books and essays of many writers (Schneider 1976, Hsu 1963, and Varenne 1977 stand out prominently) had helped me to grasp that a system of symbols and meanings, premises, and rules, with which I interpreted the world is, indeed, a socially constructed system—and not simply a given.

But the Teamsterville experience, the experience of living in a social world whose members regularly deployed a speech code different from the one to which I had been socialized, helped to reveal to me that my own ways of being in the world are deeply cultured. And so, I set about the task of discovering and describing what I have come to call Nacirema communicative conduct as a cultural system. This involved a new period of fieldwork research into a second speech code.

The Nacirema fieldwork began in southern California, when my student Mary Jo Rudd and I observed, and listened intently to tape recordings of, Nacirema conversations at family "dinner time." This is a speech event about which participants insist relentlessly that all family members be allowed a turn at talk, indeed be encouraged to talk—because each person has "something to contribute." We found that the people we observed believed strongly that one's place in the family, defined by a role such as "father," should not be a basis for interrupting or curtailing the speech of others, because each person's contribution is believed to be uniquely valuable. For these Nacirema, speech is a way to express one's psychological uniqueness, to acknowledge

the uniqueness of others, and to bridge the gap between one's own and another's uniqueness. It is a means by which family members, for example, can manifest their equality and demonstrate that they pay little heed to differences in status—practices and beliefs that would puzzle and offend a proper Teamsterviller.

In Seattle, my student Tamar Katriel and I listened to many people tell their life stories—stories in which great moral weight was placed upon interpersonal "relationships" in which each person was not only free, but also felt a sense of pressure, to express and celebrate their uniqueness and to explore and understand the other's distinctive individuality. The sense of boundary sharply dividing occasions and personae, so prominent among the Teamstervillers, was either not expressed or, where it threatened to be present, was aggressively opposed. Observing Nacirema communicative conduct provided a rich corpus of metacommunicative commentary—a corpus of, to put it simply, talk about talk. We heard a variety of symbols and expression, like "highbrow," being invoked. As we scanned this material, we found, among other things, two clusters of terms pertaining to everyday ways of speaking. One of these clusters includes:

"communication"

"real communication"

"really talking"

"supportive communication"

"open communication"

This is what we labeled the "communication" cluster. The other cluster includes

"mere talk"

"small talk"

"normal chit-chat"

We labeled it the "mere talk" cluster.

We noticed, and our respondents confirmed our hunch, that in this Nacirema speech the terms in each cluster could be substituted for each other in some expressions and the sense of the expression would be maintained, but that in some expressions the terms could not be substituted across clusters. For example, in the statement, supplied by one of our respondents (the person labeled "K" in Katriel and Philipsen 1981), "Communication allows me to grow . . . it scares me to be stagnant," other Nacirema respondents said that

the sense of the expression is maintained if "real communication" or "open communication" is substituted for "communication": that is, the Nacirema informants heard "Real communication allows me to grow" as a meaningful, sensible statement, but they felt that "Small talk allows me to grow" was not a sensible statement.

The discovery, in Nacirema speech, of the two clusters labeled by "communication and "mere talk" prompted us to search for the meaning, to the people who produced the materials we had collected, of the term "communication." "Communication," it seemed to us, was a prominent and important term in Nacirema speech about interpersonal life, and thus we set ourselves the task of delineating its meanings to those who used it in the highly poignant ways some of our informants did. We discovered that "communication" indeed was a symbol that figured prominently in Nacirema discourse about interpersonal life and that it carried a rich array of meanings. These meanings were revealed by examining the words with which "communication" co-occurred, such as "self," "relationship," and "work," as in a statement such as "things can be worked out, as a family you can learn to communicate" (Katriel and Philipsen 1981), or in the statement about "open marriage as a relationship where there is a value in good communication . . ." (Philipsen, Corpus). Note in the last statement the co-occurrence of the terms "communication" and "relationship"; it was such co-occurrences, among other things, that we located, analyzed, and interpreted.

In the course of examining such expressions, we followed a strategy of interpretation (see Katriel and Philipsen 1981, Philipsen 1992, chapters 3, 4, and 5) designed to uncover the meaning of the term "communication." That strategy consisted of several tactics. These included examining the utterances in which the term occurred and noting the terms with which it co-occurred, searching for semantic dimensions of the meaning of the term, analyzing the metaphors (such as "work") which the term was linked to in the speech we examined, and tracing the use of the term in prominent cultural episodes and public stories. This strategy enabled us to interpret what is meant by "communication" in the Nacirema speech we examined, and in so doing we discovered not only a definition but part of a complex cultural system of symbols and meanings, premises, rules, and discursive forms.

Based on the materials and the analytic and interpretive procedures outlined above, we (Katriel and I) formulated a definition of "communication" as "close, open, supportive speech." The phrase is our gloss, our interpretive definition, of what the term "communication" means in the discourse we collected and examined. This was our interpretation of what the symbol "communication" meant to the people who used it in the instances we recorded. Our formulation of the symbol "communication" and the meaning "close, open, supportive speech" was a finding grounded in observation and interpretation.

We also found that, for the people whose discourse we studied, "communication" could co-occur meaningfully with such Nacirema symbols as "self," "relationship," and "work," and that these terms derived their meaning, in part, by virtue of their co-occurrence with others of these terms. Thus, the symbol "relationship" meant something different in the utterance " 'communication' is essential to our 'relationship' " than it did in an utterance about a "statistical relationship." We had found, that is, that these terms constituted part of a cultural system, in that we had found several elements (symbols and meanings) whose meanings were interdependent.

Having initially formulated part of a speech code, one in which "communication" was a key term, we were able to find this term, and other symbols such as "relationship," occurring together in a wide array of Nacirema speech, including the telling of several life stories by informants, a popular television talk show which was broadcast nationally, and contemporaneous Academy Award-winning movies about contemporary American life. The importance of these discoveries was not so much that we found the culture we had formulated being used widely in American life but that we found the terms, premises, and rules we had discovered being used by speakers and hearers as one integrated code of meanings. Our concern, that is, was not so much with documenting that the culture we had formulated is widely used, but that the way of using "communication" and other terms we had formulated was indeed a systematic way of speaking and, thus, a portion of a culture.

Although it might appear that the Nacirema, with their penchant for individualism, do not have a common culture, we learned that among these individualistic, seemingly relativistic, people, there is deployed a discernible, common speech code, one that underpins much communicative conduct. For the Nacirema, such folk terms as "self," "relationship," "work," "openness," "growth," and "communication" provide a systematic vocabulary of perception and motive. To understand some Nacirema speech, as its speakers and hearers understand it, to understand the motives they use in organizing and interpreting their social experiences, to know what it means to be a Nacirema—these all require that one have knowledge of the culture-specific meanings of these Nacirema symbols (Carbaugh 1988 extends and develops the account of Nacirema "communication").

It is hard to immerse oneself in an alien cultural world, as Teamsterville was to me, and be unchanged by it. For me the contact with Teamsterville life brought into sharp relief several aspects of Nacirema culture that, at one time, I had taken for granted. That such terms as "communication," "self," and "relationship," and the ideas to which they refer, are cultural constructions and not universally given experiences, was easier to grasp after struggling to learn a culture such as Teamsterville's. To hear a Nacirema's statement that "each of us is an individual," as a deeply cultured, even quaint, statement is made easier after having spent three years listening to Teamstervillers talk

about persons as "Italians," "Poles," "Lithuanians," and so forth—as persons whose being is defined more by their social than by their psychological characteristics. To hear, as a deeply cultured statement, the Nacirema's insistence that each child should express himself because of the child's potentially "unique contribution" to a family conversation is facilitated by listening for three years to Teamstervillers insisting that a child should be seen and not heard.

In sketching some of the Teamsterville and Nacirema findings that I have reported, I have tried to show, in each case, how the fieldwork contributed not just to the collection of anecdotes but to the discovery and formulation of a distinctive code. The formulation of a speech code, I propose, is a theoretic move in that it is general, empirical, and explanatory.

First, to formulate a code is to move from the particular to the general. One can observe, record, and interpret a great deal of human behavior, but then to make the bold statement that one has formulated (even a part of) a code is to leave the relatively safe ground of description for the heights, as it were, of generalization. Such an interpretation says there is a code (a socially constructed system of symbols and meanings, premises, and rules) revealed in the record of human behavior which has been assembled, that that code consists of these particular elements and that these elements are related in this particular way. It is just such an interpretation that I have made in proposing my formulations of Teamsterville and Nacirema speech codes.

Second, the formulation of a code is an empirical task. In the Teamsterville and Nacirema fieldwork materials I found expressions of notions about communicative conduct, expressions that took the form of symbols, utterances, and patterned uses of symbols and utterances. In each case the analyses and interpretations of field materials, and combining them into a system of connected and related elements, constituted the formulation of a code as a system of symbols and meanings, premises, and rules, pertaining to communicative conduct. The systems were built up from empirical materials—observations and records of communicative conduct. In turn, each of these formulations can be subjected to empirical conduct. In turn, each of these formulations can be subjected to empirical disconfirmation—that is, new fieldwork data or the reinterpretation of extant data could lead to a revision of the formulation that was proposed.

In relation to this second point about ethnographic theories, mention should be made of the work of Donal Carbaugh in advancing the theory of Nacirema "communication" (particularly Carbaugh 1988). Carbaugh developed substantially the theory of "communication" which Katriel and I set out. First, his studies shored up empirically the earlier work by producing and interpreting new materials that corroborated the earlier proposal about "communication." Second, he added to the theory by providing (1) detailed studies of other symbols in the code, including "being honest," "sharing," "choice,"

and (2) a much more intensive examination of a Nacirema meaning of self (Carbaugh 1988). This is a theoretic advance because the formulation of the code was developed by showing that symbols and meanings other than those originally mentioned are important elements of the code and by showing the ways in which the initial symbols and meanings and the ones that Carbaugh examined independently relate to each other.

Third, a theory should provide a basis for explaining something. An account of a code provides a principle or principles by which a great number of particular observations are made intelligible. The formulation of a Teamsterville speech code posits that the theme of place ramifies throughout the culture's thematization of communicative conduct. The formulation of a Nacirema speech code posits that the theme of "communication" ramifies throughout the culture's thematization of communicative conduct. In each case, particulars are made intelligible that would otherwise seem inchoate, and particulars that would otherwise seem unconnected are integrated into a system. Thus, the formulation of a speech code is a device with which the observer interprets or explains an empirical record which has been assembled.

3

In this section of the chapter I formulate five propositions about speech codes. These propositions are suggested by, and consistent with, the empirical literature of the ethnography of communication. They are answers to the questions raised in the introduction of this chapter, the questions of the existence, substance, discovery, and force of speech codes. Although I illustrate and support these propositions here primarily through reference to the Teamsterville and Nacirema studies, because they are the ones most familiar to me, I emphasize that the propositions are grounded in a much larger fund of studies (which is available for further theory generation and for testing and refining such proposals as those I advance below). Braithwaite (1990), Carbaugh (1989), and Goldsmith (1991) are examples of theoretical work drawing from the fund of studies included in Philipsen and Carbaugh (1986). The first four of these propositions were presented earlier (Philipsen 1992), with some modifications here, and the fifth has been added to the earlier formulation.

1. The Distinctiveness of Speech Codes

In Teamsterville and Nacirema speech codes, it has been shown, speaking, as a mode of social interaction, has been thematized distinctively. In these two systems, speaking is assigned different purposes, valued differently, linked to distinctive cultural themes, and conceptualized by a different metacommunicative vocabulary.

This point can be expressed no less sharply because Teamsterville and Nacirema speech codes are each expressed in the same language, English. Each of these codes draws from the same language a distinctive set of terms and notions. And each makes of the same terms something distinctive. "Communication," a quintessentially Nacirema symbol, is certainly part of a Teamsterville lexicon, but "close, supportive, flexible speech," A Nacirema meaning for "communication," is a meaning not active in Teamsterville talk about talk. "Neighborhood," an important symbol in Teamsterville culture, is certainly also part of the Nacirema symbolic repertoire, but the sense of "neighborhood" as a culturally defined place for speaking is not a prominent part of Nacirema sensibility. Likewise, there are contrasting Teamsterville and Nacirema premises and rules about speaking, such that one can think of two distinctive speech codes built up from the same linguistic codes. The "same" linguistic code provides the basic symbols from which such contrasting orientations can be constructed as the Teamsterville notion that "children should be seen and not heard" and the Nacirema notion that "you can't keep a child quiet at the dinner table."

The point here is not that people who live in "Teamsterville" draw from only one code and that "Nacirema" code users draw from only one code. Rather, in the Teamsterville and Nacirema sites I found the respective codes being used prominently. In each case, the particular speech communities or social settings provided a place in which a code could be heard because it was deployed by interlocutors who found their speech mutually intelligible. Presumably, Teamstervillers and others speak in the terms of more than one code. What I found was that by listening to various people speaking together, in sites selected because they were likely to yield difference, I could find different codes deployed and that these codes had a kind of internal consistency or logic to them.

The finding that speaking is thematized in culturally distinctive ways is consistent with the large number of ethnographies of speaking that are now available for comparative analysis (Philipsen and Carbaugh 1986). In study after study, drawn from languages and cultures throughout the world, have come data that support the proposal, here formulated as Proposition One, that *wherever there is a distinctive culture, there is to be found a distinctive speech code.* These studies show cross-cultural distinctiveness in terms, semantic dimensions used to define those terms, metaphors, premises, and rules, pertaining to "speaking."

The Nacirema term "communication," with its dimensions of close-distant, supportive-neutral, and flexible-closed, is a useful point of contrast. Other speech codes, for which semantic dimensions for "speaking" terms have been reported, include that of the Afro-American peasants of St. Vincent in the West Indies, a code that makes prominent the semantic contrasts sensible-senseless and polite-impolite as dimensions for characterizing acts of

speech (Abrahams and Bauman 1971); that of seventeenth-century New Englanders, in which a controlled-uncontrolled contrast is prominent (St. George 1984); that of the Haya, in which substantial-insubstantial is prominent (Seitel 1974); and that of *dugri* speech in Israel. The available literature suggests that for each cultural system of speaking there is a distinctive system of such semantic dimensions, which in part constitute the domain of "speaking."

Another way the cultural particularity of speech codes is manifested is in metaphors for "speaking." Again, the juxtaposition of "communication" to other codes is instructive. Katriel and I found the "work" metaphor—as in, " 'communication' is the 'work' which is necessary for a 'relationship' "—to be a cultural resource for conceptualizing and interpreting Nacirema speech. Speech codes in other cultures have a metaphorical theme, which ramifies throughout the domain of "speaking." The Haya, for example, conceptualize the domain of speaking in terms of an "alimentary process" metaphor (Seitel 1974). The Chamula (Gossen 1974) and seventeenth-century New Englanders (St. George 1984) conceptualize speaking in terms of a "heat" metaphor, which has different meanings in each case.

As it is with symbols and meanings, so it is with premises and rules. Consider Walter Ong's proposal that speaking links individuals in social relationships. He writes: "Because in its physical constitution as sound, the spoken word proceeds from the human interior and manifests human beings to one another as conscious interiors, as persons, the spoken word forms human beings into close-knit groups" (Ong 1982, 74). Ong's statement reveals a premise about speaking that emphasizes the interior of the individual as the starting point and source of experience of communication. This is, of course, a deeply cultured model, one whose evocation might be quite stirring to the Nacirema ear. But regardless of whether Ong's model is objectively true, the ethnographic literature suggests that other cultures implicate other premises.

For example, Michelle Z. Rosaldo's (1982) ethnography of speaking among the Ilongot in the northern Philippines, an "oral culture," portrays a people whose understanding of speaking deemphasizes the individual speaker as the intentional initiator of spoken meaning. The Ilongot's understanding presents a model of speaking as something quite different from what Ong proposes—individuals are, in the Ilongot code, already wedded to each other in unbreakable bonds of sociality, and speaking is merely a manifestation of that connection. Rather than proceeding from the interior of the person outward, speaking—and the meanings it embodies—originates outside the person.

Verschuren (1989) has conducted an eighty-one-language survey of what he calls "language action verbs," such as "to speak" or "to say." Seventy-seven of the eighty-one languages include a word for the English "to talk." But beyond that, there are many differences across languages as to what notions of linguistic action can be expressed in the language. Verschuren's finding that "to speak" is a linguistic universal suggests that in all cultures "speaking" is thematized in some way. But in the Teamsterville and Nacirema cases, and in many others in the ethnography of speaking literature, it can be seen that this linguistic universal is but a starting point for thematizing speaking, a point from which each language and culture takes its own distinctive course.

2. The Substance of Speech Codes

What do speech codes thematize? What is their substance? Of course, they are about speaking, but what, one might ask, is the substance or matter of speaking, as this is illumined by the study of speech codes? In the first full formulation of the ethnography of speaking, Hymes (1962) suggested that "speaking," with its connotations of interpersonal contact and engagement, might be a metaphor for social life, that by inquiring into a people's 'speaking' one might learn something about their social life. This applied not only to their habits or practices of speaking, that is to conduct, but also to native concepts and notions about speaking.

Hyme's suggestion that speaking is useful as a heuristic metaphor for the study of social life was supported by several studies of particular speech communities. Bauman (1970), for example, found that the historical records of the seventeenth-century Quakers provided data that suggest that Quaker speech practices, percepts, and precepts articulated with Quaker social and cultural patterns. Working in this way, Bauman (1970), Basso (1970), Seitel (1972), Stross (1974), Fox (1974), Sherzer (1983), and others were able to show that that attention to "speaking" opens up a view— or hearing—of the distinctive particularities of a people's social life.

In 1976, when I initiated the Nacirema studies and began to think about the contrasts in the Teamsterville and Nacirema codes, I formulated a scheme that laid the groundwork for subsequent studies. This is a scheme that suggests that speaking is a resource with which people accomplish human purposes, but a resource that is distinctively conceptualized in different codes. This line of thinking and the development of the working scheme were influenced by Richard McKeon's theory of communication, truth, and society (Mckeon 1971), which proposes a universalist thesis about the functions of speaking, and by Hymes (1962), Bernstein (1964), and Douglas (1970), which suggest cross-cultural differences in how these universal functions are realized. These sources, and my Teamsterville and Nacirema data, led me to suggest (Philipsen 1976b) that cultural definitions of the resourcefulness of speaking could be compared and contrasted in terms of three interrelated functions of discourse—discourse as a medium of self expression, embodiment of common values, and discovery of truth, categories inspired by Mckeon's categories "communication," "society," and "truth." In each culture,

I proposed, speech is defined as being resourceful for a particular kind of self-expression, for the embodiment of particular social values, and as differentially instrumental in the process of knowing, a claim suggested by the ethnographic studies of speaking then available as well as Hymes's programmatic essays (Hymes 1962, 1964, 1967, 1972).

Philipsen (1976b) provided an initial statement of how the Teamsterville and Sunnyville (Nacirema) findings mapped onto this comparative scheme. My strategy was to use these formulations of how speaking is a medium of personal expression, social linkage, and epistemic activity, and then to use the fieldwork in which I had been involved to propose differences, across communities, in terms of these three dimension of comparison and contrast. The preliminary formulation was illustrated in contrasts along two of the three dimensions. The Teamsterville code seemed to emphasize the appropriateness of speaking as a resource for (1) revealing to others those aspects of one's self that are similar to those of others in one's age-gender-nationality-block group within a community, and for (2) affirming one's continuing recognition and endorsement of the local sense of "place," boundary, and hierarchy. By contrast, the Sunnyville/Nacirema data suggested another configuration of cultural definitions of the resourcefulness of speaking—a system that emphasizes the use of speech for (1) expressions of personal uniqueness and (2) a community sense of rightness attaching to an equality ethnic in interpersonal relations (Philipsen 1976b). Such works as Berger, Kellner, and Berger (1970), Rosaldo (1982), and Silverstein (1979) suggested a revised formulation of the dimensions, one that I used in several reports (Philipsen 1986, 1987, 1989, and 1992), and that has been used and adapted by others (see, for example, Carbaugh 1994; Fitch 1994).

The revised formulation is that the thematization of speaking in Teamsterville and Nacirema cultures reveals a distinctive code of self, society, and strategic action. These codes, historically transmitted, socially constructed systems of symbols and meanings, premises, and rules about communicative conduct, are at once codes about the nature or persons, about the ways persons can and should be linked together in social relations, and about the role of symbolic action in forging, sustaining, and altering such interpersonal linkages.

This can be expressed as Proposition Two, *a speech code implicates a culturally distinctive psychology, sociology, and rhetoric*. A speech code does not provide simply an account of coding, encoding, and decoding, as neutral processes sealed off from other aspects of culture. Rather, it implicates a view of what a person is and of how persons are constituted, of the particular kinds of social relations that persons can and should enter into, and of the appropriate and efficacious symbolic resources available to interlocutors for constituting themselves as persons in social relationships. This was shown elsewhere in a lengthier treatment of these codes (Philipsen 1992, chapter 6).

Proposition One points to differences across codes, Proposition Two to the substance of such codes. These two principles can be joined to comprise the following elaboration of Proposition Two: *speech codes are distinctive thematizations of the ends and means of social action*. Each implicates a distinctive conception of what goods humans should aim to secure, how to secure those goods, and how to judge efforts to attain them. A speech code, as a culturally distinctive "social rhetoric" is part of a common culture that can provide individuals with a kind of practical knowledge about what to feel and what to do (Scruton 1979). It provides a system of meanings and beliefs that provides answers to questions about ends to seek, as well as answers to questions of the proper and efficacious means for achieving those ends. In particular, a speech code provides a system of answers about what linkages between self and others can properly be sought, and what symbolic resources can properly and efficaciously be employed in seeking those linkages (Philipsen 1987, 1989, 1992).

The matter, or substance, of speech codes is, by this account, social life. This general point is woven through the literature of the ethnography of communication, echoing and supporting Hymes's (1962) suggestion that speaking or communication can be thought of as a metaphor for social life, and that as communication (including speaking) is thematized and enacted distinctively across cultures, and across speech communities, so cultural thematizations of communication and speaking should reveal a culturally distinctive code of social meanings and conduct in particular cases.

3. The Meanings of Speaking

Proposition One refers to the distinctiveness, and Proposition Two to the substance, of speech codes. Proposition Three is concerned with the part that speech codes play in the process of communication.

It has long been assumed that whenever interlocutors speak with each other, they potentially create shared meaning. They do this, for example, by referring to experience in such a way that the interlocutors can find common meanings in the use of language. It has long been assumed as well that users of language, and of other media of communication, not only express and interpret communicative acts in terms of what is said—or talked about—but also in terms of what is being done (Austin 1962). Attention has been drawn to such "actions" performed in speaking as "persuading," "entertaining," "uniting," "chatting," "conversing," and so forth. A parallel move is made by practitioners of the coordinated management of meaning, who posit as one of the interpretive resources interlocutors bring to bear in constructing a sense of social acts, the idea of speech act (Pearce and Cronen 1980, see also Philipsen in press for a comment on this approach).

Still another parallel move is the axiom of Watzlavick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) that communications have both a content and a relationship aspect.

Proposition Three is that *the significance of speaking is contingent upon the speech codes used by interlocutors to constitute the meanings of communicative acts.* When I spoke to unruly Teamsterville boys in order to discipline them I was judged by them to be unmanly because, in such circumstances, I spoke. From my perspective, my acts of speech were gentle but firm administrations of discipline and the benign exercise of adult power. My interlocutors constituted from my behavior a different act. In each case, what the behavior counted as was contingent upon the speech codes which the interlocutors used to constitute the meanings of the acts.

"Constitute" is used here with deliberate cognizance of its use in the speech act theory of the philosopher John Searle (1976). That theory holds that there is a definite range of what can be done, what acts can be performed, in speaking. And it holds that what a given speech behavior counts as is determined by the universal conditions necessary and sufficient for a behavior to count as, for example, a promise, a command, and so forth. Searle is concerned with a set of philosophical possibilities and the logical requirements for an observer to say that one of these possibilities was realized in a given utterance. For example, Searle posits that it is possible, in an act of speech, for the speaker to make a promise, and that a promise is made if and only if certain conditions are fulfilled. In uttering, for example, "I will take you to the cleaners tomorrow," certain conditions must be met for the locution to count as a promise (for example, the speaker must think the hearer wants to go to the cleaners, or else the utterance might count as a threat rather than a promise). If a speaker said, "I will take you to the cleaners tomorrow," and all the logical requirements were met for classifying the utterance as a promise, Searle would call it a promise even if the speaker and the hearer called it an expression of sorrow. Searle would say, I believe, that although the utterance was mistaken as an expression of sorrow, a promise was indeed made, because the conditions for making a promise were met.

To propose that speech codes are used by interlocutors to constitute speech acts as meaningful says something different from, but not necessarily in conflict with, what Searle says about speech acts. My move has been to interpret what interlocutors, singly or jointly, experience their speech acts and interactions to be. To Searle's set of logical possibilities this adds, in particular instances, a further component of the speech act or of spoken interaction, and that is what the interlocutors experience the meanings of their speech acts to be. These meanings are such outcomes as "communicating," speaking "like a man," speaking in a way that is "supportive," and speaking like "one of us." Each of the meanings expressed in quotation marks refers to what Teamstervillers or Nacirema interlocutors might take their communicative

acts to be. Although Searle's system might be perfectly adequate to determine the conditions under which an observer can say that an utterance counts as a directive or a promise, it is through knowledge of particular speech codes that the observer can hear and interpret such experienced meanings as those I have instanced here.

Cultural types of speech acts and cultural meanings do not necessarily meet any philosophical or logical criteria, only the criterion of shared significance among interlocutors. The cultural formulation of these acts and meanings might have its own logic but that is not necessarily the logic of the philosopher of language. The Nacirema term "communication" illustrates these differences between the philosophic and the cultural account of speech acts. "Communication" is a Nacirema term that, in some contexts, refers to "close, supportive, flexible" speech. To say that "we are really communicating" requires that interlocutors engage in spoken interaction that is highly disclosive, in which the interlocutors are supportive of each other as unique persons, and in which both parties are committed to the possibility of negotiating their perceptions of self and other. This is not a philosophical or a philological account of what conditions must be present to say we are "really communicating"—it is an observer's formulation of what some interlocutors take "really communicating" to be.

The question, What happens when people talk?, is thus reconfigured here as, What do interlocutors interpret—or experience—themselves to be doing in speaking? And the answer is: it depends upon the speech code they use to constitute—to construct, to define, to interpret—their communicative acts. To the extent that this claim is true, and the claim is consistent with the data consulted for this chapter, then the meaning of speaking is always, at least in part, a function of culture.

This was, for me, a hard-won learning. Perhaps it is obvious to others that when people speak they also perform certain actions—certainly Austin and Searle had made the point, and it seems plainly enough put in Watzlavick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967). But thinking through the abundance of field experiences in the Teamsterville and Nacirema studies helped me to understand that this is true and that it is important in the lives of people. Quite simply put, when people speak they understand themselves to be doing something, and when other people experience others speaking they take those others to be performing some kind of action. A speech code is the resource that people deploy to do that taking, or interpreting.

The distinctive contribution of ethnographic studies to this idea is the telling, in many studies of many codes, that there are many codes of speaking which interlocutors bring to bear in hearing speech acts as one thing or another. And each distinctive code provides a distinctive system of resources for doing the hearing.

The ethnographic studies that can be used to substantiate this point merely point to the use of distinctive resources and the organization of those re-

sources into socially constructed codes. The accumulated studies do not suggest that cultural codes are more powerful as resources for constituting the meanings of speech acts than are idiosyncratic personal codes. But they do suggest that cultural speech codes are one important source of such meaning construction.

4. The Site of Speech Codes

In formulating Teamsterville and Nacirema speech codes, I have been concerned with auditing utterances and interpreting their significance to those who make or hear them. In many instances, I have interpreted instances or collections of instances of speaking that, upon first hearing, sounded culture-free, or at least culture-neutral. For example, in the early part of the Teamsterville fieldwork, when I heard people talk about "the neighborhood," "around here," or "connections" (to a political figure), I was not aware that they were speaking terms that, although they are common English words, are also code terms in Teamsterville culture. Likewise, when I first listened to Nacirema parents say that "communication" is vital to the parent-child "relationship," I did not hear such expressions as deeply cultured. The data-rich experience of auditing and interpreting Teamsterville and Nacirema communicative conduct has suggested Proposition Four, that *the terms, rules, and premises of a speech code are inexplicably woven into speaking itself.* This suggests that a speech code is something that is and can be learned by all who might have an interest in it. In elaborating this proposition, I suggest four ways that speech code elements are woven into speaking.

Patterns in speaking. In formulating the Teamsterville speech code, I used the organizing frame of participants, setting, ends, and topic, taken from Hymes's (1962) scheme, to examine who talks to whom, in what settings, toward what ends, and about what topics, in order to learn fundamental aspects of a Teamsterville speech code. Such central categories in Hymes's scheme as speech events, components of speech events, and functions of speech events, provided a way to organize many separate instances of spoken behavior into a pattern that could be, and was, tested against further events and validation by local consultants. The use of Hymes's framework enabled me to hear, in the stream of Teamsterville behavior, a culturally distinctive pattern where initially I had heard no culture pattern being implicated.

It was by applying these categories that I was able to hear the Teamstervillers not simply as speaking but as speaking in culturally organized ways. For example, it was only by applying the framework that I was able to appreciate that one never merely speaks in Teamsterville but that one always speaks as a bearer of a culturally defined social identity—that is, that if one is male one always speaks as a man, as that category is thematized in Teamsterville culture. The local pattern for speech behavior, as well as the local commentary upon behaviors that do not fit the pattern, comprises ways that Teamsterville communicative conduct invokes and implicates a code. So too, in the earliest Nacirema studies, Mari Jo Rudd found one speech event, family "dinner time," in which our informants and subjects experienced a way of speaking that is highly patterned and the object of a good deal of moral and temporal energy. One way that a code is woven into speaking is that interlocutors pattern their speaking in culturally distinctive ways.

Metacommunicative vocabularies. A second, immediately obvious way that culture is woven into speaking is in the use of a culturally distinctive metacommunicative vocabulary (and other talk about talk). When, for example, I asked a Teamsterviller about who his preferred interlocutors are and he replied by saying they are people from "around here," he used a culturally distinctive term, one whose meaning was different from that which I supplied prior to studying Teamsterville culture. When a Nacirema talks about the importance of "communication in a relationship," cultural terms with very particular definitions are being used—and displayed.

Attention to metacommunicative terms is a tactic proposed by Hymes, who wrote that "One good ethnographic technique for getting at speech events . . . is through words that name them" (Hymes 1962, 110). Several years later, there was a substantial fund of studies that had taken up Hymes's (1962) suggestion. In a review of some of these studies, Carbaugh wrote that "As speech is identified and labeled through cultural categories, its efficacy as an action—what it is doing, what it should and should not do, what it can and can not do—is displayed" (1989, 124).

There is now a substantial literature that draws attention to the thesis that terms for talk and other metalinguistic references thematize the means of communication and the meanings that these means have to those who use and experience them. Much of this work is conducted under the auspices of the ethnography of speaking (see, especially, Stross 1974, Abrahams 1974, Sherzer 1974) and more recently under the heading of metapragmatics (Collins 1987; Verschuren 1987; Lucy 1992). Katriel's study of dugri is an exemplar of such research in that it begins with a folk term for a kind of speaking, traces the meanings of the term dugri, and delineates the social understandings implicit in the term's situated use. Fitch has demonstrated a particularly useful approach to such research, emphasizing one type of speech act, directives (Fitch 1994).

The rhetorical invocation of metacommunicative vocabularies. Applying a methodological principle articulated by Kenneth Burke, that one should not merely compare "verbalizations . . . [but should] also correlate the situations behind them" (Burke 1965[1954], 183), suggests a third way that interlocutors weave culture into speaking. In the reports of Teamsterville and Nacirema fieldwork (Philipsen 1992, chapters 2 through 5), I have attended to how speech code elements are expressed in the naming, interpreting, explaining,

evaluating, and justifying of communicative acts. If, following Burke (1950) again, one thinks about utterances as addressed to some hearer for a persuasive purpose, one can hear—or at least interpret—interlocutors as using speech code elements to serve rhetorical ends.

The use of metacommunicative vocabularies in culturally distinctive forms. Cultures (and the speech codes that comprise one part of them) are not unordered arrays of elements, displayed without pattern or form. Some elements of any culture are more important than others in terms of their significance to the interlocutors who use them; some cultural themes ramify more widely throughout the lives of those who use them; and some elements of culture are expressed more prominently than are others. The particular studies that make up the empirical literature of the ethnography of communication suggest that a fourth way to hear the articulation of speech code elements is to listen for the use of them in three communicative forms whose structure enables one to notice the cultural significance of the symbols and meanings, premises, and rules displayed in them. Those forms are totemizing rituals, myths, and social dramas.

The following part of the descriptive framework is based on Philipsen (1987) and slight modifications of it in Philipsen (1992). Initially, it was proposed as part of a theory of cultural communication, which includes a specification of key communicative forms in and through which interlocutors enact, articulate, and negotiate and test their personal identification with a code or a speech community (Philipsen 1987) have been used as a descriptive framework in several published studies (including Katriel 1986; Carbaugh 1988; Fitch 1991; Sequeira 1993). Its successful use is, in part, evidence of its general utility.

All routinized episodic sequences—known, repeatable ways of structuring an interaction event—entail the use of cultural ways of speaking and interacting. All episodic sequences do this because they are routinized—stereotypical, predictable—and because their routinization marks some aspect of share practice. Greeting rituals are example. A *totemizing ritual* (Turner 1988, 161–163), a particular type of ritual, is a structured sequence of actions the correct performance of which pays explicit homage to a sacred object of a group or culture. Thus, a totemizing ritual is routinized but it also is a particularly poignant (meaning-full) ritual. They are infused with the expression of emotional content such as anger, frustration, and joy. And the referent of the situation—the sacred object of the group—is made explicit. Katriel and I have shown how the Nacirema display a kind of "communication" ritual, in which a structured sequence of communicative acts honors and explicitly affirms the importance of things taken to be sacred among the Nacirema, notably selves, relationships, and communication (see Philipsen 1992, chapters 4 and 5).

All stories, which string together cultural symbols in meaningful sequences of activity, potentially implicate cultural content. *Cultural myths,* a special kind of story, make key elements of a cultural code particularly salient. A myth is a story of some type of person who confronts a type of problem and responds effectively through the use of some type of action or resource. A cultural myth is a story that, in the telling, provides its hearers with resources for interpreting their own experiences and for telling their own stories in ways intelligible to them and their interlocutors. In the course of developing the Nacirema speech code we not only listened to people tell us their personal stories, but I also examined some prominent public stories told in mythic form, stories in which, like the everyday stories, Nacirema speech code elements were prominently displayed (Philipsen 1992, chapter 5).

A third communicative form in which significant cultural symbols are made salient is the *social drama.* In the social drama, someone invokes a moral rule in challenging (criticizing) the conduct of another. In the next step of the sequence, a reply, consisting of a repair, a denial, or the like, is made to the challenge. The reply is either honored or dishonored, with the consequence that the offender either reintegrates with the group of evidence of moral schism is revealed. In this process of invoking rules and replying to rule-invocations, code elements are pressed into service. They are pressed into service in a form that, like rituals and cultural myths, provides not only for the invocation of the code element but also for the discursive co-ratification of its legitimacy by the interlocutors. In this way, interlocutors deploy significant code elements, and their discursive force is revealed in and through how their use either does or does not have force for the interlocutors (Philipsen 1992, chapter 3).

Interlocutors organize and interpret spoken activity in ways that can be detected by the application of such frames as participants and setting. They express and articulate meanings about speech in their use of a culturally distinctive metacommunicative vocabulary. They seek to accomplish things by invoking elements of a speech code. They participate in rituals, myths, and social dramas, forms of discourse infused with the elements of a culture. In all these ways, and this is an illustrative but by no means an exhaustive account, speaking is revealed to be richly woven through with the resources of a culture (see Fitch 1994 for an extension of the argument).

The proposition that speech codes are woven into speaking is both a methodological and a substantive point. It is methodological in that it suggests a general framework for the discovery and description of speech code elements. As such, the particular way in which the proposition has been developed here is subject to empirical testing—that is, one could ascertain, in and through the examination of cases, whether this formulation of a descriptive framework is adequate to extant and new cases, whether it is sufficiently parsimonious, and what prejudices it privileges, either knowingly or unknowingly. That it has been used successfully by others is one kind of rough validation of its utility. But it is presented here, as it has been presented

elsewhere, as a working proposal, which is to be modified in the light of criticism, both conceptual and empirical.

The proposition that speech codes are woven into speaking suggests that the latter can be permeated with elements of the former. Research in the ethnography of speaking suggests that speaking is more permeated with speech code elements than one might ordinarily suspect. This discovery, when made by an individual trying to listen perceptively to the speech she or he hears or when made by a theoretically-oriented observer, opens up and important investigative possibility—the code, as it were, is deployed in social interaction, and thus made accessible to the auditor who listens to speaking with these categories in mind. As a theoretical and practical matter, then, and not just a methodological one, the proposal that speech codes are woven into speaking is of considerable consequence—the proposal locates the site of one important class of human action, that is, metacommunicative action. And what is the consequentiality of that? For that I turn to a fifth and final proposition.

5. The Discursive Force of Speech Codes

Propositions One, Two, and Three point, respectively, to the distinctiveness, the substance, and the function, of speech codes. Proposition Four is concerned with their site or location. Proposition Five answers the question, What force do culture in general and speech codes in particular have in social life? The question is whether knowledge of speech codes, in particular discursive situation, enables a practitioner or an observer of spoken life to predict and control some aspect of communicative conduct. Faced with the kind of human situations encountered in Teamsterville and the Nacirema studies, it is difficult to feel that culture is not a powerful force in spoken life. Teamsterville and Nacirema speech were noticeable as remarkably cultured precisely because each is expressed in a distinctive code. Furthermore, when speaking in the terms of these codes, speakers and hearers evoke and invoke standards of social expression which are brought to bear in characterizing and evaluating oneself and others. To hear the responses that Teamstervillers make to those of one's actions that do not meet the standard of the Teamsterville code, and to hear a response to one's actions that is grounded in the Nacirema code is to feel, firsthand, the force of Teamsterville or Nacirema culture.

One thesis about the culture-conduct relationship attributes to culture a deterministic force in conduct. In this view, culture is one of the springs of action that impels humans to act in particular ways and that provides the meanings humans use to construct the sense of the actions that they and others perform. There is, of course, a great deal of anecdotal and systematic evidence to support the idea that people experience a kind of social pressure to make their behavior conform to social norms (Coleman 1989; Enker 1987; Richman 1988; Schwartz 1973). But there is a substantial literature that criticizes this approach as theoretically flawed and empirically unsupportable. Hall developed this critique more fully and situated it within the ongoing debate in the social sciences over norms and conduct (Hall 1988/89, see also Philipsen 1989).

My fieldwork observations suggest that the individuals I observed on occasion violate and resist various cultural imperatives, while nonetheless not challenging their general legitimacy. That is, the people I observed did not behave as cultural automatons, even as they did behave as culture bearers. In Teamsterville, for example, residents who themselves deployed the code in their talk, nonetheless did, on occasion, talk reflectively about it—hey described, interpreted, and evaluated their own and others' violations of the code. In his theory of dueling structures, Huspek underscores this point more generally in referring to social actors as "purposive" and "reflective" (Huspek 1993).

Given that there is widespread evidence for the force of culture in human communicative conduct, but nonetheless a substantial body of evidence and argument to suggest that humans not only follow but also flout their cultures, the code-conduct relationship must be treated as an issue. The theoretical resolution I have proposed for this issue is what I call the discursive force position. This position, expressed here as Proposition Five, is that *the artful use of a shared speech code is a sufficient condition for predicting, explaining, and controlling the form of discourse about the intelligibility, prudence, and morality of communicative conduct.* This is a complex proposition which can best be amplified by discussing several of its key aspects.

One, the studies cited in this chapter provide substantial evidence that *discourse about the intelligibility, prudence, and morality of communicative conduct is a prominent and consequential feature of human lives.* People talk about talk—they label, interpret, explain, evaluate, and justify their own and others' communicative acts. And in the course of doing that, they claim for themselves and others particular social identities, and they express social meanings which constitute, for themselves and others, social experience. It is the pragmatics, or effects, of such claiming, expressing, and constituting, in particular cases, which Proposition Five seeks to explain.

Two, the proposition points to an aspect of discourse to which the proposition applies: *the form of discourse about the intelligibility, prudence, and morality of communicative conduct.* A crucial distinction is made between predicting and controlling (1) the production or interpretation of a particular kind of communicative act and (2) the form of discourse about communicative acts. (1) refers to predicting and controlling whether someone will, faced with a decision, produce an act that is congruent with a particular code's meanings and expectations. (2) refers to a subset of (1), those acts that are part of a metacommunicative discourse—that is, are part of a sequence of talk

about talk. Proposition Five does not generate predictions that in all circumstances interlocutors will perform actions that are congruent with a code, but does generate predictions about how interlocutors will talk about such performances.

Data from the Nacirema studies illustrate and substantiate this aspect of the proposition. For example, the Nacirema code thematizes and legitimates a parent's listening carefully to a child's expressions of opinions and feelings, say at the dinner table; but parents who themselves pay lip service to the Nacirema code on occasion do not realize its ideals. Such anomalies are not threatening to the speech codes theory, because not all code-conduct congruencies are predicted by the theory. Rather, the theory predicts that, under the circumstances described, if a parent did not respond "openly" and "supportively" to the child, this might be the occasion for discourse about the parent's communicative conduct. If another parent observed the conduct and then commented on it, involving Nacirema code elements in the comment, and then the first parent responded to the comment, there would be discursive chain of comments, the form of which is predicted by speech codes theory. The theory predicts that if the commentary is artfully formulated and the code is shared between (or among) the interlocutors, then interpretations or evaluations grounded in it will be treated as intelligible and legitimate. A case in point is the following report:

> At the family dinner table, a parent said to the children at the table that they must be silent for the remainder of the meal. Later, the other parent characterized the first parent's actions as "uncommunicative"; furthermore, the second parent admonished the first that such conduct would result in "your children not liking you."

In this episode, the second parent initiated discourse grounded in a speech code, with particular comments on the prudence of the first parent's action ("If you are uncommunicative, your children will not like you"). Speech codes theory predicts the range of likely responses to be: a repair, an argument about the pertinence on this occasion of the code principles appealed to, or an effort to negotiate the situational legitimacy of the code's force; all of these responses implicate the responder's orientation to appeals grounded in the code as intelligible and at least of sufficient legitimacy to require some kind of reasoned response to the appeal. Philipsen (1989) and Hall (1988/89) develop this aspect of the theory more fully.

In this matter, I follow a strongly developed literature on vocabularies of motives. This literature, which is grounded in Burke (1935/1954) and Mills (1940), proposes that we should think about "motives not as inner dispositions that cause action, but rather as rhetorical constructs that define action with respect to particular social contexts" (Hopper 1993, 801). For Burke and Mills, "motives" encompasses not only rules of action but symbols, meanings, and premises as well. Furthermore, Burke and Mills argue that the seeming orderliness of social life is constructed in and through the use, by interlocutors, of verbalizations that are grounded in symbols and reasons that are given credence by those who share the vocabularies of motives from which the symbols and reasons are drawn. Hopper (1993) provides important empirical evidence in support of this position.

Three, we can focus on *how the process of discursive force works* as it does. Why are appeals grounded in speech codes efficacious in the way I have proposed they are? The answer to this question lies in three features of speech codes—their systematicity, their social grounding, and their expression in formal elements. Each of these will be considered.

Code systematicity, refers to the fact that code elements derive their meaning from their place in a network of reinforcing and interanimating code elements. When the criticizing parent, reported in the episode above, commented on the "uncommunicative" quality of the first parent's actions, the word "uncommunicative" invoked a network of symbols, premises, and rules, thus endowing the remark with a kind of force that an unconnected word would not have had. This is similar to what Leslie J. Miller calls "macrosocial supports" (Miller 1990).

Socially legitimated refers to the fact that the code was learned in and through social interaction in significant socializing contexts (Bernstein 1972). The association of code elements, which are involved in discourse, with the memory of life experiences in these socializing contexts, endows them with a sense of legitimacy and normalcy. Socially legitimated is more a temporal concept, in that the person who hears a code invoked can think back to previous invocations of the code. This suggests a sense of precedence and the presumption that precedence might entail. This is similar to what Miller calls "microsocial supports" (Miller 1990; see also Simon, Eder, and Evans 1992).

Code elements as forms refers to the fact that the forms in which cultures are expressed are devices that are used to influence or control others. In my discussion of Proposition Three I identified several communicative forms or patterns which are widely believed to be among the carriers of culture: contextual patterns, symbols, arguments, routines (including rituals), stories, (including myths), and social dramas. These can be treated as vehicle or carriers of culture and examined as sites where codes are deployed. This is the heuristic use of these forms to notice or learn code elements. But there is a long-established practice of treating these forms as rhetorical—or control—devices as well as heuristic devices. In a paper titled "How to Control Things with Words," Cnarniawska-Joerges and Joerges (1988) focus on labels, metaphors, and platitudes as linguistic artifacts that social actors use as control instruments. They show that these linguistic devices, like material artifacts, are built with design features that make them implements of linguistic control.

Symbols, metaphors, arguments, platitudes, stories, et al., are not only sites in which culture is displayed, they are also sites in which culture is deployed.

Cnarniawska-Joerges and Joerges (1988) argue that such communicative forms as labels, symbols, metaphors, and platitudes are not only forms but devices, each of which embodies a linguistic control mechanism. For example, metaphors, by transferring aspects of one object to another, fit meanings into imagination-stimulating messages. To hear the phrase, invoked by a marriage counselor, "the relationship is the patient" (based on Lear 1988, 64) invites the hearer to imagine things about the "relationships" or marriages that are, presumably, stimulated by the metaphorical linkage between "relationship" and "patient." Platitudes, by implicating a link between the general past and the specific present, conventionalize or normalize the conduct the speaker characterizes or assesses. The platitude, "You can't keep a child quiet at the dinner table," uttered by a Nacirema parent, can be invoked to explain as well as to appraise a child's conduct or a parent's response to it. I am arguing, following Cnarniawska-Joerges and Joerges (1988), that a third feature of a code, its expression in formal elements, is conducive to the rhetorical effectiveness of its use, that is, when an interlocutor invokes a code element in interpreting or evaluating communicative conduct, the interlocutor's deployment of the code draws its efficacy from its expression in a particular rhetorical form or device.

In this section of the chapter I have suggested some of the conclusions that might be drawn from a review of a large body of speech codes research. As with the fieldwork studies referred to in the previous section, these conclusions are grounded in a body of empirical particulars. As with particular ethnographic formulations of speech codes, these propositions at once formulate a tested and testable generalization and serve a particular explanatory function. They draw attention to a phenomenon, speech codes, and point to their existence, diversity, and importance in social life. Taken together, these propositions help to explain why it is that, in concrete situations, people pay the attention they do to their own and others' talk; they help to explain how it is that interlocutors (including investigators) can come to know the particularities of communicative conduct and of its meanings to those who produce it in particular discursive worlds; and they help to explain the particular function and force that speech codes have in social life.

Proposition 1 draws attention to the phenomenon of speech codes and to their distinctiveness. Someone experiencing a given discursive world for the first time could, as is the case with myself in relation to Teamsterville, fail to notice that the talk that, in part, makes up that world, is deeply and distinctively cultured. This was also true for both Tamar Katriel and, in a different way, for me, in our early experiences of some Nacirema speech. Proposition 1 raises the empirical possibility that, in any given circumstance, a distinctive speech code is a substantial component of a particular

discursive world, and thus Proposition 1 serves to draw attention to an important phenomenon which can be overlooked (or not heard) by participants and observers.

Proposition 2 helps to explain why it is that speech codes and the phenomena that people thematize with the resources of a particular code are consequential to those who use and partake of them. Specifically, Proposition 2 suggests that these phenomena are important to people because they are intricately implicated with notions and experiences of self, other, and strategic action. Like speech codes themselves, such notions and experiences can be missed—that, is, not noticed—and what is noticed, when communicative conduct is perceived through the "lens" of a speech code, is the constructions people make of talk. These constructions are important to people because they are intricately involved with such questions as, What does conversing intelligibly and appropriately among this people require and entail? What kind of man or woman or person will I be if I converse intelligibly and appropriately in these distinctive terms? What kinds of social experiences will be enacted in and through such conversations? In using and adapting to the use of a particular speech code, such questions as these are raised and, at least implicitly, answered. Proposition 2 thus explains the consequentiality of the use of particular speech codes.

Propositions 1 and 2 are more fully elaborated when they are joined with Proposition 3, the proposition about the use of speech codes to constitute the meanings of communicative acts. Specifically, the distinctiveness of speech codes (P1) and the social ideological aspect of speech codes (P2) together help to explain that the adoption of a particular speech code can bring into play distinctive expressions and experiences of social reality. The distinctiveness of speech codes (P1) and the use of speech codes to constitute the meanings of speech acts (P3) together help to explain how interlocutors who deploy different codes can systematically misunderstand each other. And the social ideological aspects of speech codes (P2) and the use of speech codes to constitute the meanings of speech acts (P3) together help to explain the importance interlocutors attach to their own and others' acts of speech.

Proposition 4 locates the display of speech codes elements in talk and, having sited it there, further specifies some of the particular places in which interlocutors (and researchers) can look or listen for such elements. Proposition 4 has a double edge. It *characterizes* speech code elements as public, observable resources, and it *points to particular sites* in which the deployment of these resources can effectively be observed. Thus, it simultaneously focuses on the deployment and the discoverability of speech code elements.

Proposition 5 presents a complex argument about the nature, limits, and conditions under which the deployment of speech codes has force, or traction, for the interlocutors who use them and experience their use. It specifies a limited but powerful domain in which the deployment of speech codes has

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Proposition 5 presents a complex argument about the nature, limits, and conditions under which the deployment of speech codes has force, or traction, for the interlocutors who use them and experience their use. It specifies a limited but powerful domain in which the deployment of speech codes has

force in shaping communicative conduct. Furthermore, it specifies three variables that influence the force that speech code deployment has in particular encounters: code systematicity, social legitimation of a code, and the form of code elements. Proposition 5 thus not only explains the circumstances under which the deployment of speech codes has rhetorical traction, it also provides an explanation of why they have the force they do.

When Propositions 4 and 5 are joined, they point to the use of speech codes theory in providing for prediction and control of communicative conduct. They reference an observable phenomenon, elements of speech codes, and they specify where these phenomena can reliably be found. Furthermore, they specify a particular rhetorical function that the deployment of these code elements serves and they specify the conditions under which their deployment has certain predictable effects. When Propositions 1, 2, and 3 are joined to Propositions 4 and 5, a powerful combination of explanatory and heuristic themes is provided, themes that provide the resources for noticing and explaining a consequential dimension of communicative conduct.

CONCLUSION

Talk is important to people, but in distinctive ways across distinctive circumstances of time, place, and culture. The distinctive ways talk is important to people are manifested in the symbols, meanings, premises, and rules about communicative conduct which they deploy to talk about talk and which, when examined, can be understood to constitute what I have called speech codes. The deployment of speech codes—their use by interlocutors in communicative conduct is consequential for those who use them, in that in and through their deployment social meanings are expressed and constituted. Such codes can be discovered and described through the examination of their public display in communicative conduct. These are some of the conclusions to be drawn from research on speech codes.

The five propositions presented here constitute the working core of a speech codes theory. In this chapter I have set forth some particulars in the development of that theory, by tracing some of the history of the theory's core concept, speech codes, have surveyed some of the fieldwork that has contributed to the theory's development, and have articulated five propositions that form the core of a theory. Although the story of the development of the theory has been presented sequentially in three parts, an accurate telling of the story would interweave conceptual development, fieldwork, and the process of generalization rather than separating them.

The empirical status of the propositions is twofold. First, they were each generated in and through an interweaving of conceptualization, data collection and analysis, and speculation based on the data. It is important to emphasize that the data from which they were constructed include not

only my own original research into several speech codes but also, indeed primarily, the work of others, as cited. Thus, each of the propositions is, having been formulated, subject to empirical testing. That is, new data or reinterpretation of extant data can be used to disconfirm, refine, or develop these propositions.

Finally, the theory itself, as formulated here, is designed to thematize a phenomenon, speech codes, explore its attributes, and assess its workings in the process of communication. As such, its value is twofold. First, it suggests a particular way of perceiving and thinking about communicative conduct in particular social milieux, and its value can be assessed in terms of whether the use of this approach will continue, as it has in the past, to stimulate discoveries about particular ways of speaking. Second, it proposes generalizations about the phenomenon it essays, and its value can be assessed in terms of whether those generalizations stand the test of further work.

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6

Developing Communication Theories

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The original premise drawing together this collection of papers was that communication theory emerges when careful empirical observation is creatively and insightfully blended with equally careful conceptual analysis. Professors Albrecht and Philipsen first reasoned that it would be useful for a community of graduate students and faculty to discuss with several active researchers how the researchers worked concepts and empirical observations into theory. Then they reasoned that a larger audience might be interested in these matters—hence this book.

Albrecht and Philipsen were clearly right. The colloquium series, which also included discussions with professors Janet Beavin Bavelas, Edna Rogers, and John Wilson, was stimulating and productive. Listener-discussants had the rare privilege of hearing the people responsible for some of the most often-cited research in the field report on their struggles to devise fruitful ways to observe communication phenomena, to understand how concepts guided observations and were in turn guided by them, and to develop, test, and revise theoretical formulations to make sense of the empirical observations and concepts. The result was a series on "developing communication theories" that aptly illustrated both senses of this strategically ambiguous title: (a) that there are various, incremental, often nonlinear, and even serendipitous ways to build communication theory, and (b) that several important communication theories are unfinished and still in process.

The colloquium presentations were, of course, revised extensively for this volume. They now display these scholars' understandings of the process they go through in their work even more explicitly than did the original oral versions. Thus, these chapters offer the reader the opportunity to examine the general model of theorizing that is operating here and the sometimes subtle but important variations among these theorists' approaches. In some cases,