Speech Codes Theory

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Speech codes theory is an account of communication as a deeply cultured human activity. The theory, and the empirical research on which it is built, demonstrate that the kinds of local knowledge people deploy to talk about — to characterize, interpret, and rationalize — their communicative conduct is indeed local, particular knowledge, and that such knowledge can be discovered and described through systematic inquiry.

Speech codes as a theoretical concept

The principal statements of speech codes theory foreground speaking as an action performed by a speaker in social interaction. For example, in Philipsen (1992) there is a report of a code of speaking observed in a particular US neighborhood whose men experience local rules constraining sharply whether, when, and for what purposes they are to speak as a mode of encompassing a situation. In the same volume the rules and meanings attached to speech in that code are contrasted with those of another code, in which men experience pressures to "communicate" (to disclose their inner feelings) in ways that would be inappropriate in the first community. The focus on individuals as potential speakers, subject to local constraints and expectations regarding their communicative activity, is carried out and elaborated upon in extant treatments of the theory (e.g., Philipsen, 1992, 1997; Philipsen & Coutu, 2005; Philipsen, Coutu, & Covarrubias, 2005), belying an emphasis — observable in practice — on the perspective of a potential speaker in social interaction, in a particular social and cultural milieu.

Speech codes theory contemplates speaking as a linguistic action in the oral mode, but the term "speech" here is itself a figure of speech used to refer to all the means of communicative conduct operative in the life of a speech community. Specifically, "speech" is used as synecdoche (a figure of speech in which the part stands for or designates the whole), to suggest all the concrete means by which people participate in communicative conduct: speech, gesture, writing, electronic messages, building design, and other communication systems. Just as, when the bosun of a ship calls for "all hands on deck," the bosun calls not just for the hands but for the full bodies and full energies of those so summoned, so in speech codes theory "speech" can be used to summon up all the means of communicative conduct that enter into the life of a given social world.

There is a precedent for the expansion of "speech" in speech codes theory. It is in the work of the linguist and anthropologist Dell Hymes (1974), who uses "speaking" to refer

The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction, First Edition.
Karen Tracy (General Editor), Cornelia Ilie and Todd Sandel (Associate Editors).

DOI: 10.1002/9781118611463/wbielsi178

to the social use of language, in all its modes and including those manifestations and derivations of language for which speaking can be a surrogate term. In Hymes's treatment, such manifestations and derivations consist of, but are not necessarily limited to, writing and print, systems of body movement, gestural expression, music, graphic communication, and drum and chanting systems. Speech codes theory does not insist that all of the means so subsumed under speech are necessarily "manifestations and derivations of language," as Hymes stipulates. This is done in order to leave as open as possible what, in the study of particular social worlds, might be considered as falling within the scope of a speech code and of a community's local understandings of communicative activity.

In the first formal statement of speech codes theory, a speech "code" was defined as "a system of socially constructed symbols and meanings, premises, and rules, pertaining to communicative conduct" (Philipsen, 1997, p. 126). Although such words as "symbol," "premise," and "rule" are abstract and contested concepts, it is often possible to find working examples of them expressed or enacted in the spoken or written words of people in everyday life, and thus to have something concrete with which to try to figure out a particular code of speaking.

For example, consider the following statement drawn from field notes in studies of the use of the word "communication" in the contemporary United States:

> An American university student recalls that when he was nine years old, his parents divorced and his father was given weekly visiting rights. On the days that the boy spent with his father, the father insisted that they "communicate" about their "relationship." The father's efforts became burdensome to the boy, who wished his father had just taken him to a baseball game. (Philipsen, 2008; attributed to Tamar Katriel, personal communication)

The words "communicate" and "relationship" are symbols frequently used in contemporary American speech in a premise such as "communication is necessary for a good relationship" (Katriel & Philipsen, 1981). Likewise, one might find evidence of a rule of conduct implicit in the vignette "fathers should communicate with their children." As part of an inquiry, one could ask about "communication" and "relationship": What do "communicate" and "relationship" mean to the father and the son? Why does the boy resist "communication," for which an American dictionary gives, as the first sense, "the transfer of meaning"? Why would the father think that he and his son should communicate, over and over, about their "relationship," which presumably is a biological or a legal one, of father and son? Is not the relationship of father and son immutable? What, for man and boy, is the force of the man's insistence that he and his son "communicate" about their "relationship"? If an investigator were to search for evidence of the use of a speech code in this brief vignette, the items mentioned above are some of the observations and exploratory questions that might be considered.

Elsewhere the expression "communication code" is used to designate what speech codes theory refers to as a "speech code." Baxter (1993) and Coutu (2000) each acknowledge Philipsen's earlier (1992) use of "speech code," but they use "communication code" to refer to the same thing. It is tempting to follow Baxter (1993) and Coutu (2000) in using "communication code." But "communication," like "speech," has its nuances

and limitations. For example, when linked with the word "code" and situated in a discussion of information transfer, a "communication code" is a fixed system whereby meanings are assigned unambiguously, with none of the nuances and contingencies that communicative conduct implies. This is the case in uses of "communication code" that can be found elsewhere, for instance in the "Alberta Electrical and Communication Utility Code," or in "the communication code words for the letters of the alphabet." In another common usage, "communication" has a very different situated sense, as "close, open, and supportive speech" (Katriel & Philipsen, 1981). To link that particular sense of "communication" with "code" makes of "communication code" part of a very particular speech code, as suggested in the following title of a paper: "What is the secret that cracks the communication code?" — to which the author answers: "Without love she reacts without respect, and without respect he reacts without love" (Eggerichs, 2004, p. 6).

Beeman (1986) uses the phrase "communication code" in yet another way, to refer to shared knowledge about situational factors beyond the linguistic code that might account for successful "relay" by means of the linguistic utterance of a "particular message" (p. 15); in this way Beeman makes "communication code" narrower than what Baxter (1993) and Coutu (2000) have in mind for "communication code," and also narrower than "speech code" as used in treatments of speech codes theory.

In his classic work *On Human Communication: A Review, a Survey, and a Criticism*, Cherry (1957) defines "code" as "an agreed TRANSFORMATION, or set of unambiguous rules, whereby MESSAGES are converted from one representation to another" (p. 305). He provides examples, including the Morse code, in which a message that is expressed by one representation — the letters of the English alphabet — is transformed into another sign system: the dots and dashes of Morse code. Morse code was invented for a specific purpose and follows explicit rules. A natural language, on the other hand, develops organically over long periods of time and does not necessarily follow explicit rules. Thus Cherry differentiates types of signal systems, such as a code and a natural language, in terms of two features: (1) deliberateness (and speed) of formation; and (2) explicitness of rules.

Cherry also differentiates his concept of "code" from those of a legal code or a code of ethics. The latter formulations, written or unwritten, official or unofficial, pertain to what is lawful or moral in a particular political unit or social group, an attribute not present in Cherry's sense of "code."

Cherry's definition of "code" contrasts in three ways with the way code is defined in speech codes theory. First, the rules and meanings of a speech code are not necessarily unambiguous. They have what is described as an "open texture" — they are always subject to interpretation by the people who use them. Second, "code" in speech codes theory refers to something constructed over time, through a process of social interaction, and that is an integral part of a community's living of its collective life. Third, speech codes theory's "code" encompasses not only rules for intelligibility and meaning, it also encompasses rules of appropriate conduct.

With regard to the three attributes just mentioned, (1) unambiguous rules versus open texture of rules, (2) a swift and decisive formation versus an organic construction and development over time, and (3) a focus on meanings only, or on both meanings and rules, a speech code is more like a natural language or a code of laws or ethics than like

a code in the sense in which Cherry defines it. But a speech code is also different from a natural language and from a legal or ethical code in at least two other respects. First, a speech code has a particular domain of application — the domain of communicative conduct. A natural language can encompass a much broader range of human experience, indeed all, or almost all, of a given culture. A speech code deals with a subset of a given culture: the subset that pertains to communicative conduct. A legal or ethical code pertains to a different subset of the life of a given culture, although the two can be mutually interpenetrating. Thus a speech code might be broader or narrower than a legal or ethical code. Scope is not the issue here. Rather the issue is simply one of difference: A speech code and a legal or ethical code pertain to different subsets of human experience.

A second way in which a speech code differs from a natural language or a legal or ethical code relates to the fact that, in many societies, a natural language is written down, or at least explicitly acknowledged and taught in some way. The same is true of many legal or ethical codes. By contrast, a speech code, as defined in speech codes theory, is not ordinarily written down, systematized, or acknowledged in dictionaries, rulebooks, or statutes. That a speech code is not written down does not, however, mean that its terms, tropes, and entreaties are not made public. They are indeed expressed and communicated; but ordinarily such expression and communication gets done in a way that makes it seem as though a speech code is uncodified.

Attributes of speech codes

Speech codes can be further conceptualized in terms of four attributes. One, a speech code consists of resources with which people talk about and shape communicative conduct. A resource is defined in the Oxford American dictionary of 1980 as "something to which people can turn for help or support to achieve one's purpose." Speech codes are, for the most part, made up of tangible resources — words, symbols, expressions, statements of premises, and statements of rules. For example, the Spanish phrase *palabras de futuro* (words of the future) is an expression that men and women in 17th-century Mexico used in order to refer to the words that a woman and her prospective husband had said to one another about their romantic intentions (Seed, 1988). A woman who uttered a "promise about the future" (i.e., a promise to marry a particular man) and later declared to a priest that she had uttered such a promise was using code terms and expressions designed to accomplish something in interaction with another human being — to accept a suitor's proposal of marriage, in the one case, and to persuade the priest to perform a marriage ceremony (perhaps against the wishes of the woman's parents), in the other case. The statement by former US Secretary of State Robert S. McNamara that, if he had "force[d] debate" among decision makers, this would have enhanced the likelihood of making a wise decision (with reference to US actions in the Vietnam conflict) is a statement that implies a premise about the efficacy of a particular type of communicative conduct, "debate," in pursuing a particular end, a wise decision (Coutu, 2000).

Two, a speech code is local and socially constructed. It is not just any system of resources for talking about, interpreting, and shaping communicative conduct. Rather

it is created through humans' interacting with each other in a particular place and at a particular time. The expression *palabras de futuro* and the premise about "forcing debate" were each constructed at a particular time and place, through a process of social interaction. The former is expressed in the Spanish language and was significant in 17th-century Mexico. The latter is expressed in the English language, is US American, and its significance is distinctive to the 20th and 21st centuries. Any significance that these terms, phrases, and premises have, or had, in one place and at one time can be different or nonexistent in other places and at other times, because in each place and period humans construct distinctive resources.

Three, a speech code is a system of resources. It is not just one term or one premise. Rather it consists of multiple words, symbols, signs, meanings, nuances, statements of premises, and statements of rules. People use these words, symbols, signs, and so forth in noticeable and meaningful combinations. The 17th-century Mexican code of honor of which Seed (1988) writes consists of many words, expressions, and meanings that speakers and writers configured into complex utterances; and those utterances were in turn used by readers and hearers to make judgments about the meaning and credibility of the oral and written statements. McNamara used clusters of co-occurring terms, which he configured into complex utterances; and his critics, in turn, responded with their own utterances, which were configured in their own clusters of co-occurring terms (Coutu, 2000).

Four, a speech code is open and dynamic. Some codes provide one-to-one transformations from one sign system to another, as when a Morse code signal is transformed into a letter of the English alphabet. Other codes are not fixed in this way, but rather are open. These other codes, for instance speech codes, make reference to the world through signs and symbols, but they allow for all the nuance and diversity of natural languages: ambiguity, vagueness, polysemy, connotation, and the like. For example, many people use a word that Robert S. McNamara used, "discussion," but use it differently from the way he used it. And such codes are susceptible to change and adaptation, as happened with changes in the code of honor in Mexico from the 17th to the 18th centuries (Seed, 1988).

Characteristics of speech codes theory

Speech codes theory has four important characteristics as a theory. One, it is grounded in field-based and textual studies of communicative conduct of particular times and places. For example, as part of a long-term ethnographic project, Hart (2012) observed, interpreted, and reported on two terms that had particular symbolic value in an online language-learning community called Eloqi (pseudonym): "native English" and "English logic." Within the Eloqi community these terms were used by administrators and trainers to market, describe, explain, justify, and teach a particular style of English language communication to the students. Speech codes theory is concerned with such observed communicative conduct, as an object of inquiry.

Two, speech codes theory posits a way to interpret or explain observed communicative conduct by reference to situated codes of meaning and value. For members

of the Eloqi online community, Hart (2012) showed that the symbolic terms "native English" and "English logic" were interrelated with a larger system of meanings and rules, which pertained not only to the mechanics of language but also to a local and socially constructed code of how to be a good and effective English speaker/user in the world. In the Eloqi community students were taught that native English speech had a logical structure and that it involved producing, using, and responding to speech that was clearly organized, succinct, open and honest, proactive, spontaneous rather than canned, and positive and supportive. This speech code, which Hart named the "code of English Logic," provided students with a set of symbolic resources that answered questions about how to be in the world, how to present oneself, how to frame what one knows, how to come across in a certain idealized way, and how to successfully and productively interact with others. It was thus far more than language that Eloqi's students gained; it was a lesson in personhood, social interaction, and strategic calculation of one's spoken actions.

Three, speech codes theory includes general propositions about communication as a deeply cultured social activity. Such general propositions are built up as a result of a process of analyzing multiple studies such as that of Hart (2012), placing them side by side, and then subjecting them to a comparative analysis intended to yield general, synthetic statements about the nature of speech codes, their functioning in social life, and the bases of their discovery in particular cases. In the case of the generation of the extant propositions of speech codes theory, a large corpus of data has been constituted. It includes hundreds of published empirical studies conducted under the auspices of the ethnography of speaking. Furthermore, it includes the growing body of recent empirical work inspired directly by speech codes theory.

Four, the propositions of speech codes are empirically testable. Each of the six propositions presently included under the cover of the theory are formulated so as to make it possible to confirm, disconfirm, modify, or elaborate this theory. Such modifications can in principle take the form of strengthening the case for continued support of an extant proposition, of warranting the addition of a new proposition to the theory, or of warranting the rejection of an extant proposition. In the prototypical version of the theory (Philipsen, 1992) there were four such propositions (labeled there "principles"). In the first formal statement of the theory (Philipsen, 1997) all four of these principles were retained and labeled propositions, and a fifth proposition was added. In the last modification of the propositional formulation of the theory (Philipsen et al., 2005), a sixth proposition was added. These modifications over time fulfill one of the original purposes of the construction of the theory, that is, to change it as is warranted by new data and by reconsiderations of the extant data.

The six propositions of speech codes theory

PROPOSITION 1 Wherever there is a distinctive culture, there is to be found a distinctive speech code.

The first proposition of speech codes theory asserts that every culture (i.e., every socially constructed system of symbols and meanings, premises and rules) includes symbols,

meanings, premises, and rules about communicative conduct. This is a statement about cultural systems in general—that all of them contain a subset that maps the domain of communicative conduct. Furthermore, the theory asserts that the particular system of words, meanings, premises, and rules about communicative conduct that a particular culture includes is *sui generis* (one of a kind); and it states that, in all places where people have constructed codes of communicative conduct, those codes are culturally distinctive.

When versions of speech codes theory were published in 1992 and in 1997, there was a large body of empirical evidence based on linguistic and ethnographic fieldwork that supported Proposition 1. Much of this evidence is contained in the 250 plus studies cited in Philipsen and Carbaugh (1986). Selected portions of this evidence are reviewed in detail in several studies that provide a cross-culture review and comparative analysis of how various cultures include and elaborate a particular aspect of speaking; such are Braithwaite's (1990) study on rules for being silent in social interaction, Carbaugh's (1989) on metapragmatic terms, Katriel's (1986) on indirect speech, and Verschueren's (1989) on metapragmatic terms. Since the publication of speech codes theory as a formal theoretical statement, a substantial body of new work has been published supporting Proposition 1 (e.g., Covarrubias, 2002).

One of the strongest bodies of evidence in support of Proposition 1 is found in Verschueren's (1989) systematic analysis of 81 natural language varieties in terms of whether and how these varieties include and elaborate a vocabulary of words that map the domain of speech—that is, a system of words that can be glossed as the English phrases "to speak" or "to say." Verschueren reports that all the languages examined have a word that can be glossed as "to speak" or "to say," and that 77 of these languages have a word for the English verb "to talk." Beyond that, there are many differences across languages as to the range and type of notions of linguistic actions that can be encoded in a particular language. Treating language as a stand-in for culture in this instance, Verschueren's study provides an empirical demonstration of Proposition 1, in that each local system studied (each culture, in the terms of speech codes theory) provides a vocabulary for speaking, and each culture provides a distinctive vocabulary for speaking (in terms of the range and types of words used to map that domain). Studies such as this one could be used to test Proposition 1 still further.

Philipsen (2008) asserts the thesis that, whenever people engage in interpersonal communication, there are traces of culture woven into their messages and into their interpretations of the meanings of those messages. This thesis, closely linked to Proposition 1, suggests that, whenever language is used in social interaction, there will be traces of a speech code woven into that language use. This line of reasoning suggests that the presence of speech codes woven into language use is a universal property of language use in social interaction.

Proposition 2 In any given speech community, multiple speech codes are deployed.

Proposition 1 is concerned with a cultural unit (i.e., a given cultural system) and the presence and elaboration of speaking within it. Proposition 2 treats speech codes as situated in a social unit— a speech community, a speech network, a speech field—in a given place and time. Proposition 2 asserts that there are, in any given speech

community, two or more speech codes that are deployed by participants in social interaction.

Ethnographers of communication, and linguistic anthropologists before them, have produced a substantial body of evidence in support of the data-based claim made by Hymes (1974) that every speech community is an organization of diversity. This is attested to in the evidentiary record of the universal presence, in speech communities, of more than one language variety, dialect, speech style, or way of speaking (e.g., Hymes, 1974; Philipsen & Coutu, 2005). Speech codes scholars have, in many cases, found that their research participants experience, within the same lifeworld, two or more different codes pertaining to communicative conduct.

When the multiple speech codes proposition was added to the older versions of speech codes theory (Philipsen et al., 2005), a substantial body of published evidence was cited as the empirical grounding of the proposition. Much of that evidence consists of studies done in speech communities, speech networks, speech fields, or speech situations in which there is a predominant language variety and at the same time there are multiple codes pertaining to the use of language in social settings—that is, speech codes.

Where Proposition 1 asserts, by implication, traces of a speech code in language use in social interaction, Proposition 2 asserts, by implication, the possibility that social interaction in all speech communities has traces of multiple speech codes. Coutu's study (2000) of the social drama that ensued after the publication of McNamara's *In Retrospect* played an important role in the creation of Proposition 2 of speech codes theory and in its integration into subsequent versions of the theory (Philipsen et al., 2005). Coutu's (2008) follow-up study shows, further, that the conversation of the social drama that she studied was, "at every turn," "a conversation fed by different codes of communication" (p. 405).

PROPOSITION 3 A speech code implicates a culturally distinctive psychology, sociology, and rhetoric.

Proposition 3 answers a question about the content of speech codes. One answer is that speech codes name and describe local resources with which to refer to and characterize speaking in its widest sense. Such resources typically have the material form of specific terms, meanings, premises, and rules of communicative conduct. Proposition 3 says that the elements of a speech code implicate something more than speaking, or communicative conduct narrowly defined; they also implicate local meanings about human nature (psychology), social relations (sociology), and strategic conduct (rhetoric). Specifically, wherever there is a situated vocabulary in use that relates to communicative conduct (manifested, for example, in terms for talk, in metapragmatic expressions, or in a situated system of premises or rules of communicative conduct), one can be find, in the use of these situated vocabularies, symbols that reference the nature of persons, social relations, and strategic interaction.

Two early studies of a Teamsterville code (Philipsen, 1992) and of a Nacirema code (Katriel & Philipsen, 1981; Philipsen, 1992) provide illustrations of coding, within one culture, of terms and premises pertaining to communication that are linked, in the

indigenous scheme, to an indigenous psychology, sociology, and rhetoric. Carbaugh (1989) provides a systematic comparative analysis of this phenomenon across multiple cultures, suggesting the potential cross-cultural universality of the imbrication, in any given culture, of cultural terms and premises about communication and terms and premises related to self, society, and strategic action.

Proposition 3 asserts that, wherever and whenever one hears talk about communicative conduct, one also hears talk about persons, society, and rhetoric. For example, when one hears someone say that "communication" is necessary for a "relationship," as is said in much speech in the contemporary USA, one can hear in such talk traces of a code of personhood, social relations, and strategic action (Philipsen et al., 2005). Proposition 3 also says that words and expressions about communicative conduct, and the notions they imply about persons, social relations, and strategic action, are distinctive across cultures (Philipsen et al., 2005).

There is a substantial body of evidence in support of Proposition 3, published in the years since the proposition was first formulated. Much of this evidence can be traced directly to the use of speech codes theory as an orienting perspective, as shown in recent studies from multiple contexts, languages, and speech communities (Hart, 2012). Further evidence has been published under the inspiration of cultural discourse theory.

Proposition 4 The significance of speaking is contingent upon the speech codes used by interlocutors to constitute the meanings of communicative acts.

Proposition 4 is concerned with the use (and force) of speech codes in the production and interpretation of utterances in social interaction. Proposition 4 addresses how a participant in social interaction might interpret her or his own and others' communicative acts. Does a speaker's speech or silence, or movement of the eyebrow, count as a communicative act or as mere behavior, and, if as a communicative act, what is the speaker saying through that act and how is it experienced by an interlocutor? Proposition 4 states that what a given behavior counts as for a receiver and interpreter of it is contingent upon the speech code that the interpreter uses to construe it as one sort of action or another.

The evidence for Proposition 4 is based on several ethnographies of speaking conducted prior to the first formulation of speech codes theory (e.g., Katriel & Philipsen 1981). Subsequent studies include those of Coutu (2000, 2008), Covarrubias (2002), and others.

Proposition 5 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.

Proposition 5 addresses how speech codes influence communicative conduct; specifically, it states that (1) participants in communicative events draw from a speech code or speech codes notions and terminology to label, interpret, explain, evaluate, justify, and shape their own and others' communicative actions; and (2) the rhetorical force

of such use of speech codes is contingent upon the coherence, social legitimacy, and rhetorically artful use, of the code(s) so employed.

Proposition 5 rests on research that shows that speakers can be successful in shaping how people talk about the intelligibility, prudence, and morality of communicative conduct. Proposition 5 also shows why efforts to get people to talk about the intelligibility, prudence, and morality of conduct have the results that they do: These results depend on the nature of the code used, how artful the user is in using it to shape her own or others' conduct, and the perceived propriety of problematizing apparent rule violations in face-to-face interaction (e.g., Coutu, 2008; Philipsen, 1992; Philipsen et al., 2005).

Coutu's (2008) study of the social drama around the publication of Robert McNamara's memoir *In Retrospect* offers a rare application of Proposition 5 to an empirical case. It provides detailed evidence how McNamara and his critics deployed the resources of two dueling speech codes in "evaluating, justifying, and interpreting the communication taking place" (p. 404). It also indicates the careful approach required to capture the dynamics of such rhetorical deployment of speech codes in this kind of analysis: "The social drama appears to be a linear progression of one comment after another. That appearance, however, is deceiving. The discussion between McNamara and his respondents was dynamic, with each side continuing to assert its perspective" as part of a complex process of negotiating the meanings, to each side, of the various actions deployed, and the rules and principles invoked (p. 397). Coutu's study is a paradigm of using speech codes theory to analyze highly nuanced discursive situations and to investigate the dynamic processes of rule use, rule negotiation, and rule interpretation.

Empirical evidence of various types supports the claim that people experience a great deal of social pressure to make their behavior conform to social codes. A great deal of empirical evidence shows that people who pay lip service to a cultural code do not always use it to guide and interpret their conduct, and there are several explanations for the evident slippage between culture and conduct: open texture, essential incompleteness, internal inconsistency in implications for action, indeterminacy, and multiplicity in the lifeworld (Philipsen, 1992) of cultural codes.

PROPOSITION 6 The terms, rules, and premises of a speech code are inextricably woven into speaking itself.

Where should one look or listen for evidence of a speech code? Proposition 6 directs us to observe communicative conduct, because symbols, meanings, premises, and rules about communicative conduct are woven into it. Furthermore, this proposition directs the observer to pay attention to particular things: (1) metapragmatic words and expressions (e.g., words and expressions about communicative conduct); (2) the use of metapragmatic words and expressions in consequential interactive moments (rhetorical moments, one might say); (3) contextual patterns of communicative conduct, such as those that can be noticed and described in the terms of Hymes's (1974) descriptive framework; and (4) such special forms of communicative conduct as rituals, myths, and social dramas.

Proposition 6 was built by learning from the published experiences of ethnographers of speaking, who have discovered and formulated speech codes on the basis of their experience. It is proposed in such a way as to be available for critique and revision, that is, it requires one to learn from the experiences of ethnographers of speaking who, using the framework, report in their studies ways to challenge its adequacy or to improve it by making it more parsimonious or more adequate to bona fide cases of inquiry.

Philipsen, Katriel, and Carbaugh (see Philipsen, 1992) were instrumental in developing the strategy, initially suggested by Hymes, of attending to cultural vocabularies as a site for finding the deployment of culturally distinctive speech codes. Katriel and Philipsen (1981), Katriel (1986), and Philipsen (1992, Chapter 5) were instrumental in the construction of the portion of descriptive strategy that relies on the use of such cultural forms as ritual, myth, and social drama as heuristic aids in the discovery and formulation of particular speech codes. Philipsen put together the various elements of the strategy, and these are constructed in speech codes theory as an integrative framework in Philipsen (1997).

Assessment of speech codes theory

One of the purposes of the creation of speech codes theory was to supply a framework and a rationale for finding and formulating "those means of speaking whose use, in a particular community, have meaning potential for those who use and experience them, and to specify what that meaning potential is" (Philipsen & Coutu, 2005, p. 361). Since the publication of Philipsen's (1997) explication of the theory, there have been hundreds of scholars who invoke speech codes theory as motivating and informing in situ studies of speech codes. Many studies use speech codes theory in only an incidental way; but recently there has been an upswing in the number of studies that use speech codes theory as the principal investigative framework or as the principal explanatory resource (or both). Examples are studies of the use of the term "citizen" as a coded political keyword in US public discourse, studies of public drama of wide and deep significance in the political life of the United States, studies of remedial interchanges of Japanese visiting students with their United States hosts, studies of science communication, and studies of cross-cultural online learning.

A second purpose for the creation of speech codes theory was the empirical testing and development of the original four "principles" of the theory (Philipsen, 1992). These four were expanded in Philipsen (1997) through the addition of what here is numbered as Proposition 5, a sixth proposition (here, Proposition 2) being added in response to empirical critiques found in Coutu (2000) and Covarrubias (2002). This is testimony to the active response to the theory and to the resultant modifications in its propositional composition.

SEE ALSO: Community of Practice; Context; *Dugri*; Editor's Introduction; Ethnography of Communication; Interactional Sociolinguistics; Sociocultural Linguistics; Speech Act Theory; Speech Community

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