proceedings

1980 ABCA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

UNFURLING COMMUNICATION'S COLORS IN THE 80'S

sam j. bruno, editor

School of Business & Public Administration
University of Houston at Clear Lake City
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PREFACE

Forty-five years is a long time for a love affair, but that is how long ABCAers have been ardent suitors of the ABCA's annual conference. This year's conference was held in Washington, D.C., December 27-30, 1980, at the Capital Hilton Hotel. And these proceedings represent the written record of the 6th International and 45th Annual National Convention of the American Business Communication Association.

The mood of the Nation's Capital was reflected in the conference theme, "Unfurling Communication's Colors in the 1980's."

Concern with communication in the '80's was mirrored in the variety and depth of papers presented at the meeting. The discussion included proven topics as well as new ones and growing recognition that competence in communication skills can greatly benefit those who will be the managers of tomorrow. Despite some changes in the "state of the art," the basic objectives of communication instruction remain as important today as they have in the past. An understanding of communication and its role in business and society makes a vital contribution for preparing students to meet the needs of today's business world. Without question, the skills of business writing and speaking can be used to progress more rapidly in organizational settings.

My task as editor was exceedingly interesting, sometimes very trying, and always challenging. Nearly all contributors to these proceedings provided camera ready manuscripts. One or two papers required retyping to achieve uniform style and presentation. Thus, full responsibility is assumed for any and all mistakes that might appear in these papers. Except for minor changes necessitated by typographical errors in manuscripts and other obvious errors, I avoided making any alterations to this collection of papers.

The sequencing of articles in these proceedings does not correspond to the conference program. The order chosen reflects my best effort at creating coherence from the diversity of titles listed in the program.

Papers in Part I are devoted to curriculum innovations and changes. A number of papers in this area are concerned with developing communication courses which bridge the gap between classroom instruction and business practices.

Part II is a representative sample of organizational communication, including discussion of intergroup research, research on manager's leadership style and communication style, upwards communication, and employee communications. The articles in Part III are indicative of the

variables that intervene in the communication process. This section discusses ways language changes and grows, the ethical use of language, communication barriers, and the power of the Flesch Reading Ease Formula.

The articles appearing in these proceedings were selected with the advice of six reviewers. They used seven major criteria or factors in evaluating this collection of papers. The factors used in evaluating these papers were: (1) overall significance of the paper, (2) interest to ABCA members, (3) research problem, (4) research design, (5) method of analysis, (6) usefulness of results, and (7) publishability of the paper. These standards were applied to all papers, thus assuring each paper was evaluated equitably and objectively.

An undertaking of this magnitude deserves the acknowledgment of many persons. Besides the obvious contribution on the part of those whose papers are included in this volume, thanks must go to Professors C. Glenn Pearce, General Chairperson, Alfred B. Williams, Associate General Chairperson, and R. Jon Ackley, Assistant General Chairperson.

I am indebted to Professors Alfred B. Williams, Patricia A. Wells, Gretchen N. Vik, Raymond V. Lesikar, and Herbert W. Hildebrandt for reviewing conference papers and meeting some rather tight deadlines.

Thanks also to Rosemary Pledger, Dean of the School of Business and Public Administration, for providing some needed funds to employ secretarial help. Rosemary's continued support in professional and research oriented activities is greatly appreciated. Finally, with gratitude I acknowledge the assistance of Cathy Penn. She carefully proofread the entire volume, retyped manuscripts, and prepared prefatory pages.

Additional copies of these proceedings may be obtained from ABCA's national office.

Sam J. Bruno
Editor

University of Houston at Clear Lake City
October, 1980

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PROGRAM

AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

6th INTERNATIONAL AND 45th ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

December 27-30, 1980

Capital Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1980

1:00-2:30

GENERAL SESSION — Congressional Room

Chairperson	Lilian Feinberg, 1980 President, ABCA Iowa State University
Greetings	C. Glenn Pearce, Chairperson 1980 ABCA Convention Virginia Commonwealth University
	Ronald Smith, Dean, School of Business Georgetown University
	Taro Kondo, Director, JBEA, Kansai Region
	Gloria N. Wilson, Chairperson 1981 ABCA Convention Arizona State University
Keynote Speaker	Richard Mitchell, Editor The Underground Grammarian Glassboro, New Jersey, State College
Topic	"Less Than Words Can Say"
Presider	Harvey Goslee, Wilton, Connecticut

3:00-3:40

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speakers	Jean Voyles, Georgia State University Andrea Wise, Macon Junior College

Topic	"Communication in the Office of the Future"
Presider	Leland Brown, Eastern Michigan University
Coordinator	Mariellen M. Naudeck, Purdue University

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speaker	Robert L. Rings, Boston University
Topic	"The Practitioner and the Student: Facing 1980's Communication Issues Together"
Presider	Jean W. Vining, University of New Orleans
Coordinator	L. W. Denton, Auburn University

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	John W. Gould, University of Southern California
Topic	"Practices and Problems in International Business Communication"
Presider	Pat Wells, Oregon State University
Coordinator	James W. Hill, Pennsylvania State University

3:45-4:25

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speakers	Gloria N. Wilson, Vice-President-West, ABCA Arizona State University John C. Tootle, Arizona State University
Topic	"Measuring Learning in Business Communication"
Presider	Binford H. Peeples, Memphis State University
Coordinator	Carolyn Schneider, Aiken Technical College

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speaker	Patricia Marcum Grogg, Illinois State University
Topic	"Adults and Their Fear of Writing: How to Handle It in the Classroom and in Consulting"
Presider	Daniel Dieterich, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point
Coordinator	Pat Pearson, Iowa State University

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Florence B. Grunkemeyer, Ball State University
Topic	"The Status of Undergraduate and Graduate Communication Courses: A Research Survey"
	and
Speaker	Robert C. Tesch, Sr., University of Georgia
Topic	"Preferred Content in a Business Communication Course As Rated by Members of ABCA and AACSB"
Presider	John M. Penrose, University of Texas at Austin
Coordinator	Gertrude A. Butera, State University of New York, Alfred

4:30-5:10

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speaker	Ann T. Viviano, Pace University
Topic	"The Role of Nonverbal Communication in Business"
Presider	David N. Bateman, Southern Illinois University
Coordinator	Marilyn B. Silver, Delaware Technical and Community College

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speaker	Phillip A. Sinclair, University of Toledo
Topic	"The English Language in the Year 2000"
Presider	Vanessa Dean Arnold, University of Mississippi
Coordinator	Ross F. Figgins, California State Polytechnic Univ.

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Robert W. Rasberry, Southern Methodist University
Topic	"Maximizing Communication Learning Opportunities in Business Schools"
Presider	Mildred W. Landrum, Kennesaw College
Coordinator	John Pauly, Fordham University

MONDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1980

8:30-9:10

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Panel Discussion	"A Business Writing Program for the Eighties: The Purdue Model"
Chairperson	Herbert W. Hildebrandt, ABCA Vice-President-Midwest, University of Michigan
Coordinator	Jeanne W. Halpern, Purdue University
Respondent	Michael P. Beary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.
Panel Members	Melissa E. Barth, Purdue University Janet Callaway, Purdue University David Paul Ewing, Purdue University June Ferrill, Houston Baptist University Sarah Liggett, Purdue University Jane C. Thielman, Univ. of Wisconsin, River Falls

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speakers	C. Kendrick Gibson,and F. H. Boghossian, University of Wisconsin, LaCrosse
Topic	"Impact of Frame of Reference Upon Communication in International Business Activities with Third World Developing Countries"
Presider	Richard C. Huseman, University of Georgia
Coordinator	Hilda M. Jones, Oregon State University

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Phillip V. Lewis, ABCA Vice-President-Southwest Oklahoma State University
Topic	"Leadership Styles and Communicative Climate"
Presider	Kathleen A. Kelly, Babson College
Coordinator	Mark Bernheim, Miami University

9:15-10:00

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Panel Discussion	"A Business Writing Program for the Eighties: The Purdue Model"-continued-see Session A, 8:30-9:10 for list of participants

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speakers	Michael J. Rossi, Western Michigan University Lynn A. Hance, Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Co., Detroit, Michigan
Topic	"Specialized Markets for Business Communication: Communication for Accountants"
	and
Speaker	Wayne A. Losano, University of Florida
Topic	"Problems in Accounting Communication"
Presider	Martha H. Rader, Arizona State University
Coordinator	J. Douglas Andrews, Univ. of Southern California

SESSION C — South American Room

Speakers	Esther R. Blumenfeld, Researcher-Writer, Atlanta, Georgia Lynne Alpern, Freelance Writer, Atlanta, Georgia Mark Carroll, Chief, Professional Publications, National Park Service and President, Society for Scholarly Publishing, Washington, D.C.
Topic	"So You Want to Write a Book?"
Presider	Morris Philip Wolf, Author and Consultant, Augusta, Georgia
Coordinator	Mildred Landrum, Kennesaw College

10:30-11:25

GENERAL SESSION — Congressional Room

Keynote Speaker	Louis M. Kohlmeier, Jr., Director, National Center for Business and Economic Communication, The American University, Washington, D.C.
Topic	"Business, the Media, and the Public: Communicating in the 1980's"
Presider	Lois J. Bachman, ABCA Vice-President-East, Community College of Philadelphia
Coordinator	C. Gilbert Storms, Miami University

11:30-12:10

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speaker	William James Buchholz, Bentley College
Topic	"How to Succeed in Business-Without Really Writing"
Presider	Norma Carr-Ruffino, San Francisco State University
Coordinator	Donald Skarzenski, Framingham State College

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speakers	Warren S. Blumenfeld, Georgia State University Esther R. Blumenfeld, Researcher-Writer, Atlanta, Georgia
Topic	"Readability of the 1980 Democratic and Republican Platforms: An Assessment and Comparison with 1976"
Presider	Leah Grubbs, The University of Texas at Austin
Coordinator	Kevin J. Brady, Dynalectron Corp., McLean, Va.

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Steven Zachary Rothmel, Iowa State University
Topic	"Writing Anxiety: Causes and Effects"
Presider	Sue Lorch, University of South Carolina, Aiken
Coordinator	Gerald Lathan, Memphis State University

1:30-2:10

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUPS — Presidential Ballroom

Presider	Doris D. Engerrand, ABCA Vice-President-Southeast Georgia College
Coordinator	R. Jon Ackley, Virginia Commonwealth University
Table 1	Pearl G. Aldrich, PGA Associates, Arlington, VA "On-the-Job Writers: A Profile"
Table 2	Joe Barnard, Manager, EDP TITAN Systems International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Washington, D.C. "Electronic Media (TITAN) and Communication"
Table 3	H. Nelson Fitton, Chief, Publishing Center Office of Governmental and Public Affairs U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. "Publishing Management"

Table 4	Annette D. Harbaugh, University of Maryland, University College "Course Planning through a Survey of Adult Students"
Table 5	Marya Withey Holcombe, Yale School of Organization and Management "Writing Program for Graduate Management Students for Whom English is a Second Language"
Table 6	Lawrence A. Lee, National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C. "Computers and Communication"
Table 7	Kitty O. Locker, University of Illinois "Factors in Reader Response to Negative Messages"
Table 8	Judy Steiner McClain, Indiana University "Classroom Procedures: Increase Teaching Time-Decrease Grading Time"
Table 9	Robert J. Myers, Baruch College "Corporate Advocacy 1979-1980: Who, What, Where, Why?"
Table 10	Leonard P. Oliver, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. "The Humanities in National Life: The Decade Ahead"
Table 11	Pat Pearson, Iowa State University "But That's Not What I Meant!"
Table 12	Lynn T. Reynolds, The University of Texas at Austin "Research As the Basis of the Behavioral Communication Course: A Laboratory Approach"
Table 13	Carolyn Schnieder, Aiken Technical College "Understanding Language: A Writing Strategy"
Table 14	Marilyn B. Silver, Delaware Technical and Community College "Business Communication: A Community College Approach"
Table 15	Pat Wells, Oregon State University "Teaching Conference Techniques"

2:15-3:15

GENERAL SESSION — Presidential Ballroom

Keynote Speaker	Robert Orben, Humor Consultant and Editor of "Orben's Current Comedy" and "Orben's Comedy Fillers," Arlington, VA

Topic	"The Humor of Business-The Business of Humor"
Presider	E. Rennie Charles, ABCA First Vice-President Ryerson Polytechnical Institute
Coordinator	Jean W. Vining, University of New Orleans

3:45-4:25

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUPS — Presidential Ballroom

Presider	Doris D. Engerrand, ABCA Vice-President Southeast, Georgia College
Coordinator	R. Jon Ackley, Virginia Commonwealth University
Table 1	Gerald J. Alred, Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Mohan R. Limaye, Univ. of Texas at Austin Diana C. Reep, University of Akron "Early and Unusual Works"
Table 2	Mark Bernheim, Miami University "'Style' in Writing"
Table 3	L. W. Denton, Auburn University "In-House Programs in Written Communication: Forty Years in the Wilderness"
Table 4	H. Nelson Fitton, Chief, Publishing Center, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. "Publishing Management"
Table 5	James W. Hill, Pennsylvania State University "How to Teach a Course in Technical or Business Writing That is Relevant to the Students' Professional Fields"
Table 6	Hilda M. Jones, Oregon State University "Use of Videotaping in the Business Communication Class"
Table 7	Kathleen A. Kelly, Babson College "Writing Instructions for the MBA Candidate"
Table 8	Linda S. Lambert, Western Michigan University Joel P. Bowman, Western Michigan University Patricia E. Matlock, Western Michigan University "Adding Practical Experience to a Business Communication Curriculum"
Table 9	Lawrence A. Lee, National Science Foundation Washington, D.C. "Computers and Communication"

Table 10	Leonard P. Oliver, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. "The Humanities in National Life: The Decade Ahead"
Table 11	A. E. Verrept, Kathleen Hart, Akio Hayaski, and Lilian Feinberg Panel Discussion with Representatives from Belgium, Canada, Japan, and the United States "International Business Communication"
Table 12	John M. Penrose, University of Texas at Austin "For Job Recruitment: Important Subject Areas Outside a Student's Major"
Table 13	Judith Stein, Yale School of Organization and Management "Correlation Between Selected Variables and Ability to Write a Well-Organized Memo"
Table 14	Donna Stine, Iowa State University "Writing Personnel Evaluations"
Table 15	Lionel D. Wyld, Head, Writing Division, Naval Underwater Systems Center, Newport, R.I. "Writer/Editor Internships: Proving Ground for Young Professionals"

4:30-5:10

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speaker	P. K. Ebert, Millikin University
Topic	"Women and the Art of Organizational Politics"
Presider	Randy E. Cone, University of New Orleans
Coordinator	Vanessa Dean Arnold, University of Mississippi

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speaker	Ed Goodlin, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Topic	"Effects of Mass Media upon Written Communications"
Presider	Mariellen M. Naudeck, Purdue University
Coordinator	Jerome Curry, Pennsylvania State University

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Larry R. Smeltzer, Louisiana State University
Topic	"Critical Skills That Should Be Used for Upward Communication"
Presider	Hilda Allred, University of Rhode Island
Coordinator	Frank Jaster, Tulane University

6:00-7:30

RECEPTION (Cash Bar) — Congressional Room

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1980

8:30-10:00

PRESIDENT'S BREAKFAST — Presidential Ballroom

Chairperson	Kathleen Hart, ABCA Vice-President-Canada New Brunswick Community College
Keynote Speaker	Lilian Feinberg, 1980 ABCA President Iowa State University
Topic	"Once Over Lightly"
Presider	Arno F. Knapper, University of Kansas
Charge d' affaires	C. Jeanne Lewis, Fayetteville State Univ.

10:30-11:10

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speakers	Teri Kwal Gamble, College of New Rochelle Michael W. Gamble, New York Inst. of Technology
Topic	"Handling Interpersonal Conflict in the Organization"
Presider	Sydel Sokuvitz, Babson College
Coordinator	Jerome Curry, Pennsylvania State University

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speakers	Julie Stusrud Held, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis Margaret Goodman Burns, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis
Topic	"Marketing Your Academic Skills: Actions and Issues"

Presider	J. Douglas Andrews, Univ. of Southern California
Coordinator	Martha H. Rader, Arizona State University

SESSION C — South American Room

Speakers	Paul R. Timm, Brigham Young University R. Wayne Pace, Brigham Young University Brent D. Peterson, Brigham Young University
Topic	"Activating Citizen Representation in Government Policy Decisions"
Presider	Marilyn B. Silver, Delaware Technical and Community College
Coordinator	Dan H. Swenson, Western Michigan University

11:15-12:00

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speaker	Kermit G. Palmer, ABCA Vice-President-Northwest, Eastern Washington University
Topic	"Synergy Technique for Improving Communication"
Presider	Annette D. Harbaugh, University of Maryland, University College
Coordinator	Binford H. Peeples, Memphis State University

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speaker	A. E. Verrept, University of Antwerp Antwerp, Belgium
Topic	"Experimenting with a Fixed Plan for Discussing Letters and Reports"
Presider	Lionel D. Wyld, Head, Writing Division, Naval Underwater Systems Center, Newport, R.I.
Coordinator	Shirly Kuiper, University of South Carolina, Columbia

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Stan Wollman, St. John's University
Topic	"Starting Your Own Consulting Practice"
Presider	Pat Pearson, Iowa State University
Coordinator	John M. Penrose, University of Texas at Austin

1:30-2:10

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speaker	John Louis DiGaetani, Hofstra University
Topic	"Teaching Reading Skills in Business Communication Classes"
Presider	Carolyn Schneider, Aiken Technical College
Coordinator	David N. Bateman, Southern Illinois University

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speaker	Denise R. Mier, Baruch College, CUNY
Topic	"Executive Level Training in Public Communication"
Presider	Ross F. Figgins, California State Polytechnic Univ.
Coordinator	Leah Grubbs, University of Texas at Austin

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Sheryl S. Pearson, Univ. of Michigan, Dearborn
Topic	"RX for Writer's Block"
Presider	James M. Lahiff, University of Georgia
Coordinator	Sue Lorch, University of South Carolina, Aiken

2:15-3:00

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speaker	Norman B. Sigband, Univ. of Southern California
Topic	"Employee Feedback: Threat or Necessity?"
Presider	Hilda M. Jones, Oregon State University
Coordinator	Dan H. Swenson, Western Michigan University

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speakers	Iris I. Varner, Illinois State University Carson H. Varner, Jr., Illinois State Univ.
Topic	"Who is Qualified to Teach Business Communication?"
Presider	Gerald Lathan, Memphis State University
Coordinator	Annette D. Harbaugh, University of Maryland University College

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Eric E. Matthiesen, Creighton University
Topic	"Issues and Theories in Intergroup Communication"
Presider	Gertrude A. Butera, State University of New York, Alfred
Coordinator	Jack D. Eure, Southwest Texas State University

3:30-4:10

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speaker	Steven Golen, Louisiana State University
Topic	"The Effects of Communication Theory on Students' Perceptions of Communication Barriers"
Presider	Judy Steiner McClain, Indiana University
Coordinator	Robert L. Baker, Virginia Commonwealth University

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speaker	Richard L. McGuire, MacMurray College
Topic	"Can We teach Ethics? We Do Teach Ethics!"
Presider	Shirley Kuiper, Univ. of South Carolina, Columbia
Coordinator	John Pauly, Fordham University

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Jeremiah H. Sullivan, University of Washington
Topic	"The Power of the Flesch Reading Ease Formula"
	and
Speaker	Helen J. Schwartz, Oakland University
Topic	"Teaching Stylistic Simplicity with 'Readability' Formulas"
Presider	Kevin J. Brady, Dynalectron Corp., McLean, VA
Coordinator	Norma Carr-Ruffino, San Francisco State Univ.

4:15-5:00

SESSION A — Pan American Room

Speakers	Bella G. Clinkscale, Cleveland State University Kenneth R. Mayer, Cleveland State University
Topic	"Developing Dictation Competencies in Collegiate Business Communication Courses"
Presider	Frank Jaster, Tulane University
Coordinator	Sydel Sokuvitz, Babson College

SESSION B — Senate Room

Speaker	Ron Dulek, University of Alabama
Topic	"An Analysis of State Agency Correspondence"
Presider	Pearl G. Aldrich, PGA Associates, Arlington, VA
Coordinator	C. Gilbert Storms, Miami University

SESSION C — South American Room

Speaker	Marie E. Flatley, San Diego State University
Topic	"A Comparative Analysis of the Written Communication Competencies Necessary at Various Organizational Levels of Management in the Private Business Sector"
Presider	Donald Skarzenski, Framingham State College
Coordinator	Dorothy Bernd Williams, Vicore, Inc., Arlington, VA

PART I
CURRICULUM INNOVATIONS AND CHANGES

THE PRACTITIONER AND THE STUDENT: FACING 1980's COMMUNICATION ISSUES TOGETHER

Robert L. Rings, Boston University

ABSTRACT

Academicians and communication practitioners have been concerned with bridging the gap between classroom instruction and business practices. In response to this need, the Boston University School of Public Communication has a course designed to directly expose students to business communicator work environments and the social issues to which they must be responsive.

Student teams visit and study communication departments of organizations such as Polaroid, Boston Edison, TRW, New England Telephone, Honeywell and General Electric. Managers, directors and vice presidents bring case situations for student analysis and discussion in class. Issues faced together include employee resources; product integrity; hazardous waste disposal; and, business-government relations.

CLARIFYING THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION DIRECTORS

Academicians and business communicators are concerned with bridging the gap between classroom instruction and business communication practices [7]. In response to this need, Boston University's School of Public Communication has a course that facilitates close contact between students and practitioners in studying business communication and public issues. First, the need is clarified by summarizing a selective review of the literature followed by the description of the course.

Public Expectation Trends

Business survival is predicated on the support from its external and internal publics. As Max Ways, a member of Fortune's Board of Editors noted, "A business in the formation of policy has to pay attention to outside views of what the public interest demands. As business seeks to improve its communication, its first need is to

understand that the public relations problem arises primarily out of the basic trend of modern life which business itself has promoted" [14, xxvii]. Carl Madden, economist and futurist, argued that the public will judge corporations on their social responsibility in the traditional market place, in serving "public needs" and in achieving non-economic values deemed important by society [1].

Business's Oversight or Misdirection

Unfortunately, American businessmen are "out of touch and poorly informed although well intentioned" concerning many consumer and worker demands [3]. A survey of 1,143 key executives was conducted by Louis Harris and Associates. The results showed that business misunderstood product and employee safety, worker's compensation and health insurance [3, p. 3]. Yet many businessmen recoil bitterly at the intrusion of Government's regulation and legislation which evolves partly through business not being in touch [3]. Government intervention becomes the means through which frustrated publics influence business's attention to their demands. According to Roger D'Aprix, noted professional communicator and author,

> The notion of government as a rentless adversary will have to change. ...In its place must come ...the understanding that the public has the right to try to influence the corporation through the political process as well as the market place [1].

Although the consumer publics generally get most of the attention, "the corporation's most neglected public -- in terms of communications -- are its own employees," asserted Harold Burson, Chairman of Burson-Marsteller [5, p. 1]. Burson noted that business's employee communications generally do not openly discuss business-related public issues with the employees. Yet he cited where some corporations have opened up the communication lines through speak-up columns in company papers, telephone hot lines and letters. In a few cases bottom line statistics revealed positive results in reduced absenteeism and turnover and increased off-the-street job applicants [5].

In clarifying the communicator's role, the macro-environment has been discussed relating the actual situation to the desired condition. But what are the specific expectations of the Chief Executive Officers and the professional communicators?

A CEO's Expectation of the Professional Communicator

Reginald Jones, Chief Executive Officer of General Electric Company expects the following from professional communicators: integrity, accuracy, thorough research skills, professional writing skills, and vigorous advocacy of the company's interest, in the context of the public interest, productivity, understanding issues, sophistication and business sense [15]. "Business sense" is essential because "no amount of language skill can disguise a certain emptiness, a feeling that something is being lost in the translation, in the work of a corporate communicator who hasn't learned to feel at home with finance, economics, technology, and -- today -- politics" [15, p. 4].

Business has become involved in the formation of public policy through lobby and candidacy support. The communication channels to various corporate constituencies -- employee, customers, share owners, community neighbors, the media -- are being employed to build support for the views of management on issues of importance to business. It's the task of corporate communicators to understand those issues and present them in terms that have meaning to the audiences addressed [15, p. 4].

What Communication Professionals Must Do

According to D'Aprix organizations must be more responsive to human values [2]. He acknowledged the significance of becoming proactive (anticipating the public's concern) and counseling management about the importance of reciprocity in the communication process.

D'Aprix asserted that one must confront the system responsibly and calmly, capably showing that one knows what she/he is talking about [1]. Professional communicators may constructively criticize the system if they have taken the initiative to show practical alternative positions or plans.

Hussein Shatshat offers more of a cross-sectional view of what must be done. He conducted a comparative study of the present and ideal roles of communication directors in selected business organizations. A few recommendations (relevant to this article) resulting from the survey of 106 randomly selected organizations are the following:

1. Efforts should be made to have communication directors become more involved in determining major policies related to developing and maintaining company-wide communication systems. Communication directors should be fully utilized in the improvement of the organizational communication system and given sufficient authority to supervise all phases of its operation.

2. Consideration should be given to the training needs of communication directors so that they may become better equipped to deal with organizational communication problems.

3. There is a need to coordinate the efforts of educational institutions and industry on the educational needs of prospective communication directors. The expectations of the business community and training programs in the academic world must be reconciled in order to better prepare communication specialists for jobs in industry.

4. Consideration should be given to an examination and evaluation of organizational as well as employee communication needs [11, p. 62].

What Academicians Are Doing

A Harris Poll of college students a few years ago showed that 61 percent thought the profit motive was unnecessary and 85 percent felt there was virtually no competition in big business [12, p. 19]. Such lack of understanding in the average student is bad enough, but for those planning to pursue business communication careers it is unacceptable as implied in the expectations of Jones and D'Aprix and the recommendations of Shatshat.

These Harris Poll results were the backdrop for Keith Shelton, North Texas State University, as he developed a business unit concerning how a business works in his course for pre-professional communication students. His course module encompasses money and its history, the stock market and how it works, economic indicators, the government's role in business and economics and the initial unit on the "workings of a business" [12].

John Rippey, Pennsylvania State University, found that very few schools of journalism offer business reporting. His course relied on local businessmen, business educators and editors as classroom resources for increasing his students' appreciation for the business world [6]. The course involved individual speaker and panel formats with plenty of opportunity for discussion. Rippey did not attempt to teach economics but did hope that his students would be motivated to take "bona fide" economics courses and follow business stories in national publications.

An experience based learning approach was used by John Ruhe, Notre Dame, in his business communication course. Round table type class setting facilitated open discussions and experiential exercises were significant teaching tools. Just as Shelton and Rippey reached

out to the business sector, Ruhe asked business leaders, recruiters and recent graduates to help the students understand the communication needs and realities in the business world. He noted, "Visits to an outstanding chapter of Toastmasters International reinforced many of the earlier learnings. Bankers, realtors, attorneys, and other business leaders supported the 'learning by doing' focus...and set the stage for the realization that skill development in communications is a life-long experience" [9, pp. 22-23].

If you do not have the expert resources needed, one can go to the experts, and this is what Timothy O'Keefe, Florida Technological University, did. O'Keefe's pre-professionals traveled to New York and Washington for a week-long seminar trip [4]. During the week, the students met with distinguished nationally and internationally known communicators for their taste of real world problems and perspectives.

The corporate annual report, "pampered pet project of corporate communications departments," is the focus of study for William Ruch's business communication classes [8]. California State University-Sacramento students study its aesthetic format and content thoroughly. They are examined on their analysis of this corporate publication and report their evaluation orally to the class. Certainly, this is a practical method of bringing business perspective into the classroom.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY'S BUSINESS COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY COURSE

Boston University School of Public Communication's Business Communication and Society course covers business communicators' job responsibilities and their organization's management of the corporate social impact. Public issues referred to earlier by Ways, Madden, D'Aprix, Burson, Jones and Shatshat are focal points for the course.

Students are usually public relations or communication majors; many are organizational communication minors. There is also an economic behavior course offered for these majors as an elective just as the Business Communication and Society course is. Students range from having had no prior business oriented courses to those with some economics and/or marketing course experience.

There are two primary instructors for the course. One is an economist by academic training but is now a nationally renowned public relations spokesperson. This article's author is the other instructor and has experience as the internal communications manager within a Fortune 100 conglomerate and as an organizational development consultant for business and government. Although the course content is very similar under both instructors, the course description which follows

is distinctively the author's approach. This approach is heavily influenced by professional experience and the close association with distinguished professionals in the Industrial Communication Council, Inc. International Association of Business Communicators and the Yankee/IABC chapter.*

Course Objectives

1. Become familiar with "Business Communication," its function and scope within the business organization.

2. Gain insight into the critical issues between businesses and influential environmental forces.

3. Develop a basis for empathizing with those in the business community, thereby enabling effective business communication.

4. Become familiar with business communicators' roles, programs and employment opportunities.

Required Resource Readings

Roger M. D'Aprix's The Believable Corporation provides the philosophical basis of the course [1]. D'Aprix's book was written for CEOs and professional communicators to help crystalize the difference between conventional business communication and what the business communicators should be doing in light of the public trend toward social responsibility concerns. Students enjoy reading this "nonacademic" book because of its moderate readability level and many hypothetical yet realistic case situations illustrating D'Aprix's main points. The Believable Corporation is provocative and sets the stage

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*Industrial Communication Council, Inc., ICC, is composed of 235 managers, directors and vice presidents of corporate communication who are top policy decision makers. The focus is on communication issue strategies.

International Association of Business Communicators, IABC, is made up of managers, editors and other communication specialists. Primary focus is on technical skills.

Yankee/IABC Chapter is the New England chapter of approximately 150 public relations, employee communications, organizational development and marketing communications specialists of assorted managerial levels. This chapter's membership has been the prime resource group for the Business Communication and Society course.

for subsequent class discussions between the instructor and student and also the many guest resource leaders.

George C. Sawyer's Business and Society: Managing Corporate Social Impact and George A. Steiner's Casebook in Business and Society provide additional structure to the study of the business world's evolution and especially, the current environmental influences upon it. Steiner's cases are quite useful yet most cases studied in class are brought in by resource leaders for student analysis and exchange of views with the guest.

Course Content and Methodology

In an attempt to practice the philosophy being advocated in the course, channels of communication are opened wide by minimizing lecturing and maximizing the student's direct exposure to the situations and people under study.

During the first three 1½ hour sessions, the student's definitions of business communication and corporate social impact are tapped, then a panel of business communicators introduce their profession with a show-and-tell and question/answer session. Examples of organizations which have been represented in this panel are: Honeywell, New England Telephone, TRW, Star Market (grocery chain), Massachusetts Teachers Association and Boston Edison.

Following classroom sessions on the evolution of business and very basic corporate economics, The Believable Corporation is discussed, setting the stage for the assignment of three-person teams to "Big Brothers or Big Sisters". Business communicators and organizational development managers or directors agree to provide the team an opportunity to study in-depth how they implement their responsibilities and programs. The teams also review organizational reporting relationships, salary ranges and corporate efforts toward social responsibility. Teams meet with their respective liaisons at least twice and prepare a written report accompanied by organizational charts and examples of publications. The team describes the liaison's department's strengths and weaknesses. Each member notes if she/he would want the liaison's job or the job of any associates and briefly describes why. The assignment guidelines are in the Appendix.

Fortunately, the following wide cross-section of organizations have participated in the Big Brother/Big Sister Project: Polaroid; Sheraton Hotels; John Hancock Insurance; New England Mutual Life Insurance; Sweetheart Plastics; Gillette; and, General Electric plus the organizations listed as represented on the panel discussed earlier. Because each organization's communication system is quite different, each team shares its report orally with the class contributing more of

a cross-sectional perspective for all students. The project reports are given at the end of the course.

This project is the most appreciated part of the course. Not only do the students gain considerable insight into business communication operations and job opportunities but they also gain the chance to consider their host organization or be considered by the host for internships later -- great exposure for personal contacts.

The balance of the class revolves around either discussing cases from the Steiner book or relating critical issues covered by Sawyer's book to actual situations that guest resource leaders must manage. Guest resource leaders have ranged from managers to vice presidents -- from communication and personnel specialities to financial relations and civic affairs orientations. Issues debated and cases analyzed have involved corporate social auditing; consumer product safety; investor concerns; employee resource management and development; use of scarce physical resources; disposal of hazardous waste products; tax legislation and business-government relations. Of course, the business communicator's role in these issues is a constant concern throughout all sessions.

Over the course's 14 weeks, 20 outside resource leaders, including Big Brother/Big Sister Project liaisons, contribute to bridging any gap existing between academia and the business world.

Measurement of student performance is based on the report of D'Aprix's book, The Big Brother/Big Sister Project reports and two essay exams.

Summary: Business Communication and Society Course's Value

Certainly this course is a step in the direction of fulfilling Shatshat's study recommendations. It should help clarify what professional business and organizational communicators do and the different environments within which they work. Students are able to talk with professional communicators and non-communication executives about the public issues they face and why they approach them the way they do. Internship and job opportunity ideas should be enhanced.

Concerns of Ways, D'Aprix and Jones and Madden's predictions are addressed. Course methodology and philosophies similar to those of Shelton, Rippey, Ruhe, O'Keefe and Ruch are evident. Boston University's Business Communication and Society course brings the practitioner and student closer together in facing 1980's communication issues.

APPENDIX

CO 313

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION & SOCIETY PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS

The Business Communication Big Brother, Big Sister Project

Teams of Three
Written Report
Oral Report

You may choose the organization of your choice from those listed on the contact sheet handed out in class. You should contact the liaison by _____ to arrange for your first visit. You probably will need two visits. Final written and oral reports are due _____.

YOUR REPORT SHOULD CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

1. Describe your organiztion's place in society. What is its purpose and objectives? How does it accomplish this? Secure a corporate annual report of its financial position. If available, include the corporate annual reports devoted to employees and/or corporate contributions and community programs.

2. Describe the line of authority by providing an organization chart and noting how your Big Brother or Sister fits into the organization, who she/he reports to, and how his/her position relates to the top of the local organization. What is the total dollar amount of this section or department's budget?

3. Provide the salary range for the jobs within your Big Brother/Sister's department or section. Likewise, provide department goals, job description(s), and job performance appraisal forms or guidelines.

4. Identify the department or section's programs/activities in a visual matrix (as described in class). Procure as many samples of these activities as possible (i.e., a copy of the

newsletter, survey questionnaires, upward communication forms). For each program or activity briefly:

a. Describe the purposes and actions.

b. Identify the people, by title only, who are information sources and writers/producers and who are providing final approvals, etc.

c. Note the specific consumers/publics.

d. Describe method of dissemination, distribution, or implementation.

e. Acknowledge method of evaluating usefulness.

5. Does this organization publicly recognize any social responsibility for its existence? Does it address itself to any issues like the following: career path development planning for employees, management development programming, charitable contributions, taxes to community, rate of return on invested capital to stockholders, employee benefits, affirmative action, consumer protection policy, and "proactive" policy concerning use of scarce physical resources or elimination of production wastes (this may include environmental controls)? If it does, then describe in detail how <u>one of these</u> socially responsible actions is communicated to relevant public(s).

6. Delineate the strengths and weaknesses of the department as you see it.

7. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES: Would you take any of the jobs you learned about if you had the opportunity? Please provide your reasons. <u>This must be done on a separate page for and by each member of the team with his/her signature</u>.

8. Include a copy of your thank you letter to your Big Brother or Big Sister and the one page single spaced report you will include with that letter.

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MAXIMIZING COMMUNICATION LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN BUSINESS SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This paper starts with a discussion of the evident decline in writing skills of students in higher education. The focus then shifts to an examination of how business communication instructors can use new and unique ways to equip students with needed communication skills. A model program, that is currently being employed, is then described. This program uses both traditional and nontraditional forms of learning, blends an academic classroom and nonacademic service approach, and is economical to start and maintain.

INTRODUCTION

Recent findings show continued decline in the reading and writing skills of adults in the United States. A Ford Foundation report has concluded that skills once considered sufficient for an American to function adequately, are no longer sufficient [1]. A recent article in The Chronicle of Higher Education reinforced this finding. The College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) results showed that verbal scores continued to drop in 1979. The average score on the Test of Standard Written English has declined each year since it was introduced in 1975 [2].

This continuing downward spiral in verbal skills is being received not only with deep concern by academicians in the areas of English, communications and journalism, but with the proposal and establishment of new learning techniques which, hopefully, will meet the problem head-on.

English departments on scattered campuses across the nation are opening writing laboratories designed to help both their own enrolled students, and those in other departments, improve their writing skills. Business schools are also instigating new programs and courses to insure a more thorough learning of writing techniques than those often acquired in the common business communication's course. An example of this impetus for these new learning opportunities is coming from the business community. Business leaders realize employees they hire with technical skills often cannot communicate their knowledge to other people. As a result they are at a disadvantage to anticipate, create, organize for,

adapt to, and utilize change for personal and business advantages. Weak communication skills today can mean illiteracy tomorrow. Ford Foundation findings indicate that this inadequacy is a result of growing and complex demands of a technological society and have signaled that weak communication skills today may mean illiteracy tomorrow.

What does this mean for business communication instructors? It means that we must find new and unique ways to equip business students with skills we have thus far only minimally provided. It means that learning must be provided in not only a traditional format, but in a unique and all encompassing way. Instead of focusing on what to learn and the form of specific communication skills, we need to focus on each student and the skills he currently has. We then need to help students envision what they might become with improved skills, and provide them with the technique and know-how that will bring about improvement. Finally, we can provide continuing feedback that helps in the learning and unlearning process. The acquired flexibility that students will receive from this form of learning will help them anticipate and cope with change in the business environment.

Such learning cannot be accomplished in a completely traditional learning system. Likewise, instruction must be different. A standard teacher-dependent, information storing, grade-oriented, mechanistic, rote educational experience, will not work. Instead, students and faculty need freedom to learn in a variety of settings, an ability to participate in a variety of learning opportunities, and ways to make actual application of the learning.

While most business communication instructors probably have several "new and unique" teaching ideas tucked away in their minds, most recognize that money to sponsor new and improved programs is most difficult to come by. For that reason some institutions are helping foot the bill. The National Endowment for the Humanities has given the University of Kansas a grant which helped establish a writing lab for the entire university. Business organizations are also beginning to respond. Recently General Motors established a "Communication Skill Institute" with a grant to the Humanities Department at Michigan Tech University. The School will use the money to provide seminars for all faculty to help them better instruct the four modes of communication (speaking, writing, listening, reading) in each classroom.

The purpose of this paper is to describe a unique communication program that has been established at the Edwin L. Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist University. This program employs both traditional and nontraditional forms of learning, encompasses all four of the main modes of communication, makes use of a variety of learning styles by blending both an academic classroom and nonacademic service approach, and is economical to start and maintain. This program could easily serve as a model for other business schools.

THE PROGRAM

In the Edwin L. Cox School of Business (CSB), communication is viewed as a vital skill that each successful business person must possess. To equip students with the necessary skills, a new approach to communication learning has been adopted. This program has two parts: instructional opportunities and a support division. These parts offer students several options for developing concepts and skills.

INSTRUCTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The CSB communication curriculum is thorough yet flexible. Students can choose between a broadly covered lecture/application offering or a more narrowly focused laboratory setting. Currently the curriculum includes: (1) one three-hour undergraduate business communication course, (2) five one-hour undergraduate courses, and (3) three one-hour graduate courses. A rationale and description of each course follows.

A Three-Hour Undergraduate Business Communication Course

BA 3303 - Business Communications is for students who have had little exposure to the communication process and who desire a traditional classroom environment. The course develops concepts and skills in five different areas: informative and persuasive speeches; the writing of letters, memos, and reports; an employment interview; an examination of nonverbal behavior; the building of listening skills. The course meets for the entire semester and employs lecture/applications/ and tests.

Five One-Hour Undergraduate Communication Modules

These modules complement the three-hour course. They can be taken as: an introduction to each particular subject area, as a follow-up to the three hour course, or as a continuation of previous learning. Students may enroll in one or all of the modules. Each module is designed around learning objectives and none have prerequisities. A student enters each module at his or her level of ability and works on objectives that match their personally desired level of learning. If basic instruction is needed, students receive it prior to participation in the laboratory.

Standard textbooks and assignments are difficult to use since each student starts at a different point on the objective continuum. Consequently, all the modules employ a variety of books and handouts. To vary the subject matter actual assignments in other classes, or off-campus work requirements, can be substituted for the class assignments.

Each module is scheduled for maximization of learning and application. For example, the "Effective Reading" course is offered at the beginning of the semester and is completed in two weeks. The "Effective

Business Writing" module begins the third or fourth week. Thus, students employ their new reading skill when reading assignments are the heaviest. Likewise, new writing skills are available when written assignments are heaviest in other courses.

Each communication module incorporates the use of numerous action learning devices. These include: video recording, multimedia presentation, role-playing, and case analysis. The overriding attempt is to: present students with workable methods to use in changing their communication behavior and skill, provide each student with an understanding of his or her improvement, prescribe additional changes that are needed, and provide methods for accomplishing future improvement.

These modules are directed by a CSB faculty member and instructed by MBA candidates with degrees and/or work experience in communication areas, i.e., English, speech, journalism, or radio-television.

BA 3101 - Communicating by Oral Presentation places emphasis on developing and applying skills in preparation, presentation, and criticism of speeches in audience situations. Video recording and continuous student-teacher, student-student, feedback is provided.

BA 3102 - Communicating Through Group Presentations focuses on informative and persuasive group presentations and the proper use of verbal, nonverbal, and audio-visual aids.

BA 3103 - Communicating Through Effective Business Writing develops and applies effective written communication skills through the preparation of reports, proposals, letters and other business communiques.

BA 3104 - Communicating Through Effective Reading works on eliminating common reading problems, increasing current reading speed, and improving comprehension.

BA 3105 - Communicating Through Effective Listening examines listening behavior from both a skill and interpersonal viewpoint. Course objectives are: to build mental outlines, retain conversational content, improve recall, and go beyond mere words to "hear" what is being said with emotions and feelings.

Three One-Hour Graduate Communication Modules

The graduate communication modules are divided into three one-hour sessions for two reasons. First, some MBA candidates feel a need to improve in only one or two communication skill areas. A short one-hour, six-week, module easily provides that opportunity. Second, the CSB graduate program is divided into two-, three-, and four-hour courses. Consequently, candidates may need only one or two credit hours to round out their program. These one-hour modules meet the need.

The graduate courses are identical in content to their undergraduate counterparts.

BA 6113 - Communicating Through Oral Presentations carries the same description as BA 3101. BA 6114 - Communicating Through Group Presentations is the same as BA 3102. BA 6115 - Communicating Through Effective Business Writing has the same description as BA 3103.

This section described the instructional opportunities available for students in the CSB communication program. Attention will now be turned to the support division and its creative offerings.

SUPPORT DIVISION

The nonacademic support division operates under the heading of the "Communication Service." It was established in 1974 to offer the 1500 undergraduate and graduate business students an alternate means of improving their skills in the four basic modes of communication: speaking, writing, listening, and reading.

The service's offerings are divided into short courses and individual assistance. The purpose of the programming and activities found in both divisions is three-fold. First, they provide assistance to students when class schedules do not permit taking a one-, two-, or three-hour course. Second, the activities are offered in unique settings and at times conducive to learning. Third, whenever possible the information is presented in conjunction with other subject matter to enhance and augment true application.

Short Courses

The "Communication Service" offers several short programs for the CSB student body. Some are available on a regular basis; others are offered periodically. New programs are considered and offered as needs arise.

Effective Reading is by far the most popular short course. At least one section is held every month during the school year. Most sections close with a capacity of thirty participants. The program is offered on a Friday night/Saturday morning schedule for two back-to-back weeks. Special MBA and Executive MBA sessions are conducted during the orientation week.

The course uses the Xerox produced "Effective Reading" program. It takes twelve hours to complete and is offered to students at cost. Several hundred students have now taken the course and the evaluations and high enrollment show it is both popular and successful.

A limited number of spaces are reserved in each section for local business people. They enroll through the CSB's "Management Training Center" and pay a standard seminar fee. The profits from their enrollment are used by the "Communication Service" to purchase equipment and additional programs.

Strategies for Effective Listening has had moderate success. This course uses a relatively new Xerox produced program with the same name. It is four hours in length. Parts of the course are redundant, so the facilitator normally plays a major portion of the taped sequences and then adds discussion and exercises which augment the listening process.

Resume Writing and Interviewing Workshop originally was offered because other opportunities for learning how to write resumes, and to interview properly, were not available on campus. The workshop was dropped when the campus placement office assumed the responsibility.

The workshop content included a discussion of three different resume styles, examples of several applications and employment letters, and a mock job interview. MBA graduates and community executives were used as interviewers.

Principles for Better Writing is offered occasionally for MBA's during their orientation. Those who feel a necessity to learn improved writing techniques quickly attend the course. Several clear writing principles are examined, i.e., keeping sentences short, using action verbs, and writing to express...not to impress.

Exercises are also used in the workshop and a business case is explored and critiqued. All participants are encouraged to use the "Communication Service's" facilities during the year. Those with major writing problems maintain regular appointments throughout their candidacy.

Special Offerings

In addition to the short courses the service provides the following offerings.

Mini-lectures, on communication topics, are available for all CSB classes. Examples are: report writing, term paper organization, bibliography construction, proper footnoting, how to deliver an oral report, proper use of visual aids, and how to read an annual report. These talks take between 15-30 minutes and are tailored to the subject matter in each class. Presentations are made by "Communication Service" staff members at the request of the faculty. Each lecture focuses on how students can better communicate the academic content of the course.

Writing consultation accounts for over seventy-five percent of the service's work. This help in writing improvement is offered in two ways. Students may walk into the office and submit a copy of their writing for review. Or, individual faculty members can contract with the service to have the papers of their students evaluated.

First, all CSB students can submit any of their assigned papers for feedback and evaluation. The papers must be in finished form, typed, and submitted at least one week before the due date. After the evaluation is completed the student and staff member meet for an oral feedback session.

Staff members carefully evaluate the papers from a framework of overall ability to communicate. The papers are not edited or proofread in the technical sense. Instead, constructive comments are provided. If followed, and the proper changes made, the paper will be a more effective work. The following writing evaluation guide is used.

Quality and Content of Writing

- spelling
- grammar
- punctuation
- clarity
- conciseness of expression
- logic
- persuasiveness
- factual reporting
- accuracy

Professional Appearance

- neatness
- graphics
- ingenuity
- eye appeal
- creativity
- good taste

Second, assistance is available for any CBS faculty member who desires feedback for his entire class. He simply contacts the service, establishes a time for submitting papers, and receives a return date. Each student then submits two copies of his finished assignment. The faculty member grades one copy for content; the second copy is critiqued by the service. The same guidelines, listed above, are used for this evaluation. The service discourages the faculty from using the comments for grading purposes. All students are invited to stop by the service to discuss the evaluations. Individuals with extreme problems often work with the service throughout the year or are directed into the one-hour graduate or undergraduate writing courses.

The "Communication Service's" writing consultation work has had tremendous impact on the writing skills of CSB students. In the past, written evaluations on at least one project have been made for every full-time MBA candidate during his first semester. In addition, over 150 walk-in students were serviced and over 600 papers evaluated during the last academic year. Faculty and employers have commented on the improvement of the CSB graduates' writing skills.

Research guides give CSB students instruction on a variety of communication related problems. During the past four years ten guides have been authored. At least twice each year an order form is circulated to every faculty member and student. They can obtain the guides free by returning the form. The guides are listed below in order of their publication number.

1. "A Guide To The Use Of The SMU Library"
2. "A Bibliography Of Reference Works For Business"
3. "Selected Reference Tools"
4. "Footnote References and Bibliographical Entries"
5. "A Guide To Reading Annual Reports"
6. "A Guide To Outlining And Preparing Oral Presentations"
7. "Preparing Effective Written Reports"
8. "Spelling Guide"
9. "How To Write Resumes And The Accompanying Letters"
10. "A Guide To Footnote And Bibliographical Entries of Nonprint Materials"

Resume assistance on constructing and polishing employment resumes is provided year-round. Staff members carefully guide the students in remembering and listing events from their past, and then constructing the final product in the most attractive and persuasive way.

Oral presentation consultation is provided when students need assistance in preparing speeches or group presentations. A staff member is available to offer ideas and then to assist in videotaped practice sessions.

The above section has described the support division of the CSB's communication program. When combined with the instructional opportunities, they display a new approach to business communication programs. The CSB approach makes use of a variety of learning styles by blending both an academic classroom and nonacademic service approach. In addition, the program is economical to start and maintain.

At the present time the CSB program uses only one faculty member who teaches the academic offerings and directs the service operation. The "Communication Service" staff consists of several MBA candidates with degrees and/or work experience in communications areas, i.e., English or speech. The program has no budget but operates on profits received from the "Speed Reading" seminar when it is offered to the community.

This new approach to a business communications program has proved successful at Southern Methodist University and could serve as a model for other business schools.

FOOTNOTES

[1] "Illiteracy Gap Widening in U.S., Ford Study Shows," The Dallas Morning News, September 9, 1979, p. 23A.

[2] "Verbal, Math SAT Scores Decline to All-Time Low," The Chronicle of Higher Education, September 17, 1979, p. 6.

DEVELOPING DICTATION COMPETENCIES IN COLLEGIATE BUSINESS COMMUNICATION COURSES

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ABSTRACT

Work origination, emerging as a significant area in information processing in the modern business office, is a growing concern of business communication curriculum developers. This paper synthesizes the current research on word origination and dictation training. This provides the theoretical basis for recommending guidelines to instructors for designing a realistic and effective dictation training component in collegiate business communication courses.

INTRODUCTION

Word origination is emerging as an important area in information processing in the modern business office. It is also an important area for business communication curriculum development. However, relatively little research has been conducted on word origination or dictation competencies. Thus, a major question to be answered by business communication instructors is how do dictators interface with word processing personnel and procedures to create the input which is transcribed into the finished business document? Business communication instructors need to answer this question as designers of courses in written and oral business communication because persons providing the input into the word processing system must possess acceptable dictation competencies to realize the potential of the system.

The purpose of this study is to:

1) Review and synthesize the related word origination research

2) Suggest guidelines for implementing dictation training in business communication curricula

REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS OF RELATED LITERATURE

This survey of recent research on word origination and dictation competencies is intended to be a representative review of the most pertinent studies. Several studies related to word origination have been conducted during the 1970's However, few are concerned directly with the importance of dictation skills and the formal training related to these skills. Studies describing the use and convenience of longhand far outnumber those describing actual use of competencies as a basis for dictation training. The studies have been divided into four categories according to their major emphasis:

1. Word origination usage patterns
2. Correspondence cost
3. Dictation training
4. Dictation competency

Word Origination Usage Pattern

Archer and White in a survey of 108 college-trained secretaries found that 79 percent of the secretaries transcribed from handwritten copy. These secretaries were asked how much time of their day they actually spend in the four methods of dictation/transcription: (1) direct dictation, (2) Mechanical transcription devices, (3) handwritten copy, and (4) telephone dictation or direct to typewriter dictation.

The data from the study revealed that 49 or 45.5 percent, of the 108 secretaries took no direct dictation at all. Of the remaining 59 secretaries, 38, or 64.4 percent, spent less than 10 percent of their work day transcribing from direct dictation. If the 49 secretaries who took no direct dictation at all are included, 87, or 80.6 percent of the secretaries spent less than 10 percent of their work day transcribing from direct dictation.

With regard to transcription from mechanical devices, 81, or 75 percent, of the secretaries spend less than 10 percent of their work day transcribing from mechanical devices. Even more revealing is the fact that 66, of 61.1 percent, of the 108 secretaries never transcribed from mechanical transcription devices at all.

Eighty-five, or 78.7 percent, of the secretaries transcribe from handwritten copy. Of these 84, 44, or 51.7 percent, spent anywhere from 10 percent to over 50 percent of their work day transcribing from handwritten copy. The handwritten copy was distinctly the most used source of transcription for the secretaries involved in the study [1, pp. 17, 19-20].

Lewis investigated letter writing in businesses with word processing equipment. Personal handwriting was the most popular word origination method with approximately 46 percent of all letters handwritten before the introduction of word processing. After word processing implementation, direct telephone dictation accounted for 39 percent of letters, but 36 percent of letters still originated in the form of personal handwriting [7]. Longhand is convenient. Writers need no specialized equipment or personnel and can see the document developing

before their eyes. However, longhand is a slow and, therefore, expensive word origination mode.

According to a recent survey of 66 word processing supervisors, the following is a correct assessment of the situation. Sixty-two percent indicated that the estimated amount of material which was input to the word processing operation via dictation equipment was 25 percent or less of the total input. Twenty percent indicated that the input percentage was between 26 and 50 percent; 12 percent indicated that the amount was between 61 and 75 percent; and 6 percent indicated that a higher percentage of material was input via dictation [9, p. 10].

To determine current usage, buying plans, and user attitudes, Modern Office Procedures mailed questionnaires to 2,000 randomly selected readers. While seven out of ten companies now use dictation equipment, only one in three people who originate typewritten work use it [4, p. 70]. This data indicates that business correspondents need more formal dictation training to encourage their use of mechanical input devices.

Correspondence Cost

Fugler revealed significant differences between the cost of a one-page, 150-word letter with two carbon copies prepared via different modes of word origination. The cost (labor, material, and equipment) was $2.88 with longhand and $1.22 with dictation to machine [5, pp. 13-14].

Luke made comparisons limited to labor cost using 10 words per minute as the average longhand writing speed and 60 words per minute as the average dictation rate. A 105-word letter would thus cost approximately 33 cents to dictate compared to $1.65 to write in longhand for a dictator whose annual salary was $12,000 [8, pp. 26-27]. Word origination in longhand is clearly more expensive than word origination through dictation to a secretary directly or indirectly through a machine or word processing system.

Dictation Training

The effect of training in dictation techniques was noted by Lewis. Business letter writers who received training originated more of their letters by direct telephone dictation than letter writers without this training [7].

The importance of dictation in today's office was examined by Folsom and Estaville in a survey of 500 executives, secretaries, business education teachers, and business students. Eighty-seven percent of the executive team members had little or no formal training in giving dictation. Moreover, of the secretarial respondents, 73 percent stated they frequently had to retype correspondence because of poor dictation. When most teachers hear the word "dictation," they immediately equate it with someone taking dictation thus placing the emphasis on the recorder rather than the generator of the dictation [4, pp. 25-26].

Dictation Competencies

The curriculum materials and literature of business commnication and word processing contain numerous lists of dictation objectives, skills, and suggestions but no systematically developed or validated dictation competency list. Therefore, Clinkscale and Mayer in 1980 identified and validated dictation competencies used by the word originator [2, pp. 15-27].

Input was obtained from task analyses, office education curricula, journals, and textbooks. From this input, a preliminary competency list was developed using these criteria for dictation competency identification and refinement:

1. The competency list encompassed the entire spectrum of dictation activities as presently perceived by recognized authorities.
2. Each statement was a dictation competency, i.e., an activity performed by office personnel in the process of dictating business correspondence. Statements were written for use in a workplace setting and were broad enough to encompass all relevant subcompetencies.
3. Competency statements were written at the same level of specificity.
4. Competencies were stated at the action or application level, rather than lower levels demanding only the possession and/or comprehension of information.
5. The competency statements were expressed in non-technical terms and were unambiguous, concise, separate, and distinct.

After the master dictation list was constructed, it was submitted to a multi-disciplinary expert jury of executives, office managers, business educators, transcribers, secretaries, and word processors for the purpose of securing content validation. This feedback was used to construct the final 66-item dictation competency list, which is shown in Table 1.

The dictation competency list was set up in questionnaire format. Respondents were asked to rate competency importance using a five-point rating scale: very important, important, undecided, slightly important, and not important. The questionnaire was mailed to selected dictators, instructors of business communication and word processing, and word processors in northeastern Ohio.

Eighty-six usable responses were received--32 dictators (56 percent response), 21 instructors (35 percent), and 33 word processors (58 percent).

The following null hypotheses were tested:

H_1 There is no significant difference between dictators and instructors on the importance of each dictation competency.

H_2 There is no significant difference between instructors and word processors on the importance of each dictation

competency.

H_3 There is no significant difference between dictators and word processors on the importance of each dictation competency.

The statistical method used to test these hypotheses was the Chi Test of Independence. The level of significance for rejection of the null hypotheses was set at .05.

When dictators, word processors, and instructors were compared on the importance of each dictation competency, there were thirty significant differences out of the 198 comparisons made as indicated in Table 2. H_1 (differences between dictators and instructors on competency importance) was accepted for 58 items and rejected for 8 items. H_2 (instructors and word processors) was accepted for 49 items and rejected for 17. H_3 (dictators and word processors) was accepted for 61 competencies and rejected for 5.

These conclusions were drawn from the findings:

1. Overall, there was substantial agreement among dictators, instructors and word processors on the importance of dictation competencies. Respondents tended to rate items very important to important. Few items were rated undecided, slightly important, or not important.
2. Where there were significant differences, instructors disagreed much more frequently with word processors than with dictators. Furthermore, instructors tended to place higher importance levels on dictation competencies than the other two groups.
3. Dictators and word processors tended to show common agreement more often when compared to each other than when compared to instructors.
4. Apparently dictators and word processors have reconciled many of their differences on the importance of dictation competencies because of their complementary work relationship.
5. Instructors more often disagree with practitioners on dictation competencies, possibly because teachers are not totally aware of the complexities of the dictator/word processor work relationship on a day-to-day basis. Or, instructors may tend to be idealistic and, therefore, attach higher importance ratings to dictation competencies in order to include as many dictation competencies as possible in business communication curricula.

GUIDELINES FOR DICTATION TRAINING IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION CURRICULA

As seen from research and business experience, dictation is a complex skill. It is not natural or automatic; it must be taught, practiced, and learned. Word processing supervisors generally agree that initial training is one of the most important considerations in achieving good dictation input into a word processing center. Dictation truly is a team sport, for the output of the dictator becomes the input

of the word processor. Dictation is thus a critical interface in the business communication process between the more creative planning and thought processes of the dictator and the more mechanical production and editing processes of word processor.

Lewis determined how business executives received their training for dictating to secretaries and machines. Of the 320 respondents, 79 had no training whatsoever. The breakdown of training methods for the remaining 241 was: 148 trained by equipment vendors, 124 trained by their companies; only eight received dictation training in college. Twenty persons had been trained by other sources which presumably included self-training by reading and practice. Fifty-eight executives had received combinations of two or more types of training [6, pp. 10-11].

Which is the best dictation training mode? Self-training to a large extent, uses the trial-and-error method which is inefficient, mistake-prone, and slow. It requires considerable self-motivation and, if successful, often ingrains bad dictation habits and procedures which must be eradicated later. Vendor training when automated dictation and word processing equipment is installed is usually minimal with less-than complete coverage of dictators. It does not provide for training of new employees nor provide periodic refresher education. Furthermore, because of competitive cost-cutting pressures vendors are cutting back on their initial training. Company training by the word processing staff is expensive to the firm but specific to the equipment and procedures unique to their setup. In-house training is on-going with periodic brush-up education if needed for problem dictators and training for new employees.

Dictation training is an integral part of collegiate business communication, and, therefore, business administration graduates should be expected to have developed dictation skills to the application or acquaintanceship level as part of their business communication coursework. Inclusion of dictation training in these courses is a natural expectation from the perspectives of both the future employer and employee. Foisom and Estaville found that executives thought formal dictation training to be very helpful or extremely helpful [4, pp. 25-26]. A 1974 study funded by the American Business Communication Association found that graduating seniors felt that more time should be spent in "dictating business messages." A follow-up study of the same respondents after they had taken jobs in business revealed that they believed even more time should be spent on dictation [6, p. 11].

Granted that business practice and the literature reveal the need for implementing dictation training into business communication courses, how can this be done? There are seven points that should be used by the instructor in developing an effective dictation training component in a business communication course.

1. <u>Create a favorable attitude toward dictation and word processing in general</u>. This is "basic training." Justify the word processing concept from the time, cost, flexibility, and output quality

viewpoints. Business communication students are usually young and inexperienced so they will have little built-in resistance to newer word origination techniques which in-house trainers need to face and overcome. Students need to understand cost benefits of originating, transmitting, and producing output in various word origination modes--handwritten, dictation to stenographer, or dictation to machine. Furthermore, students need to develop fundamental word processing concepts: (1) the role of word processing as a subsystem of a larger administrative support or management information system; and (2) the equipment options available and administrative procedures commonly employed in automated word processing systems.

These are crucial concepts in the development of dictators who realize the cooperative "tesm support" attitude implicit in the linkage role which dictation plays between the dictator/originator and word processor/producer. Good attitude is important because most problems associated with word processing are human factors, not equipment factors. Dictators must be positive, receptive, and willing to do their important share in providing the dictation input.

2. Develop the thought process for dictation. The dictation competencies identified by the authors attest to the part that the planning and preparatory stages play in the quality of the subsequent dictation and final business document. The creation of effective business documents is difficult even using the handwritten, rough draft word origination mode. However, after students have developed this facility, they should progress to the oral input mode which uses the same thought process but at a more sophisticated level. The business writing instructor should foster the thought process applied to dictation by sequential development from simple to complex. Have students start with simple, routine, transaction-oriented correspondence (direct requests, good-news letters) and gradually progress to longer, more complex, idea-oriented documents (proposals, reports). The skill of preplanning and using mental and written outlines appropriate to the complexity level of the business document is integral to the production of well-expressed, clear and concise business documents.

3. Teach specific rules for the actual dictation. Some illustrative examples taken from the dictation competency list in Table 1 include dictation of opening and closing instructions and content before and after the actual message part of the document; when and how to spell; when and how to indicate punctuations, capitalization, and numbers; making corrections; and the rate, volume, and clarity of the dictator's voice.

4. Develop skill in use of equipment. Provide as much "hands-on" experience with the three basic types of dictation equipment (portable units, desk-top units, and centralized phone-in systems) as possible given equipment availability. Knowing "what the buttons do" is not enough to ensure confident skillful use of input media on the job.

5. Teach how to evaluate the end product, the typed page. Student dictators must have realistic expectation of the skills of the word processor or they will make unrealistic demands on word processing personnel. With the heavy emphasis on equipment and procedures in word processing systems (especially centralized arrangements), the dictator can easily forget that there is another human being on the other receiving end of his/her dictation. Dictators need to be taught when to accept minor imperfections which do affect content in light of the cost and time involved in redoing. Dictators must know how to edit and indicate changes, especially when complex, idea-oriented content using text-editing equipment is being used.

6. Be as intensive as possible in consideration of time and equipment available. The business communication curricula is crowded. Content priorities must be observed; equipment limitations must be accepted. Given the current level of office automation today and predictions for the near future, instructors must develop an acquaintanceship level of understanding of dictation and word processing and proceed as far toward the development of job-level skills transferable to the actual job environment as possible.

7. Integrate dictation training into business communication curriculum consistent with course objectives and sequential development of organization and writing skills. Schools which offer only one business communication course in which both written and oral communications skills are developed nave no decision to make about placement of the dictation component. However, for the increasing number of colleges and universities which schedule separate courses in written and oral business communication, this guidance is offered. Dictation is, strictly speaking, an oral skill so inclusion of dictation in the oral course is defensible, assuming that the oral course follows the written course where basic planning, researching, organizational, and writing skills were learned. Other instructors will rightly maintain that dictation is more closely allied with written communication. It is a logical follow-up step to planning and drafting on paper and should, therefore, follow immediately in the written course when students are in the midst of the planning anc compositional aspects of written communication. Perhaps the final deciding factor will merely be which course can best survive the addition of another content area to crowded syllabi.

CONCLUSION

The research reported and the guidelines provided will aid instructors in developing dictation competencies in business communication students. Graduates who can apply word processing concepts and have effective dictation skills will be better able to step into today's automated office with less on-the-jot training. They will able to use all their business communication knowledge and skills more efficiently because they are already efficient word originators.

TABLE 1

DICTATION COMPETENCIES

THE DICTATOR SHOULD BE ABLE TO . . .

Prepare for dictation . . .

1. Schedule dictation according to its importance and priority.
2. Establish regular time for dictation.
3. Dictate early in the day.
4. Analyze supplemental information (i.e., mail, relevant files) before dictation.
5. Select appropriate place for dictation (for example, quiet location free of interruptions).

Pre-plan message . . .

Prepare a <u>written</u> outline . . .

6. Determine the purpose of the message.
7. Visualize the reader.
8. Outline points to be covered.
9. Eliminate unnecessary points.
10. Check sequence and move items freely until the order is logical and coherent.
11. Review the outline for possible omissions.

Prepare a <u>mental</u> outline . . .

12. Determine the purpose of the message.
13. Visualize the reader.
14. Outline points to be covered.
15. Eliminate unnecessary points.

Select appropriate language . . .

16. Use simple, conversational words and phrases (contractions, idioms, personal names).
17. Avoid trite expressions.
18. Avoid professional jargon and technical language.
19. Use concrete language.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Dictate at correct pace . . .

20. Dictate at slow pace.
21. Dictate at moderate pace (i.e., normal speaking rate).
22. Dictate at rapid rate.

Articulate clearly . . .

23. Use voice inflection to indicate commas, periods, question marks.
24. Use voice inflection to highlight important words and passages.
25. Enunciate clearly (plural endings, similar words and sounds, past tenses).
26. Modulate voice so that it is neither too loud or too soft.

Position receiving unit (microphone, telephone, etc.) properly . . .

27. Hold receiving unit 2-3 inches of lips.
28. Speak across face of receiving unit.

Dictate special features of message . . .

29. Dictate paragraphs.
30. Pronounce and spell out unfamiliar or technical words.
31. Pronounce and spell out unusual names and places.
32. Dictate capitalization.
33. Dictate unusual punctuation (dashes, underscoring, quotes).
34. Dictate long or unusual figures.

Dictate message format . . .

35. Dictate inside address.
36. Dictate attention line, salutation, and subject lines, as needed.
37. Dictate the complimentary closing.
38. Dictate the signer's name and title, closing notations, i.e., P.S. and enclosures.

Dictate special instructions . . .

39. Indicate whether rough-draft or final copy.
40. Specify type of document (letter, memo, report, manuscript).
41. Indicate order of transcription.
42. Dictate special mailing instructions.
43. Indicate approximate length of message.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

44. Indicate number of copies.
45. Specify "end of message."
46. Specify "end of dictation."

Supply additional information to facilitate transcription . . .

47. Specify your name, department, location, telephone extension.
48. Dictate fill-ins for printed forms from left to right and top to bottom.
49. Specify number of columns, column headings, and number of entries for simple tabulations.
50. Provide copy for complicated document formats.
51. Provide instructions for typing same message to several addresses.
52. Supply necessary reference materials to transcriber.
53. Instruct transcriber to obtain names and addresses from related correspondence.

Follow through on post-dictation activities . . .

54. Proofread document throughly and return to transcriber with proofreader's marks for correction.
55. Encourage transcriber to edit so he/she can check for completeness and accuracy of dictated reply.
56. Read finished work aloud including punctuation and paragraphing to hear how it "sounds" on paper.
57. Request work be re-done if necessary.

Promote human relations . . .

58. Compliment transcriber for good work.
59. Encourage transcriber to ask questions about unclear items.
60. Accept suggestions for improvement.

Use proper correction procedures . . .

61. Preface corrections or specific instructions with word <u>correction</u> or <u>operator</u> (or name).
62. Correct by back spacing and then rewording the dictation if using dictation machine.
63. Indicate corrections on log (index slips).

Operate dictation equipment properly . . .

64. Start and stop dictation unit to avoid losing first or last part of dictation.
65. Review and follow input unit instructions for use.
66. Maintain a log (index slips) when using dictation machine.

Table 2

Chi-Square Values for Dictators, Instructors, and Word Processors

Comp. No.	Dictators, Instructors		Instructors, Word Processors		Dictators, Word Processors	
	X^2	df*	X^2	df	X^2	df
1	9.127		1.140		6.846	
2	11.294	4	12.678	4	3.689	
3	2.472		1.052		.649	
4	7.194		7.001		.598	
5	4.170		2.893		4.913	
6	2.451		5.190		4.362	
7	2.588		6.664		6.753	
8	6.742		1.531		7.393	
9	2.638		2.384		5.552	
10	6.708		2.343		5.878	
11	2.179		6.803		4.516	
12	9.295		18.767	4	6.181	
13	2.915		9.307		3.301	
14	9.330		2.759		9.269	
15	6.194		1.073		6.303	
16	3.248		4.300		.809	
17	9.754	4	6.961		2.171	
18	3.934		3.344		8.739	
19	8.151		7.638		.576	
20	4.504		3.857		7.364	
21	10.503		6.930		3.610	
22	.620		10.420	4	16.312	4
23	3.970		8.134		7.325	
24	2.260		11.495	3	16.866	2
25	8.258		17.008	5	4.334	
26	4.506		20.077	3	11.726	2
27	2.613		4.895		9.255	
28	4.836		5.869		17.984	5
29	10.470	4	10.989	4	5.256	
30	6.338		13.133	4	7.764	
31	3.775		9.222	3	2.275	
32	12.456	4	8.755		3.318	
33	8.827	3	13.167	3	1.426	
34	2.530		11.550	4	7.223	
35	5.658		5.580		3.090	
36	.886		4.334		3.795	
37	6.399		2.527		7.676	
38	3.164		3.641		6.843	
39	5.089		11.556	4	2.646	
40	2.303		2.218		2.478	

Table 2 (Continued)

Comp. No.	Dictators, Instructors		Instructors, Word Processors		Dictators, Word Processors	
	X^2	df*	X^2	df	X^2	df
41	5.974		.097		6.946	
42	3.439		4.083		4.431	
43	3.420		1.302		2.983	
44	5.076		4.854		4.346	
45	4.452		7.236		5.934	
46	4.280		.983		2.064	
47	3.536		5.318		1.912	
48	3.766		4.798		2.430	
49	2.777		15.067	4	9.232	
50	3.074		4.931		4.414	
51	5.350		3.242		4.071	
52	5.835		2.875		1.385	
53	4.268		6.386		1.300	
54	7.391		12.569	4	7.962	
55	.903		2.201		1.995	
56	1.993		3.000		8.453	
57	6.694		14.483	4	9.087	
58	4.941		9.643	4	7.257	
59	1.093		5.508		1.989	
60	3.982		1.412		3.119	
61	11.552	4	6.734		3.747	
62	2.049		7.026		5.859	
63	21.183	4	7.399		9.731	4
64	4.489		1.403		4.710	
65	1.840		3.156		2.461	
66	25.051	5	11.427	5	6.015	

*Degrees of freedom are reported for X^2 values significant at the .05 level.

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AN ANALYSIS OF STATE AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE

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ABSTRACT

Business communication instructors need to be aware of the writing done in the working world. This paper, by providing an analysis of one-hundred governmental communiques, offers a view of the writing in one facet of that world. The findings indicate that some differences exist -- especially in terms of good- and bad-news letters -- between the writing taught in business communication classes and that done in government, but overall the classes appear to meet the needs of students planning to work for the government. The paper ends with questions based on the study's findings, questions that relate these findings to business communication classes.

INTRODUCTION

Broadly defined, the job of business communication instructors is to teach a "reality-based" communication course -- a course that meets the needs of the world of work. Heuristics, tagmemics, and psychotherapy are not the meat-and-potatoes served in this course. Service, not philosophy, is the key.

To fulfill the demands of this "reality-based" curriculum, instructors need to keep up-to-date with the writing taking place in the working world. The purpose of this paper is to help with this task. Specifically, this paper reports on the state of writing in an area that 39% of all college students eventually work in -- government [1]. More specifically, this paper presents an analysis of the message content of and the communication strategies used in one-hundred governmental communiques. Through this analysis instructors will have an opportunity to justify or, if need be, adjust the content of their courses based on the needs of one world of work.

DATA COLLECTION

The one-hundred communiques used for this study were collected for a communication training class for mid- and upper-level government administrators. Prior to attending the class, the administrators sent

representative samples of "typical" correspondence. To keep the study from being weighted toward administrators sending the most samples, the study used only one randomly selected sample from each administrator. The correspondence consisted of sixty-four memos and thirty-six letters. State personnel received eighty-four of the memos and letters; people outside of the state agency received sixteen of the memos and letters.

Administrators from five different states sent communiques. Locations of the states ranged from the Northeast and Southeast to the Midwest and West.

DATA ANALYSIS -- MESSAGE CONTENT

Most business communication texts divide written business correspondence into three, four, or sometimes five categories [2]. Broadly defined, these categories are: good news; bad news; persuasive; and informative. Table 1 shows how the one-hundred communiques fit into each category.

Table 1

Content Divisions

Good News	Bad News	Informative	Persuasive
8%	0%	40%	52%

Table 1 is not, however, an adequate representation of message content. Much variety existed between samples in certain categories, especially within the informative and persuasive categories. Because of these differences, additional classifications became necessary. Specifically, informative messages were subdivided into three classes: unrequested follow-ups; just-to-let-you-know; and, requested information. Persuasive messages were subdivided into two classes: direct and indirect requests. Definitions of each of these classes follow.

Informative

Unrequested Follow-Up (UFU) -- Administrators send this message when their work area is the subject of a debate and/or discussion. The writing of the UFU occurs when one administrator remembers -- anywhere from one hour to two days later -- one or more additional facts deserving consideration. The UFU relays the additional fact(s). (Interestingly, in each of the UFU's analyzed, the remembered facts supported the writer's rather than the reader's opinion.)

A second type of UFU develops when an administrator is absent from an informal discussion (written or oral) about his or her area. The administrator therefore learns about the discussion second- or third-hand. In these situations the administrator writes either to provide ad-

ditional information or to show an awareness of the discussion -- or, on occasion, for both reasons. One UFU, for example, consisted of a letter written in response to a series of newspaper articles covering an administrator's area. In this case, the administrator offered a detailed explanation about why a particular agency took certain actions.

Just-To-Let-You-Know (JLK) -- These messages provide information in a more casual, less argumentative manner than UFU's. This lower tension factor probably develops from the lack of previous writer-reader discussions about the message's topic. The primary motive of these messages is to eliminate responses like "Why wasn't I told about this?" or, "No one around here tells me anything!"

Information Requested (RQ) -- As their name implies, RQ's simply forward requested information. Interestingly, in each of the samples analyzed, the initial requests came from superiors. This writer-reader relationship may explain why all eight of these memos had Addendum Plugs. (Addendum Plugs appear at the end of request messages and have little or nothing to do with the stated reason for writing. Instead, these plugs contain some sort of praise -- occasionally on an issue [20%] but usually for a subordinate [75%].)

Persuasion

Direct Requests (DR) -- These messages contain clear, direct statements about what the writer wants the reader to do.

Indirect Requests (IDR) -- These messages at first give the appearance of being JLK's; that is, they seem to contain news the writer assumes the reader wants to know. However, somewhere in the message (specific placement will be discussed later) the writer asks the reader to do something. Further, the writer includes a safety check (e.g., "Please be sure to let me know when you have ordered the forms.") to insure that the reader performs the action.

Using the above mentioned categories, Table 2 indicates the content breakdown of the messages.

Table 2

Content Subdivisions

Informative

	UFU	JLK	RQ
Percent Of Entire Sample	3	24	3
Percent Of Informative Messages	20	60	20

Persuasive

	DR	IDR
Percent Of Entire Sample	24	28
Percent Of Informative Messages	46	54

DISCUSSION -- MESSAGE CONTENT

One business communication content area is noticeably absent from Tables 1 and 2: the negative or bad-news letter. Administrators sent no examples of this type.

In an attempt to find an explanation for this absence, phone interviews were conducted with ten administrators. The administrators were selected on a basis of previous contacts. Each was asked the reason for this absence. Table 3 contains a list of the answers.

Table 3

Administrator Interviews

	Number	Percent
Seldom put "bad news" in writing -- prefer talking.	5	50
Use form letters for "bad news."	2	20
Infrequently write "bad news" -- i.e., did not seem like a "typical" example.	2	20
Never have occasion to write "bad news."	1	10

The pervading attitude, then, seems to be one of avoidance. When a negative situation arises, these administrators prefer the phone or a face-to-face confrontation to writing.

One administrator interviewed did, however, admit to writing an occassional "angry" letter, noting that this letter serves as a kind of release for pent-up anger. However, the administrator added, this letter is always filed and later destroyed -- never sent.

Other than the absence of "bad-news" letters, the content of these administrative messages coordinates well with the general divisions of conventional texts. The percent of treatment varies (no conventional text devotes 52% of its content to persuasive messages) but the basic focus (i.e., good news, informative, etc.) is similar.

DATA ANALYSIS -- COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Administrators have a number of business communication strategies available for use. Anything from the "you" attitude and success con-

sciousness to action endings and positive attitudes can serve their purposes. This study examined three specific strategies:

1. The proportion of active to passive sentences.
2. The length of sentences and paragraphs.
3. The organizational pattern of the messages (i.e., inductive, deductive, etc.).

Active/Passive Sentences

Most business communication texts exhort their readers to use the active rather than the passive voice -- assuming, of course, the writers strive for clarity. To measure how much these administrators use each of these voices, an analysis -- using the active-passive classification -- was made of the sample sentences. Table 4 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 4

Strategies -- Active - Passive

	UFU	[illegible]	[illegible]
Active	54%	55%	69%
Passive	46%	45%	31%
	DR	IDR	
Active	60%	61%	
Passive	40%	39%	
	GN		
Active	36%		
Passive	64%		

Sentence/Paragraph Length

In terms of sentence length, most texts tell writers to stay in the range of the "average" sentence -- from seventeen to twenty words [4]. Texts are usually less specific about the length of paragraphs, with most advice being not to let paragraphs get "too long."

Table 5 shows the average number of words in each sentence and each paragraph of the samples.

Table 5

Strategies -- Sentence - Paragraph

Informative

	UFU	JLK	RQ
Words per Sentence	16	18.8	16.3
Words per Paragraph	56	57.8	32.3

Persuasive

	DR	IDR
Words per Sentence	16.6	18.1
Words per Paragraph	50.9	57.4

Good News

	GN
Words per Sentence	32.4
Words per Paragraph	60.6

Organization

A message's organization can be analyzed in any of a number of ways. In this study, the placement of the message's purpose determined the organizational pattern identified. Messages were therefore classified into one of three patterns:

1. Inductive -- The purpose first appeared in either of the last two paragraphs in messages with more than four paragraphs or in the final 20% of messages with four or fewer paragraphs.

2. Deductive -- The purpose first appeared in either paragraph one or two of messages with more than four paragraphs or in the first 20% of messages with four or fewer paragraphs.

3. Embedded -- The purpose first appeared after the second paragraph but before the next to the last paragraph in messages with more than four paragraphs. Or, it appeared in the middle 20-80% of messages with four or fewer paragraphs.

Table 6 indicates the organizational pattern of these administrative messages.

Table 6

Organization

Informative

	UFU		JLK		RQ	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Inductive	4	50	4	12	0	0
Deductive	4	50	8	33	8	100
Embedded	0	0	12	50	0	0

Persuasive

	DR		IDR	
	#	%	#	%
Inductive	4	16	8	28
Deductive	20	84	12	43
Embedded	0	0	8	28

Good News

	GN	
	#	%
Inductive	0	0
Deductive	8	100
Embedded	0	0

DISCUSSION -- COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Probably the most surprising discovery in Tables 4 through 6 is the organization of the good-news letters. The dominance of passive voice and of long sentences seems highly unusual.

In an attempt to find an explanation for the good-news figures, each of the ten administrators interviewed was asked to speculate about the findings. Seven of the ten administrators could offer no explanations; three of the ten said the figures probably reflected "careless writing." Each of these three expressed the general opinion that administrators give little care to good-news messages since the messages will please the receivers regardless of how they are written.

Other than the figures on good-news letters, Tables 4 through 6 generally reinforce the advice offered in most business communication texts. Active sentences seem to be preferred over passive sentences, although perhaps not to an appropriate extent. The tendency to use the passive voice up to 46% of the time in some informative messages probably indicates either bad-writing habits, an attempt to cover-up information, or a lack of knowledge about different writing voices.

The findings on length and organization obviously coincide with business communication texts, as evidenced by the fact that five of the six categories in Table 5 have sentence length averages in the sixteen- to twenty-word range. One slightly unexpected finding is the strong ten-

dency to use a deductive approach in persuasive messages -- both in direct and indirect messages. Obviously these administrators believe the best way to persuade a reader is to tell that person at the beginning what he or she is being asked to do or think.

QUESTIONS

Conclusions could, of course, be drawn from the data presented. However, for the paper to fulfill its purpose of helping instructors to justify or alter their courses based on "real world" writing, instructors would be wiser to draw questions from the data -- questions about how the data relate to business communication courses. Four key questions seem to arise.

Question 1: Should instructors continue to teach the "bad-news" letter in business communication classes?

Instructors would, of course, be presumptous to throw the "bad-news" letter out of the curriculum on a sampling of one group of administrators. After all, this group's non-use of this letter may not be indicative of all aspects of government writing -- or of the world of industry.

Yet this "bad-news" finding does raise questions about a need for classroom modification. Perhaps, for instance, "no-letters" should begin to receive less emphasis then they presently do -- according to some class syllabi, instructors devote up to 33% of their class time to "bad-news" situations [5]. Or perhaps class lectures need to be modified to acquaint students with other modes of conveying "bad-news," such as phone calls and face-to-face interviews, rather than just stressing writing.

Question 2: Do instructors place enough emphasis on informative and persuasive messages?

Obviously these state administrators use informative and persuasive messages. Instructors may be able to enhance significantly the quality of their service function by placing more stress on these two message types. The tendency to use tricky or unique cases should perhaps be supplemented by cases loaded with facts -- facts that students need to communicate to others and/or facts that students need to use as a persuasive base.

Question 3: Should instructors alter the way they teach the "good-news" letter?

If instructors grant students the "license of looseness" that these state administrators seem to take in writing good-news letters, their grading tasks will become chaotic. Standards will have to be thrown out.

Perhaps, instead, this finding about good-news letters indicates

a need for another shift in classroom perspective. Specifically, instructors may not only need to teach how to write "good-news" letters but also how to take advantage of them -- for example, how to ask for counter-favors. Further, instructors may need to stress the judgmental factor involved in seemingly unimportant messages. Put specifically, people make judgments about the quality of a writer's mind and that writer's abilities based on the way he or she writes. When someone simply "jots-off" a seemingly unimportant memo, that person may invite unfair, illogical assumptions. A good way to stress this point is to save notes students leave for their instructors, for experience indicates that often seemingly good students leave perfectly illiterate notes.

Question 4: Are instructors doing their jobs in the community?

The manner in which administrators write good-news letters, their tendency to make at least 30% of their sentences passive -- and what may even be a fear of writing in delicate (i.e., negative) situations -- indicate the need for business communication instructors to expand their horizons. Rather than just teaching students about the world of work, business communication instructors need to teach workers about the world of writing. Government employees must be made aware of what business communication instructors can do for them -- i.e., teach clear writing. In short, business communication instructors need to expand their service function.

In summary, this message analysis reports on the present state of writing in one governmental agency. Obviously the writing done in this agency represents only a small portion of the writing done within an enormous bureaucracy, but the analysis still provides data on which business communication instructors can begin to justify and adjust the content of their courses. And through this process, as well as through studies of other facets of the working world, the field of business communication can continue to meet and exceed its obligations as a service area.

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[4] The figures in Tables 4 and 5 do not meet a .05 level of significance

[5] This figure comes from an analysis of syllabi collected at various state, regional, and national ABCA meetings.

THE STATUS OF UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE COMMUNICATION COURSES: A RESEARCH STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Findings from a research survey completed by the directors of American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) concerning the status of both undergraduate and graduate communication courses yielded the following information: (1) more undergraduate students than graduate students studied communication courses, such as written communications, oral communications, and/or report writing; (2) more undergraduate students majoring in accounting, marketing, management science, or finance were required to study report writing; (3) both undergraduate and graduate programs were integrating communication skills and concepts in all business courses; and (5) more universities were requiring graduate students to study specific communication courses.

PROBLEM

Many references, articles in periodicals and comments by employers, have indicated that employees possess inadequate written and oral communication skills. Today businesses claim that their companies are spending annually multimillion dollars on communication activities.

PURPOSES

The primary purpose for conducting the formal, analytical research was to determine the number of undergraduate and graduate programs in colleges of business who have been accredited by AACSB who require specific communication courses as a part of the business core, such as principles of communications, organizational communications, employment communications, and/or report writing. The secondary purpose for the survey was to determine the trends/changes for developing communication courses.

The ultimate objective was to use the data in support of the following recommendations: (1) to require principles of communications

as a part of the undergraduate business core and (2) to require report writing as a part of the graduate business core at Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, as well as for other universities.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher mailed a structured questionnaire to the directors of 202 accredited colleges of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business that were listed in the AACSB Membership Directory, 1978-1979. For the respondents who were to complete questions within a matrix, the investigator suggested the following scale:

4 Indicates course is "required" in the business core for undergraduate majors.

3 Indicates course is an "elective" in the business core for undergraduate majors.

2 Indicates course is "required" in the business core for graduate majors.

1 Indicates course is an "elective" in the business core for graduate majors.

The faculty who were teaching communication courses in the Department of Business Education and Office Administration, Ball State University, served as a jury of experts for evaluating the structured questionnaire. Responses were recorded according to actual frequency.

FINDINGS

One hundred twelve (55.4 percent of 202) directors of accredited programs by AACSB completed the questionnaire. Two respondents did not complete the question concerning which programs were accredited by AACSB. Forty-three (39.1 percent) respondents indicated they had an undergraduate program accredited; 8 (7.3 percent) indicated they had a graduate program accredited; 59 (53.6 percent) indicated they had both undergraduate and graduate programs accredited.

Table 1 illustrates fifty-two respondents (46.4 percent) reported that their undergraduate students were required to study written communications. Thirty-nine respondents (34.8 percent) indicated that the undergraduates were required to study oral communications; 32 (28.6 percent) indicated the students were required to study report writing. Approximately 20 percent of the undergraduates could elect to study written communications and/or report writing.

More graduate students could elect written and/or oral communications than were required to study these courses.

TABLE 1: TOTAL UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS THAT OFFERED SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION COURSES AS REPORTED BY 112 RESPONDENTS

Communication Courses	Undergraduate Programs		Graduate Programs	
	Required 4	Elective 3	Required 2	Elective 1
a. Written Communications: Is the course required in the business core?	52	24	7	16
b. Oral Communications: Is the course required in the business core?	39	16	7	12
c. Report Writing: Is the course required in the business core?	32	23	4	14

When a "written communication" course was not required in the undergraduate business core, 4 directors indicated the students may substitute the course for one of the composition courses (general requirements); 32 respondents indicated students may not substitute a written communication course for a composition course. Only 36 respondents (32 percent) responded to this question; 76 directors (68 percent) did not respond to this question.

When an "oral communication" course was not required in the undergraduate business core, 23 directors indicated the oral communication concepts were developed in a written communication course; 23 directors indicated the oral communication concepts were not developed in a written communication course. Only 46 directors (41 percent) responded to this question; 66 directors (59 percent) did not respond to this question.

Only 18 directors indicated their students were permitted to substitue an oral communication course for a speech course; 53 directors indicated their students were not permitted to substitute an oral communication course for a speech course. Seventy-one directors (63 percent) responded to this question; 41 directors (37 percent) did not respond to this question.

At the beginning of these findings it was recorded that 43 of 110 respondents (39.1 percent) indicated they had an accredited undergraduate program. Also, 59 respondents (53.6 percent) indicated they had both undergraduate and graduate programs accredited. Approximately one-third of the respondents indicated students who majored in accounting, marketing, management science, or finance were required to study report writing.

TABLE 2: REPORT WRITING COURSE REQUIRED FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS AS REPORTED BY 112 RESPONDENTS

Degree Majors	Undergraduate Programs		Graduate Programs	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
a. Accounting	44	39.3*	7	6.3*
b. Marketing	43	38.4	5	4.5
c. Management Science	41	36.6	6	5.4
d. Finance	40	35.7	6	5.4
e. Economics	31	27.7	2	1.8
f. Business Education	30	26.8	3	2.7
g. Secretarial Science	23	25.4	2	1.8
h. Data Processing	20	17.9	2	1.8
i. Others	19	16.9	1	0.9
j. None	25	21.8	6	5.4

*Percent rounded to the nearest decimal. Most of the respondents checked all their majors for both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Undergraduate students who majored in either secretarial science or data processing (25.4 to 17.9 percent) studied report writing less frequently as illustrated in Table 2 above.

Graduate students who majored in accounting, management science, finance, or marketing were required more frequently to study report writing. Whereas graduate students who majored in economics, data processing, or secretarial science were required less frequently to study report writing.

The respondents were asked to indicate other communication courses that were offered in both the undergraduate and graduate business programs. The courses offered more frequently were listed at the top and in descending, such as the following courses:

Undergraduate Business Courses

Organizational Communications (21 of the 112 directors indicated this course was offered)

Business Writing and Reports

Employment Communications

Oral Communications

Theory and Problems of Advanced Business Communications

Persuasive Speaking

Business Writing

Advanced Business Communications

Marketing Communications

Executive Communications

Management Communications

Public and Human Relations Communications

Interpersonal Communications

Graduate Business Courses

Organizational Communications (10 of the 112 directors indicated this course was offered)

Administrative Communication Theory

Communication Conflicts

Employment Communications

Analysis and Presentations

Accounting Research and Development

From a review of the course descriptions returned with the questionnaire by the respondents, many of the above course titles were similar in description of course content.

The respondents were asked to indicate trends for developing new courses and indicate changes in emphasis in business communications for both undergraduate and graduate programs. The researcher categorized the trends and changes in descending order of most frequent to less frequent according to the following categories: (1) course development, (2) course/curriculm changes, (3) skill integration, (4) skill development, (5) other department/college, and (6) others.

Undergraduate Business Programs:

1. Course Development:
   a. Offer oral communication course
   b. Offer report writing course
   c. Offer conflict resolution course
   d. Develop public policies course
   e. Offer tutorial and short writing courses as needed

2. Course/Curriculum Changes:
   a. Emphasis short letters and reports
   b. Emphasis interpersonal and nonverbal communications
   c. Study the effects of technological developments on communications
   d. Use multimedia in courses

3. Skill Integration:
   a. Integrate communication skills and concepts in all business courses
   b. Deemphasize specific communication courses but emphasize the functional courses with written projects, research, and cases
   c. Teach typewriting and communications as a combined course

4. Skill Development:
   a. Offer a major and minor in communications
   b. Offer communication resource centers
   c. Offer workshops in writing not specific written communication courses

Graduate Business Programs:

1. Course Development:
   a. Offer written communications for MBA students
   b. Offer problem analysis and presentation for MBA students
   c. Develop course for teachers of business communications for improvement of their expertise in this teaching assignment

2. Course/Curriculum Changes:
   a. Emphasis oral communication concepts
   b. Require MBA students to study report writing

3. Skill Integration:
   a. Integrate communication skills and concepts in all business courses

4. Skill Development:
   a. Offer communication resource centers

Undergraduate Business Programs:

5. Other Department/College:
   a. Develop communication skills in English departments
   b. Study technical writing offered by the English department
   c. Develop separate communication departments
   d. Offer communication courses taught in the college of journalism and communications

6. Others:
   a. Offer business communication courses to junior standing students who have completed one year of English composition with an average of 2.00 or higher
   b. Pass English proficiency examination which stresses writing

Graduate Business Programs:

5. Other Department/College: None

6. Others: None

From the review of related literature more universities are requiring MBAs to study written and oral communications. "At least 14 MBA schools have recently either revised or adopted communications programs for their curriculum. The schools include: Carnegie-Mellon University, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, M.I.T., Stanford, University of California/Berkeley, University of California/Los Angeles, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, University of Pennsylvania, University of Virginia, and Yale." [1]

CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the findings concerning the status of undergraduate and graduate communication courses in accredited programs by AACSB, the researcher makes the following conclusions:

1. Approximately one-half of the directors of accredited undergraduate business programs required written communications; approximately one-third required a study of oral communications; approximately one-fourth were required to study report writing.

2. Approximately one-third of the directors indicated undergraduate students who majored in accounting, marketing, management science, or finance were required to study report writing.

3. Approximately one-fifth of the directors indicated undergraduates studied organizational communications; one-tenth of the graduate students studied organizational communications.

4. Some of the directors of graduate programs indicated a trend toward studying specific communication courses such as written communications and/or report writing.

5. Some of the directors indicated a trend for both the undergraduate and graduate programs to integrate communication skills and concepts in all business courses.

6. Some MBA students are required to study written and oral communications.

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*The Status of Undergraduate and Graduate Communication Courses in AACSB Programs," Research partially funded by the Bureau of Business Research, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana.

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PART II
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

ISSUES AND THEORIES IN INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

With increased emphasis on the systems orientation, researchers are beginning to turn their attention from intragroup to intergroup research. This paper defines the concepts of in-group and out-group relations in accordance with their current usage in the literature and applies these concepts to the problem of linking suborganizations through the use of communication.

INTRODUCTION

Although many important books in organizational communication address the topic of group communication, few extend their discussion beyond intragroup techniques, such as patterns of problem solving, leadership, etc. Thomas F. Carney, in his 1979 essay, "Currents in Organizational Communication," noted the extent to which the concept of intergroup communication has been ignored, observing that only one of seven books that he reviewed contained some "conceptualizations of intergroup, organization-wide problem-solving procedures," and concluded that there was "nothing to equal it in the rest of the literature, where the focus is usually intragroup" [3, p. 208]. The dynamics of intergroup communication, by default, thus remain a fresh subject for future authors to mold into "ground-breaking" chapters.

It is understandable, given the evolution of social psychology, why contemporary theorists have focused on intragroup issues while largely ignoring intergroup literature. In the first Katz-Newcomb lecture, Ivan Steiner outlined two contrasting perspectives employed by those who research social behavior. The first approach, the "individualistic" orientation, holds that the organism is a relatively self-contained unit, whose every action reflects its internal state or processes. The second orientation, the "group" approach, directs the researcher to look for causes outside of the individual, in the collective actions of others, for example, or in the constraints imposed by the larger system [17].

According to Steiner, social psychology had, by the late 50's, demonstrated little concern for larger social systems, preferring the investigation of internal states and processes--dissonance, attitudes, attributions. Instead of dealing with long sequences of collective action,

researchers created short sequences, pre-programming half or more of the ongoing process. Subjects had only to fill in the blanks. These studies told us how a tree behaves in the experimenter's contrived forest but nothing about the forest iteslf. Researchers tended to reject the "group" approach for the "individualistic" orientation because empirical studies that might have told us how trees interact to sustain a forest were too complex, required excessive subject time, and involved several investigators.

Nevertheless, the activities of any group reveal a process in which subgroups emerge and relate with each other to shape the functions of the organization. Henri Tajfel points out that the social environment of a group or organization is composed of subgroups which form a continually changing kaleidoscope of intergroup relations [19]. Thus, scholars are challenged to inquire into the patterning of collective action and to discover their effects on the outcome of the parent group or organization.

An initial, selective review of the issues and theories in intergroup communication might well serve to provide tentative answers to these questions. For purposes of clarity, this review can be divided into two major topics: (1) Determinants of Intergroup Differentiation; and (2) Effects of Intergroup Differentiation.

DETERMINANTS OF INTERGROUP DIFFERENTIATION

The division of people into "us" and "them," "we" and "they," a process called "intergroup differentiation," explains how groups come to identify themselves and to distinguish themselves from other groups. Research into group differentiation, which has been conducted for about two decades, reveals two well-defined trends, the convergence or conflict of interest approach and the categorization approach.

The Convergence or Conflict of Interest Approach

Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif, and their co-workers conducted three experiments (Connecticut 1949; upstate New York 1953; and Oklahoma 1954) to demonstrate how conflicts develop and are resolved [13; 14]. In all three experiments, the procedure was essentially the same.

Preadolescent boys, who believed they were attending camps to study camping methods, served as subjects. These boys arrived on separate buses and settled into separate cabins. Contact between the two groups was not permitted during the first stage of the experiment.

The first week's activities, designed to develop cohesiveness, included such activities as camping out, cooking meals, improving a swimming hole, boating, etc. The hypothesis tested during this initial phase of the experiment was: "when a number of individuals without previously established relationships interact in conditions that embody goals with common appeal value and that require their interdependent activity for attainment, over time, a group will form" [16, p. 232].

Eventually, both groups achieved their own identities, and manifested signs of "we" feelings that identify a group. Despite the fact that there was no contact between the two groups, each selected tough fighting names--"Eagles" and "Rattlers"--and designed flags. This phase of the experiment demonstrated that intergroup contacts were not essential to the formation of ingroups. Common goals and shared activity were judged as essential variables needed for ingroup formation.

The second week's activities were planned to determine the conditions sufficient for intergroup differentiation. The dependent measure of intergroup differentiation was the expression of hostile feelings toward the other group. As soon as the "Rattlers" and "Eagles" discovered each other's presence, they issued challenges in baseball, touch football, and other competitive activities.

At this point the experimenters introduced the independent variable of their study, activities in which success by one group led to frustration in the other. A tournament was organized and large drawings of two thermometers dramatized the cumulative score of each group. The tournament started with a spirit of good sportsmanship, but as it progressed the feelings of good sportsmanship faded. The experiment thus demonstrated that sustained conflict over mutually-sought goals attainable by only one group is a sufficient condition for the creation of derogatory images and the expression of hostility toward a rival group, a conclusion supported by Blake and Mouton and Bass and Duntemann [1; 2]. The field experiments conducted by Sherif showed the process of intergroup differentiation to be a function of two variables: (1) cohesiveness within groups; and (2) competition for goals that only one group could achieve.

The Categorization Approach

A second group of researchers, seeking to determine the minimal conditions necessary to arouse intergroup differentiation, concluded that the independent variable in the Sherif studies, competition, is not a necessary condition for creating intergroup differentiation.

In 1972, Tajfel described a phenomenon that he termed the "deductive categorization error," which occurs when it is known that stimuli belong to different categories. Evidence for the existence of this phenomenon is provided in a 1963 study conducted by Tajfel and Wilkes [22]. Using eight lines of different lengths, these researchers demonstrated that subjects see a greater difference between the lengths of lines when a letter A is systematically assigned the four shorter lines and B the four longer lines than when no labels are assigned. In other words, stimuli labeled alike are perceived differently from unlabeled stimuli. More recently, this difference, termed the "categorization effect," has been confirmed by other experimenters [7; 9]. In their experiments some have used non-social stimuli such as lines and squares, while others have used social stimuli, such as attitude statements. Tajfel's discovery of the categorization effect led him to hypothesize that conflict was not needed to create intergroup differentiation. Ferguson and Kelly confirmed that intergroup differentiation could occur in the absence of conflict [5].

Although much remains to be done in testing the link between intergroup differentiation and conflict of interest versus the link between intergroup differentiation and social categorization, two tentative conclusions can be drawn. First, the attachment of intergroup differentiation to a conflict of interest. Second, the explanation afforded by the categorization approach has been the more extensively tested theory [6; 10; 11; 21]. It appears, therefore, that the development of group affiliations rather than the phenomenon of hostility toward groups is the more probable determinant of intergroup differentiation.

EFFECTS OF INTERGROUP DIFFERENTIATION

Tajfel, et al., and Doise, et al. have documented the relationship between intergroup differentiation and ingroup preference or bias [4; 18; 21]. Their experiments followed the same basic design of Tajfel's 1971 experiment. Subjects were first divided into groups on the basis of some trivial task, then instructed to award money to other subjects according to specially-prepared payment matrices. The results of these experiments consistently demonstrated that subjects use their minimal group classifications to show strong ingroup preferences in their payments. Sherif reported a similar finding. Two groups of boys competed in picking up scattered beans. After the competition, an image of each boy's collection was shown to the entire group, after which subjects estimated the number of beans. The estimates showed a strong tendency to overestimate the productivity of the members of their own group [14].

Ingroup Bias and Intergroup Cooperation

Several studies testing the effects of ingroup bias on intergroup cooperation have consistently demonstrated ingroup bias to be detrimental to intergroup cooperation [12; 14]. The experiments conducted by Sherif, for example, demonstrated that ingroup preference was highest when intergroup conflict was most intense. Blake and Mouton observed an ingroup bias in subjects given the opportunity to interact on a mutual task after being separated into two groups [2; 16]. Their measure of ingroup bias was the tendency for ingroup members to rate their own product higher than the product of an outgroup. Each group then chose members to represent it in negotiating a common solution to the problem that each had sought to solve. During the negotiations, each group was allowed to send notes to instruct its representative. Content analysis of these notes revealed that most messages intended to destroy the rival's proposals, with few messages urging the negotiators to explore similarities. The content of these notes was accepted as evidence that ingroup bias is detrimental to intergroup cooperation.

Ferguson and Kelley provided the strongest evidence for the effects of ingroup bias on intergroup cooperation in their 1966 study, which examined the over-evaluation effect under conditions of minimized competition between groups [5]. In order to minimize competition, these researchers employed minimal groups with very little prior history of interaction. In addition, they eliminated all direct suggestions of competion. In post-experimental discussion, however, subjects repeatedly reported

that they felt a strong tendency to compete, that the situation was one in which they wanted to excel the other group. These researchers concluded that "the sheer presence of another group working on the same task led to a tendency to compare results. It appears that the foundations of intergroup conflict are exceedingly easy to lay" [5, p. 227].

Ingroup Bias and the Permeability of Group Boundaries

Sherif's 1954 study also documented the effect of intergroup differentiation on the permeability of group boundaries [15]. Near the end of the experiment the two groups were taken to a nearby lake for an outing. Despite the fact that the beach was crowded, each group stuck together and consciously avoided members of the other group. The behavior of the boys indicated the degree to which the group boundaries had become impermeable because of ingroup bias.

SUMMARY

Organizational theory, in some sense, is like a new automobile model covered with a tarpaulin. People stop and speculate about the structure and design of the car under the cover, noting its bulges and overall dimensions. But what if there are four subcompact cars under the tarpaulin, or two cars and two motorcycles? It makes a difference. It also makes a difference if we conceive of a group or organization as one entity or two or more [18]. The whole concept of the organization changes when viewed from the perspective of a system having component parts, each related to the whole.

While not a new concept, the study of organizations as systems has only recently received the attention it deserves. When organizations deal with their external environments, they become segmented into units. The sales unit faces problems associated with pricing, customer interest, competition, and so on. The production unit deals with capital equipment, quality control, labor and the like. This process is commonly termed "differentiation," the degree to which a system contains distinct subgroups. According to Everett Rogers, "the greater the differentiation in a system, the slower the rate of diffusion of innovations, and the lower the system's productivity in accomplishing tasks that require cooperation" [12, p. 44]. Organizations offset the effects of differentiation by increasing the degree to which the subgroups in a system are linked to each other by communication flows.

The use of communication to link suborganizations, however, requires insight into the harmful effects of ingroup bias. This review has presented studies that document the relationship between ingroup bias and reduced cooperation and increased permeability of suborganization boundaries. For those who will write the organizational communication textbooks of the 1980's, these studies provide a point of departure for discussing communication between groups. Further, this analysis reviews studies that document a causal relationship between intergroup differentiation and ingroup bias. To those responsible for solving organizational problems through the use of communication strategies, these studies suggest a need

to reduce the degree to which organizational units are categorized by unnecessary labels. When attempting to link suborganizations, communicators should also reduce the number of activities embodying goals in which success by one group leads to frustration in another.

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LEADERSHIP STYLE AND COMMUNICATION OPENNESS

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ABSTRACT

This paper studies the relationship between a manager's leadership style and his or her communication openness. Findings suggest that managers who are task oriented demonstrate a willingness to solicit and to give feedback, but that managers who are relationship oriented do not demonstrate this same communication openness. Thus the findings of this study leads one away from the traditional beliefs scholars have held regarding high task oriented managers and their tendencies to not communicate.

INTRODUCTION

Communication openness has long been proposed by organizational researchers to achieve better working relationships among people; specifically, openness in message-sending and openness in message-receiving. Giving and receiving information are apparently necessary for successfully functioning organizations. Managers must receive feedback about the ongoing operations of the enterprise if they are to secure information for decision making. Employees need feedback to assess their on-the-job effectiveness. If communication openness is so vital, then both managers and employees must practice giving-and-receiving-feedback skills. Because giving and receiving feedback should lead to greater mutual trust, increased communication awareness, and better interpersonal relationships.

Giving good feedback requires that the "givers" be in contact with their own feelings and judgments and have adequate language skills for communicating those feelings and judgments. Receiving feedback requires the "receivers" to receive feedback without feeling attacked or threatened. Through feedback managers may learn of the impact they have on employees. Unfortunately some managers fail to recognize that if their communications are to be effective they must have reliable feedback. Those managers who do not allow for the receiving of feedback will find their managerial effectiveness severely limited. Likewise, if feedback from employees is discouraged, managers will eventually be isolated or bypassed.

THE PROBLEM

This study's purpose is to establish a foundation upon which a manager's leadership style and communication style can be investigated. Four research questions will be studied in order to determine (a) if managers who possess a high level of giving and receiving feedback also possess a high relationship orientation and a high task orientation and (b) if an open communication style is necessary for effective leadership in organizations. The four research questions are:

1. Is task orientation related to communication openness with the self?

2. Is task orientation related to communication openness with others?

3. Is relationship orientation related to communication openness with the self?

4. Is relationship orientation related to communication openness with others?

Delimitations

The findings, conclusions, and generalizations reported in this study apply to practicing supervisors and managers in various business, industry, government, and educational organizations in the states of Texas and Oklahoma and all other populations judged to be similar.

Definition of Terms

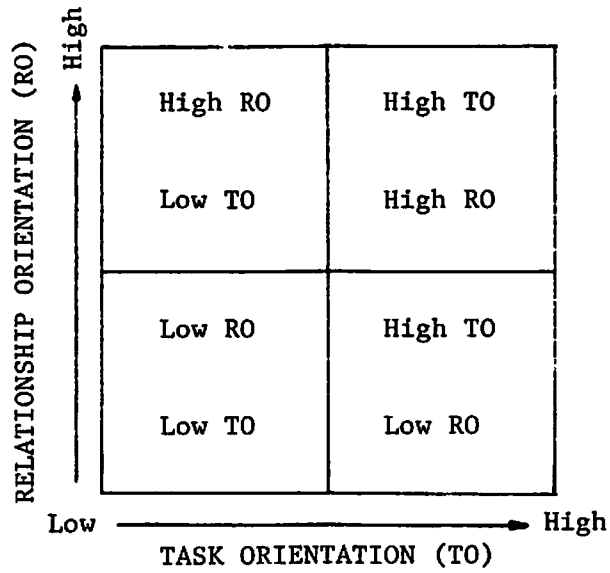
There are three terms used in this report that may need explanation: leadership style, feedback, and communication style.

Leadership style is defined according to the degree that a manager has (a) high or low task orientations, also known as a concern for production, and (b) high or low relationship orientations, also known as a concern for people. A manager's leadership style will be determined by the LEAD Questionnaire [4] and plotted on a two-dimensional grid (Figure 1).

Feedback is a verbal or nonverbal (intentional or unintentional) response to another person(s) that provides them with information as to how their behavior is affecting you. It is also a reaction by others as to how your behavior is affecting them. The goal of soliciting or giving feedback is to get information out in the open where it is available to everyone.

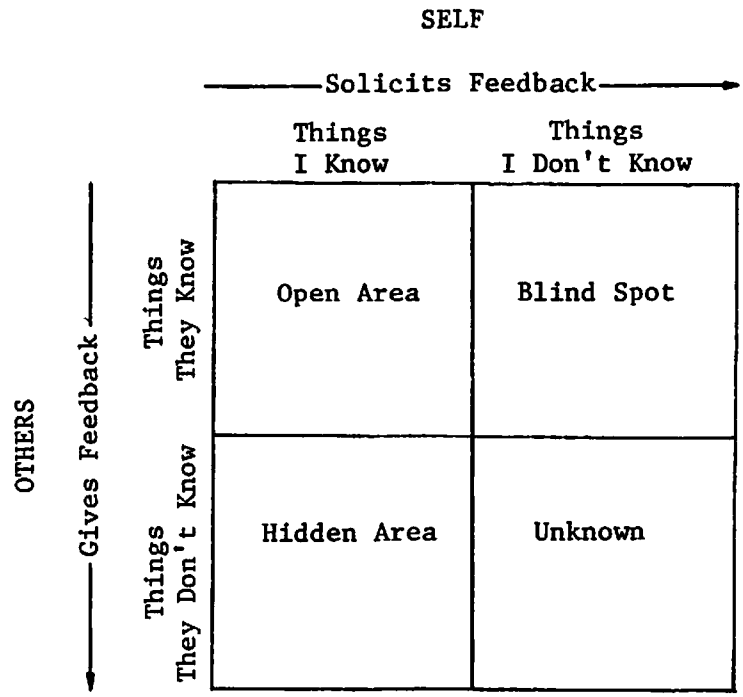
Communication style is defined according to the degree that a manager gives and receives information as measured and plotted on the Johari Window [5]. The Johari Window is a communication model (Figure 2)

FIGURE 1



which illustrates a person's tendency toward communication openness. It indicates how persons give and receive feedback about themselves and others. The four basic window panes are an open area, a blind spot, a hidden area, and an unknown area [6].

FIGURE 2



Procedure

Two questionnaires--LEAD and Johari Window--were distributed to supervisors and managers of various organizations in Texas and Oklahoma. These two tests were chosen because they essentially measure two things. The LEAD questionnaire measures task orientation and relationship. The Johari Window measures communication openness with self (open + hidden vs. blind + unknown) and communication openness with others (open + blind vs. hidden + unknown). By taking one LEAD score and one Johari score at a time, it is possible to compute four different Chi-square tests. These tests avoid the problem of small expected values since they are each two by two tables (see Table 2). A two-by-two table does not always eliminate this problem, of course, but it does in this study's data.

The total number of people involved in this study was 275 and represented a cross section of practicing managers and supervisors. Each person in the study was part of a supervisory improvement seminar and was responsible for the "grading" of his or her questionnaire so that immediate feedback could be provided to the participants. Accuracy was later checked by a research assistant. Comparisons were then made as to similarities and differences between leadership style and communication style by use of a standard Chi-square test for independence with the Yates correction for continuity [1]. Unusable questionnaires totaled 13.

Significance of Study

By comparing leadership styles and communication styles one can discover common qualities as well as unique differences. For example, if managers discover they have the "proper" leadership style according to LEAD, but they score ineffectively as to communication openness, they have a model for new ways to interact with others. A growth process could begin so that managers learn more about themselves and others for effective, realistic, and satisfying interrelating. If, on the other hand, managers discover that they score high on both tests, they have a model supporting their effectiveness. And we have another source of data supporting the belief that effective leadership does indeed require communication openness.

Thus, research into the relationship between leadership and communication are important because a poor communicative climate is symptomatic of a poor managerial climate. Notice:

> When management is effective and relationships are sound, problems of communication tend not to occur. It is only when relationships among members of the organization are unsound and fraught with unarticulated tensions that complaints of communication breakdown begin to be heard. Thus, the quality of relationships in an organization may dictate to a great extent the level of communication effectiveness achieved. Relationship quality in turn is a direct product of the interpersonal practices of an organization's membership.
>
> Reduced to its lowest common denominator, the most significant determinant of the quality of relationships is the <u>interpersonal style</u> of the parties to a relationship [3].

The Johari Window was chosen as a model for exploring communication style because it deals with the personal side of communicators and has application to all organization members. Although this paradigm has been used primarily as a conceptual tool in laboratory training programs and has prompted little serious research, its constructs are researchable [3]. The LEAD instrument is an outgrowth of the Ohio State University leadership studies, is considered empirically sound, and is widely accepted as a valid indicator of management style.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

A plotting of total responses by managers and supervisors is shown in Table 1. From this data four different Chi-square tests were conducted to avoid the problem of small expected values. The categories used from LEAD were high task orientation (high TO - high RO + high TO - low RO); low task orientation (low TO - high RO + low TO - low RO); high relationship orientation (high TO - high RO + low TO - high RO); low relationship orientation (high TO - low RO + low TO - low RO).

TABLE 1

	High TO Low RO	High TO High RO	High RO Low TO	Low RO High TO	Totals
Open Area	21	82	45	34	182
Blind Spot		1	3	4	8
Hidden Area	1	24	20	13	58
Unknown Area		3	5	6	14
Totals	22	110	73	57	262

The categories used from the Johari Window were high communication openness with the self (open area + hidden area); low communication openness with the self (open area + hidden area); high communication openness with others (open area + blind spot); low communication openness with others (hidden area + unknown area).* See Table 2.

Categorizing the data in this fashion eliminates any problem with expected value sizes and permits a more precise determination of what is related to what than would be possible were a standard Chi-square test to be conducted on Table 1 as it is arranged.

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*Thanks are extended to Lamar Reinsch, Speech Department, Oklahoma State University, for his assistance in defining the categories for both LEAD and Johari Window and for his statistical guidance.

TABLE 2

TASK ORIENTATION

OPENNESS WITH SELF	High	Low
High	128	112
Low	4	18

Chi-square = 8.6046
df = 1
p = .01

TASK ORIENTATION

OPENNESS WITH OTHERS	High	Low
High	104	86
Low	28	44

Chi-square = 4.6313
df = 1
p = .05

RELATIONSHIP ORIENTATION

OPENNESS WITH SELF	High	Low
High	171	69
Low	12	10

Chi-square = 1.9353
df = 1
nsd

RELATIONSHIP ORIENTATION

OPENNESS WITH OTHERS	High	Low
High	131	59
Low	52	20

Chi-square = .1331
df = 1
nsd

An examination of Table 2 yields good evidence that task orientation is related both to communication openness with self and with others. That is, managers who are high in task orientation both give and solicit feedback. There is not, however, adequate evidence to support belief in a relationship between relationship orientation and communication openness with self or with others. Perhaps this is because a high concern for relationships has not been translated into feedback behavior by the subjects in this study.

The significance of this finding is apparent. For almost two decades researchers without empirical evidence have been suggesting that high task oriented managers (i.e., those of Theory X persuasion) are not open. And that because of a lack of openness, they create communication climates of distrust, fear, and a lack of understanding. The end result is that workers must constantly function in a state of frustration. However, in this study it is the high relationship oriented manager who

is not open. Thus, the findings are almost completely opposite of what the human relationists and organizational behavior researchers have suggested.

In none of the cases is the relationship tremendously strong. But the pattern can best be seen by looking at the percentages in Table 3.

TABLE 3

OPENNESS WITH SELF	TASK ORIENTATION High	TASK ORIENTATION Low
High	95.97	86.15
Low	3.03	13.85

OPENNESS WITH OTHERS	TASK ORIENTATION High	TASK ORIENTATION Low
High	78.79	66.15
Low	21.21	33.85

DISCUSSION

One of the problems encountered in the study was the low number of managers who scored in the blind spot and unknown areas of the Johari Window. Therefore, some of the expected values used in the standard Chi-square test of significance were smaller than some researchers would recommend, although recent studies indicate acceptance of such values [2]. That's why a two-by-two arrangement of data was decided upon. It eliminated the small expectation problem. Therefore, we can be confident that there is a definite relationship between task oriented management and communication openness. Future research should focus on further empirical validation of the relationship between communication climate and leadership style and further investigate the impacts of these two phenomena.

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CRITICAL SKILLS THAT SHOULD BE USED FOR UPWARD COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Communication skills important for subordinates when communicating upward were analyzed. Two groups of middle managers, with the assistance of an authority in Business Communication, developed a list of 26 critical skills. One hundred eighty-seven practicing first-line supervisors from different organizations and 176 college business students ranked these skills in order of importance. There was a significant Spearman rank-order correlation between the rankings of the supervisors and the college students. The results of the rankings were further statistically analyzed to develop a list of critical skills that should be used when communicating upward in an organization. Suggestions are given on how these critical skills may be presented for improving upward communication.

INTRODUCTION

In complex work organizations, communication difficulties continue to be a major concern. The purpose of this research was to investigate one aspect of communication in the modern organization-upward communication.

A number of studies have indicated that communication upwards tends to be distorted [1;6]. Likert commented that upward communication is at least as inadequate as downward communication, and probably even less accurate because of the selective filtering of information that subordinates present to their supervisors [11, p.47]. Bennis contends that this phenomena is serious and must be recognized and managed to effectively run an organization [4]. Housel and Davis state there is a continual need in any organization to attempt to reduce barriers to upward communication [8].

Ineffective upward communication is detrimental to both the supervisor and the subordinate. It is of vital importance to supervisors when making decisions because they must rely heavily on the information they receive from subordinates. Upward communication is also important for supervisory morale. Sussman found that there is a positive

correlation between a supervisor's job satisfaction and the extent to which he/she perceives messages from subordinates as accurate [14].

Upward communication is also important to the subordinate. Downs et al. determined, by means of a factor analysis, that communication with supervisors is of utmost importance in determining employee satisfaction [7]. Baird and Diebolt found that subordinate satisfaction is related to the frequency of communication with the supervisor [3].

Previous studies that investigated the distortion of the upward flow of communication have emphasized the social or psychological variables of the process. Studies conducted nearly thirty years ago showed that selective screening of information from low to high status members was a characteristic of communication in social groups [2;10;15]. Read found that employees with greater drives for upward mobility would restrict the flow of upward communication to a greater extent than those with less drive for upward mobility [9].

More recently, Housel and Davis conducted a comprehensive review of literature on upward communication. They concluded that there are three important variables that should be investigated: channel of communication, anonymity, and openness [8].

The literature that Housel and Davis reviewed, and other literature on upward communication, does not address itself to the skills that supervisors and subordinates need to improve the flow of upward communication. The purpose of this study was to determine the critical factors that subordinates should consider when communicating upward. This purpose was established to supplement the literature in several ways. First, the process of upward communication had been addressed but specific skills for upward communication had not been investigated. Second, the results of this study could be used by training professionals and business communication professors when attempting to improve upward communication skills.

The second purpose of the study was to compare practicing supervisors to collegiate business students on the skills they considered the most important for upward communication. This purpose was established to determine if it was necessary to design special instructions for business students on this topic. If their ratings differed from successful supervisors, it could be assumed that skills for upward communication is a topic that requires special attention for collegiate business students.

METHODOLOGY

The purposes of the study were met by following a five step procedure. First, 20 middle and upper level managers were asked to list the skills they considered to be critical when communicating upward. These managers were considered to be experts because they had at least two levels of management reporting to them and had successful careers in management.

Second, the list of critical skills was presented to a second group of managers who reviewed and edited the list with the assistance of a specialist in business communication. Third, a revised list of 26 critical skills was presented to 187 first-line supervisors. They were asked to mark the seven skills they considered to be most important, and then rank order those seven in order of importance.

The fourth step was to present the same list of skills to 176 collegiate students of business. They were asked to rank the skills in the same manner as the practicing first-line supervisors. The final step was to statistically analyze the rankings of the supervisors and compare the two groups.

The statistical analysis consisted of transforming to z-scores the sums of the values assigned to the skills. These z-scores were then rank ordered. Finally, the rank orders of practicing supervisors in business were compared to the rank orders of college students by means of the Spearman rho technique.

The remainder of this article presents the findings of the study and discusses these findings.

FINDINGS

Table 1 presents the rank orders of the skills and their z-values for both the practicing supervisors and the college students. Rank orders are not equal intervals. That is, there is not the same difference between a rank of 2 and 3 as the difference between the ranks of 3 and 4; consequently, the z-values have been provided to indicate the relative difference between various rankings.

The Spearman rho correlations between the practicing supervisors and the college students was r=.758. The correlation was significant at the .05 level of confidence.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the critical factors that subordinates should consider when communicating upward. An additional purpose was to compare practicing supervisors to collegiate business students on their ratings for the skills they consider to be the most important when communicating upward.

The first purpose was met by working with two different groups of middle managers representing a cross section of organizations. The list of critical factors they developed for communicating upward is important for several reasons. First, it represents the thoughts of managers who have been successful on their jobs and have risen several levels in management through the promotion process. Second, the list was developed by a group of people who are actually on the "firing-line"

on a daily basis. Because of the source, this list possesses credibility when presented to students of business communication either at the collegiate level or for practicing managers participating in an in-service workshop. It is recommended that this list be presented when discussing the topic of upward communication or the more general topic of organizational communication.

A comparison of practicing supervisors to collegiate business students on their rankings of the importance of the skills indicated they were not significantly different in their rankings. The rank order correlation between the two groups was .75 which is significant at the .05 level of significance. This indicates that successful supervisors and collegiate students of business believe that the same factors are of greatest importance when communicating upward.

One difference between the two groups was that practicing supervisors ranked the use of understandable vocabulary as 5th in importance whereas students only ranked this item as 13th. Also, supervisors ranked active listening as 8th in importance whereas students ranked active listening as 18th. These findings imply that practicing supervisors are much more aware of the importance of clear vocabulary and active listening than are college students. The importance of these items must continue to be emphasized in the business communications course.

Special emphasis must be given to those factors which both the practicing supervisors and the college students rated high. There appears to be five critical skills that are important to upward communication. These factors, in order of importance according to the more than 350 individuals who ranked them, are:

1. Explain the problem in a logical sequence.
2. Attack the problem, not the person.
3. Get the attention of the manager.
4. Present solutions to the problem.
5. Develop a specific plan of action.

If subordinates practiced these five factors, upward communication would be more effective in organizations. There would not be the omission or distortion that is commonly found in complex organizations.

The above list was presented in order of importance according to the cumulative rank-order of the 363 respondents in this study. An analysis indicated that a slight change in the list resulted in not only the five most important factors, but also the order in which they should be implemented. This revised order is:

1. Get the attention of the manager.
2. Explain the problem in a logical sequence.
3. Attack the problem, not the people involved.
4. Present solutions to the problem.
5. Develop a specific plan of action.

This list of critical skills for communicating upward can be a useful tool for improving both oral and written communication. One way

of doing this is to integrate the skills with the modeling process. Modeling has been a popular and effective technique for improving supervisory communication [5; 9; 13]. However, it can also be used with other populations.

In the modeling process, the students or trainees are presented with a list of critical skills that should be used in a given situation. The students then review a model in which the skills are implemented. After reviewing several successful model applications of the skills, the students practice implementing the skills. The students are then evaluated by comparing their application of the skills to the model.

This modeling process can easily be used with the skills for upward communication developed in this study. The process can be used with both oral and written communication. A memo or report in response to a case study can be used for the model in written communication and a video tape can be used for the model in oral communication. A simple evaluation checklist can be used to determine if the skills for upward communication have been implemented.

TABLE 1

Rank Order and z-scores
of Critical Skills

Critical Skill	Rank Order by Supervisors	z-score of Supervisors' Rankings	Rank Order by Students	z-score of Students' Rankings
Explain the problem in a logical sequence	1	1.97	2	1.56
Present solutions to the problem	2	1.79	6	1.13
Attack the problem, not the person	3.5	1.72	1	2.18
Get the attention of the manager	3.5	1.73	3	1.32
Use vocabulary understandable to the manager	5	1.02	13.5	-.10
Develop a specific plan of action	6	.81	4	1.27
Approach the manager at the correct time	7	.54	12	-.08
Use active listening procedures	8	.47	18	.45
Keep a positive tone	9	.38	5	1.18

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Critical Skill	Rank Order by Supervisors	z-score of Supervisors' Rankings	Rank Order by Students	z-score of Students' Rankings
Stay on the topic, don't get distracted	10	.27	9	.29
Listen to all sides of the story	11	.20	7	.19
Ask the manager for advice or opinion but do not ask to have the problem solved for you	12	.18	11	.19
Stay calm and keep your emotions out	13	.113	10	.27
Be willing to present information the manager may not want to hear	14	.07	8	.35
If in a face-to-face situation, use eye contact to keep the manager involved	15	-.38	19	-.19
Explain how the problem affects both you and the manager	16	-.40	21	-.89
Explain consequences if no action is taken	17.5	-.52	22	-.94

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Critical Skill	Rank Order by Supervisors	z-score of Supervisors' Rankings	Rank Order by Students	z-score of Students' Rankings
Explain the follow-up required	17.5	-.52	26	-1.59
Don't try to drop your responsibilities	19	-.70	15	.19
Don't be intimidated by the manager	20	-.75	17	-.37
Distinguish between facts and opinions	21	-.84	19	-.78
Be willing to take others' points of view	22	-.90	13.5	-.10
Read feedback to know if the manager is listening	23	-.97	24	-1.18
Know the correct medium to use	24	1.36	25	-1.24
Defend your point of view	25	-1.40	16	-.29
Don't take a defensive approach	26	-1.47	20	.81

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EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS: THREAT OR NECESSITY?

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ABSTRACT

More and more organizations recognize the value of securing feedback from employees. A variety of different methods are being used: employee newspapers, written questions, one-to-one meetings, group sessions, and others. This paper recommends the use of EMS (Employee-Management Sessions). Representatives from management and labor attend periodic sessions where opportunities are available for both groups to transmit (talk) and to receive (listen). Results achieved have been extremely favorable from the point of view of morale, productivity, and commitment.

WHEN THE FORMAL CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION ISN'T WORKING...

> There is no such thing as a vacuum in communication. If something is going on, it will be communicated; if not on the formal channel, communication will take place on the informal.

This is a basic truism in interpersonal and organizational communication. If employees are not told or listened to about the possibility of closing the Bellville Plant, or the decision to cut back production ten percent, or the plans to stop hiring engineers for the next three months, or the contemplated acquisition of the Baxter Corporation, or, or, or . . . .

Never fear; communication about all these activities will take place . . . most probably on the informal communication channel.

It begins with feelings of anxiety, fear, and frustration. Joe expresses that with his comment to Marty,

> I don't know what's going on with the Bellville Plant, do you? If "they" close it down, I don't know what I'll do. We just bought a new home in Bellville and have our kids in the Bellville schools . . .

If this Marty does not have an answer for Joe, another Marty will . . . and that is how the grapevine starts.

> You don't know about the Bellville Plant, Joe? Well, let me tell you on the basis of my "inside" sources.

Thus, because the management did not tell Joe about the Bellville plant, or listen to his questions about it on the formal channel, the informal took over![1]

And this happens again and again in organizations. Frequently the employee will approach his union representative for "an answer" because his organization has told him/her nothing or very little on an aspect of operations which the employee feels affects him/her very strongly. The response from the union representative may be accurate or it may not. But it will fulfill the employee's "need to know."

Communication, as we all know, involves reception as well as transmission. Employees not only want to be told, they want to tell. In other words, they want to be listened to. The individual wants his foreman to listen; the section chief wants his supervisor to listen; the division head wants the corporation president to listen! Although all would like to secure compliance and agreement with what they have to say, they will usually accept a logical explanation or even disagreement if they have first been listened to.

An example of one excellent corporate program is that described by Bank of America President and Chief Executive Officer A. W. Clausen in the January-February 1980 HBR article. In it, Mr. Clausen details five major methods The Bank uses for encouraging employees to speak and for management to listen: Employee Assistance Department, Let's Talk it Over, Open Line, Bank American, and Employee Advisory Councils.

In all of these, opportunities are provided for sensitive issues to be discussed, questions to be asked, responses to be secured, and the loop of communication to remain open.

Today's Employee and Company Goals

Employees today have a greater need to know about the activities of their organization than did their counterparts 50 years ago. The employee of the '20s and '30s had less job security and, in addition, was primarily interested in his paycheck--fulfilling his basic needs. Furthermore, he/she knew that if too many questions were asked about areas that "really did not concern the worker," he/she might very well be fired. Today the union or government often provides the employee with a certain degree of job security. Termination is often difficult without "due process."

And another reason for the employee's greater need to know may simply be the result of the modern "involvement syndrome" or the

"participative management approach." But whatever it is, there is no doubt that today, by and large, employees want to know.

They want to know about "the new contract we won or lost." "Why is production being cut back in Departments 6 and 7?" "Why are we bringing in from the outside a new supervisor for Section 8 instead of promoting from within?" "Why is the soup in our cafeteria always cold?" "Why do some special people get parking spaces next to the plant entrance and we've got to park a mile away?" "Why are we subcontracting for the tail assembly unit instead of manufacturing it here?" "Why did our proposal to the Department of Defense on the X-51 Communication System not receive the contract?" "Why?" "Why?" "Why?"

The employee wants a forum where he/she can hear as well as one where he/she can be heard. In a word, today's employee wants a "piece of the action" through knowledge about the organization's activities, and his own position and privileges in the company.

Of course, we are aware that there are those few who are completely uncommitted and simply work 40 hours per week for a paycheck. They have no interest in the firm's progress and position. But that may be the fault of management, and not the employee!

And we are also aware that competition, security, confidentiality, and other factors do not permit disclosure of some areas to employees. But we also know that when we tell people we can't tell them, and why we can't tell them, they are usually quite willing to accept that statement in good faith.

It is the vacuum--the silence--that causes problems between individuals. And the problems which arise from silence are no less disastrous in the home environment than they are in the business organization. Silence can be suicide--at work, at home, at play.

Those firms which do not provide a free-flowing communication loop will find that the work force will individually and collectively secure information from other sources.

Certainly, our basic axiom in communication is always true: If we don't tell them, "they" will always find someone who will! There is no such thing as a vacuum in communication.

Of course, there are those organizations who delude themselves (but not their employees) by saying, "We do provide that information through the employee publication." However, if that publication devotes 95 percent of its copy to "retirements," "marriages," "the bowling tournament," and the President's Holiday message, the intelligent employee's need to know will not be fulfilled.[6]

Other firms will send out an employee bulletin or a management memo, but here again, if it is not closely related to what employees want to know and need to know, that message will only, as Peter Drucker says, make noise.[3]

In his article, "What Communication Means," Drucker makes the further statement, "That the traditional downward communication in companies and other organizations does not and cannot work . . . ."[3]

Drucker's basic point here is that "downward communications" will not work unless management first permits the communication to come up. Let us examine that concept as well as a method for implementation.

Methods for Improving Organizational Communication

There are various methods for securing upward communication. These not only fulfill the employees' need to know but they secure employee suggestions, build a climate of trust, increase openness in vertical communication, and result in a genuine management/employee cooperative spirit.[5]

One method involves periodic meetings between management and worker representatives where people can speak and people can listen in a nonthreatening atmosphere of openness and good will with the objective of attaining mutual goals and objectives.

In the Royal Corporation, these sessions were called "Employee-Management Communications Meetings"; at the Baker Division of Baker Oil Tools, "Coffee Sessions"; at Hughes Aircraft, "Quality Circles"; at Lockheed (Palmdale), "Roundtable Sessions"; at the Signal Division of Lear-Siegler, ROI (Return on Involvement) Sessions; at Southern California Gas Company, "Interact"; at Harshe, Rotman and Druck, "Tuesday Lunch"; and at the Craig Corporation, "The President's Quiet Hour."

The January 29, 1979 issue of Business Week discusses and explains various employer-employee feedback methods used by different firms as well as the different designations which such sessions have been given. In the last year or so, the same article points out, the psychologists' term has been applied: "Deep sensing."[2]

Northrop Corporation uses a system modeled on the IBM "Speak Up" program and The Bank of America "Open Line" program. In fact, the Northrup feedback session is also designated "Open Line."

Mary E. Person, Northrup Corporate Director of Employee Communications indicated that "Open Line" was begun about two years ago at the firm's Ventura Division. Forms, available in the Division's hallways, are preaddressed, postage paid, and provide room for the employee's inquiry.

"Once received in the Office of Corporate Employee Communications," Person explained, "the question is assigned a number, typed up, and after the employee's name is removed, sent to the management personnel best qualified to respond. When the response is received, it is reviewed to determine if it adequately answers the question. If it does not, it is returned to the source for further information or clarification. When the question is properly answered, and signed by the manager, it is sent to the employee. Both his name and question are kept confidential."

Kent Kresa, General Manager of the Ventura Division, said ". . . we want employees to know that they are always free to ask any company-related questions. And our managers will try to provide straightforward and sincere answers." Bill Kearney, Manager, Material and Production Control, explains, "I'm really all for this program. Employees have a right to ask questions and get answers. When it comes to my areas, I have no reservations about offering candid, sincere answers or following up on a suggestion."

Vice President, Engineering, Bruce James adds, "Whenever someone takes the time to ask a question, that person deserves an answer. I've always tried to be honest . . . and I intend to continue to respond in a straightforward manner."

Person stated, "In most of the cases, the questions have been job-related: benefits, overtime, working environment, job procedures, and promotion opportunities. But along with these, we also receive suggestions on how to improve a procedure or cut costs."

At TRW Information Systems, an 8-point feedback system from employees is used. Tim O'Neill, Director of Human Relations, listed them as (1) Grapevine where informal leaders are recognized and discussion opened; (2) Grievance Procedures; (3) One-in-five sensing: every fifth employee is brought in to discuss with management "what I like best" and "what I like least"; (4) Third party process where two individuals or two groups meet with a third party to resolve a conflict; (5) Performance appraisal; (6) Dialogue program: employee questions and management's answers appear in the company newspaper (the employee remains anonymous); (7) Career counseling; (8) Assessment centers.

The PROACTIVE Principle

What all these systems amount to is LISTEN TO PROACT. When management Reacts to a strike, increased absenteeism, plummeting productivity, rapidly rising pilferage, below standard product manufacturing, government intervention, consumer complaints, and a dozen other problem situations, it is often too late to ward off a costly and grief-producing situation. A much better alternative is to keep the Loop open so that the problem can be communicated and Proaction can take place instead of Reaction.

PROACTION in EMS

The method that is recommended here, as part of a total system, is one based on Employee-Management Sessions (EMS).

These are simply meetings held at periodic time intervals. They are based on management's honest and practiced desire to listen objectively to what is said and to state honestly what must be transmitted. It is further based on the fact that most employees want to be committed, have ideas and information to contribute, and are interested in the organization's welfare as well as their own.

Once that doctrine is accepted, along with the idea that preventative medicine is better than emergency surgery (proaction rather than reaction), the stage is set for EMS.

Establishing EMS Ground Rules

Obviously no firm should enter into a management-employee communication exercise without careful planning. Decisions should be secured on:

1. Session objectives
2. Topics for discussion
3. How representatives (both management and worker) will be selected
4. Frequency and place of meetings
5. How the topics discussed and the answers given will be "fed back" to the work force

Session Objective

It is vital to first determine what goals the sessions will attempt to achieve. Certainly, different organizations will have different objectives. However, it is important to list those goals prior to the first meeting and review them periodically for possible revision.

One firm lists its objectives for management-worker meetings this way:

1. To improve employee-management communications
2. To develop better mutual trust and understanding
3. To provide an opportunity to discuss openly and freely mutual company problems.

Establishing goals for the sessions may follow the pattern of the three items listed above. My personal recommendation is to avoid such terms in listing objectives as "problems," "handle complaints," and "discuss unsatisfactory situations." The wording should be positive: "Discuss opportunities for improving . . . ," "review ways to solve . . . ," etc.

Topics of Discussion

Obviously, some care must be taken in what items are discussed to avoid legal complications. Certainly the National Labor Relations Board regulations in this area should be carefully consulted.

A Southern California firm makes this recommendation to its plant managers concerning topics for discussion:

> Sessions of this type can be held at a division whether they are unionized or not. The only ground rules which are established are that there will not

> be any discussion of grievances, wages, or fringe benefits or any other matters which are normally covered in a collective bargaining agreement with the unions, or in the case of a nonunion company, discussed directly with the employee involved. This doesn't mean, however, that if there are questions of interpretation or consistent plant administration that these matters can't be discussed.[4]

In actual practice, most topics involve manufacturing processes, fringe benefits, safety conditions, cafeteria and parking situations, and other items encountered during the course of the day. "Where management feels that the suggestion and problem submitted is not feasible, then a 'no' answer should be given with a specific explanation. Some of the subjects will have to be deferred for study or future consideration. However, no matter should be left 'hanging,' and in all cases an answer should be rendered."[4]

It should also be clearly understood that the topics brought up may be initiated by management as well as the employees. And to my way of thinking, it is vital that management bring questions to the employees. "Pilferage is increasing. What suggestions do you have on . . ." "Down time on the presses is increasing dramatically. What ideas do you have on why this is so?" "When we sign out tools to employees for weekend use, we get about 30 percent back in need of repair or adjustment. What do you suggest?"

As for the employees, companies typically find that the agenda items brought to the first few meetings are complaints: inadequate lighting in Section 4, the cafeteria always runs out of . . . ., long lines at the time clock when punching out, etc. However, if these complaints are treated intelligently, and if action is taken--positive or negative--a change will take place. That change will be in the topics brought up by the employee representatives: complaints will be replaced in subsequent meetings by suggestions and recommendations on how to improve productivity, sales, safety, or operations in general.

But top management should remember that it takes only one meeting where an employee's legitimate item is pushed aside ("Oh, that's beyond our control."), or manipulated ("Well, the government just wouldn't let us do that."), or handled in a cavalier fashion ("That's almost too minor for us to work on."), and all future sessions will become almost valueless.

How to Select Representatives

The representatives from management should be as high as possible in the company. Certainly having the CEO at such sessions lends an importance to the meeting that is significant. If separate meetings are held by each division, then the division manager and his departmental representatives should be present.

From the employee side, it is probably best to have the employees in each section or division elect their own representative. Some organizations rotate representatives beginning with the most senior and working "down." Other companies choose attendees randomly--every sixth name on an alphabetized list of all employees. Some use consultants or managers from different divisions to run the meetings, while at others, the CEO meets with his people.[2]

A preference, based on experience, is to have employees elect their representative who will serve a specific period of time.

Frequency and Place of Meeting

On the whole, monthly meetings seem to be satisfactory. This permits the meetings to maintain continuity but not to be so frequent as to become a bother.

The sessions are best held on company property, usually with sandwiches and coffee available. This lends an air of informality and communicates the nonverbal message: "I may be president but I eat and enjoy the same turkey-cheese sandwich as does Stanley, one of our press operators."

Most organizations do not hold the meetings on company time. However, if the union requests extra pay (or time-and-one-half) if the meetings are held on employee time, such compensation should be approved. A compromise method may also prove valuable: begin on company time and end on employee time. Here, as in much of the procedure for these meetings, the employees should participate in the decisions reached on the meeting-mechanics.

Feedback of Meeting Activities

It does little good, company-wide, if the only people who know what went on at the sessions are those who participated. Some method must be used for feeding back a summary of questions and answers to the employees.

One method, of course, is to distribute a simple set of minutes. Another is to post a complete recap of the meeting on plant bulletin boards. It is even possible to videotape the session and play it back in the employee cafeteria the day following the session.

The important point is to feed back information into the loop of communication.

Problems

Of course, there are arguments against this management/employee method of communication. Some criticism can be voiced because productive time is used; it is costly for 15-20 people to meet for an hour or so; the labor representatives who are usually invited may exploit the information

to an unfair advantage; that middle manager's authority is lessened when workers meet with top management; and on and on.

However, none of these match the advantages gained through the increase in trust and the improvement of communications which result from the sessions.

Concluding Comments

These Employee-Management Sessions permit problems to be aired, suggestions to be heard, and participative management to take place in a climate of openness and trust.

> The method seems immaterial--the bottom line of all of them is, at the least, an across-the-board boost in morale. "I feel I'm heard now, that I'm not just a number," says a clerk at Shell Canada Ltd. Claims Marie Boulton, a Leeds & Northrop secretary: "You can write memos when you want to raise an issue, but verbal contact is always better." And James Jaskowiak, a grinder at TRW Inc.'s J. H. Williams Division, notes that "the meetings really give you the feeling the company wants to help."[2]

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THE ROLE OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS

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ABSTRACT

Nonverbal behavior has long been a subject of study by psychologists, sociologists, and others concerned with understanding human behavior. One particular focus of this study has been the role that nonverbal behavior, or body language, plays in communication. It is the purpose of this paper to review the literature on the communicational aspects of nonverbal behavior. In addition, empirical data from the author's study of the function of nonverbal behavior in the communication of status will be presented.

In summary, the purpose of this paper is to clarify the role that nonverbal behavior plays in effective, competent communication and how we can best use the research findings in a practical, applied manner.

INTRODUCTION

A rapidly growing body of literature attests to the human ability to interpret messages communicated through the face [2, 8], the body [4], and the tone of voice [7]. Furthermore, much research has indicated that a large proportion of the information communicated during an interpersonal interaction is conveyed via the nonverbal channel. Mehrabian and his colleagues [13], for example, contend that as much as 93% of the impact of an emotion is conveyed through nonverbal channels. Argyle [3] contends that the nonverbal channels are nearly 13 times more effective than verbal cues and, in a recent study, Archer [1] found that subjects who were shown video tapes of social interactions were significantly more accurate in their interpretations of those interactions than subjects who read transcripts only ($F\ [1, 427] = 164.53$, $p < .001$).

Given the research presented above, it would appear that the success of any interpersonal activity will partially depend upon good nonverbal communication skills. That is, the apparent significance of the nonverbal channel suggests that poor decoding skills or lack of responsiveness to such cues may be a serious handicap in social situations. Recent research indicates that there is a correlation between interpersonal effectiveness and the ability to decode nonverbal messages [5, 14].

The present paper will illustrate the role of nonverbal communication in the management process. As Livingston [12] suggests "what seems to be critical in the communication of expectations is not what the boss says so much as the way he behaves." It is therefore the purpose of this paper to present a distillation of some of the research in the area of nonverbal behavior within the context of a competency based approach to interpersonal communication, especially in business and industry.

White [18] defines the competent individual as one who can successfully fulfill the requirements of his/her social role. This author proposes that good nonverbal communication skills are integral to the managerial role.

In reviewing the nonverbal behavior literature, it becomes clear that there are at least two foci of the research, that is, the idiosyncratic determinants of nonverbal behavior and the contextual determinants of nonverbal behavior. A particular line of thought within the "context" approach views nonverbal behavior as a code which communicates information about interpersonal dynamics. Sheflen [15] comments:

> Communication then, includes all behaviors by which a group forms, sustains, mediates, corrects and integrates its relationships. In the flow of an interaction, communicative behaviors serve to give continuous notification of the states of each participant and of the relationships that obtain between them. Individuals growing up in a culture must learn these communicative behaviors and perform them correctly if they are to be comfortable perhaps even if they are to survive, in the world.

Further, Goffman [10] comments that there exists a kind of "interaction ritual: in which there is a self who is...a kind of a player in a ritual game who copes honorably or dishonorably, diplomatically or undiplomatically, with the judgmental contingencies of the situation."

Some research has been conducted in an attempt to identify the nonverbal "code" for the communication of one aspect of the managerial role, that is, the status differential between the manager and the employee. Bond and Sheraishihi [6] investigated the effect of status (high status/equal status) upon nonverbal behavior. Results indicated a significant interaction between status and gender. Males maintained greater eye contact in the high status condition ($\bar{X}$=27.2) than in the subordinate condition ($\bar{X}$=21.1). This difference was not significant. Females, however, maintained significantly greater eye contact in the high status condition ($\bar{X}$=30) than in the low status condition ($\bar{X}$=17.3).

Exline [9] conducted several experiments to investigate the relationship between visual attentiveness and power. His first experiment investigated the difference in eye contact as a function of power (high power (HP)/low power (LP)). His results indicated that the LP consistently looked more than HP, that LP maintained significantly

greater "looking while speaking" than HP, and finally, those HP's rated as being high in leadership qualities by their superiors looked significantly less than those HP's rated as being low in leadership qualities.

The purpose of the present study was to extend the earlier research by examining a more extensive array of nonverbal behaviors and the effect of a manipulated status change rather than a one shot role play of one status condition. It was hoped that in this manner any subtle changes in nonverbal behavior would become more apparent.

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects for the experiment were 64 female undergraduate students at Pace University who were enrolled in undergraduate psychology courses. Subjects volunteered after a brief presentation by the experimenter during one of their classes which included the information that video-taping would take place.

Procedure

Prior to their arrival in the Psychology Lab, each subject completed a Rehfisch Personality Inventory [Ri] which is a measure of psychological rigidity.

Upon arrival, each dyad was asked to sit down in previously arranged seats, and were given the following instructions in order to create the status conditions:

> I am about to present you with four problems which I would like you to discuss and solve.
>
> During this discussion, I am going to place you _____ in charge, you will be the superior or boss (HS) and in each discussion task, that will be your role. As the boss, you will evaluate the relative contribution of both yourself and _____ your subordinate (LS). Based upon your decision, you will distribute these 10 chips (E hands HS chips) between yourselves, at the end of each discussion task.

As soon as both subjects in the dyad indicated that they understood the procedure, the experimenter presented them with the first of the discussion problems, which were similar to the following:

> "(insert HS name), the directress of nursing, has received a memo from you, (insert LS name) stating that you were discouraged because you were passed by for a promotion which another nurse, with less seniority, was given."

After the second discussion problem, the roles were reversed such that the subject who had been role playing the subordinate (LS) now took the role of the superior (HS) and the subject who had been role playing the superior (HS) now took the role of the subordinate (LS). The subjects were given the following instructions:

> During the last two discussion tasks, I want you to switch roles. You, (insert name of former LS) will now be the superior and play the role of boss and you (insert name of former HS) will now be the subordinate. It will now be your responsibility, (insert name of new HS), to distribute the chips between yourself and (insert name of new LS).

During each problem solving session, dyads were videotaped and observers recorded eye contact duration using Meylan stopwatches.

RESULTS

A significantly greater arm openness was found in the subordinate condition ($\bar{X}$ = 1.92) than in the superior condition ($\bar{X}$ = 1.77, F = 7.7, df 1,48, $p < .01$, see Table 1). In addition, a significant interaction was obtained between psychological rigidity and status (F = 3.54, df 1,48, $p < .01$, see Table 2). Rigid subjects leaned forward at a greater angle in the superior condition ($\bar{X}$ = 1.15) than in the subordinate condition ($\bar{X}$ = .99). However, non-rigid subjects leaned forward at a greater angle in the subordinate condition ($\bar{X}$ = .99) than in the superior condition ($\bar{X}$ = .53).

Additionally, the order in which the subjects experienced the status conditions accounted for a significant, unique proportion of the variance in the amount of increase in eye contact in the superior role over the subordinate role (R^2 = .0755, F = 4.858, df 1,60, $p < .05$). Status order also accounted for a significant, unique proportion of the variance in the amount of change which took place in body lean when role reversal took place (R^2 = .12, F = 8.796, df 1,60, $p < .01$).

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

These results suggest two conclusions: first, nonverbal behavior is sensitive to changes in social role and, second, nonverbal behavior appears to be norm determined, at least with regard to the communication of status. That is, it appears that there are some clearly articulated nonverbal signals as to the relative status of individuals in an interpersonal interaction (arm openness and body lean). Given the research cited earlier which suggests that people derive a significant proportion of their information about an interpersonal interaction from the nonverbal channel, it seems reasonable that where "rules" exist, they must be obeyed at the risk of miscommunication. There appear to be such "rules" for the signalling of status. The most convincing support

Table 1
Three Way Mixed Analysis of Variance of
Arm Openness
Rigidity x Status x Trials
Repeated on Status and Trials

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	MS	F Ratio
Between Subjects	30.6970	49	.62	-
Ri 'R'	.8037	1	.80	1.29
Error B	29.8933	48	.62	-
Within Subjects	35.5044	150	.23	-
Status 'S'	1.6170	1	1.6170	7.7
Trials 'T'	.0006	1	.0006	.02
R x S	.0022	1	.0022	.01
R x T	.7333	1	.7333	3.18
S x T	.1889	1	.1889	.85
R x S x T	.7119	1	.7119	3.23
Error 1	10.0824	48	.21	-
Error 2	11.1778	48	.23	-
Error 3	10.9903	48	.22	-
Total	66.2014	199	-	-

Table 2
Three Way Mixed Analysis of Variance of
Body Lean
Rigidity x Status x Trials
Repeated on Status and Trials

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	MS	F Ratio
Between Subjects	437.7533	49	8.9300	-
Ri 'R'	7.0634	1	7.0634	.78
Error B	430.6899	48	8.9700	-
Within Subjects	111.4686	150	.7400	-
Status 'S'	.0071	1	.0071	.00
Trials 'T'	.0101	1	.0101	.01
R x S	8.7134	1	8.7134	8.54
R x T	.6396	1	.6396	1.04
S x T	.0006	1	.0006	.00
R x S x T	.3482	1	.3482	.72
Error 1	49.3302	48	1.0200	-
Error 2	29.3059	48	.6100	-
Error 3	23.1135	48	.4800	-
Total	549.2219	199	-	-

for this conclusion can be found in the significant variance which status order accounted for in both eye contact and body lean. This result indicates that in spite of the high degree of idiosyncracy in these two aspects of verbal behavior which masked any between group differences as a result of status, all the subjects were sufficiently homogeneous in the amount and direction of change in these variables when role reversal took place to result in a significant variance accounted for in that measure.

The most likely outcome of a failure of a manager to give the proper nonverbal signals of his/her high status would be a breakdown in the credibility attributed to his/her authority. Some support for this suggestion comes from the research of Imada and Hakel [11] who found that job applicants who were nonverbally immediate (high eye contact, smiling, attentive posture, smaller interpersonal distance) were rated as being more likely to be accepted, more successful, more qualified, better liked, having more desirable characteristics, being more motivated, more competent, and more satisfied if given the position, and as a result, were more frequently recommended for the position than job applicants who were not nonverbally immediate.

Toyne [16] in a speech before the American Business Communication Association suggested that women must attend to their nonverbal behavior if they expect to climb the organizational ladder. This author suggests that any aspiring manager must attend to nonverbal communication if they expect to be competent in their managerial role.

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PART III
INTERVENING VARIABLES IN THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE YEAR 2000

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ABSTRACT

Groups exist today that use the English language in an advanced manner, some groups connected, some disconnected with their environment. All are engaged in becoming more efficient and precise, attempting to overcome their environmental difficulties, some perhaps threatening, all are competitive.

World radio, world television, world interaction, all are bringing influences on the English language. This is a continuing envolution that accelerated following World War II, until today, English is the world's most useful language. English will continue to dominate world traffic despite Spanish aspirations, French pushiness, the African aluminum cartel, and the Arabic control over oil.

There are a number of ways a language changes and grows. Four of them are presented: (a) through neologisms, (b) through introduction of more efficient foreign words, (c) through revival of dead terms, and (d) through error based on ignorance or tolerance.

INTRODUCTION

People develop language because communication widens their control of environmental circumstances. Describing reality to each other enables people to profit more from it, as well as protect themselves better against it. The different languages among people reflect the different realities they have had to describe in forging their particular histories.

Language is a force that can change human circumstances for the better, and circumstances are a force that can lead to changes in language.

The Norman Conquest introduced many thousands of Old French words into the Anglo-Saxon framework of Old English, changing its sounds and vocabulary so thoroughly that today the average person needs special dictionaries to decipher a text written around 1000 A.D.

More recently, an event took place far away from England or America, yet it still transmitted scores of terms into our language: Bolshevist, five-year plan, Leninism, labor camp, world proletariat, comrade,

permanent revolution -- and gave new meaning to some of our most basic words, such as "red," affecting the environment so much that a professional baseball team officially changed its name from the Cincinnati Reds to the Cincinnati Redlegs.

Here are some more examples of words that have been around a long time, but suddenly or gradually acquire new meaning:

disadvantaged (general, now economic)
establishment (general, now political)
charisma (religion, now political)
polarization (optics, now general)
turned on (electricity, now mood)
guru (Hinduism, now psychology)
fulfillment (general, now sales terms).

Another change that can occur to an already existing word is in its grammatical function:

tango (first noun, now also verb)
commercial (first adjective, now also noun)
pinpoint (first noun, now also verb)
. . . and recently, from strife-torn Italy:
kneecap (first noun, now also verb: to shoot at someone's leg).

Language changes in a number of recognized ways. The making of a new meaning for a word, or the coining of new words or word combinations to insert into a perceived absence of a suitable term is called neologism: spacewalk, countdown, parenting, word processing, rent stabilization. It's difficult for us to realize that everyday terms, such as "gross national product" and "balance of payments," were coined only thirty to forty years ago.

Probably the best current practitioner of neologism is Alvin Toffler. In his The Third Wave, recently published, he offers: prosumer, technorebel, econ-sciousness, infosphere, and practopia. For example, a prosumer is someone who is both producer and consumer of things he or she uses.

Language will also change when a word in another language better satisfies the perceived need to describe, convey, or find the mot juste. Examples (e.g.): hibachi, déja-vu, boomerang.

Language also changes miraculously, as when an ex-word rises from the dead with new life and extended meaning: charismatic, hubris, antibiotic.

People also get tired of using certain words, or certain rules of language lose their helpfulness. "Whom" and "shall" are falling into disuse because talkers don't like the slow-down necessary to determine if they are applicable.

In fact, specialists have noted that a trend favoring brevity is particularly characteristic of how our language is changing today. This trend, with its good and bad side effects, is more active in the highly technologized United States than it is in England, and in many instances it is possible to differentiate British speech from American through such words and terms:

the green thumb/the green fingers
the movers/the removers
the outlet (for electricity)/the power point
the pack (of cigarets)/the packet
the wrench/the spanner
the cow catcher/the locomotive guard
the gas/the petrol
gear shift/gear lever
hood/bonnet
subway/underground
truck/lorry
the D.A./the public prosecutor
the draft/the conscription
graft/corruption in public office
trooper/policeman

Occasionally, the British desire for brevity goes further than the American:

umbrella/brolly
baby carriage/pram
fellow/bloke (but "guy" is used in both countries).

The newspaper industry, one of the largest contributors of change to the language, greatly reinforces the trend toward brevity. A newspaper's or tabloid's tendency to squeeze the essentials of recent events into brief headlines has introduced the current of "headlinese" into our discourse, with undercurrents in both the political arena and entertainment biz, such as:

to star/to play the leading role
to boo/to express disapproval
the pres/the president
the ham/conceited actor
the pix/the moving pictures
to root/to give moral support.

The criterion of brevity also raises certain slang terms to standard level:

cop/policeman
sleuth/detective
to con/to deceive
boss/leader
to goof/to blunder
to dump/to get rid of
to wire/to send a telegram.

Besides brevity, foreign languages and new inventions are the leading innovators of modern English. These two frequently overlap: the Russian term for an early satellite was readily adopted all over the world, and today sputnik is part of our vernacular. In original Greek, discotheke means a collection of records. In modern English, the word, as well as its briefer version disco, refers to a night club which features dancing and music (usually prerecorded) of a certain style, often with strobo lights.

New inventions contribute daily to the English language. Space travel raised an enormous crop of neologism: astronaut, cosmonaut, space capsule, star trek, to orbit, satellite, earth rise, sputnik, splashdown, etc.

And we are all experiencing the impact of computers on our daily lives and communications. In 1955, the words "input," "programming," and "printout" brought puzzled responses from English-speaking people. Today, it is not impossible to overhear the following type of dialogue in a bank:

GWENDOLYN

Damn. I spent two days researching generic reads and find out the stupid sign is blowing me up.

HERBERT

The sign?

GWENDOLYN

Yeah. I dumped the file and all of these packed fields are signed with an F and my PL/1 packs with a C. No wonder he couldn't find those records. Anyway around this other than an assembler macro?

HERBERT

PL/1, right?

GWENDOLYN

Check.

HERBERT

That guy'll let you perform a Boolian OR against a binary mask -- you can take that byte anywhere your heart desires. Take a look at EMP605 -- somewhere in the middle, I think . . .

These computer programmers are discussing how a computer might be communicating bank information to itself -- a procedure that is not easily standardized, often extemporized by computer people bouncing "tricks of the

trade" off each other. Generic reads refer to indexing signs, as one looks under J in the dictionary -- generic in the sense of general research. A sign shows whether the number is positive or negative. The letters C and F both mean positive, but a certain type of positive. Usually the PL/1 type of computer uses C-type of packed fields (compact information), and Gwendolyn's program was looking for the wrong results because the file was using an F-type. She doesn't want to rectify the program by using an assembler (computer) macro (a subroutine or small program written to achieve a certain result). A Boolian OR is a logical test performed on a piece of information. In this case to test certain parts of it. A byte is a unit of storage, one "letter." EMP605 is the name of the program.

The following conversation between two young business executives represents one extreme to which the various pressures on our language have brought us in 1980:

EXECUTIVE 1

What's the width, depth, scope of this turkey? How many meters does it take to cope? How bankable is it?

EXECUTIVE 2

Zap! Dumb. Check with the work appliance center.

EXECUTIVE 1

Let's teleconference with Zig.

EXECUTIVE 2

Telemind a commex in the Blade garden section. It's available to 15,000 declared bugs out of the telemeter. We can greenlight this package for 15% profit.

EXECUTIVE 1

Okay. Let me percomp the new shipment for the SKUs. Will they match the bug demand? Will the package fly?

This is the daily bread that feeds the American corporate system: energetic minds discussing the marketing potential of a new shipment. Width, breadth, and scope are the cubic meters of salable space the newly-arrived products will occupy. Will it end up profitable (cope, bankable) overall? The work appliance center refers to their work desks, with increasing numbers of machines on them. Teleconference means to confer via electronic circuitry. Telemind a commex means order an advertisement, in this case in the Toledo Blade, which guarantees 15,000 possible horticultural clients (bugs) out of all the potential clients their firm reaches (the telemeter). Greenlight means to improve, package is the ad

itself. Percomp is a new verb, the result of a personal, hand-held computer. "To percomp" is figuring something by use of a hand-held computer. SKUs is a technical term for the projected number of clients this product could satisfy, which must exceed or equal the bug demand of 15,000 in order to fly (make profits).

But how deeply will our language embrace technological terms like data processing, statistics, and mathematical logics? Will words such as "null hypothesis," "T-square," and "zero hour" become part of everybody's language? And how much permanence does the new language have that's churned out almost daily by the huge Federal bureaucracy and its linguistic twin, the Washington press corps -- words such as:

synfuel/synthetic fuel
radic-lib/radical liberal
com-symp/communist sympathizer?

If enough writers and speakers, no matter who they be or where, write or speak that word in public, it will become established, but even meteorological predictions are more reliable than linguistic ones. An 1980 dictionary contains thousands of entries that in no way could have been predicted in 1880. So, let us begin our predictions gingerly, saying that during the next twenty years, the English language will evolve in correspondence to the social, political, economic and technological changes that touch the lives of English-speaking people.

There are certain human developments we know must affect language, but we are unable to say how. The physical measurements of the average human being have been increasing since medieval times -- hardly anyone can fit in medieval armor. Increased communication networks and reading skill increases the vocabulary the average person can remember. Given these further qualifications, let us now speak of the English language in the year 2000.

The grammatical structure of the language will continue to be simplified, and there will be fewer words with more than three syllables.

Television and movies will reduce the number of regional differences in speech patterns and pronunciation.

The differences between American and British English will stay on a level similar to the one now -- some differences will disappear and some new ones will arise. Some experts, notably the chief editor of the Oxford English Dictionaries, hold that the home influence outweighs the media influence by far, and that Americans and English will have even more trouble understanding each other than previously.

Government, administrative and technological gobbledegook is unlikely to completely disappear, but its effect on popular language will remain limited.

The party of the first part will probably continue to haunt the parties of the second or third part, but it will be popularly hoped that legalese be simplified.

The largest part of new vocabulary will result from technical and social factors. Odd inventions and fantastic, unpredictable inventions will continue to put new words in our voices and ears. Just as your grandparents could not have imagined saying or hearing words like drip-dry, Xerox, brainwashing, and quick-freezing, so will our children experience new concepts and substances.

Our grandchildren will react to overalls, bluejeans, and bell-bottoms with the same bemusement we get from the knickers and zoot suits of thirty and forty years ago.

Most of the inherent confusion in the English language will remain:

root	weighed	dues	said	ode	laid	tough
lute	paid	lose	laid	owed	lay	bough
newt	jade	fuse		road	lain	through
suit	prayed	booze		sewed		though
neuter	x-rayed	cruise				throw
lieutenant	preyed					cough

The five most commonly used nouns wil remain:

time people water words way

The five most frequently used words will continue to be the particles:

the of a and to

The following words will have disappeared from the language:

to lie (meaning to recline)
lain (its past participle)
shall
whom.

From time to time there will continue to be rebellions against certain words. Charles McCabe did it well in his nationally syndicated column of March 20th, 1980. Alfred Kahn, chairman of Council on Wage and Price Stability, conducted a seminar last April titled, "How the Use of English can Turn a Bureaucrat into a Person." He tried, how he tried, to generate clearer use of the English language. The University of Cincinnati provost did it, in 1979, against the words input and feedback by fining his staff a quarter for writing or uttering either of them. Whether or not this violated the principle of freedom of speech has never been tested, but other candidates nominated are:

facilitate	effectivity
bottom line	desking
utilize	linkaging
impact	porkability
(as a verb)	workability
interface	networking.

The four most ancient words found in the English language will continue to be:

apple bad gold tin.

The percentage of people who speak English will increase from its present ten percent.

The present controversy over sexist words will abate, and certain effete Eastern schools will retitle their studies of hypersonities back to humanities.

There will always exist, however, aborts, words of purple nature that try to creep into the language. Today these words are doing their best:

sitcom ... sexpionage ... videoholic ... videography ...
crepewich (sandwich made with crepes)

Critics will continue to deplore certain nouns being converted to verbs, such as:

to access	to plasticize
to enculturate	to annualize
to accessorize	to prioritize

The tendency of words to evolve through the association of sounds will continue. Thus:

from microprocessors to picoprocessors
from hotel to motel to botel to totel to rotel to flotel.

Some words will continue to have a confusing rather than clarifying effect. People in 2000 A.D. will still pause to think through whether "biweekly" means every two weeks or twice a week.

Certain intellects will influence the language mightily, as did Herbert Spencer, 19th century social philosopher. It was he who introduced the word "evolution" to the public years before Darwin adopted it. Spencer also coined the phrase "survival of the fittest" long before it became associated with Darwin.

Distortions will continue. Prudishness is one way distortion occurs; as in English law, adultery is veiled with the euphemism "criminal conversation."

The British Broadcasting Corporation and the Times of London will continue to be arbiters of the spoken and written word.

The distinction between less and few will disappear.

Revelant will become synonymous with relevant.

Vunerable will replace vulnerable.

The pronoun I will continue to replace me.

The natural evolution of English will accelerate due to the influence of broadcasting.

And finally, with meteorological hedging, I say there is a ten percent probability that extra-sensory perception will be exerting noticeable changes on our language by the year 2000. Whether or not such a change would revolutionize the English language remains to be seen, as perhaps does the effect communication with extra-terrestial beings might have. Such possibilities, in fact, are being studied (at considerable expense), with most predictions about universal language centering around mathematical logic and symbols.

And finally, safe to say, the English language in the year 2000 will be enormously affected by how well the language of the 1980s succeeds in persuading various ministries of wars on this planet not to employ nuclear weapons. If our language of today does succeed, our language of tomorrow will be even more successful.

CAN WE TEACH ETHICS? WE DO TEACH ETHICS!

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ABSTRACT

Language instruction, especially the teaching of styles and forms, as in business writing, is inherently value-laden. There is no neutral style or form. Consequently, the choice of style for business writing cannot be a pre-ordained adoption of one particular style. Instead, the choice must be based upon a clear understanding of the ethical implications of the choice. The three-part division of ethical stances — authoritarian, situational, and consequential -- provides a solid basis for analyzing the ethics of business language. Such an analysis shows that the ethical use of language depends upon the individual writer's judgment of context and consequences, not upon the nature of language or of a particular style, nor upon the supposed inherent morality or immorality of the business world.

INTRODUCTION

At a recent conference of business communicators, a part of the program was devoted to the question: "Can we teach ethics?" Such a question is probably about the content of a business communications course. But it also raises questions about the language of business communication, which in turn leads to questions about the ethical nature of language itself.

Nineteenth-century concepts of language implied that at least some uses of language were neutral and without overt values. But contrary to those opinions, more recent studies, especially those influenced by ethnic studies, make clear that all uses of the language are value-laden. Consequently, the teacher of language, whether in public school or in a business communications course, is always teaching within the ethical framework of the language he or she is advocating. The ethical assumptions of that particular language, dialect, or style, may be concealed or undiscussed, but they are always present. The use of language is always governed by an ethic, that is, by a general principle or principles of usage based upon social, political, philosophical, or rhetorical predispositions.

The question: "Can we teach ethics?" if applied to business writing has only one answer: "We do teach ethics." The real question is: "How can we know what ethic we are teaching?" A further question for some may be: "How can we teach the ethic we want to teach?"

This paper offers answers to these questions through three theses: 1. Language instruction, especially the teaching of styles and forms, as in business communication, is inherently value-laden. There is no neutral style or form. 2. The three-part division of ethical stances -- authoritarian, situational, and consequential -- provides a solid basis for analyzing the ethics of business language. The usefulness of this framework will be shown with brief discussions of ideas about style, including George Orwell's ideas about simplicity and clarity, followed by a review of a recent criticism of his ideas. 3. The ethical use of language in business writing depends upon the individual writer's judgment of the context and consequences of that use, not upon the nature of language or of the style, nor upon the supposed inherent morality or immorality of the business world.

HONESTY, CLARITY, AND STYLE

Three years ago the International Association of Business Communicators released a survey of business communicators' opinions about their jobs. Although most of the survey was about salaries, qualifications, and status, one portion cited writers' estimates of their abilities to be honest in their work. Those estimates were disappointing. Only 37.1% claimed they could "always" be "honest and candid." Fifty-one per cent said "sometimes," and 71.1% said that they ought to be "more open" in the publications they wrote for or had charge of[6,p.2].

These concerns for honesty and openness are entirely consistent with the growing emphasis upon the need for the analysis of business ethics. The number of studies on business ethics increases at an almost geometric rate, and this article, no doubt, has at least some of its impetus in the popularity of the topic, and in one of its sub-topics, the ethics of the use of language in business affairs.

Yet the concern for honesty in writing is not new. It may have had its most outspoken expression if not its contemporary genesis in George Orwell's 1946 essay, "Politics and the English Language." Orwell named the issues and the culprits without hesitation. Politics and language had created a vicious circle of deception and dishonesty. Officials making public statements were using the language to obscure their real motivations and the dismal truths of their actions. In turn, the language was becoming more corrupt and thus easier prey for further misuse. Dead metaphors, circumlocutions, jargon, were all symptoms of the odious manipulation of the language. Still, Orwell asserted, a cure was possible, especially if writers followed his rules. Summarized, they amounted to: Be brief, clear, and simple in style[5].

Orwell's ideas about big government, dishonest use of the language, and the close link between a simple, clear style, and honesty are the heritage which most style manuals written since then maintain. In his recent essay, "An Ethic of Clarity," Donald Hall asserts: "Style is ethics and psychology; clarity is a psychological sort of ethic, since it involves not general moral laws, but truth to the individual self. . . . There must be no gap between expression and meaning, between real and declared aims.

It [this truth] means not saying "luncheon" or "home" for the purpose of appearing upper-class or well-educated. It means not using the passive mood to attribute to no one in particular opinions that one is unwilling to call one's own. It means not disguising banal thinking by polysyllabic writing or the lack of feeling by clichés that purport to display feeling. . . . When the smoke of bad prose fills the air, something is always on fire somewhere."[2,p.22]. Texts in business and technical writing espouse these same virtues of style. In fact, these virtues have even generated a formula for judging individual writers' styles. That formula, called the Gunning Fog Index, allows a writer to calculate the reading level of his prose by counting the number of words per sentence and the number of words of more than two syllables, fitting those amounts into a formula, and doing some simple arithmetic. The longer the sentences and the more polysyllables, the more fog [1,pp. 60-61].Thus, simplicity, brevity, and clarity have become the Holy Trinity of English prose style. Accompanying them is the sometimes unspoken but always present idea that such a language is natural, undeceptive and unmanipulative.

Granted, the style created by these criteria has specific and important uses. Its three virtues in many cases offer the best guides to what a writer should give his audience. Nevertheless, this style cannot be the only style for a writer, especially for a business writer. In fact, the unquestioning use of such a style ignores the real ethical issues in style and in the long run hinders those genuinely concerned about the ethics of business writing.

Fortunately, however, several contemporary writers have questioned the universality of the Simple, Clear,and Brief Style. Several years ago, J. Harold Janis pointed out that in spite of the many texts recommending such a style, he could not find many established business writers who adhered to those rules. Instead, he found the frequent and intentional use of jargon, circumlocution, and obfuscation. Why did business writers not improve in spite of all the commands to do so? Janis gives several reasons: First, the short training period available gives a new business writer only time to learn the company's traditional language. Second, the business writer is "always writing not just <u>to</u> someone, but <u>for</u> someone — his company, his department, his superior." Even the writer's signature is really only "in behalf of his employer."[3,p.541]. Consequently, the detachment and indirectness, even the use of the conventional language of the company is appropriate for the writer's job. Third, the already fixed conventions allow for the rapid handling of large volumes of correspondence; attention to fresh phrasing and simplicity would require more time than is available. Fourth, readers are accustomed to stock phrases and might be confused by new expressions. Fifth, Janis attaches a "ritual" value to pretentious and circumlocutionary phrases[3,pp.542-543]. He cites this sentence as an example: "We have not yet been favored with a reply to our letter of January 4." saying that this is "admittedly archaic, but it says much about the writer that is not unattractive."[3,p.544]. Indeed, indirectness in language, says Janis, may protect the business writers from "the consequences of their own words," and inexactness may be "realistically dealing with business situations."[3,p.545]. In addition, Janis claims that the pretentiousness of business language may fulfill the need of the business writer to "assert himself." Janis concludes, saying: "There is some question as to whether the forcible imposition of

plain English would . . . [produce] sufficient gains in overall clarity to offset the losses in morale among a valuable segment of [a] company's personnel."[3,p.546].

The question of the ethics of Janis's theories of style can be laid aside for a moment in order to point out that his theories oppose the ethic of clarity offered by many stylists. He claims that a broader view of business writing is needed than one which allows a simple authoritarian resort to one style. Whatever the validity of Janis's argument for protecting oneself or preserving one's image through fancy words, his article does assert that a consideration of the context of a style is central to business writing, to the writer if to no one else[3,p.545].

A second critique of the Clear Style is in Richard Lanham's book, Style: An Anti-Textbook. Lanham's point is explicit: the style recommended by most texts is empty of personality and pleasure, and establishes a fallacious connection between clarity and honesty. Moreover, Lanham argues convincingly that circumlocutions can be more gentle and convey more understanding of another person's situation than the austere wording of the Clear Style[4,pp.25-30]. Lanham's fundamental point is that the "businesslike" or "scientific" reduction of language to its supposed universal simplicity edits out the pleasure of language and insists upon nothing but banal seriousness.

Both Janis's and Lanham's works provide counter-claims to Orwell's and Hall's statement of the virtues of the Clear Style. But a third writer's essay, Hugh Rank's "Mr. Orwell, Mr. Schlesinger, and the Language," makes a systematic analysis of Orwell's fallacies and then offers a new criterion for the ethical use of language. According to Rank, Orwell's underlying thesis is that manipulation of language is bad and that the difference between the style that Orwell demands and the styles he condemns is that the latter manipulate the language but the former does not. Rank rejects that premise, saying that it puts those who support it in an "impossible" situation because "it can be observed that all people, in all eras, in all lands, have done — and continue to do — this 'bad' thing of language manipulation." [7, p.162]. In contrast, Rank proposes another premise about language manipulation and thus about style: ". . . language manipulation is a neutral, natural human activity and . . . any 'goodness' or 'badness' depends on the context of the whole situation; who is saying what to whom, under what conditions and circumstances, with what intent, and with what results."[7,p.163]. Or to put it another way, all use of language is the manipulation of language, and there are no criteria for choosing a style to be derived from some theory of the history of the language or of the connections between the excellence of the prose and the morality of its writer. Rank's analysis undermines the traditional assumption that a writing style can be regarded in itself as ethical or unethical. Instead, a contextual ethic is called for, one that takes into account the circumstances in which the style is used as well as the style itself.

CONTEXT AND CONSEQUENCES

The contextual ethic which Rank calls for can be developed by the use of a traditional framework for studying ethical issues. This framework is made up of three points of view possible for the agent, in this case, the writer: 1) the Authoritarian, 2) the Situational, and 3) the Consequential. A few examples will show how these terms can apply to a study of style. Clearly, Orwell's view of style is Authoritarian. His thesis is that there is a single best style whatever the circumstances, and its characteristics can be set out in a series of rules to be constantly applied. In addition, basic writing courses are full of such Mosaic dicta: "Don't write in first person." "Never begin a sentence with but or and." "Never end a sentence with a preposition." "A theme must always have three parts." Such pronouncements may have specific uses for specific times, but the many skillful violations of each of these rules demonstrate their limitations. The Situational criterion is somewhat difficult to apply to writing. Its original intent was to identify choices made on the basis of immediate circumstances, usually the agent's feelings of the moment. It is easily typified in the current phrase: "If it feels good,do it." Such a criterion does allow justification of some kinds of writing: the angry letter written in haste to the comptroller who has just taken too much out of one's paycheck. It might also excuse an angry memo written in response to a colleague's error. It does, indeed, identify the source of some business writing. But it does not allow a view of the future as part of the context of business writing. In contrast, the Consequential point of view might result in a carefully phrased report to gain a superior's attention and to secure a raise to be granted at the beginning of the fiscal year still some six months away.

Although all these criteria allow the analysis of writing styles, it is the Consequential point of view that seems most valuable for directing and teaching business writing, for it is the one that makes fullest use of a judgment of context and of the principle that all business writing wants to create a response. Given these advantages, the Consequential point of view, if it is to be used properly, must be based on the guiding principles of business itself so that the consequences of choosing a style of writing can be assessed in a correct context.

In a free-enterprise system where the supplier is at liberty to supply the wants and needs of the consumer, two goals appear to offer guidance for the supplier: efficiency and profit. The principle of behavior in the free enterprise system (even one with considerable outside regulation) is that the manufacturer or seller may provide goods and services for the consumer at whatever profit is possible. Moreover, that profit is in part governed, in the enterprise itself, by the efficiency or competence of the manufacturing and marketing process. It is in this general context that business writing must be considered, and so considered, it can be divided into the two audiences that such writing serves: the other employees of the enterprise itself, including subordinates, colleagues, and superiors, and the public with whom the enterprise wishes to do business. Within the enterprise itself, in memos and reports, the principles that govern the writing are those of providing efficient communication of information and of aiding the decision-making, both of which

are important to the profit, earned in part by the efficiency of the enterprise. Within the relationship between the enterprise and the public, the principles that govern business writing are those of creating good will and of creating a demand for the product or the service.

What then should be the characteristics of business writing given these goals and a Consequential ethic? For writing for the public, the Clear Style is not a foregone requirement, even from a consequential point of view. Creating a demand for a product does not inevitably lead to the use of Simplicity, Brevity, and Clarity. Skillful prose may be necessary, but the Holy Trinity is not the immediate choice. Given a Consequential but short-range point of view, good will can be gained by a number of methods, all available to the writer -- flattery, deception, a number of rhetorical devices including bandwagon logic, ad hominem arguments, directness, folksiness, plain talk, short sentences, snob appeal, and many more. But if a business foresees the possibility that its public will eventually discover that these devices were used to deceive it, then the business may wish to make more long-range consequential decisions about the language it uses to its customers. It may then choose such a style that makes more modest claims for its products or services, that supplies correct information, and that appeals to reasonable, intelligent forming of opinions so that it may keep the good will of its customers for future purchases. Style aside for a moment, a consideration of long-range consequences might have led Oldsmobile to delay filling orders for cars rather than to use Chevrolet engines,and to make the necessary adjustments in its advertising. More specifically about style, thinking of long-range consequences such as the loss of a valuable customer might cause a retail firm to write a personalized response to a complaint rather than sending that customer a form letter with the appropriate little boxes merely checked.

The other category for the consideration of ethics in business writing is in-house writing. At first glance, contextual and consequential considerations might seem unnecessary, for the needs of in-house writing lend themselves well to the imposition of the Authoritarian demand for Brevity, Simplicity, and Clarity, so much so that Orwell could have recommended that style to improve profit as well as honesty. What other style is really needed for the goals of efficiency, competence, and profit? Even Lanham agrees that the Clear Style has a single "commandment," "Thou shalt be as clear as necessary in order that the world's business be done efficiently and civilization thereby preserved."[4,p.11]. Perhaps if computers wrote memos, letters, and reports, and made the decisions, no other style would be needed. But in human affairs, such as business, even matters that appear to require only correctness and speed still involve human motives, feelings, and social relationships. Conveying facts from one employee to another may depend upon convincing the reader of a memo of the accuracy of the writer. On a more complicated level, messages that pass from superior or subordinate, or from subordinate to superior require more than bare,naked correctness. Whatever may be the simplicity and accuracy of a message, those qualities do not guarantee its reception and effectiveness. Good will, empathy, and sympathy may be as necessary as correctness for the message to be effective. So even the application of the Clear Style in what seems to be its most effective role needs some careful judging of its context and consequences. An example may help

to clarify: A product research analyst sends a proposal to the department head to change the design of a fuel valve to get greater efficiency. It might be assumed that all that was necessary for the department head to accept the proposal was the correct data, a contrast of past and proposed costs of manufacture, and perhaps a mention of the current demand for fuel conservation. But such an assumption ignores the context of the department head's decision, who may be distracted by other jobs, who may distrust the analyst on the basis of previous work, or who may be preoccupied with the possible costs of retooling. Thus, even in such an apparently "objective" situation, some consideration of context and consequences is necessary for the wise choice of a style for the proposal.

When the ethics of business writing are discussed, it cannot be assumed that the ethical values of honesty and simplicity exist already. In the first place, no one kind of writing dominates the field of business writing, and the fundamental goals of business writing are different, depending upon the circumstances for both writing for the public and for one's fellow employees. Within any of these contexts, no pre-ordained standards exist. Some writers may find that honesty does create the best consequences, but that honesty is not an innate quality of the context or the style.

THE TEACHING OF STYLE

What does all this add up to for the teacher of business writing? Or to put it more exactly, if the teaching of any style or presentation of language is the implicit presentation of an ethical point of view, what methods should be used to insure a conscious and forthright teaching of these styles and their implied ethics?

First, students need to be made conscious of the ethical implications of their language. That can be done through ethnic studies or through the study of the implicit ethics of diction and organization. It can also be done with the study of dialects.

Second, students need to be taught about <u>contexts</u> for writing. They must see that business writing is different from the writing done for a teacher. A sensitivity to contexts might be taught by asking students to present the same content to two different audiences.

Third, they need to be acutely aware that <u>all</u> business writing wants to bring about a response, even though that response might not return directly to the writer. Students need to ask the question: "If I write this, what is likely to happen?" Then they can use their knowledge of the context and their readers to predict the consequences and to choose their style and organization.

Fourth, they need to be entirely cognizant that they cannot rely on an inherent morality in the business or work, or in the language they use. If they find their honesty in conflict with dishonesty around them, they cannot assign their difficulty to the manipulative nature of a particular style. Moreover, they cannot blame the "system," for the

system is not inherently deceptive. When business writers find themselves constrained from being honest, they must realize that they are in conflict with other individuals who have also made choices. The goals of business are efficiency and profit; neither honesty nor dishonesty is an inherent ingredient of those goals.

Such a realization of individual responsibility is frightening to those who want the authority of the system to rely on or who want to justify their own inability to act. But to those who see language as part of the context of any human decision-making, writing will become a source of challenge and creative effort, and may very well become the source of that ethical behavior they wish to create.

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THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION THEORY ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

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ABSTRACT

Communication theory is important for students to understand because it provides a foundation for future applications to varied communication situations. The students learn that various problems or barriers to effective communication can interfere with the understanding of the meaning intended by the communicator. This study was conducted to determine if students would perceive communication barriers more seriously after a discussion of communication theory. The results of this study indicated that 19 barriers had a significant increase in seriousness from before to after the theory discussion.

INTRODUCTION

The study of communication theory in the business communications course appears to be the current trend. Business students need to understand the communication process, its problems, and its application to the varied communication situations they will encounter not only in their professional careers but also in their collegiate training.

The ultimate goal of communication is the achievement of complete understanding. However, the task of communicating is not easy for many business students because they observe, interpret, and communicate ideas and concepts differently. When students do things differently, problems in understanding frequently occur. Thus, these problems or barriers to effective communication can interfere with the understanding of the meaning intended by the communicator.

Business students should be aware of the importance of identifying communication barriers among themselves. Tafoya stressed that through the identification of communication barriers, one would be able to "assist individuals in understanding themselves and their interactions with others." [2, p. 4]. This understanding would ultimately lead to an improvement in communications for students because they could modify their communications based on the unique aspects of the situation.

The identification of the barriers should not necessarily begin when a student graduates and becomes employed. Business communication instructors need to stress the importance of identifying communication barriers in their classrooms. By applying the basic communication theory to actual communication barriers, the students will be more able to deal effectively with these barriers as they arise in their collegiate training and later in their professional careers.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to determine if business communications students at Louisiana State University perceive communication barriers more seriously after a discussion of communication theory.

PROCEDURES

The sample consisted of 266 students registered in 10 sections of Business Communications during the 1980 Spring Semester at Louisiana State University.

The perceptions of the business communications students were measured by means of a questionnaire administered before and after the discussion of communication theory. The questionnaire was administered the first day of class, and the same questionnaire was again administered after the discussion of communication theory. The approximate time between the two questionnaire administrations was four weeks. Only those students who responded to both questionnaires were included in the analysis. The communication theory principles were those included in the first six chapters of Lesikar's Business Communication: Theory and Application [1].

The items for the questionnaire were constructed from an analysis of the literature pertaining to communication barriers. A total of 33 barriers were selected. The students were asked to indicate the degree of seriousness regarding a particular communication barrier on a scale of one to five, with one signifying not serious and five signifying very serious.

A z test was used to determine if there were any significant differences in the means of each communication barrier between the before and after discussion of communication theory. The level of significance for rejecting the null hypotheses was set at .05.

An analysis of variance was used to test the minor hypotheses. The responses were analyzed before and after the discussion of communication theory to determine if there is an overall difference in the perceptions of communication barriers by business communications students in the following 13 independent categories: major,

classification, age, sex, marital status, employment status, employed full- or part-time, length of employment, membership in campus organization(s), completion of English writing, psychology, sociology, and speech course(s).

An a posteriori contrast test was used to determine which groups perceived the communication barriers differently when there was significant difference in the anlaysis of variance. The a posteriori contrast test which was used was the Duncan's Multiple Range Test. The Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to analyze the data.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. When comparing the means of the individual barriers between before and after the discussion of communication theory, one can conclude that business communication students will likely perceive the communication barriers more seriously after the discussion of communication theory (see TABLE 1). Poor organization of ideas and physical noise and distractions were the only two barriers that were not perceived as more serious after the theory discussion.

2. The most serious communication barriers before the discussion of communication theory were a tendency not to listen, lack of interest in the subject matter, prejudice or bias, poor organization of ideas, and resistance to change (see TABLE 1).

3. Speaking too loudly, poor spatial arrangements, informal social groups or cliques, differences in status or position, and inappropriate physical appearance were the least serious barriers before the theory discussion (see TABLE 1).

4. The most serious communication barriers after the discussion of communication theory were either-or thinking, tendency not to listen, know-it-all attitude, resistance to change, and prejudice or bias (see TABLE 1).

5. Speaking too loudly, poor spatial arrangements, inappropriate physical appearance, excessive size of a group, and informal social groups or cliques were least serious barriers after the theory discussion (see TABLE 1).

6. Nineteen barriers had a significant increase in seriousness from before to after the discussion of communication theory. The five barriers which had the most significant increase were differences in perception, differences in status or position, either-or thinking, know-it-all attitude, and lack of feedback (see TABLE 1).

7. From the analysis of the individual communication barriers for the 13 independent categories, one can conclude that the business students will likely perceive certain barriers as more serious than others (see TABLE 2).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Business communication instructors should continue to include a discussion of communication theory in their classes, with additional emphasis on barriers to effective communication.

2. Business communication instructors should be aware of the most common communication barriers that may have an impact on effective communications of business students. These barriers could serve as a guide for classroom discussion.

3. The most serious communication barriers could be used as topics for research projects.

4. Once the most serious barriers have been identified, business communication instructors should show the linkage between the identification and the behavior designed either to overcome or minimize the effect of these barriers on communication.

5. Additional communication barriers should be included in business communication textbooks, or a reading list concerning the most serious communication barriers should be developed.

6. Business communication students should develop their interpersonal skills by analyzing the most serious communication barriers in small group discussions with subsequent group presentations to the class.

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TABLE 1

MEAN RATINGS AND COMPOSITE RANK-
BEFORE AND AFTER DISCUSSION OF COMMUNICATION THEORY

Communication Barrier	Before Rank	Before Mean	After Rank	After Mean	Mean Difference	Level of Significance
Tendency not to listen	1.	4.0909	2.	4.1509	+.0600	ns*
Lack of interest in the subject matter	2.	3.9385	6.	3.9924	+.0539	ns
Prejudice or bias	3.	3.8903	5.	4.0189	+.1286	ns
Poor organization of ideas	4.	3.8484	12.	3.8233	-.0251	ns
Resistance to change	5.	3.8419	4.	4.1278	+.2859	.01
Either-or thinking	6.	3.7987	1.	4.1917	+.3930	.01
Hostile attitude	7.	3.7695	8.	3.9470	+.1775	.05
Know-it-all attitude	8.	3.7677	3.	4.1466	+.3789	.01
Physical noise and distractions	9.	3.7476	15.	3.7143	-.0333	ns
Too many intermediate receivers between the sender and intended receiver of information	10.	3.7475	7.	3.9508	+.2033	.01
Communicator's lack of credibility	11.	3.7387	13.	3.8151	+.0764	ns
Lack of trust	12.	3.7362	9.	3.8872	+.1510	ns
Lack of understanding of technical language	13.	3.7290	10.	3.8642	+.1352	ns
Overload or too much information	14.	3.6331	14.	3.7331	+.1000	ns
Lack of knowledge of a communication topic	15.	3.5422	11.	3.8333	+.2911	.01

*"ns" means not significant at the .05 level of significance as determined by a z test.

Note. Composite rank is based on means.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Communication Barrier	Before Rank	Before Mean	After Rank	After Mean	Mean Difference	Level of Significance
Prematurely jumping to conclusions	16.	3.5405	16.	3.7057	+.1652	.05
Lack of feedback	17.	3.3484	17.	3.6805	+.3321	.01
Use of profanity	18.	3.3194	21.	3.3985	+.0791	ns*
Fear of distortion or omission of information	19.	3.2977	25.	3.3561	+.0584	ns
Defensiveness	20.	3.2977	22.	3.3774	+.0797	ns
Personality conflicts	21.	3.2621	19.	3.5075	+.2454	.01
Poor timing of the message	22.	3.2208	24.	3.3702	+.1494	.05
Emotional reactions	23.	3.1359	20.	3.4549	+.3190	.01
Inability to understand non-verbal communication	24.	3.0777	23.	3.3764	+.2987	.01
Differences in perception	25.	3.0292	18.	3.6278	+.5986	.01
Physical distance between sender and receiver of information	26.	2.9159	26.	3.1774	+.2615	.01
Excessive size of a group	27.	2.8835	30.	2.9208	+.0373	ns
Overly competitive attitude	28.	2.8738	28.	3.0564	+.1826	.05
Inappropriate physical appearance	29.	2.8026	31.	2.8480	+.0454	ns
Differences in status or position	30.	2.6871	27.	3.1208	+.4337	.01
Informal social groups or cliques	31.	2.6829	29.	2.9771	+.2942	.01
Poor spatial arrangements	32.	2.5097	32.	2.7057	+.1960	.05
Speaking too loudly	33.	2.3613	33.	2.6466	+.2853	.01

*"ns" means not significant at the .05 level of significance as determined by a z test.

Note. Composite rank is based on means.

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS PERCEIVED
AS MORE SERIOUS IN EACH INDEPENDENT CATEGORY

BEFORE	AFTER
A. Major	
Quantitative Systems:	Office Administration:
Overly competitive attitude	Resistance to change
Management:	
Emotional reactions	
Finance:	
Emotional reactions	
Social Sciences:	
Emotional reactions Poor timing of the message Informal social groups or cliques	
B. Classification	
Freshman:	Sophomore:
Know-it-all attitude Lack of knowledge of a communication topic Hostile attitude Poor spatial arrangements	Personality conflicts Either-or-thinking
Sophomore:	Senior:
Informal social groups or cliques	Resistance to change Either-or thinking
Junior:	
Informal social groups or cliques Too many intermediate receivers between the sender and intended receiver of information	

TABLE 2 (Continued)

BEFORE	AFTER
Senior:	
Know-it-all attitude Resistance to change	
C. Age	
19 or Younger:	19 or Younger:
Inability to understand non-verbal communication	Overly competitive attitude Lack of feedback Informal social groups
	20-21:
	Informal social groups
	25 and over:
	Informal social groups
D. Sex	
Females:	Females:
Resistance to change Speaking too loudly Overly competitive attitude Either-or thinking	Resistance to change Speaking too loudly Overly competitive attitude Either-or thinking Hostile attitude Prematurely jumping to conclusions Too many intermediate receivers between the sender and intended receiver of information
Males:	
Differences in status or position Physical distance between sender and receiver of information	

TABLE 2 (Continued)

BEFORE	AFTER
E. Marital Status	
	Married:
	Prematurely jumping to conclusions
	Divorced:
	Prematurely jumping to conclusions
F. Employment Status	
Working:	Working:
Resistance to change Inability to understand non-verbal communication Informal social groups or cliques	Lack of feedback
G. Employed Full- or Part-Time	
Full-Time:	Full-Time:
Personality conflicts Informal social groups or cliques Either-or thinking	Informal social groups or cliques
Part-Time:	Part-Time:
Resistance to change Differences in status or position Overly competitive attitude Poor spatial arrangements	Know-it-all attitude Resistance to change Overly competitive attitude Too many intermediate receivers between the sender and intended receiver of information

TABLE 2 (Continued)

BEFORE	AFTER
H. Length of Employment	
5 Years and Over:	
Too many intermediate receivers between the sender and intended receiver of information	
I. Membership in a Campus Organization	
Member:	Member:
Personality conflicts Informal social groups or cliques Prematurely jumping to conclusions	Prematurely jumping to conclusions
Non-Member:	
Lack of knowledge of a communication topic	
J. Completion of English Writing Course(s)	
	3 Hours:
	Differences in perception
	6 Hours:
	Differences in perception Inability to understand non-verbal communication
K. Completion of Psychology Course(s)	
	3 Hours:
	Differences in perception Inability to understand non-verbal communication

TABLE 2 (Continued)

BEFORE	AFTER
L. Completion of Sociology Course(s)	
NONE	
M. Completion of Speech Course(s)	
3 Hours:	
Inability to understand non-verbal communication	
Physical distance between the sender and intended receiver of information	
Prematurely jumping to conclusions	

THE POWER OF THE FLESCH READING EASE FORMULA

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ABSTRACT

Subjects were randomly assigned to four treatment groups and read passages rated 5, 15, 25, and 40 by the Flesch Reading Ease Formula. Each passage was mutilated in accordance with the cloze procedure, and the cloze score for each subject was recorded. Reader variable measures of reading ability, familiarity with the passage material, interest in the material, and age were taken for each subject. The observed cloze scores were then regressed on the reader variables, and residuals calculated. The residuals, free of reader variable influence, were substituted for the cloze scores, and a series of orthogonal planned comparisons performed. As expected, the Flesch classifications of "difficult" and "very difficult" corresponded to significant differences in readability except that REF score differences below 15 points between two passages did not indicate any significant differences in readability. Flesch scores are linearly related to purged cloze scores.

INTRODUCTION

Readability is a measure used to match readers and texts. It involves the familiarity with and interest of a reader in a text and the extent to which a reader can read the text at optimum speed. Emphasis in most research, however, has been placed on defining readability as reader comprehension--the understanding of words and phrases and the relating of ideas in the text to the reader's experience [7, 9]. The readability of a given passage can be (1) predicted before reading through the analysis of a text by a readability formula, or (2) measured after reading through the administration to the reader of a cloze test. The most famous and most widely used formula is the Flesch Reading Ease Formula. Its power to predict reader difficulty with a passage, however, has received little attention in the literature.

To be useful in the analysis of text difficulty, a readability formula must provide quantitative, objective estimates of the style difficulty of writing. It must be applicable to texts of varying difficulties, must not involve readers in deriving its estimates, must be easy and fast to use, and must be powerful enough to discriminate significantly between passages [9]. There are over 50 formulas available, and several probably are more useful than the Flesch Reading Ease Formula [3]. Nevertheless,

the Flesch REF [6] has become the most widely applied in the entire history of readability research and the formula most generally recommended [9, 17].

The Flesch REF is:

$$REF = 206.835 - .846WL - 1.015SL$$

where WL = the number of syllables per 100 words and SL = the average sentence length of the passage being analyzed. The REF score can range from about 0 to about 100 and has been categorized by Flesch as follows:

Score	Difficulty of Passage
91 - 100	Very Easy
81 - 90	Easy
71 - 80	Fairly Easy
61 - 70	Standard
51 - 60	Fairly Difficult
31 - 50	Difficult
0 - 30	Very Difficult

Although Flesch further classified the REF scores by grades, he did not recommend interpretation in this manner.

A proposed revision of the REF in the 1950's never took hold [13], and so the REF as described by Flesch in 1948 remains intact. A recent search of both psychological and educational studies in readability conducted by the author revealed the recent application of the REF to: high school vocational material, data processing textbooks, journal abstracts, college textbooks, teacher education modules, military training manuals, political literature, novels, aerospace engineering communications, junior college faculty handbooks, high school newspapers, fire rules in a hospital, and educational psychology textbooks.

How accurate, reliable, and powerful is the Flesch REF? Klare [9] cited a number of studies which showed the REF to be probably valid and reliable, although most of the studies involved only correlations between REF scores and reader judgments of passage difficulty or else reader scores on multiple choice tests requiring recall of information from passages. With the development of the cloze test, however, an excellent criterion measure of reading comprehension became available which was more powerful than judgments and not subject to the confounding elements of a multiple choice test, such as the readability of the test questions themselves [11] and the memory span of the reader [4]. Few investigations, nevertheless, have used the cloze test to validate the REF.

The cloze procedure was first proposed by W. L. Taylor [16]. The test involves reader replacement of words deleted from a passage. Taylor showed that REF, as measured by cloze, adequately represented readability differences between passages with REF scores of 89 and 68 on the one hand and 68 and 49 on the other. Although he could show a difference between a REF of 79 and one of 69, he was unable to show differences between 89

and 80, 80 and 68, 68 and 47, and 47 and 96. Thus, although he demonstrated the importance of cloze procedure, he did not (nor did he intend to) give any indications of the power of the Flesch REF. He showed that the cloze test is useful for contrasting the reading abilities of different individuals. Since 1953, most research has used cloze in this way, and cloze tests have been shown to be a valid and consistent measure of reading comprehension [1, 2, 14]. Little work has been done in using cloze to contrast the readability of different passages as categorized by the Flesch REF or other readability formulas.

One unpublished study [10] used cloze tests to measure the reading performance of students at various grade levels as determined by the Flesch REF. It showed that the REF predicted significant differences between ninth and fifteenth grade levels and between twelfth and fifteenth grade levels. No differences were found between ninth and twelfth grade passages. Essentially, then, differences of about 20 points between two REF scores predicted differences in readability with some reliability, but differences of about 10 points did not. These findings paralleled Taylor's.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

The present study sought to explore the power of the Flesch REF, particularly its ability to discriminate between passages in Flesch's "difficult" and "very difficult" categories. Based on the findings of Taylor and Knight, it was hypothesized that REF score differences of 15 points and above between two passages will predict significant differences in readability, while a difference of 10 points will not.

A number of other research questions presented themselves. Specifically, will different passages rated at the same REF score yield similar cloze scores for a given person? Are REF scores linearly related to cloze scores? Does Flesch's classification of "difficult" and "very difficult" really signal significant differences in readability?

The present research sought to test the hypothesis and answer the research questions by measuring the cloze scores of subjects in four treatment groups randomly exposed to passages with REF scores of 5, 15, 25 (in the "very difficult" class) and 40 (in the "difficult" class).

METHOD

Summary of Design

The study was based on a randomized, between subjects design, with Flesch REF as the independent variable. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four treatment groups and asked to read passages corresponding to Flesch REF scores of 5, 15, 25, and 40. Each treatment involved reading four passages of approximately 250 words each. The passages had been mutilated in accordance with cloze procedures so that 50 words in each passage had been deleted. The dependent variable for each subject was the number of correct completions out of 200 missing words.

Since other variables are thought to influence cloze scores besides passage difficulty, an attempt was made to eliminate their influence on the dependent measure through the use of a covariance procedure employing multiple regression of the cloze scores with covariates, followed by an analysis of variance of the residuals of the predicted cloze scores.

Covariates which may be related to cloze scores are: age of subject, the subject's familiarity with the material, the subject's interest in the material, and the subject's reading ability [9].

Subjects

The subjects were 52 undergraduate students enrolled in a business communications course at the University of Washington School of Business Administration (32 males and 20 females). Students received extra credit toward their course grade in return for their participation in the study. The mean age of the subjects was 22.1 years (standard deviation = 2.39).

Procedure

Three weeks before the experiment subjects were given the Cooperative English Test of Reading Comprehension, Form 1C [5]. This test measures total reading comprehension (vocabulary, level of comprehension, and speed of comprehension) and has been shown to be significantly correlated with the cloze test [15]. In two comparisions using college freshmen Salup obtained correlations of .36 and .67.

The experiment was conducted during regularly scheduled class time, and subjects were randomly assigned to one of four treatment groups. Each group received a test package containing instructions for the test, a sample cloze test, four cloze passages of about 250 words each, and a questionnaire concerning their age, their familiarity with the material, and their interest in the material.

In the instructions the subjects were asked to sign their name to the test. This was done so that cloze scores could be matched with the reading comprehension scores and so that subjects would have some incentive to do their best on the test. They were told, however, that their scores measured reading comprehension, that the scores would have no effect on their final grade, and that the tests would be destroyed after the experiment. Then the cloze procedure was described to them, and they were shown an example.

Four passages (A, B, C, D) were employed during the experiment. These were all taken from a basic marketing textbook which was not currently in use at the School of Business Administration. Each passage was then altered to produce four versions corresponding to REF scores of 5, 15, 25, and 40. Only sentence length and the number of syllables per 100 words were altered. Alterations followed the guidelines set down by Flesch in his 1948 study, as did the scoring.

Each subject was presented with passages A, B, C, D corresponding to the REF score of the treatment group to which he had been assigned.

The order of presentation of each passage was varied to control for order effects. Each passage was approximately 250 words in length.

The cloze test was constructed by deleting every fifth word in the passages until 50 words had been deleted. A word was defined by the white space around it, except that hyphenated words were counted as two words. In place of each deleted word an underlined blank space was substituted. Blanks were all of equal length (15 spaces). Subjects were given pencils to complete the tests, and were given unlimited time for completion. If they finished early, they were encouraged to go back and guess at blanks not filled. A closure was scored as correct when it exactly matched the deleted word, although intelligible and unambiguous misspellings were accepted [12, 16].

The questionnaire asked for the subjects' age and their agree-disagree responses to four assertions on seven point equal-appearing interval scales. One assertion concerned the subjects' familiarity with the topic of marketing. The other three assertions and their corresponding scales measured the subjects' interest in marketing, their interest in the passages they had just read, and the degree to which they found the passages informative and stimulating. These three measures were combined to form the interest covariate in the experiment [7].

After the experiment the subjects were informed of the nature of the experiment.

Results

Because of the influence of reader variables (reading ability, interest, familiarity, and age) on cloze scores, they cannot be analyzed for the influence of passage difficulty until they have been purged of reader variable influence. A technique for accomplishing this has been described by Kerlinger and Pedhazur [8]. It involves the regression of the unpurged cloze scores on the covariate reader variables. The resulting predicted cloze score for each subject is then subtracted from the observed cloze score to obtain a residual score. The residual is substituted for the observed cloze score because, although it still retains the influence of the treatment, it is free of the influence of the covariates. A series of orthogonal planned comparisons of treatment means (residuals) will then reveal the influence of the treatments on the dependent variable (cloze scores).

For the procedure to be effective, however, it is necessary that (1) the relationship of the independent variable (Flesch REF scores) and the dependent variable (purged cloze scores as represented by residuals) be linear, and (2) there is no interaction between the independent variable and the covariate.

For each subject four cloze scores were obtained. These represented the number of correct closures for passages A, B, C, and D. The scores were combined to form a total score which was the dependent measure. Cronbach's alpha was .80, an indication of the reliability of the cloze procedure as a criterion measure. In Table 1 the cloze means

TABLE 1

Cloze Means and Standard Deviations
of Test Passages for All Subjects

Passage	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
A	19.8	5.19	52
B	21.2	4.96	52
C	18.5	4.43	52
D	25.2	4.39	52

for each passage for all subjects range between 18.5 and 25.2. Theoretically, if the Flesch REF were completely reliable, all passages would have the same cloze means. In fact, the means of passages A, B and C are quite similar. Only passage D is significantly different from the others, F (3,153) = 438.86, $P < .001$.*

In order to employ multiple regression to remove the influence of reader variables from the cloze scores, it was necessary that there be no interaction between the covariates and the independent variable and that there be a linear relationship between cloze scores and Flesch REF scores. As Table 2 indicates, an analysis of variance of the independent variable

TABLE 2

Summary of Analysis of Variance
of Independent Variable on Covariates

Covariate	df	MS	F	Significance of F
Reading Ability	3	41.428	0.882	.46
Interest	3	8.313	0.693	.56
Age	3	6.118	1.071	.37
Familiarity	3	3.063	0.920	.44

(Flesch REF scores of 5, 15, 25, 40) and each of the covariates revealed no relationship between the Flesch REF scores and reader ability, interest, age, and familiarity. Figure 1 shows the relationship of the Flesch

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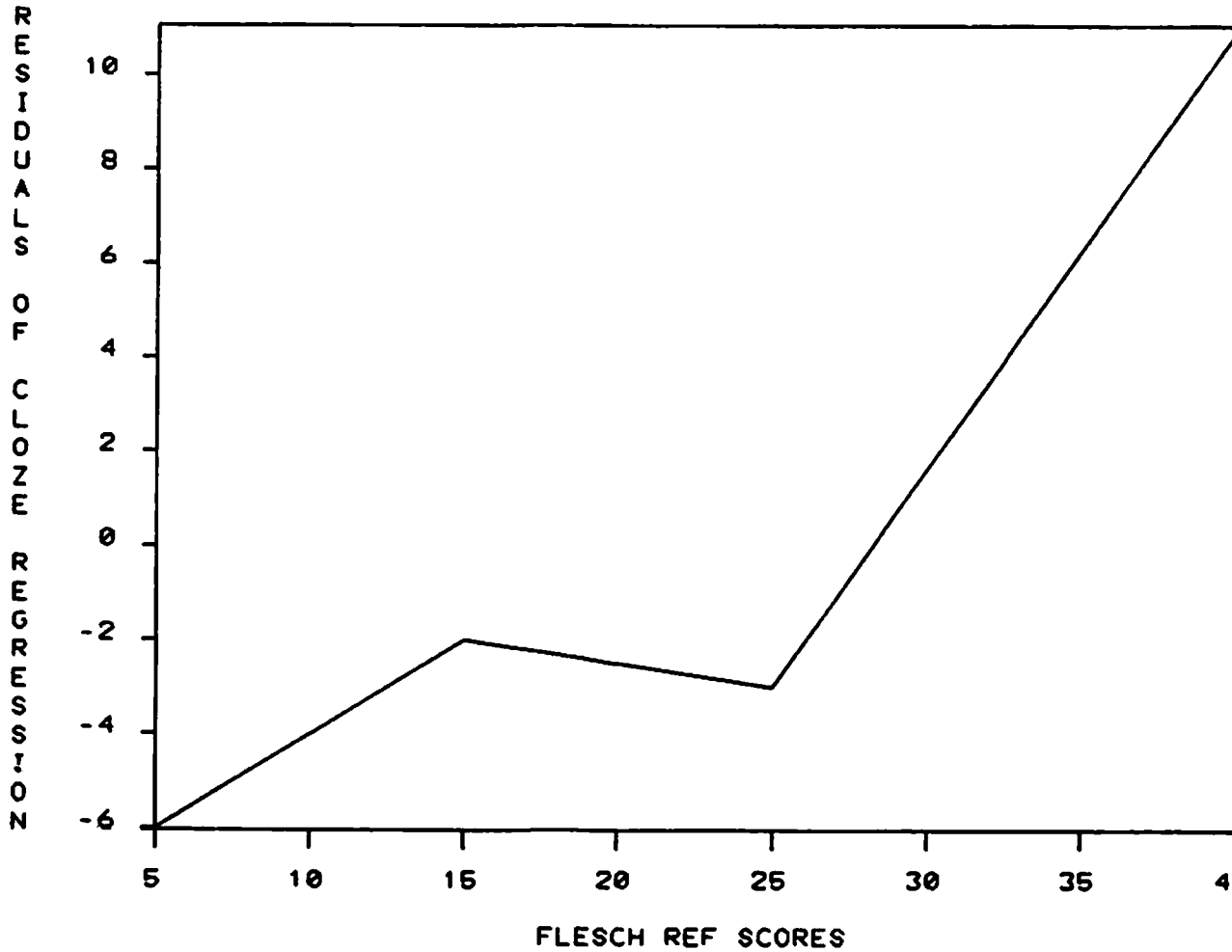
*Passage D, therefore, was somewhat more readable than the other passages. Thus, the combined cloze mean scores (A + B + C + D) for each treatment were slightly higher than the Flesch score predicted. What this means is that the graph line in Figure 1 is slightly higher than it ought to be. The slope of the line, however, which shows the power of the Flesch REF to predict comprehension, remains the same.

REF scores to the cloze scores purged of the influence of reader variables. The deviation from linearity is not significant F (2,48) = 2.50, p > .05 [8].

FIGURE 1

Purged Cloze Scores



The results of the multiple regression of the cloze scores on the covariates is summarized in Table 3. Reading ability, as measured by the Cooperative English Reading Test, was correlated .60 with the dependent variable cloze test and accounted for .36 of the total variance. None of the other reader variables had much influence on the cloze scores, probably because most of the subjects had a similar interest in and familiarity with the marketing material used in the study, and almost all of the subjects were 21 or 22 years old. In effect, then, interest, familiarity, and age were controlled in the experiment.*

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*The reader variables were not highly correlated with each other, the highest correlation being -.40 between age and familiarity. All correlations among the remaining covariates were below .12.

TABLE 3

Results of Regression of Cloze Scores on Covariates

Variable	r	Multiple R (cumulative)	R^2 (cumulative)
Reading Ability*	.60	.60	.36
Interest	.25	.63	.40
Age	.07	.63	.40
Familiarity	.09	.63	.40

Table 4 shows the results of a series of planned orthogonal comparisons among the treatment means. In general, the hypothesis that REF score differences of 15 points and above will predict significant differences in readability was supported, except that there was no significant difference between passages scored REF = 5 and REF = 25. The Flesch classifications of "very difficult" and "difficult" as representing different levels of passage difficulty were supported--all of the treatments scored in the "very difficult" level were significantly different from the passage in the "difficult" level.

TABLE 4

Summary of *a priori* Comparisons of
Purged Residual Means for Treatment Groups

Treatments	Flesch Category of "Very Difficult"			Flesch Category of "Difficult"
Flesch Reading Ease Score	5	15	25	40
5		N.S.**	N.S.	$p < .001$
15			N.S.	$p < .001$
25				$p < .001$
40				

DISCUSSION

The Flesch Reading Ease Formula will discriminate between passages labelled by Flesch as "very difficult" and "difficult," although score differences between two passages of below 15 points probably do not indicate

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*$p < .001$

**N.S. = no significant difference

any significant differences in the readability of the passages. Moreover, the Flesch formula is moderately reliable. In the study the cloze means of passages A, B, C, and D were calculated across all treatments. Three of the four means were quite similar, an indication that a person reading passages bearing the same Flesch REF score will generally experience the same level of difficulty in comprehension. Such passages, of course, ought to be similar in format and organization, and be of the same level of reader familiarity and interest. Finally, Flesch REF scores are linearly related to cloze scores purged of reader variable influence.

This linear relationship suggests that the Flesch formula variables, word length in syllables and sentence length, influence the ability of a reader to replace missing words in a passage. Why these variables should influence closure is a subject for future research. Also needed is evidence of the Flesch formula's power at REF scores above 40. It may be that the formula is either less or more powerful than it has been shown to be in this study.

Further work on the validity, reliability, and power of other formulas could be undertaken using the cloze procedure outlined in this study. The use of purged cloze residuals to represent dependent variable cloze scores solves one of the problems that has plagued much readability research for years: how to control multiple reader variables. With reader variable influence controlled, the relationship of cloze to many exogenous variables besides Flesch REF scores can be explored.

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THE ROLE OF PERCEPTION IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES OF UNITED STATES FIRMS

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ABSTRACT

The frame of reference is a principal part of the process of communication. Recognizing that the frame of reference is the accumulated field of experience, it is no wonder that cross-cultural exchanges by businesses in Third World Developing Nations are difficult.

The United States businessman approaches the bargaining table with the normal interest in profits and the need to win out over the competition for the contract. Even though laws are usually in place in the TWDC against unethical practices and payoffs, they are not conformed with since they are against the self-interests of the elite group. These different viewpoints make communicating difficult since a wide gulf exists between the two parties in understanding which has been breached most often in the form of a payment. Therefore, there is a need for third party consultants to come into the scene to assist in the communication process.

INTRODUCTION

The business literature is filled with examples of communication and "ethical" breakdowns between United States businessmen and their international counterparts. Much of this published work focuses upon whether American business leaders should "do as the Romans do" whenever they are operating overseas. The examples given generally illustrate the results of such decisions when businesses have paid grease money overseas. As a result, the firms have limited their ability to communicate effectively for they have failed to perceive the total environment of the host country.

This paper explores the frame of references of United States businessmen and the Third World Developing Nations. A model is developed and recommendations are made which, we believe, will allow the development of a more accurate communication frame of reference for business exchange. By training management to perceive the international

environment of these countries more accurately, and to communicate more openly, business opportunities can be developed which will be profitable, stable, and less subject to disruptions due to governmental changes in these developing nations.

The Frame of Reference

The frame of reference is a principal part of the process of communication (See Figure 1) [3]. The process begins at a point when the sender receives stimuli which he decodes first and then encodes for transmittal to the receiver. Osgood was one of the first to recognize this in describing his "communication unit" where each person (sender or receiver) decodes first followed by the encoding process [5].

This first step of each unit in the communication process, decoding and encoding, takes place within the individual's frame of reference. This important aspect of the communication model was first expressed in Schramm's model where he speaks of the accumulated "field of experience" of each individual trying to communicate [5]. The closer the two frames of reference are, the greater the probability of effective communication. The Ayer [1] and Cherry [2] models also seem to express the significance of a common frame of reference in effective communication in their "co-orientation" concept.

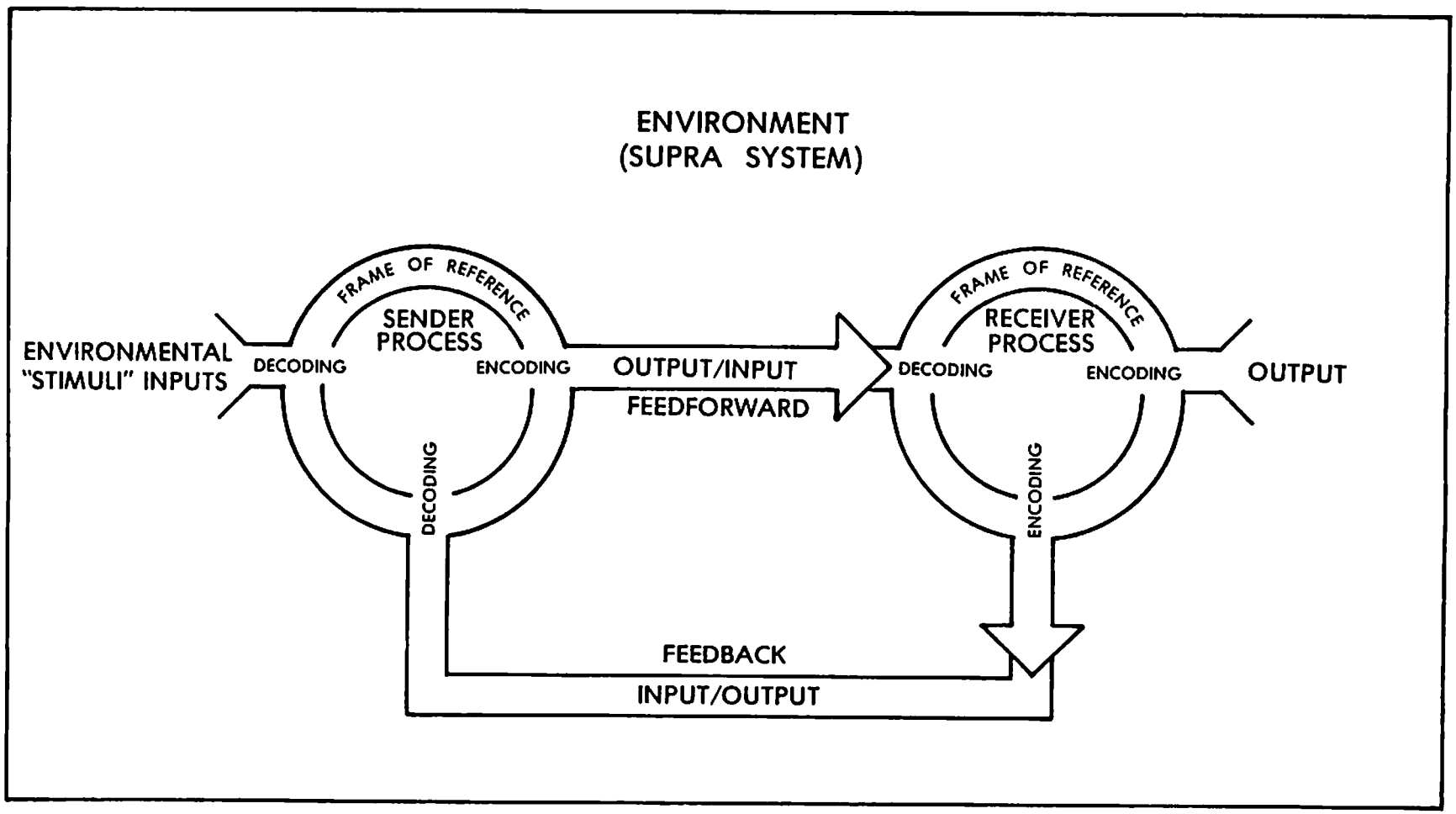
Recognizing that the frame of reference is the accumulated field of experience, it is no wonder that cross-cultural exchanges by businesses in Third World developing nations are difficult. The research and reporting of the tendency of other nations to require or condone payment for activities facilitating the completion of business deals illustrate the use of superficial means to bring about commonality of the frames of reference. However, the fact that these relationships are fraught with problems and uncertainty is evidence of the lack of true cooperation and communication necessary to long term relationships.

The Differing Viewpoints

Both parties to the exchange process involving United States and Third World Developing Countries (TWDC) approach the situation with a limited view. As mentioned by Neilsen [4] this is an example of intergroup conflict resulting from some or all of these factors:

(a) Distributive Justice practicied by each group toward the other by granting or withholding certain rewards considered important for the other group.

(b) Differences in Task Orientation and Experience created by time horizon differences, ownership of information, and different levels of certainty concerning the situation and tasks to be completed.



AN INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION MODEL:
A SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

FIGURE 1

(c) Competition for Scarce Resources, tangible or intangible. Tangible items include certainly money or facilities whereas intangible items of interest would be prestige, status or influence.

(d) Differences in Reference Groups - a significant factor.

Before these differences can be compensated for, the reference group conflict should be discussed.

The United States businessman approaches the bargaining table with the normal interest in profits and the need to win out over the competition for the contract. The fact that our culture desires high ethical practices places the firms at a disadvantage, in his perception, compared to their competitors with no ethical constraints. In addition, the firm often fails to perceive the corporate role in national policy when engaging in international exchange. Thus, the frame of reference is one of immediate returns anticipating only the short run consequences.

On the other hand, the individual representing the TWCS has different reference points. Often, the representative is a member of a small upper class group usually employed in the governmental framework. These jobs are a family affair, highly controlled and held on to tenaciously. These individuals see the exchange as an opportunity to improve their personal positions in countries providing few opportunities outside the government. Even though laws are usually in place in the TWDC against unethical practices and payoffs, they are not conformed with since they are against the self interests of this elite group. These different viewpoints make communicating virtually impossible since a wide gulf exists between the two parties in understanding which has been breached most often in the form of a payment. Figure 2 illustrates this typical case where the differing goals prevent communication. So far, the only way commonality has been achieved has been through payment.

A More Realistic Outlook

It is clear that there are no easy answers for United States businessmen overseas. The context surrounding present exchanges is confusing for both parties. In our opinion, recent international events have shown that business activities abroad involve larger issues than the firm's interest. It is clear that national security and policy issues can be determined by business activities.

Third World countries have several commonalities that can be identified to help guide firms, through the morass.

Commonalities

1. Government, outside of agricultural section, is the major thrust of country.

2. Social structure - Small upper class of governmental officials. No middle class with large lower class tied to agriculture

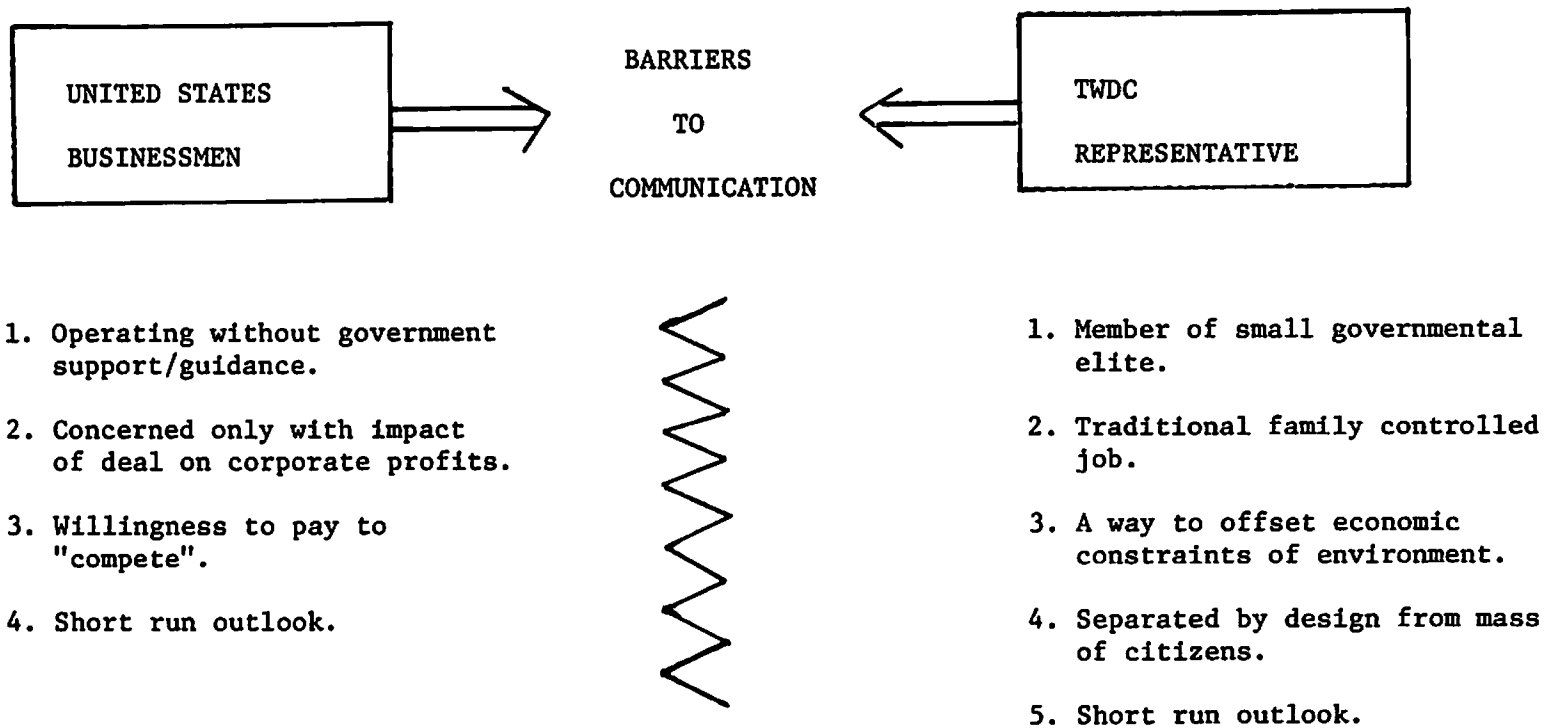


FIGURE 2

FACTORS INFLUENCING FRAME OF REFERENCE

OF UNITED STATES AND THIRD WORLD DEVELOPING

COUNTRY PARTIES TO THE BUSINESS EXCHANGE

and subsistence living.

3. Tension between masses and the upper class.

4. Laws in place to insure ethical business dealing.

When United States businesses deal with the upper class -- government -- the level of tension increases that could cause disruption.

Need for Diagnosis

If the traditional business dealings between United States firms and TWDC are to continue in the future, then more problems with drastic consequences are bound to follow. The traditional business dealings have been conducted by means of selective association -- an association between United States businesses and members of the ruling class in the TWDC. In most cases, however, the members of the ruling class have disassociated themselves from their own people. Indirectly, therefore, United States businesses have disassociated themselves from the people of the TWDC. Members of the ruling class are perceived by their own people as not worthy of the job of coordinating business relations between United States firms and TWDC. This selective association is a major source of conflict not only between United States firms and TWDC but also within the TWDC themselves.

New forms of cultural and political change are unfolding in most TWDC. More and more people are being educated and expectations of the masses are rising all the time. This creates tension -- tension between past and future and between tradition and modernity. The rate of change is rapid.

United States firms need to be proactive and not reactive to these changes. Proaction creates greater self-control relative to the changing environment. The result will be a better level of adaptation to the changing TWDC-environment by United States firms than when the firms have to react to an environment that has changed already. These firms need to ask themselves: What are the problems? What are the causes of these problems? However, since many firms have a short-run outlook and are concerned with immediate profits they may have been "blind" as to the forces behind the discontent and dissatisfaction in the TWDC.

CONCLUSION

In this paper we have outlined some of the many possible factors influencing frames of reference of United States and TWDC parties to the business exchange. These factors operate as obstacles to effective communication between the two parties. Since the frames of reference of the two parties are different, in our opinion, a third party needs to come into the scene to assist in the reduction of the effects of the

barriers in the communication process.

This new party may be the use of third party consultants. These consultants must be those whose advice and recommendations are valued by the two parties. They need to possess considerable authority of knowledge and position. Most importantly, for the consultants to be effective, they must win the acceptance and trust of both United States firms and TWDC. In their business dealings with TWDC United States businesses must abandon their quick-profits short-run outlook and follow the principle of "enlightened self-interest" -- by helping out TWDC, businesses will actually be serving their own long-term interests. In this regard, the responsibility of introducing third party consultants into the scene rests with United States businesses.

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