# COMMUNICATION RESEARCH TRENDS

# Interpersonal Communication

by

## Paul Soukup, S.J.
## Santa Clara University

Husband and wife, parent and child, priest and penitent, supervisor and employee, the 'happy hour' regulars at the corner pub - almost all of us communicate interpersonally every day. Important decisions can depend on success or failure in carrying out this process. Ultimately, it probably is of far more practical importance than mass media communication. But what do we really know about it?

As the author of this issue points out, only three of the last forty issues of *Trends* have focussed on topics which can be labelled 'interpersonal communication'. Most of the others have been devoted to various aspects of mass communication.

While trying to rectify this neglect, we have to recognize some obstacles. Those studying interpersonal communication often are not able to define just where it ends and other categories of communication begin. The field is handled differently in different countries. In the United States it has been welcomed within the fold of communication science, although others, such as psychologists and anthropologists, have long been interested in it. In Europe and elsewhere it is most often a part of psychology.

To describe the study of interpersonal communication on a worldwide basis therefore is a challenging task. We have elected, for the sake of coherence, to limit our survey to the North American perspective: interpersonal communication treated as a subfield of communication studies. The references, bibliography and current research sections do try to suggest the broader geographic and disciplinary range of relevant efforts, and hopefully a future issue of *Trends* will be able to deal with the same topic as it is more characteristically studied in other academic traditions.

# Introduction

Interpersonal textbooks tend to tell stories. Some begin by recounting how an oldster sat day by day in the park, never saying anything. Yet the neighbours came to know their companion's moods and dispositions. Communication occurred even without speech. Other texts recount tales of conversations gone awry or of successful ones, wondering just how people manage to talk. Still other stories narrate family events, highlighting differences in speech between the generations. Wives fret because their husbands don't talk; husbands resent being asked to discuss what to them is obvious.

Put more abstractly, interpersonal communication study seeks to answer these kinds of questions: Does someone who ignores you communicate anything to you? How can the same word or phrase have such different meanings to people? How can people talk anyway? Are arguments and disagreements really summarized in the now-famous line from the film 'Cool Hand Luke': 'What we have here is a failure to communicate'? The difficulty for interpersonal communication has been to move from the anecdotal to the general.

Near the beginning of the contemporary focus on communication between individuals, Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, and Don Jackson published what became a seminal work. Examining case studies of psychiatric patients, they proposed five general axioms of interpersonal communication. These axioms, which find their way into almost every introductory text in communication, include: (1) One cannot not communicate; (2) every communication has a content and a relationship aspect such that the latter classifies the former; (3) interaction sequences, like word sequences, cannot be understood as a string of isolated elements; (4) human beings communicate both digitally and analogically; and (5) communication comprises both symmetrical and complementary interaction (1967).

The tale of those axioms tells the story of some of the current thinking about interpersonal communication.

## A Look Back

When *Communication Research Trends* last reviewed the area of interpersonal communication in 1986 (Vol. 7, number 1), it focused on general themes that emerge in the study of interaction between two people--particularly on 'studies of communicative interaction, communicators, communication in relationships, communicative situations and mediated interpersonal communication' (McDonnell, 1986, p. 1). Much of the research reported in that review emerged from psychology and communication studies which employed a variety of laboratory and experimental methods. Many of those studies also presumed that one cannot not communicate, judging communication, in other words, from the perspective of a receiver who interprets even unintentional individual actions as communicatively meaningful.

Interpersonal communication study had emerged from a tradition rooted largely in anthropology and social psychology. Watzlawick and his colleagues acknowledge their debt to Gregory Bateson (1958) whose work informed their axioms. Another key movement in the early definition of interpersonal communication was symbolic interactionism, as proposed by George Herbert Mead in the 1930's and developed by Herbert Blumer (1969). These schools of thought provided theoretical beginnings; methodological foundations also came from both anthropology and psychology. The ethnography and ethnomethodology of the former have now somewhat eclipsed the laboratory experiments of the former.

During the last 10 years interpersonal communication research has burgeoned, examining almost every aspect of communication including the mass media, which appear indirectly as a topic of interpersonal conversation (Kepplinger & Martin, 1986; Schenk, 1989). Interpersonal studies deal with personality factors and communicator style (Duck, 1985; Bell & Daly,1985; Richmond, Gohram, & Furio, 1987), emotion (Wowk, 1986; Shiminoff, 1988; Matsumoto, 1991), communication competence (Schrader, 1990), conversation (McLaughlin,

1984; Tannen, 1990), nonverbal behaviour (Burgoon, Birk, & Pfau, 1990; Burgoon & Walther, 1990), marriage (Noller, 1984; Fitzpatrick, 1988b), family relationships (Stephen 1990), work relationships (Goldsmith, 1992; Wayne, 1992), small groups (Gudykunst, 1986; Hirokawa & Poole, 1986), conflict (Cahn, 1990), gender (Fischer, 1988; Halterman, 1991; Gender and Verbal Communication, 1991), and so on.

Perforce, this review takes a more modest and more restricted view of current work in interpersonal communication. It begins, first, by revisiting the classic axioms and using a debate surrounding them and other work to introduce some serious theoretical challenges to the whole tradition of interpersonal communication research. Second, it examines some of the building blocks of interpersonal communication--conversation and nonverbal communication. Third, it notes some research in specific areas of interpersonal behaviour: family relationships, marriage, and conflict.

One must also add a caution at the beginning of this overview: not only is it incomplete; it reflects a distinctly North American and United States bias. Most of the work in interpersonal communication occurs in the United States. In fact, few other regions even use the separate term 'interpersonal communication' as a descriptor within communication studies. In Europe, Asia, and South America, the interpersonal concern falls into the domain of psychology, socio-linguistics, or social psychology. This is not to say that scholars in these regions do not attend to interpersonal communication; they do but with a different theoretical and methodological focus from their colleagues in the States. (For examples of this work, see Szopinski, 1976; Somlai, 1982; Katori, 1984; Caffarel Serra, 1986; Sainz Sanchez, 1986; Bgazhnokov, 1987; Joseph, 1987; Keppler, 1987; Knops, 1988; Borsoni, 1989; Geser, 1989; Nel, 1989; Roiz, 1989; Huls, 1990; Klushina, 1990; Meunier, 1990; Andrade, 1991; Fruggeri, 1991; Ito, 1991; and Yoshitake, 1991.)

# I. The Critique of Communication Theories

Stewart J. 1991. 'A Postmodern Look at Traditional Communication Postulates', *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, Vol. 55, pp. 354-379.

Lannamann, J. W. 1991. 'Interpersonal Communication Research as Ideological Practice', *Communication Theory*, Vol 1., pp. 179-203.

Rakow, L. F. 1986. 'Rethinking Gender Research in Communication', *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 36, No. 4, pp. 11-26.

## The Background to the Debate

This section reviews some of the theoretical grounding for interpersonal research and then examines in more detail three specific critiques. Some scholars working in this area have become less and less comfortable with applying the information-theory model stemming from electronic communication (Shannon & Weaver, 1949) to interpersonal sources. Others note that social or linguistic practices within the research enterprise itself have kept us from noticing important issues. The three critiques--by Stewart, Lanamann, and Rakow--each change our perspective by calling attention to what people readily take for granted.

Michael Motley (1990) began one recent re-examination of interpersonal communication by questioning the validity of the first of Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson's axioms, that one cannot not communicate. He acknowledges that 'equating behaviour and communication has...been implicit in many other broad approaches to communication,' but then noted that such orientations favour the receiver over the sender. More serious, from a theoretical perspective, is his juxtaposition of this axiom with four basic information-theory assumptions about communication--'that communication is interactive, involves encoding, involves the exchange of symbols, and has a fidelity dimen-

sion' (p. 1). On each of these counts, he argues, the axiom fails.

The four information-theory assumptions imply a restricted range of behaviours: thus not all behaviours will satisfy their conditions for communication. To explain his argument, Motley presents a 3 x 3 matrix made up of source behaviour and receiver behaviour--only four of whose cells meet the requirements of interactivity, encoding, symbolic exchange, and fidelity. For better or worse, most communication research ignores the other five cells. Watzlawick et al's axiom includes them--hence the contradiction. Motley concludes by suggesting that communication scholars can't have things both ways: they must reject either the axiom or their common assumptions.

Later that year Janet Beavin Bavelas (a co-author of the original axioms) responded to Motley (Bavelas, 1990). She stresses the need to separate, on logical grounds, the two propositions that Motley had treated as equivalents: 'All behaviour is communication' and 'One cannot not communicate.' Because the former contains a universal quantifier while the latter has an existential quantifier (p. 593), the two cannot be equivalent.

Beyond that she reconstructs the historical context of the 'one cannot not communicate' axiom. Interested in real world communication and working with verbally impaired individuals, Watzlawick's team focused on nonverbal communication. The research methods of the 1960's provided only introspection as an avenue to investigate nonverbal encoding and intentionality. The team finally rejected the information theory model of communication (whose assumptions Motley had employed) as applied to nonverbal behaviour. 'Given the choice between abandoning nonverbal behaviours and accepting an introspective criterion, we chose nonverbal behaviours, brashly enfranchising all of them' (p. 595). The choice put empirical observation ahead of theoretical niceties. An early critique of this approach (Wiener, Devoe, Rubinow, & Geller, 1972) attempted to resolve the impasse by distinguishing *informative* from *communicative* acts. Building on this, Bavelas argues that empirical research on these questions remains a possibil-

ity, particularly after she and her colleagues developed a methodology that could examine nonverbal behaviour 'without requiring that intentionality be established' (p. 595).

She concludes her response by suggesting that researchers treat both models as hypotheses rather than axioms or assumptions. They could then seek ways to test them empirically.

## Philosophical Critique

Others entered the discussion as well (Beach, 1990; Anderson, 1991; Motley, 1991; Clevenger, 1991). However, John Stewart raises an important set of larger questions for this tradition of interpersonal communication theory through an examination of its philosophical grounding. In 'A Postmodern Look at Traditional Communication Postulates' (1991), he re-examines the issues from a perspective that challenges commonly accepted Enlightenment truths. He comments:

> One of these received truths is that, as Descartes and Kant insisted, questions of 'fact' can and should be rigorously separated from questions of 'value.' This belief was developed into what are sometimes called the 'modernist dualisms' between subject and object, theory and practice, art and science, art and reality, literature and criticism, form and content, will and reason. (p. 355)

Following postmodernist thinkers such as Heidegger, Gadamer, Habermas, Lyotard, Foucault, and MacIntyre (as summarized by McCarthy, 1987), Stewart reviews four key themes of postmodernist thought.

First, Stewart points out that these thinkers critique the traditional Cartesian-Kantian conceptions of reason, noting that reason is seldom independent of context and group interest. Second, postmodernists offer a critique of the sovereign, rational subject. 'The construct "the subject" is problematic both because it covers over unconscious factors and because it ignores the inherently social nature of human identity' (p. 357). Third, they criticize the notion of 'knowledge as representation, according to which the subject stands over against an independent world of objects that it can more or less accurately represent' (p. 357). Instead, they argue, that humans are in the world and cannot give 'objective' accounts. Fourth, postmodernists reject philosophy's

distancing itself from rhetoric and poetics. Following a solid tradition in speech communication, dating back to Aristotle, they reassert the role of discourse and dialogue in the knowledge process.

These four postmodernist themes offer alternatives to the information-theory model's four assumptions which Motley noted. Where the received model sees communication as symbolic behaviour, the alternative model takes its lead from Gadamer who critiques the semiotic approach to language because 'it inadequately captures "the language that lives in speech"' (p. 360). Both ordinary language and hermeneutic philosophy offer different constructs of language, constructs which are much more active, dialogic, and rooted in the human lifeworld. Language, then, 'is not representational but presentational; it is not symbolic but constitutive' (p. 364).

Similarly, the encoding process comes under fire for it presumes a representational basis of communication and thought. The encoding postulate rests upon the Cartesian-Kantian assumption of a rational subject who is cut off from a real world and who overcomes the subject-object dichotomy by encoding information. But this account ignores the fundamental relatedness of human beings in the world. Further, it assumes that cognition and language can be separated. Postmodernist thought notes that we humans 'are as much subject-to the linguistic resources for defining our world as those resources are subject-to us' (p. 365).

Most postmodernist thinkers would accept the third information-theory postulate: communication is an interactive, two-way process. Most see communication (and human life in general) as characterized by 'mutuality, involvement, and context-dependence' (p. 367). However, a few would substitute 'transactive' for 'interactive' since the latter term implies that communicators have adequately grasped things prior to their exchange whereas the former highlights the fact that the subject matter constantly changes even as people communicate. People understand through communication, not prior to it.

Finally, postmodernist thought questions the fidelity postulate since that assumption presumes a representational view of the world. 'In order for a fidelity assessment to work, one has to assume a considerable degree of both discreteness and stability in the phenomena being matched or fitted' (p. 370). The sender and receiver proposed by the model must then have access to their own and each other's goals and messages so that they can compare them and assess fidelity. Postmodernist thought asks whether humans do indeed assess the fidelity of claims in this way or whether communication is rather an ongoing process that comes clear only over time.

The postmodernist critique strikes at the heart of the tradition of interpersonal communication research. Often assuming the information-theory model (and seldom adverting to its origin in electronic communication), interpersonal theorists developed careful empirical studies that, as Motley pointed out, favoured the receiver and validated the Cartesian/Kantian worldview. The postmodern position first moves all communication research (and especially interpersonal research) towards an explicitly transactional model in which communication defines the identity of its participants. 'Second, researchers aware of the postmodern critiques will certainly continue their efforts to study speech communication as-it-actually-happens, and preference will be given to research approaches which minimally impose predetermined structures of rationality' (p. 373). Third, 'validity' and 'proof' will be seen more clearly as a function of pragmatic communication practices. Finally, research will more explicitly move away from the information-theory model toward one rooted, perhaps, in hermeneutics.

## Ideological Critique

Although he did not participate in the debate occasioned by Motley, John Lannamann, also writing in 1991, offers a critique of interpersonal communication research similar to that of Stewart but from a different starting point. Focusing on ideological practice, he notes that what is 'absent in the metatheoretical debates about interpersonal research has been the investigation of how epistemological decisions are shaped by latent ideological commitments' (p. 183). This omission stems from institu-

tional demands for specialization (which separate interpersonal research from social phenomena), from an early empirical orientation, and from competing treatments of interpersonal power. Mainline interpersonal work treats power as 'a communicative product or process through which one person effects an intended behavioral or attitudinal change in another person' (p. 184); the alternative view treats power from the systemic level. These three factors blind us to the ideological basis of interpersonal domination.

Lannamann identifies four ideological characteristics which suggest trends in interpersonal communication research. First, the research tradition tends to select the individual as the locus of personhood. Empirical instruments (questionnaires, content analysis, interviewing) focus on the individual, even when theorists acknowledge that interpersonal communication takes place *between* individuals. Such an approach ignores the social origins of the self (p. 187) and shifts explanations to cognitive structures and away from social processes (p. 188). As a case in point, he notes that relationship-development models account for friendship formation by a cost/benefit analysis carried out by individual actors, thus reducing 'relationships to isolated individuals pursuing hedonistic acts' (p. 190). Such a focus on the individual is itself ideological, he says, because it reinforces a power model of relationships and then ratifies those power relationships by keeping them from systematic analysis. Historical, social, and even geographical patterning in relationships disappears.

Second, the research tradition concentrates on the perceptions of the knowing subject. Like the previous characteristic, this too neglects social processes and material conditions. For example, language--a product of the human community--both produces and positions subjects within society. How we speak makes a difference but most people do not attend to how they speak. Only recently (spurred on by feminist studies with its emphasis on language inequality, for example) has communication study shown an interest in the ways that social institutions such as language actually determine interpersonal relations (pp. 190-191).

Third, interpersonal research assumes a purposeful behaviour in individuals. 'Individuals are seen as controlling their own destiny, and theories of social action based on subjective intentionality work to shore up our lingering modernist belief in the unitary self' (p. 192). The function of social practices, social roles, and social patterns remains hidden behind the ideological defense of the autonomous individual. The research tradition simply does not ask whether the behaviour is indeed autonomous.

Finally, the research tradition attends only to the present when it comes to interpersonal behaviour. 'This pervasive ahistoricism has several roots including an early emphasis on process (Berlo, 1960), a pragmatic focus on the here and now (Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson, 1967), a microsocial focus that precludes an examination of the prevailing social epoch, and the lingering effects of a thorough-going reductionism in experimental method' (p. 194). Whatever the cause, we find few historical studies of relationships and the communication that characterizes relationships. Lannamann notes that only a few conflict models suggest that one needs to look at the roots or history of the conflict in order to understand a current situation.

As a response to this situation, Lannamann offers the alternative of critical interpersonal research. One can avoid the four weaknesses by developing 'an explicit account of the unintended consequences of social interaction. By expanding the unit of observation to include the *ramifications* of interpersonal action, we are better able to see the recursive link between interpersonal practices and the emergent structures of larger social systems' (p. 195). Social class and the experience of state authority, for example, lead to styles of interpersonal behaviour--whether among school drop-outs, teenage gang members, or upwardly mobile urban professionals. Secondly, Lannamann urges a rethinking of the concept of power away from an energy model (where one person or thing exerts a force on another) and towards a sense of constraint applied recursively. For example, the enactment of power in a student-teacher relationship depends on historical patterns of legitimation, highlighted by a

status difference in a hierarchical social structure. Each member of the student-teacher dyad comes into the relationship with a personal (and social) historical pattern which constrains how they interact (p. 197).

### Feminist Critique
Several years before these theoretical and philosophical re-evaluations, Lana Rakow (1986) had called into question the way that 'gender has been operationalized as a pregiven category' (p. 11), to be used as a fundamental variable in interpersonal and mass communication research. In 'Rethinking Gender Research in Communication,' she argues, based on feminist scholarship, 'that gender should be seen as a verb, that is, work that we do to construct and maintain a particular gender system, and as a meaning system, that is, organizing categories used to make sense of the world and experience' (pp. 12-13). [Rakow's more recent (1992) work on feminist directions in communication research is treated in *Communication Research Trends*, Vol. 12, No. 1.]

Using historical studies she notes that researchers are more likely to assume male and female differences than to observe them. Following Putnam (1982) she claims that gender may well be more an effect of communication patterns than a cause of them. 'She [Putnam] argues that sex difference research rests on the assumption that the researchers know which traits and behaviours are masculine and which feminine, and that gender is mutually exclusive and linked to biological opposites' (p. 16).

Using anthropological, sociological, and biological data, she demonstrates that creating two universal categories of people does not necessarily flow from human biology. Rather it stems from the Western Enlightenment's predilection for binary oppositions and dualisms, from the need to mark individuals in a hierarchical system, and from the social requirement of a 'structuring structure' to give order to the world (pp. 21-22). She does not mention, though it may be relevant, that a binary opposition like gender provides an easily accessible independent variable, one that can readily be utilized in unsophisticated statistical modelling in empirical studies.

Her study of gender indicates that the different meanings of gender (in different historical and cultural settings) show that gender 'has meaning, is organized and structured, and takes place as interaction and social practice, all of which are communication processes' (p. 23). Therefore communication research must resist using gender as an explanatory concept lest it presume what it is trying to establish.

Each of these three critiques poses a theoretical challenge to communication research in interpersonal communication. Each in its own way asks that research and theorizing about communication put the communication process (a *social* activity) ahead of the particular individuals engaged in that process. Data gathered about individuals, through whatever empirical means, still obscure the social framework and reinforce the tendency to privilege individual behaviours. These critiques--whether centred on postmodernism, ideology, or gender--ask researchers to develop ways to study the process rather than the communicator.

# II. Basic Studies in Interpersonal Communication

Studies of conversation and nonverbal communication form two of the building blocks in the edifice of interpersonal studies. Other blocks consist of examinations of motivation to communicate, communicator style, interpretation, and so on (see Knapp & Miller, 1985 for an overview of the areas). As noted above, this review will look only briefly at verbal and nonverbal communication. These areas could well merit their own extended reviews, as the bibliographies in each work demonstrate. Further, one should note that the theoretical debate outlined in section I occurred only after the work reported here was completed.

## A. Conversation

McLaughlin, M. L. 1984. *Conversation: How Talk Is Organized*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Nofsinger, R. E. 1991. *Everyday Conversation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Tannen, D. 1990. *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. New York: William Morrow.

### How People Talk

Language and its everyday use makes up the foundation of all interpersonal communication. Following in the tradition of ordinary language philosophy, linguistics, and ethnomethodology, communication researchers have looked more and more at how conversation works. This focus has taken its place alongside the rhetorical analysis of verbal production: interested not so much in global interpretation as in structures and smaller-unit interpretation, students of conversation minutely analyze transcriptions of talk that might occur anywhere.

Three good examples of this approach to interpersonal communication study come from McLaughlin (1984), Nofsinger (1991), and Tannen (1990). McLaughlin's book is more technical; Nofsinger planned his as an introductory textbook; and Tannen chose a popular style to make the fruits of this research tradition available to a wider audience. Each demonstrates the fact that day-to-day conversation requires an immense amount of communicative skill.

In *Conversation: How Talk is Organized*, Margaret McLaughlin presents an overview of how people talk. Conversationalists, usually unconsciously, know a great deal about communication. Researchers have tried to make this knowledge explicit by describing it in terms of rules, interpretive procedures, and maxims. Rules specify behaviour in particular contexts. 'While most theorists seem to agree that rules prescribe the behaviour necessary to constitute a social act or to carry out an action sequence, none implies that rules prescribe *particular* behaviours, or reference idiosyncratic situations' (p. 16). People learn rules through modelling and use them to guide actions. For example, we learn that conversation follows a turn-taking rule. First one person talks, then the other. Conversationalists also follow sets of interpretive procedures to guide their reactions. For example, when someone observes that it is cold in the room, the conversational partner knows to interpret this not only as a statement but also as an indirect request to close the window (p. 30). Finally, following Grice (1975), McLaughlin notes that conversationalists also employ a set of common assumptions to facilitate the social interaction of talk. For example, the *Quality* maxim 'requires that one state only that which one believes to be true, and for which there is sufficient evidence' (p. 32). Both the rules and the maxims carry social sanctions: at minimum the rule violator is judged ignorant or impolite.

Conversations work because they have patterns--they are somewhat predictable (Nofsinger, 1991, p. 9). Ultimately this makes the work of conversation easier so that speakers can attend to their meaning, without undue regard for the mechanics of coordinating their talk. In order to understand some of those mechanics, researchers have had to describe various aspects of language, often in great detail. Besides talking, conversationalists also perform a variety of actions, or speech acts, in their talk. Utterances (locutions) accomplish illocutionary acts (the terminology follows that of Austin, 1975, and Searle, 1969): promises, requests, commands, threats, offers, greetings, and so on. One can distinguish forms from one another through propositional content and situational rules (Nofsinger, 1991, pp. 14-45).

Besides having coherence at the functional level, conversations also hold together on a structural level through sequences, turn-taking, and alignment. Sequences are series of three or more speech acts that form a unit. These include simple things like openings or greetings as well as more complex things like stories or arguments (McLaughlin, 1984, pp. 169-194; Nofsinger, 1991, pp. 49-77). On an even more basic level, turn-taking establishes conversation; it also strikes most people as elementary and rather obvious, and--as most transcriptions of normal conversation readily

show--is observed more in the breach of its rules. Indeed, scholars have had trouble defining turns because turn boundaries are so fluid (McLaughlin, 1984, p. 93). Speakers construct turn units as they talk: 'the important thing about...these...units is that participants can *project* where they will end' (Nofsinger, 1991, pp. 80-81); usually transcriptions indicate that a speaker did accomplish a speaking goal or was about to accomplish one when the turn ended. Noting turn organization helps specify the rules by which people take turns, refuse turns, or interrupt one another. Turn-taking rules also help to clarify conversational events like hesitation pauses, switching pauses, simultaneous talk, and interruptions. One model that has emerged from the study of turns is an economic one: conversation has its goods (the turn to speak) which entail certain costs and rewards and obligations. 'Market mechanisms' adapted from economic studies helps to explain and predict the occurrences of turns in conversation (McLaughlin, 1984, p. 92). Finally, alignment keeps turns on track by helping people to monitor or understand one another. The process, consisting of verbal and nonverbal cues, conveys understanding as well as synchronization. For example, nodding one's head and saying, 'uh-huh,' signals to the speaker to continue; establishing eye contact may signal the handing over of a turn to speak. Sometimes more formal alignments take place as when someone summarizes a conversation, repairs a fault ('Sorry, I thought you were finished'), or prefaces an utterance with a disclaimer or explanation ('Usually I don't use this kind of language...'). Alignment, in general, refers to the ways speaking turns are fitted together by the speakers; more alignment takes place where there is a likelihood or an occurrence of misunderstanding (Nofsinger, 1991, pp. 111-137).

Ultimately conversational analysts attempt to carefully describe the mechanics of talk in order to specify the rules people implicitly follow--rules which make communication possible. Conversational structures can indeed be complex and forbidding despite the fact that even children have managed the process. This empirically-based research sheds important light on human communication and, on a theoretical level, helps correct the information theory models by insisting on rules drawn from empirical observations. The conclusions gained from the careful study of conversation also bear fruit in diagnosing and understanding the all-too-real mis-communications that seem to characterize human interaction.

Other studies combine with the study of conversational analysis in order to improve an understanding of how communication works. These studies attempt to refine conversational methods as well as to develop new ones. Duck, Rutt, Hoy and Strejc (1991) propose an approach that focuses specifically on everyday talk, rather than talk recorded in laboratories or in other artificial settings. They also attempt to correct three common errors in the research: aggregating communication samples from different kinds of relationships; treating any instance of communication in a given relationship as an indicator of the communication in the relationship as a whole; and treating data gathered on a given day as equivalent to data gathered in other circumstances (p. 229). They proposed and tested the 'Iowa Communication Record,' a structured self-report form that employs a diary technique in which participants record a wide variety of information about their day-to-day conversations (p. 236). In the initial work Duck et al. note consistent gender differences in the quality and nature of conversations--'males are unaffected by details that could actually create change in the relationship' (p. 247). In addition they also find that groups commonly clustered as 'intimates' for research purposes (close friends, best friends, lovers) show distinctly different patterns of communication (pp. 247, 253). This work calls attention to the real-world nature of conversation and the impossibility of separating conversation from relationships.

**Gender and Conversation**
Deborah Tannen, a sociolinguist, studies precisely these things: everyday conversations and their effects on relationships. In *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (1990), she provides a wonderfully readable guide to gender differences in conversational styles. She argues that women and

men often talk at cross-purposes, beginning with very different assumptions about the world and about the nature and purpose of talk. Writing of herself and her husband, she summarizes the differences:

My husband was simply engaging the world in a way that many men do: as an individual in a hierarchical social order in which he was either one-up or one-down. In this world, conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand if they can, and protect themselves from others' attempts to put them down and push them around. Life, then, is a contest, a struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure.

I, on the other hand, was approaching the world as many women do: as an individual in a network of connections. In this world, conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give confirmation and support, and to reach consensus. They try to protect themselves from others' attempts to push them away. Life, then, is a community, a struggle to preserve intimacy and avoid isolation. (pp. 24-25)

The distinction translates into different conversational styles. Women seek what Tannen terms 'rapport-talk' while men prefer 'report-talk.' The former privileges private speaking--establishing connections, matching experiences, building a common world--while the latter favours public discourse, getting attention, arguing a point (pp. 76-77). Obviously, women and men can choose either style (and do, according to circumstances); in general, women choose rapport-talk while men choose the other.

Tannen uses data generated by the kinds of conversational analysis presented by McLaughlin and Nofsinger throughout her book. For example, in discussing interruptions, especially in talk between intimates, she notes that interruption often transposes into questions of power and dominance. 'Interrupting carries a load of metamessages--that a partner doesn't care enough, doesn't listen, isn't interested' (p. 189). Transcriptions indicate that overlaps (the generic term for interruptions)

can be cooperative or uncooperative. People usually regard only the latter as interruptions because such talk steals the turn away and often changes the subject as well. Cooperative overlaps occur when people work together to recount an event, share news, or help the conversation out. But individuals can fail in cooperative overlaps--here the data suggest that we should all be more careful in taking offense (pp. 192-200).

Over and over again Tannen reminds us that individuals differ in their style of speaking. One style is not necessarily better than another. She concludes, 'Once people realize that their partners have different conversational styles, they are inclined to accept differences without blaming themselves, their partners, or their relationships. The biggest mistake is believing there is one right way to listen, to talk, to have a conversation--or a relationship' (p. 297). The ultimate benefit of conversational analysis results from an increased understanding of what happens implicitly in talk; knowing that, for example, frees people from letting arguments spiral out of control due to the misunderstandings of style that hide substance.

## B. Nonverbal Communication

Knapp, M. L. 1978. *Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction* (2nd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Burgoon, J. K., T. Birk, & M. Pfau, 1990. 'Nonverbal Behaviours, Persuasion, and Credibility', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 17, pp. 140-169.

Burgoon, J. K., & J. B. Walther, 1990. 'Nonverbal Expectancies and the Evaluative Consequences of Violations', *Human Communication Research*, Vol 17., pp. 232-265.

Burgoon, J. K., & D. A. Newton, 1991. 'Applying a Social Meaning Model to Relational Message Interpretations of Conversational Involvement: Comparing Observer and Participant Perspectives', *The Southern Communication Journal*, Vol. 56, pp. 96-113.

Keeley-Dyreson, M., J. K. Burgoon, & W. Bailey, 1991. 'The Effects of Stress and Gender on

Nonverbal Decoding Accuracy in Kinesic and Vocalic Channels', *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 17, pp. 584-605.

## Background Work

Nonverbal communication complements, reinforces, or even contradicts verbal messages. Since the work of Watzlawick and his associates, interpersonal communication study has examined nonverbal behaviour as a necessary part of human interaction. Much of the basic research in nonverbal communication, which occurred in the period of 1950 to 1975, examines somewhat self-contained areas of activity: environment and personal space; physical appearance and clothing; gestures and other bodily movements; touching; eye behaviour; and vocal cues (Knapp, 1978). Before addressing more specific studies, let us briefly review the commonly accepted terms and definitions.

Humans, as territorial creatures, react to environmental and spatial cues. Although architecture does influence behaviour, personal space receives more explicit research attention. Researchers have particularly studied conversational distances which range from a few inches to several feet; closeness of relationship and culture strongly determine the exact distances (Knapp, 1978, pp. 123-124). Similarly, physical appearance and clothing styles signal willingness to communicate--at least on a stereotypical level. Many nonverbal studies look at perceptions of clothing or body shape in order to measure differing interpretations (Knapp, 1978, pp. 175-185).

Traditional studies of gesture, movement, and touch classify these activities, often using an analogy to linguistics first proposed by Birdwhistell in the 1950's (see Birdwhistell, 1970, for a summary). Others prefer classifications that do not claim any kinship with linguistic practice nor any particular inherent meaning for any gesture; these researchers divide movements only to facilitate further research. Ekman and Friesen (1969) propose the most commonly used categories: emblems (actions which have a direct verbal translation, such as pointing to an imaginary wristwatch to ask the time), illustrators (actions which illustrate speech, usually through accompanying gestures), affect displays (actions which exhibit emotions), regulators (actions which maintain or regulate interactive behaviour, such as nodding one's head to let the speaker know that the message is understood), and adaptors (actions which adapt to body or the environment, such as scratching an itch or moving things on one's desk). Similar categories of touch classify types of touch and parts of the body commonly touched--such touching ranges from impersonal (a perfunctory handshake) to highly intimate (sexual touch); hands are the most commonly touched parts of the body (Knapp, 1978, pp. 250-252).

Eye contact and vocal cues (intonation, pitch, volume, rate of speaking, and so forth) primarily regulate communication by signalling turn-taking. However, both also express emotion (the long, loving gaze or the angry tone). Much of the research tradition tries to integrate these factors into studies of larger communication interactions--family interaction, persuasion, and so on (Knapp, 1978, pp. 298-305, 340-355).

## Nonverbal Communication in Interpersonal Settings

More current research has examined the nonverbal component of differing interpersonal situations. Judee Burgoon and her colleagues have published four studies that indicate some of the directions which scholars have taken in this area. First, Burgoon, Thomas Birk and Michael Pfau (1990) explored how nonverbal behaviours interacted with credibility and persuasion. Since past theory held that nonverbal behaviours had little direct influence on persuasion, the group looked for an intervening effect. They found that nonverbal cues signalling composure, sociability, and immediacy influenced judgments of credibility which in turn influenced the persuasion.

In another study Burgoon and Joseph Walther (1990) examined expectations. 'Communication expectancies are cognitions about the anticipated communicative behaviour of specific others, as embedded within and shaped by the social norms for the contemporaneous roles, relationships, and context' (p. 236). They asked a random sample of subjects to report their impressions of photographs of different situations involving touch. Overall they found

that expected nonverbal behaviours were judged positively by third-party judges; unexpected behaviours were judged variously depending on the attractiveness, status, and gender of the communicators. However, they also raise the more general issue of reliance on observer impressions--do observers or participants better judge behavioral expectations?

Burgoon and Deborah Newton (1991) addressed precisely that question in a study which had observers rate the nonverbal behaviours involved in five 2-minute videotaped segments in which one of the participants varied the level of involvement (through posture, eye contact, gestures, facial animation, laughter and so forth). In addition, the participants themselves also rated the nonverbal behaviours. The observers consistently rated the behaviours: 'the current results demonstrate unequivocally that certain relational meanings are associated with the global construct, conversational involvement, as well as with particular nonverbal cues...' (p. 108). However, the participants tended to be more favourable in their assessments than were the observers. Burgoon and Newton suggest several explanations, ranging from the differing cues available (participant vs. observer) to the cooperative nature of conversation that would make the participants more sympathetic to each other. They note that this area, because of its importance, should be further studied.

(Although it lies beyond the scope of this review, the entire winter 1991 [56:2] issue of *The Southern Communication Journal* addresses questions of nonverbal behaviours. Several studies stress methodological issues while others look to things as specific as head movement and ageing.)

Finally, Maureen Keeley-Dyreson, Burgoon, and William Bailey (1991) examined how stress can influence one's judgments of nonverbal behaviours. As one might expect, stress does interfere with one's judgments; people have greater difficulty judging vocal tone, inflection, and other paralinguistic cues than they do gestures or bodily movements. The relatively greater attention paid to overt behaviours may account for this difference.

These four studies demonstrate the range of topics which the interpersonal aspects of nonverbal behaviours cover. They also indicate the difficulties in assessing how these behaviours interact with others in communication. As Bavelas noted in her reply to Motley, the Watzlawick group decided that--whatever the difficulty--nonverbal data could not be ignored.

# III. Interpersonal Communication Situations

Interpersonal communication has also been studied within the context of common situations where people interact. Since interpersonal communication virtually defines personal relationships, some recent work on relational communication in the family will be examined. Next comes marital communication. Finally, because it is so common, conflict will be examined.

## A. Family Communication

Stephen, T. 1990. 'Research on the New Frontier: A Review of the Communication Literature on Marriage and the Family.' Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Dublin, Ireland.

The study of the family has grown in importance over the last several decades, with scholars from a host of disciplines examining this vital relationship. Initially the domain of sociologists and psychologists, the family has drawn the interest first of systems-analytic communication theorists. Much of Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson's early work, for example, addressed treatment plans for dysfunctional children by concentrating on the communicative interactions of their families. Other communication teachers and scholars have approached family communication as a narrower context of the larger interpersonal communication area. For example, Pearson's text, *Communication in the Family* (1989), treats the same topics as most textbooks in interpersonal communication but adds sections which

stress aspects more particular to the family (couples, roles, development of the family, ageing), children, and the home. Other interpersonal topics such as self-disclosure, conflict, and decision-making are also considered from the perspective of the family unit.

Others focus on the family as a site of communication behaviour. Silverstone (1990) has investigated the ways in which communication technologies are integrated into the family context. Similar research is reported by Lull (1988) and discussed by Crain (1989).

Studies of family communication have accelerated as more and more angles of study appear. In his review of the area Stephen (1990) notes the following themes: sibling interaction, parent-child interaction, marital and pre-marital pairs, child socialization, parenting, and family use of the media (p. 4). However, he also notes a lack of coherence among the studies of family communication, something that may be 'natural in a field turning its attention in a new direction' (p. 7).

Stephen examined 116 articles on family communication published in major communication journals between 1915 and 1987; 72 of these appeared between 1980 and 1986. He divides the articles into calls for research, proposals of typologies for classifying families, investigations into decision making (including power, control, and conflict), explorations of family use of the mass media, studies of mother-infant interaction, and studies of parenting. In addition he notes some articles that seem to fit no category, being 'quite diverse, ranging from a study of the effects of supportive family communication in a diet management program to one of turn taking rigidity in families of drug addicts' (p. 14).

Stephen also observes that the studies report a wide range of research methods. A little over one-third relied on questionnaires, 20% used content coding, 12% included interviews, and smaller numbers employed content analysis, experimental designs, or a mix of methods. This is an important point because it indicates the relative newness of the area as well as the inherent difficulty in studying the family--the relatively close-knit qualities of families make traditional methods of study

(observation, laboratory experiment) almost impossible.

**Lack of Theory in Family Communication**
Despite the richness of theoretical development regarding the family in other social sciences, communication study has not as yet developed a strong theoretical base. Stephen reports that some hold that it is too early for this kind of formation, 'that it will not be possible to construct useful theories until a strong foundation of descriptive findings has been laid' (p. 17). Others, including Stephen himself, hold that the descriptive research needs some focus:

> The [communication] field's contextual organization (organizational, mass, interpersonal, group, etc.) may perhaps inadvertently encourage the belief that once a context area has been delineated and formalized, normal science proceeds by discovering the relevant facts about communication taking place within it. Were the field organized by theoretical position (for example, symbolic interactionist theories, exchange theories, psychological theories, functional theories, information processing theories, etc.), it might be easier to coordinate research efforts toward the development of a sensible and inter--related knowledge base. (p. 18).

This lack of theoretical focus is reflected in the fact that some question whether communication in family settings is any different from communication that occurs in other, less intimate, settings.

However, some do argue that family settings clearly differ from other areas where people communicate. Trying to describe those differences has given rise to one interesting area of theoretical development: the attempt of several scholars to create taxonomies of variables influencing family communication. One typology, developed by Mary Anne Fitzpatrick, classifies marital couples and will be discussed in the next section. Another, developed by Chaffee and McLeod (see Tims & Masland, 1985), began in an attempt to understand media use patterns in children. Using measures of high and low 'concept-orientation' and 'socio-orientation,' they divided families into four groups. 'Concept-orientation describes a communication environment in

which children are stimulated to express ideas while socio-orientation describes an environment in which children are encouraged to maintain harmonious personal relations and to repress feelings on extrapersonal topics' (Stephen, 1990, p. 9). These basic orientations both result from communication and influence the kinds of communication which takes place in the home.

Much remains for communication research to do within the locus of the family. Stephen's conclusion is well worth repeating:

> The promise of research on communication in marriage and the family lies in the possibility that it may further our understanding of basic social processes. Among the more important of these processes are (a) those in which children acquire knowledge of the world, (b) those related to the formation and maintenance of self, (c) those related to the transmission of culture, (d) those related to physical, social, and psychological well being, and (e) those related to important personal capacities (e.g., intelligence). There would seem to be ample reason at this time to suspect that communication plays an important, if not crucial, role in each of these areas. The challenge for the discipline, therefore, is to begin to conceptualize and carefully research these basic issues. (p. 24)

## B. Marital Communication

Noller, P. 1984. *Nonverbal Communication and Marital Interaction.* Vol. 9, International Series in Experimental Social Psychology. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Fitzpatrick, M. A. 1988b. *Between Husbands & Wives: Communication in Marriage.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Noller, P. & Fitzpatrick, M.A. (Eds.). 1988. *Perspectives on Marital Interaction. Monographs in Social Psychology of Language*, Vol. 1. Clevedon, Avon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Researchers and counsellors have long regarded communication as an essential ingredient for a successful marriage (Karlsson, 1951; Bolte, 1975; see also Noller, 1984, ch. 2 for a summary of this tradition). 'The role of communication in marriage has undergone changes in that communication between husbands and wives has moved from the periphery

to centre stage in modern marriage (Kidd, 1975)....[A]t least for middle class Americans, "communication" means close, supportive and flexible speech' (Fitzpatrick, 1988a, p. 1). This interest in communication has drawn communication researchers to more critically examine marriage and the communication that constitutes it. (One might ask whether good communication makes a marriage successful or whether a successful marriage creates good communication. That question, seldom investigated, will not be further discussed here except to note that while most studies explore the link between communication and marriage, they presume a causal direction in that linkage: that good communication helps to create a good marriage.)

Tannen's studies of gender differences in conversation, which apply to marital relationships as well as to conversation, will not be repeated here. Patricia Noller (1984) examines the other building block of interpersonal research--nonverbal communication--as it appears in marriage. Mary Anne Fitzpatrick (1988b) proposes a different approach, characterizing couples according to their communication styles. Finally Noller and Fitzpatrick, in a jointly edited volume (1988), provide a wide--ranging look at communication in the context of marriage.

### Nonverbal Behaviours

After sketching out a description of nonverbal communication (citing the Watzlawick et al. axiom regarding the impossibility of not communicating) and reviewing the links between marital communication and the marital relationship, Noller builds *Nonverbal Communication and Marital Interaction* around several key questions: (1) What kind of communication system does nonverbal communication provide for couples? (2) Do happy couples differ from unhappy ones in their communication? (3) Do happy couples differ from unhappy couples in their perception of each other's communication? and (4) How important is nonverbal couple communication to marital satisfaction? (Noller, 1984, p. 30).

She reports that couples low in marital adjustment misunderstand one another's nonverbal messages more than do other

couples, thus supporting the idea that nonverbal communication does play a role in the 'private' communication system of each couple and in the satisfaction level of each couple. Further, more misunderstandings seem to be related to encoding messages than to decoding them. Her second two questions also receive positive answers: couples rating high on marital adjustment scales do tend to have better nonverbal communication. In addition some clear differences emerge in other areas as well. For example, wives are better message senders than husbands; wives tend to err in positive directions in decoding while husbands do so in negative directions. 'The nonverbal sending and receiving of husbands is more strongly related to marital adjustment than is that of wives, with low marital adjustment husbands making more errors in both sending and receiving than high marital adjustment husbands' (p. 87). In some instances low marital adjustment couples actually do better at decoding the messages of strangers than those of their spouses--this implies that basic communication skill may not generalize to the marital relationship (p. 101).

Noller also describes some more specific evidence for her conclusions. Discrepant messages (those in which a positive visual or nonverbal meaning occurs joined to a negative verbal or vocal one) happen more frequently in low marital adjustment couples. But 'discrepant communications seem to be the preferred mode for sending negative messages, by subjects of both sexes, whether high or low in marital adjustment.' The negative communication of unhappy couples is more direct or intense in both verbal and nonverbal channels (p. 150). The differences between high and low adjustment couples also correlate with gaze behaviour: the pattern of looking at each other differs. 'Low marital adjustment couples tended to look more when they were speaking and less when they were listening than other couples' (p. 164), particularly in the case of negative messages. This suggests either a desire for confrontation or a need to monitor the reactions of the spouse (p. 165). Finally, as Tannen found with verbal messages, Noller notes differences between the nonverbal behaviours of husbands and wives. Females better

encode nonverbal messages (p. 167); females send more direct messages (messages agreeing in all channels) than do males (p. 168); males are less likely to express themselves nonverbally (p. 169).

Both men and women contribute to communication problems in marriages. In summarizing the research Noller found that in couples rating low in marital satisfaction, both wives and husbands:

1. Are generally more negative in their interactions, and they not only send more negative messages than other spouses, but their negative messages seem to be more intense.
2. Send fewer positive messages than other spouses.
3. Send more discrepant messages...
4. Are less able to predict whether the spouse will decode their message accurately.
5. Are less likely to look at the spouse when they, themselves, are listening, and are more likely to look at the spouse when they, themselves, are speaking...
6. Show less reciprocity in their gaze patterns and are less similar to one another, particularly in their pattern of looking when they are listening.
7. Decode their spouses less accurately than they decode strangers. (pp. 177-178)

Despite the need for more theoretical work on the exact relation of communication (verbal and nonverbal) to marital satisfaction, the link between the two cannot be denied. Behavioral therapists could well make use of the wealth of data Noller reports in helping distressed couples with communication training.

## Types of Married Couples

Fitzpatrick's *Between Husbands & Wives* presents conclusions built up through almost 15 years of research into the interactions of married couples. After reviewing models and perspectives on marital interaction, she presents a typology of couples developed from thousands of questionnaires and interviews. The typology, which helps to better understand the available data, has as its basis the Relational Dimensions Instrument, a 77-question form that asks spouses to agree or disagree with statements on marital ideology, interde-

pendence, and communication. Their answers allow the researchers to classify the couples as Traditionals, Independents, Separates, or Mixed.

> Traditionals hold conventional ideological values about relationships' and show high interdependence and a high degree of sharing. They tend not to avoid conflict, but the conflict is usually issue oriented since they tend to rely on their common (usually unspoken) ideology to ground their lives together. Independents are just that: they believe 'that relationships should not constrain an individual's freedom in any way.

The independent maintains companionship and sharing in marriage but does so while preserving personal physical space and a minimal common schedule. Independents report more assertiveness than traditionals and also do not avoid conflict.

> Separates seem to hold two opposing ideological views on relationships at the same time. Whereas a separate is as conventional in marital and family issues as a traditional, he or she simultaneously supports the values upheld by independents and stresses individual freedom over relationship maintenance.

Separates have less sharing in their marriages, maintain psychological distance, and avoid open conflicts (p. 76). Pure couples feature marriages in which both partners are the same type; mixed couples consist of partners who belong to different types.

Fitzpatrick reports a number of studies conducted by herself, her students, and her colleagues which have validated the Traditionals-Independents-Separates-Mixed typology. The typology helps to clarify other research as well: on gender differences in marriage, on power, on conflict, on persuasion, and on self-disclosure. Past studies sometimes showed puzzling inconsistencies in data gathered on married couples. Fitzpatrick's approach of categorizing communication behaviour according to marital type eliminates much of that inconsistency. The different marital types have different perspectives on marriage and on life and consequently react differently. Not all married couples find satisfaction or happiness in the same things; not all happy married couples have high levels of communication; not all married couples value confrontation or avoidance.

These are valuable research results for people working with married couples. At one point Fitzpatrick and her colleagues examined the Marriage Encounter programme from the perspective of the marital typology. Although somewhat critical of the programme because it does not teach communication skills in an effective way, they proceeded with a in-depth study of leader couples. As expected there were a high proportion of traditionals in the group, but not any higher than in the general population. However, there was a significantly higher proportion of separates than in the general population. They explain this by noting that the Marriage Encounter program provides an activity that the couple can do together while maintaining their emotional distance (p. 107).

Fitzpatrick's final chapter goes beyond validating the typology. In it she:

> demonstrate[s] the psychological reality of this typology by proving that certain propositions about marriage cohere together. Such coherence in the minds of the members of this culture suggests the marital types are psychologically real categorizations of marriage (p. 227).

Because there are competing conceptualizations of marriage, researchers should be careful in generalizing about the behaviour of married couples; marriage counsellors should realize that no one therapeutic course will prove effective. For example, happily married separates value things and behave in ways different from happily married traditionals. Mixed couples face perhaps greater difficulties since they blend different ideas about marriage.

Fitzpatrick's work offers benefits to those trying to understand more about marital communication. The facts that it has a clear theoretical sense, that it builds on a very large data set, that it is supported by a consistent research agenda, and that it welcomes new validation make it an important tool for further research.

### Research Studies

Noller and Fitzpatrick have jointly edited a volume of studies: *Perspectives on Marital Interaction*. The studies--research based and methodological in orientation--investigate

aspects of communication which discriminate between different types of married couples, or different types of individuals (p. 323).

By and large every study indicates that distressed couples differ markedly from non--stressed couples in terms of their communication patterns. In addition the studies report differences between male and female communication and male and female responses to marital stress, a link which deserves much more research (p. 344).

Fitzpatrick provides a context for the research by reviewing various approaches to marital communication. Despite the centrality of the quality of marriage to this research tradition, that is not the only approach. Others include linking individual characteristics in both biological and psychological processes to the marital situation. Psychological differences manifest themselves in cognitive, conversational, and affective models. These, particularly in the case of conversation, provide significant windows through which to view the marriage. Another approach to marriage arises from theoretical models: some propose co-orientation models; others (including Fitzpatrick herself), typological models; and still others, interaction models. The first of these focuses on the psychological processes by which wives and husbands construct their common world. The second, as noted above, categorises couples according to their beliefs or behaviours. The third explains interaction in marriage in terms of some exchange: behavioral exchanges, social learning/reinforcement, or relational control, for example. Finally, another approach looks beyond the marriage to the larger social network of extended families, close relationships, and friends (1988a, pp. 1-20).

Particular studies in the book are grouped into four sections: communication as a means to manage everyday living in marriage; communication of emotion; problem solving; and coping with other relationships. The first section presents research into day-to-day communication. One project explores dysfunctional patterns, especially the spirals in which each partner's communication seems to block any resolution. Another examines understanding and misunderstanding--how is it that couples can decode their messages? A third looks at power and control and the ways that these pass from partner to partner in the course of normal conversations.

The second section of the book surveys the ways in which couples deal with emotion and presents three differing perspectives: the first covers couples' cognitive appraisals of emotional situations; the second, their perceptions of each others' communication of emotion; and the third, sex differences in the physiological responses of men and women to emotional situations. Part three of the volume presents two alternative ways of studying conflict resolution in marriage, one based on problem solving styles and the other on Fitzpatrick's typology. The last section of the book situates marital communication in terms of other relationships, either in terms of comparing communication patterns with spouses and strangers or in terms of the effects of family and friends' input on couples' understanding of their own relationships.

The variety of studies and methods assembled by Noller and Fitzpatrick gives a good indication of the ways in which interpersonal communication research addresses larger social questions. It also illustrates that particular concerns of communication cut across a variety of areas. This review of interpersonal communication concludes with a closer look at one such particular concern: conflict.

## C. Conflict

Hocker, J. L. & Wilmot, W. W. 1991. *Interpersonal Conflict* (3rd ed.). Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown.

Borisoff, D. & Victor, D. A. 1989. *Conflict Management: A Communication Skills Approach.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Cahn, D. D. (Ed.). 1990. *Intimates in Conflict: A Communication Perspective.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Although most people do not like conflict, it seems an unavoidable aspect of human life. Conflict usually results from competing claims on scarce resources or from competing claims for power; it may result from incompatible activities or from disagreements over values.

From a communication perspective, conflict

is an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals (Hocker & Wilmot, 1991, p. 12).

Communication researchers who explore conflict usually do so with an eye to providing guidelines to resolve conflicts or at least to transform them from destructive experiences into productive ones.

Joyce Hocker and William Wilmot have published three editions of their text, *Interpersonal Conflict*, since 1974 and it still stands as an important summary and resource. The book first describes the components of conflict and then offers particular courses for conflict intervention.

In depicting the chief components of conflict they call attention to common images of conflict (war, explosions, a trial, a struggle, a mess, a game, an adventure, a bargaining table, a tide) which influence people's behaviour--toward destruction or collaboration. In addition they note that, since conflict stems from incompatible goals, an understanding of conflict requires specifying just what the goals are; some goals are (to borrow Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson's language again) content goals and some, relationship goals. Because goals -- and how people see them -- change throughout the conflict, Hocker and Wilmot recommend clarifying one's goals in as concrete a way as possible. A knowledge of the power dimension of conflict also helps to clarify the relationship aspect of the dispute. Finally, they describe conflict tactics and styles; these include avoidance, engagement, competition, threats, and even violence.

The second part of *Interpersonal Conflict* provides a manual for dealing with conflict. Taking a systems theory perspective, they advise identifying conflict patterns through noting metaphors, strategies, goals, and so forth. The 'Hocker-Wilmot Conflict Assessment Guide' leads the reader through a series of questions drawn from the analysis in part one. It includes questions about the nature of the conflict, its triggering events, its historical context, the assumptions each party makes, the expression of the conflict, the goals each party identifies, any other content and relational goals, the attitudes toward power held by each

party, the balance of power, the tactics and styles used by each party in expressing the conflict, their perceptions of the other's tactics, the patterns that characterize the conflict, and possibilities for change and resolution (pp. 173-176).

Hocker and Wilmot suggest three main approaches to resolving conflict. First, self-regulation involves changing from the inside out by changing one's own (or the situation's) communication patterns, altering one's ways of expressing conflict, and adjusting the conceptual patterns with which the parties approach conflict. Second, bargaining and negotiation lead to particular communication patterns and behaviours which end in compromise. Finally, third-party intervention leads to changing the conflict from the outside; this usually calls for a formal process of some kind, most often adjudication, arbitration, mediation, or consultation.

*Interpersonal Conflict* provides a thorough overview of the conflict process and, among other things, the communication dimensions of that process. It contains many practical suggestions as well as a 25-page bibliography for further reference.

## Communication Skills and Conflict

Deborah Borisoff and David Victor offer a slightly different approach to conflict. Their *Conflict Management* (1989) focuses more particularly on communication skills, calling attention to language, verbal strategies, and nonverbal strategies. First they propose a five-step model for conflict management (*assessment* of the situation, *acknowledgement* of the other party, *adjustment* of one's attitude to include a willingness to communicate, *action* to resolve the conflict, and *analysis* of the process). Seeking long-term change, they suggest verbal and nonverbal strategies to create a supportive communication environment, one in which conflict is not a destructive element. For example, they suggest avoiding threats and hostile joking, generating viable solutions rather than criticism, and understanding the other party's perspective.

*Conflict Management* also explores some specific contexts of conflict. Gender differences, as noted above, do affect communication style;

this, in turn, can affect conflict. Intercultural communication also introduces particular difficulties that can lead to misunderstanding and conflict. Finally, written materials and writing styles can contribute to conflict. In each situation Borisoff and Victor lead the reader through their five-step model, calling attention to communicative solutions to potential conflicts.

**Research Studies**
*Intimates in Conflict* differs from the other treatments of conflict noted here: it collects empirical studies of conflict within the particular setting of ongoing relationships: families, friendships, and social networks. Dudley Cahn, its editor, notes that:

> interpersonal conflict between intimate partners goes beyond differences regarding a specific problem, issue, or argument because of the emotional nature of their relationship (p. 1).

In his opening review he suggests that researchers view such conflict as a communication process with multiple dimensions. Consequently, research might address questions such as these:

> Are patterns of conflict as a cause and as an effect both equally destructive in intimate relationships?...
>
> Are the partners male or female? What psychological gender and sex type are they?...
>
> What are [the] social contexts that function as antecedents in intimate conflict? (pp. 18-19)

Although each of the 11 essays in the collection sheds light on one aspect or another of the problem, space only permits discussion of a few.

Jonathan Healey and Robert Bell assess various responses to conflict in friendship. Their work tests the applicability of two theories originally developed in studying romantic partners to relations among friends: investment theory and the 'exit-voice-loyalty-neglect' typology. Investment theory holds that every relationship is held together by an exchange of resources; one stays in a relationship if one has invested more than one hopes to get from alternative sources. The 'exit-voice-loyalty-neglect' typology describes reactions to conflict:

constructive responses take the form of voice (an active discussing, solving the problem) or loyalty (a passive sticking it out); destructive responses take the form of exit (an active leaving, terminating the relationship) or neglect (a passive letting the relationship die). In measuring the responses among friends, Healey and Bell found weaknesses in the typology (namely that exit and neglect blended together) but found clear indications that investment theory did account for many friendships--at least among college students (pp. 25-48). Their results have merit because so many studies use the 'exit-voice-loyalty-neglect' typology to examine conflict among intimates.

Dolf Zillmann reviews a great deal of research on the interplay of cognition and excitation in aggravated or violent conflict (pp. 187-208). Citing statistics on domestic violence, he asks how disagreements breed anger leading to violence against intimates. Two factors seem to be at work: cognitive incapacitation (in which usual inhibitions do not work) and some triggering cause or excitation. While many things might act as trigger, the former might be caused by alcohol, habits of aggression, or reinforced strong emotions through escalation of the conflict itself. He concludes, 'The discussed research sensitizes us to critical events in the escalation of conflict and points to communicative intervention strategies' (p. 202). Among these strategies are (1) averting escalation of emotional arousal by communicating mitigating circumstances or by explaining how to cope with an adverse situation; (2) cautiously disengaging from argument with a person exhibiting 'cognitive deficit'; and (3) 'stressing passive inhibition by avoiding aggressive habits or aggressive actions' (pp. 202-204).

In his investigations of cultural diversity in intimate relationships, Guy Fontaine notes that:

> in intercultural relationships one does not interact with a nation, race, ethnicity, or culture on any macrolevel. One does so with specific people on the specific tasks required by the relationship (p. 211).

He stresses that people should not rely on generalized descriptions but instead work to develop 'intercultural microcultures' within which individuals can negotiate, make decisions, and communicate between their particular cultures as they themselves embody them. He suggests a number of practical communication strategies to accomplish this. For example, people should match rituals--compare what they usually do in given situations: have a cup of tea or have a beer (p. 219). From these, individuals can understand each other's perspectives and better go about their communication in a way that avoids unnecessary conflict.

Other essays in *Intimates in Conflict* deal with the reluctance to give voice to negative matters, nonverbal conflict behaviours, the use of humour in managing conflict, and the influence of social networks. This last study raises the question whether having common friends tends to help people resolve conflicts (steering them away from terminating the relationship) lest they lose their place in the social group. Other researchers report work on confrontation behaviours, teaching the communication skills of interpersonal confrontation, and measuring the psychological reality of marital conflict.

# Perspective

Many readers of *Trends* may not follow interpersonal communication, a fact that is not surprising considering only three issues of *Trends* since 1980 have touched on what might involve interpersonal topics while 40 issues have addressed the mass media and related topics. And yet the concerns with which interpersonal communication deals probably touch as much of people's lives as do the media.

This imbalance reflects both a sociological approach to communication study and the inability of interpersonal communication scholars to find a clear focus on their aspect of communication. Sometimes it seems that everything which is not mass communication falls under the heading of interpersonal communication; that practice confuses the issue of just what it is that they study. 'Of course, the communication discipline's contextual structure is not haphazard. The lines of division actually imply a simple theory of communication, which, at its most basic level, suggests that audience size and intimacy are variables of paramount importance in understanding and predicting human communication' (Stephen, 1990, p. 19). Forced to begin their research with this reasoning about audience size, scholars studying interpersonal communication began with a transmission model better suited to mass audiences.

That transmission model has influenced thinking about communication ever since. Students beginning classes in communication dutifully read about source-message-receiver models of communication and note down the elements of Shannon and Weaver's information theory model. They take in a sender-based idea of communication in which the key measurable variables are audience size and audience characteristics; few question the notion and primacy of the sender. The transmission and information theory models exerted such fascination that even the anthropological and social psychology backgrounds of interpersonal study attempted to adapt them.

Interpersonal communication study has perhaps never been completely comfortable with its pedigree. That background may well have led to a long period in which it lacked a sense of purpose. And that background did inhibit theoretical development because it led people to look in the wrong direction. Human beings are not machines nor do they imitate technical systems when they communicate. But all the theories began by describing technologically driven systems.

Even this incomplete review of interpersonal communication research suggests a change in focus from those earlier days. Thought-provoking theoretical critiques invite scholars to re-examine their work and to re-think what we mean by communication between people. Specific human areas of interaction call attention to how different people are from their technical systems. Sustained thought about these differences begins to lead to new research

methods--methods better suited to understanding the complex interactions that constitute day-to-day living.

Perhaps inevitably, and certainly most welcome, interpersonal communication research is now in a position to shed new light on mediated communication. Television viewing, for example, often happens in an interpersonal context (Lull, 1988); people construct meaning from media messages as these are filtered though their social networks--something Katz and Lazarsfeld first suggested in the 1950's (1955) but which seems forgotten by subsequent investigators until recently. However, the questions about context will not go away now. And such questions may be more easily answered because the research tools of interpersonal study have found their way into the kits of those more interested in mass communication.

These developments are welcome news indeed.

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# Current Research on Interpersonal Communication

**Australia**
**Patricia Noller** (Dept. of Psychology, Univ. of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland 4072. Univ.Tel No. (07) 377-1111). Interests: marital communication.

**Belgium**
**Jean-Pierre Meunier** (Dept. Communication Sociale, Univ. Catholique de Louvain, Place de l'Université, B-1348 Louvain-La-Neuve. Univ. Tel No. (010) 43-21-11). Interests: communication theory.

**Canada**
**Janet Beavin Bavelas** (P.O. Box 1700, Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2). Interests: communication in relationships, interpersonal interaction.

**Christina O'Sullivan** (Department of Communication, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6. Univ.Tel. No.(604) 291-3111. Univ.Fax No.(604) 291-4455). Interests: interpersonal communication, gender and communication.

**Claude Tousignant** (Service de la documentation, Télé-université, 2635 Hochelaga, 7e étage, Ste-Foy, Québec G1V 4V9). Interests: interpersonal communication.

**Croatia**
**Pavao Brajsa** (Zavod za Socijalni Rad, Zagreb). Interests: family communication.

## France

**Denis Guigo** (Centre recherche gestion, École polytechnique, F-91128 Palaiseau Cedex). Interests: conversation.

**Francis Jacques** (Université de Rennes II, 6 ave. Gaston Berger, F-35043 Rennes Cedex. Univ.Tel. No. 99-33-52-52). Interests: conversation, discourse.

## Georgia

**M. I. Harshiladze** (Inst of Psychology, Tbilisi). Interests: small group communication.

## Germany

**Alois Hahn** (Universität Trier. Postfach 3825. D-5500 Trier. Univ.Tel. No.0651 2011. Fax No. 0651 300519). Interests: discourse, conversation.

**Angela Keppler** (Sozialwissenschaftliche Fakultät Fachgruppe Soziologie, Universität Konstanz, Postfach 5560, D-7750 Konstanz. Univ.Tel. No. (07531) 881. Fax No: (07531) 88-3688). Interests: conversation.

**Hubert Knoblauch** (Sozialwissenschaftliche Fakultät, Universität Konstanz, Postfach 5560, D-7750 Konstanz). Interests: sociolinguistics.

**Jan Kunzler** (Inst. Soziologie, Bayerische-Julius Maximilians-Universität, Sanderring 2, D-8700 Wurzburg. Univ.Tel. No. (931) 311: Fax No. (931) 15123). Interests: theory, language.

**Micha Schack** (Department of Sociology, University of Kiel, Olshausenstr. 40, D-2300 Kiel). Interests: interpersonal communication, gender and communication.

**Michael Schenk** (Inst. Sozialwissenschaften, Universität Hohenheim, Postfach 70 05 62, D-7000 Stuttgart 70. Univ.Tel. No. 4590). Interests: interaction of mass communication and interpersonal communication.

## India

**Udaya Narayana Singh** (Univ. Hyderabad, Central Univ. P.O., Hyderabad 500134, Andhra Pradesh. Univ.Tel. No. 253901. Tlx. 0425-2050). Interests: conversation, discourse.

## Italy

**Sergio Belardinelli** (Facoltà Science Politiche, Univ. degli Studi di Trieste, Piazzale Europa,1, I-34127 Trieste. Univ.Tel. No. (040) 56038: Tlx. 460855). Interests: communicative competence, Habermas.

**Franco Bonazzi** (Inst. Sociology, Univ. degli Studi di Bologna, Via Zamboni 33, I-40126 Bologna. Univ.Tel. No.(051) 272933: Tlx. 511650). Interests: nonverbal communication, clothing.

**Laura Fruggeri** (Istituto di Psicologia, Univ. degli Studi, Via Università 12, I-43100 Parma. Univ.Tel. No.

(0521) 2041. Fax No. (0521) 207521. Tlx. 530327). Interests: marriage and family communication.

## Japan

**Yuichi Iizuka** (Fukuyama City Junior College for Women, Fukuyama). Interests: nonverbal communication, gaze, emotion.

**Tetsuji Ito** (Nagoya Univ., Furo-cho, Chikusa-ku, Nagoya. Univ. Tel.No. (052) 781-5111. Fax. No. (052) 781-1754). Interests: nonverbal communication.

**Pedro Garcia del Valle y D.** (Shizuoka-ken, Hamamatsu-shi, Takamachi 200-17, Abita 08-205, 432 Japan. E-Mail. garcia@cs.shizuoka.ac.jp. Interests: desicion-making and relationship improvement.

**Minoru Wada** (Tokyo Gakugei U, Tokyo). Interests: nonverbal communication.

## México

**Juan José Coronado Villanueva** (Universidad ITESO; Apartado postal 31-175; Zapopan, Jalisco; 45051 México). Interests: interpersonal communication theory, integrating communication studies with humanistic perspectives, particularly drawn from philosophy and theology.

## The Netherlands

**Uus Knops** (Nijmeegse Centrale dialect-en naamkunde Katholieke U Nijmegen, Comeniuslaan 4, POB 9102, NL-6500 HD Nijmegen. Univ.Tel. No. 51-93-33. Fax (080) 564606. Tlx. 48211 KUNM NL). Interests: language behaviour, sociolinguistics.

**Tuen A. Van Dijk** (Univ. of Amsterdam, Spui 21, 1012 WX Amsterdam. Univ.Tel. No. (020) 525 9111. Fax No. (020) 525-2136). Interests: conversation, language and social interaction.

## Poland

**Anna Zalewska** (Uniwersytet Lódzki, 90-131 Lódź, Narutowicza 65. Univ.Tel. No. 34-98-85. Fax No. 783958. Tlx. 886291). Interests: self disclosure.

## Republic of South Africa

**C. M. Nel** (Inst. Kommunikasienavorsing, Private Bag X41, Pretoria 0001). Interests: interracial, intercultural aspects of communication.

## Russia

**R. L. Krichevskiy and Ye. A. Sokolova** (USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences (Scientific Research Inst of General & Educational Psychology), Ul. Pogodinskaya 8, Moscow 119905. Tel. No. 245-16-41). Interests: conversation, interpersonal status.

## Spain

**Miguel Roiz Celix** (Facultad Ciencias Información, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Ciudad Universitaria, E-28040 Madrid. Univ.Tel. No. (4) 49-02-56. Fax

No. 2438643. Tlx. 22459). Interests: small groups, family communication, Palo Alto school.

**F. Javier Sainz Sanchez** (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Ciudad Universitaria, E-28040 Madrid. Univ.Tel. No. (4) 49-02-56. Fax No. 2438643. Tlx. 22459). Interests: discourse.

**Carmen Caffarel Serra** (Univ. Complutense, Madrid, E-28040). Interests: research methods in interpersonal communication.

## Switzerland
**Michael Charlton** and **Klaus Neumann** (Université de Fribourg, CH-1700 Fribourg. Univ.Tel. No. (037) 21-91-11). Interests: interaction of mass communication and interpersonal communication, family communication.

**Hans Geser** (Soziologisches Instit, Universität Zurich, Rämistr. 71, CH-8056 Zürich. Univ.Tel. No. (01) 257-11-11). Interests: technology and personal communication.

## United States
**Krystyna Strzyzewski Aune**, Dept. of Speech, George Hall 329, 2560 Campus Road, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, HI 96822. Univ.Tel. No. (808) 956-3322. e-mail: Krystyna@uhccvx. Interests: the area of emotion expression, emotion management and how it evolves throughout relationship development, behavioral study of experienced and expressed emotions in dating vs. marital relationships (expanding to include all levels of relationship development).

**Joe Ayres** (School of Communication, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-2520. Univ.Tel. No. (509) 335-3564). Interests: the relationship between communication anxiety, language use, nonverbal behaviour, perceptions, and relational trajectories.

**Judy Burgoon** (University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721. Univ.Tel. No. (602) 965-9011). Interests: nonverbal communication, interpersonal communication.

**Donald J. Cegala** (Dept. of Communication, The Ohio State University, 319 Neil Hall, 1634 Neil Ave. Columbus, OH 43210. Univ.Tel. No. (614) 292-6446). Interests: understanding the relationship between cognitive/affective processes and message production. He applies that concern to communicative competence in various settings and is currently working on a model of competence that attempts to use thought/feeling protocols to account for differences in communicative performance among doctor-patient dyads.

**John Crawford** (Dept. of Communication, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona 85283. Univ.Tel. No. (602) 965-9011). Interests: conflict, negotiation, interpersonal communication.

**John A. Daly** (Dept. of Speech Communication, Univ. of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712. Univ.Tel. No. (512) 471-1232). Interests: interpersonal communication.

**Steve Duck** (University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242. Univ.Tel. No. (319) 335-3549). Interests: communication in relationships.

**Ray Fenton** (Assessment and Evaluation; Anchorage School District; Anchorage, AK. Tel. No. (907) 269-2211; Fax (907) 269-2222). Interests: how the school environment may be manipulated to provide positive interethnic relationships.

**Mary Anne Fitzpatrick** (Center for Communication Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53706. Univ.Tel. No. (608) 262-1234. Tlx. (608) 263-5595). Interests: marital communication.

**Howard Giles** (University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA 93106. Univ.Tel. No. (805) 961-2311). Interests: language and social interaction, discourse, ethnolinguistics.

**Richard D. Halley** (Dept. of Communication, Weber State Univ., Ogden, UT 84408-1903. Univ.Tel. No. (801) 626-7072). E-mail. Rhalley@cc.weber.edu. Interests: theory of listening, relationship development, and communication via e-mail.

**David Holquist** (CAS Dept., Calvin College, 3201 Burton St. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49546. Univ.Tel. No. (517) 774-4000. Fax No. (517) 774-4499). Interests: interpersonal communication, gender and communication.

**Robert Hopper** (Dept. of Speech Communication, Univ. of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712. Univ.Tel. No. (512) 471-1232). Interests: conversational analysis, interpersonal communication.

**Mark Knapp** (Dept. of Speech Communication, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712. Univ.Tel. No. (512) 471-1232). Interests: interpersonal communication, nonverbal communication.

**Jenny Mandelbaum** (Rutgers University, P.O. Box 2101, New Brunswick, NJ 08903. Univ.Tel. No. (210) 932-1766). Interests: conversation, language and social interaction.

**Deborah Socha McGee** (Dept. of Communication, The Ohio State University, 319 Neil Hall, 1634 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210. Univ.Tel. No. (614) 292-6446). Interests: interpersonal communication, compliance-gaining, impression management.

**Margaret McLaughlin** (Dept. of Communication Arts & Sciences, Univ of S. California, Los Angeles, CA 90089. Univ.Tel. No. (213) 743-2311). Interests: conversation.

**Kelly S. McNeilis** (Dept of Communication, 319 Neil Hall, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210. Univ.Tel. No. (614) 292-6446. e-mail: kmcneili@magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu). Interests: broadly interpersonal communication, with a specific interest within health communication--issues relating to care-provider patient communication. Currently, working on assessing physician and patient communication competence, student nurse socialization, and social support among families of haemopheliacs.

**Eugenia Meimaridis** (Ph.D. student; Department of Communication; The Ohio State University; Columbus, OH 43210). Interests: interpersonal communication in health care, in particular pedagogical issues surrounding the communication and psychosocial skills taught to medical students, interns, and medical residents.

**Michael D. Miller** (Dept. of Speech, University of Hawaii, 2560 Campus Road, GRG 329, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822. Univ.Tel. No. (808) 956-8111. Tlx. 7238409). Interests: persuasion, social influence, compliance.

**Judy Pearson** (Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701. Univ.Tel. No. (614-593-1000. Tlx.810-239-2992). Interests: interpersonal communication, gender and communication, family communication.

**Rodney A. Reynolds** (Dept. of Speech, 326 George Hall, 2560 Campus Rd, Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822, Univ.Tel. No. (808) 956-8317). Interests: Message effects and processing, interpersonal influence, measurement and methods..

**Marshall Rosenstein** (Dept. of Communication Sciences, Univ. of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269. Univ.Tel. No. (203) 486-2000). Interests: interpersonal communication, nonverbal communication.

**Judith A. Sanders** (Dept. of Communication, California State Polytechnic Univ. 3801 W. Temple, Pomona, CA 91768. Univ.Tel. No. (714) 869-2000. e-mail: JASANDERS@CSUPOMONA.EDU). Interests: interpersonal communication in the intercultural setting. She is examining how people from different cultures use communication to reduce uncertainties (Uncertainty Reduction Theory) in establishing relationships with culturally similar and culturally dissimilar others.

**Susan Shimanoff** (San Francisco State Univ. 1600 Holloway Ave., San Francisco, CA 94132. Univ.Tel. No.

(415) 338-1111). Interests: rules, conversation.

**Timothy J. Simpson** (Department of Communication; Barry University; 11300 N. E. Second Avenue; Miami Shores, FL 33161-6695; tel: (305) 899-3453; fax: (305) 899-3451). Interests: the encoding process taking advantage of the information processing capabilities and selective perceptions of the decoder.

**Timothy Stephen** (Dept. of Language, Literature, and Communication, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York 12180. Univ.Tel. No. (518) 276-6000. Fax No. (518) 276-6003). Interests: interpersonal communication.

**John Stewart** (Univ. of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195. Univ.Tel. No. (206) 543-2100). Interests: interpersonal communication.

**Howard Syphes** (University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506. Univ.Tel. No. (606) 257-9000. Fax No. (606) 257-4000. Tlx. 204009). Interests: interpersonal communication.

**Karen Tracy** (University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, CO 80309. Univ.Tel. No. (303) 492-8908). Interests: language and social interaction.

**Joseph B. Walther** (Dept. of Communication Studies, Northwestern University, 1815 Chicago Ave., Evanston, IL 60208-1340, Tel. No. (708) 491-7532. e-mail: JWALTHER@NWU.EDU). Interests: interpersonal aspects of computer-mediated communication. His research in progress is exploring evidence for and extensions of a social information-processing theory of computer-mediation effects on group interaction. Larger issues involve relational communication using different verbal and nonverbal cue systems.

**Dennis Wignall** (either: Metropolitan State College of Denver, Dept of Speech Communication, Campus Box 34 - Arts, 269, Denver, CO 80203, or Univ. of Denver, Dept of Human Communication Studies, Spruce Hall North rm 142, Denver, CO 80208. Univ.Tel. No. (303) 871-2000. Tlx. 910 931 0586. e-mail: bitnet%"DWIGNALL@DUCAIR"). Interests: the investigation of the role of language in mediated messages and how it affects both the treatment of messages and the relational concerns of the interactants.

## Additional Bibliography

**Journals.**

Many journals publish material on interpersonal communication. Among those regularly publishing research reports dealing specifically with the topic from the perspective of communication science are these:

*Communication Quarterly*

*Human Communication Research*
*The Journal of Communication*
*Reseaux*, Nov 1983: Communication interpersonnelle. This special issue reviews work on the topic in France.
*The Southern Communication Journal*

**Book Series**
*Communication Yearbook:*
This series, published by various houses since 1978, is 'an annual review published for the International Communication Association' as a reference work in the area of communication. It serves as 'a professional forum for leading communication specialists' to share their work. Each year the volumes include sections on interpersonal communication, mass communication, organizational communication, intercultural communication, political communication, instructional communication, and other related fields. Only the volumes since the 1986 review in *Trends* are included here.

McLaughlin, Margaret L. (ed.). 1987. *Communication Yearbook 10.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
The interpersonal section deals with communication networks in adolescent friendship or romantic relationships and with pragmatic connectedness in conversation.

Anderson, James A. (ed.). 1988. *Communication Yearbook 11.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Sections address conversational analysis and its attendant methods and the "texts" of interpersonal communication.

Anderson, James A. (ed.). 1989. *Communication Yearbook 12.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
The interpersonal section reviews discourse and relationships: structures of power, coherence, communication in young adult friendships, and second guessing.

Anderson, James A. (ed.). 1990. *Communication Yearbook 13.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
The relevant section of this volume contains essays on interpersonal conversations, arguments, embarrassments, and negotiations.

Anderson, James A. (ed.). 1991. *Communication Yearbook 14.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
The interpersonal influence section treats social confrontation, strategies of reasoning in spontaneous discourse, and interpersonal attraction and attitude similarity.

Deetz, Stanley A. (ed.). 1992. *Communication Yearbook 15.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
The 'interaction in the social context' essays deal with dominance-seeking language strategies, communication as the interface between couples and culture, and articulation theory.

*Sage Series in Interpersonal Communication:*
Norton, Robert. 1983. *Communicator Style: Theory, Applications, and Measures.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1983.

Craig, Robert T. & Karen Tracy (eds). 1983. *Conversational Coherence: Form, Structure, and Strategy.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage,.

McLaughlin, Margaret L. 1984. *Conversation: How Talk is Organized.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage. [Discussed in this issue of *Trends.*]

Spitzberg, Brian H., & William R. Cupach. 1984. *Interpersonal Communication Competence.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
Communication competence is the ability of communicators to accomplish tasks successfully. The book reviews past research on the issue, sketches models, and proposes directions for future research.

Sypher, Howard E., & James L. Applegate. (eds.). 1984. *Communication by Children and Adults: Social Cognitive and Strategic Processes.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
The essays in this collection explore the relationship between social cognition and interpersonal communication. The first sections of the book address questions of children and their communicative development; the latter sections examine the communication processes in adults.

Bavelas, Janet B., Alex Black, Nicole Chovil, & Jennifer Mullett. 1990. *Equivocal Communication.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
This research study focusses on contextualized nature of communication through an examination of ambiguity and equivocation.

*Interpersonal Commtexts Series:*
Nofsinger, Robert E. 1991. *Everyday Conversation.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Using a conversational analysis approach, this text discusses conversational action, turn taking, repairs, misunderstandings, and argument and story patterns.

Clark, Ruth Anne. 1991. *Studying Interpersonal Communication: The Research Experience.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Beginning with everyday observations, this text leads the reader through the process of a systematic empirical study of interpersonal communication with an emphasis on experimental methodology. It includes chapters on internal and external validity, treatment of subjects, dependent measures, describ-

ing data sets, describing association, and generalizing from a sample to a population.

Gudykunst, William B. 1991. *Bridging Differences: Effective Intergroup Communication.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
This text describes a common process underlying communication between people of different groups; it emphasizes practical applications and includes self-assessment questionnaires.

### Textbooks

This selection of current textbooks used for college-level interpersonal communication courses notes book which summarize much current research from the perspective of U.S. communication studies.

DeVito, Joseph A. 1992. *Messages: Building Interpersonal Communication Skills.* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Knapp, Mark L., & Anita L. Vangelisti, 1992. *Interpersonal Communication & Human Relationships* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Mader, Thomas F., & Diane C. Mader. 1990. *Understanding One Another: Communicating Interpersonally.* Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.

Pearson, Judy, & Brian H. Spitzberg. 1990. *Interpersonal Communication: Concepts, Components, & Contexts.* Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.

Trenholm, Sarah, & Arthur D. Jensen. 1992. *Interpersonal Communication* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

### General Books

Boden, Deirdre, & Don H. Zimmerman (eds.). 1991. *Talk & Social Structure: Studies in Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
The contributors to this collection discuss the ways in which conversational mechanisms generate structures of society and structures of social action.

Charvin, François & Jean-Pierre Marhuenda. 1991. *Communication et Entreprises.* Paris: Eyrolles.

Conein, Bernard, Michel De Fornel, & Louis Quere. (eds.). 1990-1991. *Les formes de la conversation.* 2 vols. Paris: CNET, Collection Réseaux.

Conference papers from the 1987 Paris conference on conversational analysis and ethnomethodology, this collection introduces the French reader to the main themes of conversation, verbal action, and the theory of conversational interaction.

Coronado, Juan José. 1992. *La comunicación interpesonal más allá de la apariencia.* Zapopan, Jalisco (Mexico): Universidad Iteso.
A communication textbook, this volume provides an overview of the communication process as well as material more specific to interpersonal relationships. Written from an interdisciplinary perspective, the text differs from others by providing a philosophic as well as a scientific foundation. Each chapter includes a list of further readings.

Cosnier, J. & C. Kerbrat-Orrechioni. (eds.). 1991. *Décrire la conversation.* Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon.
The edited volume deals with methods of conversational analysis.

Durand, Jacques. 1981. *Les formes de la communication.* Paris: Dunod.
In this overview of communication one section treats interpersonal communication and situates it within the larger field of communication study as envisioned in a French academic context.

Ferder, Fran. 1986. *Words Made Flesh: Scripture, Psychology & Human Communication.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press.
Beginning from the perspective of spirituality and using Biblical texts as introductions, Ferder takes the reader through reflections on listening, emotion, anger, conflict, and self-disclosure.

François, Frédéric. (ed.). 1990. *La Communication Inegale: Heurs et malheurs de l'interaction verbale.* Lausanne: Delachaux et Niestle.
By exploring asymmetrical communication situations (parent-child, native-immigrant, etc.), the essays in this collection attempt to describe the mechanisms of control and cooperation active in daily communication.

Frey, Siegfried. 1984. *Die nonverbale Kommunikation.* Stuttgart.

Gilgun, Jane F., Kerry Daly, & Gerald Handel. (eds.). 1992. *Qualitative Methods in Family Research.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Although not aimed exclusively at communication research, this guidebook takes the reader through

a variety of techniques to gather data about families and family interaction, including interviews, observations, document analysis, and other qualitative and quantitative methods.

Hernández-Pinzón, Fernando Jiménez. 1991. *La comunicación interpersonal: Ejercicios educativos* (3rd ed, rev.). Madrid: Publicaciones I.C.C.E. [Instituto Calasanz de Ciencias de la Educación].
The 37 exercises assembled here cover various aspects of interpersonal communication and group dynamics; the focus tends towards business communication.

Knapp, Mark L., & Gerald R. Miller. (eds.). 1985. *Handbook of Interpersonal Communication.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
The 15 essays collected here present a sweeping overview of research and issues in interpersonal communication study. Chapters deal with methodological issues as well as address specific aspects such as communication codes, nonverbal signals, and basic processes of conversation and social influence.

Maffesoli, Michel. 1990. *Au creux des apparences: Pour une éthique de l'esthétique.* Paris: Plon.
Within a philosophical framework of epistemology, this study explores the impact of various nonverbal and cultural features on communication, thought, and public life. Of particular interest here is the section on proximity.

Melendo, Maite. 1985. *Comunicación e integración personal* (3rd ed.). Santander, Spain: Editorial Sal Terrae.
Drawn from the author's experiences as a counselor, the lectures collected in this book have a practical orientation. Among the topics addressed are interpersonal relationships, dialogue, openness, and family communication.

Pueblito Canada, Inc. 1981?. *La comunicación interpersonal: Manual práctico.* Santa Domingo: Editora Corripio C.
As an illustrated text designed to accompany a distance education program, the seven units cover basic themes in interpersonal communication: the nature of communication, verbal and nonverbal communication, interpretation, motivation, personal characteristics of the communicator, and the process of communication. Each unit includes practical exercises.

Roloff, Michael E., & Gerald R. Miller. (eds.). 1987. *Interpersonal Processes: New Directions in Com-munication Research.* Sage Annual Reviews of Communication Research, Vol. 14. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
This collection provides an overview of a wide range of interpersonal topics: uncertainty reduction, communicating emotion, interpersonal dynamics, conflict, social interaction, social penetration, and the breakdowns in friendships.

Scharry, Leo. 1989. *Étude comparative de las communication interpersonnelle entre personnes agees.* Montreal: Université de Montreal.

Siegman, A. W. & S. Feldstein. (eds.). 1987. *Nonverbal Behavior and Communication* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
An interdisciplinary look at nonverbal communication, the book includes studies of physiological processes, coding bodily movement, gestures, facial expression, pupillary behaviour, and paralanguage. It addition several essays explore the functions of nonverbal behaviours.

Stewart, John (ed.). 1989. *Bridges Not Walls: A Book About Interpersonal Communication* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
Stewart has collected essays about interpersonal communication to provide a reader for an undergraduate course in the area. Sections address basic aspects of interpersonal communication (language, verbal codes, nonverbal cues), listening, self-disclosure, conflict, and gender.

Touliatos, J., B. F. Perlmutter, & M. A. Straus. (eds.). 1990. *Handbook of Family Measurement Techniques.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
The handbook not only guides researchers but provides basic information on available measurement instruments.

Van Dijk, Teun A. 1987. *Communicating Racism: Ethnic Prejudice in Thought and Talk.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Based on research in Holland and the U.S.A., Van Dijk's study analyzes how racism is produced and reproduced in daily talk. Chapters address how ethnic attitudes are represented in memory and discourse, how they are interpreted by in-groups through interpersonal communication, and how they are diffused to groups beyond the level of a single interpersonal conversation.

Wardhaugh, Ronald. 1985. *How Conversation Works.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Wardhaugh provides a general introduction to discourse analysis and examines--among other

things--social context, cooperation in talk, turn-taking, topics, termination, and doing things with language.

Wilkinson, Louise Cherry, & Cora B. Marrett. (eds). 1985. *Gender Influences in Classroom Interaction*. Orlando, FL: Academic Press.
This research report features 11 essays on aspects of classroom interaction; while many of them go beyond interpersonal communication, the set does address some basic interpersonal communication questions such as peer interaction, student-teacher interaction, and small group interaction. The age group discussed is primarily elementary school children.

## Journal articles
This section lists resources or studies published primarily in non-English language journals. While not complete, it does give a sense of the breadth of the topic. English language materials can be found by consulting the bibliographies included in any of the books listed above.

Andrade, V. M. 1991. 'O mundo interno como afeto e representacao: Uma descricao metapsicologica da communicacao interpessoal como um processo de identificacao [The Internal World as Affect and Representation: A Metapsychological Description of Interpersonal Communication as a Process of Identification],' *Revista Brasileira de Psicanalise*, Vol. 25, pp. 467-484.
A theoretical essay, it proposes a link between intrapersonal and interpersonal communication based on the Freudian concept of affect and the ability of interlocutors to identify with bodily manifestations of affective experiences.

Avello Florez, Jose. 1986. 'La comunicación interpersonal como objeto: problemas para su analisis y modelización [Interpersonal Communication as Object: Problems in Its Analysis and Modeling]', *Revista Internacional de Sociologia*, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 35-56.
This theoretical piece evaluates traditional interpersonal models and proposes alternatives drawn from more recent work in the social sciences, particularly from semiotics and communicative competence and from the work of Benveniste, Bakhtin, Habermas, Bateson, and Goffman.

Bgazhnokov, B. Kh. 1987. 'Obshchenie glazami etnografa [Interpersonal Communication: The Ethnologist's Point of View]', *Vestnik Akademii Nauk SSSR*, Vol. 57, No. 2, pp. 87-97.

Bgazhnokov discusses the social and cultural contexts of interpersonal communication from a theoretical perspective, noting the importance of considering gestures, customs, metaphors, and even etiquette.

Bonazzi, Franco. 1981. 'Moda e comunicazione nei processi socio-culturali [Fashion and Communication in Sociocultural Processes]', *Studi di Sociologia*, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 319-330.
Starting from a consideration of contemporary fashion, Bonazzi examines the relationship between fashion and myth systems in order to better understand how fashion works as a medium of interpersonal communication.

Borsoni, Paolo. 1989. 'Metacomunicazione, disconferma, doppio legame, nelle teorie di G. Bateson, R. Laing, P. Watzlawick [Metacommunication, Disconfirmation, and Double Binds in the Theories of G. Bateson, R. Laing, and P. Watzlawick]', *La Critica Sociologica*, Vol. 90-91, pp. 206-221.
The theories of Bateson, Laing, and Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson are used to ground a view of interpersonal communication which takes metacommunication as a fundamental aspect. This relational communication brings with it issues of power, identity, and autonomy.

Brajsa, Pavao. 1991. 'Interpersonalna komunikacija u obitelji [Family Interpersonal Communication]', *Socijalna Psihijatrija*, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 161-168.
This study of 468 Serbian teenagers asked questions regarding different aspects of family communication, including communication as system activity, as a relational act, and as an adaptive action.

Caffarel Serra, C. 1986. 'Algunos metodos clasicos en investigacion social y su posibilidad de aplicacion a la comunicacion interpersonal [Some Classic Methods of Social Research and the Possibility of Applying Them to Interpersonal Communication]', *Revista Internacional de Sociologia*, Vol. 44, pp. 65-80.
The author reviews and evaluates functionalist, formalist, and structuralist social science models for their applicability to interpersonal communication.

Guigo, Denis. 1991. 'Les Termes d'adresse dans un bureau parisien [How Colleagues Address Each Other in a Parisian Office]', *L'Homme*, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 41-59.
This conversational study classed usage in eight categories: friendly, amicable, American, student-like, polite, respectful, military, and distant.

Employees kept to a general pattern of correct distance with one another.

Hahn, Alois. 1991. 'Rede und Schweigeverbote [Prohibitions of Speech and Silence]', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 86-105.
Based on conversational analysis, this study focusses on aspects of communication taboos and notes the ways that speech is prohibited through turn-taking, rhythms of speech synchronization, and the social standing of listeners.

Harshiladze, M. I. 1990. (Russian title.) '[Influence of Interpersonal Communication on the Effectiveness of Group]', *Voprosy Psikhologii*, No. 5, pp. 144-149.
In performance tests of small groups, the groups' success on tasks varied according to two factors: the type of task and the interpersonal relationships among the group members.

Hoeflich, Joachim R. 1988. 'Kommunikationsregeln und interpersonale Kommunikation; Ausgangspunkte einer regelorientierten Kommunikationsperspektive', *Communications,* Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 61-83.
This paper introduces the rules approach to communication and uses it to account for some aspects of interpersonal communication (especially coordinating action and meaning).

Hoeflich, Joachim R., & Georg Wiest. 1990. 'Neue Kommunikationstechnologien und interpersonael Kommunikation in Organisationen', *Publizistik,* Vol. 35, pp. 62-79.
Both positive and negative effects result from the introduction of new communication technologies into organizations. The authors sketch out a theoretical model to account for those effects.

Huls, Erica 1990. 'Communicatiepatronen in Turkse gezinnen; een case study [Communication Patterns in Turkish Families; a Case Study]', *Sociologische Gids*, Vol. 37, pp. 351-371.
A qualitative study of two Turkish families in the Netherlands indicates that turn-taking patterns compare with those of lower socioeconomic Dutch families and not with the highly patriarchal hierarchies stereotypically assumed to be common in Turkish families.

Iizuka, Yuichi. 1991. (Japanese title.) '[On the Relationship of Gaze to Emotional Expression]', *Japanese Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 147-154.
This study investigated the interaction of nonverbal (eye) behaviour, emotional messages (friendly or hostile, intense or weak), and the sex of the receiver.

Ito, T. 1991. (Japanese title.) '[The Characteristics of Unit Nonverbal Behaviors in Face-to-face Interaction]', *Japanese Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 85-93.
Ito examined nonverbal behaviours during conversation, attending particularly to sequences of actions. The study focusses on smiles, head nods, gaze, lean, bodily movement, and gestures.

Ito, Tetsuji. 1991. (Japanese title.) '[An Examination of Fundamental Dimensions of Expression of Nonverbal Behavior]', *Japanese Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 1-11.
Based on videotapes of conversations, this study catalogues 16 nonverbal behaviours, comparing their frequency between groups of acquainted and unacquainted, male and female dyads.

Fruggeri, Laura. 1991. 'La ricerca psicologica sulle dinamiche familiari prima e dopo l'introduzione del divorzio. Bibliografia ragionata [Psychological Research on Family Dynamics Before and After the Introduction of Divorce: Annotated Bibliography]', *Eta evolutiva*, No. 39, pp. 114-126.
Compiled by a researcher at the Institute of Psychology in Parma, Italy, the annotated bibliography notes titles from 1960 to 1988 on family communication and family dynamics in families experiencing divorce.

Joseph, Isaac. 1987. 'Les Convictions de la coquette [The Convictions of the Coquette]', *Communications*, Vol. 46, pp. 221-228.
Flirting is a specific kind of communication, characterized by irony, manners, play, acting, and double deception.

Katori, Atsuko. 1984. 'Rogin no komyunikeishon shisutemu [Communication System of the Elderly]', *Soshioroji*, Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 83-104.
A study of interpersonal and mass media use among elderly residents of Tokyo indicated that those living alone watched the most television while those living with spouses or with children watched progressively less and had more interaction with others.

Keppler, Angela. 1987. 'Der Verlauf von Klatschgesprachen [The Sequential Organization of Gos-

sip]', *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, Vol. 16, pp. 288-302.

This discourse analysis of gossip notes three common stages: preliminary (a negotiation of interest between the parties), story (the account), and conclusion (generalizations according to social types. The entire activity occurs within an interpretive frame that situates the individuals and their activity within social and moral rules.


Kepplinger, Hans Mathias, & Verena Martin. 1986. 'Die Funktionen der Massenmedien in der Alltagskommunikation', *Publizistik*, Vol. 31, pp. 118-128.
An empirical study of the ways in which the topic of the mass media appears in conversation showed that it occurs frequently as a well-integrated aspect of conversation; this phenomenon lends support to both the uses and gratifications and agenda-setting functions of the media.


Knops, Uus. 1988. 'Een verwaarloosd thema in de sociolinguistiek: het taalgedrag van en tegenover ouderen [A Neglected Topic in Sociolinguistics: Language Behavior of and Toward Elders]', *Gramma*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 85-99.
A review of the literature (primarily from English-speaking countries) indicates that the language difficulties of elderly stem not only from physiological causes but also from psychological and social factors.


Krichevskiy, R. L., & Ye. A. Sokolova. 1990. (Russian title) '[Dialogic Communication as a Factor in Interpersonal Status in a Collective of Older Students]', *Novye Issledovaniya v Psikhologii i Vozrastnoi Fiziologii*, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 65-69.
Using questionnaire data from 362 10th grade students, Krichevskiy and Sokolova compared conversational ability with various status indicators, including peer evaluation, classroom relationships, and classroom activity.


Meunier, Jean-Pierre. 1990. 'Nouveaux modeles de communication, nouvelles questions [New Models of Communication, New Questions]', *Recherches Sociologiques*, Vol. 21, pp. 267-288.
Beginning with a critique of the Saussurean and sender-message-receiver models of communication, this essay argues for a more complex model which incorporates coproduction of meaning as well as the links between verbal and nonverbal communication practices. The proposed model also accounts for public communication and participatory discourse.

Nel, C. M. 1989. 'Wit-Swart kommunikasie onder verskillende houndingstoestande [White-Black Communication under Different Attitudinal Conditions]', *Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Sosiologie [The South African Journal of Sociology]*, Vol. 20, pp. 38-46.
The author, writing from the Institute for Communication Research in Pretoria, reports a study in which interracial groups interacted and later completed semantic differential measures to determine the extent of stereotypes, prejudice, ethnocentrism, and authoritarianism.


Neumann, Klaus, & Michael Charlton. 1989. 'Massen- und Interpersonale Kommunikation im Alltag von Kind und Familie. Ergebnisse der Freiburger Langsschnittuntersuchung zur Medienrezeption von Kindern [Mass and Interpersonal Communication in Children's and Families' Everyday Life. Results of the Freiburg Longitudinal Study of Children's Media Reception]', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, Vol. 30 (supplement), pp. 364-378.
This article presents the results of a five-year study of six preschool children and their use of mass and interpersonal communication. It focussed especially on the coordination of action, power and self-assertion, and emotional regulation of relationships.


Roiz Celix, Miguel. 1986. 'Modelos psicosociologicos y antropologicos de la comunicacion en los pequenos grupos [Psychosociological and Anthropological Models of Communication in Small Groups]', *Revista Espanola de Investigaciones Sociologicas*, Vol. 33, pp. 121-142.
Roiz Celix compares theoretical concepts of interpersonal and small group communication, arguing that interpersonal communication can be subsumed in group communication. Among the models addressed are interactionism, systems theory, and anthropological-cultural theory. He also addresses the impact of new communication technologies on group interaction.


Roiz, Miguel. 1989. 'La familia, desde la teoria de la comunicacion de Palo Alto [The Family, according to the Theory of Communication of Palo Alto]', *Revista Espanola de Investigaciones Sociologicas*, Vol. 48, pp. 117-136.
This essay provides an overview of family communication theories based on the work of Bateson, Ruesch, and Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson; it also reviews contributions from cybernetics and systems theory. Some key concepts developed include metacommunication, double binds, and homeostasis.

Roiz, Miguel. 1989. 'La teoria de la comunicación de Palo Alto y sus posibilidades y limitaciones teoricas [The Palo Alto Theory of Communication and Its Theoretical Possibilities and Limitations]', *Revista Internacional de Sociologia*, Vol. 47, No. 1, pp. 87-98.
The author sketches the communication theories associated with Gregory Bateson and his followers, arguing that the integration of perspectives drawn from cultural anthropology, psychiatry, cybernetics, systems theory, information theory, and small group theory provides a good grounding for interpersonal communication study but not for mass communication study.


Schenk, M. 1989. 'Massenkommunikation und interpersonale Kommunikation [Mass Communication and Interpersonal Communication]', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, Vol. 30 (supplement), pp. 406-417.
This essay reviews theoretical connections between interpersonal and mass communication, beginning with Lazarsfeld's identification of opinion leaders and the 'two-step flow of communication' and including later theories proposed by network analysis methodologies.

Siddiqui, Mohammad A. 1988. 'Interpersonal Communication: Modeling Interpersonal Relationship, an Islamic Perspective', *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 239-246.
Siddiqui compares commonly accepted concepts from interpersonal communication research (including small groups) with a communication model based on the texts of the Qur'an.

Somlai, Peter. 1982. 'A csaladi stabilitas kapcsolati szemlelete [Relationship Concepts and Family Stability]', *Szociologia*, Vol. 4, pp. 503-520.
The author, writing from Hungary, discusses the relative merits of consensus theories and conflict theories in accounting for family stability. He suggests that the empirical evidence supports neither and proposes that an examination of relationship contexts provides a better theoretical basis.

Wada, Minoru. 1991. (Japanese title.) '[A Study of Interpersonal Competence: Construction of Nonverbal Skill Scale and Social Skill Scale]', *Japanese Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 49-59.
This essay reports a study of nonverbal interpersonal skills based on self-reports of communication and interpersonal competence.

Yoshitake, K. 1991. (Japanese title.) '[The Advantage of Active Conformity as a Communication Strategy for Compatibility Between Self-assertion and Smooth Interpersonal Relationship]', *Japanese Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 62, pp. 229-234.
Yoshitake conducted an experimental, comparative study of Japanese undergraduates to gauge the differences in satisfaction between assertion and agreement as communication strategies.

# AFTERWORD

By W. E. Biernatzki, SJ
Editor, *Communication Research Trends*

## A Widely Useful Topic
In a sense, all our knowledge of communication begins with our primordial experiences of interpersonal communication. It is the first kind of communication we know, and even radio or television broadcasts to mass audiences follow something of the patterns observable in face-to-face conversations.

Consequently, our understanding of the process of interpersonal communication is basic to any serious investigation of other forms of communication. Even those concerned with the most sophisticated technologies of mass communication need to pay some attention to what goes on at the interpersonal level.

Some hypotheses in the field which have been called into question by later researchers neverthless can be worth thinking about because of the insights into concrete communication problems which they may suggest.

The axioms of Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967), for example, are highly suggestive. 'One cannot not communicate' raises the question, what does someone 'in the news' communicate when he or she says 'No comment'? In some situations, it can be an admission of 'guilt'. Attempts at cover-ups - whether in politics, business, or religion - eventually fail if the issue is of sustained interest to the mass media; and the embarrassing facts will become public knowledge, often with more damag-

ing consequences than if they had been discussed fully and truthfully from the start.

'Every communication has a context and relationship aspect such that the latter classifies the former.' One cannot say exactly the same thing with exactly the same meaning to different people, since differing relationships with them affect and alter the meaning of the message's content. This applies, with even greater force, to mass media messages, which often are understood by their audiences in ways vastly different from that intended by the producer or editor.

'Interaction sequences, like word sequences, cannot be understood as a string of isolated elements.' A sermon will be differently received by someone who went to church direct from a family argument and by one who did not. A priest in the confessional might say things to one penitent occasioned by his encounter with the previous penitent.

More could be drawn out of the axioms, but the above examples will serve to illustrate how the simple act of reading discussions of the process of interpersonal communication can provide stimuli to help us see new and different dimensions of our particular communication situation. Although this is mainly true of our own interpersonal communication it is not limited to it, since the insights can easily begin to involve other kinds of communication, as well. If we are engaged in work with the mass media, they will almost certainly encompass that, too.

## Postmodern Insights

Although an uncritical acceptance of the whole programme of postmodernism would amount to intellectual suicide, the perspectives of deconstructionism and postmodernism have yielded insights to which all should pay attention. For example, they stress 'the fundamental relatedness of human beings in the world', the social origins of much of the way we experience ourselves, and the consequent futility of studies of interpersonal communication which are limited to data drawn from individuals, not from the living context of real interaction among persons. Humans are immersed in the world, and have difficulty making judgements which are not influenced by their social, cultural and ideological milieux. This problem is not as insurmountable as the deconstructionists would have us believe, but transcending it remains exceedingly difficult. Accordingly, the real state of communication relationships is equally difficult to fathom. Furthermore, those relationships are constantly changing. So any deficiency in our recognition that we are fully a part of the changing

social, cultural and ideological environment we are trying to evaluate will, to that degree, make our evaluations less accurate.

Contemporary theorists in interpersonal communication - as in mass communication and many other sub-disciplines of communication studies - have generally abandoned the so-called 'information-theory model' of communication, suggested by Shannon and Weaver (1949) for electronic communications. Its description of a one-way flow from source through message to receiver ignores the complex webs of feedback and dialogue which typify interpersonal communication. Less mechanical, more 'hermeneutic' methods of analysis are held, by many, to be the best direction in which future analyses of interpersonal communication should move.

Lannamann (1991) suggests that research should move away from its preoccupation with the individual and towards a more meaningful focus on the social relationships among individuals; that it should pay more attention to social and material influences on individual action; that it should recognize that much human behavior is not really intentional or autonomous; and that research must become more historical in order to ferret out the emerging relationships between the interpersonal communication of individuals and the larger structures of societies and cultures. All these suggestions - except possibly the last - can be carried too far, resulting in a self-destructive relativism, but their moderate application can help rectify mistakes caused by extreme emphasis on their contraries.

## Feminist Studies

Feminist studies have alerted us to the danger of creating stereotypes, a danger which exists even in the assignment of arbitrary categories - such as 'male' and 'female' - in the analysis of research data. Uncritical use of such categories can create false perceptions of differences among groups, defined a priori, which do not in fact reflect the most salient distribution of those differences in society.

## Conversational Analysis

Conversational analysis can give us heightened sensitivity to the various 'rules' which govern conversations - sequencing, turn-taking, alignment, etc. - which can make an individual a more effective communication partner and thereby make others more receptive to his or her ideas. The same thing can be said about the analysis of the communicative dimensions of nonverbal behavior. Burgoon and Newton's (1991) finding that participants judged nonverbal behavior more favorably than did third

party observers should be taken into account by counsellors or others involved in mediating and 'peacemaking' roles.

## Family and Marriage

Two of the most important and most practical areas of interpersonal communication research are those of family and marital communication. The intensity of family interactions and the fact that they are inescapable and seemingly interminable, make these areas arguably different from other forms of interpersonal communication. Despite the weakness of the theoretical side of family communication studies, various research findings promise to yield useful insights into 'family problems' and can be of use to counsellors.

Differences in a family's 'culture', such as high and low 'concept-orientation' and 'socio-orientation' studied by Chaffee and McLeod (Tims and Masland 1985), can give clues to the ways family members communicate and the ways they deal with conflicts.

The differing sensitivities of men and women to different kinds of verbal and nonverbal clues (Noller 1984) could help solve some kinds of marital problems when called to the attention of the couple. Research into communication differences between well-adjusted and poorly adjusted couples also could assist marriage counsellors, clergy and others, as well as the spouses themselves, in working to improve marital harmony. Typologies of expectations of marital 'ideology', independence and communication, such as that developed by Fitzpatrick (1988b) might be developed to the point where they can predict the success or failure of a proposed marriage with some accuracy; but generalizations are especially problematic in this field, and spouses with apparently conflicting styles may sometimes actually complement each other. Fitzpatrick's criticism of the lack of effective communication skill teaching in the Marriage Encounter movement might well be considered by leaders of that movement in their efforts to improve the programme's effectiveness.

## Conflict

Conflict studies are another area of interpersonal communication studies with obvious practical applications. As with the findings of family and marital communication studies, the conclusions of the conflict researchers are valuable but must be applied with discretion and sensitivity to particular circumstances which may involve many complex and interwoven variables. Models like that of Hocker and Wilmot (1991) are useful in suggesting potential avenues to solving all kinds of conflicts; but their three approaches - self regulation, bargaining/negotiation, and third-party intervention - do not go very far by themselves towards yielding practical solutions to concrete cases.

## Mass Media

Finally, the findings of interpersonal communication research can throw light on mass media behaviour. A recent trend towards more research on reception analysis contains an implicit acknowledgement that mass media almost always are received in reference to some sort of interpersonal situation. Even if there is no actual viewing or listening group, the interpersonal dimension at least functions in informal discussions of programmes and in the total interpersonal experience which has done so much to shape the psychology of the viewer or listener.

## BOOK NOTES

Hahn, J. G., and H. Hoekstra (eds.). *In gesprek over film en televisie: Over de theorie en de praktijk van 'het mediagesprek'* (In discussion about film and television: Concerning the theory and practice of 'the media discussion'). Kampen: Uitgevermaatschappij J. H. Kok, 1991. pp.200. ISBN 90-242-6818-4.

Six authors, including the editors, deal with different aspects of 'the media discussion' which are relevant for teachers and lay religious workers in the Netherlands. The book is intended for use by both Catholics and Protestants. Two of the authors are from the Dutch Reformed Church and the other four, including the editors, are Catholics.

The 'media discussion' concerns the new audio-visual language, which appeals to the contemporary person. It is shaping the whole environment of human communication and must be taken into account and used in religious education if that education is to be effective.

The fundamental elements of the 'discussion' are the characteristics of the audio-visual product, dialogue about the media within groups, religious belief and spirituality, pedagogical methods, and supervision - the ways in which the discussion is led or guided. as its fundamental elements. After introducing relevant communication theory, the book presents practical approaches useful for teachers, catechists and other religious workers at the parish level. A list of television programmes and films pertinent to various aspects of religious teaching is provided, including such pop treatments of religion as Madonna's *Like a Prayer*.

Nieske Witlox

Hart, Andrew. *Understanding the Media: A Practical Guide.* London/New York: Routledge, 1991. Pp. xvi, 267. ISBN 0-415-05712-4 (HB.) £35.00; ISBN 0-415-05713-2 9 (pb.) £10.99.

Although a considerable number of media education and media studies books are in print, the author, a lecturer in Education in the School of Education, University of Southampton, finds many of them 'either too inaccessible for teachers or too detached from any coherent concepts and theories about both the media and about teaching'. In this book he strives to provide 'both a grasp of the issues and practical guidance in a way which is easy for teachers to select from and follow'. It is based on a BBC Radio 4 series and draws on the experience provided by the wide use which has been made of those programmes and related notes in various teacher-training contexts.

After a brief introduction to the rationale for media awareness education, a chapter gives practical advice to the teacher about how to get started - including the ever-present question of how to fit media education into the curriculum. Later chapters deal with media audiences, the formation of facts (the ways media filter and distort information about real events), the forms of media fiction, promotion and persuasion, and how new developments in media technology, forms and structures may affect the role of the teacher.

The text is illustrated by both photographs and diagrams, and each chapter is followed by several 'teaching ideas' as guidance for actual classes. Appendix I gives practical sources for help in media teaching available to teachers in the U.K. Appendix II provides questions for group study of each chapter. A substantial bibliography contains mostly British references.

Craggs, Carol E. *Media Education In the Primary School*. London/New York: Routledge, 1992. Pp. x, 185. ISBN 0-415-06370-1 9 (hb.) £35.00; ISBN 0-415-06371-X (pb.) £9.99.

This book, like the one by Andrew Hart, also reviewed in this issue of *Trends*, is a response to a felt need, in Britain, for 'a clear, practical guide for teachers on how to approach media education'. Hart's book is targeted more broadly, at all educational levels, while Craggs aims specifically at the primary school level. Her book is especially intended as a response to the new National Curriculum, which calls for serious teaching about the mass media in schools, particularly in the English curriculum. The author, who has taught for twenty years, presents detailed methods for media education which will both fulfil the aims of the National Curriculum and show the way for individual teachers to go beyond its bare requirements.

Chapters deal with teaching visual literacy, news advertising, representations of reality, and media institutions. An appendix discusses the relationship of each chapter to the National Curriculum. An extensive annotated bibliography 'is an attempt to provide a balanced reading list representing the various schools of thought'.

Ishikawa, Sakae, and Yasuko Muramatsu (eds.). *Studies of Broadcasting: An International Annual of Broadcasting Science*. Special Issue: *Quality Assessment of Broadcast Programming*. Tokyo: Theoretical Research Center, NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute,

1991. Pp. 243 (plus two foldout tables). (No ISSN. No Price.)

This volume represents one of the few attempts to tackle the thorny but critical issue of quality in television. It grew out of an international joint research project begun by NHK in 1990, which included leading scholars in Sweden, Canada, Britain and the United States, as well as Japan. Senior authors of papers in the volume from those countries are Karl Erik Rosengren, Marc Raboy, Timothy Leggatt, Jay Blumler, Bradley S. Greenberg and Sakae Ishikawa.

W. E. Biernatzki, S.J.