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DIFFERENCE WITHIN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

by

KEITH MARKUS

Dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1996

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

DIFFERENCE WITHIN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

by

Keith Markus

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People could not perform the day-to-day activities which go on in organizations without shared understandings of those activities. Still less could those activities be carried out efficiently without a groundwork of shared meanings which literally go without saying. It is not surprising, then, that shared meanings (valuations, expectations, interpretations, and such) play a central role in organizational culture research.

This emphasis on shared meanings conceals difference. Even culture change is portrayed as a step from one stepping stone to another, to another fixed and unified location in culture-space. The recent re-emphasis on subcultures within organizations begins to address this problem. Even here, however, (sub)culture is theorized as a fixed and total meaning-system.

Difference within organizational culture is further concealed by the implicit theory of meaning articulated in writings on organizational culture. The meanings which become incorporated into an organization's culture are described as having been at one time (if not still) conscious interpretations. Objects, practices and events

are endowed with meaning from the consciousness which comprehends them, and that meaning is then expressed through signifying activity (language, ritual, etc.).

Such an approach hides from view the unthought meanings which reside in the pattern of the signifying activity, and are reproduced through it without conscious intention.

This study brings difference within organizational culture into view. To do so, the data collection strategy is shifted from the traditional reliance on organization members' conscious understandings of their culture, which are already systematized constructions of individual subjects, toward analysis of the language they use to talk about their organization. Audio recordings were made at focus groups in which employees discussed aspects of their organization related to its culture.

Five forms of difference within organizational culture are derived from previous research. Text analysis of the transcripts both instantiates the anticipated forms of difference within, and advances their conceptual clarity. The analyses support the notion that organizational culture cannot be adequately understood without reference to difference within.

Acknowledgements

Hold on, you were not thinking of skipping over this page, were you? I have a few people I would like to thank, so please read on. It will only take a moment.

I would like to thank everyone who talked to me about their work. They really had little reason to do so, and without them the research would not have been possible.

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Pretext

This is our last opportunity to look at the text together from the outside. When you enter the text, I will be doing author things: reporting, explaining, and arguing. You will be doing reader things: attending (or not), understanding (or not), critiquing (or not). In short, when I speak through the text it introduces a certain spacing between you as reader and myself as author which is moderated when we consider the text together from the outside. I would like to use this pretext to touch on the broader theoretical context of the dissertation, something which is not as easily discussed from within the text.

The conceptual space within which it is possible to write this dissertation opens up within a provisional opposition between difference between and difference within. This is not an opposition between two types of objects of study but between two general stances researchers might take in constructing their object of study. These stances can be quite robust to changes in how an object of study is constructed (Benn Michaels, 1977).

We are discussing difference between when we contrast two different things with respect to a common aspect. We are discussing difference within when we contrast two aspects of the same thing which can neither be partitioned in terms of separate constituents of that thing nor combined into a unitary whole. The latter may well be an emergent

property unique to patterns of signifying activity. Formal definitions can be found in Chapter One.

My own field, Psychology, has displayed a historical preference for researching difference between. In some cases it has been difference between individuals, in other cases difference between experimental treatments. Similar trends are visible in the fields of Sociology and Political Science. While the preference for difference between has been questioned most in Anthropology, it remains the dominant trend there also. This has been discussed under the rubric of "overthematization" (Shweder, 1984).

In reviewing a line of research on writing, Culler (1982) has suggested that researchers often project differences within their object of study outward from the object, as differences between that object and others. In constructing their objects of study, Psychology and other social sciences have reproduced this pattern. For example, Hollway (1989) has argued that psychology has produced an image of the individual as a unitary subject by approaching individual differences only as differences between individuals. Her analyses uncover differences within individuals which are otherwise masked.

By resisting this main current, something can be learned about the strengths and weaknesses of how we do research. By resisting it, one at least becomes aware of the pressure of the current in which one's work is

enveloped. "Difference Within Organizational Culture" is a step in that direction.

For instance, it was necessary to maintain a great deal of continuity in seeking to make a break from researching difference between to researching difference within. Previously developed resources cannot be overlooked. Instead, old techniques and methods can be modified and reinterpreted to meet new ends. This underlying continuity raises issues for any attempt to make a break with the past and start afresh. It questions the polarity of change and continuity, suggesting that each may be a tool of the other.

Similarly, the project has revealed some of the impact which our reliance on established patterns of shared meaning has on research reporting. Much to my chagrin, I have often found it necessary not only to say what I meant but also to explain that I did not mean what I did not say. The necessity of the latter arises out of the great strength of expectations pulling at the reader. This is important because it places a filter on what can be reported. Sometimes, what is worth saying in 20 sentences is better left unsaid if it requires 20 pages.

Focus on difference within also holds the potential to offer significant contributions to specific areas of theory. This is particularly the case where the emphasis on difference between has suppressed important aspects of the phenomena theorized. We will see that organizational

culture is one such area.

Working under this pretext, the project of researching difference within organizational culture can be understood as a textual experiment. The goal is to produce a text: an empirical social scientific research report which focuses on difference within.

If it was sufficient to consider only the arrangement of marks on a page, this could be accomplished as a mere experiment in typing. For those marks to be a text, however, we need to consider the social organization which is bound up in the intentions (connections between words and referents) of those involved with the text, the patterns of signifying activity which allow the marks on the page to take on meaning. For this reason, we will want to produce the text through the process of doing social scientific research, the process through which social scientific texts are normally produced.

As such, it is necessary to put aside this pretext so that what follows may be read, and read seriously. Otherwise, this textual experiment will have failed before it began.

Finally, the project has led me to conclude that every textual experiment is as much an experiment for the reader as it is for the author. As much may have been obvious to others, but I suspect there are at least as many for whom it is not obvious. Unlike other experiments, the results are

not laid bare for the author to report. For this reason, rather than bracket the experiment between a "pre-text" and a "post-text" as conceived at the onset, I leave the reader free to draw his or her own conclusions regarding the textual experiment, and to compare them to my comments here. Of course, that means the reader is also free to ignore the experiment entirely, and take what follows at face value as merely a research report.

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PART ONE: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I imagine you are already asking what "difference within organizational culture" is, so this chapter will tell you. The explanation begins with sections on "difference within" and on "organizational culture." The third section is an overview of how the remainder of this report goes about putting these two terms together. The introduction closes with some introductory comments regarding the image which is forming in your head about who you are listening to when you read this. These comments bear on how the report is written and may influence how it is read. That much is up to you.

Difference Within

Before looking for difference within organizational culture, we should first be clear on what is meant by difference within. In general, "difference within" and "difference between" are defined in distinction to one another. More specifically, however, the concepts function at three distinct levels. At the most particular, we can refer to specific differences between or within. At a more conceptual level, we can refer to two classes of differences as differences between and differences within. Most importantly, however, the concepts refer to possible forms of difference which exist independently of any actual

differences which fit the form, and the acceptance of which orders thought at a basic level. This last is the sense in which "difference between" and "difference within" are used in the singular.

We can define difference between as the state of affairs which obtains when two or more entities or events can be contrasted in terms of one or more shared attributes. This definition can be further clarified by making three points explicit. First, this state of affairs obtains not only as a function of the object of study but as a function of how it is addressed by the researcher. Second, the shared attribute may be nothing more than the presence or absence of some other attribute which can be meaningfully predicated of both entities or events although it may only be actual for some subset of them. That is, the attributes may be either categorical or quantitative. Third, difference between is still difference between if the entities or events being contrasted are constituents of a larger entity or event. That is, contrasting blue and green marbles from an urn is still difference between (marbles) and not difference within (the marbles or the urn) in the sense in which difference within is opposed to difference between.

Difference within is admittedly a difficult concept because it brings together two apparently opposing ideas (Das, 1984). The idea of difference would seem to suggest a

contrast between two distinct and separate entities. As this is not the case for difference within, we must emphasize that difference between the constituent parts of an entity does not constitute difference within that entity as the term is used here.

Difference within, then, will be reserved for the state of affairs which obtains when two or more processes or structures operating within a single entity or event can be contrasted, but cannot be reduced to or synthesized into a unitary process or structure. Some unpacking may also help clarify this definition. First, although difference within requires two or more processes or structures within a single entity or event, a common pattern of difference within may be shared by two or more entities or events. Second, analysis of difference within is aimed at discovering and articulating the tension or play between the two or more processes or structures at work within the entity or event. Third, difference within requires that neither of the two processes or structures be reducible to the other, and that they not be reducible to a single unitary more general process or structure. The relationship of difference within is not a dialectical one (Bakhtin, 1986).

This research applies the concept of difference within to organizational culture. Having outlined what is meant by difference within in the abstract, we can now turn to the concepts of organizational culture. This can also be taken

as an example to help clarify the concept of difference within.

Organizational Culture

Anyone who has ever had to take twenty minutes to explain to an outsider what could be communicated to a professional colleague or co-worker in a few words can appreciate the power of a common frame of reference. This is just one example of the shared understandings which make it possible for people to function in organizations. Without them, we could not communicate information and ideas quickly and efficiently between members of an organization. We also could not be as confident that our actions would be interpreted as intended, or that we were interpreting others' actions as intended. Shared meanings also help ensure that actions and events will be evaluated similarly by other members of an organization. By guiding interpretation, valuation and expectation, shared meanings contribute to people's ability to function efficiently in organizations.

Arguably, such shared meanings are part and parcel of the process of organization. It is no surprise, then, that these are the primary characteristics of organizations to attract the attention of those studying organizational culture. We can formulate a preliminary definition of organizational culture as: meanings shared by organization members and passed on to new members.

Within Organization Studies, most theories of organizational culture are based upon shared organizational values (Deal and Kennedy, 1982), and often behavior (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). Focusing specifically on the cultures of organizations, perhaps the most comprehensive and carefully thought through account is that of Schein (1991a, 1991b).

Schein goes beyond "shared values" by hypothesizing three levels of organizational culture. The first, and most superficial, is that of artifacts and creations. This is the level directly available to observation, and includes visible and audible behavior patterns. The second is the level of shared values. These are characterized as debatable and overt. The final level is that of shared assumptions. These are like values, but nondebatable and taken for granted. A shared value can be understood as having become an assumption, in Schein's view, when organization members are no longer consciously aware that they are deploying the value in their day to day activities -- when it becomes tacit knowledge. At this point, a shared value ceases to be a consciously held position (in opposition to another available position) and becomes "common sense."

Schein hypothesizes two processes by which such assumptions are formed. First, problems are solved using solutions which, with repeated success, can become

assumptions. Second, sources of anxiety can lead to forms of avoidance which can also become assumptions. Through these two processes, Schein hypothesizes that organizations, made of people sharing common problems and sources of anxiety, will eventually form common sets of assumptions.

This conceptualization can serve, with two modifications, as a next step in our provisional definition of organizational culture. First, we need to be clear about the idea of behavior. Authors often write as if there were an unproblematic correspondence between behavior and meaning (Schein, 1991a; Kotter and Heskett, 1992). This overlooks the fact that behavior can only be interpreted within some frame of meaning. The same behavior can take on very different meanings in different cultural contexts (Misumi and Peterson, 1985; Smith and Peterson, 1988).

In this light, it may be clearer to focus on action (meant or meaningful behavior) rather than mere behavior. Discussion in terms of behavior (and writing in the context of anglophone Sociology and Psychology, there is usually a silent 'observable' in front of the word 'behavior') suggests a universal culture-free language of behavioral observation. If such a language could exist, it is doubtful that it could be of much use in understanding organizational culture. Which behaviors are attended to, which aspects of them are emphasized, and what meanings are ascribed to them are all part of the culture in which they take place. To

understand behavior in organizational culture, we cannot first remove it from culture through a language which seeks to remain beyond culture. We cannot enter into culture by following a road which circles outside it.

Second, we should question the restriction of Schein's (1991) second two levels of organizational culture to values. Organization members share meanings involving interpretations (What does her promotion mean? What does it mean when he leaves his office door open?) and expectations (What will happen if we take this strategy? How will he respond to her change in policy?). These clearly go beyond valuation. As such, we will retain the formulation of organizational culture in terms of "shared meanings" rather than the more restricted "shared values."

Difference Within and Organizational Culture

We can now see how the idea of difference within can be applied to organizational culture. If organizational culture is understood as a system of meaning, and not simply a repository for tacit knowledge, then we can ask how the components of the system interact. Such interactions might easily have results on the system which go beyond the previously conscious meanings from which they arose. Difference within may be one such result.

We can define difference within organizational culture as the state of affairs in which two or more aspects of an organization's culture can be contrasted, but not reduced to

two constituents or integrated into a singular whole. The next section gives an overview of how this idea is developed through the remainder of the research report.

For instance, a careful reading of the Delorean example reported by Martin and Siehl (1983) indicates that the dominant culture at General Motors and the subculture represented by Delorean are mutually constituted but distinct systems of meaning. Because they are mutually constituted they are not reducible to separate entities. Because they are distinct systems of meaning they are not renderable as a unitary whole.

Overview

Part One develops the theoretical basis of the study. Part Two is devoted to method. Parts Three and Four develop specific research questions and report data analyses directed at those questions.

Chapter Two explores the relationship between culture, discourse and subjectivity. A discursive approach to organizational culture is outlined as a way of circumventing the limitations of other approaches. Chapter Three takes an initial look at research suggesting difference within. Subculture theory, ambiguity theory and habitus theory are discussed.

Part Three deals with method. Chapter Four offers some general comments on method. Chapter Five describes the data and how they were collected.

Part Three reports findings related to types of difference within organizational culture which are related to iterability. Iterability refers to repetition of signifiers and its effects of their relationship to meanings. This is discussed at the beginning of Chapter Six.

Chapter Six also discusses difference within organizational culture related to the specificity of patterns of signification to particular contexts. Incongruities between patterns functioning within the same culture are investigated. Chapter Seven discusses the ways in which words and phrases carry surplus meaning from other contexts in which they occur. The dynamics of intended and suppressed meanings are investigated. Chapter Eight discusses difference within shared meaning produced by differences between unshared meaning. The effects of unshared meanings on shared meanings are investigated.

Part Four reports the remaining findings, and summarizes the conclusions drawn from them. Chapter Nine discusses meanings suppressed by patterns of construction. The dynamics of such meanings, present in discourse through their systematic absence, are investigated. Chapter Ten discusses textualization of people in discourse. Incongruities in open and closed ended textualizations are investigated. The final chapter develops conclusions from the study and discusses limitations of the research.

Introducing the "Author"

Having outlined the content, it may be helpful to comment on the position from which it is articulated. The voice in which the material is presented indicates a certain configuration of stances and positions. These define an "Author" -- my own limited manifestation within the text.

In well entrenched research traditions, authors share a common set of voices which are readily recognized. This produces a specialized language which allows extremely concise and effortless communication through a common conceptual short-hand. It also lends a certain invisibility to the common frame of reference among insiders, and tends to produce writing which is relatively incomprehensible to outsiders.

Working in the margins between various traditions of research, the situation is somewhat different. The absence of an insider code affords more awareness of the frame of reference, but also requires more explication. Similarly, while no readers are excluded as outside the fold, few readers are able to avoid some "shifting of the mental furniture" (Checkland, 1994). I know because I have stubbed more than a few mental toes on it myself.

Two specific issues are worth touching on here. First, the "author" position of this report involves a deliberate effort to discard the various "us/them" dichotomies which hold currency in social science literature. These

dichotomies, including "exploratory/confirmatory," "qualitative/quantitative," "anglophone/continental," as well as oppositions between the names of the various sciences, are part of the "foundation myths" (Plato, 1985) through which a commitment to a specific approach is passed on from generation to generation. Developing out of this context, however, they tend to either devalue the "them" term, or elevate it as something mysterious and out-of-reach. Neither devaluation nor mystification is productive in the present context.

Second, the epistemological stance taken here has implications for the way in which the material is presented. This writing is reflective of a general rapprochement of "realism" and "social-constructivism." The former brings the assertion that knowledge is about a world which exists independent of our conscious experience (not simply about sense perceptions of an unknowable world, as in empiricism, or conscious experience in and of itself, as in idealism). The latter brings the assertion that all such knowledge is constituted through a social process which contributes the categories into which the world is divided, and the values which are attached to them. The stance taken here is that in the same way that the relativity of perception does not undermine its validity (Kelley, 1986), so the relativity of social construction does not undermine knowledge produced through it. Different ways of apprehending reality may

access different truths about it, but this does not invalidate any one of them (although it does undermine any truth claim's monopoly status).

This stance has two important implications. First, I do not adopt the approach of picking through positions to weed out the true from the false. Reading across literatures populated by many intelligent people pursuing various interests in apparently good faith, I have been hard put to come across anything fundamentally wrong-headed, let alone simply false. It seems more productive to search for the truth in every position, and then consider how they challenge one another to advance our understanding.

Second, and complementary to the first, I will not proceed as if all true positions were commensurable. This is not simply a matter of linguistic relativity fragmenting universal knowledge. It is based on the assertion that there is no universal language of thought, nor can there be (Derrida, 1981). As a result, I draw from various positions without attempting to incorporate them wholesale into a superordinate framework. There is no reason to suppress aspects which run counter to the present project.

The remainder of Part I develops my theoretical orientation in more detail. We left our discussion of organizational culture by touching on the relationship between culture and consciousness. Chapter two returns to this issue.

CHAPTER TWO

CULTURE, SUBJECT, TEXT¹

It is generally accepted that when people carry out their day to day activities in organizations they make use of collective knowledge passed down to them by example or tacit assumption. Such collective knowledge is commonly theorized as having been worked out consciously, and then rendered tacit through time (e.g. Schein, 1991a; Bourdieu, 1977; Sackman, 1991). Understanding culture as a dynamic system of meaning, however, raises questions about this understanding of non-conscious meaning.

Are we able to bring to consciousness all the collective meanings which guide our action in organizations? What of those which were never conscious? Might not non-conscious meanings either find their way into the organization from outside, or be produced within the organization as a result of configurations of other meanings in the organization? This chapter engages these issues through the relationships between culture, subject and text.

Culture and the Subject

The term 'subject' has been used with a wide variety of sometimes inconsistent meanings (Allen, 1992). By 'subject'

¹An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the New School for Social Research on March 4, 1993. Both the lively discussion which followed and detailed comments provided by my two commentators, Ching-Ching Lin and Yuh-Wei (Ku) Seng, were most helpful. I also wish to thank the Taiwan Study Group of New York City for the invitation to speak.

I refer to an individual conscious entity. This may be abstracted over persons, time, or situation. That abstraction should not allow us to forget that we are dealing with the consciousness of flesh-and-blood people and not a disembodied metaphysical substance.

Using 'subject' in this sense, we can then use 'subjectivity' to refer to a particular form of subjective experience in all its specificity of content, structure and perspective. For instance, we might explore the subjectivity of Ivan in The Brothers Karamazov (Bakhtin, 1963/1984a). We might also explore the unique characteristics of the ancient Greek subjectivity which allowed for the experience of eudaimonia, a word for which there is no modern English equivalent (Norton, 1976). In the present context, we might explore the subjectivity common to members of a given organization, or compared across organizations.

The occasional exception to this should be clear from the context. Chapter Five in particular contains passing references to 'subjective' in the sense which is opposed to 'objective' and which is used to mean 'not publicly verifiable.'

The diverse research methods brought to bear on the topic of organizational culture share the common attribute of approaching culture from the standpoint of the subject. This is true of the survey methods used in organizational

climate research as well as the methods used in organizational culture research. This common tendency is related to the focus on shared meanings (Van Maanen and Barley, 1985).

This focus on what is shared among subjects, accessed through the subject, has played an important role in the conceptualization of organizational culture. It aided in the understanding of organized action as more than simply the sum of the actions of individual organized actors. At the same time, it produced an understanding of organizational culture which concealed difference within.

We can distinguish three reasons for this. The first is conceptual. Looking for some whole which is greater than the sum of its parts is an effort which does not encourage the questioning of the whole. The struggle to establish the reality of organizational culture was not conducive to questioning its existence as a unitary whole.

The second is methodological. By accessing organizational culture through the subject, one gathers data which are most likely to obscure difference within. One reason for this is that social pressures not to be caught contradicting oneself accompany conversation in the kinds of social contexts in which organizational culture is studied. One could state this in the form of a Gricean (Grice 1975) conversational maxim: Do not make inconsistent statements unless explicitly arguing both sides of an issue. At

another level, the cognitive dissonance literature indicates that conscious processing of anything will tend to produce a regularized, systematized version of it. Conscious representations tend to come out neat and tidy even where the original was messy. As such, data about organizational culture gathered through the subject has passed through two sets of filters which work against difference within.

The final reason is theoretical. In approaching culture as a system of meaning shared by a group of subjects, organizational culture theory has treated meaning as something produced (or endowed) by subjects. This tends to cast culture in the mold of an invented system (such as a system of writing), passed down from generation to generation. Such an approach anticipates a unitary system of one-to-one correspondences, treats multiple meanings as exceptions to the rule, and precludes unthought meanings. Such a theoretical orientation does not, and cannot, recognize difference within. Consideration of specific approaches to organizational culture will help render these issues concrete.

Organizational climate studies generally sought to study employee perceptions through survey methods. Early studies which focused on objective characteristics of the organization avoided this, but it is hard to argue that they studied what is now thought of as organizational culture. There was no attempt to understand the meaning that these

characteristics had in the organization. By focusing on perceptions, these studies focused on climate through the subject. The subject's report of perceived climate served as the access point through which climate was studied.

The notion of consensus was deemed essential to the interpretation of aggregated perceptions as indications of organizational climate (Woodman and King, 1978; Johnston, 1976; Hellriegel and Slocum, 1974). This corresponds with a tendency to link consistency with the reality of organizational culture. By taking individual perceptions as sampling points in the measurement of a larger phenomenon, this approach assumed both that all culture is perceived and that consensus was a necessary condition for the reality of organizational culture. This makes it difficult to research culture as an unthought dynamic tension between inconsistent systems.

This does not change with the shift from survey methods to ethnography (Schein, 1991a; Gregory, 1983). The ethnographer (consultant or researcher) gathers data through ethnographic interviews. In these interviews, informants provide reports of organizational culture. Whether focusing on values, assumptions, perceptions, or what-have-you, the ethnographic interview focuses on the subject's report of organizational culture. As a result, the subject remains the access point through which culture is studied.

The study of culture through myths and stories is

worthy of separate discussion due to its prominence (Boje, 1991; Martin, Feldman, Hatch and Sitkins, 1983). One might object that myths and stories exist independently, and hence are an exception to the study of culture through the subject. These myths and stories are studied as indicators of organizational culture only by being interpreted in terms of meanings given to them by the members of an organization, by the subject. As such, the subject remains at the center of this understanding of organizational culture. This focus on meanings attributed to myths and stories by the subject will not help us address issues of unthought meaning. This is not to say the myths and stories cannot play a different role in an approach to organizational culture which is not centered on the subject, but only that they have not been used in that way.

Also worthy of separate mention is ethnoscience, another semiological approach (Barley, 1983). Ethnoscience maps out the structural relationships between categories in the symbolic code used by a specific linguistic community. This has roots going as far back as the central role that systems of kinship have played in Cultural Anthropology (Hymes, 1964). These structures arguably exist independently of the subject, or at least any one subject. The ethnoscientific method, however, investigates these structures through interviews. Even where one begins with texts, ethnoscience requires follow-up interviews in which

ethnoscience prompting ("Is A a kind of B?") is used to fill in the symbolic structures. Ethnoscience relies on the subject's reports to study semiotic structures, and hence relies on the subject to study organizational culture.

In fact, the ethnoscience approach to analyzing semantic structures could be the least conducive to uncovering difference within organizational culture. It goes beyond asking about work, to ask about the language in which people talk about work. As such, it expands the influence of social pressures toward consistency beyond the object language to the metalanguage. This can be seen as placing a further filter between difference within organizational culture and the researcher's data.

Three main points may be drawn from the preceding discussion. The first of these is that the focus on what is shared, while playing a valuable role in the conceptualization of organizational culture, has also played a role in concealing difference within organizational culture. By articulating organizational culture in terms of what is shared, theory has focused on what is the same. This effect begins with the focus on consensus in perceptions of organizational climate, and follows through to, for example, the focus on common semantic structures within a linguistic community.

Second, this focus on what is shared has led to data-gathering strategies which also tend to obscure difference

within. This begins with the processing of the information given by organization members. It continues with the social situation in which information is passed from organization members to researchers. It is also involved in the way the researcher processes the information. Each of these levels of filters operate, to more or less of a degree, in the various approaches which have been devised to study organizational culture.

Third, difference within organizational culture is further concealed by the implicit theory of meaning articulated in writings on organizational culture. The meanings which become incorporated into an organization's culture are described as having been at one time (if not still) conscious interpretations. Objects, practices and events are endowed with meaning from the consciousness which comprehends them, and that meaning is then expressed through signifying activity (language, ritual, etc.). Such an approach hides from view the unthought meanings which reside in the pattern of the signifying activity, and are reproduced through it without conscious intention.

Such an approach can be described as methodological phenomenism (see Adams and Hill Ingersoll, 1985, for an admirably explicit endorsement of this). It treats meaning as produced by a meaning-endowing subject. As such, the subject is taken as the source of organizational culture. The source of the source, however, is not questioned.

Discourse analysis and discursive psychology offer an important alternative approach to meaning, the subject, and organizational culture.

Organizational Culture and Organizational Discourse

The analysis of discourse is not simply a method, but a theoretical orientation (Edwards and Potter, 1992). It is an attempt to recover the communicative link between individuals by conceding semantic autonomy to the linguistic community, or communities. Even Humpty Dumpty can only communicate his idiosyncratic usage of one word by using other words in familiar ways which Alice can understand (Carrol, 1865-1871/1960).

This orientation offers researchers an approach to studying organizational culture with several distinct advantages. The first is availability of data. Whatever they produce, organizations produce as much discourse as anything else.

The second is materiality of the object of study. Discourse produces physically tangible traces, be they oral or written. As such, the study of discourse also has the related advantage of relative directness (Lakoff, 1975). In studying private things like perceptions, attitudes and emotions, one only has direct access to the phenomenon in one's self and has to resort to indirect measures or expressions of the phenomena by others. In studying a

public phenomenon like discourse, however, one has direct access to the phenomenon as produced by others as well as one's self. Discourse can be directly grappled with, unlike other common objects of psychological research which require indirect study.

Discourse-based research has one final important strength. It allows the subjectivity of individuals in organizations to be studied as one part of a larger context. This is because it replaces the radical separateness which other approaches attribute to subjectivity with a socially constituted notion of individual subjectivity. One may consider the origin of subjectivity, rather than taking it as the origin of other phenomena. By contrast, phenomenological approaches are locked into the latter because they take subjectivity as their starting point. Similarly but conversely, positivist approaches investigate social influences on mental contents but rule out the study of subjectivity through the systemization and naturalization of a particular subjectivity embodied in the measurement apparatus. The de-centering of the subject in discourse analysis is discussed in further detail later in the chapter.

Applied to organizational culture, a discourse based approach avoids many of the difficulties associated with past subject based research. First, it avoids the kinds of "filters" which make it difficult to study difference within

using subject based data collection strategies. It does so by addressing metalinguistic issues without asking about them directly. That is, while people are talking about their work, the filters are active with respect to the object language (the discourse so produced would be artificial otherwise), but not the metalanguage. They are commenting on their work, not their language, directing the filters away from the form of the discourse with which they talk about their work.

Second, it provides a concrete object of study, avoiding the criticism that culture research is "soft" or "touchy-feely." The study of discursive regularities provides culture research a "hard edge." In measuring perceived culture psychometrically or assumptions ethnographically, one has to accept a fair amount of interpretation up front before one can debate the phenomenon under question. One can discuss discursive regularities, on the other hand, before agreeing on their interpretation in terms of organizational culture. The advantage, then, is to be able to come to the question of organizational culture with data in hand, rather than having to settle the issue before one can understand one's data as data. (None of which is to deny that these strengths carry corresponding weaknesses, see Chapter Four and Chapter Eleven.)

Such an approach requires some delineation, since it varies at a very basic level from what might be a more

intuitive or common sense view. The root of the approach is the conceptualization of discourse as something distinct, but not separate, from conscious meaning. At its broadest level, this is well articulated by Harre (1992) who argues that while specific discursive acts come from specific persons, those persons are constituted as persons by their acquisition of the capacity to enter into discourse(s).

The intransigent background to all human action is the human conversation, the elements of which are the acts produced by the joint actions of speakers...The conversation, as a flow of joint actions, is as robust a world as that of the flow of electromagnetic energy. It is made by all the people, but at the will of none. At the same time, it is in that world that persons are made... Discourse and person are mutually constituted beings. They are internally related (p. 157).

Such views contrast with views which equate meaning with that which is present to consciousness. Articulating the autonomy of discourse is one with articulating the idea of unthought meaning (Derrida, 1972/1981; Foucault, 1966/1973). One place this can be seen is in the way words and phrases take on new meaning as they are inserted into new contexts. How many times do we hear our own words repeated back to us, taking on meanings we never imagined? Conversely, where do the meanings we purportedly "express"

come from if not from prior discourse, or permutations thereof? The traditional linguistic model of an ideal "message" being "encoded" in language by a speaker/writer becomes problematic when writing, speech and thought are all understood as varied forms of writing, or "arche-writing" (Derrida, 1967/1976). That is, they all take on the general form of linguistic construction. Further, all linguistic construction takes on the general form of (permuted) quotation (Derrida, 1988).

In such a view, then, organizational culture would exist, not in the presence of individual consciousness, but in the discourses which exist in organizations. Organizational culture embodies not just the remembered and forgotten meanings, but the never-before-thought meanings which are equally existent in the orderings of organizational discourse. An organization's culture may have implications for its members' thought patterns which have never occurred to any member of the organization, not even to "managers of meaning."

This approach is distinct from the Cartesian assumptions of behavioral science and cognitive science (Harre and Gillett, 1994). Discourse is not considered a material representation of an ideal culture. Similarly, discourse is not considered a material production generated from an ideal culture. Rather, discourse is the medium in which culture exists and through which culture is

reproduced. The culture is not simply reflected in the discourse, it is in the discourse.

Most theorists of organizational culture have agreed that culture arises from the solutions to the day to day problems with which people in organizations have been faced (Schein, 1991a; Deal and Kennedy, 1982). Given that communicative action is involved in problem solving, or at minimum the communication of problems solved, this is easily incorporated into a discourse based view of organizational culture. Such an approach carries the added benefit of a more parsimonious conceptualization of how organizational culture is reproduced in organizations. Theorists have described a variety of media by which organizational culture is transmitted. These include slogans, company heroes, company folklore, rituals, and the like. All communicative acts, these are easily incorporated into a general concept of "forms of talk" (Goffman, 1981). Sufficiently regularized, such forms of talk come to structure discourse in organizations, thereby producing a culture. In order to function in organizations, new hires must learn the forms of talk.

Such dissemination, however, ultimately leads to permutation and variation. We can prepare to address this through a discussion of the structural nature of organizational culture.

Culture and Structure

Theorists of organizational culture have generally conceptualized it as a singular coherent system. Schein (1991a) states that "If human beings do indeed have a cognitive need for order and consistency, one can then assume that all groups will eventually evolve sets of assumptions that are compatible and consistent" (p.372). It is this concept of "compatible and consistent" sets of shared assumptions that is most problematic in organizational culture theory. We have already seen how this emphasis on what is shared has concealed difference within organizational culture. We can now address why this is problematic.

The most thorough and direct statement of the limits to structural theorization may be Bourdieu's (1972/1977) discussion of the "objective limits of objectivism." By "objectivism," Bourdieu means that rule-governed approach to theorizing action of which model building in behavioral science is a special case. Bourdieu outlines a successive questioning of the conditions which make various forms of inquiry possible. Social inquiry based upon understanding the everyday experience of actors excludes from consideration the conditions which make that experience possible. Social inquiry based upon objective structures (be they economic, linguistic, or behavioral) explores the conditions of common experience, but in turn excludes from

consideration the conditions that make such objective regularities possible.

In arguing the inadequacy of "rule governed behavior" to explain these objective structures, Bourdieu offers a still more subtle approach to social inquiry. Bourdieu's critique of "the rule" is closely related to the ongoing critique of the circularity of empiricist psychology which requires that theories be stated in terms of operationally defined variables and then seeks to verify those theories with precisely the observations by which they are defined (e.g. Hempel 1965, Greenwood, 1992). Bourdieu's scope is broader, however, encompassing rule governed approaches from simple "formalisms" and "legalisms", to "social constraints", to Saussure's (1916/1992) objectivized notion of language (as opposed to speech), to "collective unconscious." Each functions within the space of inquiry into the regularities and structures of everyday experience, but falls into circularity when faced with the self referential task of inquiry into the origins of the structures themselves.

Bourdieu refocuses inquiry on the "generative schemes" which "tend to reproduce" the structures outlined by objective inquiry. He thereby moves beyond abstract structures in a way which should not be confused with a "back to everyday accounts" movement. Action is understood as "structured improvisation." People respond to specific

situations in daily life on the basis of generative schemes common to any group facing similar situations. These are similar to the "schemas" investigated by Cognitive Social Psychology, except that they are not personal constructs, but common understandings, and they are not determinative but merely suggestive of action. The actions improvised within this context then reproduce the generative schemes themselves. Hence, a sufficient number of deviant improvisations will modify the generative scheme itself.

By rooting the objective structures in the specific actions of various individuals, Bourdieu carries out a critique of the objectification of the structures of everyday life. In objectifying these structures, the researcher substitutes the totalizing view of an "impartial spectator" for the involved perspective of the participant. James (1890/1950) criticized this as "the psychologist's fallacy." By imposing such a singular, totalizing perspective, such objectification obscures the dynamic nature, and specificity of these generative schemes.

When Bourdieu gathered all his data bearing on one seemingly natural whole, the Kabyle calendar, he found that various periods of the year were organized in opposites, but that these opposites could not be made to lie flat in a total structure of the Kabyle year. That is, different seasons were enacted and understood in opposition to other seasons, but these seasons did not combine into an

exhaustive and mutually exclusive set of periods on a single calendar (as do the western Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter). Instead, seasons from different oppositional sets overlapped without conceding or concealing their separateness. The various oppositions functioned separately, but disrupted one another when Bourdieu tried to impose a total structure on them simultaneously.

A number of researchers have explored reasons for such anomalies in purported structural totalities, these are discussed in the next chapter, and developed further in Parts Three and Four. First, it will be useful to articulate our discursive conceptualization of organizational culture.

A Discursive Approach to Organizational Culture

At this point we can summarize four main points from the forgoing discussion:

- . By approaching organizational culture through the subject, organizational culture theory has systematically concealed the unthought.
- . Organizational Discourse offers an approach which overcomes this.
- . The focus on culture as constituted by what is or was present to consciousness conceals difference, leading to a portrayal of culture as a unified total system of meaning.
- . Such a totalizing approach cannot account for the structures it proposes because it divorces them from the social context in which they are (re)produced in order to use them to explain that social context.

These developments have some implications for our

provisional definition of organizational culture. It would be a mistake to confuse discourse with culture (Kondo, 1990). The relation between the two, however, can help us understand the dynamics of organizational culture. Specifically, it aids in the development of three key areas of organizational culture theory which are not well developed.

The first of these is how organizational culture affects day to day activity in organizations. We all say and do things in organizations which we can feel confident will be understood as intended without need of explanation. We can also all probably think of an example of someone doing or saying something which did require accompanying explanation. Standard organizational culture theory can only attribute the first type of event in a vague sort of way to shared meanings, and has had little to say about the second type.

A discursive approach to organizational culture helps fill in these theoretical gaps. Some actions and utterances are readily understood -- and recognized as such -- because they draw directly on the organizational archive (Foucault, 1969-1971/1972), what has been said and done, which forms the history of communicative action at the organization. Others are not readily understood -- and are recognized as such -- because they deviate in a substantial way from the organizational archive. Such actions then join the

organizational archive, and serve as reference points (generic archetypes) for future actions or utterances. Of course we also need to recognize the degree to which organizational members do not always wish to be fully understood or fully understand (Crapanzano, 1992), but this does not modify the basic process of understanding through reference to the archive.

As indicated above, a discursive approach to organizational culture also helps us to understand how organizational culture is reproduced in organizations. Organizational culture theory provides a detailed picture of how cultures form, but then implies that once the shared meanings are in place they will maintain themselves -- a sense of timelessness characteristic of structuralist thought. Such an installation-without- reproduction approach would suggest that organizational cultures would exhibit culture fade, a gradual weakening of the culture over time. Yet, such a phenomenon has neither been predicted nor observed in organizations.

A discursive approach provides us with an understanding of how organizational cultures are constantly reproduced, and why they do not fade. Each time we draw on the organizational archive, each time we perform a communicative action which follows a familiar pattern, each time we do something like we have done it before, we reproduce, refresh, and reinforce the organizational culture. Each

time anyone reproduces the organizational culture it provides us with one more experience, one more example, one more event, which serves as a reference point for future communicative action which is added to the organizational archive.

Finally, a discursive approach to organizational culture helps us to understand how the unthought functions in organizational culture. Organizational culture theory suggests that all the shared meanings which find their way into an organization's culture are or were once consciously thought. The unthought is only taken into consideration with respect to actions or strategies which serve to reduce anxiety (Schein, 1991a; Smith and Simmons, 1983). Even here, however, the actual action choices or strategic choices are consciously selected even if their motivations are unconscious.

The relationship between patterns of communicative action and the shared meanings which constitute organizational culture, however, help us understand how unthought meanings can function in organizational culture. The discursive regularities which form in a discursive formation, as well as the patterns of shared meaning they reproduce, are very complex. The larger and more complex the organization, the more complex the discursive formations and patterns of meaning. Just as actions can have unintended consequences, so patterns of communicative action

can result in unforeseen, unexpected and unthought meanings in the organizational culture.

In some cases these unthought meanings may surface in other very conscious meanings. The case of a large public service research division with which I am familiar can provide a real life example. Middle management in this division represented the division both to the top management of the institution and to people outside the institution. Accordingly, they adopted formal business attire. In contrast, the large number of consultants who were employed to carry out the research were encouraged by line supervisors to adopt a casual style of dress. This was offered as a perquisite (comfort) as well as being expressive of a casual work atmosphere.

The two groups adopted their unique styles of dress independently for reasons unrelated to the dress of the other group. Yet, the dress codes (themselves patterns of communicative action) formed an immediately visible mark of distinction between the two groups. The result is a constantly reinforced, and salient, sense of otherness between the two groups in the division. This feeds into and reinforces a general atmosphere of mistrust and distaste between the two groups. The reader may not be surprised to learn that the division is characterized by a state of dynamic equilibrium in which each group is dissatisfied with the other, and compensates themselves for the

dissatisfactions through an economy of mutual exploitation. Clearly this state of affairs was not brought about by the dress codes alone, but the example does illustrate how unthought meanings (in this case the marked separateness of the two groups working in the division) can feed into an organization's culture through regularities in communicative action.

In other cases, unthought meanings may not surface through other thought meanings, but may remain dormant blind spots in an organization's patterns of meaning. We will return to this in the next chapter.

These three issues have ramifications for our provisional understanding of organizational culture. From a discursive approach, we understand that the history of communicative action within an organization forms an organizational archive. This provides words, phrases, conceptual orders, narratives, and meanings from which speakers/actors can draw. Organizational discourse is reproduced through the process by which organization members draw from past discourse to construct new communicative actions which then become part of the organizational archive. At the same time, the positions from which, and language resources with which, discourse allows organization members to speak (write, act) preconfigures the subjectivity

of organizational members². It structures how we experience life in organizations, preconfiguring the form of our conscious experience. It is this influence (and not the discourse itself), coupled with the social influence which both derives from it and reinforces it, that we experience as a culture.

Organizational culture, then, can be understood as meanings (currently thought, once thought now tacit, and never thought) stemming from the order of organizational discourse, and expressed through communicative action which feeds back into and reproduces that discourse. These meanings can be studied by analyzing the order of organizational discourse. Such an approach allows for the open investigation of difference within organizational culture, addressed in detail in the next chapter.

²I am indebted to the members of the (now defunct) CUNY Preconfiguration of Subjectivity Study Group for their help in developing the ideas expressed here regarding the preconfiguration of subjectivity by social, psychological and discursive processes.

CHAPTER THREE

SUBCULTURE, AMBIGUITY, AND DIFFERENCE WITHIN

In outlining and arguing for a discursive approach to organizational culture, the previous chapter played on a spacing between the current project and the literature as it now stands. This chapter re-inserts the current project into the organizational culture literature through the areas of organizational subculture and cultural ambiguity. These two areas of research each lead in the direction of difference within organizational culture. Following this lead, the remainder of the chapter develops the idea.

Organizational Subculture

Two aspects of the existing research on organizational culture can be interpreted as opening the issue of difference within organizational culture. The first is research on organizational subcultures (e.g. Martin and Siehl, 1983; Deal and Kennedy, 1982). Contrasting subcultures to the dominant culture, Martin and Siehl (1983) describe three types of subcultures. Enhancing subcultures produce more fervent adherence to dominant values. Orthogonal subcultures simply add values to the dominant culture which are not part of it, but are not contradictory to it either. Countercultures, on the other hand, hold values which directly contradict those of the dominant culture.

Martin and Siehl offer some interesting insights into

how the dominant culture can make use of subcultures, particularly counter cultures, to "let off steam" or purify the dominant culture. They do not, however, go beyond the conceptualization of culture as a coherent set of values or beliefs. Subculture theory partitions off subcultures from the dominant culture. As such, the two are left intact. Subculture theory addresses difference between consistent subcultures within an organization, not differences within a single culture.

Subculture research does, however, make an important contribution in opening the door to the study of difference within organizational culture. By partitioning organizational cultures, subculture research fractures the mindset that the whole organization is the natural unit for the study of organizational culture. At the same time, by raising the issue of disparate value systems functioning in relation to, or even as part of, a larger culture, it opens a door to the idea of difference within organizational culture.

Organizational Ambiguity

Another door is opened by the small but growing literature on ambiguity in organizational culture (Martin and Meyerson, 1988; Frost, Moore, Louis, Lundberg and Martin, 1991). Ambiguity research which focuses on different interpretations stemming from incomplete communication (e.g. Weick, 1991) is conceptually similar to

the organizational subculture literature. Other research, however, focuses on "normal ambiguity" (Meyerson, 1991) which is actually part of the culture. Understood as "fragmentation" or individual differences in interpretation, the focus remains on difference between. Organizational ambiguity can also be understood, however, as simultaneously active multiple meanings. This begins to articulate a notion of difference within organizational culture.

Organizational Culture with Difference Within

The overview in Chapter One briefly glossed the specific manifestations of difference within organizational culture which are investigated in this research. Building on the foregoing discussion of organizational culture, this section provides further description. Each of the research questions summarized here is developed further in its own chapter in Part Three or Part Four.

Chapter Six develops a form of difference within stemming from discursive specificity. It investigates bipolar oppositions which make up part of the discursive regularities of organization members. As these oppositions occur in the members' talk, each functions in a particular context. Combining the oppositions into a general system, however, produces anomalies. Specific discourse objects occur sometimes on one side, sometimes on another. This indicates of form of difference within because discourse

objects bear multiple relations to one another within the discourse of the same group.

Chapter Seven develops a more subtle form of difference within stemming from words which are used in different contexts. The mere fact that the same word can have more than one meaning does not imply difference within. The use of such words, however, often activates both meanings simultaneously with one meaning intended and the other actively suppressed. The impact which this suppression has on the discourse constitutes a form of difference within. This form is investigated in terms of connotation³.

Chapter Eight develops a form of difference within involving shared meanings. Where different perspectives exist in an organization, there is usually some shared ground they have in common. The differences, however, will reflect differently in this common ground. This introduces another way in which difference exists within a system of shared meaning without fracturing it. This form of difference within is investigated in terms of doxa, the content shared by two opposed viewpoints.

These three chapters constitute Part Three. Each of the three forms of difference within investigated in Part

³The terms for multiple meanings within a system and multiple meanings dragged across contexts are 'polysemy' and 'heteroglossia.' I have avoided these terms in the text because they do more to hinder than to aid the effective communication of the concepts to those unfamiliar with the terms. This comes at the cost of a somewhat imprecise use of 'connotation' (Lyons, 1993).

Three constitute a special case of difference within stemming from a common process we can refer to as dissemination. This suggests that the simple correspondence between a communicative action and its meaning within a symbolic system may not hold up to the material iterability of the communicative action, which, unlike an ideal meaning, is never strictly repeatable (Derrida, 1988).

The specificity chapter involves the compromising of such correspondence by different bipolar oppositions. The Connotation chapter involves the similar effect of different discursive contexts. The Doxa chapter involves the effect of divergent perspectives. Each injects difference into the meaning of a communicative action.

Part Four discusses forms of difference within which are not special cases of dissemination. Chapter Nine develops a form of difference within produced by the constructions used by speakers. Similar discourse objects can be constructed differently depending upon the rhetorical aspects of the communication being made. Along with their insights, constructions employed within discourse may bring with them blind spots, suppressing other possible insights.

Chapter Ten develops a form of difference within stemming from the reference to people in discourse. In some cases people are represented in a fixed and determinate way. Other times, they are represented in an open and indeterminate way. When the same person, or people, are

represented both ways it introduces a form a incongruity into the representation which constitutes a form of difference within. This is investigated under the rubric of textualization.

These processes of difference within have implications for our provisional definition of organizational culture. In Chapter Two we defined organizational culture as meanings (including those currently thought, once thought but now tacit, and never thought) stemming from the order of organizational discourse, and expressed through communicative action which feeds back into and reproduces that discourse. In the present chapter, we have expanded our understanding of organizational discourse and its capacity for difference within.

Difference within the organizational discourse becomes difference within organizational culture when the organizational archive, now understood as having and thereby reproducing difference, is drawn upon in the communicative actions of the organization's members. The psycho-social press of each communicative action as it is experienced by organization members may exert force in more than one direction, simultaneously evoking different contexts, connotations and stances. As a result the subjective experience of organization members within a culture which is not unitary will not be that of a unitary subject, but of a subjectivity fraught with internal tensions and differences

(Hollway, 1989).

With this in mind, we can summarize the research questions addressed in this report in terms of the following hypotheses.

1. The simple correspondence between a communicative action and its meaning (within a symbolic system) does not hold up to the material iterability of the communicative action, which, unlike an ideal meaning, is never strictly repeatable.
 - 1a. Specificity of discourse to particular domains introduces discursive practices which do not form a "consistent" whole when abstracted over domains.
 - 1b. Words, phrases and other communicative actions take on multiple accents, simultaneously carrying connotations from multiple contexts, when they are used in more than one context.
 - 1c. Aspects of an organization's discourse shared by the discourses of two subgroups take on simultaneous meanings related to the discourses of the two subgroups, particularly where those shared aspects are focus points in the power relations between the two groups.
2. Along with their insights, constructions employed within discourse bring with them blind spots, suppressing other possible insights.
3. The representation of subjects in a discourse introduces tensions between finalized characterizations and the characterization of unfinalizability.

Although I have followed disciplinary conventions in articulating the research questions as hypotheses, this should not be taken to mean that each question has a yes-or-no answer. The analyses which follow begin by articulating evidence in the data for each form of difference within. The primary contribution of the analyses, however, is the elaboration of how they occur. Each analysis forced a

substantial rethinking of the corresponding hypothesis.

The forgoing discussion outlines the scope of the research reported here. Having laid out the theoretical groundwork and the specific research questions, Part Two addresses issues of method.

PART TWO: METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

CHAPTER FOUR

PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON METHOD

I have included this rather nontraditional chapter for a reason. While Chapter Three indicated a general approach, there remain some issues of method which warrant comment. Rather than burden the description of the research design with lengthy intermittent digressions, I have collected these comments here.

I will comment on seven such issues: the relation between language and context, sincerity in asking, systemization, the effects of specificity of method, blindness and falsity, blindness and truth, and analysis and correction.

Language in Context and

Context in Language

The study of language in context is a central theme of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis, with which the current project is closely tied. In "Signature, Event, Context", Derrida (1988) criticizes the concept of a "total context" developed by Austin (esp. p. 2-3, 8-10). Too briefly, his argument is that the context can never be wholly determined because the word (sign) "carries with it" the force of iterability and difference which in the moment it is inscribed in its context breaks with that context, thus marking the "theoretical inadequacy of the current

concept of context... as it is accepted in numerous domains of research" (p. 3).

Derrida's argument engages the concept of context on the border between context and non-context -- the relevant and irrelevant. In this it is successful. Derrida's exposition, however, overlooks another boundary which lies even closer to the heart of research which seeks to use the concept of context: that between the context and the object of study to which the context is said to belong.

In the mere act of naming this boundary, we already see problems. We begin with an object of study. We then seek to define its context, so that this can be taken into account in the research. In so doing, we expand the object of study to include the context. This can lead to an infinite expansion in which, as each "context" becomes included as part of the object of study, it requires a broader context to be taken into account.

To avoid this disruptive snowballing effect, the original object of study has to remain privileged over its immediate context. As such, that context has to maintain an ambiguous status as both object of study and not object of study. Specifically, the study of language in context demands that the context be added to the object of study, yet that addition can never be completed lest it become part of an expanded object of study requiring that its own context be taken into account. Instead, that addition must

be held in suspension throughout the analysis, allowing the analyst to have reference to a to-be-added but not-yet-added context.

This might lead us to begin to question the relationship of alterity between the linguistic event and its context. We speak of the communicative action as being in its context, but not part of it. What is it that privileges the communicative action over its context in this distinction? It is this treatment of the communicative action as a self-enclosed unit which allows for a simple separation between communicative action as object of study and communicative action as context.

If we are not to cut ourselves off from understanding language in context, we must be open to the context in language. That is, the communicative action under study would not be a communicative action without its capacity to be context. As such, the context, or the process of contextualization, is already in the communicative action before we consider its context. This is the case both in the sense of being context and being contextualized. By analyzing difference within the communicative action (as a signifying act), the present research is also addressing the issue of context in language.

Sincerity and Analysis:

Asking Questions

Under most circumstances, if I ask you a question there is a presumption that I am in fact interested in the answer. As analysis moves further away from the content of the response (as in poll taking) to the form of the response (as in this research, and discourse analysis in general), there is an increasing tension placed upon this presumption. In the extreme case, where the analysis focuses upon meaning not present in the text of the response, the sincerity of the question is clearly strained.

Bakhtin's (1981) discussion of content and form is of some assistance here. Bakhtin can be understood as arguing that while form and content lie at opposite poles of a text, they cannot be separated. Form operates through content, and content through form. de Man's (1989) reading can be taken as a demonstration that Bakhtin cannot be understood otherwise.

As such, while the research aims of the study are to address a particular structure in organizational discourse and organizational culture, namely that of difference within, this can only be accomplished through an analysis of content. At least, the analysis of form must be informed by a careful attention to content. Hence, the extreme focus on form can be understood as not a devaluation of content, but as reinforcing its importance.

Difference Within and Systemization

When we speak of theory we generally have in mind a sort of blueprint which outlines the basic nature of what we are theorizing and can be applied to different instances of it across space and time. Theory has a tendency to systemize things in a neat and tidy way. In this, we see the effects of the logical-mathematical heritage of scientific theory (Hindess, 1977).

This tendency toward systemization is at work in structural linguistics and formalist criticism in their parallel attempts to discover underlying universal structures in language. It is also at work in discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and pragmatics (these are not distinct) where they attempt to outline structures underlying various forms of interaction. It is no less at work in the theory of dissemination if Derrida (1981, 1988) is understood as outlining the structure of a general process by which signifiers escape systems of meaning (but see Rorty, 1992 on the "if").

This raises problems concerning the theorization and scientific study of difference within. The various forms of difference within reviewed in Part One function, in different ways, to resist systemization. We might wonder how successful any attempt to study an inherently anti-systemic phenomenon through systematizing means can be. In the absence of any clear-cut approach to dealing with

this problem, we can only remain mindful of it as we proceed.

Blindness, Insight and Research Methods

Chapter Nine, will discuss the play of blindness and insight in the constructions employed in discourse. This discussion applies no less to scientific discourse (Anonymous, 1991⁴). As such, we can anticipate that the insights achieved by any research effort will be matched by related blind spots.

More concretely, the particular conceptualization of a research topic employed, as well as the specific research methods brought to bear, will simultaneously open the way to some insights and block the way to others. Different approaches will make available, and correspondingly conceal, different truths about the object of study. We have identified the many insights which the methods brought to bear on organizational culture have made available. We have also identified difference within as something to which those approaches were blinded. In constructing an approach to investigate difference within organizational culture, we have no doubt blinded ourselves to other aspects of organizational culture.

⁴The "anonymous" authors are Marta B. Calas and Linda Smircich. I have retained the "masquerade" of feigned anonymity in citations and reference out of deference to the authors' wish that the article be published that way.

This might suggest that abstracting across specific approaches we will be able to construct a meta-narrative which holds access to all aspects of organizational culture. On the contrary, quite the opposite might be true. It is precisely the particular approaches to organizational culture, in all their methodological and theoretical specificity, which allows us access to what we know about organizational culture. By abstracting away from that specificity we may simply be closing off our access to those insights.

Blindness and Falsity

The application of the logic of blindness and insight to scientific knowledge raises an important issue. It might appear to suggest that we can never be wrong. That is, all cases of what would normally be understood as falsity could be reinterpreted as blindness of a certain sort. In this section, I will develop this issue more formally, and argue that it is in fact a misconception.

Statements about what we believe to be the case are referred to as propositional attitudes. We are here concerned largely with a special subclass of propositional attitudes which assert that something is the case for all members of a certain set. Russell (1905/1991) has shown that these can be understood in the general form 'For all things, if this can be said of something, then that can also be said of it'. As such, if we express a propositional

attitude about so-and-so, we are not just making a statement about so-and-so but about all things such that if they are so-and-so then it is also the case that they satisfy some other condition.

Working within this framework, we can distinguish true statements from false ones. A true statement is one such that all possible discourse objects satisfy the second condition if they satisfy the first condition. A false statement is one such that there is at least one case of a discourse object which satisfies the first condition and not the second. For our purposes, the important point to draw from this is that falsity is not the mere absence of truth. Truth and falsity are two relations which can obtain between a statement expressing a propositional attitude and a state of affairs.

As such, truth and falsity operate similarly within a given propositional framework. Such a framework, however, assumes an already agreed upon set of categories for articulating the classes of discourse objects involved in the propositions. Blindness, as discussed here, bears a relation to truth of an entirely different type. Blindness is part of the construction of that set of categories required to define a given order of truth and falsity. Blindness is part of the process of specification which allows us to construct a given propositional framework within which truth and falsity can operate.

We can now contrast blindness and falsity by their differential relation to truth. As we have seen, falsity is contrary to truth. Truth and falsity define an exhaustive and mutually exclusive set of relations which can obtain between a statement and a state of affairs within an agreed upon categorical framework. As such, falsity negates truth. Blindness, on the other hand, is a necessary condition of both truth and falsity. As such, blindness facilitates both truth and falsity.

The forgoing suggests that assessing the truth or falsity of a statement is in fact a very complex affair. The same statement may very well be true within one categorical framework, and false in another. This being the case, we have to restrict our judgments of truth and falsity to specific categorical frameworks, or classes of categorical frameworks. Nevertheless, in no way does the relativity of falsity to specific categorical frameworks negate falsity. Far from undermining falsity, we have seen that blindness is a condition of its existence.

Blindness and Truth

It should be clear that comments similar to those made pertaining to the relationship between blindness and falsity also apply to blindness and truth. It may be helpful to render two additional points explicit. First, we have said that blindness is a condition for the existence of truth. This should in no way be taken to suggest that it is a

sufficient condition. The argument that blindness also underlies falsity indicates that.

Second, the notion of truth conditional upon discursive formations warrants some comment. The classical attempt to understand truth as prior to the language in which it is expressed is based upon a monologic worldview with its roots in the theological desire to read the word of God from nature (Derrida, 1981). As a result, truth claims have often produced totalizing moments which seek to enforce a certain symbolic order with all of its effects. In response to this, the critique of such totalizing "regimes of truth" has often taken on the tone of a critique of truth itself.

Reading post-modern criticism of modern notions of truth as arguing against the idea of truth has certain advantages. It allows authors such as Derrida and Foucault to be fit into the familiar categories of relativist and nihilist (e.g. Bloom, 1987; Rosenau, 1992). Such a reading is difficult to reconcile, however, with comments such as Foucault's (1972/1971) assertion that

Ideology is not exclusive of scientificity. Few discourses have given so much place to ideology as clinical discourse or that of political economy: this is not sufficiently good reason to treat the totality of their statements as being undermined by error, contradiction, and a lack of objectivity (p. 186).

Derrida's (1988) comments distancing a "'deconstructive' way of thinking" from "relativism, with everything that is sometimes associated with it (skepticism, empiricism, even nihilism)" (p. 137) are also difficult to assimilate to such a reading. Passages such as these suggest that post-modernism cannot be adequately read into familiar modern categories.

The notion of truth deployed in this project is reflective of a broader desire to develop a post-modern sense of truth. That is, to develop a notion of truth which is non-foundationalist and moves beyond monologic, logocentric notions of truth. Further development of this program, however, is beyond the scope of the current project.

Analysis and Correction

In Part One, we had relatively little difficulty blending research from a variety of disciplines. While there tends to be relatively little resistance to transporting theory across disciplinary boundaries, this is not the case with methods of analysis. Method seems to touch on entrenched disciplinary commitments, as if disciplines were anchored less to content area than to the specific methods of analysis they employ.

This is, perhaps, not too surprising if one considers that method is somewhat more entrenched in the distinctive social practices which support any scientific community.

Graduate students learn to ask methodological questions from methods books in much the same way actors learn their lines from play books. The role playing is simply more subtle.

Correctability conventions play an important part in these social practices because they support the dissemination of research findings through research reports. The reader's confidence that errors of analysis are subject to mechanisms of correction is central to the author-reader relationship in a research report. This confidence is generally provided by the reader's previous experience with similar methods of analysis.

This poses an interesting problem for reports of interdisciplinary research. Some readers have experienced a dis-confirming statistical test of significance. Others have heard informants give accounts which run counter to what might have been anticipated. Others have stared into a conversation transcript which does not support their expectations. Others have wrestled with aspects of a text which resist a particular interpretation. Relatively few readers, however, have had all of these experiences.

I have tried to address this difficulty in two ways. First, I have included more data than would otherwise be necessary in the text of the report. This affords the reader the opportunity to evaluate my analyses with respect to the data as they proceed, and to take issue accordingly. It also provides the reader footing for a critical stance,

because I do not claim any privilege in my relation to the data over that of the reader. Finally, a reader so inclined may even cross-check various analyses against data provided in other chapters.

Second, while few readers can be expected to draw confidence from correction conventions prevalent in other disciplines, there are certain conventions which are shared across disciplines. Research reports generally take the form of arguments subject to some form of internal logical consistency. These may be somewhat enigmatic to the uninitiated, as with dialectics, deconstruction, or even statistical inference, but they are there. So long as he or she understands the argument, the reader should feel confident in his or her ability to evaluate it.

Similarly, all disciplines which have reporting practices share a form of correction which derives from them. Feedback from readers, both before and after publication, play an important role in analysis and correction. This can be recognized by readers of various disciplines.

Ultimately, however, no amount of methodology or disciplinary social practices can determine the validity of any research report's argument. Both the author and the reader face an unforced choice. Each is responsible for his or her own decision, and no formality can remove that personal responsibility.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA COLLECTION

The research questions discussed in Chapter Three are addressed by analyzing samples of organizational discourse. This chapter outlines how the data were collected. Briefly, intact work groups were interviewed. A structured interview schedule was used in separate interviews with supervisors and with subordinates. This discourse was audio-tape recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Structured Interview

A common interview schedule (Kerlinger, 1986) was used for both supervisor interviews and subordinate focus groups for all work groups included in the study. Prompts were designed to elicit talk relevant to the research. This can be seen as a form of theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). In practice it is the same as an experimental psychologist eliciting relevant behavior, or an ethnographer or survey researcher asking relevant questions.

In general, the interview schedule consists of two major sections. The first section uses a critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954). The second section uses a series of standardized topic prompts.

Critical Incidents

The critical incident technique is a data collection strategy conducive to questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups, which is designed to elicit accounts of specific

events bearing on a specific research objective. As used here, the purpose was to elicit accounts of events of a common type, but unique to the site in their details. The technique does not, however, "consist of a single rigid set of rules governing such data collection. Rather, it should be thought of as a flexible set of principles which must be modified and adapted to meet the specific situation at hand" (Flanagan, 1954, p. 335). As such, the form it takes here differs from its use elsewhere, particularly in performance appraisal.

The emphasis here is on 'incident', and not 'critical.' Research participants were asked to focus on one particular incident in order to render their discussion concrete. This was generally either the most recent incident, or one selected by the participants to illustrate a point.

The first critical incident asks about coordination with other units, offices, or groups in the organization. The second asks about the most important task performed by the work group. Both of these are followed by a scripted probe asking if others see it differently. These were designed to elicit data containing different and identifiable voices.

Common Topic Prompts.

The second half of the interview involved prompts on standardized topics. The first three common topic prompts were designed to be used in every interview, a fourth was

intended to be used only if there was time. In fact, all of the interviews and focus groups included all of the prompts. The response to the final prompt was lost for the Site 1 focus group, however, due to equipment failure (Appendix A).

The first prompt asks about the typical relationship between the supervisor and subordinates. The second prompt asks about the relationship between the work group and the total organization. The third prompt asks about the relationship between a new hire and the work group as a whole. The final prompt is a standard interview prompt related to organizational culture which asks "how do things get done around here?" (Bower, 1966). Each of these was followed by a scripted prompt asking "Can you give me an example?" Together, these four prompts constitute the second half of the interview. The complete interview schedule is given in Appendix B.

The first three of these were designed to elicit talk situated in contrasting contexts of inclusion and exclusion. As it turned out, this strategy was unnecessary because participants frequently shifted between such contexts without prompting. The final prompt was included as a time buffer which could provide useful data, but could also be dropped without cost.

Procedure

For each work group participating in the study, one supervisor interview and one subordinate focus group was

carried out. These were each done separately.

This separation was complete at most sites. It was slightly less complete at Site Three. Due to the physical layout of the workplace, there were no private offices or separate rooms. Instead, spaces were separated by dividers. In the case of the supervisor interview, subordinates were only a single divider away. The supervisor made some references to this during the interview, but generally appeared uninhibited. She simply lowered her voice when discussing specific individuals. The focus group was held at a greater separation. There was no indication that the participants were concerned about being overheard.

It was not necessary for subordinates and supervisors from the same work group to discuss the same critical incidents because each reported their own views and divergent views. The divergent views need not even have been those of other work group members. In fact, they usually were not.

Both the structured interviews and focus groups followed the same format. There were no fixed time frames for the prompts. The interviews were scheduled to last one hour. Most were less, only the Site Four focus group ran over an hour. Before the interview began and the recorder was turned on, permission to be taped was confirmed at all sites.

As suggested by Flanagan (1954), the interviews began with a brief explanation of the anonymity of the data and the purpose of the study. This did not include mention of the research questions, but only a basic statement of interest in how people talk about their work. When this was completed, the tape recorder was turned on and the interview began to follow the structured interview schedule.

The first question on the interview schedule is a throw-away prompt designed to give the interviewees time to acclimate to the presence of the tape recorder. In practice, this prompt proved useful because it allowed me to orient myself to the interviewee's work situation and tailor the remaining items as appropriate. As indicated on the schedule, probes were then improvised as needed. Generally, additional probes were not needed. The interviews then proceeded as described above.

At the end of the interview, the tape recorder was turned off, and the participants were thanked for their participation. They were also offered the opportunity to receive a brief feedback report about the research by supplying their name and address. All the work groups accepted this offer.

Sample

In total, approximately two hours of material was recorded for each work group. In line with Stubbs' (1983) estimate, this yielded approximately 60 pages of transcript

for each work group. The average length was 62.2 pages with a maximum of 89 and a minimum of 42. Interviews produced slightly more text (mean of 67.3) and focus groups slightly less (mean of 57.0). This yielded a total sample of 373 pages of transcript.

The interview schedule contained seven prompts. A response, defined as the talk occurring between two prompts, is the largest unit of analysis. Each interview and each focus group produced seven responses except the Site 1 focus group which produced six. This yields 41 responses in the total sample.

Sites

The research sites constitute a diversity sample (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). Work groups were selected to be different in terms of organizational setting and composition.

In addition to diversity, selection of work groups was subject to additional constraints. First, the selected groups were intact work groups, individuals who had been working together for some time and had had time to participate in common discourses associated with the work situation. Second, the work groups all had to have a hierarchical structure with at least one person in a clearly superordinate position. This was necessary for reasons which will be clear as the data analysis is discussed in further detail. Third, each work group has four or more

subordinates. Groups of this size were sought out so that focus group data would be minimally dependent upon individual idiosyncrasies. Also, the work group's work had to require interaction among group members. Finally, individuals had to be willing to participate in the research, including being audio-tape recorded.

Within these boundaries, data were collected at four sites. Site One was a student testing office at a medium sized public sector academic institution. Site Two was a research group at a private hospital. Site Three was a project group at a small private sector data processing consulting firm. Site Four was a software development group in a large corporation. Site Two had to be discarded due to an equipment failure (Appendix A) and Sites One, Three and Four were retained for analysis. The result was a sample of work groups which were diverse in terms of organization size (one large corporation, one mid-sized bureaucracy and one small business) and economic sector (one public sector, two types of private sector). The groups are less diverse, however, in terms of organizational level (primarily line workers) and task (Sites Three and Four were doing two types of computer programming, Sites One and Three were involved in two types of data processing).

Transcription

Transcription focuses on only the words spoken. Phonetic characteristics of the speech are not transcribed.

Table one outlines the transcription conventions adopted for this research.

TABLE 1

Transcription Conventions

1. Interviewees are identified in order of participation by capital letters from the beginning of the alphabet.
2. The interviewer is identified by a capital I.
3. Appropriate terms are used to indicate the form of the name. For example an occurrence of 'Keith' would have been replaced with '[first name I]' had it occurred.
4. People with a known direct relation to interviewees are identified by that relation (e.g. supervisor).
5. Other people are identified by capital letters from end of the alphabet in order of mention. Where this exceeds 17 (the number of letters following I), double letters from the end of the alphabet are used in order of mention after the initial 17.
6. The company for which the interviewees work is simply identified as company in the phrase 'name of company'.
7. Companies of a known direct relation to the interviewees are identified by that relation.

8. Other companies are identified by number.
9. Names of products and places are transcribed literally for purposes of analysis, but are replaced by numbers in all passages reported in the text.
10. Pauses which involve a topic termination are identified by '...'.
11. Pauses which do not involve topic termination are identified by a comma ', '.
12. Otherwise, punctuation is inferred from meaning, and is arguably arbitrary given that it is not pronounced.
13. Descriptions of speech or transcriber's comments are in square brackets, '[]'.
14. Words about which the transcriber is uncertain are followed by a question mark within square brackets, '[word?]'.
Unidentified words are indicated by a question mark within square brackets without a preceding word, '[?]'. Question marks within square brackets do not indicate query.
15. Descriptions of sounds, including laughter, are in parenthesis, '()'.
16. If two turns overlap and the first speaker finishes first, the first speaker's turn is

transcribed in whole followed by the second speaker.

17. If two turns overlap and the second speaker finishes first, the first speaker's utterance is divided at the point of interruption and the second speaker's turn is inserted in between.
18. Similar conventions apply to multiple interruptions.

The transcription process laid bare the extent to which transcription is in fact a form of translation. Spoken and written English follow different grammars and somewhat different lexicons. Utterances such as 'Uhm' and 'Mmm' are given standardized spellings. Similarly, spoken grammatical conventions, such as the contraction of 'of' and 'to' into a trailing 'a', were transcribed into written equivalents such as 'gonna', 'sorta' and 'kinda.' Choices of punctuation were made in such a way as to best reflect the spoken form.

On one occasion, the Site One focus group, one individual spoke in a language other than English. Foreign language utterances were both transcribed verbatim and translated into English. The translations are enclosed in square brackets as transcriber's comments.

Individuals, work groups and organizations are kept anonymous. Names of people and companies are not retained in the transcriptions. Additionally, proper names of places

and products are omitted from all passages reproduced in this document. Transcripts are identified only by the number corresponding to the work group, and as either an interview or focus group.

Transcription was done in four passes. During a first pass, audio data were transcribed as accurately as possible into a word processor. During the second pass, the transcription was checked for errors while the audio tape was played a second time. The third pass was an anonymity check. In the final pass, a spell checking program was used to catch misspellings, variant spellings, or deviations from the transcription conventions.

Overview of Data Analysis

The remaining chapters present the analysis of the transcripts from the interviews and focus groups. Each chapter is devoted to a different form of difference within organizational culture. The chapters in Part Three analyze forms related to iterability. The remaining forms are analyzed in Part Four.

I have attempted to distribute the analyses across as wide a selection of the data as possible. This is done to give the reader exposure to a broad sampling of the interview transcripts, and to allow the discussion to draw from a diverse range of data. Given that the numbers assigned to the sites and to the chapters are of no significance, the reader should not lose any sleep over the

relation between the two. Aside from, say, the missing data in the Site 1 focus group, the choice of data is essentially arbitrary.

Each analysis uses a quantity of data appropriate to its needs. Analyses which allow for a degree of abstraction or summarization use larger portions of data. Other analyses work with smaller portions of data in a more detailed manner. In each analysis, the data used is adequate to address the corresponding research question.

Each chapter begins with the theoretical basis for a form of difference within organizational culture. This is generally followed by a section outlining the analytic approach used in that chapter. Following this, the analyses are reported and the findings are discussed.

PART THREE: DIFFERENCE WITHIN AND DISSEMINATION

CHAPTER SIX

SPECIFICITY

The three chapters which make up Part Three address forms of difference within organizational culture which are special cases of dissemination. Discussion of this general phenomenon provides an overview of Part Three.

Repeating the Unrepeatable

If we were to understand organizational culture as a closed system of meaning, we would understand each meaning as a fixed correspondence between a signifier and what it signifies. Each use of a particular communicative action would constitute a token of a particular type, a specific case of a signifier. Furthermore, because the correspondence between signifier and signified is fixed by its meaning, all tokens of a given type would be interchangeable.

Given this understanding, communicative actions would be perfectly repeatable. Because all tokens would be interchangeable, it would be possible to make an exact repetition of the identical communicative action. In fact, such repetitions would be commonplace in an organization with a given culture. There is reason, however, to question the possibility of such repetition.

Consider the example of an employee taking too long to stop socializing in the hall with a colleague of equal

status while a companion, also of equal status, holds the elevator. The employee in the elevator protests "c'mon", then a few moments later "c'mon", then again "c'mon." The identical communicative action is repeated three times (assume for the sake of argument that there is not variation in inflection). Yet, the position of each iteration in the series ensures that it is indeed not the same communicative action.

Each successive 'c'mon' carries with it the weight of the previous ones. The second utterance is not just an utterance of 'c'mon' like any other, but a repetition of the utterance referring back to the first utterance, and therefore different from the first utterance. This phenomenon has been studied under the rubric of iterability or dissemination (Derrida, 1972/1981, 1988).

More generally, the repeated use of any communicative action, any drawing upon the organizational archive, takes the form of a quotation (Derrida, 1988). The repeated use of a communicative action, then, cannot be understood as the communication of a selfsame meaning through a selfsame signifier on more than one occasion. Instead, we have to recognize the materiality of the signifier as it accumulates meaning, and shifts in meaning, through successive usage (Bakhtin, 1963/1984a; Derrida, 1988). The meaning of a given communicative action is not a fixed ideality, but a shifting trace through discourse (Derrida, 1972/1981, 1991).

We can subsume the three types of difference within addressed under the specificity, connotation, and doxa hypotheses into a general dissemination hypothesis. The differences within a meaning system stemming from distinct spheres of application can be understood as a spacing between the signifier and signified which is dependent upon one's location within the meaning system. As such, the specificity hypothesis addresses dissemination across micro-discourses within a broader organizational archive which supports a common culture.

The connotation hypothesis is also related to the spacing between signifier and signified produced by separate spheres of discourse. This form of difference within can be understood as an effect of spacing as meanings migrate across spheres, adhering to signifiers. This is a further form of dissemination which goes beyond the separation of spheres, to investigate their interaction.

Differences within shared meanings reflecting differences between unshared meanings of two or more groups can also be understood as a form a spacing between the signifier and signified. In this case, dissemination of meaning occurs within a shared signifier as a result of other unshared meanings which surround its use. This form of dissemination is addressed under the doxa hypothesis.

The Separation of Spheres

Bourdieu (1972/1977) develops a theory of practice based upon the concept of the habitus. He describes the habitus as a contextually specific set of individual dispositions which are simultaneously "structuring structures" and "structured structures" (1972/1977, 1979/1984). That is, while an individual's actions are "structured" by the habitus, it is also "structured" by the actions of individuals. Further, the habitus is shared by individuals facing similar problems together. Therefore, one individual's actions, while structured by a shared habitus, also structure a habitus shared by others.

This is the same relationship of mutual constitution we outlined in Chapter Two between an organization's discourse and its members. Bourdieu goes on to describe each individual's dispositions as variations on a common theme. The combination of the structuring of the habitus by potentially deviant structured improvisations and the variation in dispositions between individuals opens the way to difference within the habitus.

Bourdieu goes further, however, in showing that aspects of the habitus which address specific activities or problems are not necessarily consistent with other aspects. Because these aspects are situation specific, they do not necessarily lead to inconsistencies in practice, but only in the attempt to construct a consistent description of the

habitus as a total system. Bourdieu criticizes those who point to such cross-situation inconsistencies as contradictions as perpetrating a logical fallacy of the "confusion of spheres." Situationally specific dispositions belong to different spheres.

This leads to a form of difference within which we have discussed as the specificity hypothesis. We can now develop this hypothesis in more detail. First, it is important to distinguish the intended phenomenon from the more general phenomenon of multiple meanings. If it were simply a matter of the meaning of terms being indexed to different spheres, the phenomenon would not be a form of difference within. By indexing signifiers by sphere, one could still produce a set of fixed correspondences with signifieds which adequately described the system of meaning.

The specificity hypothesis, however, suggests that it is not simply the case that words mark different signifiers depending upon the sphere. We can articulate this by referring back to Chapter Four in which a word's meaning was described as having four aspects: referential, performative, poetic, and citational. In the phenomenon we are describing, the referential aspect of a word's meaning remains the same across spheres. In Bourdieu's (1972/1977) example, the Kabyle word for ladle always refers to the same set of objects. Part of the performative aspect of the word's meaning, however, does vary by sphere. To refer to

the ladle is to position it as masculine in one sphere and as feminine in another.

As such, it is not simply a matter of indexing a word's various meanings as separate signifiers. Rather, the same signifier holds simultaneous but separate meanings within the citational context of the shared discursive archive. At one and the same time, these meanings are separated by sphere and linked by their shared signifier and referent. In this way, the phenomenon constitutes difference within organizational culture.

This chapter addresses the question: Is there evidence in our data that the specificity of discourse to particular domains introduces discursive practices which do not form a consistent whole when abstracted over domains? To this end, it employs a formalized approach to the kind of oppositional analysis developed by Bourdieu (1972/1977) in his analysis of the habitus, but traceable at least back to Levi-Strauss (e.g. 1969). When the text is analyzed in this way, specificity is indicated by anomalies between oppositions from different parts of the text.

Responses to the standardized prompts are analyzed in this section. The Site 3 focus group data was selected for use in these analyses. Focus group data was selected because it contains several speakers, and therefore provides more direct evidence of shared ways of talking about work. Rather than simply starting with Site 1, the next site was

selected instead because it contains complete data for the standardized prompts. The site 1 data are incomplete.

The next section shows that the phenomenon under study occurs in an example taken from the data. The following section provides further analysis of how the phenomenon occurs. A final section summarizes the findings.

Anomalies in the Data

This section traces an anomaly involving the relation of the supervisor to the work group in some detail, and briefly summarizes others. The example given detailed discussion is particularly clear, and readily traced, because it is related to the framing of the prompts. It does not differ in form, however, from other anomalies found in the data, and other unprompted anomalies are discussed in the next section.

Framing of the Prompts

The first three prompts respectively asked the subordinates to relate the work group to the supervisor, to the rest of the organization, and to new hires. For Site 3, the client organization was used for the second of these. This was done because they had no significant interaction with other work groups in the company.

These three prompts were designed to situate the supervisor and the new hires in anomalous positions with respect to the work group. The first prompt placed the supervisor outside. The third placed the new hire outside.

Unit of analysis

Whereas Bourdieu (1972/1977) tends to either analyze words or conflate words with their referents, the emphasis here will be on referents. There are two reasons for this. First, the focus on referents retains the connectedness of words used for the same referent. Second, it allows us to incorporate terms made up of more than one word, such as 'new hire', into our analysis as units when they mark a single concept (Hudson, 1991).

Analytic approach

The analytic approach makes use of three types of units. As developed above, the most basic unit is referents. Dichotomous oppositions are made up of pairs of referents. What Bourdieu (1972/1977) calls "homologous analogies" are made up of aligned dichotomous oppositions. The target phenomenon, anomalies, occur within homologous analogies.

In this case, supervisor/work group is an opposition. The pairing "supervisor : work group :: outside : inside" is an example of a homologous analogy. Combining this analogy with "supervisor : client :: inside : outside" generates an anomaly because 'supervisor' is both inside and outside.

Supervisor: Inside and Out

Working from the above, we can explore how this anomaly actually unfolded in the data. This will render the hypothesis concrete, as well as providing evidence of the

phenomenon. Tracking the positioning of the supervisor in the responses to the prompts in parallel will allow for direct comparison.

Because the anomalies are induced by the prompts, we should begin with the statement of the prompts as they actually occurred in the focus group. Quotations from the transcripts are identified by three pieces of information. The first is the site number. The second is an 'I' for supervisor interviews or an 'FG' for subordinate focus groups. The third is a page number. The first prompt is designed to distinguish the supervisor from the work group:

I: I see. ... Okay, uhm, the other questions I guess are more are more general uh. The first one is is just in general, sort of overall, how would you uhm describe the relationship between you as the the members of the work group and your supervisor, [first name of supervisor], how does that relationship work? (3, FG, 25)

The second two prompts do not distinguish the supervisor from the work group:

I: This is kind of a a unique situation in that, we talked a little bit before about how you don't, with your work, coordinate much with the rest of the company, so I guess this question can have to do with coordinating

with [name of client firm, mispronounced],
and your end users, and those people, just as
much

B: [name of client firm]

I: [name of client firm], okay,

B: Right.

I: okay, uhm, (clears throat) how do you see
this work group in relationship then with the
with the broader context of the people who
you work with uh in terms of getting the
project done? (3, FG, 32)

and,

I: Yeah. I see. Okay. Uhm, the next sort of
general topic I'm interested in is uhm what's
it like when new people come aboard, and uhm,
you know, uh what's it like? (3, FG, 42).

This distinction is not of any importance, however,
unless it is attended to by the participants. Utterances
following the first prompt do not exhibit any indications of
rejecting the formulation. Rather, utterances occur which
echo it by distinguishing the supervisor from the group.

A: She's our supervisor. (3, FG, 25)

B: She does the first thing, but [we?] don't
recognize her [?] (3, FG, 25)

C: you know, we, you know, we tell her what's
going on and we tell her if we're gonna delay

the results. (3, FG, 26)

Each of these utterances follow a form in which a word such as 'she' or 'her' is used to distinguish the supervisor from the work group. The latter is referred to using words like 'we' or 'our' which might otherwise include reference to the supervisor. We can take this as evidence of the "supervisor : work group :: outside : inside" part of the anticipated anomaly.

The following response directly follows the next prompt.

B: I only have rumors, so I, you know, I mean,
[first name of supervisor] always tells me
that a lot of [name of client company] thinks
that we wa- we walk on water. (3, FG, 32)

At this point, the position of the supervisor is ambiguous. The positioning of the supervisor inside the work group, however, is clarified as the response in continued:

B: That uh [first name of company president]'s
people can do anything, okay. [First name of
U] told me something to that effect, you know
that we're not like the other. You know,
that we're considered to be like uh high
powered. (3, FG, 32)

The supervisor is an employee of the company president. She is one of "his people." Here, then, we see the "supervisor : client :: inside : outside" relation in the data.

The 'new hire' prompt is followed by three pages of material which make no reference to the supervisor. The material involves clarifying the question and identifying examples of new hires. Following this initial material, however, the "newest surviving hire" (3, FG, 43) describes the work group in a way which offers evidence of the supervisor's positioning within it.

B: it has unique it has unique characteristics
of the group that make it easier to work
with.

I: Mm hmm.

B: Like uhm uh [first name of supervisor] and I
talk more. Alright. These other four, he
talks a a lot less than I do, but he's more
talkative than these three, alright. (3, FG,
46)

This particular passage does not place B, or anyone else, outside the work group. As such, additional material would have to be cited to fully support the "supervisor : new hire :: inside : outside" relation. However, it is sufficient to indicate the alignment of the supervisor with the inside, even without the outside term clearly marked.

Taken together, the three responses are sufficient to indicate that the supervisor can fall on either the inside or the outside of the work group within the practice of the work group's discursive practices. The anomaly is produced,

however, by crossing between the spheres demarcated by the various prompts. As such, the data are consistent with the hypothesis that discursive practices and the cultural meanings they reproduce exhibit specificity.

The example cannot be fully accounted for without difference within the meaning of 'supervisor' as it functions in the work group's discourse. Words used to refer to the supervisor cannot be said to have two distinct meanings in two distinct contexts. While the textualized "supervisor" may not be identical, the supervisor to which they refer is the same person. Reference to the supervisor without marking the inside/outside context would not be met with "Which supervisor do you mean?" There is only one referent.

At the same time, reference to the supervisor cannot be said to have a single universal meaning within the discursive practices of the work group. Reference to the supervisor as inside is not the same as reference to the supervisor as outside. It occurs in different contexts, and carries a different meaning. It positions the supervisor differently with respect to the work group. The textualized "supervisor" is different.

Rather, these differences are simultaneously active within the general discursive practices of the work group. They can be said to be indexed by context, but the common referent binds them in a way which defies the separateness

of the contexts. This introduces a form of difference within which is multiplied by the many different referents for which it occurs.

Further analysis indicates 22 anomalies involving 11 referents in the complete responses to the four prompts. Of the 376 respondent turns in the data, 128, or 34.0 percent, contained referents involved in one or more of the anomalies. Although there is significant variation between prompts, ranging from 48.0 percent for the second prompt to 21.5 percent for the fourth prompt, the phenomenon is not obscure⁵.

So far we have seen that the phenomenon cannot be explained without reference to difference within, and involves about a third of the conversational turns taken by the work group members. This suggests that a sizable portion of talk in organizations cannot be fully accounted for by a unitary system of meaning. This supports the suspicion that organizational culture cannot be adequately understood in terms of shared meanings of a unitary nature.

How Anomalies Occur

The aim of these analyses is to provide a better

⁵Details are available from the author. Percentages cited represent statistically significant deviations of odds ratios from the mean of the other three prompts. This means that if we assume all observed differences are due to chance, variation between prompts of this size or greater would be observed in less than five percent of all discourse samples. Statistical significance does not indicate the probability that the observed differences were in fact obtained by chance (Falk and Greenbaum, 1995).

understanding of the form the anomalies take in the data, and how they function in the discourse. Toward this end, an extended example is given closer inspection. The example involves the discussion of "users" which occurs following the second prompt. The second prompt relates the work group to the broader organization. As indicated above, this was broadened to include the client organization for the Site 3 work group. The actual presentation of the prompt was cited above.

The work group first responds by describing the clients' view of them as, among other things, "high powered" (3, FG, 32). I then probe "Mm Hmm. H- how do you see them? I mean how does it work in the other direction?" (3, FG, 33). Following this prompt, the respondents introduce a series of oppositions which frame the discussion. This structure lasts until the case of V, one particular user, destabilizes it. This provides a clear example of an anomaly in a relatively short span of talk.

The discussion of the clients' perceptions of the work group is at an abstract level. The clients are referred to by the company name. The "other direction" probe, however, is immediately interpreted in terms of users.

B: Wh- the users?

I: Yeah. (3, FG, 33)

This initiates a work group/user opposition which is followed by a positive evaluation of users as a whole.

Users are admirable, and not a problem.

B: Uhm, I find them, I've never had that much problem with users in my whole life. I I've always usually admired my users

I: Mm hmm.

B: and this is true here. (3, FG, 33)

Following this general statement, B introduces the first of two specific examples.

B: I I I have nothing but respect for [first name of U], she's very thorough, she's one of the technical people we work with a lot. (3, FG, 33)

B describes U as respected, thorough, technical and worked with a lot. This puts several oppositions into place. It is the technical/non-technical opposition, however, which immediately draws comment. Whereas B had introduced U as an example of a general positive regard for users, C deploys the technical/non-technical opposition to limit the example to technical users. As such, this new opposition fractures the second term in the previous work group/user opposition. The shift is met with general agreement.

C: But she's a technical person.

D?: Yeah.

B: Yeah.

C: Okay, what I said before even applies to the, you know, the end users as well.

I: Mm hmm.

C: I mean there are a lot of people who don't understand how things are done,

I: Mm hmm.

C: and sometimes they'll ask for things that seem very similar to them, but they're not.

I: Mm hmm.

C: You know, but I found that for the most part, you know, they'll, you know, they understand what you're talking about and they

I: Mm hmm.

C: they accept it, and then

D: Well, I mean, we're working for a technical group.

B: Right. And, we're so [?]

D: [?] you know, we're not really working for the end users. (3, FG, 33-34)

Through this span of discourse, the technical end of the technical/non-technical opposition is aligned with the positive attributes of users. Technical users "understand" and "accept," as well as taking on the earlier attributes of being respected and admired. End users occupy the non-technical end of the opposition, and are thereby denied these positive attributes.

This discursive order is challenged, however, by the introduction of a second example. V is introduced in the

following turn as an example of an end user. This example destabilizes the technical:end::good:bad structure, however, because V is positively evaluated by the work group. As such, the example of V favors the work group/user opposition which was introduced and rejected earlier, and the generally favorable evaluation of users which it supported.

C: You know [first name of V] is

A: Well, [first name of V] is [really?]

C: more of an end user, but she's very smart in the sense that

A: In the business [?] (3, FG, 34)

At this point, C seems to sense the shift. C makes two attempts to resolve the tension created by the anomaly. Above, he attributes the positive evaluation of V to her being "very smart." Below, he attributes it to her having "a feel for" data processing.

C: I mean, even though she, you know, she's not, she has a feel for [it?], I don't know,

I: Mm hmm.

C: somehow she's [?], she's good, right? I mean she

?: Yeah.

A: Yeah (3, FG, 34)

C signals his uncertainty with "I don't know," but no one comes to his aid. No one takes up the invitation to offer a clarification. Ultimately, C aborts the attempt to

resolve the incongruity by focusing on the positive evaluation of V as a conclusion and a closure.

C: she doesn't say well I want this, I want it now and then forty-two days later I'll change something and, not change the, you know, the date.

I: Mm hmm.

C: Uh, no, I think we have, I think we have a pretty good relationship

B: Yeah.

C: with [the? client?] (3, FG, 35).

In this case, then, we can see both sides of an anomalous referent, V, or end users in general, in contiguous spans of discourse. The passage begins with all users, including end users, receiving a positive evaluation. This is supported by the work group/user opposition. With the introduction of the technical/non-technical opposition, however, end users are on the opposite side from the positive evaluations. The introduction of V as an example brings the anomaly to the surface, leading the work group to grapple with it as explicitly as anywhere in the transcript.

One aspect of this process deserves emphasis. It is not simply a matter of competing interpretations being argued out among the work group members. There appears to be general agreement as the discussion proceeds. Having introduced the work group/user opposition, for instance, B

nevertheless voices one of the 'yeah's in response to C's introduction of the technical/non-technical opposition. The discussion is similarly peppered with 'yeah's throughout.

Rather than argument and counter-argument, the process appears to be one of social cognition (Safferstien, 1992). Counter-examples are introduced as part of a collective process of clarification. As such, they are generally met with agreement rather than resistance. The incongruous oppositions operate as alternative interpretive frames. The discussants pull from these like a carpenter pulls various tools from a tool box. The process of collective cognition unfolds as a combined effort to select the appropriate frame for the interpretation of a particular case (Das and Boje, 1993). This supports the idea that these oppositions, though normally kept separate, reside in a collective unity. In this aspect, practicing a culture is a process of using its oppositions as interpretive frames.

Together with the example given earlier in the chapter, this provides an indication of the form which this type of difference within takes within organizational discourse. Oppositions introduced through various distinctions, or simply through naming, tended to structure subsequent discourse. Anomalous oppositions were generally kept separate, as Bourdieu (1972/1977) suggests. Where spheres are not kept separate, uncertainty was visible in the talk, and the conversation focused on selecting the right

interpretive frame, or sphere.

Chapter Summary

The specificity hypothesis states that discursive practices from specific spheres do not form a consistent whole when abstracted across spheres. Analysis of the Site 3 focus group responses to the four standardized prompts supports this hypothesis. Analyzing the discourse in terms of structuring bipolar oppositions and their relative alignments, cases occur in which referents are differentially positioned with respect to these oppositions. Such anomalies are taken as support for the specificity hypothesis because they cannot be accounted for without reference to difference within.

The dissemination hypothesis is directed at organizational culture understood as a shared system of meanings made up of a unitary set of correspondences between signifiers and signifieds. The results are difficult to reconcile with this understanding of organizational culture. Rather than a closed system of meaning, the results are more consistent with a dynamic process of meaning which is both reproduced and altered through the discursive practices of organization members. Such a process supports the phenomenon of difference within organizational culture. In this case, words used to refer to common referents were seen to operate in a general discourse which allowed for differences in meaning in different spheres of talk.

Where spheres were kept separate, the anomalies do not appear to affect the practice of the culture through the talk. This was generally the case in the data. Further analysis indicates that where spheres are not kept separate, confusion results. Discourse under these circumstances reflected a process of collective cognition in which the group tried to interpret cases in a way which eliminated incongruities.

Analysis of this type of difference within using data from a North American work setting makes an additional contribution to the research literature. The phenomenon appears much more familiar without the exoticism of Kabyle attributions of gender to a ladle (Bourdieu, 1972/1977). This transfer might not appear as significant to a Kabyle, but to English speaking researchers practicing organization studies in industrialized societies it does render the phenomenon more accessible. It is not a far stretch to recognize the processes analyzed in the talk of these data processors as present in other sites, or our own talk for that matter. This sense of familiarity may help undermine the extent to which the alternative hypothesis, that organizational cultures are comprised of consistent symbolic systems, appears self-evident.

The last passage analyzed in this section provided an example of what happens when spheres do not maintain their separateness. In that passage, we saw end users functioning

as a referent in two distinct ways. Each related to a different sphere, or the discursive order generated by a different set of oppositions. This phenomenon goes beyond the specificity hypothesis, and is taken up in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONNOTATION

What Bourdieu (1972/1977) dismisses as the confusion of spheres, Bakhtin (1963/1984a) takes as a fundamental aspect of language systems. Bakhtin (1986) uses the term 'speech genres' to refer to relatively stable forms of talk which develop around specific situations. Left to themselves, such genres might be adequately described by a structural account of language, but they are not left to themselves.

Words in a language are constantly recycled through different speech genres. In different contexts, these words take on different meanings or accents. These different meanings and accents adhere to the words, and carry over into different contexts, or speech genres. Words become "double voiced" (Bakhtin, 1963/1984a).

This introduces another form of difference within organizational culture. Double voiced words and phrases have multiple accents which function simultaneously. Within any given sphere, accents from several spheres in which a word or phrase is used will function at one or more levels. In organizations, the words, phrases, and slogans which serve as media for the transmission of culture become double voiced. This causes the culture itself to become polyvocal, and take on simultaneous internal difference.

The mutual addressivity between the two voices is a form of dialogization. An important distinction is drawn by

Morson and Emerson (1990) between two senses of dialog in Bakhtin's writing. In one sense all words are dialogized in that they occur in discourse. In the more limited sense analyzed here, however, only some words are dialogized.

This section addresses the research question: Is there evidence in our data that words, phrases and other communicative actions take on multiple accents, simultaneously carrying connotations from multiple contexts, when they are used in more than one context? For ease of reference, this has been dubbed the connotation hypothesis. The analyses identify double voiced words in the data⁶.

Analytic Approach

Responses to the first critical incident prompt provide data for these analyses. These responses involve critical incidents describing situations in which the respondents coordinate with other parts of the organization. This prompt includes a scripted probe asking about divergent views among those with whom the respondents coordinate. This was designed to elicit data containing double voiced words.

Having skipped over Site 1 in the previous chapter, that site's responses are used for these analyses. This chapter focuses on the analysis of the Focus Group data.

⁶Reanalysis of data published by Saferstein (1992) and Martin and Siehl (1983) aided in the development of this hypothesis. Although the analyses are not reported here, I wish to acknowledge the contribution.

Unit of Analysis

The units of analysis are words rather than referents. The reason for this is that we are interested in the way the material signifier, and not the signified discourse object, carries meaning from one context of use to another. This analysis of words is interpreted as addressing a phenomenon which can then be generalized to other communicative actions such as phrase use and nonverbal actions which are omitted from this research.

Identification of Double Voicing

Double voicing occurs in the space between two extremes. On the one hand, two completely separate voices do not share enough to exhibit difference within, they represent difference between. On the other hand, two voices in complete agreement merge sufficiently to obscure difference within, reducing it to the mere difference between speakers speaking in a common voice (Bakhtin, 1963/1984a). By beginning with an account of different views, we can follow the discourse sample from the first extreme toward the second, without reaching the second.

The analysis begins by identifying two divergent voices in the response. There is an asymmetry to the responses to the initial prompt and the probe in that one is an account by the respondents of their own views, and one an account of views which are not their own. Nevertheless, responses provide clear articulations of divergent voices.

Once different voices are identified in the data, the analysis continues by identifying specific words which occur in both voices. This makes it possible to identify words used with different meanings in different voices. To provide evidence for double voicing, however, it is necessary to show that two meanings are simultaneously active within a single use of a word.

The text around each usage of a term is scrutinized for effects of each of the two semantic fields in which the term is enmeshed. The connotation hypothesis posits that the presence of the second semantic field will turn every "this" into an implicit or explicit "this (not that)." Occurrence of linguistic markers of both fields indicates that both fields are active. Evidence of two semantic fields operating in the same occurrence of a term is taken as evidence of difference within.

Double Voicing in the Data

The Admissions Office was identified by the focus group as another office which has seen a task differently. Three passages of their response to the first critical incident prompt provide discussions of interaction with the Admissions Office. The first immediately follows the prompt (FG, 1, 2-4). Following some discussion of another office, the second passage follows a probe asking if the process has ever gotten mixed up (FG, 1, 6-7). The final passage directly follows the scripted probe involving seeing the

process differently (FG, 1, 7-10). We can refer to the first two passages as the "group view" text, and the third passage as the "other view" text.

Word Selection

From these three passages, 11 words were selected for analysis. The "group view" passages contain 479 words, 178 of which are unique. The "other view" passage contains 357 words, 136 of which are unique. When the passages are combined, the resulting data contain 242 unique words, 65 of which are common to both the "group view" and the "other view" passages.

The most frequently occurring words are pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, and other indexicals. Due to their extreme abstraction, these words were eliminated from the candidates for analysis. This is because words this abstract carry very little meaning from context to context, partly because they are so ubiquitous that they are not easily tied to particular contexts.

This abstraction issue should be distinguished from the fact that the meanings of the words are dependent upon the context of usage. Bakhtin's (1984a) theory implies that all words share this quality of context dependent meaning. The difference is that some words are simply so abstract that they lack the kind of specific content which can be tied to particular contexts.

Removal of these overly abstract words from the 65

common words leaves 21 words as candidates for analysis. Examination of the text in which these occur indicates an important distinction within the "other view" passage. Only a portion of this passage actually voices the other view (turns 81-101, FG, 1, 8-9). Occurrence in this sub-passage is essential to identifying usage in the other voice. Of the 21 words, 11 occur in this portion of the text. These 11 were selected for analysis.

The words are truncated to eight characters for purposes of computer aided analysis. The words are: admissio(n), departme(nt), get, have, informat(ion), know, need, procedur(e), process, students, and transfer. Variant forms of a word, such as plurals, are analyzed together.

Distinguishing the Voices

As an analytic technique, the following pastiche dialog was constructed out of the "group view" and "other view" passages (Jacques, 1992). This pastiche dialog takes responses out of the contexts in which they actually occurred, and juxtaposes them. This is done to draw out the distinctions between the voices. It also helps to bring out their mutual addressivity.

V1: Testing in- incoming freshmens [involves coordination] because they have to go through with admissions and recruitment, you know, all that goes hand in hand with testing. Without testing, they don't want you without,

we don't want you without.

V2: [But, u]h, I guess the Admissions, they're not really concerned about our uh function. [They are more interested in] getting them into the system, and enrolled for, you know, budget purposes or whatever.

V1: Okay, if a student is coming in from, uh, transferring from another college and they go into admissions, then they'll bring a copy of their transcripts and an official copy of their test scores through admissions who would then send it by either interoffice mail or bring it down, the results, to us. Okay. That process doesn't always work.

V2: [T]hey're not really concerned about getting us the information that we need in order to you know uhm process the students. [W]e have a different procedure for transfer students. I don't, I don't really know the procedure they have there.

The turns attributed to V1 are taken from the "group view" passages (FG, 1, 3-4). The turns attributed to V2 are taken from the "other view" passages (FG, 1, 8-9). The first voice treats the activities of the Recruitment, Admissions, and Testing offices as an integrated system which works "hand in hand." Variances are treated as

exceptions in which the process "doesn't work." This voice takes a systemic college-wide view. Sometimes it speaks for the college: "They don't want you without." Sometimes it speaks as the college: "We don't want you without." Either way, testing is an integral part of getting into the college.

The second voice brings out another view of getting into the college. This view is attributed to Admissions. In this view, testing is peripheral and should not stand in the way of getting as many students enrolled as possible. Admissions is "not really concerned with" the testing function, but just wants to get students "into the system." As presented in this voice, variances are not the exception but the rule: "They're not really concerned about getting us the information." Rather than a college-wide view, this voice speaks of individual offices not necessarily familiar with each other's activities: "I don't really know the procedure they have there."

These two voices can respectively be understood as Testing speaking in its own voice and Testing articulating Admissions' voice. As such, they provide different accents to the words they have in common. With this framework, we can return to the 11 words selected for analysis.

Analysis of Selected Words

The passage of the "their view" text which explicitly deals with Admissions' view will be used to analyze the effects of the two voices on the words to be analyzed. The scripted probe is followed by a laugh and two unrecognizable words from one respondent. The selected passage directly follows these two turns.

The words selected for analysis have been underlined. Parenthesis following the words indicate ordinal sequence of occurrence of the same word. Words occurring in interviewer turns are underlined but not numbered. Turns are numbered in the left column for ease of reference. The term 'Asta' is short for Advanced Standing Transfer Student.

- 1 I: Can you can you tell me about an example?
- 2 A: [???]. Admissions (1) procedures (1). [?]
 uhm with Astas.
- 3 B: yeah.
- 4 A: uhm, we have (1) a different procedure (2)
 for transfer (1) students (1)
- 5 B: for Astas too.
- 6 A: than they have (2).
- 7 B: We have (3) a [?].
- 8 A: I don't, I don't really know (1) the
 procedure (3) they have (4) there [?].
- 9 C: Uh, I guess the Admissions (2), they're not
 really concerned about our uh function. I

- mean uh as far as a
- 10 A: The deadline
- 11 C: Astas to the transfer (2) college.
- 12 A: especially the deadline.
- 13 C: yeah, so uh they're not really concerned
about getting (1) us the information (1) that
we need (1) in order to you know (2) uhm
process (1) the students (2).
- 14 A: process (2) the students (3).
- 15 C: You know (3), for our functions as far as
making up folders you know (4) and uhm uhm
making up placement cards so that they can
have (5) that available for them at
registration.
- 16 I: Mm hmm.
- 17 C: So maybe they need (2) to, you know (5), set
up a point of contact, you know (6), from
their department (1) that'll strictly deal
with us,
- 18 A: [?]
- 19 C: you know (7), so that we can coordinate, you
know (8), our support with them, you know
(9), in conjunction with them.
- 20 I: Mm hmm.
- 21 C: This, that'll be, you know (10), something
something to look into.

- 22 I: They're they're, are they more interested in
getting as many people
- 23 A: Yeah.
- 24 I: as possible and not worried about a deadline?
- 25 C: Getting (2) that [?] and you know (11),
getting (3) them into the system,
- 26 I: Where you need the time, yeah.
- 27 C: and enrolled for, you know (12), budget
purposes or whatever.
- 28 I: Mm hmm. So, uhm, I mean, how do you deal
with that?

Five of the eleven words do not show evidence of double voicing in the data. These are 'have', 'information', 'know', 'students', and 'transfer'. Double voicing of the remaining six words is described below.

Admissions. From its first occurrence in the second turn, the meaning of 'admissions' is under contention. In the Testing voice, 'admissions procedures' are carried out by the Admissions, Recruitment and Testing offices. The capitalization is an artifact of transcription, but in the Admissions voice, admissions procedures are Admissions procedures.

Double voicing is brought out in the fourth turn, where Testing's admissions procedures are distinguished from Admissions' admissions procedures. This double voicing carries through, even in turn 9 where 'Admissions' refers

rather unequivocally to the Admissions office. This is because the very meaning of admission to the college is at stake. So long as the inclusion of testing activities in the admissions process is a point of contention, use of the term admissions in either sense (admission is this) carries with it an implicit suppression of the other sense (admission is not that).

Department. The word 'department' occurs once in the 17th turn. Turns 17 through 21 involve a pausing in the articulation of the Admissions' view wherein the Testing view reasserts itself through a proposal for re-integrating the testing and admissions functions. In this context, we can understand the word 'department' as also carrying these two voices. To the Testing voice, departments are parts of an organic whole which work together in a college-wide system. To the Admissions voice, however, departments are separate entities each pursuing their own objectives. Turn 17 calls upon the first sense of department to counter the second sense as part of an effort to re-assert the system view implicit in the Testing voice. As such, there is again an implicit "not that" in the "this."

Get. The word 'get' occurs four times in the form 'getting.' The first occurrence involves testing information (turn 13). The remaining three involve students (turns 22 and 25), although the second last occurrence is ambiguous. These two uses of 'getting' bear somewhat

different relationships to the dialog between the two voices. With respect to testing information, getting is either a central component of the admission procedure or a case of the Admissions Office doing the Testing Office's job ("they're doing our job," FG, 1, 7). Articulating the Admissions voice, turn 13 asserts the latter over the former ("not really concerned"). At the same time, the Testing voice maintains its view that getting the information is part of "processing the students" within its narration of Admissions' view ("information that we need"). This layering produces an effect of "they say this (not that), but its really that (not this)."

The second use of getting is directly implicated in the contention over exactly what constitutes getting someone into the school. The Testing view holds that testing information is part of that process, whereas the Admissions view contrasts simply getting someone "into the system" with processing the testing information. By articulating the Admissions voice, these uses of 'getting' assert the latter sense over the former. This constitutes addressivity of the Admissions voice toward the Testing voice. The Testing voice, however, only answers in so much as the respondents clearly mark their difference from the Admissions view through the use of the marker "They're."

Need. The word 'need' occurs twice in respondent turns (13 and 17) and once in an interviewer probe (turn 26). As

with the two uses of 'getting,' the occurrences are not directly related and will be analyzed separately. Due to this separateness, and the fact that it occurs last, the occurrence of the word in the probe does not add to the analysis.

Turn 13 was discussed above. The use of the word need is central to the reassertion of the Testing voice following the articulation of the Admissions voice. The Admissions view asserts that the information is not needed by its lack of concern about it. The Testing view makes the explicit counter-assertion that it is needed. This addressivity of the testing voice toward the Admissions voice indicates the double voicing of the word in this occurrence.

Turn 17 also involves the re-assertion of the Testing voice over the Assessment voice. Here it takes the form of a suggestion to aid the re-integration of the admissions and testing functions. Again the word 'need' is central since the Admissions view apparently does not consider such integration necessary. As such, the addressivity takes a similar form as that in turn 13.

Procedure. The plural 'procedures' occurs once in turn 2, and the singular 'procedure' occurs twice in turns 4 and 8. The double semantic of the term 'admissions procedures' in turn 2 was discussed above. The occurrences of 'procedure' in turns 4 and 8 involve the distinction between the procedure which Testing has and the procedure which

Admissions has. This sets in place a relationship with the two dialogized voices which is similar to that found in turn 13.

The Admissions voice asserts itself by distinguishing between Testing and Admissions' procedures. This is in keeping with the fragmentation between offices asserted by the Admissions view. At the same time, the nesting of Testing's procedure and Admissions' procedure under 'admissions procedures' allows the Testing voice to re-assert itself. As such, we again find the Testing voice first articulating the Admissions voice, but then reasserting itself through its narration of the Admissions voice. Once again we see the Testing voice saying "Admissions says this (not that), but really that (not this)."

Process. The word 'process' occurs twice in turns 13 and 14. Both its role in the now familiar turn 13 and its obvious resonance with the word 'procedure' point toward the sort of double voicing we can expect in this word. There is also addressivity with the use of 'getting' in turns 22 and 25. Getting students into the system is a view of processing which excludes testing. We have seen earlier how the Testing voice re-asserts itself in the end of turn 13. The use of 'process' in this re-assertion can be seen to be addressing both the Admissions voice in the beginning of turn 13 and the alternative concept of processing implicit

in the Admissions view. Turn 13 asserts that Testing needs to process students, not just admissions. The use of 'process' in this way asserts that processing is this too (and not just that).

In the forgoing analysis, 11 words were analyzed with respect to two voices found in the segment of data used in the analysis. Of these, six showed evidence of double-voicing and five did not. Given that the frequency of double-voicing is not pertinent to our hypothesis, the results of the analyses support the hypothesis.

The 11 words were selected for analyzability. If we assume that our lamppost sample is statistically independent of the location of the key, however, we can make a rough estimate of the pervasiveness of double voicing⁷. Based upon a binomial distribution, the 95 percent confidence interval around the observed probability of .55 (six out of 11) ranges from .26 to .85. This is consistent with the claim that some but not all words are double voiced.

⁷Seeing a drunk searching under a lamppost, the constable asks what he has lost. Informed that the drunk has lost his key, he asks how he knows he lost it under the lamppost. The Drunk responds that he does not know where he lost the key, but under the lamppost is the only place he will be able to see it if it is there. This is a simple way of saying $P(x)|s = P(x)$ where x is a parameter to be estimated and s is the sampling parameters.

Chapter Summary

The analysis of the focus group data began by selecting the most frequently occurring words which met the criteria for analysis by being both specific and used in both parts of the response to the first critical incident prompt. The analysis proceeded by identifying the voices of the respondent and their chosen other, and elaborating their dialogic relation. Finally, each of the 11 words selected for analysis was related to the two voices, and six of these were shown to be double voiced in the discourse sample.

This analysis provides evidence of the form of difference within posited under the connotation hypothesis. If we were to understand organizational culture as a stable set of shared meanings, words should not be double voiced. Where words have more than one meaning, the intended meaning should be unequivocal for any given use of the word. A word should be a unitary marker for a singular meaning.

Our analyses suggest otherwise. We were able to identify double voiced words in the data. For these words, meaning was bound up in a dynamic process of addressivity between divergent voices. The articulation of an intended meaning was not a simple matter of encoding that meaning in a shared code, but a more complex matter of asserting that meaning and suppressing another in a contested code.

Each double voiced "this" carried an implicit or explicit "not that." As such, two divergent meaning systems

could be seen to be simultaneously active in the discourse. Moreover, these could not simply be separated into two independent systems like two alternative codes. Rather, their addressivity held them in a form of interdependence. Each was constituted in its distinction(s) from the other. As such, the phenomenon is a type of difference within organizational culture.

One can argue that so long as it is possible to distinguish the voices and the meanings associated with them, the totality of meanings can be understood as a single shared system of meaning. This argument depends upon the incorporation of addressivity and double voicing into a singular meaning system. Given that addressivity is a continuously unfolding process, however, it is not clear that such a system could be stable. Rather, it would involve a continual process of self-transformation. In any event, the argument requires a re-conceptualization of shared systems of meaning which is substantially more complex than that found in the current literature. As such, it may be taken as a strategy of assimilating these findings, but not as an objection to them.

We can briefly comment on the effects this type of difference within may have on the subjectivity of organization members. We have seen that organization members have to be aware of and navigate the different perspectives on shared tasks which surround them. To some

extent, this implies a capacity to shift perspectives in looking at a given activity.

More directly, however, the analyses have shown that words used in organizational settings do not always have fixed agreed-upon meanings. Rather, the meanings of at least some words are in flux as points of contention between competing views. This indicates that individual organization members cannot depend upon a stable organizational symbolism to define meaning. Instead, they must forge meaning out of dynamically negotiated tensions between competing forms of signification. The analyses indicate that these competing forms of signification can co-exist and interact within the discourse of individuals and groups in the organization.

As such, difference within organizational culture does not constitute a form of cultural fragmentation (Meyerson, 1991). Using a double voiced word in one or another voice within a culture is not the same as using the same word in a similar way but in an outside context where it does not carry the addressive relationship to another voice. Because of the interdependence of the mutually addressive voices within the organization, the addressivity binds the organization members together, even in their disagreement. They are connected by a shared difference within the meaning of the words they use.

Finally, because the focus group was somewhat cautious

about formulating the view other than their own, their response provided a particularly good test of the phenomenon. However, it may also give an undue impression that organization members are largely unaware of divergent perspectives and that the phenomenon is therefore somewhat obscure from organizational life. Both the Site 3 supervisor and other focus groups, however, articulated other views in vivid detail.

To the extent that different offices have different tasks, goals, and objectives, different perspectives on shared tasks should be expected. This being the case, recognizing and dealing with those divergent perspectives is part of organizational life, and effectively dealing with them is part of effective job performance. We should not be surprised, then, to find a rich meta-language for articulating the relations between these divergent perspectives.

This chapter has focused on a form of difference within which is related to what is not shared between two groups within an organization. In the next chapter we turn to a form of difference within which is related to what different groups do share.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DOXA

We have already touched on the spatiality of discourse -- its dependence upon specific situations and localities -- with respect to organizational subcultures, the habitus, and speech genres. Because different groups of people tend to occupy different positions and circumstances, this leads to a differentiation of discourse across different groups. An organization does not have to be very large before several such groups, and their discourses, become differentiated.

Working within a dichotomous framework which opposes one dominant discourse to an undifferentiated non-dominant discourse, Bourdieu (1972/1977) provides a terminology for discussing these issues. The orthodoxy, or dominant discourse, is opposed to the heterodoxy, or non-dominant discourse. The aspects of a symbolic order which become invisible, which are shared without question, arbitrary as they may be, make up the doxa. The doxa is shared by the orthodoxy and the heterodoxy, providing the discursive space in which they can oppose one another.

Bakhtin (1981) presents a similar set of concepts in discussing centripetal and centrifugal forces. Centripetal forces are those which homogenize language, pulling a society toward a central position. Centrifugal forces are social forces which pull against the dominant symbolic order by complicating and localizing meaning. Both orthodoxy and

centripetal forces are associated with official power or authority. Heterodoxy and centrifugal forces are associated with resistance. Bakhtin's concept of centrifugal forces, however, does not carry the sense of internal homogeneity that Bourdieu's "heterodoxy" does. Centrifugal forces also pull against one another.

The specificity of discourse to different regions of a population has been most meticulously explored in the work of Foucault (1966/1973, 1963/1975, 1975/1979, 1980, 1961/1988). Foucault (1969-1971/1972) outlines various aspects of discourse which maintain divisions between groups. Rules of exclusion prohibit certain forms of discourse. Internal rules moderate and regulate the discourse from within. Finally, conditions of entry into discourse restrict participation in certain discourses to certain groups. Unlike some of his interpreters (e.g. Hollway 1991), Foucault (1980) is careful to point out, however, that even resistance is a form of power. Just as heterodoxy is a form of symbolic order, and centrifugal forces are effective social forces, so marginal discourses and discursive margins are imbued with power.

The spatiality of discourse, and the power relations it embodies, are another source of difference within symbolic orders. Organizational theory after systems theory (Katz and Kahn, 1979) has been eager to point out that organizations do not serve a single purpose, but are

permeated with conflicting purposes of different members and groups of members of the organization (Kanter, 1977). As a result, different aspects of an organization take on different meanings for different members depending upon their view of the purposes the organization serves (Young, 1991). These differences remain differences between, however, until they come into contact.

It is in the things that they share, the common ground, that these differences are differences within. The heterodoxy and orthodoxy both reflected in the same doxa are the sites of difference within the symbolic order. For this reason, the absence of a term corresponding to doxa may be taken as a limitation to Bakhtin's theoretical vocabulary. In linguistic terms, we might expect difference within wherever common signifiers or signifieds are shared by two groups in whose discursive practices these common signifiers or signifieds are treated differently. In this case, it is the iterability of expressions of shared meanings in unshared contexts which produces differences within the shared meanings.

The analysis of power and resistance in the discourses surrounding a Japanese "Ethics Retreat" for factory employees by Kondo (1990) indicates the way power relations can produce difference within organizational discourse. The factory studied by Kondo sent employees at all levels to an ethics retreat intended to instill a sense of self

discipline. The retreat featured military like discipline, and a rigorous schedule of activities from lectures, to addressing Mount Fuji, to a closing day marathon. Participants generally resisted the imposition of the retreat's authority (power) and ideology. As Kondo illustrates, however, there is no pure resistance or pure hegemony. The two coexist and function together within the same practices.

Discussing the retreat, Kondo (1990) describes two ways in which resistance functioned within the dominant discourse of the retreat. First, the bizarre rituals incorporated into the retreat deliberately encouraged disbelief. This initial disbelief and resistance then turned to the retreat's advantage as the participants experienced their ability to successfully adapt to the harsh conditions of the retreat, and therefore began to doubt their initial feelings of disbelief. In order for its message of self-mastery to have the desired impact, the retreat had to open itself up to resistance and disbelief.

Second, the retreat organizers marked off "appropriate context[s] for the expression of resistance and disbelief" (p. 111) which served to protect the dominant discourse (akin to Martin and Siehl's (1983) purification of dominant cultures). More importantly, the incorporation of sanctioned public forms of resistance into the retreat protected against an unthinking dogmatic acceptance of the

dominant discourse which would have actually undermined its attempts to instill self discipline and self mastery. For example, toward the end of the retreat, different groups of participants put on sketches in which many of them ridiculed retreat organizers and rhetoric. In both ways identified by Kondo, communicative action at the retreat was imbued with both power (the dominant discourse) and resistance (discourses of disbelief).

This chapter addresses the question: Is there evidence in our data that aspects of an organization's discourse shared by the discourses of two subgroups take on multiple simultaneous meanings related to the discourses of the two subgroups? This is anticipated particularly where those shared aspects are focus points in the power relations between the two groups. The chapter reports analyses which provide evidence for this type of difference within organizational culture⁸.

Analytic Approach

The analysis proceeds similarly to the previous one, with the exception that instead of the differences between the two perspectives, the focus is on what they share.

Data

Responses to the second critical incident prompt

⁸This hypothesis was developed through the analysis of an account published by Jacobs (1979). Although the analysis is not reported here, I wish to acknowledge the contribution.

provide data for this set of analyses. This is the prompt which asks about which work activities are seen as most important. A scripted probe inquires if anyone might hold a different view of what is most important.

Having introduced Sites 1 and 3 in the previous chapters, data from the remaining site are used in this chapter. The Site 4 focus group participants did not provide an alternative perspective. After three attempts to elicit such a response, I deemed it necessary to proceed to the next question in order to maintain rapport. Because the supervisor did provide an alternative view, the interview provides the primary data for these analyses.

Unit of analysis

Responses are analyzed in terms of propositional content. The unit of analysis is the propositional statement, and ultimately its constituent terms. A discussion of assumptions involved in the use of propositional logic can be found in Appendix Three.

Evidence of Difference Within

Two perspectives and their shared content are identified in terms of propositional content. Each proposition from the shared content is then analyzed in terms of the differences between the perspectives. Where the divergent perspectives reflect differently in the shared content, placing different accents on it, this is taken as evidence of difference within.

Two Perspectives in the Data

This section elaborates the two perspectives articulated in the data. It also provides the reader with passages taken directly from the data. The response is not cited in its entirety, but the passages provided for the reader are substantial. The cited passages are also those most central to the analysis which follows.

The purpose of the second prompt was to elicit divergent perspectives on the most important activity that the work group does. The strategy was to first elicit the respondent's view, and then elicit another view with a scripted probe. The Site 4 supervisor, however, responded to the initial prompt with a description of divergent views which were then elaborated throughout the response.

I: ...The next question also sort of uh hits on
sort of the role

A: Mm hmm.

I: within the organization,

A: Mm hmm.

I: uhm, and even more directly, uhm, you've
described several different functions

A: Mm hmm.

I: that y- your unit serves, and, uhm, of those,
wha- which one do you see as being the
central one? The most important one?

A: Hmm. That's a tough choice because, uh, it

should be development.

I: Mm hmm.

A: I believe that that our f- our chief function should be development, and we should be spending more time understanding the customer's needs. But its development and supporting the customer when they're in trouble (4, I, 19).

This is followed by a detailed description of the process of "supporting the customer when they're in trouble." Response to probes then articulate the reasoning behind the two perspectives. The other view is attributed to "upper management" (4, I, 24). Table 3 gives an accounting of the two perspectives in propositional form. Table 3 introduces a notation which will be used throughout the chapter. Nine predicates are defined as follows:

D = Development

U = Understand customers' needs

S = Service

I = Most Important

P = Paid for

R = Receives every resource

C = Dedication to customer

B = Best for company

A = Actual

The final predicate warrants some explanation. There

is an important distinction between what is real and what is actual. Potentials, possibilities, options, and the like are real, but not actual (Norton, 1976). Only the activities which are actualized, which are carried out, are considered actual. This distinction is used here to deal with distinctions in the data between the current state of affairs, what is actual, and what should be, real but unactualized potentials.

To simplify the notation, the range of discourse objects is limited to activities. The above attributes are predicated to activities through propositional functions. For example, ' $D(x)$ ' indicates that a particular activity, x , is a developmental activity. ' $(x)(Ux)$ ' would indicate that all activities involve understanding the customers needs. Finally, ' $(Ex)(Sx)$ ' indicates that there is at least one activity which is a service activity.

The notation is consistent with that of Copi (1979), but certain symbols have been substituted to make the notation consistent with the standard ASCII character set. Specifically, '>' is used to indicate material implication. ' $Sx > Px$ ' would mean that if activity x is a service activity then it is an activity which is paid for. Also, '*' is used for the 'and' operator, and a forward 'E' is substituted for a backward 'E' for the existential quantifier, as indicated by the example in the previous paragraph. Finally, '~' indicates negation.

The table is divided into six sections by topic. In most cases both views are summarized in the same number of propositions under each topic. There is no deliberate correspondence, however, between propositions with the same number, or in the same position. Sets of propositions under a given topic should be considered together.

In the table, the assumption of existential import is rendered explicit in the form $(Ex)(x)$. This simply means that at least one activity, x , actually exists. This is a basic assumption of rules of inference. Without it, contrary propositions, such as Cx and $\sim Cx$ are not mutually exclusive. It is rendered explicit as a proposition here because it constitutes a very basic form of shared content between the two views.

Table 3

Two Views in Propositional Form

Group View

Other View

Existential Import:

1. $(Ex)(x)$

1. $(Ex)(x)$

Common Ontology:

2. $(Ex)(Dx) * (Ex)(\sim Dx)$

2. $(Ex)(Dx) *$

$(Ex)(\sim Dx)$

3. $(Ex)(Ux) * (Ex)(\sim Ux)$

3. $(Ex)(Ux) *$

$(Ex)(\sim Ux)$

$$4. (Ex) (Sx) * (Ex) (\sim Sx) \\ (Ex) (\sim Sx)$$

$$5. (Ex) (Ix) * (Ex) (\sim Ix) \\ (Ex) (\sim Ix)$$

$$6. (Ex) (Px) * (Ex) (\sim Px) \\ (Ex) (\sim Px)$$

$$7. (Ex) (Cx) * (Ex) (\sim Cx) \\ (Ex) (\sim Cx)$$

$$8. (Ex) (Bx) * (Ex) (\sim Bx) \\ (Ex) (\sim Bx)$$

$$9. (Ex) (Ax) * (Ex) (\sim Ax) \\ (Ex) (\sim Ax)$$

Most Important Thing:

$$10. (x) (Ix > Bx)$$

$$11. (x) ((Dx \vee Ux) > Ix) \\ Ix)$$

$$12. (x) (Ix > (Dx \vee Ux)) \\ Sx))$$

Commitment:

$$13. (Ex) (Cx * \sim Sx)$$

Resource Allocation:

$$14. (x) ((Sx * Ax) > Rx) \\ Rx)$$

$$15. (Ex) (Bx * Sx * \sim Rx) \\ Rx)$$

$$4. (Ex) (Sx) *$$

$$5. (Ex) (Ix) *$$

$$6. (Ex) (Px) *$$

$$7. (Ex) (Cx) *$$

$$8. (Ex) (Bx) *$$

$$9. (Ex) (Ax) *$$

$$10. (x) (Ix > Bx)$$

$$11. (x) ((Dx \vee Sx) >$$

$$12. (x) (Ix > (Dx \vee$$

$$13. (x) (Sx > Cx)$$

$$14. (x) (Cx > Sx)$$

$$15. (x) ((Sx * Ax) >$$

$$16. (x) ((Bx * Sx) >$$

Paid Service:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 16. $(x)((Sx * Ax) > \sim Px)$ | 17. $(x)((Sx * Ax) >$ |
| $\sim Px)$ | |
| 17. $(x)((Bx * Sx) > Px)$ | 18. $(x)((Bx * Sx) >$ |
| $\sim Px)$ | |
-

The next portion of the table deals with the common ontology of the two views. This is derived from the use of common predicates within each view. Ontology can be understood as what kinds of entities are permissible within a discourse (Harre and Gillett, 1994). For each of the predicates, the first part of the proposition indicates that there is at least one activity of which it can be predicated. The second part asserts that there is also at least one activity of which it cannot be predicated. This later part renders the interpretation somewhat stronger, but is justified by the diacritical nature of the predicates. At the level of normal speech, it only makes sense to distinguish a set of activities if there is another set of activities from which it can be distinguished. Philosophical concepts such as, say, the set of activities from which no other activities can be distinguished, do not enter into the discourse.

The remaining sections of Table 3 are more directly substantive. The central disagreement over what the most important activities are is spelled out under the next

heading. Both views share a common definition of what is most important based upon what is best for the company. They disagree, however, on what activities those are. They agree that development is one of the most important activities, but only the group view holds understanding customers' needs most important and only the other view holds customer service most important.

The next heading indicates two views of commitment to the customer. The other view identifies service with commitment to the customer. The group view rejects this identity. The other view is articulated in the following response.

I: Uh huh. Uhm, what what are the uhm the perspectives in the organization that that see other things as more central or [more?] important?

A: Uhm, certainly the upper management. Uh, dedication to customers is interpreted as supporting the customer. (4, I, 24)

The two views also agree that when service is given to a customer, every resource is diverted to that effort. They disagree, however, on their evaluation of this practice. The other view considers it best for the company, the group view does not. The above response continues as follows.

A: So, if I get a customer call, everything stops.

I: Mm hmm.

A: Every resource that I've got that I need gets diverted.

I: Mm hmm.

A: And that's, e- with this particular thing, its up to four people right now.

I: Mm hmm.

A: Out of, its ten percent of the organization for three or four days.

I: Mm hmm.

A: Uhm, because the customer, uhm, expects that.

(4, I, 24)

Finally, the two views again agree that such service is not paid for by the customer, but also disagree on their evaluation of this practice. Again, the other view considers it best for the company, and the group view does not.

A: Unfortunately, in the computer business where I also, I used to run a computer center, uhm, the computer companies are much better organized. I paid for that kinda service.

I: Mm hmm.

A: We give it away for free. (laugh) (4, I, 24-25)

The passage goes on to elaborate the lengths to which this policy is taken, and the burden it puts on the company.

This section has provided the propositional representation of the two perspectives and passages of the data from which they were derived. The remainder of the chapter involves the analysis of the propositional representation of the data.

Shared Content

As was apparent from the above description, much of the shared content was visible in the unpacked statements of the two views. In order to provide a more systematic search, however, unpacking of the propositional systems was carried out as described in Appendix Three. On the basis of this, nine additional propositions were added to the group view, and eight additional propositions were added to the other view. These contributed two propositions to the shared content. Both views hold that development is most important, and that it is best for the company. Table 4 gives the complete set of shared propositions.

Table 4

Shared Content

1. (Ex) (x)	We are talking about real activities.
2. (Ex) (Dx)	There are development activities.
3. (Ex) (Ux)	There are understanding-the-customer activities.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 4. (Ex) (Sx) | There are service activities. |
| 5. (Ex) (Ix) | There are important activities. |
| 6. (Ex) (Px) | There are paid activities. |
| 7. (Ex) (Cx) | There are customer-dedication activities. |
| 8. (Ex) (Rx) | There are activities which receive every resource. |
| 9. (Ex) (Bx) | There are activities which are best for the company. |
| 10. (Ex) (Ax) | There are actual activities. |
| 11. (Ex) (~Dx) | There are non-development activities. |
| 12. (Ex) (~Ux) | There are non-understanding-the-customer activities. |
| 13. (Ex) (~Sx) | There are non-service activities. |
| 14. (Ex) (~Ix) | There are non-important activities. |
| 15. (Ex) (~Px) | There are non-paid |

- activities.
16. $(Ex)(\sim Cx)$ There are non-customer-dedication activities.
17. $(Ex)(\sim Rx)$ There are activities which do not receive every resource.
18. $(Ex)(\sim Bx)$ There are activities which are not best for the company.
19. $(Ex)(\sim Ax)$ There are non-actual activities.
20. $(x)(Ix > Bx)$ If an activity is important, it is best for the company.
21. $(x)((Sx * Ax) > Rx)$ If a service activity is carried out, it receives every resource.
22. $(x)((Sx * Ax) > \sim Px)$ If a service activity is carried out, it is not paid for.
23. $(x)(Dx > Ix)$ Development activities are important.
24. $(x)(Dx > Bx)$ Development activities are best for the company.
-

Difference Within Shared Content

The previous sections have identified the discourse elements to be analyzed. We can now consider the presence of difference within with regard to these elements. Rather than consider each of the twenty-four individually, similar elements are analyzed together. Differences between the functioning of the shared content between the two perspectives is articulated on the basis of the data.

Chapter Four discussed the idea that meaning can be thought of in terms of four interrelated aspects: referential, performative, citational, and poetic. Propositional calculus was designed to capture only the referential aspect of meaning in the form of universal propositions. For this reason, attention to the other aspects of meaning, particularly the performative, provides clues to difference within. These other aspects of meaning help us understand context dependent factors in what propositional calculus represents as universal or context independent.

On the surface, this only goes to show difference between. The fact that the common propositions are not only common but shared discursively between the two perspectives, facilitating a dialog between them, however, indicates a larger whole. Rather than simple difference between corresponding but different terms in two different archives, the analysis indicates difference within terms shared

between two perspectives within a common archive. This is one advantage of working from two perspectives articulated by a single organization member, rather than responses of different members each articulating their own perspective. Data from a single member indicates that both perspectives function within a single discourse.

The analysis begins with the substantive propositions, leaving the common ontology last. This is done because the propositions indicating existential import are in some sense "deeper" forms of shared content. The analysis of the substantive propositions bears directly on the analysis of the common ontology.

(x) (Ix > Bx). Both perspectives agree that activities are important because they are good for the company. Both rule out the idea of something which is important but not good for the company. However, each perspective has a different notion of what those activities are. This difference colors the meaning of the shared notion of importance in different ways for the two perspectives.

The following passage concludes the response to a probe asking why development was the most important thing.

A: Yeah. But, to the, I believe that the development is, makes the most money for the company, and its its very interesting for the people,

I: Mm hmm.

A: So, it its got a lot of pluses, and that's
why I think its uh what we should be doing.

(4, I, 24-25)

On the basis of the available data, little can be said about the poetic or citational aspects of the meaning of this passage. The data do provide information, however, about the performative aspect. The first four words enact a recovery from a topical tangent. The remainder signals the termination of the response by summarizing its main points, and thereby cues the next question. The final clause further marks the function of this summary as a termination by citing the question to which it was a response.

In summarizing the response, the summary statement asserts that making the most money for the company and providing the workers with interesting work are reasons for its being the most important function. The former of these is interpreted in terms of 'B', the 'best for the company' predicate. By arguing that because an activity is best for the company it is most important, the argument elliptically incorporates the $(x)(Bx > Ix)$ premise. Performatively, however, it is employed as part of an assertion about what in particular is most important. Since the perspectives disagree on what is most important, the meaning of ' $(x)(Bx > Ix)$ ' is linked to the different perspectives by which it is employed. Performatively, it is employed to support different activities.

$(x)((Sx * Ax) > Rx)$ and $(x)((Sx * Ax) > \sim Px)$. These statements share a similar sort of difference within. This stems from the differential evaluation of the agreed upon state of affairs. Both agree that service activities receive every resource, and are not paid for. The other view holds that this is best for the company, the group view disagrees. As such, although they agree on the descriptive statement, for one it is a statement of fact-as-it-should-be, and for the other it is a point of criticism.

The response to the "other view" probe was cited above, after Table 3 and just prior to the subsection on shared content (4, I, 24-25). The supervisor's first turn responds to the prompt first by naming the holder of the other view and then by articulating that view. In its performative context, as a response to the prompt, "dedication to the customer" is best understood as positively valued. A different interpretation would be difficult to reconcile with the performative function of the turn as a response, as marked by the first part of the turn. With this in mind, the first turn can be understood as an articulation of the positive valuation of "supporting the customer" in the "upper management" view. The next two turns then unpack "supporting the customer" by stating that "everything stops" and "every resource... gets diverted." Starting with the fourth turn, however, the group view is articulated through the criticism of this state of affairs.

In this example, we see shared content, $(x)((Sx * Ax) > Rx)$, agreed upon as a matter of fact, but disputed in terms of its valuation between the two views. As such, the citing of the facts serves a different performative function. The fact that the agreed upon state of affairs was brought about as part of the upper management perspective indicates that it would function to articulate and support that view when deployed by that view. In contrast, we see the same agreed upon content functioning to critique the upper management view, and support the group view, in the context of this example.

$(x)(Dx > Ix)$ and $(x)(Dx > Bx)$. Development is identified as most important and best for the company within both perspectives. In the group view, however, it is paired with understanding the customer, whereas in the other view it is paired with customer support. The former is closely related to development and supports it, the later is unrelated to development and competes with it for time and resources. As such, the assertion that development is important and best for the company takes on a somewhat different tone in the two perspectives. In one case it reinforces the other most important activity, in the other case it moderates it.

In the immediate response to the initial prompt which was cited above, development is named first in articulating both perspectives. The group view is articulated as "our

chief function should be development, and we should be spending more time understanding the customer's needs" (4, I, 19). The other view is articulated as "development and supporting the customer when they're in trouble" (4, I, 19). This formulation is echoed later in the same response.

A: So, I think development should be the, our highest thing, and understanding the customer's needs, but it seems to be development and support. (4, I, 21)

Later responses, however, indicate that development plays a dominant role in the former view, but not the latter view. In the summary of the response to the first probe, cited above, the group view is summarized wholly in terms of development: "I believe that the development is... what we should be doing" (4, I, 23-24). Then, in response to the second probe, which directly follows, the other view is summarized wholly in terms of customer support: "dedication to customers is interpreted as supporting the customer" (4, I, 24, cited in full above). This provides further evidence that $(x)(Dx > Ix)$ and $(x)(Dx > Bx)$ function differently in the two perspectives.

Common ontology. Each of the propositions included as part of the common ontology contains a term which functions differently in the two perspectives. These differences reflect back on the common ontology. Although both agree on the kinds of activities that are available for discussion,

they disagree on their relations to each other. As such, the agreed upon terms take on different colorations in the two perspectives.

Each of the examples discussed throughout the chapter provide evidence of this phenomenon. The discussion of ' $(x)(Ix > Bx)$ ' indicated that different x's are considered I and B. The following discussion articulated the way 'Rx' and 'Px' functioned differently in the two perspectives. Finally, we saw that the agreed upon 'Dx' functioned differently in the context of the two perspectives. As such, although the two perspectives agree on certain categories, they disagree on which activities fall into those categories, and what other characteristics category members share.

Chapter Summary

The forgoing analyses provide evidence of difference within of the form posited under the doxa hypothesis. Two perspectives were identified in the data. Shared content was then distilled from these perspectives and analyzed for difference within.

The findings question the conception of shared assumptions employed by most organizational culture theory. Such approaches assume that because a belief is shared by organization members it is the same for all the members. The identity of the belief, however, is based solely on the referential aspect of its meaning. As the above findings

indicate, beliefs which are identical referentially may differ greatly in the way their expression functions performatively. Shared referential meaning does not rule out differences in the other aspects of meaning. The analyses presented in this chapter suggest that where there are other differences, shared assumptions will also exhibit differences in meaning. This suggests that shared cultures are not necessarily shared in the same way for everyone who participates in them.

The forgoing analysis also has a number of implications for our understanding of organization and organizations. It suggests that areas of difference between divergent perspectives in organizations cannot be partitioned off from areas of agreement. Any such attempt at containment fails to consider the ways in which areas of difference are reflected in areas of agreement.

For example, facilitators working in the areas of negotiation and conflict resolution often find it productive to separate different areas of dispute and tackle them individually. The current findings do not question the usefulness of this parsing technique, but they do suggest that deferred issues remain at the table, even when they are not on it. Even as agreement is reached on one area, other differences may be reflected in each side's understanding of that agreement. For this reason, recognizing the remaining differences would help facilitators understand the dynamics

of agreement for whichever area is currently on the table.

Similarly, the analyses have implications for organizational intervention. Because such interventions face multiple barriers to change, establishing a level of consensus on an intervention is an important first step. The forgoing analysis, however, suggests that a consultant should never consider the matter closed. The meaning of the consensus is not universal. Differences in the perspectives brought to the consensus will produce differences within the consensus. An awareness of the multiple meanings carried within that consensus will aid a consultant in achieving a successful organizational intervention.

Part Three has analyzed three types of difference within. Each is related to the iterability of signs within an organizational culture. Evidence was found in the data for difference within related to discursive specificity, words crossing between spheres within a broader discourse, and content shared between divergent perspectives. Part Four will address forms of difference within organizational culture which are not directly derived from iterability.

PART FOUR
DIFFERENCE WITHIN BEYOND DISSEMINATION
CHAPTER NINE
CONSTRUCTION

The previous three chapters dealt with difference within resulting from multiple meanings present in a text. Another form of difference within results from meanings not present in a text. It is not entirely accurate, however, to attribute a meaning to a text in this way. A text requires the intentionality of a reader to take on meaning. To be more accurate, then, we are interested in the way the use of a particular rhetorical construction achieves its purpose through the suppression of certain meaning. It is these suppressed meanings which introduce difference within the rhetorical construction (de Man, 1983, 1979; Derrida, 1991).

This chapter draws on text analysis which explores the way the unique insights of various texts require, as their conditions of existence, a certain blindness to other aspects of their referents. While these aspects remain real, the functioning of the text requires that they not be present to the consciousness of the author, or reader.

It is important to emphasize, however, that the constructions studied function within their own semantic space. We are not dealing with critique in the vernacular sense of counter-argument. Instead, it is critique in the classic philosophical sense of exploring the limits or

constraints within which a thesis functions (Culler, 1982). When we speak of rhetoric, it is in the descriptive sense in which all communication, including this paragraph, functions. The word is not used in the pejorative sense in which it is opposed to fact, truthfulness, or dispassionate discourse.

This phenomenon is similar to the phenomenon of linguistic framing (Tannen, 1993). The difference is that framing is predominantly a characteristic of a specific communicative action within a specific discursive situation. The phenomenon under study here has more temporal endurance. It only becomes relevant to organizational culture when a rhetorical construction which may have begun as framing is passed on through a discursive order from speaker to speaker, or writer to writer. When this occurs, implications of a particular rhetorical construction are unwittingly passed to the communicative actions of individuals whose communicative purpose may bear no relation to the performative context which gave rise to the rhetorical construction.

Construction and the Blindness of Insight⁹

We can illustrate the phenomenon of interest with an

⁹Both the phrase and the formulation "blindness and insight" come from de Man (1983). I wish to both acknowledge my use of his ideas in this chapter, and acknowledge that my use of those ideas presses them in a direction he would have been unlikely to take them.

example so simple as to have been dismissed as "trivial" (Rosenau, 1992, p. 78): The sky is blue. The obviousness of such a statement, taken at face value, may in fact strain the application of the term insight. I hope it will at least render the insight contained in such a statement beyond the need for argumentative demonstration. Let us turn, then, to the blindness necessary to achieve this insight.

We can analyze the blindness involved in the insight by contrasting our example with 'The sky is not blue.' There are a number of senses in which this statement is also true. These involve which parts of the sky one includes in the extension of 'sky.'¹⁰ Let us focus our analysis, however, on one simple case: the night sky. The advantage is that the sky at night is a readily accepted referent of 'the sky.'

The phrase 'the sky' is important because it reminds us that we are not simply dealing with different meanings of the word 'sky' alone. For example, we might question whether the claim 'All men are mortal' implies that Socrates' wife is mortal depending upon how we interpret the word 'men.' This phenomenon is understood in terms of traditional logic as equivocation. Unlike 'a sky' or 'all sky,' however, 'the sky' indicates that there is only one

¹⁰Compare "the sky starts under your feet" from Yoko Ono's "On Sky" (Haskell and Hanhardt, 1991, p.69) or "The sky is only an air mass and there's air everywhere" from Lie Yukou's "Groundless Worry that the Sky Might Fall" (Yang, 1993, p. 25).

sky which is the sky under discussion. As such, it is not simply a matter of different meanings of the word 'sky' because 'the sky' asserts a singular meaning.

This assertion is part of the rhetoric of construction. In stating that the sky is blue, or not blue, one is not only making a referential assertion about the sky, one is also performatively asserting the use of a particular construction. This process facilitates communication by limiting the range of meanings within which subsequent utterances should be interpreted.

The result of this facilitating limitation, however, is that certain meanings are excluded from the construction. It is through this process that each insight rests on some blindness (de Man, 1983). The blindness is the exclusion of other possible insights by the construction which supports the insight.

In our example, apprehension of the truth in 'The sky is blue' requires a blindness to the truth in 'The sky is not blue.' The two are not simply two simultaneously true assertions, such as 'The wife of Socrates is a man' and 'The wife of Socrates is not a man,' incorporating two meanings of a word they hold in common. Rather, each asserts a construction of 'the sky' which excludes the other.

At this point, the reader should be able to flip back and forth between "the sky is blue" and "the sky is not blue" like two perceptions of a Gestalt drawing. Notice,

however, the need for oscillation. The insight requires the blindness. It requires that one not try holding both in consciousness at the same time.

One might object that one can hold both in consciousness at the same time by quantifying blueness. Thinking that the sky is three quarters blue, however, is not the same experience as thinking "the sky is blue" or "the sky is not blue" in the senses in which each of these statements are true. Instead, it opens up an entirely new type of insight which creates a blindness to some aspects of the truth of both statements.

Finally, we should note that this relationship between blindness and insight in no way implies that blindness and insight are coextensive. The argument is that the discursive orders which facilitate insight also produces blindness. This implies that where there is insight there will necessarily be blindness, but not that where there is blindness there will necessarily be insight.

Construction and Difference Within

From this, we might hypothesize that constructions used in an organization's discourse generally require some blindness in order to construct some insight¹¹. If that is the case, various constructions may allow access to different parts of the picture, but it may be impossible to

¹¹Analysis of data published by Kremen (1979) aided in the development of these ideas.

access the whole picture through a single construction. It is the very notion of a "whole picture", however, that falls into question. If language requires some blindness for every insight, the whole picture cannot be articulated.

Instead, understanding occurs through any number of specialized constructions which facilitate certain insights at the expense of others. These specific constructions introduce a form of difference within organizational culture. This is because what is suppressed by a given construction has a tendency to turn up in the rhetorical mode by which it is presented (de Man, 1979, 1983).

Such analysis has, from time to time, been mistaken for the classic reduction to absurdity of classical logic. Such a reduction, however, relies on a notion of contradiction which, in turn, relies on a fixed shared set of categories. Derrida's (1991) research suggests that before there are any categories there is difference. The issue is how different categories construct (and suppress) this difference.

This chapter addresses the question: Is there evidence in our data that along with their insights, constructions employed within discourse bring with them blind spots, suppressing other possible insights? Such a phenomenon constitutes a form of difference within organizational culture because the suppressed content is simultaneously absent, in that it is suppressed, and present, in that it affects the order of the discourse.

Data

As with earlier analyses, data that have not previously been analyzed are preferred as part of an effort to distribute the analyses across the data. Taking the sites in sequence, the Site 3 interview is the first of the remaining transcripts that have not been analyzed.

The common topic prompts were designed with this analysis in mind. Again taking the data in sequence, the response to the first common topic prompt was selected for analysis. This is the prompt asking about the supervisor-subordinate relationship. As such, the Site 3 interview response to the first common topic prompt provides the primary data for the analyses in this chapter.

Analytic Approach

In order to address the research question, it is necessary to show both that the rhetoric of the construction employed in the response suppresses something, and that effects of the suppression are identifiable in the response. The former shows that something is not directly present in the response. The latter shows that it is present in its effects on the discourse.

The analysis begins with an exposition of the data. Primary assertions in the data are extracted and put in propositional form as a heuristic. The analysis then proceeds by identifying suppressed aspects of the supervisor-subordinate relationship and the way the rhetoric

of the construction suppresses them. The analysis is completed by showing the impact of this suppression on the response¹².

Boss Not Boss: The Primary Data

The primary data follow the prompt asking about the relationship between the supervisor and her subordinates:

I: Okay. Uhm, in a in a general way I'm interested in uh how you see uhm the basic relationship you have, then, with the people you're managing and how that works. (S3, I, 33).

In her first turn following this prompt, the supervisor makes a number of assertions. She is a project manager, not a people manager. She is not responsible for salary or performance review. Using the conventions presented in chapter eight but retaining the full English phrases, these can be formalized as follows. Parenthesis indicate predication.

1. I(Project Manager)
2. I~(People Manager)
3. I~(Responsible for Salary)

¹²I proposed a test for suppressed content based on the propositional content of the construction. This approach was unsuccessful because translation into propositional form disrupted the rhetoric to the point that the test was impossible. I also proposed comparison with other work groups' responses. As it turned out, there were more than enough data to address the research question within the Site 3 responses.

4. I~(Responsible for Performance Review)

These assertions draw the distinction between being a project manager and, in this case, not being a people manager or boss. This is related to a general theme which we saw in Chapter Six. The contrast between being a small consulting firm and being employees in a large company is salient throughout both the Site 3 focus group and interview. This distinction occurs in the transcript as follows.

A: Mmm. They look at me as the project manager, but not but not, you know what I mean? We I I try to, These are all, you see this is the other difference with being an employee in a company, I'm not responsible for their salary, I'm not responsible for their performance review, which I like. (S3, I, 33)

The assertions that she is not responsible for performance review or salary help to fill out the distinction between project manager and people manager.

Some of the reasoning behind this distinction is given in the next passage. The following two assertions summarize what is said in support of the distinction.

5. Subordinates~(Need to be Managed)

6. Project(Need to be Managed)

The response continues as follows.

A: And, in a small consulting firm like this,
our boss [first name of company president] is
very picky. Every person

I: Mm hmm.

A: is very good.

I: Mm hmm.

A: So these are not people that really need to
be managed. Its more that we're working on a
project with many people programming and many
aspects, somebody has to coordinate. (S3, I,
33).

This is followed by some additional elaboration which
is discussed at the end of this section. Next, two new
assertions occur which fill out the contrast between project
manager and people manager, or boss, made above. These are

7. Boss(Responsible for Salary)

8. Boss(Responsible for Performance Review).

These parallel assertions 3 and 4 above. Along with a more
explicit statement of assertion 2, these occur as follows.

A: But, you know, when you've been the boss,
people, that's why I laugh, [first name T]
always says the boss, I'm,

I: (laugh)

A: I don't, I'm not in that way. I was when I
was a manager in a company.

I: Uh huh.

A: When I gave people their reviews, and I determined their raises, their promotions, and really having quote control over their work lives. I don't feel that way here. Uhm, I feel I have to coordinate, and I have to ask people is it done, (S3, I, 34-45)

In a lengthy passage which follows, she explains that if a subordinate is falling behind then she will step in to redistribute the workload.

9. Subordinate(Fall Behind) > I(Redistribute Work)

How this occurs in the response can be illustrated with the following excerpts. The first directly follows the above passage.

A: and [hope?]. If you're falling behind schedule then I would, I'm the one will see if any of the other people have free time. (S3, I, 35.)

The second occurs two supervisor turns later.

A: And so, you know, w- w- the person who maybe could squeeze in extra work, it isn't that they don't want to help the other person out, but they just not be aware that the other person is a little behind,

I: Mm hmm.

A: or is given too much, or, So, one person has to make sure its all balanced out and

everybody's helping each other out, and that people realize the priorities. (S3, I, 35-36.)

The forgoing passages begin to touch on a proposition which is stated more explicitly elsewhere. The supervisor explains her role in terms of having an overall perspective on the project. There is an implication that others may not share that perspective.

10. I(Have Overall Perspective)

This proposition is drawn from two passages. The first occurs between the two passages cited to illustrate proposition 9.

A: Gee, [?], you fell behind, and I had given you two programs and you're still working on one we thought would be done. Let me see if I can get someone else to do the other one, so we can catch up. So ya, one person still has to sort of overlook, look over the whole thing. (S3, I, 35).

The other occurs shortly thereafter.

A: So, somebody still has to have the overall perspective on it. What I try to do, to help them out, is I try to do some of the communication, so that they're not bogged down. (S3, I, 36).

This last passage also introduces one of two

propositions about communication.

11. (Ex) [x(Communication) > x(I do)]

12. (Ex) [x(Communication) > x(they do)]

The first states that the supervisor does some communication. The second states that some communication is left to the subordinates. The second is derived from the following passage.

A: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But I try to get them to talk too because its, in in this type of field, like I said, everybody's a professional, these are all competent people, and you can't, I don't want them to feel like I'm running the users and they don't have any time, and as I said, that's why I called them all to [city name], because I know we were giving a big presentation, there were going to be people from nine insurance companies there, and I wanted them to feel a little, they did the work, I wanted them to feel a little glory of that. (S3, I, 37.)

The response continues for another five and a half pages, but the above is sufficient for the purposes of the analysis.

When Representation is Performative

Before we swallow this representation hook, line, and sinker, there is an important aspect of its performative

context which we should consider. The following passage, referred to above as additional elaboration, will help develop this point.

A: Uhm, now that I've given them each like their own responsibility, I've nothing to [?] a little bit, it still strikes me as a little funny that they'll say to me, I'm gonna work home, [first name of company president] allows us to work home, it doesn't matter, we have terminals, we can dial in,

I: Mm hmm.

A: but they'll say I'm gonna work home tomorrow, is it okay? And I'll go well, Whatever you want to do. (S3, I, 34.)

The subordinate behavior which "still strikes [her] as a little funny" conflicts with the image she presents of herself as manager of the project but not the people. It suggests that in describing this image she is not simply representing it but asserting it over a less egalitarian view. In fact, there is evidence for a similar dynamic in the focus group data: "She's our supervisor." but then later "Well, she seems more like a cheerleader. (laugh)" (S3, FG, 25). Rather than the supervisor asserting her view over the subordinates view, these data suggest that the whole work group is involved in a process of collective cognition in which more egalitarian aspects of the

relationship are being emphasized over less egalitarian aspects (Saferstein, 1992). Both are asserting a similar image.

Difference Within the Primary Data

We need not be overly concerned with the veridicality of the supervisor's account. That is not a prerequisite for difference within. The performative aspects of the representation do, however, suggest a first entry point into the phenomenon we are concerned with.

Tales of the Supervisor Cheerleader

We have seen how the representation of the supervisor's role downplays the supervisory or boss-like aspects of that role. To show difference within, however, we must articulate the ways in which the suppressed content remains present in the discourse. In the passage we have been discussing, this is particularly clear because the comparison passage occurs in the primary data itself. The incongruous discourse, the report of boss-like behavior, is set within the representation we are analyzing. It is present in the most direct and concrete sense.

The representation of the incongruous event, which in another context might function as a counter-example, is co-opted by the representation under consideration by presenting it as "funny" behavior. The passage immediately follows a description of the development of the supervisor's current role. "[I]n the beginning... I'd sort of ask who's

interested in doing that part" (S3, I, 33-34), "And then over time you see people's strengths and weaknesses, so you try to give them work that leans toward their strength and what they seem to enjoy more." (S3, I, 34). This leads directly in the passage we are analyzing.

It begins with a restatement of the current state of affairs: "...now that I've given them each their own responsibility..."(S3, I, 34). The report of the incongruous behavior then caps this account, before a topic change. The co-opting of the account is accomplished rhetorically by presenting it as an anachronism: "it still strikes me as a little funny..." The behavior is presented as something which may have once been sensible but is no longer sensible in light of the supervisor's current role. As anachronism, reporting the incongruous behavior actually serves to support the representation of the supervisor's role exactly because it appears "funny" in contrast to it.

Having articulated the rhetoric of the passage in this way, we can see the difference within the discourse. In and of itself, the incongruous behavior suggests an aspect of the supervisor's role which is being suppressed by the representation in place. Subordinates do behave toward her as toward a boss on some occasions. Within the rhetoric of the representation, however, this is co-opted as a "funny" anachronism. As such, this aspect of the supervisor's role is simultaneously suppressed by the representation and

present in it.

The data analyzed in this section provide a particularly clear example of difference within a construction. It does not, however, provide a particularly strong example of a construction which is durably entrenched in the discourse. To demonstrate this, we can turn to a less localized aspect of the data.

"[T]his is the other difference..."

The data analyzed above rests within the broader categorical opposition between project manager and people manager which is at play in the response. This, in turn, is part of the general contrast between the work group as a small consulting firm and employees in large companies which pervades both the supervisor interview and the subordinate focus group data. The dialogic relation between these is, in part, the kind of addressivity analyzed in Chapter Seven.

In providing the basic categories, this opposition has significant impact on the rhetoric of the entire response. Like any construction, however, this opposition emphasizes certain aspects of the work group by suppressing others. An analysis of this provides a more pervasive example.

The first thing to notice about the opposition is that its restatement is the first thing out of the supervisor's mouth in response to my prompt. She begins "They look at me as the project manager, but not..." and continues "...you see this is the other difference with being an employee in a

company" (S3, I, 33). The first turn begins with the opposition, and the remaining turns follow suit.

The second thing to notice is that it is a categorical opposition. When she "was a manager in a company" she "gave people their reviews," and she "determined their raises," and promotions. Then she had "control over their work lives," whereas now she does not "feel that way." Rather, she has to "coordinate," and "ask people is it done" (S3, I, 34-35). Her job is not presented in relation to the distinction as being more like this and less like that. Coordinating consultants is like this, and managing employees in a large company is like that.

It is not that she always speaks in categorical terms as a matter of personal style. Hedged statements do occur in the response. They involve the characterization of her coordination task as one of saying "you write this program..., you write this" versus meeting "in a conference," asking "who's interested in doing that part," and proceeding to "divvy it up" (S3, I, 33-34). Here we see phrases that are not categorical "So these are not people that really need to be managed. Its more that...somebody has to coordinate" (S3, I, 33). The sentence containing 'really' does contain the words 'people' and 'managed', but in the more narrow context of characterizing coordination. There is no such hedging with reference to the employee versus consultant or people manager versus project manager

distinction.

It is not surprising, then, that of the 64 supervisor turns which constitute the response, not a single turn makes reference to what the two types of managers have in common. The categorical opposition between the two types orders the discourse in such a way that such references are inadmissible. They run counter to the rhetoric of the construction.

The rhetorical construction which excludes such references, however, leaves its mark on the account. First, such references remain present through the conspicuousness of their absence. Although such references are not present in the sense that they do not occur, their presence is felt in the rhetorical construction which suppresses them. This introduces a doubleness into the discourse which we have been describing in terms of difference within.

We should be perfectly clear about the argument here. The absence of referents in and of itself is not evidence of difference within. There are no references to Mickey Mouse, the invasion of Normandy, or the Grand Canyon either. These do not, however, provide evidence of difference within because we have not identified specific characteristics of the rhetoric of the construction which suppress such references. Specific characteristics were identified, however, with respect to references to similarities between the two types of supervisors. The absence of these

references along with the presence of a rhetoric which suppresses them -- that is, a rhetoric in which they are present -- provides evidence of difference within.

There is a second way in which the rhetoric of the construction holds the similarities between project management and people management present in the construction. Contrast requires a degree of similarity. It is easier to contrast apples and oranges than, say, apples and orangeness or apples and honesty. As such, the rhetoric of the construction makes use of the similarities in asserting the contrast.

They are both supervisory roles. They are both types of management. These similarities are all made use of in constructing the contrast at the same time that their explicit reference is suppressed. In this way also, the suppressed material is present though absent, introducing difference within the construction.

Appraising Performance

To further clarify the argument, it may be useful to introduce some additional data from outside the response. Within the response, doing performance appraisals is presented as part of the distinction between a manager in a company and a project manager in a consulting firm. In the opening turn, the supervisor relates "I'm not responsible for their performance review" (S3, I, 33). Eleven turns later, she describes what it was like when she was a manager

in a company: "I gave people their reviews" (S3, I, 35).

In the response to the new hire prompt, 193 of her turns later, a passage occurs which indicates that while she may not be responsible for formal reviews, she does appraise her subordinates performance and her appraisal does matter to them.

A: [first name M] was like the technical guru of
a certain part of the system.

I: Mm hmm.

A: And I didn't think he was doing as good I
want, as well as I knew he was able to, and I
knew he was feeling threatened. So all of a
sudden he was working a hell of a lot harder

I: (laugh)

A: and doing a better job... (S3, I, 65).

The passage occurs within the context of a description of the most recent hire's entry into the work group. The reference to M "feeling threatened" refers in part to the arrival of T, the new hire. Nevertheless, the passage does indicate that her appraisal of their performance is significant to her subordinates.

These data are not presented to catch the supervisor in a contradiction. By the end of the interview the rhetorical context has shifted somewhat away from the contrast between managing people and managing projects toward the maturity and experience of the subordinates in contrast to the

broader range of people at different stages of their careers that one would expect in a larger company. This shift provides an opening for the discussion of this aspect of her job.

The passage does provide evidence that we do not have to rely on speculation about unmentioned aspects of her job. We have evidence in the data of an aspect of her job which does not fit the rhetorical construction analyzed above. Discussion of her appraisal of subordinates' performance, albeit informal, does not fit with the categorical opposition structuring the rhetoric of the response to the supervisor-subordinate prompt.

Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the question: Is there evidence in our data that along with their insights, constructions employed within discourse bring with them blind spots, suppressing other possible insights? The Site 3 supervisor response to the first common topic prompt was analyzed with reference to other passages of data from the same site.

Analyses indicated that it was in fact possible to identify aspects of the supervisor-subordinate relationship which were suppressed by the rhetorical construction employed in the response. Further, it was shown that this suppression had identifiable effects on the response. This constitutes a form of difference within organizational culture because the suppressed content is simultaneously

absent, in that it is suppressed, and present, in that it affects the order of the discourse.

Documentation of this phenomenon in a work setting poses further difficulties for a structural account of meaning in organizational culture. First, the analyses indicate that not only what is said but how it is said is important to understanding organizational culture. Treatment of organizational culture in terms of a system of symbols and their fixed corresponding meanings is insufficient to capture this aspect of organizational culture.

Second, the findings raise the issue of commensurability. If one speaks of organizational culture in a singular monolithic way, it is implied that all the pieces of an organization's culture fit together into some sort of totality. If, on the other hand, one takes the kinds of constructions investigated here as pieces of an organization's culture, it suggests that the pieces cannot be put together without altering them in a significant and artificial way. This is because they not only add a unique piece of organizational knowledge, but do so by suppressing another piece. This does not rule out a holistic approach to organizational culture, but it does question approaches that arrive at holistic cultures by assuming them to be singular and unitary.

As with previous chapters, the results reported in this

chapter help to explain some previous findings regarding organizational culture. For instance, it has been reported that strong cultures are often successful while conditions remain constant, but can lead to difficulty in adapting to changing conditions (e.g. Kotter and Heskett, 1992). If strong cultures are characterized by strongly entrenched constructions, we can see how these would limit adaptation. Adaptation would be particularly difficult if it required looking into the blind spots of one of the entrenched constructions. A diversity of less entrenched constructions, on the other hand, would facilitate adaptation.

Correspondingly, in times that do not require as much adaptation, a few strong constructions could do a lot to streamline communication within an organization. They might also maintain a sense of focus and a shared sense of purpose. A diversity of less entrenched constructions, on the other hand, could complicate communication and engender conflict within the organization.

Finally, we might note that modern corporations have mastered the arts of framing and stipulative definition to the point that the parallels with Orwell's (1949) *Newspeak* are not easy to ignore. For example, Weaver (1988) discusses Ford's resorting to "rhetorical gimmickry and media hype" to avoid public airing of the companies financial difficulties (p. 31). This should not, however,

be taken as an indictment of corporations. Any such criticism would have to be part of a broader critique of the prevailing social climate in which it is always open season on corporations. In such a climate, pro-active attempts to set the terms of discussion might be understood as a necessary survival strategy.

Managing the language used within an organization is one form of culture management (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). The findings of this chapter, however, suggest that when managers of meaning are successful in establishing a particular construction they are also entrenching a corresponding blindness. Such institutional blind spots may have undesirable side effects down the road, such as inhibiting adaptation. Understanding this, managers of meaning might use their influence over language more cautiously.

CHAPTER TEN

TEXTUALIZATION

People in organizations communicate about each other. This chapter argues that communication about people introduces another form of difference within organizational culture. As such, this everyday event poses an additional challenge for singular conceptions of organizational culture.

Reflexivity

The paradigm case for understanding linguistic representation is that of an individual perceiving an external object and representing it in language. This scenario allows a certain ontology to unfold which keeps its constituent elements neatly separated. The observing subject is the site of language. The external world, as perceived by the subject, is represented in this internal language.

The issue of reflexivity is raised when a subject becomes the object of representation. In this case, the otherwise neat ontology turns in on itself and the elements become mixed. The subject is the object. Representor becomes represented. Internal becomes external. Complexities arise.

An important aspect of this problem is captured in Bakhtin's concept of finalization (1963/1984a, 1965/1984b) or consummation (1919-1986/1990). A strong reading would

suggest that our subjectivity as we experience our selves is unfinalizable. It is always open to change at any moment. Our subjectivity as it is experienced by others is finalized. It is a fixed character of some determinate sort. Through its very articulation or representation it is rendered in a fixed form.

As such, there is always a tension between a representation of a subject and the unfinalizability which is lost in the representation. This effect of textualization is no less evident in the case of self-description (Crapanzano, 1992). Further, this tension is no less real when both the representor and the represented are unaware of it.

Elsewhere, Bakhtin (1986) describes a form of novel in which the protagonist is represented as learning or developing through the events depicted in the novel. This suggests that people can also be represented in unfinalized form. This opens the possibility of tension between two representations of the same person, or even within one representation of that person.¹³

Argyris (1980, 1991) has articulated the effects this tension can have on organizations. Using a different theoretical vocabulary, Argyris describes tensions between two types of communicative actions. Someone engaging in the

¹³This phenomenon can be seen by tracing the references to tele-marketers in the account reported by Turkel (1974, p. 95-96).

first type uses only his or her own understanding of a situation to interpret another individuals' behavior. As such, it is based on a finalized conception of the other. Someone engaging in the second type interprets other people's behavior by actively engaging the other person's understanding of the situation with his or her own. This involves an unfinalized conception of the other.

Executives tend to describe themselves as doing the latter, but actually tend toward the former in practice. This opens up a schism between saying and doing, and a tension between them. Argyris (1980) has detailed how this can have far reaching effects on an organization's culture. For the present purposes, we can limit our attention to understanding the phenomenon as a form of difference within organizational culture.

For this purpose, Bakhtin's (1919-1986/1990) earliest take on these issues will be the most useful. Here, Bakhtin is interested in the specificity of the idea of finalization to particular relationships to a given representation. To take Bakhtin's example, the sufferer bears a different relationship to his or her own suffering than the artist who fixes that suffering against a clear blue sky in order to express something more than the suffering itself.

The example is similar to the foregoing discussion in that the sufferer's own experience is unfinalized, but the act of representation by the other is an act of

finalization. What is important about Bakhtin's (1919-1986/1990) exposition is that the sufferer's unfinalized experience is still active in the finalized representation. It is active both in that it constitutes part of the representation and in that the representor responds to it, often by evaluating it.

This approach helps focus the issue of difference within. It goes beyond contrasting representations of the same individual to highlight differences within a single representation of that individual. Due to the layering of different value-contexts of those involved in a representation, we cannot speak of a given representation as either finalized or not, but rather as containing a complex interaction of both. Again, this same issue is raised by the act of self-representation (Crapanzano, 1992). The "self-" resists finalization and the "representation" encourages it.

This chapter will address the question: Is there evidence in our data that the representation of subjects in a discourse introduces tensions between finalized characterizations and the characterization of unfinalizability? More specifically, we will address this question by showing the relationship between layers of finalization within an account taken from the data. Such layering is taken as evidence that meaning is more complex than can be understood in terms of a singular approach to

organizational culture.

Analytic Approach

We can address this question by analyzing an instance in which an organization member is represented in one of our discourse samples. We will begin by selecting a sample. We can then proceed by analyzing the layers of meaning related to the various participants.

Data

Thus far, we have not yet analyzed data from the Site 4 focus group. For this reason, it will provide the data for the analyses in this chapter. Because the analyses are dependent upon words that refer to people, we have a criterion for choosing which part of the data to analyze. Analysis of the portion of the data with the highest proportion of person referential terms is preferable.

The focus group transcript contains 11,082 words spoken by the participants. A list of words referring to people was constructed empirically from a frequency listing of the words. The list includes all the name codes from the transcript. These take the form of letters in brackets. It also includes pronouns like 'She' and 'I' as well as terms like 'mentor' and 'tester.' The proportions of person referential words should be considered estimates because the identification process is not flawless. For instance, 'mentor' can refer either to a person or an activity.

The overall base rate for words referring to people was

15 percent, or 1,663 words. These were broken down by prompt, including the opening talk before the first prompt as a separate category. Of these categories, words referring to people occurred most frequently following the prompt asking about the supervisor-subordinate relationship. The proportion for this prompt was 20.4 percent, or 563 of 2,756 words. The next most frequent was only 14.8 percent, or 240 out of 1,624 words, for the new hire prompt. As the only section of data above the mean, the supervisor-subordinate prompt was the clear choice for analysis.

Reference to the supervisor was selected for analysis because of the frequency with which it occurred, it being the topic of the prompt. The response to this prompt contains 120 references to the supervisor. This constitutes 22.8 of the 527 unambiguous uses of person referential terms (33 were coded ambiguous) and 32.9 percent of the 365 unambiguous uses when indefinite uses were removed from the analysis (159 were indefinite, 3 could not be coded). Using these as a guide, a discussion of the supervisor's supervisory style put forth by [B] was chosen for use as the primary data because it provided a uniquely lengthy discussion without frequent topic shifts.

The Representation of the Supervisor

The response to the prompt begins with a general affirmation of the work group's preference for their own supervisor and positive evaluation of him. An account of

micro-management by another supervisor is offered which, by contrast, shows the supervisor in a positive light. At this point I introject the following probe:

D: So we we do have a very good, overall, very good relationship between,

I: Can you uhm describe some interactions with [first name of supervisor] or or uh

D: Other supervisors? Right.

I: What it is

A: What's good about them. (laugh)

I: about their style, or,

A: [first name B] say. (laugh)

(laughter) (S4, FG, 34-35)

The last of these turns begins a process by which [B] is nominated by the group to provide the example. The word 'say' was spoken not in the sense of "for example" but as a directive to speak. This is a common phrase in the native language shared by A and D, and appeared to be readily understood by B and C. In the next three turns, the nomination of B to speak is supported by his spending more time with the supervisor.

[B] ends this by beginning to talk about the supervisor: "I like [first name of supervisor]" (S4, FG, 35). His exposition then continues as follows.

B: I, [first name of supervisor] as a person is a very nice guy.

A: Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

B: Sometimes its hard to understand his
managerial style a little bit. I,

A?: Mm hmm.

B: would classify it as a reactionary style.

A: Nobody's perfect.

B: Right.

A: (laugh)

B: (laugh) Yeah, nobody's, yeah, nobody's
perfect. Every everybody's got their faults.
But, [first name of supervisor] reacts to
whoever's yelling at him the loudest. Be it
the system test supervisor, his manager, the
department head, some customer, and sometimes
its hard to follow priorities. He'll ask you
to do something

(sneeze)

B: for priority, and you'll be in the middle of
doing it, and somebody'll identify another
problem, so he'll react to that,

?: Yeah.

B: and ask you to drop what was a critical
problem maybe two hours before, to work on
this. So it sometimes gets a little
confusing.

A: Yes. Yeah. You cannot totally, you know,

depend on him anyway. You can never, right? You have to use your own judgement, and uhm uh he can help on some, you know, sometimes, right? If you tell him uh some problems he can help, but not uhm uh, how do I say this uh,

B: He's not very forceful in his personality,

A: That, Right.

B: so if you need a supervisor to bulldoze another supervisor into agreeing to something, he's not the person.

A: No. Right. But, uh, do you need, I mean, do you find some time to do that? uh uh?

B: I'll give you an example. The the thing that we're doing

A: Oh, this recently, yes,

B: with the system testers.

A: yeah.

B: Uh, we're

A: (laugh) [first name T]'s still checking.
(laugh)

B: in our current release,

A: Mm.

B: uh a new system test supervisor has come in, and he's implemented a procedure where when we get an MR and we make a fix we're not

allowed to submit it until we have the system
tester's review the fix

I: Mm hmm.

B: and essentially bless it.

I: (laugh)

B: Now, you know, for the last eight years, or
whatever this project's been going, we've
never had anything like that.

I: Mm hmm.

B: And the fact that [first name of supervisor]
couldn't get this shot down, I think is an
example that when he needs to be strong and
forceful with other supervisors and the
department head, he doesn't do it. He sorta
just

?: Mm.

B: acquiesced to this and

D: Right. And,

B: now there's a lot of overhead in terms of

?: Mm hmm.

B: administrative things that we have to do.

(S4, FG, 35-38)

This brings [B]'s exposition to an end, and the
conversation turns away from the supervisor's style toward a
discussion of the relationship between the work group and
the system testers.

Difference Within the Representation of the Supervisor

To analyze the representation given above, we should begin with the supervisor. The supervisor is in the position of the (tragic) hero in Bakhtin's (1919-1986/1990) sense. That is, his is the central subjectivity represented in the passage. In Bakhtin's terms, this introduces a first "plane of meaning" into the representation.

The Supervisor's Plane of Meaning.

One difference between the above data and the example discussed earlier is that, unlike Bakhtin's sufferer, the supervisor actually exists outside his representation. This is partly a quirk of Bakhtin's example, in that the sufferer could also exist. More importantly, while recognizing that there is more to the supervisor than [B] is aware of, or than [B] chose to represent in this instance, it is with the supervisor as represented which we are concerned in our analysis. We are analyzing the representation, not the supervisor.

There are two key elements to the supervisor as represented. The first is the inherent limitation in his managerial style. The second is that he is unaware of this limitation.

The supervisor's weakness is first formulated as "a reactionary style" and latter as "He's not very forceful in his personality" (S4, FG, 35 and 36). This is described as

leading to problems on the job: "sometimes its hard to follow priorities" and "sometimes it gets a little confusing" (S4, FG, 36). There is no indication, however, that the supervisor is not acting in earnest when he "reacts to whoever's yelling at him the loudest" (S4, FG, 36). The supervisor is represented as trying to do a good job but failing due to a limitation of which he is unaware.

[B]'s Plane of Meaning.

We now come to a second difference between our analysis and those of Bakhtin (1919-1986/1990). [B]'s exposition is not a work of art in the sense developed by Bakhtin. We can develop a similar analysis, however, on two grounds. First, while [B]'s representation may not be an aesthetic act, it is an ethical act in Bakhtin's sense. That is, it is an act of evaluation which actively engages [B]'s evaluative context with that of the supervisor. Second, as an act of representation, [B]'s exposition shares certain qualities with an aesthetic act which are key to our analysis. [B] presents the supervisor's experience outside of its own context in order to express something beyond that experience.

[B]'s evaluative context differs sharply from that of the supervisor in that he is aware of the supervisor's limitation. Given the two formulations of the supervisor's weakness it is not clear from the data whether we should interpret [B]'s value orientation as one of frustration

("reactionary style") or resignation ("not very forceful in his personality"). Frustration is predicated on the possibility of change in the supervisor's behavior. Resignation, on the other hand, would suggest that the supervisor could not change. Still, it is predicated on the possibility that things could be different, were it not for the weakness.

Either way, [B]'s evaluative context is open to possibilities which the supervisor's is not. Because [B] is aware of the limitation, because he sees the supervisor as the supervisor cannot see himself, [B] is open to the possibility of the supervisor without the limitation. This image of the supervisor without the limitation is not the same as the supervisor's self-image unaware of the limitation because it offers a solution to the problems attributed to the limitation ("hard to follow priorities," "confusing").

This image of the supervisor without the limitation becomes a backdrop on which [B] projects the image of the supervisor with the limitation. We see this when he states "...if you need a supervisor to bulldoze another supervisor into agreeing to something, he's not the person" (S4, FG, 36). We can also see it in his summation of his example: "...the fact that [first name supervisor] couldn't get this shot down, I think is an example that when he needs to be strong and forceful with other supervisors and the

department head, he doesn't do it" (S4, FG, 37). In both cases the desired behavior ("bulldoze," "get this shot down") is the backdrop against which the limitation is presented ("he's not the person," "he doesn't do it").

This is indicative of [B]'s evaluative context. He is a subordinate of the supervisor. The supervisors limitation directly impacts on his work life. Seeing the limitation, he is able to attribute the difficulties and confusion to it, whereas the supervisor might attribute them to the problems to which he is responding.

Finalization. An interesting complexity arises when one analyzes the relationship between the supervisor's and [B]'s planes of meaning. In one sense, the supervisor's subjectivity is unfinalized, and is finalized through [B]'s rendering of it. The supervisor perceives himself as "react[ing]" to each "problem" in and of itself, openly. Only in [B]'s subjectivity are those reactions fixed by the supervisors inherent limitation.

On the other hand, [B]'s awareness of the limitation opens him to the possibility of the supervisor without the limitation. As we have seen, the supervisor is closed to these possibilities because his lack of awareness of his limitation finalizes it. It closes off the possibility of change. In this way, the supervisor's and [B]'s experience of the supervisor's managing each have both a finalized and an unfinalized moment.

This issue is underscored by the results of a reliability study I carried out as a side analysis¹⁴. Each of the 120 references to the supervisor were rated as finalized (Object scale) or unfinalized (Agency scale) by myself and two other raters. Each scale had three points ranging from "very little" to "very much." "Cannot tell" was a fourth option, producing some missing data. Each set of ratings showed a moderate negative correlation between the two scales as rated by each rater ($\underline{r} = -.46$, $n=102$, $p < .001$; $\underline{r} = -.55$, $n=116$, $p < .001$; and $\underline{r} = -.51$, $n=120$, $p < .001$).

Despite the similar pattern within raters, the correlations between ratings on the same scale by different raters were near zero ($\underline{r} = .08$, $n=105$, $p = .41$; $\underline{r} = .08$, $n=105$, $p = .41$; and $\underline{r} = .06$, $n=120$, $p = .49$ for the Object scale; $\underline{r} = -.11$, $n=100$, $p = .30$; $\underline{r} = .25$, $n=104$, $p < .02$; and $\underline{r} = .28$, $n=116$, $p < .01$ for the Agency scale). Taken together, these results suggest that while there was some consistency between scales for each rater, there was no consistency between raters for each scale.

The non-significant findings should not be taken as evidence for a given interpretation for several reasons. First of all, the distributions of the scale scores violate assumptions of normality. Second, there are four distinct reasons for a low correlation between any two scales, none

¹⁴I am indebted to Karina Hui and Ruth Diones for their participation.

of which are mutually exclusive (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955). Similarly, once the link to a common construct between raters is broken, there is no way to distinguish construct variability from rater variability. The two are not statistically distinct (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1988).

The pattern of correlations nevertheless provides an adequate description of the relationship between the ratings for our purposes. This pattern helps underline the conceptual error underlying the attempted study. It assumed that any given reference was either finalized or not. In fact, the forgoing analyses suggest that any one reference can have both finalized and unfinalized moments.

The Audience's Plane of Meaning.

A third plane of meaning is introduced by the people [B] is talking to. Of course each of us had our own evaluative context, mine being particularly different from those of [A], [C], and [D]. For our purposes, however, it is enough to touch on them collectively.

We can begin by referring back to the heuristic device of separating meaning into four poles: poetic, citational, referential, and performative. Up to this point, the analysis has primarily be concerned with the referential aspect of [B]'s exposition. The other focus group participants, however, respond in ways which suggest that we shift our focus to the performative pole.

[B] begins his exposition in a context in which the

group has articulated a universally favorable assessment of their supervisor in contrast to other supervisors. Just before my probe, the group articulates a sense of we-ness, hoping that "the whole group, as we are here," can "take over another project" (S4, FG, 34). The work group, including the supervisor, is twice referred to as "the whole gang" (S4, FG, 34).

The intention to be critical of the supervisor runs against this context. Performatively, it is not an expression of we-ness. As such, [B] begins with two positive overtures: "I like [first name of supervisor]," and "[first name of supervisor] as a person is a very nice guy" (S4, FG, 35). Then, [B] states his criticism gently: "Sometimes its hard to understand his managerial style a little bit. I, ...would classify it as a reactionary style" (S4, FG, 35). This is immediately followed by [A] interjecting "Nobody's perfect" (S4, FG, 35).

[B] begins again in a conciliatory tone. He agrees "yeah, nobody's perfect" and amplifies "everybody's got their faults" (S4, FG, 35-36). Only then does he launch into a more forceful statement of his criticism. After this, [A] concedes the criticism, but questions it import: "But, uh, do you need, I mean, do you find some time to do that?" (S4, FG, 36). [B] then responds with his example.

These performative dynamics indicate that as [B] is evaluating the supervisor, the group is evaluating [B] in

his evaluation of the supervisor. In discussing the supervisor, they are not only exchanging information but positioning themselves with respect to the supervisor and the group. [B]'s critical stance modifies this positioning, and meets with some resistance in the process.

[B] is aware of this and is able to respond to it. He is not, however, able to step out of himself and into an exterior perspective. He perceives it from within. As such, the group's response as audience to [B]'s exposition adds another plane of meaning to it. Unlike [B], they are able to see him from the outside as he makes his criticism. They see him introducing a spacing into the previously asserted we-ness, and they see it from the outside as a movement away from them. This is a plane of meaning [B] can understand from without, but cannot directly co-experience.

Finalization. In the same sense, then, in which [B] finalizes the supervisor, the audience finalizes [B]. The supervisor's open experience of his managing is finalized in [B]'s assessment of it. Similarly, [B]'s open experience of his evaluation of the supervisor is finalized in the audience's assessment of it. Each plane of meaning holds the potential for a different configuration of finalizing moments.

We could continue this analysis to include my plane of meaning in presenting [B]'s exposition in order to say something about organizational culture, and your plane of

meaning, as reader, in evaluating my representation from without. Moving beyond organization members, however, would take us outside our current purpose. Instead, we should briefly comment on one remaining plane of meaning which is not unique to particular evaluative contexts.

The Cognitive Plane of Meaning.

Each of the planes of meaning we have identified so far are unique to a particular evaluative context. In Bakhtin's (1919-1986/1990) terms, they are non-reversible. The supervisor, [B], and the audience are each fixed in the plane of meaning they occupy because of who and where they are. There is a plane of meaning, however, in which people are essentially interchangeable. Bakhtin calls this the cognitive plane.

In the passage we are analyzing, this plane can be seen to be implicated in each of the other planes. First, [B] appeals to the cognitive plane in representing the supervisor without reference to his own internal experience of the behaviors [B] is describing. This quickly becomes situated in [B]'s own evaluative context, however, until he states his criticism in the form of a general rule: "so if you need a supervisor to bulldoze another supervisor into agreeing to something, he's not the person" (S4, FG, 36). This generalized 'you' again appeals to the cognitive plane by making each of the work group members interchangeably insertable into the 'you' of the general rule. In doing so,

it engages the audience's plane by depersonalizing the issue of we-ness.

Analysis Summary.

The foregoing analysis has identified various evaluative contexts associated with specific participants in the representation of the supervisor. Each evaluative context introduces a unique plane of meaning to the representation. These differ in their finalizing moments. In addition, there is a cognitive plane which is not tied to a specific evaluative context. Further, each of these planes was seen to be mutually engaged with the others.

As such, the analysis revealed layers of meaning within the act of representing the supervisor. These levels cannot be collapsed because it is the relationship between them, made possible by their separation, which constitutes the act of representation. At the same time, they cannot be completely separated because of the ways in which they rely on one another. As such, the analysis of [B]'s representation of the supervisor has revealed a form of difference within.

We understand this as a form of difference within organizational culture by the same logic developed earlier in the paper. Cultural meanings are reproduced in and practiced through the discursive practices of the organization. In our example, the act of representing another organization member through the organization's

discursive practices involved the mutual engagement of various planes of meaning specific to particular participants in the act of representation. In this case, difference within the culture was a precondition of its practice.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has developed a form of difference within related to the representation of people. To the extent that the meanings involved in an organization's culture involve people, we would expect it to share in this form of difference within.

The data analyzed indicated that the various participants in an act of representation -- the person represented, the representor, and those to whom the representation is presented -- each bring distinct evaluative contexts to the act of representation. These distinct contexts introduce different planes of meaning. The act of representation is constituted out of the mutual engagement of these different planes.

As such, the meaning of the representation is more complex than can be expressed through singular approaches to organizational culture. The problem is that such approaches limit their analysis of meaning to the cognitive plane. In order to fully understand the meaning in an act of representation, however, it is necessary to take into account the various planes of meaning involved in the act.

These findings have particular significance for attempts to interpret stories associated with particular organizations and their cultures. The act of finalization by the representor, in this case the storyteller, is an act of fixing the story's meaning. As we have seen, however, this is only one moment in the meaning of the story. A full analysis would have to take into account the meaning of the story from a variety of evaluative contexts. One cannot simply render the storyteller's intent as the universal meaning of the story.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SUMMARY

AND OTHER FEIGNED CLOSURES

The thrust of this research report is that organizational culture cannot be adequately understood without reference to difference within. Difference within is the state of affairs which obtains when two or more processes or structures operating within a single entity or event can be contrasted, but cannot be reduced to or synthesized into a unitary process or structure. With respect to organizational culture, this has been analyzed in terms of simultaneously active systems of meaning which are neither separable nor unitary in nature. The presence of this phenomenon in an organization indicates that the organization's culture cannot be adequately described in terms of a single unitary meaning system.

Parts One and Two developed the theoretical and methodological basis for investigating difference within organizational culture. The concepts and methods of discursive psychology were drawn upon to support the inquiry. Parts Three and Four developed various forms of difference within organizational culture and presented evidence for them. Each form of difference within constitutes a phenomenon which cannot be explained, or even articulated, if organizational culture is understood as a unitary system of shared meanings.

Chapter Six developed a form of difference within related to the specificity of discourse to specific domains or spheres. Analyses found that in different contexts words could fall on different sides of the basic dichotomies which order the discourse without creating contradictions. This constitutes a form of difference within because the phenomenon cannot be fully described either in terms of two separate meanings of a word or in terms of a single unitary meaning. As such, a unitary system of shared meanings cannot account for this phenomenon.

Chapter Seven developed a form of difference within related to the different accents put on words when used to voice different perspectives, and the diacritical relations between these perspectives. Analyses showed that two meanings were often simultaneously active because opposing views turned a statement of "this" into an implicit or explicit "this not that." This was described in terms of addressivity between the voices which placed different accents on shared words. This also constitutes a form of difference within a word's meaning which cannot be accounted for by a unitary system of shared meanings.

Chapter Eight developed a form of difference within the meanings which are shared between two opposing views. Propositions with shared referential meaning were shown to bear different relationships to unshared propositions. This produces tensions within the shared meanings as unshared

meanings reflect differently in them. Again, this constitutes a form of difference within and cannot be accounted for by a unitary system of shared meanings.

Chapter Nine developed a form of difference within produced by the rhetorical constructions used to communicate. Whether adopted in a conscious effort or as a matter of convention, rhetorical structures suppress certain aspects of a phenomenon in order to reveal others. The suppression holds the suppressed meanings present in the rhetoric, however concealed in the overt message. This suppression-retention results in another case of simultaneously active but incommensurable patterns of meaning. This is another phenomenon which cannot be accounted for in terms of singular unitary systems of meaning.

Chapter Ten developed difference within the textualization of people. Such textualization was shown to involve multiple planes of meaning corresponding to the specific evaluative contexts of the participants in the representation. This includes the person represented, the person doing the representing, and the people to whom the representation is directed. Further, these planes differ in how and whether they finalize the various participants. Due to the separation between and interconnectedness between these planes, they constitute a form of difference within organizational culture. This provides a final example of a

phenomenon which cannot be accounted for if organizational culture is understood as a unitary system of meaning.

These findings in no way invalidate previous research in organizational culture. Singular and systemic approaches to organizational culture were a response to the need to establish organizational culture as a phenomenon and as an accepted research topic. Through this process, however, important complexities of organizational culture were suppressed.

The elucidation of difference within organizational culture builds upon previous research by addressing complexities which were glossed over by previous approaches. For some purposes a singular representation of an organization's culture might be adequate. For other purposes, however, it will not be. It should not, therefore, be taken for granted as an implicit premise. This research has provided data to remedy the latter condition.

The next section develops the relationship between the current study and previous research in more detail. The remaining sections discuss some of the limitations, applications, and implications of this research.

Assimiliations

The abstractions introduced in the last few paragraphs can be rendered concrete by borrowing from philosophy the practice of rereading theorists based upon new findings.

The theory of organizational culture developed by Schein (1991a, 1991b) was introduced in Chapter One. In addition to being a relatively comprehensive and explicit theory, it has the advantage of having been summarized twice, allowing some comparison between expositions. This will also help render concrete some of the conclusions stated in the chapter summaries.

Schein breaks his definition into six conceptual units. His development of these units articulates his conception of organizational culture, and provides a good point of entry for our rereading. He begins by stating "Culture is: 1. A pattern of shared basic assumptions," (1991b, p. 247). As the genus of Schein's definition, almost every word requires some rereading.

First, we cannot read 'pattern' to mean a fixed or closed system (Barley, 1983). On the basis of the present research, we cannot even read 'pattern' as a dynamic but singular set. Rather, we need to recognize that even a temporally fixed snapshot of the pattern contains multiplicities of meaning which cannot be expressed in terms of a singular set.

More important to the present research, a natural reading of Schein indicates a dualistic ontology in which the shared assumptions are stored inside members' minds in a way which is somehow separate from the cultural sphere of social interaction. It is difficult to specify what form

these assumptions could take, however, if not linguistic. We have seen that anything linguistic is necessarily caught up in the discursive practices of the organization, and therefore its culture. Further, as part of the discursive practices which reproduce the culture, these assumptions would be expected to carry multiple intertwined meanings. We need to consider this in our reading of 'pattern' to avoid a singular notion of an organization's culture.

Next, we cannot read 'shared' simply to indicate something held in common in an equivalent and interchangeable fashion. Bourdieu (1991/1977-1985, 1984/1979) has articulated the extent to which people at different strata cannot be said to share equally in a culture. The present study goes further to argue that even participants within a strata will share differently in the culture depending upon the specifics of the speech situation. Moreover, each individual shares in a culture in multiple and simultaneous ways. As such, we have to read 'share' as participating in a common culture in multiple and differentiated ways.

Third, we cannot read 'basic' as indicating a foundational structure. This would suggest that specific communicative actions are produced by applying the abstract rules embodied in the culture. We have seen that such a reading would result in placing the reproduction of the basic assumptions outside the domain of the theory. By

arguing that the culture is reproduced by the concrete communicative actions which take place from day to day, the present approach has reclaimed the process of reproduction. In this light, 'basic' should only be read to mean general and perhaps basic to our outside description.

Finally, we need to be cautious about our reading of 'assumptions.' As stated earlier, and developed throughout the previous chapters, this should not be limited to things which have been consciously adopted. As a dynamic system, cultural components may interact to produce new components of a culture which were never consciously adopted.

'Assumptions' should be read in a broad sense to include what communicative actions can be said to assume without regard to which assumptions are now or were ever conscious assumptions.

Schein continues with a list of differentia to limit the forgoing genus. He continues the definition with "2. invented, discovered or developed by a given group," (1991b, p. 247). The previous comments on 'assumption' apply here. We need to exploit a broader notion of 'developed' to include all the consequences of collective practice and reproduction of a culture.

Schein continues "3. as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration," (1991b, p. 247). The simplest reading is to understand Schein as saying that an organization forms its culture in

response to these problems only when it is first forming. Combining our understanding of cultural reproduction with Schein's acknowledgement that organizations continue to face these problems (1991a, p.382), however, we can produce a more complex reading. In this reading, we understand Schein as referring to an ongoing process of adaptation and cultural production.

Schein concludes his definition with three more aspects: "4. that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, 5. is to be taught to new members of the group as the 6. correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (Schein, 1991b, p. 247). The phrase "is to be taught" is unfortunate in that it deviates from the language of description, sounding more like prescription. Schein (1991a) elaborates this aspect of the definition as "it must be taught" in order for a "culture to serve its function" (p. 379).

Schein articulates this teaching of culture in terms of socialization (1991a, p. 380). This concept has been severely criticized for the way it takes individuals to be whole unto themselves and affected from the outside by a radically separate environment (Hollway, 1989). Such a view ignores the extent to which an individual is socially constituted within discourse, culture, and organization. We can save Schein from this criticism by altering our reading of 'taught.' To do this, it will be helpful to follow

Wanous' (1980) lead in recasting the issue in terms of entering an organization.

We began by taking people to be constituted as individuals only within culturally imbued discursive practices. It follows that people are not the people they are within an organization until they enter the organization. Organizational entrants have to learn to practice a culture to be effective in their jobs (Das and Boje, 1993), and in doing so they grow and change. Whether members of the organization aid newcomers in this process formally, informally, or unconsciously, is a secondary question. We can avoid the difficulty by reading 'taught' to mean that newcomers must learn to practice the organization's culture in order to function within it.

This introduces another more difficult aspect of reading 'shared.' Schein (1991b) elaborates: "the passing on of assumptions through the socialization process is the test of sharedness and taken-for-grantedness. It distinguishes assumptions that are idiosyncratic from those that are a shared characteristic of the group" (p. 251). The links we have developed between organizational culture and the material reality of what people do and say on a daily basis render problematic this radical separation between the cultural/shared and the idiosyncratic.

Anything a person does or says in an organization is practiced and received within the context of that

organization's culture. As a result, even idiosyncracies are cultural. Even to act against a culture is to act within it. We therefore need to minimize this radical separation between culture and idiosyncrasy in our rereading of 'shared.'

We have only given a flavor of the directions in which a comprehensive rereading could go. We would have to go on at great length to deal with the intricacies of Schein's treatment of subculture, the management of culture, the constraints culture puts on management, as so forth. This is enough, however, to render concrete the comments made at the end of the previous section.

Our capacity to produce this reading is evidence of the continued viability of Schein's articulation of organizational culture. The details of the reading indicate the contribution of the current research. The particulars of such a rereading would, of course, differ for other articulations of organizational culture. At a general level, however, similar rereadings would apply. Rather than providing grounds for the rejection of previous work, the present study strengthens their contribution by forwarding the sophistication of our readings of them.

At the same time, we still have the option of continuing with an older reading. This may still guide research and practice in useful ways despite the things which it overlooks. The difference is that we can now make

an informed choice to overlook them.

Limitations

Research generally involves a series of tradeoffs. Each of these tradeoffs imposes a limitation. Some of the tradeoffs involved in this study are described below.

As with all research, this study is dependent upon some prior theoretical commitments. An attempt has been made to make them explicit working hypotheses, rather than to leave them implicit in the rhetoric of the paper. This is by no means a finite or realizable goal. As was discussed in Chapter Four, each such commitment simultaneously opens the way to some insights, and closes the way to others.

The data collection made a tradeoff, giving up complete naturalness for a more focused approach. The discourse analyzed is clearly prompted by, and hence influenced by, the research itself. Still, the texts analyzed are actual employees' responses to plain language queries about their organization. The analysis captures the texture of the various kinds of discourse which carry organizational culture. The various concessions made in naturalness of data provided for a more powerful data collection strategy which maximized the usefulness of the data in addressing the research questions.

The formalisms involved in the analyses often give up comprehensiveness and certain subtleties in exchange for procedural consistency or methodological expediency. For

instance, in some cases the analysis is restricted to words because they are easily counted and are mutually exclusive (unlike phrases), where the phenomenon analyzed is attributed to words, phrases, and other communicative actions. In such cases, it is anticipated that the results derived from the analysis of words will readily generalize to most other communicative actions. Exceptions to this may warrant additional research beyond the scope of the present study.

We have investigated the nature of organizational culture at the expense of how its attributes might be associated with things outside of the culture. This is in line with Barley's (1983) suggestion that we need to ask "of what is [a culture] composed, how are its parts structured, and how does it work?" before we ask what a culture does or what it can do (p. 394).

As such, the study does not provide the kind of if-then instrumental results commonly referred to as "levers." By providing a better understanding of the nature of organizational culture, however, it provides a firmer grounding for such instrumental research. Those who wish to measure culture need to be clear about what they are measuring before they address how it is related to other constructs (Embretson, 1983). A better understanding of the dynamics of organizational life is to the advantage of people at all levels in organizations, including would-be

managers of meaning.

Finally, the study favors the analysis of meaning at the level of the signifier (here generalized to communicative action) as opposed to propositional content. The former has been associated with a typically French tradition following Saussure, and the latter with a typically anglophone tradition following Wittgenstein (Frank, 1992).

The reason for favoring the former was touched upon in Chapter Four which mentioned that propositional logics generally assume that the meaning of the terms used in the logic are mutually understood and agreed upon. As such, analysis based upon such propositional logics is inappropriate for research which questions the realizability of that very assumption in organizational discourse. Semantic analysis based upon propositional logic would simply beg the question. Propositional semantic analysis was used, however, in Chapters Eight and Nine where it was appropriate to the analyses. The above assumption does not beg the question addressed in those chapters.

It has been suggested that a propositional logic which goes beyond the either-or logic of agreed upon meanings could be developed (Kristeva, 1986). Such a project, however, is far beyond the scope of this research.

Applications

The research has a number of applications for practice.

First, it provides a new conceptual apparatus for those who would use our understanding of organizational culture in decisions made and actions taken within organizations. As we saw in Part One, the idea that an organization's culture may be made up of distinct parts such as subcultures is familiar enough. These parts, however, have been thought of as either singular in themselves, or ultimately divisible into singular elements.

Without detracting from the positive contributions of previous work, the current research adds to this the idea that cultures are not composed of singular elements. It suggests that the consumers of organizational culture theory are missing important aspects of an organization's culture if they are only looking for singular systems of meaning. Modification of practice to attend to difference within organizational culture may make visible issues clouded by a unitary approach. An understanding of the role discourse plays in reproducing and modifying culture offers a more concrete approach to addressing these issues.

Second, the research suggests that the relationship between culture and leadership is even more complex than the management of meaning literature would suggest. First, this research suggests that culture is responsive to and influences people at all levels of an organization. Further, it suggests that organizational culture has effects of which organization members, including leaders, are not

aware. Finally, organizational culture can carry internal tensions which press in contrary directions. Taking all of this into account, organizational culture is more likely than not to turn attempts to influence it in unexpected directions.

For instance, Smirchich and Morgan (1991) recognize "the importance of the voluntary nature of the enactments and sense-making activities initiated by members of the situation being managed," and wish only to "emphasize the special and important position accorded to the leader's view of the situation in the frame of reference of others" (p. 472). This research suggests that there are additional complexities involved in a leader's attempt to "embody through use of appropriate language, rituals, and other forms of symbolic discourse, the meanings and values conducive to desired modes of organized action" (p. 472).

Leaders simply cannot expect their "language, rituals, and other forms of symbolic discourse" to retain the singularity of meaning that they may attach to them. Others have pointed out that the skillful reinterpretation of leader's intended meanings is a form of resistance (To, 1993; Scott, 1990, 1987). This research goes beyond this to suggest that, due to the kind of addressivity analyzed in Chapter Seven, a leader's attempt to put in place one interpretation may actually strengthen the interpretation he or she is trying to displace. This is because the very act

of addressing it helps legitimize it.

Further, we need to recognize that issues of power and influence are not restricted to leaders. An act of symbolic management is inserted into the context of complex dynamics going on between the subordinates (K. Hui, personal communication, April 23, 1995). As the leader's symbolic act is refracted through this context, it not only becomes fractured by competing interpretations, but takes on completely new layers of meaning. For instance, if the leader's preferred meaning favors one faction involved in a power struggle among the subordinates, the symbolic act takes on the additional meaning of appearing to favor that faction.

This is not to say that an understanding of an organization's culture cannot be used constructively. It is to say that culture is not easily managed. Attempts at culture change are more complex than the literature currently suggests.

The understanding of organizational culture developed in this research also has implications for the work force diversity literature. To the extent that organizational membership is more diverse we can expect a more diverse archive of communicative actions feeding into the organization's archive. To the extent that diversity becomes stratified in organizations we can expect deeply ingrained organizational subcultures, and more communicative

tension between levels. To the extent that diverse organizations develop strong dominant cultures, we can expect these cultures to be imbued with a dense undergrowth of marginalized meanings stemming from the diversity of meanings brought to the organization.

It is not simply a matter of vertical stratification, however, in that employees tend to form racial enclaves within strata as well (Lefkowitz, 1994). While this may actually facilitate communication within work groups, it turns communication between them into cross-cultural communication. On the basis of this research, we would expect the overall culture to incorporate complex interlacing of meanings associated with the various groups and their interrelations. Attempts to address this within the organization will be complicated by the sensitivity of race as a topic.

Similarly, we can also comment upon the increasing trend toward smaller cores of company employees and larger peripheries of temporary workers who are not actual employees of the company although they may have a long-term relationship with the company. This trend reduces costs by allowing companies to avoid commitments to benefits or job security for large portions of their work force. At the same time, such a strategy clearly has implications for what it is like to work at the organization.

Analysis in terms of an organizational archive suggests

that this will impact not only the temporary workers, but the employee core as well. The temporary workers, owing to their different relationship with the organization and their affiliations with multiple organizations, will infuse the organizational discourse, and therefore the culture, with a broad undercurrent of diverse meanings. Many of these are likely to run counter to traditional workplace values such as loyalty to the organization and subordination of short-term gains to the long-term good of the company. Most directly related to this research, it will be important to understand that these effects cannot be understood in terms of a simple, or even complex, partitioning of the work force or the culture. Instead, areas of local impact will spread waves throughout the culture rendering all of it more complex.

Finally, the findings may offer an answer to "the uniqueness paradox" in organizational culture. The paradox was posed by Martin, Feldman, Hatch and Sitkins (1983), who reported two related findings. First, members of organizations illustrate the unique characteristics of their organization with stories. Second, these stories can be neatly summarized into seven basic types on the basis of the purportedly unique characteristics they illustrate. The uniqueness paradox, then, is that organizations illustrate their uniqueness using anything-but-unique stories. The claim of uniqueness is made on the basis of exactly those

aspects which the stories hold in common.

The answer to this paradox suggested by the present data is that it results from the abstract systemization of stories which are contextually situated communicative actions. The paradox analysis treats uniqueness from the analyst's point of view. This is not, however, the point of view which produced the discursive activity in which the stories are imbedded.

The analyses brought out the extent to which cultural identity is diacritical. Much of the discourse was devoted to contrasting the work group's characteristics with dissimilar others. So, people tell similar stories about the uniqueness of their work places because they are unique from specific other types of work places. Similar types of workplaces do not enter the discursive field, and therefore do not play a role in defining uniqueness in the context of telling the story.

Implications

More broadly, the study also involves, or is involved in, issues of more general theoretical interest. One such issue is that of disciplinary boundaries. This research is supported by the previous efforts of authors from a wide variety of disciplines. This reflects not only the convictions of the author, but the necessity of drawing from various sources in order to gather the resources needed to formulate and address the research questions. This would

not have been possible within the bounds of any single discipline.

Unfortunately, the dominant trends in social science, pressed on by the information explosion and the increasingly technical and specific nature of research concerns, are toward more insularity between academic disciplines. Interdisciplinary programs such as Women's Studies and Cognitive Science are an important counter-force so long as they do not become insular in themselves. The pressures which impede the flow of information and ideas across disciplinary boundaries, and their effects on our sciences, deserve our attention.

Another such issue is the relationship between the individual and the social.¹⁵ This problem is related to the previous one in that Psychology and Sociology are often distinguished from one another on the basis of taking an individual or social point of view. The distinction rests on a shared assumption that both the individual and the social can be understood independently of the other.

This study follows the lead of those who seek to question the intelligibility of individuality and sociality separate from one another (Vygotsky, 1992/1934). If the individual can only be understood through the social, and

¹⁵'The' is understood here as the accepted condensation of the more philosophically exact but awkward 'that which is.' This sense of 'the individual' is distinct from the more organic sense in which it is opposed to 'the group.'

vice versa, this also calls for a closer association between Psychology and other social sciences, including Sociology. It also calls for a serious questioning of the ontological status afforded these two concepts.

These issues have a particular bite for the first generation of post-Cold-War intelligentsia, by which I simply mean "people doing intellectual work" (Allen, 1992, pg. 616). While we may remember the Cold War, it does not shape our intellectual milieu. It is ours by inheritance.

Theoretical discourse in America could hardly have helped being shaped by the Cold War over the past decades, nor should it have. Many of my generation, however, feel a sense of foreignness with respect to certain aspects of this discourse. For instance, there is a tendency toward bipolar political allegiances (right-left, liberal-conservative, individualism-collectivism). Similarly, there is a preference for military metaphors (choosing sides, attack and defense, victory and defeat). These seemingly superficial stylistic markers are part of a fundamental order which runs very deep in current theoretical discourse. Recognizing that many of these predate the Cold War and that some may continue after it (J. Cutler, personal communication, April 11, 1995), the current feelings of foreignness coincide with the its end.

In a phrase attributed to Bertrand Russel, one should not assume that any given epistemology assumes any

particular politics. In this context, we should also be wary of the opposite error. I am not suggesting a direct correspondence between method and politics with respect to individualism and collectivism.

There is an influence, however, which goes beyond strict philosophical presupposition. This is the influence not of what is said but how and why, the influence of positioning, footing, and centering. The dimension of theory which is taught by example rather than through text books has its own influence. It is through these forces that some fall victim to a management bias while others succumb to a socialist chic. Whereas the Cold War may be over politically, we have only begun the project of untangling its epistemological effects.

We should all be questioning the continued efficacy of theoretical discourses framed in this way to address problems in the post-Cold-War world. It may be that these issues are more central to the moment of inquiry in social research than to the moment of application (J. Cutler, personal communication, April 11, 1995). This would still impact the applicability of social research. This is a conversation in which participants of all generations will make valuable contributions, but as the first generation of outsiders these are our questions to raise. I take this to be among my generation's most complex tasks, and most pressing responsibilities.

Finally, the research takes into consideration some of the complexities of the people it studies and their subjectivity. In an interview with Sneja Gunew, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak comments on the way issues of subjectivity have largely been treated as issues of the researcher and not the researched. Spivak takes the example of "people from Africa, from India, from these so-called natural places" (Spivak and Gunew, 1994, pg. 201). She describes the problem of how the researcher's "subjective structures can, in fact, give objective truth" as "the problem of autobiography" (Spivak and Gunew, 1994, pg. 201-202). At the same time, the subjectivity of the native informant has been left unquestioned. She concludes:

So that, once again, the theoretical problems only relate to the person who knows. The person who knows has all of the problems of selfhood. The person who is known, somehow seems not to have a problematic self. These days, it is the same kind of agenda that is at work. Only the dominant self can be problematic; the self of the Other is authentic without a problem, naturally available to all kinds of complications. This is very frightening (Spivak and Gunew, 1994, pg. 202).

This project can be read as an attempt to problematize the subjectivity of the known. In this case, the known research participants are not from Africa or India.

Nevertheless, the work place is often enough treated as a "natural place" for Spivak's comments to apply. In complicating the organizational culture literature, a primary emphasis of the research has been to bring the post-structuralist problematic of the phenomenological self to bear on the subjectivities of the research participants. By researching the difference within apparently unitary meanings, the research brings into question the extent to which the subjectivity of organization members can be taken as unitary.

A Last First Word

Tolkien (1982) expresses his preference for applicability over allegory because "the one resides in the freedom of the reader, and the other in the purposed domination of the author" (p. 11). A similar sentiment applies to my reporting of this research. Although it is not allegory, there is a certain "purposed domination" about the way social science research is commonly reported.

Drawing on Kuhnian imagery (1970), publication practices press every publication to be a "paradigmatic" text which sets the framework for hordes of "normal science" studies to follow. The predictable result is a tiresome array of frameworks, and a scarcity of followers. When every publication marks a revolution, revolutions are either hollow or piddling.

It is my hope that this research will neither be

ignored nor followed because it would only mark the failure or success of "purposed domination of the author." Rather, I hope it will be read, considered, and put to whatever use the reader sees fit. Organizational culture need not be studied in terms of difference within, but I hope the concepts arising from this research will be of use to others in understanding problems in organizational culture and elsewhere. In short, I offer this last word as no more than a first word.

APPENDIX A

APPARATUS

This appendix describes the equipment used in recording and transcribing the data. A note of explanation regarding the equipment failure is also included.

Recording Apparatus

The interview was piloted using two pressure zone (PZM) microphones and a four track tape recorder. Pilot participants indicated that the four track recorder was too large, and would intimidate participants in the actual study. It had the additional disadvantage of requiring an external power source.

For these reasons, an ordinary monophonic pocket tape recorder, using standard size cassettes, was used for the actual data collection. At Sites One and Two, the two PZM microphones were used. Sites Three and Four were recorded using the built-in condenser microphone.

The absence of the PZM microphones resulted in a significant reduction in the signal to noise ratio. This represented both a reduction in the signal strength and a substantial increase in white noise. This does not, however, appear to have translated into a comparable loss in quality of the transcriptions. The incidence of unrecognizable words is roughly comparable, and appears to have more to do with rapid speech or talking under one's breath than the recording apparatus. The reduced recording

quality seems only to have resulted in longer transcription times for the latter sites.

Original recordings were made on 120 minute cassettes. The reason for this is that they allowed for uninterrupted recording of an interview. The Site Four focus group was an exception, requiring a second cassette.

Transcription Apparatus

The original cassettes were duplicated onto 60 minute cassettes for transcription, with the exception of one 90 minute cassette for the long focus group. This was done using a standard cassette playback unit connected directly to a standard cassette deck. Sufficient overlap was allowed so that nothing was lost at the point at which the tape was turned over. The reason for the duplication is that 120 minute cassettes are unsuitable for transcription. Because of their lighter stock, frequent stopping and starting can result in stretching and distortion of the tape.

Transcription was done using foot controlled, variable speed transcription machines. Using the headphone output, these were played through a small guitar amplifier. The reason for this was not volume. Rather, the amplifier's larger speaker produced a significantly more easily understood reproduction of the taped voices. The smaller speaker on the transcriber attenuated the frequency range of the audio signal, producing a "tinny" sound. Such attenuation removes the overtones which are key to most

phonetic differentiation.

Equipment Failure

Finally, a word of explanation is in order regarding the equipment failure encountered during data collection. The problem was neither with the recorder nor the microphones, both of which functioned reliably. The problem was with the one-eighth inch microphone input with which the recorder was outfitted. Although substituting the smaller input for a standard one-fourth inch input allows for smaller recorders, it comes at a substantial cost. The slightest lateral pressure on this smaller input resulted in a loss of signal.

After the first equipment failure at Site One, experimentation suggested that the problem could be avoided simply by making sure that the Y-adapter used to combine the microphone signals was supporting its own weight. Site Two proved this wrong. As a result, the microphones were abandoned for Sites Three and Four.

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Introduction and explanation of interview.
 - A. "Would you please tell me something about your work? I would like to hear about what it is that you do."

(Probe until microphones seem forgotten)
2. Part I: "For the next two questions I would like to focus on specific parts of your work."
 - A. "I am interested in hearing about how your work involves coordinating with other units, offices, or groups in the (company/school). What is it that you do that requires the most coordination of this kind? Can you tell me about the last time you interacted with another unit?"

(confirm critical incident has been identified)

"What was it that you were doing?"

"Did the people you were dealing with see the activity differently from you? How so?"

(continue probing differences between the two sets of narratives as time and participant responsiveness allow.)
 - B. "I am interested in how you see your role in the (company/school). Of all the things you do here, which is the most important? What are the most important things for you to accomplish?"

(confirm topic choice)

"Can you tell me a little bit about why it is important?"

"Is there anyone who might see a different part of your work as more important? How do they see your work differently from the way you see it?"

(probe as appropriate)

3. Part II: "Now I would like to ask some general questions about working here."
 - A. "Overall, what kind of relationship do you have with your (supervisor/subordinates)? How would you describe it?"

"Can you give me an example?"
 - B. "In general, how does your (office/department/appropriate designation of work group) fit with the rest of the (company/school)? What is its role in the larger organization? How does it play that role?"

"Can you give me an example?"
 - C. "In general, what does it take for a new hire to become part of your group? What is it like for the group until they do?"

"Can you give me an example?"
 - D. "How do things get done around here? What does it take for someone to get something done?"

"Can you give me an example?"

APPENDIX C

SHARED CONTENT AND LATENT CONTENT

This appendix elaborates some of the analysis underlying the results reported in Chapter Eight. The first section develops some of the assumptions of predicate logic. The second section describes the identification of shared content. The third and final section reports the derivation of latent content.

Assumptions of Predicate Logic

Analysis in terms of predicate logic requires certain assumptions. First, as does all predicate logic, the rendering of the responses in propositional form requires an assumption that the meaning of the predicates is agreed upon. At least at the level of the truth functions of propositions, meaning is treated as unproblematic.

Although we have seen evidence in Chapter Seven that meaning is not always unproblematic, this does not rule out the use of predicate logic. All methods simplify certain aspects of a phenomenon in order to facilitate the analysis of others. Along these lines, the assumption can be understood as a methodological one designed to mute one phenomenon in the interest of revealing another.

Second, statements represented in the predicate logic are restricted to object language statements. Meta-linguistic statements are not permitted. As such, the layered fabric of meta-linguistic reference found in

ordinary speech has to be flattened out. Whereas people normally mix object language assertions with meta-linguistic judgements about those assertions, the analysis restricts the propositional systems to object language.

Finally, we cannot ignore the irony of using mathematical logic to address a research question derived in part from the theoretical work of Michel Foucault. He often used the identification of something with a "universal mathesis" as a form of reduction to absurdity (itself a logical concept). However, Foucault understood the underlying connectedness which makes rupture and discontinuity possible. I suspect he would not have been too surprised to see such an appropriation of the predicate calculus. In the context of this analysis, the predicate calculus does not speak for the logos. It is not invoked as guarantor of truth. It is simply one method, among others, used by one researcher, among many others, to understand one small discursive arena, among very many others.

Shared Content

Bourdieu (1977/1972) defines doxa in contradistinction to orthodoxy and heterodoxy as "the sum total of the theses tacitly posited on the hither side of all inquiry, which appear as such only retrospectively, when they come to be suspended practically" (p. 168). Doxa is the undisputed context within which divergent perspectives are opposed to one another. The present analyses require a method for

identifying such shared content.

The traditional test for presupposition offers a more refined definition of shared propositional content. Specifically, for a given proposition and its negation, if a proposition (a) must be true in order for the positive assertion from the pair to be true, and (b) must be true in order for the negation from the pair to be true, then it is presupposed by the pair (Keenan, 1971; Brown and Yule, 1983; Stubbs, 1983). The criticism that propositions identified as presuppositions by this procedure may not be consciously presupposed or implied by a speaker (Brown and Yule, 1983) is not relevant here because we are interested in the semantic space in which speaking is possible, and not the specific performative function of the speech.

This approach provides a test for presupposition, but does not provide a sufficient methodology for identifying shared content. The test requires a previously identified proposition to be tested. Identification of all shared content would require an exhaustive search, submitting every possible proposition to the prescribed test. A more efficient approach to identifying shared content is preferable.

As a first step, each perspective is translated into propositional form. This is useful because it overcomes problems of ellipsis. When a speaker is relating a point of disagreement between his or her view and another view in

actual conversation, it is extremely awkward to recite 'I think this is that but they think this is not that,' or some variation thereof. It is much more likely that a speaker will only state explicitly as much as is needed to indicate the difference of view without actually spelling out contradictory statements in their entirety. Putting the perspectives into propositional form makes these elliptical statements explicit.

The translation into propositional logic used here is compatible with Copi (1979). However, there are some differences involving sensitivity to the discursive context and performative qualities of the statements. For instance, in Copi's (1979, p. 9) example, 'Percival Lowell believed that Mars is inhabited,' the component statement 'Mars is inhabited' is not considered truth-functional because Percival Lowell's belief is not dependent upon the truth of the statement.

Similar statements in the data are treated somewhat differently. For instance, 'I think development should be the, our highest thing..., ' (I, 4, 21) is not interpreted to mean "It is my belief that development should be our highest thing irrespective of whether or not in truth it should be our highest thing." Rather, based upon the discursive context, it is interpreted as an assertion that 'Development should be our highest thing' and 'I think' is interpreted as a voice marker which is not truth-functional.

Once in propositional form, the two views can be further unpacked. Using standard rules of inference and quantification rules (Copi, 1979), we can derive additional propositions implicit in those derived from the text. In order to render the derivation of implicit content a finite task, however, it is necessary to place some restrictions on what is considered a new and distinct proposition. As such, these are restricted to inferences involving Modus Ponens, Modus Tollens, Hypothetical Syllogism, Disjunctive Syllogism, Constructive Dilemma, Destructive Dilemma, or Simplification. The other rules of inference, Conjunction and Addition, and replacement rules are only allowed as intermediary steps toward one of the above inferences.

I began the unpacking with the first two substantive propositions (see below). I then added additional propositions, one at a time, when all apparent deductions had been made from the available propositions. This provides a systematic approach to unpacking latent material in a system of propositions. I cannot prove that it provided an exhaustive set of all latent material. I suspect that such a proof would constitute a dissertation in itself. We can be reasonably confident, however, that any propositions which were missed are fairly few in number, and unlikely to affect the conclusions drawn at the end of the chapter.

Working from the propositional systems derived from

each view, it is then possible to identify shared propositional content. This is simply a matter of comparing the lists of propositions associated with the two views. Propositions occurring in both lists constitute shared content.

Derivation of Latent Content

The following derivations are based upon the premisses given in Table 17 in Chapter Eight. The unpacking of the group view is given first, followed by the other view. Intermediary steps are indented. Notation is compatible with Copi (1979) with the modifications described in Chapter Eight.

Group View.

18. $Ix > Bx$	10, UI
19. $(Dx \vee Ux) > Ix$	11, UI
20. $(Dx \vee Ux) > Bx$	18,19 H.S.
21. $(x) (Dx \vee Ux) > Bx$	20, UG
22. $(Dx \vee Ux) > Bx$	21, UI
23. $\sim(Dx \vee Ux) \vee Bx$	22, Impl.
24. $(\sim Dx * \sim Ux) \vee Bx$	23, De M.
25. $(\sim Dx \vee Bx) * (\sim Ux \vee Bx)$	24, Dist.
26. $\sim Dx \vee Bx$	25, Simp.
27. $\sim Ux \vee Bx$	25, Simp.
28. $Dx > Bx$	26, Impl.
29. $(x) (Dx > Bx)$	28, UG
30. $Ux > Bx$	27, Impl.

31. $(x)(Ux > Bx)$	30, UG
32. $((Dx \vee Ux) > Ix)$	11, UI
33. $\sim(Dx \vee Ux) \vee Ix$	32, Impl.
34. $(\sim Dx * \sim Ux) \vee Ix$	33, De M.
35. $(\sim Dx \vee Ix) * (\sim Ux \vee Ix)$	34, Dist.
36. $\sim Dx \vee Ix$	35, Simp.
37. $\sim Ux \vee Ix$	35, Simp.
38. $Dx > Ix$	36, Impl.
39. $(x)(Dx > Ix)$	38, UG
40. $Ux > Ix$	37, Impl.
41. $(x)(Ux > Ix)$	40, UG
42. $Ix > (Dx \vee Ux)$	12, UI
43. $Cx' * \sim Sx'$	13, EI
44. $(Sx \times Ax) > Rx$	14, UI
45. $Bx'' * Sx'' * \sim Rx''$	15, EI
46. $(Sx'' * Ax'') > Rx''$	14, 45, UI
47. $\sim Rx''$	45, Simp.
48. $\sim(Sx'' * Ax'')$	46, 47, M.T.
49. $Sx'' * \sim Rx''$	45, Simp.
50. $\sim Sx'' \vee \sim Ax''$	48, De M.
51. Sx''	49, Simp.
52. $\sim Ax''$	50, 51, D.S.
53. Bx''	45, Simp.
54. $Bx'' * \sim Ax''$	52, 53, Conj.
55. $(Ex)(Bx * \sim Ax)$	54, EG
56. $(Sx * Ax) > \sim Px$	16, UI

57. $(Bx * Sx) > Px$	17, UI
58. $Px > \sim(Sx * Ax)$	56, Trans.
59. $(Bx * Sx) > \sim(Sx * Ax)$	57, 58, H.S.
60. $\sim(Bx * Sx) \vee \sim(Sx * Ax)$	59, Impl.
61. $\sim((Bx * Sx) * (Sx * Ax))$	60, De M.
62. $\sim(Bx * (Sx * (Sx * Ax)))$	61. Assoc.
63. $\sim(Bx * ((Sx * Sx) * Ax))$	62. Assoc.
64. $\sim(Bx * (Sx * Ax))$	63. Taut.
65. $\sim((Sx \vee Ax) * Bx)$	64. Comm.
66. $\sim(Sx * (Ax * Bx))$	65. Assoc.
67. $\sim Sx \vee \sim(Ax * Bx)$	66. De M.
68. $Sx > \sim(Ax * Bx)$	67. Impl.
69. $(x)(Sx > \sim(Ax * Bx))$	68. UG

Other View.

19. $Ix > Bx$	10, UI
20. $(Dx \vee Sx) > Ix$	11, UI
21. $(Dx \vee Sx) > Bx$	19, 20, H.S.
22. $(x)((Dx \vee Sx) > Bx)$	21, UG
23. $\sim(Dx \vee Sx) \vee Ix$	20, Impl.
24. $(\sim Dx * \sim Sx) \vee Ix$	23, De M.
25. $(\sim Dx \vee Ix) * (\sim Sx \vee Ix)$	24, Dist.
26. $(Dx > Ix) * (Sx > Ix)$	25, Impl.
27. $Dx > Ix$	26, Simp.
28. $(x)(Dx > Ix)$	27, UG
29. $Sx > Ix$	26, Simp.
30. $(x)(Sx > Ix)$	29, UG

31. $Dx > Bx$	19, 27, H.S.
32. $(x)(Dx > Bx)$	31, UG
33. $Sx > Bx$	19, 29, H.S.
34. $(x)(Sx > Bx)$	33, UG
35. $(Ix > (Dx \vee Sx))$	12, UI
36. $Sx > Cx$	13, UI
37. $\sim Ix \vee (Dx \vee Sx)$	35, Impl.
38. $(\sim Ix \vee Dx) \vee Sx$	37, Assoc.
39. $Sx \vee (\sim Ix \vee Dx)$	38, Comm.
40. $\sim(\sim Ix \vee Dx) > Sx$	38, Impl.
41. $(\sim\sim Ix * \sim Dx) > Sx$	40, De M.
42. $(Ix * \sim Dx) > Sx$	41, D.N.
43. $(Ix * \sim Dx) > Cx$	36, 42, H.S.
44. $(x)((Ix * Dx) > Cx)$	43, UG
45. $Cx > Sx$	14, UI
46. $(Sx * Ax) > Rx$	15, UI
47. $\sim(Sx * Ax) \vee Rx$	46, Impl.
48. $(\sim Sx \vee \sim Ax) \vee Rx$	47, De M.
49. $\sim Sx \vee (\sim Ax \vee Rx)$	48, Assoc.
50. $Sx > (\sim Ax \vee Rx)$	49, Impl.
51. $Cx > (\sim Ax \vee Rx)$	45, 50, H.S.
52. $(x)(Cx > (\sim Ax \vee Rx))$	51, UG
53. $(Bx * Sx) > Rx$	16, UI
54. $(Sx * Bx) > Rx$	53, Comm.
55. $Sx > (Bx > Rx)$	54, Exp.
56. $Sx > (Ax > Rx)$	46, Exp.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| 57. $Cx > (Bx > Rx)$ | 36, 55, H.S. |
| 58. $(x) (Cx > (Bx > Rx))$ | 57, UG |
| 59. $(Sx * Ax) > \sim Px$ | 17, UI |
| 60. $(Bx * Sx) > \sim Px$ | 18, UI |

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Autobiographical Statement

Keith Markus was attracted to Industrial/Organizational Psychology by the logic of selection test validation while completing a B.A. in Psychology from SUNY at Buffalo. He came to New York interested in developing better selection tests through better philosophy of science. Contact with graduate students from various disciplines quickly broadened his interests to include issues of post-structuralism, gender, and discourse. For the moment, he lives in New York where he writes about organization and discursive psychology, fills out job applications, and normally avoids speaking about himself in the third person.