Applying Perspectival Rhetorical Analysis in Intercultural Consulting:
The Chromosomal Bivalency Model

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Abstract

Perspectival rhetorical analysis provides an approach to the analysis of intercultural and organizational communication processes that can employ contemporary language analytical insights. Billig (1987) and Billig *et al*.'s (1988) demonstration of the dilemmatic nature of human thought and interaction and Eco's (1979, 1990) description of the encyclopedic quality of language have provided methodological pathways for implementing Wittgenstein's (1968) concept of language games and Burke's (1969b) theory of oppositional discourse. Because the full implementation of these methods is often constrained in the consulting context, the authors have analyzed their approach to consulting situations and discovered that their approach in those circumstances utilizes a method analogous to a theory of chromosomal bivalency prominent in biological science. Two case studies are presented to demonstrate the successful use of the chromosomal bivalency model and to support the proposition that interactive cultural commitments constitute an emergent discourse process analogous to the model.

Introduction

The present study arises from the application in intercultural consulting of ethnographic methods originally applied by the authors to organizational contexts. The authors have used perspectival rhetorical analysis (Burke, 1969a, 1969b, 1970, 1979, 1985; Cherwitz & Hikins, 1986; P. Shaver, 1991) to access organizational texts by examining the verbal and nonverbal language outputs of an organization (Glenn (Shaver), l990a, l990b;

L. Shaver, 1991; P. Shaver, 1991; Shaver & Shaver, 1992a, 1992b). This access is provided by examination of the rhetorically motivated perspectives of an organization and its members and of the organization's patients, clients, or customers. Perspectival rhetorical analysis approaches language as an indicator of perceived social realities, because language, verbal and nonverbal, is the primary mechanism for creating and maintaining social realities. Thus, the operational perspective of a person, a group, or an organization is revealed by the rhetorical analysis of its discourse. And although the complexity of most organizations renders direct textual interpretation problematic, the discourse of organizations can be interpreted through methods utilized by Billig (1987) and Billig, *et al*. (1988), who have demonstrated that human thought and social discourse are made up of oppositions—dilemmatic elements—that are both explicit and implicit. These methods are in sharp contrast to the traditional social psychological view that human thought is controlled by consistent, internal schemata or templates. The dilemmatic insight provided by Billig (1987) and Billig *et al*. (1988) recognizes that positive and negative referents organize the language culture of organizations, operationalizing Burke's (1969b) theory that oppositional discourse structures the perceptions of participants by composing master metaphors that are agonistic (i.e., contesting and combative). Approaching organizational speech, whether verbal or nonverbal, in this manner makes possible both access to and confirmation of the semiotic coherence (Eco, 1990) of the perspectival language under study. This dilemmatic method facilitates the study of social interaction in organizations because it allows rhetorical analysis of ethnographic data. By its nature, ethnographic research provides the kind of holistic data necessary for revealing internal relationships that "[actualize] certain possible connections" (Eco, 1990, p. 148), allowing for acceptable interpretations by permitting the examination of the text (i.e., the "speech" of the organization) as a whole, thereby controlling the "otherwise uncontrollable drift of the reader" (Eco, 1990, p. 149).

Accessing the Sites of Conflict

Consultants approaching intercultural situations often have minimal opportunities for the type of participant and observational data gathering necessary for the full implementation of perspectival rhetorical analysis. However, by reflexively analyzing our own behavior, we have discovered that our consulting has been facilitated by a method that is best described by reference to a model of chromosomal bivalency prominent in biological science.

The concept of bivalency as used in biological science refers to the creation of a double chromosome (Gribbin, 1987). The double chromosome is created by an attraction of the genes on two helixes. This attraction results in adherence of the helixes to one another and a functional coherence which results in the double chromosome operating as a single unit. This unitary function is seen to be facilitated by the suppression or

reconstitution of genes on one helix by attracted genes on the other helix. Generally speaking, all of the combinatory genes from one helix do not dominate all of the combinatory genes on the other helix. Instead, a complex interactional bivalency is the usual pattern (Bradbury, Maclean, & Matthews, 1981; Dyer, 1979; Gribbin, 1987; John & Lewis, 1975; Risley, 1986).

In similar fashion, it has been found that for purposes of intercultural consultation, even minimal participant or observational research of intercultural interactions will reveal references to particular cultural traits by the interactants. References to these cultural traits are often found at interactional sites that are meaningful for analysis and consultation because they are interactive sites chosen by the parties. Because these choices of interactive sites are often aspects of an emergent intercultural discourse system, rhetorical analysis of these sites provides insights into the perspectives, or world views, of the interactants. The resulting consultive intervention can use these insights to conduct a careful revelation of the perspectival nature of the positions of the parties in order that an accommodation can be arrived at by the intercultural interactants that is consistent with the goals of the consultive intervention as well as the goals of the culturally different interactants.

Implementing the Chromosomal Bivalency Model

Under the umbrella of any theoretical perspective lies epistemological assumptions that drive research. Implicit within the application of the chromosomal bivalency model to social interaction research lies the assumption that humans construct reality through interaction. Human communication (e.g., verbal and nonverbal) is both the key to and the criteria of social reality. Under this theory, the insights necessary to consult with individuals who are in conflict with culturally different people can arise from analysis of the verbal and nonverbal language of only one of the interactants.

This capability is important because consultants often have access to only one party rather than to all interactants. Furthermore, consultants are often called upon to make decisions and provide advice in short time periods without the benefit of extended ethnographic data collection opportunities or transcribed analysis of the talk of one party or both parties talking together. In sum, consultants are often restricted to: (a) one party's perspective, (b) limited data collection, and (c) limited time in which to analyze interactants and situations. Because of this, consultants need a theoretical perspective that facilitates definition of the chosen sites of conflict and grounds the consultive intervention.

The chromosomal bivalency model operationalizes the assumption that the sites of conflict that are identified by the rhetoric of the individuals are the exemplars of the dilemmatic perspectives involved in the interaction. The question then is: By what method of rhetorical analysis do consultants identify these perspectives?

The first task of consultants is to be aware of their own presumptions, assumptions, biases, and prejudices. By no means does this imply that consultants are to be culturally neutral. Such a suggestion is fallacious and misleading. Rather, self-knowledge and self-awareness are continuously sought after by consultants in order to provide consultants the "clean slate" from which they begin to analyze clients' rhetoric.

Using the model, the two chromosomes are postulated to be side by side, representing the culturally different interactants. Consultants must not value preconceived notions about the probable areas of contact and conflict between the two interactants. The rhetorically defined sites of conflict, representing the areas of the chromosome that have blended, must be allowed to reveal the contrasts and the conflicts. The two interactants never lose their own identity; rather, their differences are made clearer by their close intertwining.

Conflict as a Communication Process

The chromosomal bivalency model is compatible with theoretical constructs available from the field of communication. While approaches to conflict management arising from social psychological theory tend to focus on conformity, consistency, and social control in descriptions of positive social behavior, Billig (1987) and Billig *et al.* (1988) recognize the cooperative nature of "conflict" and extend the communication approach to conflict provided by Simons (1974).

For Billig (1987), the limitations of game and dramaturgical metaphors often relied on by social psychologists are overcome by approaching the concept of social behavior rhetorically. Whereas game theory cannot deal with the constant renegotiation of rules that is characteristic of empirical contexts, and dramaturgical theory cannot encompass the off-stage negotiation of roles that occurs in everyday life, rhetorical theory is seen by Billig to be explanatory of the argumentative aspects of human interaction. Thus, while Billig (1987) acknowledges that there exists a "Rhetoric of adornment," he also agrees with White (1985) that there is a "rhetoric of argument" (p. 34). Billig says of the classical study of rhetoric:

> Rhetoric was not a specialist study, confined to the ambitious few who hoped to make a career from public speaking. On the contrary, it was an established intellectual tradition, which offered practical skills of articulate expression and theoretical insights into the nature of communication. (p. 31)

Billig points out that Aristotle's *Rhetoric* recognized a distinction between the practice of rhetoric and the principles underlying that practice. Thus, knowing the available means of persuasion requires understanding of:

> . . . the principles by which attitudes are retained or changed, how audiences resist or accept suggestions, how individuals who wish to make an impact should present themselves in public, etc. In fact, it can be asserted with probably

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little exaggeration that all the major themes of modern social psychology can be found in classical rhetoric, and in particular in Aristotle's *Rhetoric.*   (Billig, 1987, p. 54)

Cultural commitments can be compared with attitudes and common sense beliefs. The terms *attitude* and *common sense* both carry connotations of unthinking reactivity similar to that often assumed for the term *culture.* But for Billig (1987), the term *attitude* is meaningfully approached only within a rhetorical context. That is, he denies the established social psychological views of the concept attitude: (a) attitudes as reflections of emotions, (b) attitudes as habits of thinking, (c) attitudes as neurological states of readiness, and so on.

The difficulty with these definitions, according to Billig (1987), is that they are functionally analytic—centering on what an attitude does for or to an individual, rather than recognizing that attitudes exist, operate, and are played out in a social context. Thus, for Billig, "an attitude refers to a stance on a matter of public debate and disagreement" (p. 177). Non-controversial common-sense beliefs are not, for him, attitudes—nor are behavioral responses. As he says: " . . . attitudes are more than visceral responses for or against a stimulus. They are stances on matters of public debate" (p. 177).

This is not to say that common sense does not contain argumentative elements. Rather, the contradictions within the community consensus that we call common sense, like values, express generalities. These generalities are only meaningful because, in semiotic terms, they contain oppositional elements that serve to define one another in their contrariety.

Such areas of community agreement are identified by Billig (1987) with rhetorical topoi or common places, which are recognized to be specific to a given culture and not universal (p. 204). It is for this reason, according to Billig, that modern, positivistic social psychology finds rhetorical processes nonrational. If in every situation one assumes that there is a correct or true position, then the constant renegotiation of meaning which White (1985) documents is illogical. Social psychologists can only take such a position, however, if they assume a capability that language does not possess: the capability of meaning the same thing by the same words in different contexts (Wittgenstein, 1968). Billig *et al.* (1988) say it this way:

It is not haphazard that common sense contains its contrary themes, or . . . that it possesses its dilemmatic character. The very existence of these opposing images, words, evaluations, maxims and so on is crucial, in that they permit the possibility not just of social dilemmas but of social thinking itself. (p. 16)

The implication of this for Billig *et al.* (1988) is that it is not just modern society that is not "clear" about its values. Modern social psychology misses the mark because it presumes that consistency, conformity, harmony, and balance are the natural states of the individual psyche (and in human social affairs) and that controversy, argument, negotiation, and disagreement are pathological. In fact, human thought and social

discourse are made up of oppositions, dilemmatic elements, which are both explicit and implicit.

Rhetorical Theory and Intercultural Consulting

These insights from contemporary rhetorical theory are applicable to intercultural consulting contexts involving conflict. When seen as a cooperative communication process, areas of apparent conflict between members of different cultural groups become accessible to research into the perspectival rhetorical commitments (Cherwitz & Hikins, 1986) of the interacting parties. This paper presents intercultural case studies as examples of the applicability of contemporary rhetorical analysis to ethnographic description and intercultural consulting. In addition, these case studies serve to demonstrate that the sites of conflict chosen by the intercultural interactants should be viewed as meaningful rhetorical influences within an emergent discourse, and that this discourse can enable cooperative and constructive interaction between culturally diverse groups.

As with all discourse, conflicts arising in intercultural contexts manifest a set of paradoxical or dilemmatic perspectival commitments revealed by rhetorical analysis, operationalized by methods proposed by Glaser (1965) and Potter and Wetherell (1987). However, these perspectival commitments emerge during the course of consultive research not as systematic, integrated ideological structures, but rather as dilemmatic patterns created and enabled by oppositions, oppositions that are represented by the positive and negative terms that organize the data language (Billig, 1987; Billig *et al.*, 1988). In Burke's (1969b) terms, these oppositions compose emergent master metaphors that are agonistic (i.e., contesting and combative).

Discourse analysis, as defined by Potter and Wetherell (1987), is directed at the analysis of particular social and cultural phenomena that are manifested primarily through printed, spoken, and visual languages. In addition, because this type of discourse analysis is a "non-cognitive form of social psychology" (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 178), no concerns are raised about whether or not language expressions are accurate descriptions of anyone's mental states. Instead, the concern is with either the process of interaction in traditionally recognized rhetorical contexts (Atkinson, 1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1985; Grady & Potter, 1985; Heritage & Greatbatch, 1986) or with the manner in which ideologically significant representations are maintained by discourse (Said, 1978, 1981; Thompson, 1984; Trew, 1979; Wetherell & Potter, in press; Wetherell, Stiven & Potter, 1987).

However, because argumentative representations in general, as well as in traditionally recognized rhetorical contexts, are constantly being re-created and maintained in social interaction, it is useful to consider this division of communication contexts to be formal and traditional rather than analytical. A perspectival rhetorical

approach such as that of Burke (1969a, 1969b, 1970, 1979, 1985) or Cherwitz and Hikins (1986) allows for the reintroduction of the concept of "meaning" into rhetorical situations, permitting language as apparently diverse as campaign speech and organizational bylaws to be seen as useful data for discourse analysis. This is so because focus on perspectives inherent in the language itself does not limit analysis to consideration of the purposes or the contexts of speakers or writers but allows the consideration of the motivations inherent in the language itself. Therefore, the discovery of ideologically significant representations operative at an interactive site can occur from analysis of discourse in dyadic interactions, public speaking, formal statements, or intercultural dialogue—written or spoken.

Further, Potter and Wetherell's (1987) approach to the coding of discourse material can be supplemented for purpose of intercultural and social interaction. They say that the coding of discourse material may "be a cyclical one of moving between analysis and coding. . . . Our understanding of what should be coded out of the transcripts changed repeatedly, as our analysis became more sophisticated" (p. 167). Glaser (1965) has provided a more formalized approach to this cyclical procedure under the rubric of the "constant comparison of categories" procedure.

However, some modification of Potter and Wetherell's (1987) theoretical stance is necessary for intercultural research. The analysis phase of discourse analysis, according to them, involves "a search for pattern in the data" in terms of both variability and consistency. They add that "the basic theoretical thrust of discourse analysis is the agreement that people's talk fulfills many functions and has varying effects" (p. 168).

By utilizing grounded theory (Glaser, 1965), such a structural/functional view is not necessary as an ontological beginning point. Research can begin with contemporary rhetorical theory, which seeks to identify the perspectival motivation within language itself, rather than seek functional explanations. If we can discover motivational perspectives within the discourse, rather than speculating about the source of such motivations or the purpose that such perspectives might serve for particular groups or individuals, we need not be concerned with individual motives or social structural considerations except as they appear to be explicitly or implicitly premised by the data language.

One remaining modification of Potter and Wetherell's (1987) method of discourse analysis also involves Glaser's (1965) concept of grounded theory. Potter and Wetherell (1987) propose that validation of findings can be provided by reference to the coherence, relevance, problem creating ability, and extensional explanatory fruitfulness of the linguistic categories and linguistic resources discovered by discourse analysis. These studies integrated these somewhat positivistic criteria with the ongoing evaluation provided by Glaser's (1965) "constant comparison of categories" procedure. The development of the data-validated theoretical categories allowed by grounded theory reveals the particular and unique perspectives inherent in the rhetorical discourse under

study, because "when individuals differentiate, associate, preserve, and evaluate—that is, when they employ rhetorical discourse—they do so from a particular and unique perspective" (Cherwitz & Hikins, 1986, p. 106). However, as can be seen from the analysis of Billig (1987) and Billig *et al.* (1988), speakers may or may not be conscious of the perspectives from which they speak. Common sense (i.e., cultural) commitments may limit the perceivable alternatives to conflict resolution. More importantly, the coherence, relevance, problem creating ability, and generalizability of categories pertinent to rhetorical behavior are by definition particular to the perspectives created by the culturally defined data language. By utilizing Glaser's (1965) "constant comparison of categories" procedure, meaningful categories can be allowed to emerge from the data language rather than being imposed upon it.

Applying the model of chromosomal bivalency, consultants use intense, unbiased listening to the talk of the client. Through the message, the elements of the conflict emerge as a perspectival structuring and defining of the rhetorically constructed motivations of interactants. However, this perspective is rarely presented in any organized fashion.

Therefore, the language presented by the clients in the first and each succeeding contact with the consultants is important. Consultants should begin with the premise that the initial conversation often contains the keys to the dilemmatic perspectives of clients and their assumptions about the perspectives of the other party. In the case of the authors' consulting partnership, the consultant who takes the call makes copious notes. Every effort is made to debrief the partner who took the telephone call within as short a time as possible. Consultants who work alone should transfer their notes to the printed page or to an audio-tape recorder, making comments and brainstorming as they make a permanent record of their notes. Accumulating language data in this manner allows the earliest possible grasp of the dilemmas central to the consultants' task.

Since the epistemological foundation of the chromosomal bivalency model is that humans create and perpetuate their world views, their cultures, and their realities through interactions, consultants can employ the chromosomal bivalency model as a working hypothesis that interactants' dilemmatic perspectives will have sites of conflict that emerge in their talk. This hypothesis will sensitize the consultants to the probability that the culturally different interactants' talk will provide consultants with access to the parties' perspectival commitments and to possible solutions to the conflict.

Case Study #1

This approach to consulting has been undertaken in various settings with diverse interactants. An example of intercultural consulting using the theory of chromosomal bivalency is a case involving conflict between a construction company and an Indian nation in the southwestern United States. This case study is particularly

apropos of this type of analysis because it was a situation in which the consultants did not have the opportunity to observe the mutual interaction of the conflict participants. Rather, the consultants were called upon to rely on impromptu analysis during interaction with one group of participants—construction company employees. The case study is analyzed in relationship to the chromosomal bivalency model and discussed using the following format: (a) description of and information about the interactants and the situation within which the consulting was done, (b) presentation of data, and (c) recommendations made to the client.

The case of the construction company and the Indian nation began when the construction company called on the consultants following job-site conflict arising out of quota-hiring obligations that stemmed from the contract between the company and the Indian nation. Demonstrations had occurred at work sites because Indian workers who had been sent to those sites by Indian governmental agencies had not been hired, even though contractual Indian employment quotas had not been met by the company.

Two characterizations of the situation were provided to the consultants by representatives of the company: (a) A field office manager described the need for intervention as an "emergency"; and (b) a safety officer based at the home office of the company portrayed the need as arising from a "technicality" in the construction contract that required training in Indian culture for employees of the company.

The first characterization referred to the behavior of young Indian males who had come to the one of the company's job sites at the direction of tribal leaders. These leaders had indicated that, under the contract, the construction company was required to hire a certain number of tribal members and that the required numbers had not been reached. Many of these young Indian males had slept on the ground or in their vehicles at this job site for several days. Some had run out of money and could not afford the trip back to their homes. The on-site office manager had become alarmed when these men staged a demonstration that interrupted the work for a short period of time.

The safety officer's characterization of the situation was that certain terms of the contract had proved to be difficult for the company to fulfill; therefore, he had decided to carry out the portions of the contract dealing with intercultural training in the belief that this would improve the company's legal position.

After some serious debate about the feasibility of meaningful intervention given the inconsistency of the requests for services by the two different company officials, the consultants decided to accept the "training" assignment offered. The consultants perceived that the two characterizations indicated an intercultural conflict arising in part because of divergent perceptions among members of the client organization. This represented a possible opportunity for meaningful intervention. In addition, the cumulative mandate from the safety officer and the field office manager provided for visits to the three construction sites. The consultants anticipated that these visits would provide opportunities for interaction with the field managers, foremen, and technical

specialists of the company, and that no harm could come from accepting the safety officer's request to provide a short course in the culture of the Indian nation involved. Further, if approached in an interactive, open-ended manner, the sessions were expected to provide insights into the perspectives of company employees in the field and Indian employees and job seekers that could be used by the consultants to analyze the conflict. A more definite preliminary program of intervention could not be formulated because the organizational structure of the company had not been made clear to the consultants nor had company managers provided a clear mandate for the consultants.

As arrangements were made for sessions at the three sites, however, contact between the consultants and the field managers revealed that the construction company operated in a highly decentralized fashion. Separate crews were responsible for pursuing the work at the three job sites in question. Each crew was managed by a superintendent who had substantial authority over field operations. Each superintendent was assisted by an office manager who reported to the superintendent but who carried out bookkeeping and disbursements according to the directions and procedures of the home office. The ambiguity of the office manager's position appeared to be purposeful and to be part of the managerial strategy of the home office.

The type of construction being carried out was highly technical. The foremen and many of the workers were technically skilled, and many of them had worked for the company from time to time for many years. However, the employment of nearly all of these long-term employees was in the nature of contract work. Rather than being permanent employees in the traditional sense, these foremen and skilled workers worked for the company on day rates of several hundred dollars a day plus living expenses. When the company had work for them, they worked seven days a week for several months until that particular job was done. When another job was contracted, they were contacted by the company directly or by fellow workers—superintendents or foremen—who had been asked by the company to put a crew together. The performance of these field managers and skilled workers on each job had implications for their attractiveness to the company and to their fellow crew members and field managers. The company and the employees attributed much of their success to the professionalism and result-oriented stance that this method of operation required.

The company and many of the field managers and workers involved at the three sites had been involved in many projects in foreign countries as well as on Indian lands within the United States. The intercultural training and employment quota clauses in contracts had been part of earlier construction agreements. According to several of the field managers, such clauses had never previously been a problem because, as one manager said, "We are usually in and out before there's a problem. This job is just too big."

The first session was extremely useful to the consultants. Before the formal session began, the consultants had dinner with about 30 of the field managers and

technical workers from site #1. Informal conversation led by the home office safety officer revealed that safety considerations were a part of the reticence of the company to hire "greenhorns" of any cultural background. The job sites for the type of construction involved are, in fact, dangerous and active locations. One of the foremen said very pointedly that all of the foremen's trucks contain body bags as standard equipment—and that these supplies had been used on occasion.

Our consultive intervention actually began during the conversational phase of the initial session. The first training session was held in the guise of a company-paid meal. The free meal and definition of the gathering as a mandatory safety meeting resulted in attendance by all managers, foremen, and technical specialists who were physically able to come. The consultants were invited to attend the dinner but not required to do so. We did, of course, attend because that interaction was anticipated to be a source of data for analyzing the conflict and the world view perspectives of one group of the interactants. The informal conversation was very informative, and the consultants briefly shared experiences and conversation, as possible, during dinner. The consultants had introduced themselves to as many of the 30 men individually as was possible in the time before dinner, finding topics of conversation that revealed the personality and perspectives of each person. After dinner, the safety officer introduced the consultants as Indian experts. Rather than taking the podium to make a formal presentation about the culture of the Indian nation with which this company was interacting, the consulting team moved their chairs to positions where they could see the groups of six men at each table in order to converse in a seemingly casual fashion. The consultants began a discussion of the differences in perspectives between the company people in the room and the Indian employees and work-seekers with whom the company people were engaged on the job site.

The topics that arose during this discussion included the following: (a) Indian workers performed well on tasks that were not technical and that were carried out away from the main areas of activity and danger: (b) the extended family obligations of Indian workers created absenteeism; (c) divorce rates were high for the long-term field employees of the company because they were away so much of the time; (d) continued employment was based on "good" jobs (i.e., jobs without major accidents), and everyone on the crew from superintendents to clean-up employees suffered from "bad" jobs; (e) these long-term field employees sometimes worked for other companies in the same type of construction business; (f) long-term employees served as employment agents for each other by giving references and recommendations for peers to other company personnel in their industry as crews were recruited for specific jobs; (g) these long-term workers had a culture of their own—a culture that members of the Indian nation did not know about or understand; and (h) members of the Indian nation would probably understand the way of life of these professional field construction people if it were explained to them.

Many aspects of this specific southwestern Indian culture relating to job situations were also discussed. Some of these details appeared to be information that had been already gained by company personnel through interaction or from earlier jobs. During these discussions, it became apparent to the consultants that their task was to interpret the construction workers' knowledge, that is, to give the workers tools with which to use their factual knowledge. The reactions of those in attendance indicated that the new insights required of the consultive intervention concerned the existence of a shared subculture among the construction professionals. The perceived understanding among the members of the subculture was that their continued economic and professional success as individuals and as a group was dependent on their professional, continuously earned credentials. This explicit insight provided a major thawing of their perceptions of the conflict with Indians or any other out-group that would attempt to invade their domain.

Thus, the major conflict revealed by analysis of the rhetoric of these managers, foremen, and technical specialists was the threat to their professional subculture created by the quota clause of the construction contract. The Indians were not a danger to the subculture because they were Indians who wanted to fulfill the promised quota of jobs. The Indians were a threat because they were interculturally insensitive to the professional subculture of the workers. Ironically, the professionals themselves were unaware of their own subculture until they began discussing their fears and frustrations. These discussions revealed that any group of workers who had asked for positions in such a result-oriented, technically difficult activity—positions that had taken the holders of those jobs years to attain—would have been resented. The job seekers could have been members of any ethnic group or from the Anglo population. The resentment was not specific to the job seeker; the resentment was in the implication that any untrained person could step into such a professional position. The perspective of the construction workers was that only hard work, time, and dedication to a position result in possession of that job. Conversely, the perspective of the Indians was that jobs were promised; therefore, jobs should be available. A solution can only result when the construction company can train the Indians in the nature of the subculture of the construction jobs and provide jobs in which the professional subculture that makes up the construction company is not adversely affected.

The intervention of the consultants can be summarized as follows: (a) The consultants reaffirmed general factual knowledge, shared by many of the participants, about the perspectives of the members of the tribe; and (b) the revelation and delineation of the structure and the world view of the workers as members of a subculture—much like the Indian tribe—provided a framework of analysis for the workers. The individual interaction between consultants and workers, the interaction between the workers in private conversation, and the interaction between workers and consultants in the discussion period of the presentation gave tools of understanding to the workers,

insights through which they could make sense of the conflicts that heretofore had seemed meaningless and nonsensical. Additional sessions provided both affirmation of these initial insights and additional information from which to work on the small differences in conflict at the other sites.

The chromosomal bivalency model suggests that sites of conflict provide both the setting for conflict and insights with which to approach the solving of the conflict. In this particular case, the workers had perceived the styles of work and the demands of the Indian workers and work seekers as being unreasonable and capricious. By gaining self-knowledge about their own perspectives as a subculture, the workers could better understand their negative responses to the Indians. They also had the option to use that understanding as a tool of conflict management.

Case Study #2

In the second intercultural consulting case, the client was an organization within a large university in the Southwest that developed and implemented health programs for Native American children through a federal agency. The children in these schools live on tribal reservations. The federal agency is responsible for providing schools for Native American children. The federal schooling agency had given permission for health assessment and had accepted funding for the health programs in its schools. The conflict was between Native American children and their families who lived on a reservation in the Southwest and the school employees of the federal agency when they attempted to implement the nutritional guidelines programs mandated by the new programs. The school employees were teachers, dietitians, and administrators.

Prior to implementation of the new health programs, these federal schools were mandated by federal guidelines to provide breakfast and lunch meals to students. The assumptions were that native children did not have adequate food and that their food, different from Anglo food, was not nutritionally adequate. The food served for breakfast and lunch at these schools was selected to meet current guidelines of nutrition. During the last few years, recent studies in health suggest that school lunches need to be well balanced with the four food groups, traditionally held to be related to good health, and to be low in salt, low in fat, and high in fiber. These new guidelines are assumed to result in healthy children and adults. These guidelines have been revised recently and, as reported in the media, are currently under review. However, the schools met their guidelines by serving Anglo food. This food is unlike the native food and is prepared according to cooking styles with which the children are unaccustomed. Further, these new health programs teach the children that eating habits must be changed in the home as well as in the schools.

The health programs were implemented by special curricula in health classes, home economics classes, and in social studies classes. These programs specifically

addressed high rates of cancer and cardiovascular illness in native peoples. Within the last three years, teachers, dietitians, and administrators have been given new and even more stringent guidelines with regard to meals that are to be offered in the schools. These newer guidelines intensified the pressure on children to take the message of healthier eating to their parents and for the children to encourage their parents to cook and eat differently.

The developers of the health programs began receiving feedback from the teachers and dietitians. Their complaints were that: (a) students were resisting the nutrition lessons, (b) children were throwing away their food regardless of how hungry they were, and (c) parents were complaining that their children were being persuaded to defy family traditions and were refusing to eat family food. In short, the program development professionals were told by the school representatives that the children and their families were either not complying with new dietary guidelines or that the guidelines were not supportive of family unity and tribal customs. The brunt of the criticism and the conflict was being brought directly to the school representatives.

The consultants were called. The instructions given to the consultant were indicative of the presumptions of the program developers. The consultants were essentially told that the school representatives "needed" intercultural communication training. The school representatives were characterized as being somewhat lacking in culturally sensitive communication competencies. Although the consultant asked for more information, this remained the primary response.

As in many cases of intercultural consulting, the consultant in this incident was not called to the site. The collection of ethnographic data from which one could make conclusions was not a viable option. Rather, as the teachers, dietitians, and administrators began to encounter sites of conflict within this interaction, they asked for help in meeting the problem. As it is in many such incidents (e.g., health communication, management-labor conflicts, and so forth), the client asked that the staff be given tools and skills that would result in their clients' (e.g., students and their families) compliance to the dietary guidelines.

The consultants were aware that the actual sites of conflict between chromosome #1 (the school personnel) and chromosome #2 (the Native American students and families) were yet to be discovered. The reported conflict and perceived negative outcomes of implementation of the health program were presented to the consultants through the preconceived world views of the teachers, the dietitians, the administrators of the federal school, and the health program developers. The conflict perceived by the client was related to changes in eating behavior by native children and families that could be reflected in reduced cancer and cardiovascular illnesses. The school personnel were concerned about the day-to-day conflict resulting from teaching of the new curriculum as it impacted its general educational mandate.

The consultants approached the training of the school representatives with a flexible set of training experiences. All of the activities were designed to be interactive, experiential, neutrally contexted so as to be nonthreatening and allow for open interaction, immediately available for post-activity processing, and open-ended for flexibility. Because the consultants were analyzing the perspectives of the school participants during the activities, the consultants used flexible exercises that could be adjusted to the emergent needs of the school employees.

Some confounding aspects in the training included the following: (a) participation in and observation of the training activities by the health program developers themselves, (b) inequality in status of participants (e.g., teachers, administrators, and health program developers), and (c) presence of a technical person who was videotaping the training.

In spite of these obvious drawbacks, the situation allowed the researcher to access the sites of conflict. First, the participants were school employees who are accustomed to "required" volunteerism. Second, the activities had been framed as discussion on perspectives of one's world and self that highlighted the fact that even culturally similar people have different perspectives on everyday matters. Third, the nonthreatening nature of the activities was relaxing and humorous but subtly related to their conflicts with the native children and their families. The opportunities to process the activities, to discuss the rights of individuals to have different perspectives, and to openly discuss heretofore unexplored problems resulted in an open forum for the revelation of emergent conflicts. Three of these sites of conflicts that represent the dilemmatic perspectives of the parties are discussed here.

First, a dietitian recalled a conversation with a young, obese elementary child who had chosen an unsuitable lunch. The dietitian talked to the child about her choice. The child tearfully recounted that her mother's feelings had been hurt when the child had told her mother, who was also obese, what was wrong with their diet. The child's suggestion that the mother was "harming" her child by serving foods high in fat, high in salt, and low in fiber was met with horror by the mother and the family. The child was torn between the feeling that she had shamed her mother and the demands of the nutrition program of the school. Her method of dealing with this conflict was to eat heartily and to keep her weight to prove to her mother that she was eating what her mother had preferred.

While the presumption was made by the school representatives and the health program developers that a change in eating behavior would have an impact on both children and their families, the many layers of significance and the onion-skin complexity of such conflicts were not clearly anticipated nor understood by the school employees and developers.

Second, the school representatives talked among themselves about the role of food in the society of these Native Americans. When families had enough money to go

into the nearest town, they bought the status food of the dominant society—the Anglo society. That food was, of course, convenience food from a major hamburger chain or from a pizza restaurant. The media onslaught toward children of all ethnic groups directs children to the fast-food emporiums. The status of children is raised if they recount eating at certain restaurants. Another message is the opposite message; the status of children is lowered if they admit that they have not eaten at certain places. Further, native foods are not a high-status food. Not only are children given the implicit message through the media that ethnic foods are not preferred, federal dietitians and health program developers presuppose that Anglo food is superior; hence, the food offerings in federally supported schools, including schools in which the dominant population is Native American, are mainstream generic non-native food offerings.

Third, the discussion then followed a path that led to "if then" and "what if." One woman spoke up saying that the basic diet of the natives was not a poor diet if the foods were cooked in a healthier manner and additional food groups were added. The concept of using traditional food, compromising on cooking methods and augmenting meals with new foods was considered revolutionary. Why was this seemingly logical concept not considered by the federal schools or by the developers of the health programs? The answer is that all such programs begin with cultural presumptions and are developed with perspectives that are ethnocentric. The first such answer is that all native foods are inferior to Anglo foods. The second answer is economic. Available food surpluses within the food commodity programs drive the school breakfast and lunch programs in this country.

The major conflict between the schools and the native children and their families is not solvable by merely increasing the intercultural communication competency of the school professionals. The consultants were asked to deal with the school's mandate from the federal government and from the developers of the health program as an inflexible reality. These inflexible realities are exemplary of the management and intercultural problems faced by consultants in a myriad of situations. Since the consultants were not asked to address the underlying conflicts that have been identified in this analysis, the consultants provided the school representatives with an understanding of self-perspectives, with the knowledge that culturally different people have differing world views, and with communication competency in framing potentially divisive directives to children in such ways that neither the child nor the family is directly challenged to choose a way of life. The ongoing development of grants from institutions seeking to improve living, social, and health situations of Native Americans would be well served to incorporate the model of chromosomal bivalency that allows the interaction of the participants at the sites of conflict to reveal the perspectives that are responsible for the conflict. Once revealed, the consultants have the opportunity to address the conflict in the best interest of both parties.

Conclusion

These case studies are presented to demonstrate the utility of the cultural bivalency model for consulting. The argument is made that a pragmatic bivalency approach to intercultural consulting can be grounded in Billig *et al.*'s (1988) dilemmatic ontology through the use of perspectival rhetorical analysis. The sites of conflict reveal the rhetorical perspectives of the interactants. The talk of interactants allows the consultant, who has attempted to listen in an unbiased manner, to analyze what is said as indicative of not just facts but of the chosen sites of conflict. These chosen sites of conflict reveal the rhetorical commitments of the interactants' differing world views. The analysis of the rhetoric reveals the major agons. While the conflicts themselves are not always directly addressed by the consultants, the clients are provided self-knowledge about their perspectives. That self-knowledge is the major tool for positive management of intercultural conflict.

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