

Negotiated Dramaturgy - Industrial Theatre as  
Communication in the Organisation

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the following work is original  
and has not been submitted for any other degree at  
any other institution.

Signed by

*Y. Palov*

On the

*20 January 2001*

A special thank you to the following people who helped and supported me throughout this study:

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**Dedicated to Dr F. G. Backman.**

## ABSTRACT

This study investigates Industrial Theatre as an effective form of corporate communication against the backdrop of South Africa's unique situation that distinguishes it from other countries in the world. As the post-apartheid South African society is concerned with development and transformation of its workforce, particularly among those who have previously been disadvantaged, communication in organisations has become vitally important in achieving these goals as well as in increasing productivity. This study identifies four specific problems that relate to the effectiveness of communication within an organisation, namely the historical problem, the literacy problem, the credibility problem and the problem concerning the traditional adversarial relationship. Problems concerning the corporate media and the definition of the term "Industrial Theatre" are also treated.

In this study, *Industrial Theatre* is equated with a form of corporate communication and thus has a public relations function within an organisation. It therefore needs to ground itself firmly within public relations theory and practice. It must be a deliberate, planned and sustained effort that establishes and maintains mutual understanding between the organisation and its internal and external stakeholders.

The uniqueness of the South African environment necessitates a communication model that creates an enabling environment for effective corporate communication. The Mersham graphic communication model for development as used in this study achieves this by contextualising both the communicators and the recipients firmly within their own sociocultural and autobiographical circumstances. The Mersham model is ideally suited to the *Industrial Theatre* context, as it also advocates that communicators and recipients should exchange roles, thereby enabling effective communication on a continuous basis.

The current trends in corporate communication encourage transparency and "ownership". All the stakeholders of an organisation are encouraged to interact and to participate in the management of their organisation, hence achieving a sense of "ownership". The key to this entire process is negotiation. As this study contends that any theatrical process used as a communication tool should have negotiation as its main constituent, it was necessary to create

a dramaturgy that incorporates negotiation into all its facets in order to serve the purposes of the thesis.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy thus created has three distinct parts. The first consists of the pre-production forums in which the stakeholders discuss issues that create objectives for the dramaturgy to achieve. The second section contains the dramaturgy that enacts the objectives through story lines created by the stakeholders and analyses the results through the in-role forums. The third section evaluates the effectiveness of the process. This approach to Industrial Theatre ensures that all stakeholders are involved in the entire process from beginning to end. They, therefore, have total "ownership" of the process, which is characterised by transparency.

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# CHAPTER 1:

## THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

### 1.1 The Problem and its Setting

This study examines whether the Negotiated Dramaturgy can form part of corporate communication activities.

The complex nature of this problem necessitates a sub-division into five further sub-problems.

### 1.2 Sub-Problems

#### 1.2.1 The Historical Problem

The divisive nature of Apartheid created, *inter alia*, a distinct communication problem within large organisations. Apartheid's education policies educated a few, empowering them with management and operational skills while keeping the majority uneducated and unskilled. Management of organisations was therefore limited to a few. The language of management was either English or Afrikaans while the majority of the workforce communicated in their mother tongues, for example isiXhosa, isiZulu, or iSotho. In most cases, the management struggled to communicate effectively with their workforce; similarly, the workforce found it difficult to communicate with management, either because of language barriers or due to poor communication structures. Today, organisations are attempting to create communication structures that promote transparency and enable effective, two-way communication.

#### 1.2.2 The Literacy Problem

Apartheid's policies have left a large proportion of the population unable to read and/or write. The sociocultural and autobiographical circumstances (Mersham et al. 1995: 55-57) of the worker either prevented him or her from attending school, or only allowed for limited schooling. This created a problem, as organisations could not always communicate successfully through the written word. Clearly, an effective approach to communication that alleviates this problem is needed.

#### 1.2.3 The Credibility Problem:

The division in society and the Apartheid notion of separateness created a high level of mistrust between the traditionally White management structures and the traditionally Black

workforce. Although this is changing, with management becoming more representative of the population, the division between management and labour still exists. In many cases, the labour force (through the trade unions) still questions the credibility of management, believing that they are adversaries and not collaborators in an organisation. In order for corporate communication to improve, methods that *build upon the credibility of all players are essential.*

#### 1.2.4 The Problem of the Traditional Adversarial Relationship

In recent times in South Africa, trade unions have grown in strength in a manner unequalled anywhere else in the world (Nupen 1990: 36). Traditionally these trade unions were not "bread-and-butter" trade unions but politically based structures (Reece 1991: 13). This situation still exists today with the largest trade union body, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), being an active member of the tri-partheid alliance (African National Congress, South African Communist Party and COSATU). The traditional "White" trade unions have tended to align themselves with right wing political structures. As South Africa enters the new millennium, the trade union movement continues to be politicised.

However, Reece (1991:13) argues that labour and capital are by definition antagonistic to each other when it comes to allocating the net income of the company. This, however, does not mean that both parties cannot reach a compromise if they are interested in co-operation. A strain on this ideal is that the union negotiators always have to worry about their members suspecting them of *being soft on the organisation* (Reece 1991: 23). This creates pressure and reluctance to compromise. Management, on the other hand, has to meet the profit expectations of shareholders and owners.

Reece (1991: 17) is of the opinion that too many of South Africa's organisations employ inappropriate human resources policies. *The perception seems to be that Black trade unions are a third party bent on interfering in the domestic affairs of management and employees.* The practices, which flow from this policy, induced black workers, in no small degree, to join unions in the first place. Clearly, this is a negative point from which to start any communication process, particularly if a successful outcome is expected.

#### 1.2.5 The Communication Media

Practitioners achieve corporate communication from management to workers through a variety of media: the written memo, bulletin boards and verbal communications (meetings etc). The (semi)-illiterate nature of the worker often makes the written message obscure while

instructions/information passed on by word of mouth, when used in a line structure (see 4.4.2) is open to many distortions. Occasionally, the practitioners make use of video or multi-media devices. They use these only for special messages, and it is not the norm for everyday communication. Clearly there are opportunities to employ a more effective medium of communication in the corporate sphere that will contribute to increased productivity and support the notion of transparency that is so important in the corporate sector today.

### 1.3 Defining Industrial Theatre

In order to investigate effectively the problem established in this study, it is essential to define Industrial Theatre. The researcher acknowledges that Industrial Theatre can take on many different forms and have different objectives within an organisation. People use the term "Industrial Theatre" with very little consensus on the meaning or functioning of Industrial Theatre. Scholars use the term, in general, to define any theatre that occurs in an industrial setting. This broad categorisation ranges from a play informing people about HIV/AIDS, to actors role playing situations as part of staff training, to a piece of theatre that furthers the aims and facilitates more effective functioning of that particular organisation.

Industrial Theatre is a theatrical experience that occurs in an industrial context. Practitioners use it to achieve different objectives, for example, issue management, internal communications, promotion, advertising and awareness campaigns. The circumstances that it addresses are industry and issue specific. In this study, the prime purpose of Industrial Theatre is the development and training of the workforce. It is employed as a developmental tool concentrating on human development in areas such as productivity and motivation.

A literature search employing the Nexus, EBSCO, Kalahari.net (<http://www.kalahari.net>), Amazon.com (<http://www.amazon.com>) databases and the inter-library loan scheme revealed a paucity of titles dealing directly with this concept. Reference is made throughout this study to the few titles that are relevant.

A sustained search of the Internet using the following search engines led to the discovery of the subsequent definitions of Industrial Theatre. The search engines used were Excite (<http://www.excite.com>), Yahoo (<http://www.yahoo.com>), Search.com (<http://www.search.com>), Snap (<http://www.snap.com>), Direct hit (<http://www.directhit.com>), Webcrawler (<http://www.webcrawler.com>), Altavista (<http://www.altavista.com>), Lycos (<http://www.lycos.com>), Inktomi (<http://www.inktomi.com>), Aardvark

(<http://www.aardvark.co.za>), epnet (<http://www.epnet.com>), Go to (<http://www.goto.com>) and Google (<http://www.google.com>).

The following quotations demonstrate the lack of consensus on the definitions of Industrial Theatre:

Industrial Theatre is a recognised method of educating, training, uplifting and informing a workforce or other group, simply by creating a piece of theatre as a vehicle for your message (Cecil & Cecil 1999: <http://www.icon.co.za/~harl/>).

Industrial theatre is fast becoming one of the preferred mediums of internal corporate communication. It can relay key messages to S A's multicultural workforce and embodies an interactive approach to communication (Parker 1997: <http://www.bday.co.za/97/0624/special/x4.htm>).

Spectacular presentations designed to engage an audience through concepts of entertainment and sensation. Our use of performance, sound and visual media provides a theatrical basis to communicate an overall message of brand awareness or corporate philosophy. This method is particularly effective when expressing a wider ideal, rather than an individual product (Orange Hand Productions: (n. d.) <http://www.orangehand.com/htm/indth.html> ).

Industrial Theatre is the use of drama and drama techniques to create learning and change in business environments. This is achieved by creating synergy between the disciplines of drama, organisational development and psychology in the design and execution of projects (The Learning Theatre Organisation: (n. d.): <http://www.learningtheatre.co.za/over.htm>).

Industrial Theatre is the use of drama and actors within a commercial setting, to sell a product or service, to put across a concept, raise people's awareness and to enhance training. Live theatre of any form can be informative, dynamic, exciting and entertaining (Actors Mean Business: (n.d): <http://www.enterprise.net/amb/industrl.htm>).

Three of the five pages listed above are of South African origin. From this investigation, it appears that Industrial Theatre is a predominantly South African phenomenon.

The main concepts that arise from the above definitions and descriptions are that Industrial Theatre is a method of educating, training, uplifting and informing stakeholders of issues concerning their organisation, using drama and drama techniques. Live theatre of any form

can be informative, dynamic, exciting and entertaining. The use of theatrical presentations engages an audience through concepts of entertainment and sensation.

Industrial Theatre is persuasive communication. Bredenkamp's (1996: 3) definition of persuasive communication aptly describes the function of Industrial Theatre. Bredenkamp defines persuasive communication as:

a communication process which seeks to voluntarily form, reinforce, maintain or change a given attitude and/or behaviour of a recipient or group of recipients in accordance with a specific intention of the communicator.

Combining the elements of this definition with the main concepts highlighted by other practitioners and the researcher's personal experience this study defines Industrial Theatre as:

*A communication process that uses drama, drama techniques and theatre as a voluntary approach to educating, training, uplifting and informing stakeholders with the specific intention of maintaining or changing the stakeholders' attitude to the organisation for whom they work.*

This study sets out a particular form of Industrial Theatre based on the two-way interactive nature of communication, the two-way symmetrical model of public relations and a problem solving system of communication by objectives. In its full process, this approach is referred to as a *Negotiated Dramaturgy*.

#### 1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine whether the Negotiated Dramaturgy can form part of corporate communication activities.

#### 1.5 Methodology

##### 1.5.1 Review of Research Traditions

The two research traditions in communication research are the positivist research tradition (developed in the USA) and the critical research tradition (developed in Germany)..

### 1.5.1.1 Positivist Research Tradition

The positivist research tradition originates in an ideology of science known as positivism. Positivism originated in seventeenth century Europe. This approach was originally intended for the studying of phenomena and actions in the natural sciences, specifically physics (Turner & Maryanski 1979: 2; Jansen 1989: 2; O'Sullivan et al. 1993: 176; Oosthuizen 1995: 3)

Positivist research is based on three essential concepts. The first is a belief that valid knowledge can only be gained from empirical evidence. In this process the researcher needs to be objective. The second is a belief that researchers should strive towards methodological unity between the social sciences and the natural sciences. This is achieved by applying the methods of the natural sciences to the social sciences. Thirdly, it is based on a belief in the progress of human reason and the need to utilise the social sciences to establish a new social order (Oosthuizen 1995: 3).

Sullivan et al. (1993: 84) lists three assumptions inherent in the empirical process. Firstly, that there is a universal objective reality that can be studied. Secondly that people are able to devise methods of studying this objective reality, and thirdly that the hypotheses created can be proved and/or disproved.

In accordance with the positivist ideal, social scientists looked to the natural sciences to provide them with a methodology that would obtain reliable and valuable knowledge. The focus of this approach is observation, measurement and experiment (Oosthuizen 1995:11).

Czitrom (1983: 122) argues that positivist communication researchers were guided by Lasswell's (1948) definition of communication which defines communication as "who says what in which channel to whom with what effect" (see section 3.3). Francois (1977:108) states that this defined the field of communication as media, audience and effect analysis. This approach gave a linear conception of the communication process as visible in the Shannon and Weaver (1948) mathematical model of communication (see section 3.3) (Oosthuizen 1995: 7). Such a positivist approach to research was concerned with the effects and analysis of the communication process (Francois 1977: 108; Hardt 1989: 569).

The research into the effects of media grew in three phases. In the first phase, the effects of media were seen as direct and strong. The explanation of the phenomena of media was related to stimulus and response theory. This theory, influenced by power of propaganda,

predicts strong and universal effects of mass communication messages on all audience members who are exposed to them. The recipients of the mass communication messages were called mass audiences. These mass audiences were seen as being defenceless against the effects of the mass media. Research showed that these assumptions about the effects of mass media were exaggerated. Carl Hovland's research conducted for the American War Office led researchers to see that mass communication only had limited effects (Oosthuizen 1995:7; Severin and Tankard 1979:248). This gave rise to the second phase of mass communication research.

Lazarsfeld supported the idea of limited effects. His research on the influence of mass communication during election campaigns found that media played a limited role as far as people's election decisions were concerned in comparison to personal influence. This research led to the two-step flow model of communication effects which proposes that information and influence often flow from opinion leaders (who are well-informed individuals who attend mass communication events) through interpersonal channels to the less active members of the population who have a less direct access to the media. Further research by Lazarsfeld showed that opinion leaders were also influenced by other opinion leaders, but they were only influential on specific topics and at specific times. Following this research, scholars refuted the argument that informal communication played only a minor role in modern society (Czitrom 1983:135; De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach 1982: 192; Oosthuizen 1995:8).

Researchers were now beginning to subscribe to a liberal pluralist view of society. The previously-held view that society is composed of isolated individuals gave way to the view that society could be compared to a honeycomb of small groups bound by a rich structure of personal ties and dependencies (Fourie 1989: 33). With this change in the concept of reality, the mass media was no longer viewed as monolithic, but rather as a provider of diverse viewpoints that contributed to the free flow of ideas. At this time, the media also acted as a monitor of the government's performance. The media now had a more positive role (Oosthuizen 1995:8).

These developments allowed researchers to focus their research on the general effects that mass media had on society. Functional analysis was used to investigate the effect that phenomena had on societies. This type of analysis was applied to mass communication research (Oosthuizen 1995: 8). Merton (cited in De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach 1982:16) listed the assumptions of structural functionalism as follows:

- 1) Society should be thought of as a system of interrelated paths; it is an organisation of interconnected, repetitive and patterned activities.
- 2) Such a society will naturally tend towards a state of dynamic equilibrium; if disharmony occurs, forces will arise tending to restore stability.
- 3) All the repetitive activities in a society contribute towards its state of equilibrium; that is, all persisting forms of patterned action play a part in maintaining the stability of the system.
- 4) At least some of the above actions in a society are indispensable to its continued existence.

According to these assumptions, the mass media was awarded a specific place in society. It was viewed as a subsystem that fulfilled specific needs through the repetitive and institutional activities in which it was involved. The mass media would function to ensure the internal integration and order in society. It also enabled people to adapt to new circumstances based on a common and reasonably accurate picture of reality. The media was expected to contribute to the stability of the system as a whole, failing this it was regarded as dysfunctional and had to reform (McQuail 1987: 68; Oosthuizen 1995: 9).

Some functionalist studies concerned themselves with general functions of the media within society as a whole, while others were concerned with the subjective motives and interpretations of individual users. These studies set into motion an arm of research called the uses and gratifications research which focused on how people use the media to gratify their needs. The attention shifted from what the media did to people to what people did with the media. This research found that people received and dealt with media messages in a selective way and that they could choose to ignore messages that they found did not agree with their viewpoints. This approach proposed that the conception of media output was motivated and directed towards the gratification of certain individual differences in people's needs, attitudes, values and other personality variables (Morley 1980: 3-6; Oosthuizen 1995: 9).

The third phase of effects studies moved away from the preoccupation with attitude change and began to investigate the long term and indirect influence that media could produce on people (Lowery and De Fleur 1988: 25). Agenda-setting was one of the theories that addressed indirect influence. This theory proposes that although the media cannot tell you what to think, through its selection of issues it can tell you what to think about. Research on agenda setting points out that the media shapes people's views of the major problems facing

society and that the problems emphasised by the media may not be a dominant reality (Severin and Tankard 1988: 2264-283).

Further research relating to long term influence was conducted by George Gebner who devised the cultivation theory. This theory postulates that heavy television viewing leads to the exclusion of other information, ideas and consciousness. Gebner calls the resultant effect cultivation or the teaching of a common world view, common roles and common values (Oosthuizen 1995:10).

This research tradition is concerned with asking questions about the effects of mass communication on the individual. Examining these effects led to a research methodology based on the functional theory of society. Researchers were looking for answers that could explain the stability of the social, political and commercial system without criticising existing views about communication and society (Oosthuizen 1995: 10).

Positivist media research assumes an empirical theory of knowledge. Empiricism views experience as the only source of knowledge. It postulates that knowledge results from observation and the testing of assumptions against the evidence of the real world. Empiricism puts the emphasis on the importance of observable, measurable and quantitative evidence (Oosthuizen 1995: 5, 11).

#### 1.5.1.2 The Critical Research Tradition

The critical research tradition was initiated by a group of German intellectuals collectively known as the Frankfurt School of Social Research who wanted to inject new life into the Marxist theory of society. Their variant of Western Marxism was called Critical Theory (O'Sullivan et al. 1985: 31, 92).

The school's first idea of reality was taken from Marx, who was influenced by the ideas of Georg Hegel. Hegel contended that social reality had a dialectical nature, implying that everything in nature moves constantly between thesis and antithesis, which in turn causes recreation and renewal of the synthesis, which flows from this flux. Hence, dialectical nature implies that everything develops into a more complex phenomenon in line with dialectical principles (Urmson 1985: 82; Oosthuizen 1995: 14).

With Horkheimer becoming the director of the Frankfurt school the emphasis of their study shifted from an socio-economic view to one that focused on cultural superstructure (Held 1980: 31; Jay 1974: 21, 84). The mass media formed part of this superstructure. The critical theorists studied the mass media's role in upholding the status quo of a class-based society, arresting its potential (Oosthuizen 1995: 14).

Critical theorists studied reality in totality, believing that no part of reality could be viewed as final or complete on its own. Critical theory demanded a radical analysis of society. Scholars in the critical tradition described, analysed and reinterpreted institutions and their role in society. They initially looked at the role of the economic base in society but later their focus concentrated more on the role of ideology in securing domination of society. For the Frankfurt School, ideology stemmed from social relations. It became dominant once social contradictions were hidden to favour the ruling class. The ideal of the Frankfurt School was not only to gather knowledge but also to serve as a guide for action towards liberation (Oosthuizen 1995: 14-15).

The school's theorising about the mass media was informed by its view of reality. They accepted that the class that controlled the economy also controlled the mass media which they viewed as part of class-based domination. Their focus turned to mass media once they had been forced into exile in the United States of America just before World War II. They called the mass media the "culture industry", having brought culture and entertainment together. They contended that the media was responsible for reproducing culture as part of its content. This reproduction was done at the expense of culture. Horkheimer and Adorno claimed that culture was losing its oppositional character that could have assisted people in opposing domination (Oosthuizen 1995: 15).

Herbert Marcuse (1968) argued that society was in the grip of a new ideology, because technology had led to a new type of rationality. This technological rationality emphasised efficiency and the improvement of living standards to such an extent that all forms of social resistance and change were contained. Marcuse was furthermore of the opinion that the people did not realise that the needs that they were trying to fulfil in modern capitalist society were not real needs but false needs held up by vested political and economical interest. He believed that the mass media played an important role in this regard and Marcuse blamed advertisements for reflecting these false needs. He argued that advertisements were presenting false needs as general needs. The false needs (presented as general needs) were

those of the establishment. This restricted the internal freedom of people and, hence, promoted direct identification of the individual with capitalist society (Oosthuizen 1995: 28; Marcuse 1968: 9-10).

The critical theorists saw the mass media as part of the culture industry that was responsible for the distribution of mass culture. They viewed the culture industry as a form of mass deception designed to keep people in the dark. This was achieved by combining entertainment and culture to the detriment of culture (Gurevitch et al. 1985: 46; Oosthuizen 1995: 19; Schoenly 1977: 119).

Marcuse furthermore believed that language served as a vehicle which the mass media used to apply social control in order to contain the social system. He argued that language was the means by which the mass media changed the mindset of the people to accepting that specific interests were right or wrong, true or false (Van Ruiten 1971/4: 77-79).

The critical theorists would not ascribe a permanent character to knowledge. Horkheimer believed that reality should be studied within its historical and social context. He supported the idea of totality, rejecting the economic determinism of classical Marxism. Horkheimer believed that critical theory should be used to uncover the contradictions in society, and to mediate towards a society's transformation. He did not reject empiricism, but emphasised that it could not replace theoretical analysis, because concepts like society, culture and class could not be viewed in empirical terms. These terms had to be explained and evaluated critically (Jay 1974: 21-55; Held 1980:32-34; Oosthuizen 1995: 17).

In explaining critical theory, Horkheimer compared it with positivist theory. He argued that critical theory does not merely accumulate knowledge, but that it is geared towards action. He viewed critical theory as the means of social change that liberates society, making it free from domination. Realising that this could not be achieved the researchers shifted their focus to analysing the conflict between man and nature as part of the universal theory of domination. The focus turned to domination that was less centred on economics and more direct (Tarr 1977: 80; O'Sullivan et al. 1993:93; Oosthuizen 1995: 17).

Critical theorists rejected objective and value-free research. They believed that researchers always became part of the social object that they were studying and maintained that society was not constructed by free and rational choice and therefore it was impossible to make

predictions about it. The existing social categories limited people and so effected their perceptions of reality. The values of the researcher and the researched are inseparable. The researcher's values influence the facts and therefore provision must be made for the pre-scientific insights of the researcher, the validity of aesthetical imagination, fantasies and human aspirations (Tarr 1977: 31-33).

Critical theorists believed that researchers should deconstruct social phenomena through reflection. They encouraged researchers to use philosophical, theoretical and interdisciplinary perspectives to ascertain and restructure the nature of social phenomena within the greater framework of concepts and theories. The critical theorists believed that questioning social phenomena requires researchers to question knowledge as well. They believed that knowledge could never be complete because it was constructed by the dynamic relationship between human activity and social structure. Because of its dialectical nature, critical theory will never be able to provide permanent answers about the existence of man. Its focus is therefore on the socio-economic conditions that stand in the way of social change towards rational society (Oosthuizen 1995: 17).

### 1.5.2 The Methodology of this Study

This study is grounded in the positivist research tradition. It proposes Industrial Theatre as an additional alternative form of communication in the corporate sphere, and applies it as a case study conducted at the University of Zululand. Using a qualitative research methodology, the researcher first analyses the theoretical constructs of the research problem through a literary review. From this theoretical conceptualisation, the researcher designs a programme that attempts to solve the particular problems identified as organisational communication problems.

The case study consists of pre-production forums leading to the final negotiated dramaturgy. The researcher describes and analyses the codes of this process in terms of the research problem. After the applied research phase, namely the 'enactment' of the dramaturgy, 'feedback' received from the participants is evaluated to establish the effectiveness of the programme. The researcher records the negotiated dramaturgy on video, providing an accurate source of data for analysis.

## 1.6 Limitations of the Study

Theoretically, the case study approach has certain limitations. It does not have the validity associated with, for example, the experimental approach, where there is a control group. However, it was felt that this latter approach would have been impractical. It also does not have the certainty that might be associated with a survey type of methodology. However, it is felt that each organisational communication problem is unique – to have merely correlated a number of different ‘Industrial Theatre’ approaches based on different problems would have achieved little.

This study does not suggest that Industrial Theatre should become the only process of communication in the corporate sphere. It suggests that it should be a viable alternative, or that it should be used in conjunction with other existing media. The structure of the programme used in this case study is just one approach. Inasmuch as the researcher believes that this is a truly effective, balanced and thorough model, other practitioners may have other successful approaches to Industrial Theatre.

## 1.7 Structure of the Study

This chapter establishes the problem, sub-problems, methodology, purpose and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 explains the Negotiated Dramaturgy, describing its influences and its structure. Chapter 3 looks at communication theory. Chapter 4 examines the role of the Negotiated Dramaturgy within the corporate communication environment. Chapter 5 looks at the communication environment of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. Chapter 6 gives a detailed description and analysis of the case study. Chapter 7 evaluates the effectiveness of the case study. Conclusions and recommendations are discussed in Chapter 8. In order to assist the reader in familiarising him/herself with the study, it is suggested that the video recording of the drama production (Appendix B) be viewed and that sections 6.15.1- 6.15.7 be read at this stage.

## 1.8 Definition of Terms

The following terms have reference to this study.

### 1.8.1 Autobiographical Circumstances

Autobiographical circumstances (Mersham et al. 1995: 55-57) refer to the life experiences that psychologically shape an individual. Each individual has his/her own set of unique autobiographical circumstances that will influence the way that he or she encodes, decodes and interprets a message and therefore constitute an important part of the communication process.

### 1.8.2 Blocking

The term "blocking" refers to the practitioners' movements, gestures, facial expressions, speech and vocal sounds in the rehearsal and performance spaces. The rehearsal period establishes the extent of the blocking. It functions to give meaning in a three-dimensional context to the shared message of the dramaturgy.

### 1.8.3 Character

The term "character" refers to the fictitious persons created by the practitioners to bring the objectives of the play to life and to ensure that the stakeholders engage them on an emotional and intellectual level. They only exist within the fictional bounds of the dramaturgy. In this study, the characters are fictitious representations of the stakeholders of the organisation.

### 1.8.4 Corporate Communication

In the context of this study, corporate communication refers to any communication that takes place within the organisation that has an impact upon the goals, mission and role of the organisation. Corporate communication has evolved from Public Relations and consists of communication that deals with the following: image and identity, corporate advertising and advocacy, media relations, financial communications, employee relations, community relations and corporate philanthropy, government relations and crisis communication.

### 1.8.5 Dramaturgy

Dramaturgy is the entire collection of communication codes that are employed in the performance space (the stage and the space occupied by the audience, such as the auditorium or workspace) (Barba 1991: 68). Dramaturgy includes all the codes of communication and representation such as the narrative, story line, plot, thesis and antithesis, but also dialogue, movement, lighting and props, within the three-dimensional activity of a performance.

### 1.8.6 Forum

The forum is a platform or vehicle that enables communication between all role players in the process, including management, worker representatives, workers and the practitioners. There are two types of forums including, firstly the pre-production forums, which occurs before the performance of the dramaturgy. The practitioners use the forums to establish the objectives, storyline and characters for the dramaturgy. The second type of forum is the in-role forum inspired by Augusto Boal's (1992) "Forum Theatre". The in-role forum occurs during the dramaturgy and is a vehicle which allows the stakeholders to respond to the dramaturgy.

### 1.8.7 In-role Facilitator

The in-role facilitator is the practitioner controlling the dramaturgy. He or she is the equivalent of Augusto Boal's (1992: 232) "Joker" and functions in a similar manner. The in-role facilitator is equivalent to a ringmaster in a circus; he or she introduces the scenes, confronts the stakeholders, facilitates the in-role forum and instructs the practitioners as to what actions to repeat or clarify. The in-role facilitator remains in character throughout the dramaturgy.

### 1.8.8 Negotiated Dramaturgy

The Negotiated Dramaturgy is the form of Industrial Theatre examined in this study. It works on the premise that the story lines and characters of the dramaturgy are created through negotiation by all the stakeholders taking part in the process. These are created in the pre-production forums. The dramaturgy involves negotiation around possible solutions to the problems raised. This occurs in the in-role forums.

### 1.8.9 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

This is a general industry term referring to the protective clothing that the stakeholders are required to wear in their work context, for example, the hard hats, safety boots, gloves, overalls etc. The practitioners wear these as iconics in their performance.

### 1.8.10 Practitioner

In this study, the practitioner is the enabling mediator encouraging effective communication between all the stakeholders. The practitioners are trained actors who perform in the dramaturgy and are specialist communicators who function as facilitators during the pre-production forums.

In the communication process, they may operate as both 'filters' and 'innovators'. They creatively respond to the suggestions offered by the stakeholders during the entire process. Through role-play, the practitioners demonstrate and contextualise the suggestions. This enables the various stakeholders to see their suggestions in action, and from this judge whether their suggestions are feasible and justified. The practitioners enact the individual intrapersonal thoughts of a particular stakeholder and share them interpersonally with the other stakeholders. This process enables a perception of equality, because regardless of the individual stakeholder's role within the organisation, the practitioners act upon his or her suggestions. The Industrial Theatre process empowers the practitioners to function as mirrors to the stakeholders, transcending the stakeholders' one-dimensional suggestions and allowing the suggestions to become a three-dimensional reality.

### 1.8.11 Sociocultural Circumstances

This refers to the cultural role of the stakeholder in his or her society. For the purpose of this study, one must view the role that the stakeholder plays in the relevant work context. In South Africa, the society and culture of the stakeholder shapes his or her industrial role. Their language, ethnic classification and education all play a vital part in these circumstances.

### 1.8.12 Stakeholder

The term "stakeholder" in this study is used in the corporate communication sense. The stakeholders are individuals involved with an organisation. This study is particularly concerned with the internal stakeholder who is a member of the organisation's staff. The term "stakeholder" in this study refers to the members of management, all employees, union representatives and members of the plant committees. In corporate communication, stakeholders were previously referred to as publics.

### 1.8.13 Theatre

For the purpose of this study, the researcher defines theatre as the enactment of a scene or play by performers, for an audience.

## Chapter 2

# THE NEGOTIATED DRAMATURGY

### 2.1 Introduction

As this study is concerned with a style of Industrial Theatre called the Negotiated Dramaturgy, it is necessary to begin the study by examining the Negotiated Dramaturgy. This chapter describes the Negotiated Dramaturgy and begins by outlining the five stages that make up this form of dramaturgy. It looks at the broad theoretical influences that help shape the overall structure and ideal of the Negotiated Dramaturgy before discussing each section in detail. In the detailed discussion, specific theoretical influences are discussed.

### 2.2 A Brief outline of the Negotiated Dramaturgy

The process of Industrial Theatre has five distinct stages. The first is the initial meeting, the second the work of the small group forums in the creative-dramatic frame where one identifies the issues and where individual stakeholders negotiate the objectives and outcomes. The third stage is the rehearsal process where the practitioners create and rehearse the dramaturgy. The fourth stage is the dramaturgy (i.e., the interactive presentation within the dramatic frame). The stakeholders settle some of the issues in the forums while the practitioners deal with these and other issues in the dramaturgy. Within the dramaturgy stage one can refer to 'in-role forums', where the attributes of a forum are present (in this case opportunities for free and open communication) but within the dramatic frame. The fifth and final stage is the 'feedback' stage where the practitioners report on the process to all stakeholders, not only to the originators (usually management). This includes the plans of action, solutions and suggestions.

### 2.3 The Broad Theoretical Influences of the Negotiated Dramaturgy

The broad theoretical influences vary in the role that they play in shaping the structure and the style of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. This section lists the ideals of Brecht and Grotowski that inspire the process, while looking at the theories of negotiation, Participatory Learning and Action and Community Drama. These theories not only inspire the Negotiated Dramaturgy but are also instrumental in giving it its shape and form.

### 2.3.1            Negotiation

Negotiation is the means to the entire process as it is the central function of each step in the process. Negotiation is a communication process that occurs between all the stakeholders (Rojot 1991: 21) in which parties attempt to achieve the greatest gain with the smallest possible loss (Nieuwmeijer 1988: 8). This Negotiated Dramaturgy attempts to facilitate this process directly in small groups and through the dramaturgy. The practitioners partly achieve this facilitation through collective bargaining or collective negotiation. The purpose is to reach agreement on issues concerning the group. This negotiation involves both individuals (as members of the workforce or management) and agents (representing the interests of a particular group, e.g. trade unions) (Piron 1978:183-196; Nieuwmeijer 1988:9). This stresses the importance of establishing a suitable environment that appeals to the stakeholders as individuals and to the role they are playing as negotiators on behalf of a group. There is no guarantee as to the way in which an individual will act. Regardless of the negotiation issue, they will act with a degree of freedom in both their individual capacity and in the group capacity (Rojot 1991: 22). It is therefore important to establish an environment that favours the resolution of the issues and the freedom of participants to act as individuals. The nature of this approach establishes tactics, strategies and a sense of trust that will influence its future (Rojot 1991: 65-66), and the future climate of negotiations.

The principles of negotiation are used in every section of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. The practitioners and stakeholders use these principles when discussing issues, creating the characters and the story line. Negotiation is also found in the dramaturgy during the in-role forum when possible solutions to the problems are discussed. During the rehearsal process, the practitioners negotiate the staging of the dramaturgy. Having looked at overall ideals the focus can now move to influence of theatre and drama on the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

### 2.3.2            Bertholt Brecht

Brecht (1964: 186) believed that theatre had the potential to be didactic in nature. He argued that theatre should edge as close as possible to the apparatus of education and mass communication. Brecht believed that theatre is free to find enjoyment in teaching and enquiring by constructing workable presentations of society, which can influence society. Theatre documents society's experiences, both past and present. This gives the audience the opportunity to appreciate the feelings, insights and impulses of the "wisest, most active and most passionate among us from the events of the day or the century" (Brecht 1964: 186). Brecht stressed that the people should be:

entertained with the wisdom that comes from the solutions to the problems, with the anger that is a practical expression of sympathy with the underdog, with the respect due to those who respect humanity, or rather whatever is kind to humanity (Brecht 1964: 186).

Brecht also influenced the structure of the dramaturgy and the practitioners' characterisations. These specific influences are discussed later in the chapter (sections 2.4.3.1 and 2.4.3.2) when those elements are explained.

### 2.3.3 Jerzy Grotowski

The concept of the Negotiated Dramaturgy is inspired by Grotowski's notion that theatre should create 'pure' communication between the actors and the audience. Grotowski believed that theatre could be a means of changing people. He believed that it could improve their quality of life and that it can contribute to the overall development and evolution of the human race (Grotowski 1968: 19, 32; 1969: 64-74; Kumiega 1985:128-129). The Negotiated Dramaturgy is inspired by this notion but does not use the style that made Grotowski so popular. The esoteric style of Grotowski's theatre is not suited for this purpose.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy is designed to be a participatory medium, and is inspired by the principles of Participatory Learning and Action.

### 2.3.4 Participatory Learning and Action

The Negotiated Dramaturgy is concerned with the education and development of the stakeholder. Organisations implement Industrial Theatre campaigns as a means of educating and developing their workforce. The ideals of ownership and transparency are important factors in South African business today. It is essential that any communication campaign that deals with the issues and rights of the stakeholder include the stakeholder in its conceptualisation and implementation. In development terms, this is called participation. The Negotiated Dramaturgy is therefore influenced by the principles of Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) which suggests an effective structure for working in this manner.

Participatory Learning and Action operates from the premise that the stakeholders are adult learners. The context of their training and the manner in which they are taught is very important if success is to be achieved. Pretty et al. (1995: 1) quoting Smith (1983), Rogers (1986) and Rogers (1989) list the following basic principles of adult learning:

- Adults participate in the process as voluntary learners. They perform best when they have decided to attend the process for a particular reason, and they are entitled to know why a topic is important to them.
- Adults usually come with an intention to learn. If this motivation is not supported, they will lose interest and stop attending.
- Adults have experience and therefore can assist each other with learning.
- Optimal learning is achieved in an environment of active involvement and participation.
- Adults learn best when they have the clear understanding that the context of the training is close to their own tasks or jobs. They are best taught with a real world approach.

Adult learning stresses the importance of effective two-way communication. Pretty et al. (1995:5) support this notion, believing that “good communication and the free exchange of information is at the heart of all training and human resource development”. Marchant (1988: Introduction) articulates the importance of communication in the development context, stating that “communication has become a *sine qua non* for development”.

Over the last few decades the planned and deliberate use of communication has taken an increasingly prominent place in development strategies. Development workers realised that people’s lives will not change without the development of the appropriate values, attitudes and stock of knowledge in the people’s minds. This belief emphasised the importance of communication and education as instruments for development. The development programmes that advocate a bottom-up approach encourage stakeholders to participate in the process (Boeren 1992:47).

Development workers believe that the stakeholders’ views and comments on their situation are an indispensable part of any development work. Pongquan (1988:20) is of the opinion that people are expected to jointly identify their common problems, assess their resource potential and conceptualise a plan and then implement it.

The popularity of Participatory Learning and Action has led to much innovation and experimentation with methodology. Pretty et al. (1995: 56) list thirty-two different terms for participatory approaches to learning and action. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Action Research (PAR), Participatory Urban Appraisal (PUA) and Theatre for Development (TFD) are a few examples. They maintain that, regardless of the approach, Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) has six basic principles. Pretty et al. (1995: 56-57) list them as follows:

*A defined methodology and systematic learning process.* The focus is on cumulative learning by all participants, which include both professional trainees and local people. Given the focus of these approaches as systems of joint analysis and interaction, their use has to be participative.

*Multiple Perspectives.* A central objective is to seek diversity, rather than simplify complexity. This recognises that different individuals and groups make different evaluations of situations, which lead to different actions. Everyone's views are heavy with interpretation, bias and prejudice and this implies that there are multiple possible descriptions of any real-world activity. Everyone is different and important.

*Group Learning process.* All involve the recognition that the complexity of the world will only be revealed through group analysis and interaction. There are three possible mixes of investigators: those from different disciplines, from different sectors, and those from outside (professionals) and the inside (local people). Within each of these there are other types of mix, for example not all local people in a 'community' are the same.

*Context specific.* The approaches are flexible enough to be adapted to suit each new set of conditions and actors, and so there are multiple variants. Encourage your participants to invent new methods, terms and names, as this will encourage a greater sense of ownership.

*Facilitating experts and stakeholders.* The methodology is concerned with the transformation of existing activities to try and improve people's situation. The role of the external 'expert' is best thought of as helping people carry out their own study and so achieve something. Encourage your participants to think for themselves as facilitators of other people's learning, particularly when they get to the village or urban neighbourhood.

*Leading to change.* The participatory process leads to debate about change, and debate changes the perceptions of the actors and their readiness to contemplate action. The process of joint analysis and dialogue helps to define changes that would bring about improvement and seeks to motivate people to take action to implement the defined changes. This action includes local institution building or strengthening, so increasing the capacity of people to initiate action on their own in the future.

Although Pretty et al. (1995) are concerned primarily with rural and urban communities these principles translate to working with industrial communities. This style of participatory approach is drawn from the activist participatory research inspired by Paulo Freire (1968). This activist approach uses *dialogue and joint research to enhance the individual's awareness and confidence and to empower him or her to act*. The strengths of this approach are centred in the fact that it assumes that the participants are creative and capable and so should be empowered. The practitioners have roles to play as catalysts and facilitators (Pretty et al. 1995: 55).

Participatory Learning and Action and Theatre for Development put the stakeholder at the centre of the process. The Negotiated Dramaturgy operates in a similar manner (see section 4.8.3) allowing the stakeholders to be the initiators of the objectives and allowing them to define the characters and story line. The Negotiated Dramaturgy advocates an interactive participation approach, meaning that the stakeholders participate in investigating the issues, which leads to them creating action plans. This approach involves interdisciplinary methodologies that encourages the stakeholders to put forward multiple perspectives and it makes use of systematic and structured learning processes for dealing with the objectives of the process. This involves multiple sessions that assist the participants in conceptualising, planning and implementing a theatre production. Theatre for Development principles encourage a discussion on the play and its content after the dramaturgy. Such a discussion is aimed at encouraging the stakeholders to jointly discuss the causes of the problem and to suggest possible solutions to solve it. The stakeholders are encouraged to take control of the decisions reached so that they can implement and maintain them (Boeren 1992: 48-49; Pretty et al. 1995: 61).

One of the characteristics of Theatre for Development is that it is very time consuming. While this might be acceptable in a rural community or urban social club, it is not suitable in a corporate context. Businesses think in financial terms and long campaigns that keep the workforce from their duties impacts negatively on the productivity of that organisation. It is for this reason that the pre-production forums are kept as short as possible and that the dramaturgy is staged and performed by the practitioners. The script is devised and/or written by the practitioners, using the *suggestions and characters created by the stakeholders*. The practitioners complete the script in the rehearsal stage and do not involve the stakeholders in this part of the process.

This makes the process an external intervention. Boeren (1992: 47) argues that this is typical of all Theatre for Development. He states that while popular theatre is expressed in local idioms and is loved by the audience, *it is not the 'normal' way of presenting and discussing problems*.

A further criticism made by Boeren (1992: 50) and Eyoh (1987: 16) was that the process could be controlled by the more powerful members of the community. To counter this the practitioners must facilitate the process so that it remains open to all stakeholders, not allowing anyone to dominate the process. Experience shows that this can be achieved through strong facilitation.

Boeren (1992: 50) states that theatre has a role to play in development efforts as it has the unique quality of combining education with entertainment and of stimulating participation and discussion. It is for these reasons that a methodology which involves Participatory Learning and Action as well as Theatre for Development influences the approach and overall structure of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. The principles of community drama also assist with the overall approach of the Negotiated Dramaturgy and specifically in the pre-production forums.

### 2.3.5 Community Drama

The Negotiated Dramaturgy draws on the ideals of community drama because it encourages co-operation, equality and transparency. Drama as a medium is non-discriminatory and therefore encourages all stakeholders to participate in the process. It is malleable which enables it to adapt to different circumstances. It is also multi-faceted, so that it can adjust to the strengths and weaknesses of the different participants. Drama encourages its participants to interpret their experience through deliberate playful enactment (Johnston 1998: 3).

Drama is a social process that relies on the active involvement of the body, mind, feelings and spirit. Through the realm of imagined experience, it allows individuals to take on the roles of other characters and experience different situations. This encourages the individual's understanding of him or herself, of others and of the world in which he or she lives in (Clifford and Herrmann 1999: 16; Heathcote 1984: 54).

Johnson (1993: 4) argues that drama is an appropriate community activity as it is "broadly humanist, respecting co-operation, sociability and equality of opportunity, while engendering mutual respect". The participation of every member is fundamental to the process. Heathcote (1984: 54) argues that drama always demands crystallisation of ideas in groups and that it can employ the individuals to work as a group to conceive ideas and to maintain the level of interest required for the work. The success of the dramaturgy relies on group effort and their mutual needs (Clifford and Herrmann 1999: 18).

The extent to which drama is used in the pre-production forum varies according to the willingness of the stakeholders. Some stakeholders enjoy the games and the role-play, while others find it a little embarrassing and it makes them uncomfortable. Some business executives are very reluctant to roll up their sleeves and remove their ties. The practitioners are able to judge the level to which the stakeholders are willing to participate and plan the forums accordingly. However, drama is never totally removed from the pre-production forums.

The following discussion explains the process in detail. The diagram in fig 3.1 illustrates this study's approach to Industrial Theatre.

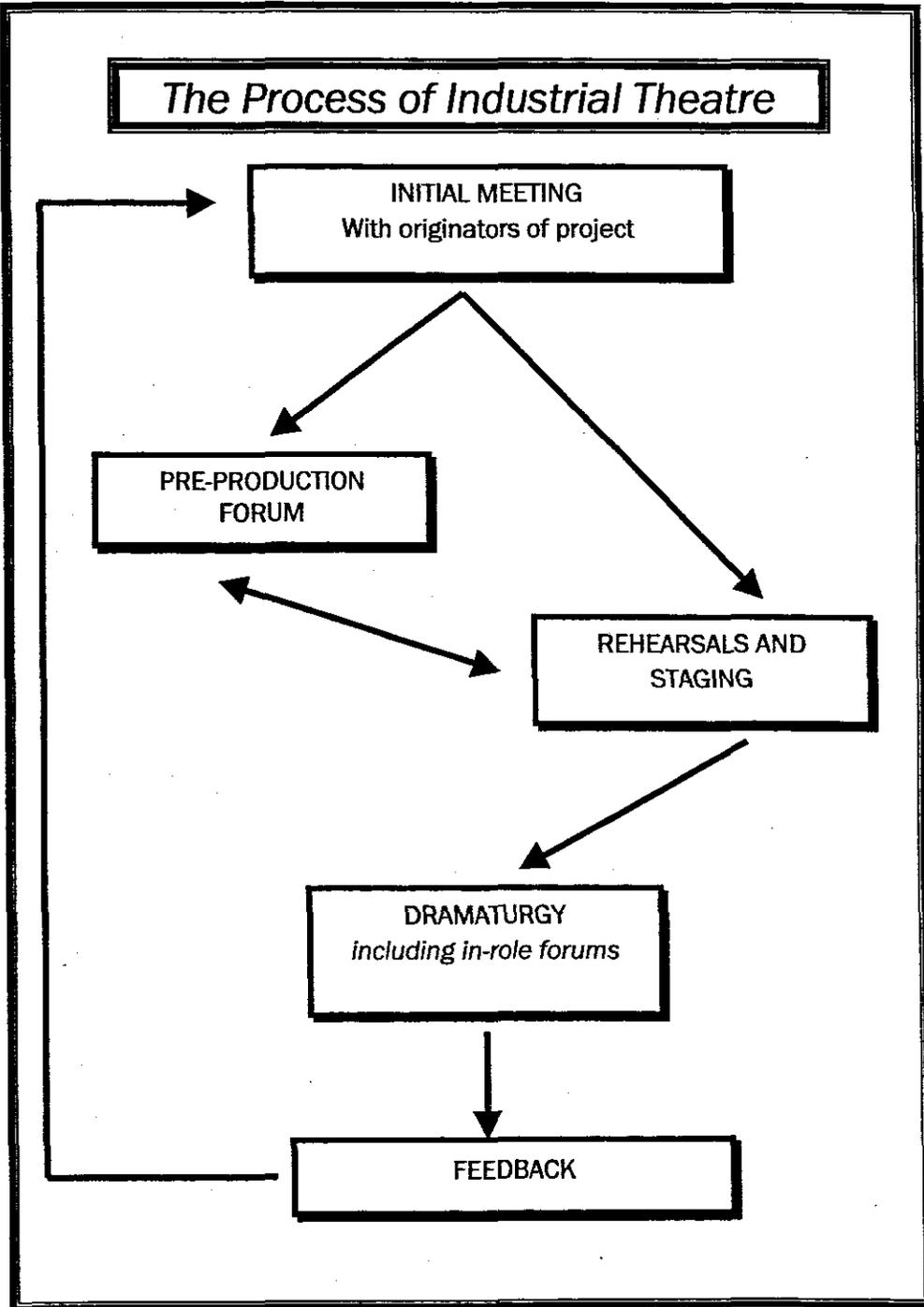


Figure 2.1: The Process of Industrial Theatre

## 2.4 The Stages of the Negotiated Dramaturgy

The stages of the Negotiated Dramaturgy were discussed briefly in section 2.2. Each stage will now be dealt with in detail.

### 2.4.1 The Initial Meeting

The initial stage is the original meeting in which a particular organisation gives a mandate to a particular company to initiate an Industrial Theatre Programme. They present the topic and issues on which the practitioners will design their approach. At this meeting, the initiators provide the practitioners with information regarding the timing, issues, possible approaches, media and the sector of stakeholders involved in the process.

### 2.4.2 The Pre-production Forums

The next stage involves the broadening of the stakeholder base to include all concerned sectors of the organisation. The stakeholders divide into small groups in an attempt to create synergy, as they are both targets and agents for change (Samovar et al. 1996: 4). The practitioners keep the groups small (see section 6.3.3) as larger groups affect existing interpersonal relations among members. The practitioners facilitate discussion allowing for diversity of opinions and ideas while allowing all the stakeholders to present their views on the issues.

The forums attempt to resolve the issues within their small group while gathering material for the dramaturgy. For example, when discussing the possible ways the supervisor character should act in the play, they are in fact debating the overall operational procedure of supervisors. The practitioners should ensure that while the participants discuss the negative or incorrect operational procedure, they should establish the correct procedure as well. Often the different sectors of stakeholders might disagree or have a different approach. The forum would then encourage the practitioners to facilitate a negotiated settlement.

Often a misunderstanding or lack of knowledge of the situation is responsible for the objective (see section 6.1.1) of the campaign. Practical experience has found that contextualising the play and, in particular, the creation of the characters, helps establish better understanding of and empathy for each other. For example, management might be unaware of the domestic situation of many of the workers. This situation directly or indirectly affects the productivity of the worker. This knowledge might create the desired empathy and understanding that the stakeholders may use to help resolve an issue or improve conditions. This exercise encourages the participant to become aware of the Sociocultural and Autobiographical circumstances that shape the

communicator and the recipient in communication (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) (see section 5.5.2). The style of the negotiated dramaturgy encourages a creative approach to the pre-production forums.

#### 2.4.2.1 The Creative Process

This process has its roots in the collective creative processes of production devising. This is opposed to the more 'traditional' approach where a director interprets a playwright's text and creates a production through a particular production process. Such a 'traditional approach is, however, also Industrial Theatre.

The aforementioned collective creativity responsible for the creation of the negotiated dramaturgy addresses the 'tangential elements' that according to Hauptfleisch (1997: 109) influences the communicative potential of the 'total performance event'. The stakeholders' realisation that they are part of the creative process enables them to identify with the 'image of the author' (themselves). The practitioner's performance within this creative process (his or her demonstrations of characterisation and use of accents in the pre-production forums) allows the stakeholders to identify with the 'image of the performer'. The site-specific venue directly relating to the objectives of the campaign and to the working environment of the stakeholders addresses the 'image of the place of performance' (the canteen or shop-floor, the university theatre in the case study). The stakeholders' knowledge of and participation in the creative process of the campaign as well as the intended perception that the campaign is for the benefit of the entire organisation address the 'image of the occasion'. The 'image of the company presenting the play' influences the perceived standards of an Industrial Theatre campaign. The general perception is that an Industrial Theatre using Sandra Prinsloo, for example, will be better than those using non-household names. As in any industry, the record of accomplishment of the company is important. The multi-award winning Blue Moon Company is nationally renowned, and hence the perception that all of its work is of good quality. It is essential for practitioners to build a reputation that improves their image. Constant good references and word of mouth can quickly improve the image of certain practitioners.

The practitioners use the principles of creative drama as the catalyst to create the dramaturgy. Creative drama is usually associated with children and the notion of 'play'. However, its principles are applicable to the creative process. Creative drama is a dramatic learning activity, guided by a leader that allows participants to imagine, enact, and reflect upon real or imagined human experiences. Pinciotti (1993) and Woodson (1999) argue that it nurtures both individual and

group skills, enhancing the participants' ability to communicate their ideas, images and feelings with others through dramatic action. The stakeholders share ideas as their imaginations define the story, the setting and the characters. This process is highly theatrical as practitioners encourage the participants to demonstrate (act out) their ideas rather than just talking about them. Personal experience shows that participants find it easier to express themselves in this way. For example, when a stakeholder struggles to share his or her idea or wants to reinforce its potential he or she often gets up and acts out the idea, sometimes alone, sometimes using others in the group. In many instances, this spurs the creativity of the others, thereby enabling the process. Undoubtedly, this varies from group to group but is universal in groups showing high levels of cohesion. Moore's (1997: 84-93) research into the cognitive processes of small groups documents this as a common occurrence. It is essential for the practitioner to create this cohesion. From the outset, the various practitioners might see themselves as opposing each other (for example, management and trade unions). Johnson (1998: 8-10) argues that practitioners can improve cohesion by allowing the stakeholders to become aware of their similarities and of what they have in common (the general good of the organisation) and the need to focus on a common goal (the creation of the story and characters).

The dramaturgy needs to address issues that are specific to the campaign. The pre-production forums establish the needs, formulate the objectives, formulate the message and establish the time frames. Chapter 6 explains these in detail when it discusses the case study. The participants create the plot and the characters to deal with the needs, objectives and message of the campaign, while also defining the dialogue. They then pass these on to the practitioners who use them in the rehearsal process when structuring and rehearsing the dramaturgy.

The practitioners rehearse the dramaturgy and conduct the pre-production forums simultaneously. This creates a 'feedback' channel between the stakeholders and the practitioners that allows for constant interaction on the story and characters as well on the technical correctness of the action and terminology.

### 2.4.3 Rehearsals and Staging

The practitioners base the story line and characters on the objectives established in the pre-production forums (chapter 6 explains how this was achieved within the case study).

This dramaturgy is designed to give substance and form to the message (Huebsch 1986: 7), while evoking 'feedback' on the negotiation issues. It functions as a three-dimensional demonstration

incorporating speech, movement and sound, concerning the positive and negative attributes of the negotiation issues (De Marinis 1982: 137, Williams 1996: 371-372). The dramaturgy allows the stakeholders to become the communicators with the same status and credibility as the 'original' communicator(s) or initiators of the project (usually management). Management becomes one of several stakeholders as indicated by the Mersham model of corporate communication (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) upon which this study is based (see section 5.5.2).

#### 2.4.3.1 The Structure

The structure of the dramaturgy is vital for effectively communicating the intention of the message. Hauptfleisch (1978: 37) states that the playwright manipulates the 'vocabulary' of a play, particularly the scenes and episodes within the total plot for a variety of purposes. In Industrial Theatre, the aim of the dramaturgy is to share an intended message with the stakeholders. The message (decided upon by the stakeholders) is broken down into objectives, which form the basis of each scene. Similar objectives are grouped together in one scene. These scenes become individual units within the overall structure of the dramaturgy. The scenes operate as if the narrative running through the entire dramaturgy was independent of time. This structure is likened to the episodic nature of Brecht's theatre (Brecht 1964: 279; Mitter 1992: 44).

Brecht's Epic Theatre makes use of closed 'parable' plays structured episodically and focuses on a moral dilemma while allowing for vital questions to be unconditionally aired with a view to their resolution (Brecht 1964: 76; Counsell 1996: 82; Styan 1981: 140). This approach allows the audience the opportunity to make its own judgement (Brecht 1964: 71). Brecht's theatre presents a structure that allows practitioners to use theatre for public discussion (Brecht 1964: 130-131; Styan 1981: 129-130).

The Negotiated Dramaturgy shares the intentions of Brecht's epic theatre. It is therefore inspired by its structure. Each scene may be a play in itself and not necessarily be one scene in an overall play. The scenes may refer to each other in order to establish cohesion. This cohesion supports the message(s) being shared by the dramaturgy. The practitioners style each scene as a 'well made play' using the Aristotelian concept of a beginning, middle and an end. These scenes have a horizontal organisation structure (Hauptfleisch 1978: 39 quoting Smiley 1971: 65), meaning that they are linear in their progression.

Keuris (1996: 51-53) explains this linear progression from a literary context, listing the stages as: the commencement of the dramatic events; the development of the dramatic events; and the conclusion of the dramatic events.

Morgan and Saxton (1987:5-7) operating from an educational drama context list four stages in the linear progression, namely: 'exposition'; 'rising action/complication'; 'climax/crisis' and 'denouement'. They divide Keuris's (1996) stage of 'development of dramatic events' into 'rising action/complication' and 'climax/crisis'. The negotiated dramaturgy approach favours this context as it clarifies the process and enables the participant to become more actively involved. Further clarification is gained by understanding that the 'rising action/complication' is achieved through dramatic tension. Listing the four stages mentioned above as: task; relationship; surprise; and mystery (O'Toole and Haseman 1986: 19-39) creates a foundation from which to create the dramaturgy.

These self-contained episodic scenes form part of a larger structure that is styled on Boal's Forum Theatre. Using Boal's (1992: 18-19) "rules of the game" to formulate the structure of the dramaturgy it should have the following characteristics:

- The dramaturgy must clearly represent the nature of each character, identifying them precisely and accurately, so that the audience can easily recognise the ideas and beliefs of each character.
- The solutions proposed by the practitioner must contain at the very least one consciously devised workplace error, which will be analysed during the in-role forum. The play must present a mistake or a failure, inducing the stakeholders to finding solutions and inventing new ways of confronting the issue. The practitioners must pose good questions, allowing the stakeholders to supply good answers. This action must open the channels of communication, creating a free, enabling environment within which all parties can participate.
- The negotiated dramaturgy can be of any genre. Surrealism or the irrational should, however, be avoided as the participants find these styles difficult to understand, thereby limiting their chances of becoming actively involved in the process. This tends to alienate the audience, causing them to struggle to understand the objectives rather than being able to concentrate on the issues that

the objectives present. Therefore, the style does not matter, as long as the objective is to discuss, through the medium of theatre, concrete situations.

Practical experience shows that limiting each scene to two or three characters is the ideal. It keeps the scenes simplistic while enabling sufficient character development to deal with the issues and objectives.

#### 2.4.3.2 The Characters

The characters are dramatic creations of typical people found within the organisation. Often they are stereotypes and caricatures designed to appeal to as many of the stakeholders as possible. Experience shows that these characters should be blatant in their actions and their intentions. The characterisation must be clear to the diverse audience and represent an employee of the organisation<sup>1</sup>. The concept of Brecht's 'Alienation Effect' assists the practitioners in this style of characterisation. Today scholars prefer the term 'distancing effect', as they believe that "alienation" is an inaccurate translation of the German *Verfremdungseffek*.

Brecht's 'distancing effect' draws the audience's attention to a particular point or object (Brecht 1964: 143-144) thereby eliminating the 'magic' of the theatre. Often theatre is associated with the creation of a magic reality in which the audience sits backs and enjoys the spectacle. The magic of the theatre absorbs the audience and therefore they are not required to think about what they are watching. The 'distancing effect' encourages the audience to adopt an attitude of enquiry and criticism in their approach to the story of the play (Brecht 1964:136; Counsell 1996: 102; Mitter 1992: 44; University of Queensland 1999). Brecht proposed that acting should show, and not evoke, empathy (Brecht 1964: 136).

#### 2.4.3.3 The Dialogue

The choice of dialogue is very important for the success of the campaign as a whole. This choice is more involved than just choosing a language, for example English and/or isiZulu. The participants need to choose a medium that guarantees the highest level of communicative

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the researcher conducted a campaign at Richards Bay Coal Terminal (RBCT) dealing with "Value in Diversity". In this campaign, the stakeholders collectively created characters belonging to management and unions. The characters were created from their own experience, drawn from their backgrounds and facing the issues that they had to deal with as individuals and as members of the organisation. This specific detail was used to create a stereotypical character that would be found at RBCT. The characters were identifiable to all the stakeholders. This also assisted the stakeholders with understanding each other and went a long way to establishing empathy for each other. This technique was instrumental in the campaign successfully achieving its objective.

success. Hauptfleisch (1997: 89) outlines three premises that shape dialogue in South African theatre. These are applicable to Industrial Theatre and need to be considered by the practitioners when devising the dramaturgy. Therefore, they are worthy of mention here.

The first premise concerns the general attributes of dramatic dialogue:

- dialogue on stage is artificial, it is a distillation of and selection from *everyday language for the purposes of communicating a specific message under particular circumstances.*
- Dialogue in performance is an integral part of the single communicative transaction.
- The playwright is not the sole creator of his dialogue form – it is also determined by a number of external social and cultural factors.

The second premise states that “the nature of dramatic dialogue is shaped in part by three demands made by the dramatic form itself:

- a play has to communicate its message directly, by aural and visual means, to an audience at the very first exposure.
- *Dialogue needs to be ‘performable’, i.e. it is to be a spoken language.*
- dialogue in a performance must be understandable to an audience made up of a wide spectrum of the general public, and having a variety of backgrounds.

His third premise is that:

Normal, everyday language, as spoken by the average man in the street, has a very limited range of expression. The aim of any artist – particularly a verbal artist – is to transcend the limitations of ‘normal’ human communication, to somehow say *more than words can*. Hence the enormous weight given to the non-verbal elements of performance, and hence too basic artificiality of an enterprise which aims at being so much more than a mere mirror to be held up to ‘nature’ (Hauptfleisch 1997: 89).

Hauptfleisch (1997: 93-95) cites two types of dialogue found in the South African theatre context. He refers to “citytalk” as the dynamic ever-evolving language spoken on the streets of South Africa, and “theatretalk” as the language used in theatres in South Africa. His argument is that theatre is “an artificial representation of life, not life itself”, and that a “play is a defined, purposely structured world created for a specific communicative purpose” (Hauptfleisch 1978: 80; 1997: 93-95). Playwrights manipulate language usage to show diversity within one language code, for example using Standard South African English and Black South African English to differentiate between the race or socio-cultural differences of the characters. The context of the negotiated

dramaturgy is different to the context in which Hauptfleisch (1997:93-95) bases his argument. Industrial Theatre is intended for a multicultural, multilingual (and often a socio-economically diverse) audience. For this reason, it makes use of elaborated codes (see section 3.8.5) to facilitate sharing the message. Practitioners are encouraged to use code switching (see section 6.13.2) within the dramaturgy to reach this diverse audience. This puts greater emphasis on the non-verbal codes used in the dramaturgy thereby improving the chances of the message being understood. Added to this is the need for terminology specific to the organisation, which is essential for contextualising the dramaturgy and for achieving the objectives of the campaign. For the purposes of this study, Hauptfleisch's (1997: 94) "theatretalk" can evolve to become "industrial-theatretalk".

#### 2.4.3.4 Performance Space

The case study (see chapter 6) was conducted in a permanent physical theatrical space (the university theatre). However, in many campaigns, this is not the case and the performance space is a site-specific venue within the organisation, for example the canteen, training centre or shop floor. A physical theatre (building) is not essential in Industrial Theatre, (nor is any theatre, for that matter). Hauptfleisch (1978: 126, 182) argues that "drama takes place wherever an actor and an audience meet". One of Peter Brook's (1972: 11) most famous statements was that theatre could take place in any "empty space". Within this mindset, the negotiated dramaturgy makes use of Boal's (1995:18) concept of the 'aesthetic space'. Boal (1995: 18) states that:

All that is required is that, within the bounds of a certain space, spectators and actors designate a more restrictive space as 'stage': an aesthetic space.

This space may be a corner or centre of a room, on floor level, or it may be a raised space like the back of a truck. The space may be stationary or it may be mobile. For example, the researcher presented a campaign from the top of a flat-bedded truck moving around the site from one section to another.

Hauptfleisch (1978: 183) and Helbo et al. (1987: 6) argue that the relationship of the audience to the actors and the physical environment can be a significant factor in the overall meaning of the play. This is particularly relevant to the Negotiated Dramaturgy, as the stakeholders are actively involved in it. They should have the sense that the 'aesthetic space' belongs to them and therefore is just a step away from them. The stakeholders' participation in the in-role forums (whether from their seats or in the space provided for the practitioners) automatically include them in the 'aesthetic space'. Within the creative drama approach of the pre-production forums

the 'aesthetic space' is constantly changing too. As the participants act out their ideas, their immediate space becomes the 'aesthetic space'.

## 2.5 The 'Feedback' Stage

The final stage of the negotiated dramaturgy is the 'feedback' stage where the practitioners report on the successes and or failures of the process to the originators. They comment on the issues raised during the pre-production forums and in the dramaturgy. This includes the plans of action, solutions and suggestions. The type of 'feedback' varies according to the brief given to the practitioners. 'Feedback' may take on one or more of the following forms:

- An informal discussion where the relevant points are raised
- A written report that briefly discusses the experiences and observations of the practitioners.
- A formal presentation which discusses the practitioners' experiences and observations of the project. (This can include video, and stills photography and/or film footage).
- Submitting video and stills photography as well as a written report.
- Conducting post-performance research to determine the effectiveness of the campaign, using questionnaires and compiling a research document that addresses the objectives of the campaign in detail.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter aimed at providing a general overview of Negotiated Dramaturgy before looking at its broad theoretical influences. The theories of Brecht and Grotowski and the central ideas contained in the concepts of Participatory Learning and Action and Community Drama were highlighted, while the overriding ideal of negotiation was discussed. The study moved from the broad to the specific, looking at each stage of the Negotiated Dramaturgy and discussing the theoretical influences that were specific to that section. The theories specific to Brecht, Boal and Hauptfleisch were discussed while the relevant elements of creative drama were highlighted.

# CHAPTER 3:

## Communication Theory

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of different theoretical approaches to the communication process. The basic theoretical elements of communication theories are identified and eight basic theoretical standpoints are outlined.

### 3.2 Common Theoretical Elements

The act of communication is a complex process and has engaged the minds of scholars since the time of Plato and Aristotle. Plato viewed communication as a dialogue between two people, allowing each the opportunity to have his or her say, to make his or her point (Van Schoor 1986: 29).

For example, Dance and Larson (1976) list one hundred and twenty-six definitions of communication. The definition of communication and the elements of the communication process vary according to the theoretical frame of reference used and the stress placed upon different aspects of the process.

Van Schoor (1986: 13), for example, in his discussion of the 'communication triptych', lists three basic elements inherent in the communication process: the communicator, the medium that carries the message and the recipient. He argues that communication cannot take place if all three elements are not present in the process. Figure 3.1 illustrates Van Schoor's (1986) communication triptych.

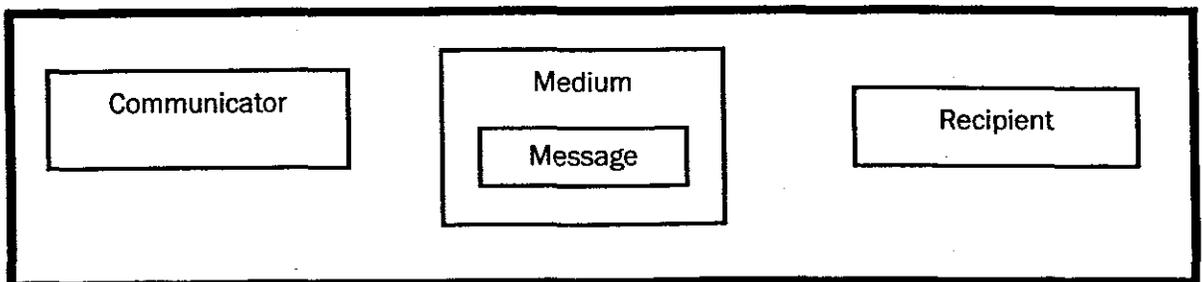


Fig 3.1 The 'Triptych of Communication'

However, it may be argued that five basic elements are found in the majority of theoretical approaches: an initiator or communicator; a recipient; a mode or vehicle or channel; a

message and an effect or "feedback" (Mersham and Skinner 2001; Watson and Hill 1993: 38).

Mersham and Skinner (2001) define these elements as:

**Communicator or source:** The source is the originator of the message. It may be an individual or several individuals working together.

**Message:** The message contains the ideas and information that the source transmits to the recipient, usually with an intention that these are necessary to initiate, support or ensure some or other form of behavioural action.

**Channel:** A channel is the means by which a message travels from a source to a recipient. The message is physically transmitted through this path. Channels may be classified into mass media or interpersonal channels.

**Recipients:** The most important single element in the communication process is the recipient.

**'Feedback':** 'Feedback' is a response, by the recipient, to the source's message. 'Feedback' then may be thought of as a measure of the effectiveness of a previous communication. The source may take account of 'feedback' in modifying subsequent messages; thus 'feedback' makes communication a dynamic, two-way process.

While these 'basic' components are helpful in understanding 'what communication is', they by no means provide a sufficient theoretical insight for the purposes of this study. For this reason eight formal theoretical approaches are now examined in detail, namely:

1. Information theory
2. Systems theory
3. Theories of signs and language
4. Theories of message production
5. Theories of message reception
6. Symbolic interaction, dramatism and narrative

7. Theories of social and cultural reality.
8. Theories of experience and Interpretation

### 3.3 Information Theory

The first theory discussed is information theory; it is closely associated with communication systems and is arguably the basis for a number of communication models. This study highlights a few of these, demonstrating how scholars have used information theory in their analysis of the communication process.

Information theory deals with the “quantitative study of information in messages and the flow of information between senders and receivers” (Littlejohn 1992: 50). Technical information theory is concerned with the transmission and reception of messages and not with their meaning. Shannon and Weaver (1949: 5) illustrate this in their model of communication.

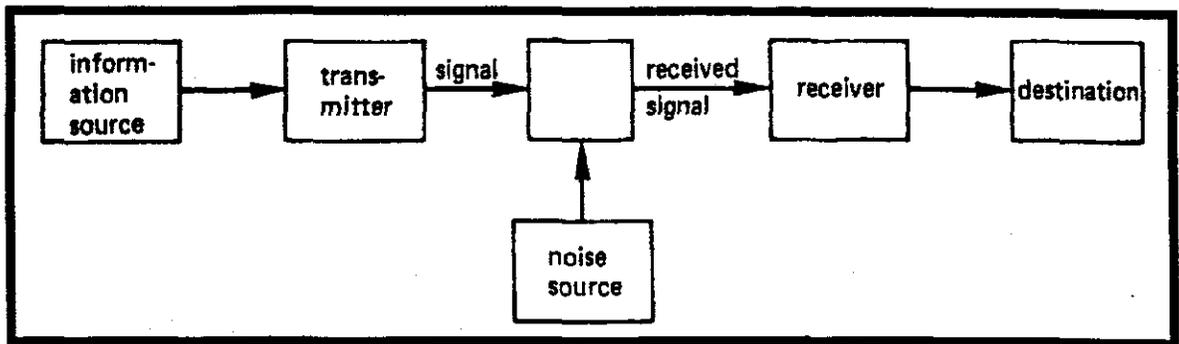


Fig 3.2 Shannon and Weaver's Model of Communication

The Shannon and Weaver model begins with the source that formulates or selects a message constructed of signs that will be transmitted. The transmitter converts the message into a set of signals that are sent through a channel to a receiver. The receiver converts the signals back into a message. Shannon and Weaver (1949) added noise to the model, defining it as any disturbance in the channel that distorts or masks the signal. This model was intended for transfer of information by humans, machines or any other system. It is a linear process-centred model (Watson and Hill 1989: 171). Shannon and Weaver (1949) identify three problem levels in the analysis of communication. Level A (technical), level B (the meaning derived from the transmitter) and level C (the receivers understanding and interpretation of the message). Their model focuses primarily on level - A problems, and has the assumption that fine tuning level A will automatically lead to an improvement in levels B and C. Shannon and Weaver's model has made no provision for 'feedback', ignoring the cybernetic principle that 'feedback' modifies both the message and communicative situation (Watson and Hill 1989:

172; Littlejohn 1992: 45). This model fails to acknowledge the importance of context with regard to communication, and does not succeed in recognising the social, cultural and political contexts in which the communicator, message and the recipient operate.

Shannon and Weaver's model arguably gave birth to communication studies and was the first to demonstrate the communication process in diagram form (Watson and Hill 1989:1720; Williams 1992: 29). Scholars often choose to demonstrate their approach using diagrams (models), which clearly represent the 'systems approach' to the communication process. Huebsch (1986: 45) states that "a model is a visual presentation of what the actual process looks like. However, it must be borne in mind that a model is never the process itself".

Wilbur Schramm (1954), one of the pioneers of communication scholarship, used the communication triptych (Van Schoor 1986) in the design of his communication models. Schramm was more concerned with mass media than with the technology of communication and therefore created his models from this point of view. His first model expanded the Shannon and Weaver model of communication (see figure 2.1). In his model, he changed 'transmitter' and 'receiver' to become 'encoder' and 'decoder', highlighting the role that individuals play in the communication process. However, the model is still linear and does not make provision for 'feedback'. Schramm's second model demonstrates the overlapping, interactive nature of the communication process. It also highlights the importance of the encoder and decoder's 'field of experience' to the communication process. In this model, Schramm demonstrates the importance an individual's biographical elements on the communication process. This model shows that their 'fields of experience' overlap at the signal, showing that a shared meaning is necessary for communication. His third model emphasises the importance of 'feedback' to the communication process. The model now moves from being linear to having a circular shape. This emphasises that communication is an ongoing process. Schramm further demonstrates this by showing that the participants in the process are both encoders and decoders of the message. This model also emphasises the importance of interpretation to the participants. Once the message has been decoded, it needs to be interpreted before the participant can encode another message as part of the 'feedback' process (Watson and Hill 1993: 166).

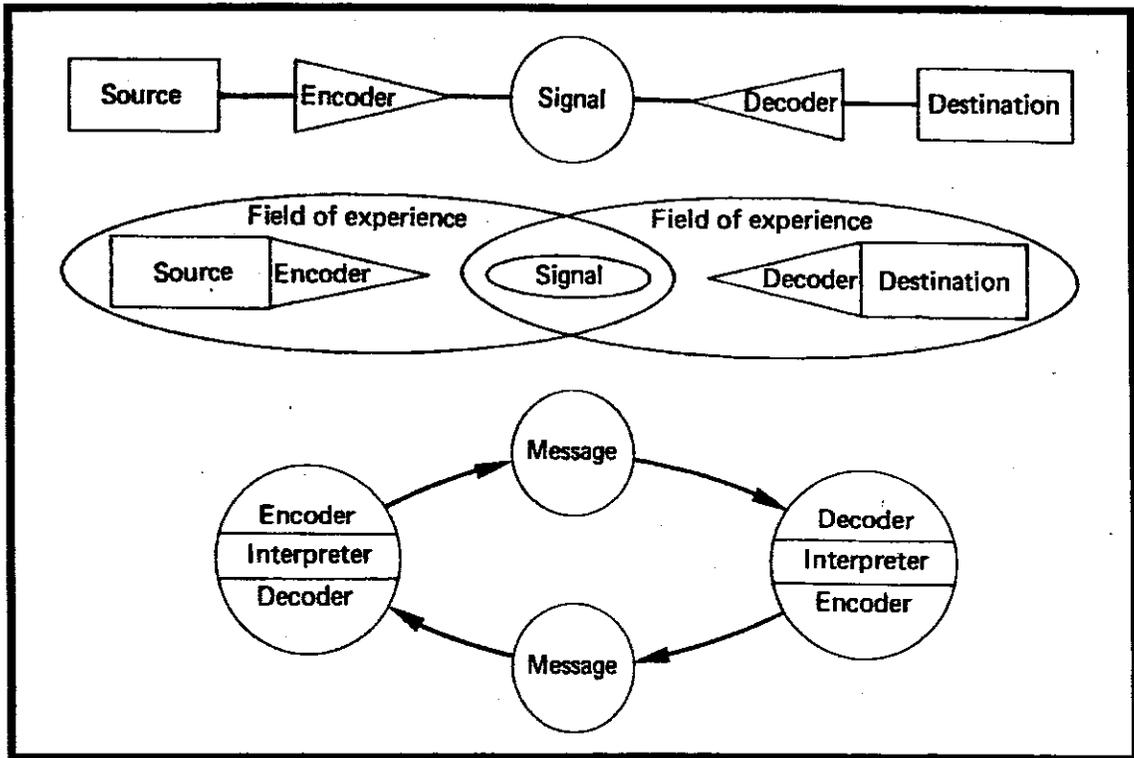


Fig 3.3 The Schramm Models of Communication.

Frank Dance (1967) believed that the circular models of communication (those emphasising the importance of 'feedback') were "manifestly erroneous" as they suggested that communication returns full circle to where it started from. Dance offers a helix or spiral model that "combines the desirable features of the straight line and of the circle while avoiding the weaknesses of either". He furthermore contends that:

At any and all times, the helix gives geometric testimony to the concept that communication while going forward is at the same moment coming back upon itself and being affected by past behaviour, for the coming curve of the helix is fundamentally affected by the curve from which it emerges (Dance 1967).

Dance was inspired by the educational theories of Jerome Brunner's spiral curriculum (Dance 1967, Watson and Hill 1993: 50-51).

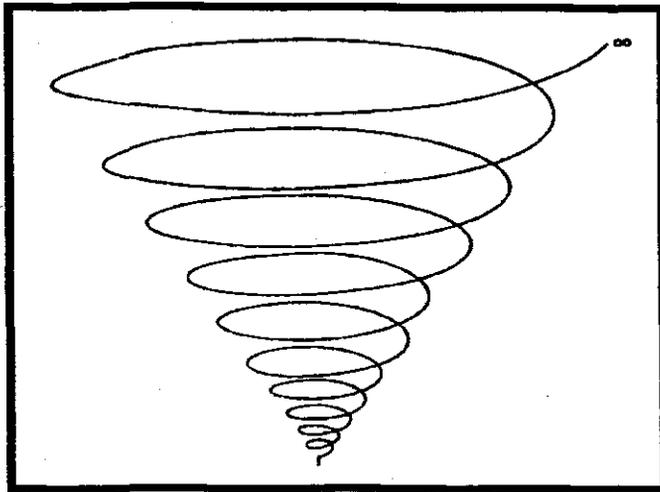


Fig 3.4: Dance's Helical Model of Communication

Lasswell (1948) chose not to use a diagram but offered the scholar a questioning device (based on the communication triptych) in his five-point approach. He puts the following questions to the scholar:

Who  
Says What  
In which channel  
To Whom  
With What Effect

Lacking from this model is the question of context and that no provision is made for the mediating factors that influence the way that a message is received and interpreted. Gerbner (1956) in a similar approach defines the process in more detail. His model of communication is as follows:

- 1 someone
- 2 perceives an event
- 3 and reacts
- 4 in a situation
- 5 through some means
- 6 to make available materials
- 7 in some form
- 8 and context
- 9 conveying content
- 10 with some consequence

The Gerbner model of communication (1956) clearly addresses the areas that Lasswell (1948) omitted. These two models are uncomplicated and assist with a general analysis of the communication process. They form a fundamental framework from which other models may be constructed and analysed.

It can be argued that the application of information theory is responsible for the Shannon and Weaver model of communication and therefore all the other models that have evolved since then. This has led to scholars having many different opinions of information theory resulting in a number of critiques of the theory.

### 3.3.1 Critique

Information theory was indispensable for developing advanced electronic devices. Systems theorists and other scholars found that information theory could not deliver the answers that they needed. Most criticism of information theory relates to its appropriateness. Cherry (1978: ix) stated that a theory using the language of science was inadequate for discussing the essentially human phenomena of human communication. Other scholars agree with Cherry, arguing that information theory cannot relate to human communication. Further criticism is levelled at the use of the term "information", and the critics believe that the use of this term is a symptom of the problem. It is argued that "information" has many different meanings today. A solution to this problem has been to rename information theory the 'theory of signal transmission' thereby emphasising information theory's technical orientation. This would remove the problem of trying to relate information theory to human communication. One of the reasons why information theory does not relate to human communication is that it is designed as a tool of measurement based on statistical procedures. Human messages cannot really be broken down into observable, measurable signals. While one can analyse the phonetic

structure of a language, adding vocal cues and body language renders information theory useless. Human communication makes use of continuous cues and not of on-off signals. This makes human communication difficult to fit into a mathematical paradigm. Information theory also downplays meaning. While information theory can measure the amount of information received, it cannot measure the degree of shared understanding among the communicators and the impact that the message had on them. Information theory does not deal with the context in which the communication takes place. The ability of individuals to receive and communicate messages is not touched on in this theory. The overriding criticism of information theory is that it tends to ignore the human perspective in communication totally.

### 3.4 Systems Theory

Littlejohn (1992: 54) states that systems theory has a major influence on the study of human communication. We begin this discussion with an overview of a system. A system is a set of objects that interrelate with each other to form a whole (Hall and Fagen 1968: 81-92, Littlejohn 1992: 41). A system can be either an open or a closed system. Due to its lack of interchange with its environment, a closed system moves towards aggressive internal chaos, disintegration and death. In opposition an open system receives and sends matter and energy to its environment (Littlejohn 1992: 41). The organisation is an open system as its image, product and sales is totally dependent on its environment.

Hall and Fagen (1968: 81-92) list four components to a system, namely:

- Objects – the parts variables and elements of a system
- Attributes – the qualities or properties of a system
- Internal relationships – the relationship of the objects
- Environment – that systems do not exist in a vacuum but are affected by surroundings.

Systems theory is influential in the study of communication, as it is a complex set of variables that interrelate with one another. In systems theory communication consists of interaction. Fisher (1978) used the term 'interact' to describe his basic unit of analysis. An 'interact' can also be seen as a set of two contiguous messages between two people. The interaction patterns of the communicators constitute the structure of the system. Systems theories emphasise the importance of equilibrium, balance and interdependence of the various subsystems that make up society. It regards society as an integrated whole, whose components work together in order to keep the whole in balance. Systems theory sees communication as an integrating factor that regulates and organises the components. Each

system and subsystem has the primary function of maintaining itself. To reach this goal the system must maintain dynamic equilibrium. Each component of the system must provide for the overall needs of the system. A system's operations are not always positive, and since society is dynamic, systems theory consists of both integrative and disintegrative processes of social change. Systems theorists argue that if negative changes are introduced that jeopardises its equilibrium, 'feedback' or communication is used to restore the equilibrium. This 'feedback' is the sharing of the necessary information for maintaining equilibrium (Fisher 1978; Littlejohn 1992: 55; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 47, 2001).

#### 3.4.1 Systems Theory and Networks

Carl Weick (1969) emphasised the importance of interaction when looking at large networks. He sees organisations not as structures but as activities. He sees organisations as things that are accomplished through interaction. As with Fisher, Weick believed that the individual's behaviour is contingent on someone else's behaviour. He believed that organising occurs through a double interact. A double interact is an act, followed by a response, followed by an adjustment. The double interacts create complex links within the organisation that create large interaction structures called networks. A network is a large system of interaction patterns, and organisations are nothing more or less than a series of networks (Littlejohn 1992: 56).

#### 3.4.2 Critique

Littlejohn (1992: 58) argues that systems theory has been a popular and influential tradition in communication. Communication is seen as group of variables that interrelate with one another. This view makes it an obvious topic for the application of system principles. Systems theory is useful for understanding the way that communication works in general and in specific instances of communication such as in organisations. The most important systems principle is wholeness and interdependence. A system thrives on interaction between its parts. The qualities of self-regulation and interchange with the environment are extensions of the interdependence principle. Interdependence is reliant on cybernetics (the study of how system parts influence one another for purposes of control). Human systems make use of networks of influence as part of their cybernetic loop.

Littlejohn (1992: 58) lists six major criticisms of systems theory. The first criticism poses the question: does the breadth and generality of systems theory provide the advantage of integration or the disadvantage of ambiguity?

This criticism relates to the theoretical scope of systems theory. Supporters of systems theory have claimed that it provides a common vocabulary to integrate the sciences, and that it

establishes a useful logic that can be applied to a broad range of phenomena. The critics claim that it must either be a general framework without explaining real-world events, or it must abandon general integration and make substantive claims (Delia 1975: 51).

The second criticism relates to systems theory's openness and attempts to clarify whether this openness provides flexibility in application or confusion in equivocality (Littlejohn 1992: 59). This criticism relates to the first. Critics of systems theory claim that it presents the fallacy of equivocation in a fancy form. Their critique is that if it presents a variety of applications in different theoretical domains it cannot prevent inconsistencies among these applications. Two theories using a systems framework may contradict each other. Delia (1977: 51-52) argues that this shows a lack of consistency. Countering this argument, Beach (1977) suggests that this openness is one of the main advantages of systems theory. Such openness does not put any bias on the researcher with an *a priori* notion of what to expect but leads him to investigate things as they are.

The third criticism questions whether systems theory is merely a philosophical perspective. Alternatively, does it provide scholars with useful explanations (Littlejohn 1992: 59). This criticism relates to the appropriateness of systems theory. The critics query whether it is a theory at all, arguing that it has no explanatory power. They contend that while it gives a perspective or way of conceptualising, it provides little basis for understanding the reasons why things occur as they do. Supporters of systems theory argue that any given systems theory of communication could be highly explanatory (Fisher 1978: 196; Littlejohn 1992: 59).

The fourth criticism relates to the heuristic value of systems theory. Critics such as Cushman (1977: 30-45) argue that "Systems is a perspective which has produced more staunch advocates than theoretical empirical research". The critics argue that systems theory does not suggest substantive questions for investigation. Supporters of systems theory argue that it provides a new way of looking at old problems. It therefore has a heuristic nature (Beach 1977 in Littlejohn 1992: 59).

The fifth criticism relates to the validity of systems theory. Critics of this theory question whether it has developed to reflect what really happens in nature, or to represent a useful convention for conceptualising complex processes (Littlejohn 1992: 60).

The sixth criticism looks at whether systems theory simplifies or complicates issues. Critics claim that it overcomplicates events that are essentially simple. Supporters of systems theory

claim that the world is complex, and therefore, a sensible framework such as systems theory is necessary to sort out the elements of world processes (Littlejohn 1992: 60).

Overall, the many theories of communication using systems principles are specific and help the individual understand concrete experiences (Littlejohn 1992: 60).

### 3.5 Theories of Signs and Language

The theories of signs and language analyse the message, its construction and the manner in which it is shared with the recipients. A message is the basic unit of communication shared by the participants in the communication process. Its success is totally dependent on the medium that contains it, the manner in which it is constructed by the communicator and the context in which it is received by the recipient. Williams (1992: 394) defines a message as "a symbol or collection of symbols initiated by a source and capable of interpretation by a receiver or receivers". The term 'symbols' that Williams uses in his definition can be interchanged with the term 'signs'. Man therefore communicates with signs, sign systems and codes. The study of signs, codes and sign systems is called semiotics.

Peirce and De Saussure are regarded as the founders of modern semiotics inspired by the philosophy and the methodology of structuralism. O'Sullivan et al. (1983: 225) describe structuralism as:

an intellectual enterprise characterised by attention to the systems, relations and forms –the structures – that make meaning possible in any cultural activity of artefact..

Saussure (1969: 16) argued that language should be studied as a system of signs and in turn be viewed as part of broader study into the general theory of signs. This assumption gives the communication scholar the tools (concepts and instruments) to study the various ways in which people assign and convey meaning. It also contributes to the knowledge and understanding of social interaction. It provides knowledge about the nature of communication concerning interpersonal relations. Communication is social and cultural interaction and the communication of symbolic forms of expression (Fourie 1996 3-4).

Peirce (1960) defines Semiosis (the active form of the term semiotics) as the triadic relationship between three elements: a sign, an object and a meaning. Ogden and Richards (1923) graphically demonstrate this relationship. Their triangle of meaning shows that a symbol is related to an object by a thought or reference, the interpretant.

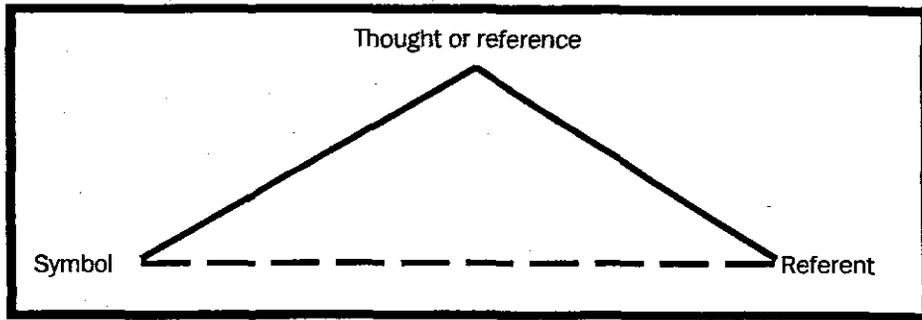


Fig 2.2: Ogden and Richards's Meaning Triangle.

The theory of signs and language focuses on the theory and signs of meaning drawing on the studies of signs, language and non-verbal communication.

### 3.5.1 Signs

A sign is anything taken by social convention to represent anything else. They are meaningful units taking the form of words, images, sounds, acts or objects. In order for a sign to function as such, it must be visible, audible or tangible, and open to smell and taste. A sign always has a representative character, which is inextricably linked to its interpretative character. This interpretation gives rise to a second sign in the mind of the interpreter (Culler 1985:116; Fourie 1996: 38; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 4).

A sign consists of a signifier, namely the physical quality of the sign, for example a word or a symbol such as a crucifix. The referent, the object, concept or idea to which the sign was referring and a signified which is the meaning attached to the signifier by the recipient (Fourie 1996: 38; Littlejohn 1992:64; Saussure in Innes 1986: 36).

The relationship between the signifier and the referent enables one to differentiate between arbitrary, iconic, symbolic and indexical signs. An arbitrary sign bears no resemblance to the signifier and the referent (for example a word). The meanings of these signs are learnt. In an iconic sign, the signifier resembles the referent as it corresponds with it visually (for example a photograph). Symbolic signs too do not have any outward correlation between the sign and its referent. Such symbols are culturally determined and must be learnt by the people of that culture (for example a crucifix or a statue of Vishnu). Indexical signs have no causal effect between the sign and its referent (for example clouds signifying rain) (Fourie 1996: 40-41).

Signs can be categorised by their inclusion in a larger sign system. This is a group of signs with similar characters classified by the same rules, for example, language. While communicating, people often use several sign systems simultaneously. Their language, gestures, facial expressions and dress all communicate a message (Fourie 1996: 45).

### 3.5.2 Codes

The theory of signs and languages breaks the message down into codes. Focusing on the role that the individual codes have on the overall composition of the message and the medium in which it is presented. McLuhan (1964) stated that “the medium is the message” illustrating the difficulty of studying a message without looking at the medium which presents it.

Codes are generally defined as a system into which signs are combined to convey meaning. Examples of codes are grammar; speech; non-verbal communication and theatre. Codes are only found in practice and are linked to culture and context. They are intertextual and serve as markers and filters. Codes are dynamic and change as society does (Fourie 1996: 50-58; Watson and Hill 1989: 33).

The signs of the message have a physical form called the medium (Mersham and Skinner 1990: 8). From Sonderling (1996: 96), Ellis (1992: 41-42), Hodge and Kress (1988: 5) and Jakobson (1960: 353) one can establish the following characteristics of messages:

Messages are not found in isolation, but in any communication event multiple messages or clusters of messages are produced, exchanged and interpreted.

Messages are directional – they are produced by a communicator, directed at a recipient and have a purpose.

Messages have meanings—they say something and are about something, for example, a referent that is either a real object in reality or a more abstract idea.

Messages consist of two aspects: text and discourse. A text is the formal aspect of the message; it is capable of being interpreted in a variety of ways. Discourse is the form, mode or genre of language usage. It is the social process of using language to construct meaningful texts (Watson and Hill 1989: 57, 192; Sonderling 1996: 95).

### 3.5.2.1 Linguistic Codes

Language is one of the media a person uses to express thoughts and feelings as to what touches on every aspect of his or her life. It is the most highly developed form of human communication.

Saussure (1981) argues that language is a system of signs used for the expression of ideas. He suggested that language consist of two aspects: *parole* and *langue*. Meaning can be derived from speech acts (*parole*) only because it is governed by an abstract system (*langue*) of concepts, meanings and rules (Watson and Hill 1989: 102; Littlejohn 1992: 73; Sonderling 1996: 91).

The structuring of language into words and grammar makes it a unified code system that creates meaning. These codes are linguistic codes. Linguistic codes are the most versatile and frequently used of all codes (Barker 1981: 50; Gamble and Gamble 1987: 100; Huebsch 1986: 7; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 19; Sonderling 1996: 88-89; Steinberg 1994: 47).

Jackobson (1960: 353) states that there are six functions of language that affects the overall message. These functions are:

- referential, referring to man's ability to use language as a means of providing information (for example telling people about a new product).
- expressive, referring to man's ability to express emotions, beliefs and opinions (for example, praising the consistent work of a team or worker.
- conative, referring to man's ability to use language to influence people.
- phatic, referring to man's use of language to make and maintain contact with people.
- poetic , referring to man's use of language for pleasure and beauty (for example, using language in slogans).
- metalinguistic, referring to man's use of language to speak about language and other aspects of verbal communication.

The aforementioned approach views language from a communicative perspective and investigates how language forms a message. Verbal messages are the basic units created, exchanged and interpreted during communication.

In theatre, text is more than just the spoken word or the speech act. Text is the integration of the speech act with the non-verbal codes of communication. The codes of the medium are described below.

### 3.5.2.2 Kinesic Codes

Kinesics refers to the study of the communicational aspects of body motion and it examines the movements and gestures that people exhibit in different emotional states. Kinesic codes consist of facial expressions, gaze behaviour, gestures, posture, and locomotion. Body movements indicate how one feels, for example pleasantness, unpleasantness, arousal, fear, surprise, rage, and affection. It reveals membership to a particular culture or sub-culture. Posture reveals a great deal of information about your sex, status, self-image, attitudes and emotional state. Gestures refer to movements of the head and shoulders, arms and legs. They communicate emotional states or reactions to messages by mirroring the intensity of thoughts and feelings. Gaze behaviour refers to the eye contact that one has when communicating. Gaze behaviour assists with regulating and monitoring communication (Adey and Andrew 1990: 348-353; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 19-26; Steinberg 1995: 60-61; Williams 1992: 59).

### 3.5.2.3 Proxemic Codes

Proxemics is the study of how people's perception of space communicates information and meaning. It refers to the way in which one configures space around him or her. It is largely culturally orientated, meaning that different cultures associate different meanings with different situations. There are four distinguishable zones of interpersonal space, namely the intimate zone, the personal zone, the social zone and the public zone. One divides the intimate zone into two further sub-zones namely the near intimate that ranges from touch to 15cm, and the far intimate that extends from 15cm to 45cm. One does not tolerate strangers in this zone, limiting it to dating and intimate friends, parents and children. The personal zone ranges from 46cm to 1.2m. This zone is restricted to those allowed in the intimate zone as well as close to acquaintances and persons who share a common interest. The social zone ranges from 1.2m to 2.1m. This zone is reserved for social situations such as work. The public zone ranges between 3.5m and 7.5m. One makes use of this zone in situations like classrooms, lecture halls and public gatherings (Adey and Andrew 1990: 353-359; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 26-28; Steinberg 1995:61-63).

#### 3.5.2.4 Haptic or Tactile Codes

These codes are concerned with the way in which one uses touch or physical contact to communicate. It may convey emphasis, affection or greetings. Haptic codes communicate information about the nature of the relationship between people. These codes are also culturally bound (Mersham and Skinner 1999: 36; Steinberg 1995: 63; Williams 1992: 59).

#### 3.5.2.5 Chronemic Codes

Chronemic codes are codes that are concerned with the use of time. They influence the way that one interprets messages and forms of behaviour (Mersham and Skinner 1999: 37; Steinberg 1995: 63; Williams 1992:60).

#### 3.5.2.6 Personal Appearance

The codes of dress, hairstyles, make-up and jewellery are the codes of personal appearance. Appearance provides visual information regarding one's age, gender, status, personality and attitudes. Appearance varies according to culture, gender and social status (Steinberg 1995: 64; Williams 1992: 60).

#### 3.5.2.7 Paralinguistic Codes

Paralinguistic codes are the clues that accompany spoken language but that are not spoken words. They concern the sound of the voice and the range of meanings that are conveyed through voices rather than the words that are used. Paralinguistic codes form a complementary language that indicates, for example, emotionality, emphasis, nonchalance, certainty or fear. It also includes the social significance of dialectic features such as educational level, sex role, ethnicity, religion, age, or a handicap (Adey and Andrew 1990: 359; Steinberg 1995: 65; Williams 1992: 58).

#### 3.5.2.8 Pictorial Codes

Pictorial codes are visual codes that include everyday objects such as text, artwork, graphics, photographs, illustrations, sculptures, the use of colour, and models. It is necessary for one to interpret the symbolism found in this type of communication through the study of icons in the process called iconics.

Pictorial codes are a powerful form of communication as they stimulate both intellectually and emotionally. Images can be used to persuade and perpetuate ideas that words alone cannot do (Lester 1995: 73). There are three major types of signs, the first category being iconic signs, which are the easiest to interpret as they most closely resemble the thing that they

represent. Indexical signs have a logical and common sense connection to the thing or idea they represent, rather than a direct resemblance to the object. These are learnt through everyday experiences. The third type of signs are symbols, which do not necessarily have a logical connection between them and the thing that they represent. Society must learn symbols, and so this instruction is socio-culturally specific. For this reason, generations pass meanings on from one generation to the next and they usually arouse a stronger emotional response than do the other signs. The first two types, indexical and iconic, are motivated signs because they closely resemble the object that they represent. The third category of sign, the symbol, is an arbitrary or conventional sign (Lester 1995: 63, 64).

The use of pictorial codes is important for creating and contextualising the communication meaning. Lewis and Slade (1994: 52) describe this form of non-verbal communication as: "One that is independent of spoken forms; non-verbal codes are conventional and culturally specific". They depend on the society or the sub-groups of the society that the individual is akin to (Lewis and Slade 1994: 54). Therefore, the participants' sociocultural and autobiographical circumstances (Mersham et al. 1995: 55-57), make it essential to view communication within these circumstances and for this reason determine non-verbal communication.

### 3.5.3 Critique

In his critique, Littlejohn (1992: 82-84) argues that classical semiotics laid the foundation for linguistic and communication theory. Most critics agree that language has certain conventions, but they tend to question its arbitrariness. Arbitrariness only makes sense if the individual accepts that the principle that language and speech are different and that signs are separate from their referents. Scholars are aware that signs are intrinsic and part of the thing that they represent. Critics of the structuralism tradition believe that language and communication cannot be separated as Saussure does in his *langue/parole* distinction. The critics argue that speech and other forms of communication are the mechanisms by which language and signs are created, maintained and changed. The studies into the non-verbal elements of communication have been important in showing that communication consists of many types of signs. However, most of this research has detracted from the importance of a holistic understanding of communication. The analytical nature of research into both linguistic and non-verbal elements misrepresents the complexity of the communication process. Burgoon and Saine (1978) call this the fallacy of analysis. Scholars believe that separating language behaviour from other forms of behaviour is ironic as the non-verbal codes are believed to be organised in essentially the same way as language. The fallacy of linguistic analogy identifies some similarities between language and bodily behaviour although there appears to be more

differences than similarities. The major difference is that language is presented sequentially involving discrete signs, whereas non-verbal codes are presented in a sequential manner and usually do not consist of discrete signs. Language tends to be organised hierarchically, while there is no evidence of this in non-verbal behaviours. Language is used consciously and non-verbal codes unconsciously. The theory of signs and language looks at the smallest units of meaning i.e. signs, which undermines the overall complexity of the communication process.

In this approach the scholar is able to deconstruct the medium allowing him or her to investigate its effectiveness as a vehicle for the message. It also shows the importance of text and discourse to this approach. The study now looks at another major approach to communication, the message production theories.

### 3.6 Theories of Message Production

These theories centre on the role of the communicator in the communication process. The communicator is the creator of the message. In this approach the message is created by the communicator with a specific intention in mind. The character, status, role and ability of this person have direct bearing on the effectiveness of the communication. Message production theory can be studied from a variety of perspectives, namely, social, interpretative and critical. The predominant approach is individual and cognitive. The theories surrounding message production convey the view that message production is a psychological process. These theories therefore consist of traits, states and processes. Trait and state theories deal with the disposition of the individual and correlates of these dispositions. Process theories explain the mechanisms used in processing information and acting according to that information (Littlejohn 1992: 107-131).

#### 3.6.1 Trait and State Processes

The first of these psychological processes is trait explanations. The premise of this process is that a person's personality trait effects the way that he or she communicates. For example, a shy person will struggle to communicate, while an argumentative person will willingly defend his or her world-view and attempts to disprove someone else's. The second psychological process is state explanations. This theory is concerned with how a mental state affects the sort of messages sent and how they are understood. For example, when a person is excited he or she tends to speak quickly, thereby effecting the clarity of the message. These two states are complementary and can be viewed together. When analysing the communicator the scholar can differentiate between trait and state characteristics. Both these theories measure a person's disposition while communicating. Communication is also an interaction between a person's state and his or her trait. For example, the way a person communicates is a

combination of who he or she is, and their situation while communicating. For example, a shy person who is upset might mumble to such an extent that nobody can understand what she or he is saying (Littlejohn 1992: 107-108). The combination of these two elements (state and trait) creates a communication state.

### 3.6.1.1 Communication Apprehension and Rhetorical Sensitivity

The two major communication traits are communication apprehension and rhetorical sensitivity. James McCroskey (1984) and his study group discovered that fear of communicating is a serious practical problem for many people. McCroskey (1984: 13-38) found that communication apprehension (CA) can be either a trait or a state. Traitlike CA means that the communicator is afraid of communicating in a variety of contexts. Such people may avoid all forms of verbal communication. Some people are afraid of certain kinds of communication, for example public speaking, but may not show fear of other forms of communication. McCroskey (1984: 13-38) called this generalised-context CA. Other people might fear talking to specific people or groups. This is person-group CA. This is situational rather than being a personality trait. CA is common and McCroskey (1984: 13-38) states that everybody suffers with it from one time to another. Although it may have a hereditary base, it is primarily a learned response.

The second major trait is rhetorical sensitivity established through the research of Roderick Hart and his colleagues (Littlejohn 1992: 111). This refers to one's ability and willingness to adapt messages to an audience (Hart & Burks 1972: 75-91; Hart et al. 1980: 1-22; Ward et al. 1982: 189-195).

Rhetorically sensitive people have concern for themselves as well as for others. They are aware of the situation and appreciate that people's communication will be effected by it. They try to adapt what they say to the situation in which they find themselves. Without compromising their own beliefs, they are aware of the appropriateness of communicating certain ideas in different situations (Hart & Burks 1972: 75-91; Hart et al. 1980: 1-22; Ward et al. 1982: 189-195).

### 3.6.1.2 Communication Style

People have a predominant style of communicating. Robert Norton (1983) called this the communicator style. He argued that people communicate on two levels. Individuals share informational content with others and they use words and actions to give form to that content of the primary message.

High order communication tells others how to understand and respond to a shared message. Norton (1983: 31) gives the example that on the content level you might share an experience with a friend, while on the higher level, you might signal that the message is to be taken seriously, or with authority, humour or disinterest. He believes that the speaker's high order functions as a style message by signalling how literal (primary) message should be taken, filtered, interpreted or understood. The style message can be delivered at the same time as the content message, or it can be delivered after, or not at all. People expect the style message to be shared; when it is lacking, people are often confused or interpret the message incorrectly. Over time an individual gains experience in interacting with others. Particular style messages recur which builds up to a communication style, for example aggressiveness. Norton (1983: 31) argues that although this style may be the predominant way in which an individual will communicate, he or she is not restricted to that style. Each person has numerous styles based on a combination of traits and variables. Norton (1983) lists nine variables; they include dominance, dramatic behaviour, contentiousness, animation, impression, leaving, relaxation, attentiveness, openness and friendliness.

Another communication trait is aggression. Dominic Infante and his colleagues were responsible for the primary research into this aspect of communication (Littlejohn 1992: 113). They argue that aggressiveness can be constructive when it aims to enhance a relationship or destructive when it causes dissatisfaction, or harms the relationship. Infante et al. divide aggression into four categories, two positives and two negatives. People demonstrate assertiveness when they put their own rights forward without hampering someone else's. This is the ideal communicative situation for the pre-production forums. It involves stating your opinion unequivocally in your own best interest. Argumentativeness is the tendency to engage in controversial conversation topics to support one's own point of view and to rebut opposing beliefs. Infante argues that argumentativeness facilitates education, allows people to see other's points of view. It enhances credibility and builds communication skills. Hostility is the tendency to feel and display anger. Infante points out that one can be assertive and argumentative without anger. Hostility involves irritability, negativism, resentment and suspicion. From this, we can see that it is clearly a negative trait. Verbal aggressiveness is an attempt to hurt someone, not physically but emotionally. Arguments attack ideas and beliefs but verbal aggressiveness attacks the ego or self-concept. It often results in such negative emotions as anger, embarrassment and hurt feelings (Infante et al. 1990: 151-161; Infante 1988, 1987:305-316, Infante and Wigley 1986: 61-69; Infante et al. 1984: 67-77; Infante and Rancér 1982: 72-80).

Cody and McLaughlin (1985: 263-312) argue that a communication situation is the entire communication event. The event is constructed of the participants taking part (who), the setting (where) and the activities taking place (what). They state that the situation affects the participants' overall behaviour and therefore their communication behaviour. This allows one to evaluate people according to their situation, and to set their communication goals accordingly. People will use their knowledge of the situation to guide their behaviour.

Cody and McLaughlin (1985: 263-312) state that two general principles govern communication behaviour. The first is how one chooses to communicate and depends on the choice of strategies that one makes for a situation. The second principle concerns strategies and costs. Cody and McLaughlin (1985: 263-312) argue that communicators will always choose communication that maximises gains and minimises costs. People will only say what they believe will benefit them. They will not say something that will not effect the objective of their communication. Their research identified six factors that enter their perception of the situation. These are intimacy, friendliness, pleasantness, apprehension, involvement and dominance (Littlejohn 1992: 115).

### 3.6.2 Process Theories

The intention of process theories is to overcome many of the problems encountered by the trait theories. There are three major process theories worthy of mention. The first is based on compliance-gaining research (see Schenck-Hamlin, Wiseman and Georgacarakos 1982; Wiseman and Schenck-Hamlin 1981). In this theory people observe behavioural regularities and ascertain the way that other people behave in these situations. The theory then looks at the way people communicate within this setting and what messages they use to gain compliance. These theories are often able to deduce the latent strategic choices people make on the basis of the analysis of the messages they receive (Littlejohn 1992: 122-130).

Schenck-Hamlin, Wiseman and Georgacarakos (1982: 92-100) argue that people choose between direct, indirect and deceptive options, between sanctions, arguments and whether to use messages to gain or abdicate control in some way.

Littlejohn (1992: 122-130) argues that the second type of process theory goes further in that it correlates the message choices with behaviours and traits. Examples are speech accommodation theory (see Giles et al. 1987: 13-48) and constructivism (see Burleson 1989: 29-46; Delia 1987: 255-274; Delia et al. 1982: 147-191). This process theory measures some states of mind or perceptions and correlates them with the observed messages and behaviours.

The third type of process, argues Littlejohn (1992: 122-130), attempts to explain the cognitive mechanism that generates actions. He cites action-assembly theory (see Green 1989: 117-128, 1984 289-306) as an example. This theory is difficult to study, as cognitive processes cannot be observed directly. The researcher can only see if certain behaviour is found in his or her postulated cognitive behaviour. This means that one can only assume that a certain model *could* be operating as opposed to being sure that *it is* operating.

Communication states and process theories form the foundation of to message production theories. These aspects are also applicable to the message reception approach.

### 3.6.3 Critique

The theories in the foregoing section view message generation as an individual process leading to observable behaviours in the form of messages. These theories that share a common concern for behaviour and the mechanisms that produce it, focus on the individual. Scholars associate the human mind as the centre for processing and understanding information and with generating messages. This had led communication scholars to accept psychological explanations for communication events. However, many scholars believe that psychological explanations do not adequately explain communication phenomena. These scholars prefer a sociological approach to the process of communication but argue that you cannot look at the sociological processes alone and therefore need some psychological explanation. They claim that the individual is involved in the process and therefore he or she must be studied. The individual is at the centre of social theories and to the overall understanding of communication. A second response to the criticism of the theories of message production is to reject it outright. Scholars claim that the human mind filters every aspect of the communication process. They argue that although the outcomes may be social, the genesis is individual, making the process a psychological one (Hewes and Planalp: 1987: 146-183; Littlejohn 1992: 127).

Psychological theories of communication look at traits, states and processes. State and trait theories attempt to deal with the attitudes of individuals and the correlates of these attitudes. Process theories explain the mechanisms that are used in processing information and the (re)action to that information. The theories of message production usually combine these in their explanations. Many of the theories dealing with traits do not go far enough in explaining the cognitive process involved in the linkage between traits and actions (Littlejohn 1992: 124-128). Hewes and Planalp (1987) argue that when social science scholars are forced to explain a trait they are forced to look at the process of interpretation and production of behaviour. They find this difficult because it falls outside of their predispositions. A further

criticism is that while successful trait approaches explain that individuals are the causality for social action, they fall short by oversimplifying explanations. Trait theories establish that individuals are important in the study of human communication. They do not, however, explain how or why this is so.

Trait theories are designed to identify qualities in people and the theorist is therefore required to identify the qualities that he or she believes exists. This means that traits are constructed by the theorist and not by the research subject. The constructive process of researching traits may lead to problems such as clarity and the distinctiveness of traits. Trait theorists lack agreement on the overall dimensions that bind the variables into traits. Confusion often results from this labelling (Littlejohn 1992: 128-129).

Littlejohn (1992: 129) argues that a second problem is the endless number of traits that can be discovered. Almost any behavioural tendency can be defined as a trait. Trait theorists believe that people are a large complex of traits. This leads to the problem of trying to establish which traits predominate over others as well as trying to explain why they predominate. The essential question in trying to evaluate trait theories is not to argue whether they exist but to determine how useful they are in the study of communication.

Process theories are designed to overcome many of the problems encountered by trait theorists. In compliance-gaining research, the researcher observes behavioural regularities. In the communication context these theories describe what people do, and what messages they use to gain compliance. The problem with this theory is that, based on external analysis, the researcher can never be sure of what actual cognitive mechanisms are being used. Speech accommodation and constructivism are examples of the second type of process theory. These theories measure states of mind or perceptions and correlate those with the observed messages or communication behaviours. This correlation enables the researcher to assume that the proposed cognitive mechanism is valid. Correlating perspective taking and cognitive complexity is something which constructivism has repeatedly done with success. Action-assembly theory is an example of a process that attempts to explain the cognitive mechanism that generates actions. This is an example of a third type of process theory. This type of cognitive study is difficult to complete. All cognitive research involves indirect observation and much inference on behalf of the researcher. The researcher is never sure if the proposed model of behaviour is actually valid, and is only able to assume that it could operate. Researchers may find that many other cognitive models might lead to the same behavioural differences (Littlejohn 1992: 131).

Process theories only partly describe how individuals process the information that allow them to understand and to generate the information. The next section looks at attempts to explain this part of the communication process by discussing theories of message reception and processing.

### 3.7 Theories of Message Reception and Processing

Littlejohn (1992: 164-168) states that message reception theories show how communication depends on the way messages are understood and judged. The theories of message production and message reception are integrally connected and cannot be divorced from one another. They are concerned with what the recipients do with the messages and how they do it. The theories address three accomplishments, namely, interpreting, organising and judging.

Interpretation occurs when one assigns meaning to concepts and tries to figure out the intentions of the message and attribute causes to them. It is a continuous process that often involves the reinterpretation of messages. Organisation is the categorising of new information into the existent system of beliefs and attitudes. Peoples' world-views remain relatively consistent therefore they are most likely to react to messages in a similar way. Another human accomplishment is judging. People are continuously making judgements from information received. When making a judgement one looks at all the aspects of the message, including the non-verbal elements of the message, the behavioural claims and attitude statements (Littlejohn 1992: 164).

Littlejohn (1992 164-168) lists four processes that govern message reception. The first is assigning meaning (see Osgood 1963; 1969; Osgood and Richards 1973). Although this process is concerned mainly with interpretation, it also governs how the message is organised and judged. Osgood's (1963: 735-751) theory of meaning suggests how individual concepts are interpreted based on evaluation, potency and activity. Sperber and Wilson's (1986) relevance theory explains how listeners come to understand the intentions of speakers in communication. They list the coding model and the inference model. The coding model is associated with semiotics and the recipient's decoding of the message. The inference model suggests that meaning is inferred and not simply transferred from communicator to recipient. The communicator influences the meaning that will be inferred in the message. They argue that in human communication meaning is more than a simple association between a symbol and its referent. It involves the intentions of the communicators. People produce messages in order to communicate intentions which they attempt to accurately convey to their recipients. It is also important for the receiver to receive the intention accurately. Regardless of how much

shared knowledge exists between the two, they can only understand each other from the perspective of their own knowledge.

Reasoning is another mechanism that permits information processing. An example of reasoning is the cognitive argument theory (see O'Keefe 1977; Hample 1980; 1981; 1985; 1988). This theory advocates a third form of argument called cognitive argument. Traditionally, "argument<sub>1</sub>" was making an argument while "argument<sub>2</sub>" was having an argument. Hample (1985: 1-22) labels this "argument<sub>0</sub>" because he believes it is fundamental to the two. Cognitive argument is the mental process of evaluating beliefs, a process essential to both message production and message reception. Cognitive argument is a process of evaluation. Each message is evaluated in terms of the context of existing beliefs within the mind of the communicator (Littlejohn 1992: 161).

A third mechanism is found in the comparison of ideas. This is the thesis of social judgement theory (see Sherif and Hovland 1961; Sherif, Sherif and Nebergall 1965; Sherif 1967). This theory is based in psychophysical research. Sherif et al. tested the way individuals judge social stimuli. His researches found that an individual's judgements of things and people are highly situational and depend on the individual's orientation to the world. People have a reference point that is always present and influences the in which way a person responds in communication. When a message is relatively close to one's own reference point, that message will be assimilated, while messages that are more distant are more likely to be contrasted (Littlejohn 1992: 162-165).

The fourth mechanism deals with the process of attitudes, beliefs and value changes. The information-integration theory (see Anderson 1971; Fishbein and Ajzen 1975; Wyer 1974) shows how change occurs as a result of newly integrated information. This theory focuses on the way in which people accumulate information about other people, situations, objects or ideas to form attitudes (predisposition to act in a positive or negative way in response to an object) towards a concept. This theory postulates that an individual's attitude system can be affected by information received and integrated into the attitude-information system. Attitudes are affected by 'valence' (whether the news is good or bad) and weight (credibility). A true statement has a heavier weight while one perceived to be less truthful is given a lighter weight. 'Valence' evaluates information on the scale from highly positive to highly negative. If a message supports one's views and beliefs, it is given the rating of highly positive. Messages that rate heavy and have a highly positive valence will actively influence the recipient. While on the opposite scale messages perceived to be lightweight and highly negative will be

dismissed by the recipient and therefore have no effect on him or her (Littlejohn 1992: 147-149).

All these theories (and many others not touched on in this study) are based on theoretical postulation, inference and creativity. There is no concrete process that underwrites message reception, however, these theories give the scholar some understanding of the mechanisms involved in this part of the process.

### 3.7.1 Critique

The theories discussed in this section deal with the way that people process information in messages. Although they are recipient-orientated theories, it is impossible to divorce message production and message reception. These theories show how messages are understood and judged. They are based upon the three elements of information processing, namely: interpreting, organising and judging. These three are different aspects of the same process. Most theories of message reception and processing follow the rational-person model. They share the idea that people think through problems and situations rationally and objectively. The rational-person thought assumes an understanding of the nature of human thought. People are thought of as independent, rational, choice-making beings. This is congruent with most western philosophy, demonstrating that this theory is shaped by the individual's world-view, a world-view that explains human experience in terms of individual cognition. This world-view assumes a universal cognitive mechanism behind all action. It attempts through its experiments, measurements, hypotheses and theories of message response to find the underlying mechanisms. The theories are appealing as they help the individual understand rather esoteric processes that baffle the average individual. The problem lies in ascertaining whether the cognitive processes are universal. Cognitive processes also do not present themselves in a self-defined form. The processes must be defined by the researcher. Such inquiry involves inferring underlying processes from observed behaviour, and naming the variables believed to be operating. This creates a problem in that there is no end to the number of constructs that can be created and named. The theoretical definitions used are abstract and partial, which enables further constructing, naming and defining (Littlejohn 1992: 164-168).

Much criticism of these cognitive and behavioural theories derive from proponents of interactional and conventional theories. This study now looks at the theories of symbolic interaction, dramatism and narrative.

### 3.8 Theories of Symbolic Interaction, Dramatism and Narrative

This approach to communication theory is based on the premise that meaning is intrinsic and is created and sustained by the interactions in a social group. Theories of symbolic interaction, dramatism and narrative state that interaction establishes, maintains and challenges the roles, norms rules and meanings within a social group or culture. These conventions define the reality of culture (Littlejohn 1992: 169). The aforementioned theories have particular importance for this study as they use theatre as a metaphor to explain the operations of man.

#### 3.8.1 Symbolic Interaction

The theoretical basis to these theories is symbolic interactionism. Manis and Meltzer (1978: 437) list seven methodological and theoretical propositions identifying a central concept of symbolic interactionism. They are as follows:

The meaning component in human conduct: Distinctly human behaviour and interaction are carried on through the medium of symbols and their meanings.

The social sources of humanness: The individual becomes humanised through interaction with other persons.

Society as process: Human society is most usefully conceived as consisting of people in interaction.

The voluntaristic component in human conduct: human beings are active in shaping their own behaviour.

A dialectical conception of mind: Consciousness, or thinking, involves interactions within oneself.

The constructive, emergent nature of human conduct: Human beings construct their behaviour in the course of its execution.

The necessity of sympathetic introspection: An understanding of human conduct requires study of the actors' covert behaviour.

Symbolic interactionism theory proposes that individuals attempt to achieve their goals through their interaction with other people. Experience is shaped by the meanings that arise from the use of symbols within the social group. Meaning can only be obtained through interaction, and therefore, communication is the core of human experience (Littlejohn 1992:170).

### 3.8.1.1 The Chicago School

The most prominent school of thought in symbolic interactionism is the Chicago School. The Chicago School is dominated by the work of George Herbert Mead. Mead's theory is governed by three basic concepts, namely society, self and the mind. Mead was concerned with the basic unit of human behaviour, which he called the 'act'. The 'act' is the total reaction of a person in a situation. The 'act' includes focusing of attention on specific objects or people in the environment as well as their feelings and thoughts about those objects or people (Popenoe 1995: 95). Therefore, according to this view people are seen as actors and not reactors (Littlejohn 1992: 171). The social act involves a three-part relationship: an initial gesture from one individual, a response to that gesture by another and, as a result of the act, the meaning derived (perceived or imagined) by both parties. Blumer (1969:2) (Mead's pre-eminent disciple) explains as follows:

Human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.

The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows.

The meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

This theory uses the premise that humans use symbols for their communication. The symbol is interpreted by the receiver, which makes meaning central to, and a product of social life. Something can only have meaning if that meaning has been obtained through social interaction. This explains the process of interpersonal communication. Both the communicator and recipient are aware of the meaning associated with a particular symbol. As society consists of an infinite number of symbols, the symbols must possess shared meaning for society to exist.

In the case where a group of people is interacting, the joint action consists of an interlinkage of their separate actions. Group conduct is the combined independent actions of the individual participants (Blumer 1969: 14-17; Littlejohn 1992: 172; Popenoe 1995: 95-96). Blumer (1969: 19) argues that groups are governed by individual choices and not the other way round. He states that "it is the social process in group life that create and upholds the rules, not the rules that create and uphold group life". Group life then is a band of co-operative behaviours conducted by the society's members. Interpersonal communication then becomes group communication.

The second concept that Mead dealt with was *self*. Mead (1934) believed that someone could act towards the self as he or she would towards others. For example, one could be pleased or angry with the self. Role taking allows an individual to experience the way that others perceive their self-concept. This action is made possible through the symbols that construct language. The perception that an individual has of the self is created by how others perceive him or her is called the generalised other. The generalised other is created through years of symbolic interaction (Littlejohn 1992: 173; Popenoe 1995: 96). Mead (1934) states that the self has two facets: the *I* and the *me*. The *I* is the impulsive, unorganised, unpredictable part of a person. The *me* is the generalised other consisting of the organised patterns shared with others. The *I* is the driving force, while the *me* provides direction and guidance

The third concept is the mind. For Mead (1934) the *mind* is the process of interacting with oneself. *Minding* is the process of hesitating while one consciously assigns meaning to stimuli. The concept of *mind* occurs when individuals are faced with problem situations and they must think through future actions by selecting and testing every possible alternative. *Minding* is intrapersonal communication.

Interpersonal, group and intrapersonal communication is the basis of these co-operative behaviours and makes the social interactionism theory an important part of communication theory.

### 3.8.2 Dramatism

Two other movements associated with symbolic interactionism are Dramatism and Narrative. Dramatism draws heavily from a theatrical metaphor while narrative uses a story sequence. Dramaturgists (proponents of this theory) see people as actors on a stage playing out roles and interacting with others. Gronbeck's (1980: 317) model demonstrates the basic idea of dramatism.

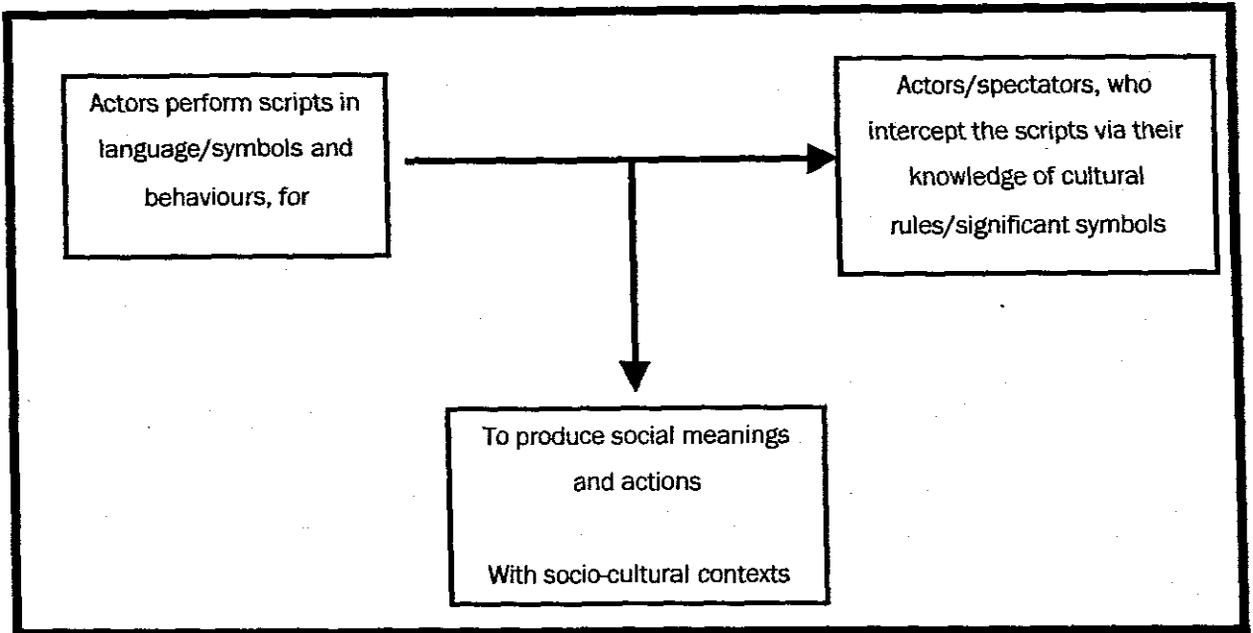


Fig 2.3 Gronbeck's Model of Society.

Dramatism views action as performance. In performance, meanings and actions are produced within a scene or sociocultural context.

Narrative theories are inspired by the way that people use stories to structure reality. Kamler (1983: 49) argues that any communication is telling stories and that stories are meant to be shared. This sharing of stories transforms people into communal beings. Trading stories for agreement, disagreement and inspection makes people part of a community.

The theories of narrative and dramatism are hard to separate, they both deal with the concept of characters playing roles in a sequence of events.

### 3.8.2.1 Kenneth Burke

Kenneth Burke was one of the influential proponents of dramatism. He too argued that man was a "symbol using animal" (Burke 1966: 5). The concept of guilt is a major consideration in all of Burke's work. He uses it as an all purposes word referring to the tensions, anxieties, embarrassments etc. that people experience. People's use of symbols is the conditioning factor of guilt. Burke identifies three interrelated sources of guilt. The first of these is the *negative*. Burke argues that through language people moralise constructing myriad rules and proscriptions. These rules are inconsistent, and by following one rule, you automatically break another. This creates guilt. Burke's second reason for guilt is the *principle of perfection*.

People, because of their failings, imagine a state of perfection. They spend their lives trying to obtain this perfection. They experience guilt when they are unable to obtain it. The third reason for guilt is the *principle of hierarchy*. In their desire for order people structure society. The ranking is a symbolic phenomenon. Through competition and division, they experience guilt. Burke argues that guilt is the primary motive behind all action and communication. People communicate to purge their guilt (Burke 1966: 9- 16; Littlejohn 1992: 178- 179).

In his discussions on language, Burke uses several inextricable terms, namely: persuasion, identification, consubstantiality, communication and rhetoric. Substance is the quintessence of any thing. The substances of any two people overlap creating shared meaning. This shared meaning is not perfect thereby hindering ideal communication. People are able to communicate because they have assigned the same meanings to symbols. Burke calls this shared meaning consubstantiality. Identification is similar to consubstantiality in that identity consists of a shared substance. Divisions occur when people lack shared substance and therefore suffer guilt. However, people are able to increase identification through communication. As identification increases, so does shared meaning improving mutual understanding. Burke lists three types of identification: material identification (resulting from possessions), idealistic identification (resulting from ideas, attitudes and feelings) and formal identification (resulting from the form or arrangement of the act) (Burke 1966: 301-303; Littlejohn 1992: 179-181).

Burke's methodological model is based on his pentad. The five components of this model are:

The act— This is what the actor does and what he or she achieved.

The scene - This is the setting and situation in which the act was achieved. This is the physical setting and the social-cultural environment.

The agent - This is the actor and his social cultural environment.

The agency - This is the means used by the agent in carrying out the act.

The purpose - This is the purpose for the act, it includes the desired effect and the reason for the act (Littlejohn 1992: 179-181).

### 3.8.2.2 Erving Goffman

Erving Goffman, another proponent of the dramaturgical tradition, analyses human behaviour by means of a theatrical metaphor. The setting for ordinary social interaction is the stage. He sees people as actors structuring their performances to make impressions on an audience. Goffman argues that interpersonal communication is the presentation through which the various aspects of the self are projected (Littlejohn 1992: 181). Goffman (1974) states that a person faced with a situation must make sense out of the events. This organisation becomes

the definition of the situation. Often a person's initial definition is not accurate and he or she is forced to reconsider their judgement. The definition of the activity is divided into two parts. A *strip* which is any arbitrary action and the *frame* which contextualises the strip within its organisational pattern.

Frame analysis is the examining of the ways in which experience is organised for the individual. Frame analysis gives meaning to the everyday events of people. Frameworks are the models that people use to understand their experiences. A natural framework is an unguided event of nature, where social frameworks are controllable and guided by human intelligence. Primary framework is the basic organisational unit (Goffman 1974: 27). Goffman (1961; 1963; 1967; 1971) states that a face engagement or encounter occur when people engage in focused interaction. People in a face engagement have a single focus and a perceived mutual activity. In unfocused interaction people acknowledge the presence of others without paying attention to them. In an unfocused situation, an individual is accessible to others for an encounter. In an engagement, a mutual contract is established to continue with the contact until it is terminated. During engagement, a relationship develops between the participants and they work at sustaining it. Face engagements have both verbal and non-verbal elements, which are important for signifying the nature of the relationship as well as the mutual definition of the situation (Littlejohn 1992: 182).

Goffman (1974: 508) argues that people do not provide each other with information but they present dramas to an audience. He claims that when an individual is saying something they are running through a "strip of already determined events for the engagement of his listeners". In engaging the audience, the speaker presents a specific character to the audience. Presenting the self is not just limited to conversations. People are always presenting scenes to others whether the scenes are focused or unfocussed. Goffman (1959: 245-246) believes that through these various dramatisations the self is determined. The way people present themselves varies according to their situation. In defining the situation, the individual first needs information about other people in the situation and, secondly, he or she needs to share information about him or her self (Goffman 1959:14-15; Littlejohn 1992: 181-184). An individual's various characters make up his or her self. The individual has to maintain the various fronts (Goffman 1959: 32) offered to people, as part of the overall self. Goffman calls this the *arts of impression management* (Goffman 1959: 203-230).

### 3.8.3 Narrative

Walter Fisher (1987) believes that human rationality is based essentially on narrative and consequentially communication in all its forms can be understood by narrative. Traditionally

narration has been considered a form of argumentation (Littlejohn 1992: 185). Arguments were viewed as being rational while narrative was viewed as being irrational. Fisher (1978: 49) counters this view by stating that narrative can incorporate traditional rationality, but goes beyond this and incorporates other forms of rationality. He is of the opinion that the narrative paradigm encompasses a variety of types of rationality. Fisher sees narrative not merely as fictional stories but the interaction of verbal and non-verbal elements of communication that tell of an event. Listeners assign meaning to the story that they had heard. Unlike traditional arguments narrative is not prescriptive (Littlejohn 1992: 186). Not all stories are equally effective. Fisher (1978) suggests two criteria for judging their effectiveness: coherence and fidelity. Coherence is the extent to which a story makes sense and has meaning. It is measured by the organisation and structure of the story. Coherence involves three types of consistency. Argumentative or structural coherence deals with the way a story is structured. Material coherence judges the story's congruence to other stories. It tests accuracy against other stories told by other people. The final element, characterological coherence, looks at the believability, choices and aspirations of the characters (both narrators and actors) in the story. A coherent story is a well-told story that is not confusing, and encourages the audience to pay attention and appreciate the art. However, a story needs fidelity as well as coherence.

Fidelity judges the truthfulness or reliability of the story. If the audience find the story truthful, they will consider it to have fidelity. Fisher (1978) lists five elements that influence fidelity. A story has values. These values must suit the moral of the story, the decisions that the characters make, or the general argument of the discourse. The values are perceived to have positive consequences in the lives of the people. The values are consistent with those of the audience. Finally, these values are part of the ideal vision for human conduct. Narrative is liberating and empowering and so does not require special skill (Littlejohn 1992: 186). The public is able to judge any narrative using coherence and fidelity.

#### 3.8.4 Critique

The theories of symbolic interaction, dramatism and narrative emphasise the importance of communication in maintaining society. They argue that a society's reality is defined in terms its meanings that are created through the interaction of its various social groups.

Littlejohn (1992: 187) cites three major criticisms of symbolic interactionism. In the first critics claim that in practice the researcher does not really know what to look for in observing interactionist concepts in real life. This problem stems from the vague, intuitive claims of the early interactionists. The criticism questions the suitability of symbolic interactionism, to lead to a thorough understanding of everyday behaviour. Critics believe that it is a social

philosophy that guides the individual's thinking about events, without providing concrete conceptualisation as to what is happening in these events. Critics believe that this failure prevents symbolic interactionism from having a heuristic value. In response to this criticism, proponents of the theory claim that its critics conceive the movement too narrowly, failing to look at the influence it has had on the theories of dramatism and narrative, for example (Littlejohn 1992: 187).

Critics further argue that symbolic interactionism leaves out the emotions of the individual and societal organisation. Critics argue that this proves that its scope is very limiting. If it is to provide adequate explanation for social life, it has to consider these factors. Their criticism goes further than just commenting on the scope of this theory, it questions its validity as well. Proponents of social interactionism again argue that its influence is wider and more far reaching than is realised. The theories of the social construction of reality are directly influenced by emotions. This shows that it does deal with the individual in a well-researched and broadly conceived manner. The criticisms relating to symbolic interactionism's ability to deal with social organisation is a major concern to the interactionists. Social organisation displaces individual prerogative, which is highly valued in old style interactionism. Social structure involves power. Social interactionists prefer not to admit to power inequality. Social interactionists have investigated the concept of power from their perspective with several research programmes specifically looking at power (Hall 1980: 49-60; Littlejohn 1992: 188).

Littlejohn (1992: 188) states that a third criticism of symbolic interactionism is that its concepts are not used consistently. Concepts such as *I*, *me*, *self* and *role* are vague. The proponents counter this by arguing that symbolic interactionism is a general framework rather than a unified theory. It has different versions. This criticism may be valid of early symbolic interactionism but it is not valid of the movement today.

The dramatism and narrative theory has been subjected to severe criticism. Littlejohn (1992: 189) argues that it is an interest group and not a set of theoretical principles. According to another view, there is an overall lack of coherence in the movement. The greatest proponent of this theory is Kenneth Burke. The breadth and complexity of his work has received both blame and praise. Certain scholars believe that his work has opened the way for important further study, while others blame him for the confusion created through his lack of focus.

Littlejohn (1992: 189) comments that Goffman's ideas are scattered and hard to assemble into a single theory. His numerous writings, although insightful, are hard to integrate. Goffman rarely uses the same vocabulary twice. He seems more interested in pointing out

idiosyncratic observations than in making a general statement. Goffman's final work entitled 'Frame Analysis' provides an overall scheme that can be used to integrate his lifetime's work.

While narrative has been useful in defining how telling stories is a universal human activity, considerable controversy reigns about the place of narrative in communication. Fisher's narrative paradigm is criticised, as scholars believe that it does not characterise all communication (Rowland 1989: 39-54; Littlejohn 1992: 189). Fisher (1956: 55-58) argues that his narrative is applicable to all communication and is especially important to persuasion. Fisher (1955-58) believes that narrative is more a dimension than a type of communication.

Narrative and dramatism have relevance to this study which deals with the theatrical metaphor and the view of people as actors. The study identifies with social interactionism theory and accepts that the broader social and cultural factors are major contributing factors to the way that messages are encoded and decoded. It is then essential to look at the theories of social and cultural reality.

### 3.9 Theories of Social and Cultural Reality.

Alfred Schutz (1970) first expressed the idea of the social construction of reality. In doing this he argued that man's private world is from the outset intersubjective. It is shared with others and experienced and interpreted by others. The world is common to everybody. He stated that: "...the unique biographical situation in which I find myself within the world at any moment of my existence is only to a very small extent of my own making" (Shutz 1970: 163). People's meanings and understandings arise from their communication with others. This theory is embedded in sociological thought (see Berger and Luckmann 1966). Kenneth Gergen (1982: 1985) called this school of thought the "the social constructionist movement" which is concerned with the process by which individuals account for their world through their experiences. Gergen (1985: 266-269) argues that this movement is based on the following assumptions:

- 1) The world does not present itself objectively to the observer but is known through human experience. This is largely influenced by language.
- 2) The categories in language used to classify things emerge from the social interaction within a group of people at a particular time and in a particular place. Categories of understanding, then, are situational.
- 3) How reality is understood at a given moment is determined by the conventions of communication in force at the time. The stability of

social life therefore determines how concrete our knowledge seems to be.

- 4) Reality is socially constructed by interconnected patterns of communication behaviour. Within a social group or culture, reality is defined not so much by individual acts, but by complex and organised patterns of ongoing actions.

### 3.9.1 Social Construction of Self

One of the focal points in the social construction of reality is the social construction of self. Rom Harré and Paul Secord (1972: 1979) placed constructionist assumptions at the core of their work. They argue that the self is both individual and social. They studied the way in which individuals account for and explain their own behaviour in particular "episodes" as termed by Harré and Secord. Harré and Secord called this study *ethogeny*.

An "episode" is a predictable sequence of acts, defined by all parties as an event which has a beginning, middle and an end. Examples are having dinner, giving a lecture, performing in a play, watching a play, etc. Ethogeny is the meaning of the episode and the way that the participants understand the various acts in the episode. Harré (1979) argues that a social group creates "theories" to explain the experience of reality. This is done through interaction. A group's "theories" conceptualise the experience and include a scenario of what the logical outcome of a particular action within an episode will be. He argues that these "theories" are templates of the course of action anticipated in the episode. For example, people in management have an idea of how managers should behave in the work place and they are required to explain and account for their behaviours within this template. The meanings attached to these episodes give rise to the rules that guide the participants' actions within the episode. These rules tell the participants how to act at that moment. The concept of rules is important in constructionist thought (Littlejohn 1992: 192).

Harré (1984) states that the *self* is also structured by personal theory. He argues that the *self* is a theoretical concept, derived from the ideas of personhood, materialised in the culture and expressed through communication. Harré differentiates between the concepts of *person* and *self*.

The *person* is the publicly visible being that has the attributes and characteristics of persons in general within the culture or social group. The *self* is the individual's private notion of himself or herself. Concepts of personhood are public and governed by the group's concept of personhood. The concepts of selfhood are private, and governed by the individual's theory of his or her own being as a member of the culture. Both personhood and selfhood theory are learned through a history of social interaction. This emphasises the importance of the

biographical and socio-cultural elements on the individual, which in turn effects the way, they will communicate.

### 3.9.2 Social Construction of Emotion

Another major area in the social construction of reality is the social construction of emotion. Harré (1986: 2-14) suggests that emotions are constructed concepts, determined by the local language and moral orders of the culture and social group. Averill (1980a: 305-339; 1980b: 7-45; 1982; 1986: 98-119) argues that emotions are belief systems that guide one's definition of the situation. Emotions consist of internalised social norms and rules that include how to define emotions and how to respond to them. The physiological element is learned socially within the culture, meaning that an individual's ability to make sense of emotions is socially constructed. For Averill the emotion is a syndrome. A syndrome is a cluster or set of responses that go together. A single response is insufficient to define an emotion. All the responses must be viewed together. Emotional syndromes are constructed by society, as people learn through interaction what a particular cluster of behaviours is meant to signify. Communication also tells one how to behave when undergoing those emotions. Different societies show emotions in different ways; people must learn how their culture shows a particular emotion. Each emotion has an object towards which the emotion is directed. There are a limited number of objects for each emotion. For example, you are angry with someone, that person is the object of your anger. People label emotions according to how they are experienced. The categories that create the labels are defined by socially constructed rules.

Averill (1980b: 7-45) lists four kinds of learned rules that govern emotions. Rules of appraisal tell the individual what an emotion is, where it is directed and whether it is positive or negative. Rules of behaviour tell the individual how to respond to the emotion. Rules of prognosis define the progression and passage of emotions. Rules of attribution prescribe how an emotion should be explained and justified.

Emotions are not entities in themselves but are defined and handled according to rules that are learned through social interaction. A person's concept of emotions and the way to express and deal with them can change as people grow older and develop (Littlejohn 1992: 194).

### 3.9.3 Rules and Social Action

Rules are an important part of social and cultural action. Social interaction constructs rules, which in turn govern social interaction (Littlejohn 1992:198). There are three major approaches to understanding the role of rules in society. They are the rule-following approach

(see Smith 1982: 1984), the rule-governing approach (see Shimanoff 1980) and the rule-using approach (see Cronen et al. 1976; 1979; 1980; 1988).

Rule theories have added to the understanding of social and cultural reality. They provide a mechanism by which the scholar can understand reality. The different approaches have created different definitions, which in turn have caused confusion. This area of sociological and communication study has inspired a lot of debate and academic discourse which does not fall within the scope of this study.

The theories of social and cultural reality have stressed that the importance of communication is the creation of this reality. It is therefore important to look at the relationship between language and culture. This relationship falls into the discipline of sociolinguistics. Sankoff (1980: xvii) states that most scholars of language believe that language is affected by both structural properties and sociocultural factors.

#### 3.9.4 Language and Culture

One of the most important contributions to language and culture was theory of linguistic relativity. This was created by Edward Sapir (1921) and his protégé Benjamin Whorf (1956). The theory of linguistic relativity states that ways of thinking and patterns of culture are determined by the structure of the language used in a particular culture (Watson and Hill 1993: 164; Littlejohn 1992: 208; Sapir in Whorf 1956: 134).

#### 3.9.5 Elaborated and Restricted Codes

Another important sociolinguistic theory was created by Basil Bernstein (1971). He differentiated between elaborated and restricted codes. This theory shows how language reflects and shapes the assumptions of a social group. Elaborated codes provide the speaker with a wide range of syntactic and grammatical alternatives. The speaker is able to make his or her ideas and intentions explicit. The language is more complex and involves more explanation. Bernstein equated these codes with a loosely knit middle class society. Restricted codes give the speaker a narrower range of options. These codes do not allow the speaker the opportunity to elaborate or expand their meanings and intentions. Bernstein associated these codes with a tightly knit lower class society.

Restricted codes used by closed societies require a high degree of shared meaning. These societies make use of a closed-role system, which reduces the number of alternatives for the participants. People are understood by the roles that are set for them. The understanding of who the people are and how they should behave forms the basis of this shared meaning which

implies that an elaborated code is not necessary and therefore not learned. In elaborated codes, this high degree of shared meaning is not necessary. An open-role system expands the number of alternatives for individuals in the group. The role of the individual in this society is individualised and negotiated. An individual might have little shared meaning with the society and so will require elaborated codes to communicate. Elaborated and restricted codes are created by social structure and values. A well-defined and structured group with fixed social roles will use restricted codes. On the other hand, a group where the structure is less well defined and has fluid roles will use elaborated codes. Pluralistic societies promote elaborated codes, whereas monolithic societies promote restricted codes (Bernstein 1971; Watson and Hill 1993: 6; Littlejohn 1992: 209-210).

The negotiated dramaturgy uses elaborated codes as they are designed to reach all stakeholders within the organisation. The stakeholders represent different, genders, cultures, languages and social statuses. The intention of the negotiated dramaturgy is to create a process that clearly explains certain concepts or objectives to all stakeholders regardless of their differences. The participants then need to use elaborated codes to achieve this intention.

### 3.9.6 Critique

Generally, the social constructionist theory is popular among critics. It manages to explain a number of concepts left unanswerable by the symbolic interactionists. The proponents of these theories believe that all aspects of reality are socially constructed and that reality is constructed through communication. The critics argue that the proponents' notions of reality conflict with the common-sense notion that reality is objective and independent (Littlejohn 1992: 212).

Cherwitz and Hilkins (1986) provide a comprehensive critique of constructionism. They list five arguments in criticism. The first is the naïve argument where they argue that nobody acts as though reality is socially constructed. They make the point that individuals must have some form of independent reality in their daily actions. The second criticism deals with the evolutionary argument. Cherwitz and Hilkins (1986) argue that if human experience has been evolving from prehistoric times to the present an objective sense of reality is required as a control for measuring this evolution. Their third criticism takes the form of an argument on logical consistency. They argue that there is no way to test the validity or quality of socially constructed knowledge without an outside reality. Cherwitz and Hilkins's (1986: 121) fourth argument is anthropological in nature. They claim that despite human variability there is a lot of commonality across cultures, creating cross-cultural understanding. In their final argument

Cherwitz and Hilkins (1986) look at persuasive discourse, they believe the argument that communication results in an undeniable objective world of discourse, speakers, audience and responses. They argue that the communication that constructs reality cannot be understood without reference to its own reality. Littlejohn (1992: 213) writes that Cherwitz and Hilkins (1986) do not deny the importance of language to reality. They propose their own theory in which they argue that rhetoric takes a central role in the discovery, examination and dissemination of truth. Communication is used to distinguish things, to make inferences, to promote ideas, to evaluate claims and to express perspectives on reality. However, communication does not construct reality itself.

Rule theories have added to the understanding of social and cultural reality. They provide a mechanism whereby people can understand reality. Littlejohn (1992: 214) points out that the rules concept is not particularly coherent with Shimanoff (1980) believing that a rule must deal with overt behaviour. Cronen and Pearce (1976; 1980; 1988) believe that rules apply not only to overt meanings but also to internal meanings. Littlejohn (1992: 214) argues that this discrepancy has led to some confusion, with scholars having to return to the basic issue surrounding constructionism. This issue poses the question: "Is communication a tool for communicating accurately about the world, or is it the means by which the world itself is determined?"

### 3.10 Theories of Experience and Interpretation

Interpretation of the message is an important part of the communication process.

Interpretation attempts to explain the connection between action and meaning. Littlejohn (1992: 215) states that an action may have many different interpretations that cannot simply be discovered. Interpretation is an active, disciplined process that involves the creative act of ascertaining all the possible meanings and actions of messages. There are two converging schools of thought on interpretation: Phenomenology and Hermeneutics. Phenomenology is the study of the knowledge that arises in the conscious experience. It studies the appearance of objects and events in everyday situations. Hermeneutics originally was concerned with the interpretation of writings but now it has grown to be any kind of interpretation. The two schools of thought are explained in more detail below.

#### 3.10.1 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is the study of the ways in which people experience the world. It is conducted from the perspective of the person perceiving the message. A phenomenon is the appearance of an object, event or condition. Anything that is perceived is a phenomenon (Littlejohn 1992:215). In phenomenology, the individual's basic data for interpretation (his or her frame

of reference) is his or her life experience (Merleau-Ponty 1982: viii-ix). Palmer (1969: 128) states that "Phenomenology means letting things become manifest as what they are, without forcing our own categories on them". Phenomenology looks at what exists and then attempts to interpret it. He or she never postulates and then investigates whether it exists or not.

Deetz (1973: 40-51) lists three basic principles of phenomenology. The first of these is that knowledge is conscious. Knowledge is not deduced from experience but is expressed through conscious experience. The second is that meanings are assigned to objects through the way that people perceive them. The third principle is language. Language is the vehicle that allows people to construct meanings.

### 3.10.1.1 Classical Phenomenology

Edmund Husserl (1965) argues that experience is the only conceptual scheme that an individual can use for discovering the truth. He stated that the conscious experience is the way in which people discover the reality of things in the world. Truth can only be known through conscious attention. Individuals understand phenomena by looking at the way that they are presented to him or her and by analysing their awareness of the phenomena.

Husserl believed that people experience things in a natural attitude. This natural attitude is influenced by the individual's beliefs and perceptions. Husserl argues that while there is nothing wrong with this attitude, a sharper attitude is needed if one is to know the world. In order to analyse an object by means of phenomenology one has to get rid of the distractions of everyday life. He used the term 'bracket out' to suggest the temporary removal of the distraction in life. This process is called phenomenological reduction or epoche. This is the systematic elimination of any subjective factors influencing one's pure experience of a thing. In reduction, one brackets subjective factors like history, biases and interests which might distort the natural attitude and concentrates on the object being analysed. Once this has been effectively completed, the individual's consciousness reveals the true essence of the object (Littlejohn 1992: 216).

Having completed the process of phenomenological reduction, the individual can now use transcendental reduction to analyse the object further. This reduction brackets experience itself, which leads to a true understanding of the transcendental ego. It involves removing social life, the creator of an individual's beliefs, attitudes and values from his or her frame of reference. This reveals the true essence of the human mind. Transcendental reduction is a psychological endeavour designed to uncover the nature of the human being and of their thought (Littlejohn 1992: 218).

Husserl's approach to phenomenology is very controversial, as many scholars believe it to be too idealistic. They argue that language, communication and culture are essential elements of the conscious experience. These elements therefore, cannot be divorced from the conscious experience. It is then impossible to bracket them out and analyse an object as Husserl suggests (Littlejohn 1992: 218).

### 3.10.1.2 Social Phenomenology

Social phenomenology examines the experiences of everyday life, particularly the use of language. This school of thought acknowledges the importance of experience and that consciousness cannot be divorced from language (Littlejohn 1992: 218).

Merleau-Ponty (1962) argued that the human being is an indivisible physical-mental being that creates meaning in the world. He called this the *body-subject*. He argued that the person has a relationship to things in the world. For Merleau-Ponty, human life is both affected by the world and in turn, defines and assigns meaning to the world. The *body-subject* and the world of things and events have a dialogic relationship because people give meaning to things in the world but there is no human experience outside the world.

Individuals assign meaning to experience through communication. Merleau-Ponty (1962) argues that thought occurs in and through speech because meaning is created by speech. The human experience is therefore based in communication. He differentiates between the use of speech to create meaning, which he calls the speaking word, and speech used to convey meaning, which he calls the spoken word. Merleau-Ponty (1962) shows that individuals receive and assign meaning to objects and experiences.

Although his approach to phenomenology also advocates bracketing, he specifically suggests that the researcher bracket any categories that could distract him or her from the task of concentrating on the meanings of the subject as expressed through the language of the subject. Littlejohn (1992: 219) explains that a phenomenologist in this tradition concentrates on the thing itself, and the language used to describe the thing and the meanings reflected in the language. The scholar must take into account that because people share a language, they also share meanings. Therefore, the scholar is interested in the public meanings available to everybody who uses the common language. Reduction is concerned with the "spoken word" rather than with the speaking word.

Shutz (1967), a contemporary of Merleau-Ponty, investigates social events from the perspective of the people participating in them. He argues that when individuals operate in everyday life they make three basic assumptions. The first is that the reality and structure of the world will remain constant. The world will always remain as it appears. Secondly, they assume that their own experience of the world is valid, and that their experience of events is accurate. The third assumption entails that individuals see themselves as having the power to act in a way that affects the world.

Schutz's (1967) work puts communication at the centre of the way that individuals experience reality. He claims that the individual's world depends on what he or she learns from others in their sociocultural communities. For Schutz, knowledge is always part of a historical situation. He believes that people in different times and different situations experience life differently. He sees reality as being socially constructed within a group, leading to the absence of a universal reality.

Individuals create typifications or categories that help define reality. Schutz (1967) argues that people understand and deal with things by placing them within a generalised category that typifies them and that by exploring the socially approved typifications of particular cultures and social groups, specific truths about individual historic groups can be found.

Social knowledge for Schutz (1967) consists of 'social recipes'. These are typical well-understood ways of behaving in particular situations. These social recipes enable individuals to classify things according to a mutual understanding of logic. This logic enables them to solve problems, to assume roles, to communicate and to establish proper behaviour in different situations. Most social activities proceed according to these 'recipes'.

Littlejohn (1992:220) explains that Schutz's social phenomenology provides backing for the social constructionist movement and that it is an important part of the philosophy of social relativism, which is prevalent in communication theory today. Schutz's ideas focused the attention of the scholar on the individual meanings that different people bring to a communication event. His ideas have had particular impact on cultural interpretation.

### 3.10.1.3 Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Heidegger (1959; 1962; 1971) combined phenomenology and hermeneutics and created hermeneutic phenomenology or philosophical hermeneutics. Heidegger denies the ability of an individual to reach truth through any form of reduction. He believes that the most important aspect of human life is just being in the world. He was concerned with the

understanding as a mode of existence. Through this philosophy, he became the founder of philosophical hermeneutics. Heidegger believed that the reality of something was not known through analysis but through natural experience. Natural experience emerges from communication. He argues that something is real if it is experienced through the natural use of language (Heidegger 1959: 13).

Gadamer, a protégé of Heidegger, was interested in the way that understanding is possible in human experience (Littlejohn 1992: 221). Gadamer sees interpretation as part of being, believing that individuals and texts could not be separated when being analysed. According to Gadamer's (1975) theory, individuals always understand experience from the perspective of presuppositions. Traditions help the individual to understand things. He believed that it was impossible to separate oneself from tradition. Observation, reason and understanding are never objectively pure. These factors are influenced by community and history. He furthermore believed that history could not be separated from the present, as people are always part of the past, in the present and anticipating the future. He believed that the past affects the way in which individuals view the present, and the present affects the way that individuals view the past. The fact that people are part of tradition does not prevent them from changing. Gadamer (1975) believes that over time an individual becomes distanced from events in his or her past. He argues that an individual understands an artefact in terms of categories created by his or her tradition. The unessential elements fall away and the individual is left with only the highly relevant meanings. Interpretation of historical events and objects are enhanced by historical distance. Gadamer (1975) argued that understanding a text means looking at the enduring meanings of that text within the historical tradition, while distancing it from the original communicators' intentions. He viewed texts as being simultaneously able to speak to the individual in the present as they did in the past.

Gadamer also believed that experience is inherently linguistic arguing and that experience cannot be separated from language. He believed that language prefigures all experience and that the world is presented through language. He states that in communication two people are not using language to interact with each other. Communication is a triad of two individuals and a language (Gadamer 1975: 394; Campbell 1978: 101-122).

### 3.10.2 Hermeneutics

Littlejohn (1992: 222) states that hermeneutics is the study of understanding, especially by interpreting action and text. Hermeneutic scholars fall into two general groups: Individuals who use hermeneutics to understand written texts called textual hermeneutics, and

Individuals who use hermeneutics as a tool for interpreting action called social or cultural hermeneutics.

Texts are any artefacts (written documents and other records) that can be examined and interpreted. The technique of hermeneutics is called the hermeneutic cycle. This technique advocates that the researcher interprets something by going from general to specific and then from specific to general. For example, a researcher will look at a specific text in terms of a general idea of what the text is meant to mean, and then modifies the general idea based on the specifics of the text. Interpretation is ongoing as the researcher moves between the specific and the general. The individual will relate what is seen in the object with what is already known. The researcher moves between a known set of concepts and an unknown set until the two merge into a tentative interpretation (Littlejohn 1992: 223).

Hermeneutic scholars agree that interpretation can never be separated from language. The very experience of understanding is linguistic. An individual's linguistic categories become a crucial part of any understanding. As with phenomenology, hermeneutic scholars also believe that language has meaning and discloses meaning to the individual. Language forms reality for the individual (Littlejohn 1992: 223).

### 3.10.3 Critique

The staunchest critique of these theories has come from the structuralists. They assume that structures are real apart from the human experience of them. These realities influence human experience in ways neither anticipated nor understood by communication. The structural or cognitive theorist believes that these powerful influences must be discovered by controlled observation. They believe that hermeneutic interpretation is inadequate for this task (Hamlyn 1982: 194).

Critics further believe that the interpretive approaches have ignored important psychological and social structures that influence human behaviour. They believe that by concentrating on the conscious experience the interpretation theorists do not grasp the ways in which the external factors affect human life (Littlejohn 1992: 234-235).

The structural-cognitive theorist argues that the structures that effect human life are largely unintentional and the individual is unaware of these. Cognition is a complex set of processes, many of which are hidden from the individual. They argue that although much of what individuals do is indeed conscious, many important structures governing social life are beyond awareness (Littlejohn 1992: 235; Motley 1986: 3-23; Bailey 1986: 74)

The hermeneutical method grants individuals the ability to interpret actions and texts. Proponents believe that there is no structural reality outside of actions or texts. They believe that ambiguity demands interpretation and the interpretation is a conscious human experience. The structuralists believe that people may not accurately understand, nor can they reliably report their experience. For this reason, they insist that scientific research methods are necessary in understanding interpretation. Further criticism suggests that interpretive methods tend to be case-orientated and do not lend themselves to generalisations and theory building. Things can only be understood in phenomenological terms if the experience is bracketed. In hermeneutics individuals interpret a set of group actions or a text, but individuals are discouraged from generalising beyond the specific case (Littlejohn 1992: 235).

Poststructuralist criticism sees interpretation approaches as foundationalist, arguing that interpretation seeks some sort of essential meaning in practices and texts. Further differences are that phenomenologists seek the essence of experience, while poststructuralist deny that essence occurs. Hermeneutic scholars attempt to find the central meaning in texts while poststructuralist deny that there is any central meaning in text (Littlejohn 1992: 236).

These criticisms fall into the overall scholarly debate that rages between proponents of the cognitive and structural theories and the proponents of the sociological theories. These debates are prominent in communication and social science research. While no conclusion is predicted soon, the ongoing debates add to the overall heuristic nature of communication study.

### 3.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, eight theoretical approaches to communication are presented. The limitations of each cluster of theories are discussed. Against this broad background of approach, it is now necessary to focus upon research that specifically addresses the question of corporate communication dealt with in the following chapter.

Having looked at the theories governing the discipline of communication, the study will focus on communication in the corporate environment.

# CHAPTER 4:

## THE CORPORATE COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT

### 4.1 Introduction

Industrial Theatre is corporate communication. In order to understand fully its role within organisations it is essential that one has a clear understanding of the corporate communication environment. Elements such as authority, communication channels, mutual understanding, democracy, freedom of speech, negotiation, adjudication and mediation need to be discussed.

### 4.2 Communication within Organisations

Organisations are structured in a particular way to achieve objectives. In effective organisations people have a clear description of their function, authority, responsibility and the kind of decisions he or she is empowered to make (Adey and Andrew 1990:76; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 147; Morgan 1990: 4).

Each organisation structures itself in the manner in which it believes is best for productivity (Adey and Andrew 1990:76; Jones 1995: 104-106). An important concept in organisational structuring is the concept of span of control. A basic approach is that there should be the fewest possible management levels and the shortest possible chain of command, the ideal being between three and six subordinates reporting to a superior. A narrow span of control has more managers and fewer subordinates, while a wide span of control would therefore have more subordinates reporting to a manager. A narrow span of control enables the manager to control his or her staff easily. In the wide span of control the subordinates have more room for initiative and are controlled less by their manager. The type and nature of the organisation determines which specific type of control is more effective. Each organisation is different and when looking at the organisation structure it is important that the context of the organisation be taken into consideration.

Industrial Theatre practitioners should be able to adjust to the span of control that exists in the organisation. The case study (see chapter 6) worked in an environment where there was a wide span of control between the workers and their supervisors, but a narrow span of control between the supervisors and the upper management of the department. This had to be taken into account when designing the Negotiated Dramaturgy, particularly when looking at the participation in the

pre-production forums. In theory, the Negotiated Dramaturgy has a wide span of control removing the various reporting levels. It facilitates communication on one level, thereby eliminating many possible communication problems. The Negotiated Dramaturgy proposes direct communication between all the stakeholders of an organisation at a level and in an environment that the practitioners design solely for communication purposes.

### 4.3 Organisational Authority

Understanding authority in organisations is important if one is to understand the communication channels that exist within this context. Authority is the vertical ordering of organisational roles according to the relative authority of the official concerned (Jones 1995: 91; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 149). Adey and Andrew (1990: 77) list four types of authority, namely:

- 1) Formal hierarchical authority originating from nominal status at the top of the organisation.
- 2) Accepted authority that arises from the fact subordinates accept their position in the organisation.
- 3) Authority of knowledge originating from expert power that a superior has due to superior knowledge.
- 4) Authority of situation that may arise from time to time because of a particular crisis.

#### 4.3.1 Line and Staff Authority

These various authorities translate into line authority and staff authority (Adey and Andrew 1990: 77-78; Jones 1995: 93). Line authority exists for managers due to their hierarchical positions over their subordinates within their span of control. Managers hold line roles when they have direct responsibility for the production of goods and services (Jones 1995: 93). Lubbe (1994:32) describes line authority as follows:

Line authority originates at top management and delegates through the various hierarchical levels of the organisation to where the primary product- and profit- producing activities are carried out.

Line structures are either centralised or decentralised. Centralised structures allow people to make decisions at the highest level, while decentralised structure authorises decision-making at lower levels in the organisation (Adey and Andrew 1990:77-78).

Staff authority provides advice and support to the line functions. Managers who are in charge of a specific organisational function are concerned with staff authority (Jones 1995: 93). Staff authority entails those activities "that directly influence the line functions by means of advice, recommendations, research and technical knowledge and plans" (Lubbe 1994:32).

Staff managers do not have the same legitimacy and power to reward, or coerce as line managers do (Adey and Andrew 1990: 83). Instead, they have the power of expertise that enables them to use persuasion rather than coercion.

#### 4.4 Communication Channels

Organisations have formal and informal communication channels. Formal channels arise from organisational authority structure and span of control, allowing the co-ordination of behaviour such as the definitions of tasks and goals, measurement and attainment and informal operations to occur (Angelopulo 1994: 45; Steinberg 1996: 103). In many cases, these channels are ineffective or not as effective as desired by the stakeholders. This is due to the sub-problems discussed (see sections 1.2.1-1.2.6) such as the levels of illiteracy, credibility of the source and the historical perspectives. Industrial Theatre fills this need for an effective corporate communication channel that transcends these problems.

##### 4.4.1 Vertical Communication

This communication is usually top to bottom in the organisational hierarchy. It is mainly used for giving instructions, providing information about organisational policy, providing information about organisational procedures, providing performance appraisals and for explaining the relationship of a specific task to the overall objectives of the organisation. Downward communication in an organisation is more frequent than upward communication. Downward communication co-ordinates and controls the activities of an organisation. When there is contact between individuals of different status, communication from the superior to the subordinate takes place more easily than communication from the subordinate to the superior. Instructions are the most common form of downward communications. Along with these instruction based messages are the accompanying explanations of procedures and goals. Managers are also responsible for

appraisal of workers and for motivating them. This is done to improve productivity and for the good of the organisation as a whole (Mersham and Skinner 2001; Steinberg 1996:104).

The medium is usually oral or by means of written communication, minutes of meetings, memoranda, reports, notices on boards, in-house newspapers and induction manuals. Downward communication is authoritative, and unidirectional. Downward communication is work-related and is conducted through formal communication channels (Adey and Andrew 1990: 85; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 149; 2001; Steinberg 1996: 104).

Mersham and Skinner (2001) state that downward communication is beset by many difficulties. In the South African context, management and labour literally and metaphorically speak different languages. There are often huge discrepancies in educational levels affecting general understanding even of basic instructions (see sections 1.2.2 and 1.2.4).

Upward communication flows from subordinates to superiors along the same lines as downward communication. Lack of upward communication affects morale that in turn may affect productivity (Adey and Andrew 1990: 85; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 149; Steinberg 1996: 104).

#### 4.4.2 Lateral or Horizontal Communication

This form of communication takes place among people on the same hierarchical level of the organisation, for example, manager to manager or worker to worker. It is useful in co-ordinating and problem solving. It affords peers the opportunity to create good working and social relationships (Adey and Andrew 1990: 86; Steinberg 1996: 106).

In typical organisations, horizontal communication is more frequent than vertical communication. This is because individuals communicate more openly and effectively with their equals than with superiors. Horizontal messages are usually of a co-ordinating nature. These messages between organisational equals are also less subject to distortion, because peers share a common frame of reference and are more likely to be informal, rather than formal (Adey and Andrew 1990: 86, Mersham and Skinner 2001).

Organisational structures tend to discourage horizontal flows between individuals in different divisions. Messages are supposed to be passed up to a mutual superior and then back down. Naturally, this slows the speed of these horizontal flows. In many organisations employees believe

that honest expression of their thoughts and feelings can get them into trouble. This perception causes them to say only what their superiors would like to hear (Mersham and Skinner 2001; Steinberg 1996: 106).

Mersham and Skinner (2001) state that lateral communication facilitates the sharing of insights, methods and problems. When effective, it co-ordinates the various activities of the organisation enabling the various divisions to consolidate insights and expertise. Lateral communication encourages morale-building and worker satisfaction. However, it is not always easy to encourage and foster dialogue between departments because of the increased specialisation and, in a number of cases, greater competition for resources within an organisation. Not everyone wants to share their ideas and expertise with others.

#### 4.4.3 Diagonal Communication

This occurs between staff members who are not on the same hierarchical level. This is prominent where people with different levels of authority from different departments work together on an issue or project. The fact that people of higher status may have to accept the expert knowledge of so called 'inferiors' makes it highly volatile (Adey and Andrew 1990: 87; Steinberg 1996: 106).

#### 4.4.4 Informal Communication

Informal communication does not form part of the formal networks and usually is not part of the organisation's official communication. It can arise from chance social acquaintances between stakeholders or through friendships and acquaintances within the organisation that do not fall within of the management hierarchy. Stakeholders who feel that they are not getting enough information via the formal channels, explicitly develop these informal channels. This makes the organisation dynamic and exciting. It takes into account the personalities of people within the organisation. Examples are the grapevine, the corridor ripple and the corporate rumour (Adey and Andrew 1990: 89; Steinberg 1996: 106; Williams 1992: 204). Topics can range from personal gossip about staff members to decisions taken at meetings. It has both positive and negative effects within an organisation. For example, rumours of retrenchments spread rapidly, thereby seriously affecting morale. As there is no official control of the information, it has the tendency to spin out of control doing serious damage to organisations. On the other hand, rumours regarding the company's increased profits will lead to expectations of salary increases and build employee morale. Informal channels are generally more rapid and facile, since often there is no verification mechanism (thus also increasing the possibility of distortion).

Industrial Theatre methodology attempts to negate the communication problems inherent in these authority-based channels by allowing the practitioners the opportunity to design and adapt a Negotiated Dramaturgy (see chapter 2) which ignores rigid authority-based lines of communication.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy can stimulate positive informal communication. It should act as a springboard, setting off a series of informal discussions generating further awareness on the issues discussed in the dramaturgy and in-role forum. The Negotiated Dramaturgy attempts to limit negative informal communication by addressing the content of these messages and allowing all stakeholders to respond. This legitimises the message, changing it from rumour to fact. The process removes the uncertainty attached to rumours.

#### 4.4.5 External Communication

Up to this point (sections 4.2 - 4.4.5) this chapter has concentrated on internal communication. However, the Public Relations Institute of South Africa defines the organisational communications function as:

the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between the organisation and its various stakeholders - both internal and external (PRISA; Skinner and Von Essen 1996: 4; Mersham et al. 1995: 11).

Jefkins and Ugboajah (1986:19) define corporate communication as:

all forms of planned communication outwards and inwards, between an organisation and its stakeholders, for the purpose of achieving specific objectives concerning mutual understanding.

Corporate communication exists between the organisation and all its stakeholders and is important for the image and reputation of the organisation (Adey and Andrew 1990: 89). It is persuasive communication concerned with message production (see section 3.6).

#### 4.4.5.1 Grunig's Models of Public Relations

Grunig (Grunig and Hunt 1984: 14- 22) developed four models of Public Relations (corporate communication), namely: the press-agentry model, public information model, two-way asymmetrical model and the two-way symmetrical model. In these models, Grunig depicts the different types of public relations practice and the different objectives of each.

In the press-agentry model, corporate communication serves a propaganda function. Communication practitioners spread the faith of the organisation involved often through incomplete, distorted or half-true information (Grunig and Hunt 1984: 14- 22; Lubbe 1994: 8; Mersham et al. 1995: 37; Van Eeden 1998: 33).

The public information model is concerned with the dissemination of information not necessarily with persuasive intent. This model advocates the objective reporting of information about the organisation to the stakeholders (Grunig and Hunt 1984: 14- 22; Lubbe 1994: 8; Mersham et al. 1995: 37; Van Eeden 1998: 33).

Communication practitioners engage in scientific persuasion in the two-way asymmetrical model. They apply what is known from social science and research about attitudes and behaviour to persuade stakeholders to accept the organisation's point of view. The practitioners behave in a way that supports the organisation (Grunig and Hunt 1984: 14 - 22; Lubbe 1994: 9; Mersham et al. 1995: 37; Van Eeden 1998: 33-34).

In the two-way symmetrical model, the practitioner serves as a mediator between the organisation and the stakeholders. Communication practitioners attempt to achieve mutual understanding between the stakeholders and the organisation. This model uses research to facilitate understanding and communication among its stakeholders. It encourages dialogue, rather than simply disseminating information (Grunig and Hunt 1984: 21; Lubbe 1994: 9; Mersham et al. 1995: 37; Van Eeden 1998: 34). Grunig and Grunig (1992: 285) and Holtzhausen and Verwey (1996: 38) argue that the two-way symmetrical model provides a normative model of how corporate communication should be practised in order to be ethical and effective. This model also proposes a transactional nature to communication, which is reflected in Mersham's (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) Graphic Model for Development (see section 5.5.2).

Industrial Theatre campaigns can be based on any of these models depending on the objectives, style and function of the campaign. For example, the researcher conducted a campaign for Portnet, which reflects the public information model. The dramaturgy simply presented material that informed Portnet's stakeholders about the restructuring of the company. The dramaturgy informed the stakeholders of what had already been achieved and of what still needed to be achieved. There was very little consultation with stakeholders concerning the creation of the dramaturgy. Management had already consulted with the workforce at the beginning of the

process and this was therefore not part of the campaign. The purpose of this campaign was simply to disseminate information from management's point of view.

In a campaign conducted for Richards Bay Coal Terminal, the dramaturgy reflected the two-way asymmetrical model. In this campaign, the dramaturgy dealt with HIV/Aids in the workplace. The practitioners shared scientific and legal information with the stakeholders. This campaign had 'feedback' sessions where the stakeholders could raise issues that they felt needed addressing.

The two-way symmetrical model characterises the Negotiated Dramaturgy. It was designed using the model's ideals and procedures. This is evident in the case study (see chapter 6) where the practitioners served as mediators between the organisation and the stakeholders. The case study attempted to achieve mutual understanding between the stakeholders and the organisation on the issue of safety. The ideals of this model state that the organisation must use research and dialogue to manage conflict, improve understanding and build relationships with its stakeholders. The communication approach advocated by this model, and therefore, the Negotiated Dramaturgy, may induce both the organisation and its stakeholders to change their behaviour. Scholars arguing the (de)merits and the practicality of the two-way symmetrical model (Mersham et al. 1995: 38). However, Grunig (Grunig and Hunt 1984: 22) state that it is impossible to practice corporate communication in an ethical and socially responsible environment using an asymmetrical model.

#### 4.5 Corporate Communication Media

Corporate communication media include house journals, annual reports, memos, bulletin boards, product exhibitions, employee handbooks and manuals, payroll-envelope inserts, reading racks, suggestion schemes, audio-visual materials, video and films, internal programmes filed on the organisation's intranet and the public address system.

The majority of these media require that the recipient stakeholders be literate. Traditionally these publications are printed in English and Afrikaans. Some publications are now beginning to include articles in the other nine official languages, for example, Zulu, Xhosa and Sotho. The language usage in these publications is often advanced and technical. This makes these publications difficult to read for those stakeholders with a limited education. Annual Reports are often filled with financial data and terminology that means very little to the uninitiated. Payroll-envelope inserts are rarely read and the message is often destroyed as the envelope is opened. The size of these envelopes often limits the message to one small sentence. The extensive rate of illiteracy

existing in organisations renders these publications totally ineffective. In this context, reading racks become redundant.

The use of audio-visual material, video and films require expensive equipment. Videos cannot be distributed to stakeholders, as many do not have electricity, television sets or VCR's. Some audio-visual material requires a certain level of literacy in order to understand the presentation.

As organisations attempt to transform, so the need for effective communication is increased. The historical circumstances, particularly the traditional antipathy between labour and management, have made effective corporate communication vital.

Organisations are increasingly using Industrial Theatre to counter the problems discussed above. The dramaturgies are able to communicate with all the stakeholders using multilingual dialogue. Information found in the organisation's publications is also shared with the stakeholders in the dramaturgies. These presentations are a mixture of a high level of entertainment, coupled with the sensitive handling of serious messages. Industrial Theatre engages the stakeholders on their level, thereby improving the possibility of success. Industrial Theatre allows for communicating with people within their working environment and increasing the sense of relevancy associated with the communication.

Mersham et al. (1995:171-172) categorise Industrial Theatre as an unconventional corporate communication media. They argue that its:

attractiveness comes into perspective when it is compared to other media or mediated forms of communication. Instead of 'lifeless' text, photography, video or film, industrial theatre encourages audience involvement through live performance.

Even if one views this as unconventional media, it is still corporate communication and so must be contextualised within this function.

#### 4.6 Mutual Understanding in Organisational Communication

Grunig's (Grunig and Hunt's 1984: 22) two-way symmetrical model advocates the establishment of mutual understanding between all the stakeholders. As this model characterises the Negotiated Dramaturgy, mutual understanding becomes fundamental to the process.

Ideally, mutual understanding should form the basis of a sound relationship between the different parties. Stakeholders base this relationship on open, two-way communication that enables the organisation to explain its policies and procedures, while enabling it to monitor 'feedback' (Mersham et al. 1995: 11; Vorster 1994:75). This ideal has had mixed success in the past and with the move to a more transparent society, organisations need to introduce structures that assist them in this regard. The techniques of corporate communication according to Vorster (1994: 77) include the provision of ways to adjust relationships between individuals and groups with different points of view, especially when those differences may lead to misunderstanding, disagreement and hostility. It is in answer to this need that the Negotiated Dramaturgy has come forward. It functions as a two-way communication medium while empowering the interested stakeholders.

#### 4.7 Corporate Communication and Freedom of Speech

Corporate communication (and hence the Negotiated Dramaturgy) can only function within the fundamental rights of freedom of speech and information. Democracy works on the principle that everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This incorporates expression on behalf of an organisation or the self (Mersham et al. 1995: 17).

Corporate communication is indispensable in modern democracies with mass societies and mass communication. Industries desire to be all-inclusive, they therefore use various corporate communication techniques that allow their stakeholders to share their messages (Mersham et al. 1995:17; Williams 1992: 200-201). Industrial Theatre is one of these 'techniques' and is rapidly becoming an accepted part of corporate communication campaigns.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy is an open communication system that can then only exist within democratic societies. Mersham et al. (1995: 18) argue that the new democracy in this country has legitimised a form of corporate communication that actively seeks the opinions and needs of the workforce. Management cannot afford to ignore the aspirations, aptitudes and preferences expressed by its employees. It has much to gain by a satisfied labour force, working at jobs to which they are best suited. The most successful management recognises that it has a social as well as an economical function to perform (Skinner and Von Essen 1996: 107). This style of management advocates that corporate communication eliminates any barriers between truth and the stakeholders. It functions as a developmental tool that empowers the stakeholders of a particular organisation (Bredenkamp 1996: 5; Skinner and Von Essen 1996: 9).

This style of management has created a compelling need for a comprehensive approach to corporate communications. Organisations are becoming increasingly reliant on approaches that encompass the notions of transparency and participation. The Negotiated Dramaturgy is inspired by this style of management and consequently incorporates these notions into its approach. For example, in the pre-production forums all the facilitators are encouraged to participate. They are encouraged again in the in-role forum to become actively involved in the process. The stakeholders determine the campaign's objectives, and they suggest possible solutions.

The corporate communication environment in South Africa is often characterised by conflict. Radical social, economic and political change in the wider environment, in which it operates, impacts upon its communication issues and policies. Mersham refers to the "broader cultural, societal and international context" (Mersham et al 1995: 55) as being an essential consideration in the corporate communications context. For this reason, one now turns to the question of negotiation.

#### 4.8 The Nature of Negotiation

Reece (1991: 17) states that in negotiation, one should avoid total defeat of one's opponent. This loss of face will be such that the opponent will be unable and unwilling to co-operate ever again. In keeping face in the negotiation process, the participants should never personalise the debate. It should not matter whether one is able to win a slinging match against another person, but that one is able to negotiate a compromise through him or her.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy was created with this rationale in mind. The writer's research into creative conflict management (see Baker and Van der Merwe 1999) established that the 'notion of a common goal' (Reece 1991: 21) is effective in this regard. This research is equally applicable to a corporate context. The notion of the common goal encourages the stakeholders to focus on shared objectives. This occurs in the pre-production forums where the objectives are identified and ways in which they can be met are discussed. In these discussions, the stakeholders are encouraged to look at the issues from their and their negotiating partners' perspective. They are encouraged to assess each other's perspective, facilitating greater understanding and striving for workable solutions. This approach assists with the natural process of changing priorities as the process of finding a compromise draws on. The common goal is also the dramaturgy. The stakeholders need to create the characters and the storyline, they thus have a common goal that they are working towards. This approach to negotiation is similar to De Bono's (1986: 19) exploration idiom.

De Bono (1986:19) sees the 'exploration idiom' as an effective approach whereby parties do not attack existing ideas. Here participants are encouraged to explore completely new ideas and avoid "thought clichés". This approach minimises time wastage resulting from stand-offs. A clash of entrenched ideas seldom produces symbiotic resolution; rather it produces unwilling concessions or forces one party to retreat from its position. Such a negative style of negotiation produces rigidity in thinking and directs the creativity and ingenuity of parties toward defeating opposing ideas rather than improving them. It results in choosing the options that are more strongly expressed, not necessarily the exceptional ones. Argument is negative in that one party tends to use it in order to prove that the other party is wrong, stupid, ignorant or untrustworthy. People also use it to impress others, or to set the emotional climate for negotiation. In opposition to this approach, one may use creativity in an argument to assist exploration of an issue, or to cast doubt on certainty and to bring about new insights. Negotiators should move away from the concept of 'your idea vs. my idea' and strive for 'our idea'.

#### 4.8.1 The Design Idiom

The Negotiated Dramaturgy reflects De Bono's (1986) design idiom in its structure. This idiom encourages thinking that involves the constructive investigation of a situation with the aim of designing an outcome. In Negotiated Dramaturgy terms, this is working through the pre-production forums, the dramaturgy, and ending with setting the plan of action for the negotiators. De Bono (1986) suggests a variety of simple 'thinking tools' to free people from becoming locked into traditional logic-based conflict modes.

De Bono (1986:82) proposes that in the face of the complex manipulative designs of conflicts a process of un-design is required, "un-ravelling the strands that have come together in this way and seeking to put together in another way". This involves identifying the minor disagreements that may lie at the foundation of major conflicts. These minor disagreements have festered and caused any possible opportunity for agreement to seem unobtainable. Ideologies may start far apart but grow closer over time, reducing actual contraposition on issues except in the minds of the parties involved. One may use design tools to explore the possibilities of achieving outcomes that accommodate seemingly incompatible views, or that are built on common elements of perceptions, i.e. by focusing on areas of agreement rather than on disagreement.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy attempts to shift perceptions so that the stakeholders see things differently. It offers conflicting parties new objectives. In this way, conflict situations are broken

down into small obtainable objectives so that the stakeholders can then make an effort to construct them into a new design (see chapter 6). The process departs from the major dispute and focuses on working towards resolution of other smaller issues that help contextualise the greater one. Using De Bono's (1986:82) methodology, the Negotiated Dramaturgy identifies desirable objectives and then works constructively through the pre-production forums and the dramaturgy towards achieving these objectives. The pre-production forums facilitate the brainstorming of 'dream solutions' as possible outcomes. The Negotiated Dramaturgy emancipates the thinking process by making small speculative changes (if x were the case then...). Role-play in the dramaturgy tests these speculative changes. The process actively overcomes and removes preconditions and blocks, working outside of the stakeholder's boundaries rather than within them. The Negotiated Dramaturgy works down from broad pictures towards values and objectives rather than vice versa. It establishes core principles and then builds outcomes around these. This approach encourages the stakeholders to forego argumentative approaches in favour of conflict resolution.

#### 4.8.2 Collective Bargaining as Corporate Communication

Collective bargaining entails worker participation in the decision making process of a particular organisation (Anstey 1990: 1). As industry in South Africa undergoes a radical change in its operational ethics, and the manner in which it becomes more socially conscious, so the notions of transparency and inclusiveness gain in popularity. This study argues that the Negotiated Dramaturgy is an effective corporate communication tool and one may use it to achieve different communicative objectives. For example, it may provide an effective medium that facilitates and enables collective bargaining and joint decision-making. Although this is not the prime function of this study, it is important to note this function of the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

Transparency of process and inclusiveness form the foundation of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. These notions may be used to overcome the traditional adversarial role (see section 1.2.4) that exists between labour and management.

#### 4.8.3 Collective Bargaining within the Negotiated Dramaturgy

It is essential to look at collective bargaining and negotiation in order to see how the Negotiated Dramaturgy might lend itself to this function and to appreciate the effectiveness of Industrial Theatre functioning in this manner.

The relationship between management and employees needs to be mutually productive without one side being seen to be gaining while the other appears to be losing in the process. The Negotiated Dramaturgy achieves this through the practitioner's channelling and linking of the information dealing with specific issues pertinent to the current objectives. This is necessary to address complex problems. Power (1990: 75) argues that management should expand the role of their employees in the daily decision-making process of the organisation. The Negotiated Dramaturgy makes use of pre-production forums to empower all stakeholders to participate actively in this process. These forums present management with a means of incorporating the workers' suggestions into their management policies and decisions.

Power (1990: 75-76) lists three levels of assurance necessary to affect change in the collective bargaining process. These levels have created an ideal environment for the Negotiated Dramaturgy. The success of the Negotiated Dramaturgy in mediation depends on the attainment of these levels. Power (1990: 75-76) describes them as follows:

- 1) Level 1 requires that both labour and management recognise a need for change and make plans to come together to discuss the possibilities. The present socio-political climate in South Africa has established this level as a norm. It is for this reason that companies are looking for alternative methods of communication.
- 2) Level 2 requires that labour and management establish a structure to accomplish a new direction. Currently industry achieves this in part but Power observes that certain individuals may hinder the effort. Organisations have created structures that are at best a fake and do not allow for input and change.
- 3) Level 3 represents the accomplishment of the new direction; industry can achieve this through recognition of a mutual goal (objectives) of survival for both unions and management.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy creates what Power (1990: 84-85) describes as an employee-centred process. This process includes team building fundamentals, group problem-solving techniques, communication techniques, interpersonal skills, effective 'feedback' methods, positive reinforcement techniques and identification of needs. These elements feature prominently in the Negotiated Dramaturgy and are essential if the Negotiated Dramaturgy is to be successful as a collective bargaining tool.

Reece (1991:26) argues that collective bargaining does not neutralise conflict, but provides an orderly procedure in terms of which each side can best present its case to the other. The Negotiated Dramaturgy reinforces this procedure, giving the various stakeholders a structured and creative programme in which to attempt to resolve their differences. It increases the strengths of collective bargaining in that it obtains the consent of the stakeholders who must abide by the terms of the agreement reached by means of the bargaining process. The Negotiated Dramaturgy promotes the important factor of stability.

The potency of the Negotiated Dramaturgy is increased when one views an alternative view of collective bargaining, which emphasises its function as a 'creative' process that benefits both sides. This study argues that the function of Industrial Theatre suits the objective of creative bargaining, which is to find mutually beneficial and satisfactory solutions for the parties concerned.

#### 4.9 Adjudication

An area of concern in collective bargaining is the role of the adjudicator or mediator in the process. Gulliver (1979: 3) describes the act of adjudication as follows:

The comparable picture of adjudication is that of two parties...who separated from one another, face an adjudicator who sits in front or apart from, and often raised above them. Each seeks to refute the other's presentation and to persuade the adjudicator to favour his own case.

This view of the adjudicator making a decision to the benefit of one party over the other often results in negative feelings by one group of stakeholders who have been ruled against. This policy is an 'either-or' procedure, with a winner and a loser, affirming the adversarial status (see section 1.2.4) of the two negotiating parties in the South African context. The Negotiated Dramaturgy does not adopt an adjudicative stance, but attempts to perform in a winner-winner mindset. It attempts to establish the notion of compromise and the search for the common goal.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy method of handling dispute is different from traditional approaches, yet it still effectively enables the negotiating parties to reach a mutually accepted settlement.

#### 4.10 Mediation within Industrial Theatre

Strictly speaking, within the Negotiated Dramaturgy, the practitioner performs as a linker and not as an adjudicator, while the practitioners function as neutral or impartial mediators. The Industrial Theatre practitioner's purpose is to get both sides of the dispute to communicate with each other. The practitioner does not receive benefits or payments as compensation for favours. He or she separates him or herself from personal opinions and directs the parties to find a solution to their problem.

The practitioner's role as mediator is crucial to successful facilitation. He or she should not be perceived as favouring one side over the other regardless of their individual persuasions. This sense of balance shown by the practitioner makes them what Anstey (1991:251) calls disinterested mediators.

The dramaturgy encourages this balance. A negotiated (meaning originating from both sides) text accurately portrays and puts forward the case of all the negotiating parties in a balanced form. However, the manner in which the practitioners and participants handle this requires great respect and subtlety. Often when the host organisation awards a contract to Industrial Theatre practitioners, the stakeholders (either management or the trade unions) who award the contract is looking for a bias towards their point of view. It is important to stress that this process is not concerned with propaganda (see section 4.4.5.1) but in the possession of an equitable system that encourages interaction and mediation.

#### 4.11 Information and Communication

The structure of Industrial Theatre allows the practitioner to disseminate tailor-made information to each target group of employees at pre-planned times. This is quite apart from the general information dispersed routinely and regularly to all. The process allows senior staff to appreciate the vital function of information and its advantages to the organisation. Without genuine support by senior staff, no information policy can succeed. Industrial Theatre ensures that the stakeholders understand the information that they have received. It encourages face-to-face encounters between workers and bosses. Moreover, the transparency of the process allows the stakeholders to see this process taking place (Reece 1991: 98).

A common obstacle is the perceived failure of Black stakeholders to check whether they have correctly received the message and whether or not they have understood it. Similarly, Black stakeholders feel the same situation exists among their White counterparts. One could comment

that these stakeholders make communication difficult by rejecting the 'feedback' indispensable to reaching an accord (Anstey 1991:99). Industrial Theatre thus has an inherent mechanism that makes 'feedback' one of its core elements. This study demonstrates how the Industrial Theatre process works through nullifying an obstacle to communication that exists between black and white stakeholders.

#### 4.12 Conclusion

This chapter contextualised the study within the corporate communication environment. It explained issues such as organisational authority, communication channels and organisation communication media. It discussed the relevance of Grunig's models of public relations to the study, suggesting the two-way symmetrical model as an ideal for the Negotiated Dramaturgy. The chapter then looked at negotiation, adjudication and collective bargaining as corporate communication discussing how the Negotiated Dramaturgy is suited to these functions. Having looked at the corporate communication environment it is now necessary to look at the communication environment that suits the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

## CHAPTER 5:

# Communication Models

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter proposes a model that effectively represents the communication process of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. It begins by surveying the theories of the Prague Circle and its descendants, which established theatre as communication. It then examines two models designed by Manfred Pfister, and two models designed by Temple Hauptfleisch. It analyses these models in terms of their applicability to the process of the Negotiated Dramaturgy and not as models of the theatrical process. It proposes an ideal set of circumstances for a model and investigates the effectiveness of a model by Henry Marchant before finally analysing and proposing a model developed by Gary Mersham as an ideal.

### 5.2 Performance Studies

The investigation of theatre as communication falls under the ambit of performance studies. This area of study investigates the meanings that theatre creates. It encourages the study of meaning from both the senders' and the recipients' point of view. In order to facilitate the analytical process Helbo et al. (1978: 5-7) divide the investigation up into the following categories:

**Text:** This is either the written score that precedes the performance or the spoken form in relation to other performance codes. The text is repeatable and enduring, which allows it to be transformed by the performance into voice, which is an ephemeral phenomenon. This transformation justifies the distinction between dramatic (written) text designed to be read, production text (stage direction and didascalia), and theatre text (the ensemble designed to be performed).

**Speech:** Speech poses the problematical question of the power of language. It therefore has to be approached through its interweaving with other performance codes such as gesture, facial expressions and props.

**Stage Design:** Included in stage design is lighting and sound effects. Lighting can be used to focus the audience attention on a certain part of the stage while drawing their attention away from another. The ongoing technological advancement of stage lighting has considerably increased the impact that lighting has on theatrical expression. Sound effects create a mood and impose a rhythm. It can also be used to structure space and punctuate a performance. The set encompasses the overall scenography of the theatrical event. Sets can be mimetic or symbolic. They can have a dynamic function (cf. Craig) or static function (cf. Antoine). It can be used to demonstrate the plasticity of the human body (cf. Appia) or it can be dispensed with entirely (cf. Copeau, Vilar and Grotowski).

**Stage/Auditorium Relationship:** The interrelation between the performance space and the audience raised questions concerning theatre aesthetics and actor training. The performance may or may not demand an active response from the audience. The emphasis in actor training varies as a consequence of the performance functions desired: explanation through theatre of the mechanics of everyday life, translation of universal myths, arousal of emotion, exploration of the self, improvisation, acceptance or refusal of chance occurrences to mention a few. The preceding categories are based in an empirical listing of detail concerned with the material substance of the performance rather than the object of knowledge. This listing excludes the signifying relationship. That of the spectator constructing meaning by making connections across the spatio-temporal axis of the performance and developing structures of congruity. This approach further suggests that the theatrical sign is constructed and defined exclusively through the prior existence of the performance tradition. The first three categories are primarily concerned with the directorial vision, and do not establish how the performance object is constructed and at what level it exists. The latter investigation is at most philosophical and aesthetic, yet it has attracted many theatrical scholars. One such group of scholars was collectively known as the Prague Circle.

### 5.2.1 The Prague Circle

Initial research into the systematic theorisation of performance was conducted by members of the Prague Circle. These scholars focused on the semiotisation inherent in the theatrical phenomenon. Honzl (nd: 118-127) rejected approaches restricted to the material reality of the stage. He argued that:

total art can be seen to negate theatrical expression; the latter is ultimately no more than the sum, the juxtaposition, the 'co-ordinated presentation' of a number of material forms: music, text, actor, décor, props, lighting. The principle of total art, however, involves recognition that the impact of theatrical expression, in other words the strength of the impression received by the spectator is a direct function of the number of perceptions flowing simultaneously to the mind and senses of the spectator.

Valtruský (1976) argued that the process whereby all stage signs are rendered artificial is the basis for the transformation of all phenomena marked by theatrical convention into intentional signs. He argued that all events in the theatre are necessarily resemanticised by the spectator. For example, the spectator perceives an unintentional sign such as a stutter or a scratch of the head as meaningful.

Bogatyrev (1971: 517-530) reinforced the concept of stage semiotics through his notion of the excess of meaning inherent in theatrical signs. He argued that this is what distinguishes theatrical signs from signs of everyday life. Mukařovský (1934: 3-10, 1978) also studied the theatrical sign and believed that the performance signifier or 'text' was associated with a signifier established by the collective mind of the audience.

The Prague Circle also considered the system of stage meaning and they claimed that the denotative/connotative network was activated dialectically by the actor (Helbo et al. 1987: 8). The overdetermination of the stage signifier led to the study of theatrical codes. Honzl (nd: 118-127) observed the interchangeability of signifiers and the lack of limitations on the class of signifiers to which they may refer. The Prague Circle thus introduced the distinction between static and dynamic codes. These scholars were also interested in the hierarchy of codes in particular the way that meaning is generated and the shifting between verbal and non-verbal

codes during the performance. These studies led them to create the concept of layering of codes (Helbo et al. 1987: 8).

### 5.2.2 Descendants of the Prague School

Following in the linguistic tradition, Georges Mounin (1969) used communication as the frame of reference for his analysis of the theatrical phenomenon. He used communication in the linguistic sense (i.e. the intentional transmission of a message from the sender to recipient, perceived as such and entailing a response through the same channel). Mounin (1969: 95) argued that communication does not take place in theatre. He argues that communication can only take place if the receiver can respond to the sender through the same channel, in the same code or in a code that can fully translate to the codes of the original message. Mounin cited in De Marinis (1993: 139) and Elam (1980: 33) argues that for this reason theatre is stimulation and not communication.

This analysis was only applicable to the fictional world on stage. The stage/auditorium relationship seen in this perspective excludes any response from the spectators other than merely applauding, hissing or booing. This radical linguistic position has since been largely abandoned by those scholars who wish to study theatre as a sub-section of the field of communication (Helbo et al. 1987 9). Ruffini (1974a: 40) argues that in order for communication to take place in theatre, the communicator and recipient must know each other's codes. These codes do not necessarily need to translate, coincide or occur along the same channel (Elam 1980: 35). De Marinis (1993: 144) argues that "all performances intend to communicate *in the same way and to the same degree*, or that *everything* in a performance is meant to communicate" (original emphasis). He argues that the audience responds through linguistic, paralinguistic and kinesic signs. The audience is aware of the codes used by the communicators and this enables them to comprehend and interpret the shared message. This act of knowing the codes while not necessarily knowing how to use them (Ruffini 1979: 6) is what categorises theatre as communication (De Marinis 1993: 140-142).

The idealist notion of the gap between the pre-production and the production has been replaced by a materialistic approach *in praesentia* to the performance event. Scholars are

investigating the recognition of intention, aberrant decoding (see Eco 1977; 1978), and the delegation of pleasure (see Helbo 1975; 1979; 1983; 1985). Scholars now emphasise the reciprocal functions of the actor and audience in the theatrical event. They have established that the stage/auditorium relationship is socially marked, meaning that it is linked to a particular audience and its social-cultural context. Studies have also moved to focus on the language of theatre perceived in its production or reception functions within the context of a shared social experience. This focus created the use of the terms “performance codes” which are conventions specifically applicable to the performance genre and historical period. “General codes” are the linguistic, ideological/cultural and perceptual codes used in the investigation, while “mixed codes” are the general codes that function in a specific performance context. An accurate description would be to describe communication in theatre as an enunciating collective that consists of two elements: Firstly, a discourse or combination of communicative acts. Theatrical discourse establishes a specific genre in that it displays its own rules of operation. It makes these explicitly readable in their own context while disassociating them from the everyday experience. Secondly, a situation of enunciation that conjures a dynamic set of relationships and contracts (either pre-existing or constructed by the performance) determined by the popular ideology (Helbo et al. 1978: 9).

Performance studies constitutes the detailed analysis of the systems of production and reception. In the performance studies context, production is concerned with the work of the actor, speech, the relationship between fiction and the physical performance, the use of space, the construction of the performance text and the phenomena of denegation. In this context, reception is concerned with the visual composition and juxtaposition, the relationship between the readable and the visible, emotions, the role of the audience member, enunciation of/by the spectator and the verbalisation of the spectator (Helbo et al. 1978: 13-14).

Four major approaches address the effectiveness of performance studies as communication. These approaches are historical, sociological, theatre anthropological and semiotic. As this study is concerned with the negotiated dramaturgy as corporate communication, it is necessary to investigate the various models that represent the theatrical process and to propose a model that best represents the negotiated dramaturgy.

### 5.3 Models of Theatre as Communication

#### 5.3.1 The Pfister Models

Pfister (1988:3) graphically represents a unidirectional mode of theatrical communication as experienced by a reader of a dramatic text. Pfister (1988: 2) distinguishes between a narrative and a dramatic text. He argues that the difference is the speech situation (cf. Hempfer 1973: 160-164) as the communicative relationship between author and receiver. He (1988: 2) acknowledges Plato's *Republic* as the source of this distinction. Plato first pointed out this difference in Book 111 (1935:74-75) where he discusses the difference between 'narration' (report) and 'imitation' (representation). These actions depend on whether the poet (playwright) him/herself is speaking or whether it is the character speaking. Pfister (1988: 3) states that dramatic texts may be distinguished from narrative texts in that the former are consistently restricted to the representational mode. In this mode, the playwright never allows him or herself to speak directly.

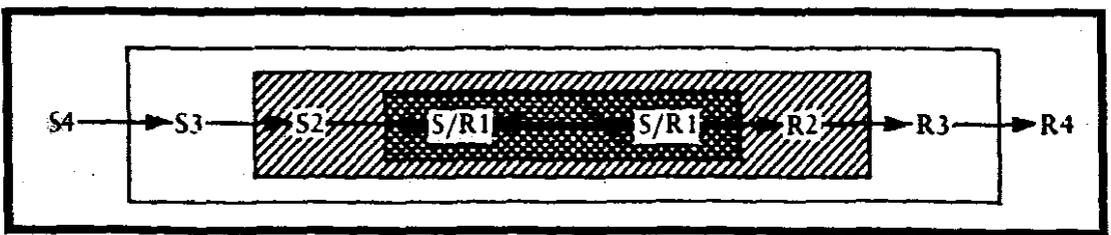


Figure 5.1: The Pfister Communicative Model for Narrative and Dramatic Texts

In this model, S4 is the actual author in his or her socio-literary role as producer of the work, for example as Henrik Ibsen is the author of the play *Hedda Gabler*. S3 stands for the ideal author, the character that the text implies is the subject of the entire work, which is the actor. S2 is the fictional narrator whose role in the work formulated by the narrative medium, in our example the character Hedda Gabler. S/R1 stands for the fictional characters communicating with each other through dialogue, e.g. Hedda, Tesman, and Judge Brack. R2 represents the fictional addressee of S2; while R3 is the implied or ideal recipient of the work, the audience. R4 stands for the recipient who reads the play at that time or all those that read the play at a later stage. The darker area represents the internal communication that occurs during a

performance. The lighter shaded area represents the mediated communication system. In dramatic texts the positions of S2 and R2 are left vacant, as there are no actors or audiences involved in this process.

This model does not consider the other factors that influence the communicative process. The Pfister (1988: 3) Communicative Model for Narrative and Dramatic Texts can be modified to consider the other communicative factors. Pfister (1988: 27) argues that the communicative process needs a channel, a message, code and a content as well as a sender and recipient. This channel forms a physical and psychological link between the sender and the recipient. The message is transmitted as a complex of signs along a channel. The codes enable the sender and recipient to en- or decode the message respectively, thus revealing the content of the message. Pfister (1988: 27) states that the sender and recipients' codes are only identical in an ideal context. They overlap in the "real world" to a greater or lesser degree. Therefore, the content decoded by the recipient is not identical to that encoded by the sender. The message itself is distorted by the channel's own noise. Pfister (1988: 27) proposes the following model as a representation of the external communication of dramatic texts.

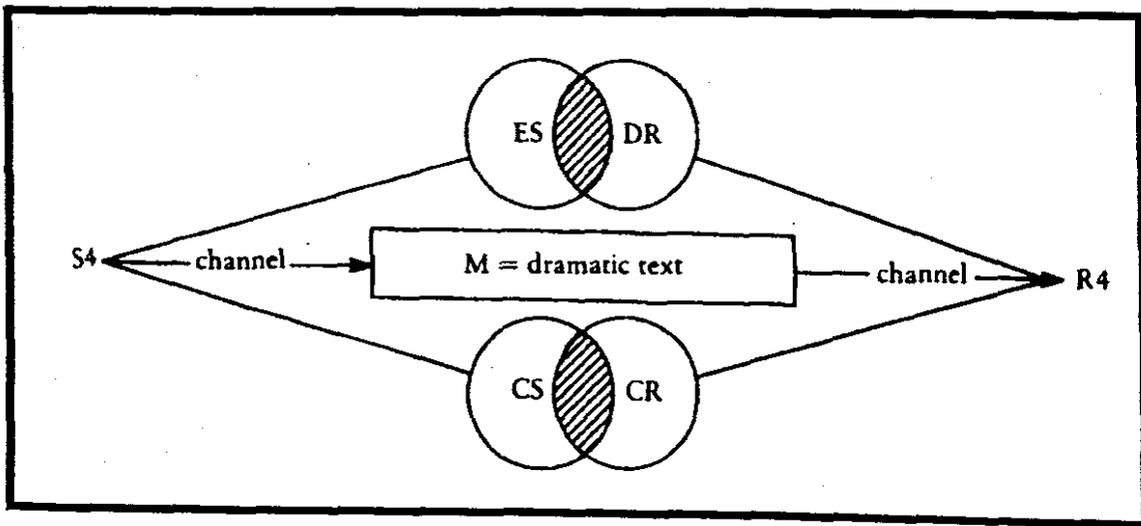


Fig 5.2: The Pfister Model for External Communication System of Dramatic Texts

In this model, ES stands for the encoding code of the sender and DR for the decoding code of the recipient. CS stands for the content as encoded by the sender and CR for the content decoded by the recipient (Pfister 1988: 27).

#### 5.3.1.1 Critique of Pfister Models

The Pfister Communicative Model for Narrative and Dramatic Texts (1988: 3) is essentially a reader's model. It therefore cannot effectively represent a dynamic process such as the Negotiated Dramaturgy. As this model is the basis for Pfister's Model for the External Communication System of Dramatic Texts (1988: 27) it is necessary to analyse it in terms of the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

The dramaturgy in the Negotiated Dramaturgy is a performance. Although initially there is a 'dramatic text' and a 'production text', the dramaturgy is a 'theatre text'. Using Pfister's (1988) terminology, the practitioners are the ideal authors (S3) while the stakeholders are the ideal recipients (R3). The Negotiated Dramaturgy emphasises the use of creative drama, role-play and improvisation (see chapter 2) in the creation of the text during the pre-production forums and in the rehearsal stage. The dramaturgy is interactive and dynamic. This makes both the stakeholders and the practitioners the actual authors (S4) of the text. Similarly, both practitioners and stakeholders are the recipients (R4) of the text. This is applicable to both the Pfister (1988) models. The Negotiated Dramaturgy encourages direct communication between the ideal recipients (S3) and the characters during the in-role forums which are part of the dramaturgy stage of the process. The process should be bi-directional, demonstrating its direct link between the recipients (stakeholders) and the authors (practitioners). This uni-directional representation does not reflect the nature of the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

Pfister's (1988) Model for the External Communication System of Dramatic Texts incorporates en- and decoding essential in any communication. However, the uni-directional nature of this model only allows for the actual authors (S4) to be the encoders and the recipients (R4) the decoders. This study has already argued that both the practitioners and the stakeholders are both the authors and the recipients. The writer supports Pfister's (1988) notion that the content is encoded by the sender and decoded by the recipient are not identical. The

Negotiated Dramaturgy encourages interaction between the practitioners and the stakeholders thereby allowing for an almost identical content.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy is a process consisting of five stages (see chapter 2). These models do not apply to any of the stages or the process as a whole. Although they have merit when examined as representations of the communicative process of "traditional" theatre (the context for which they were intended) they do not effectively represent the Negotiated Dramaturgy. The study will now focus on two further models in an attempt to find one that represents the process.

### 5.3.2 The Hauptfleisch Models

Hauptfleisch (1997: 3) sees theatre as a system and his diagram, Theatre as a System of Process (see Hauptfleisch 1997: inside cover), demonstrates this. Hauptfleisch intended this as a model that "delimited the domain of 'theatre research'" (Hauptfleisch 1997: 3). He argues that the model demonstrates how "theatre operates as a complex and dynamic structure of inter-linked processes, to generate a particular theatre event within the wider systematic context of a specific community or society" (Hauptfleisch 1997: 3). Hauptfleisch (1997: 4) states that this is a dynamic, organic system of processes. He sees it as an open system, which is constantly changing as it interacts with the larger systems of society. The model consists of numerous elements, which are also processes. These processes are heuristic in nature and encourage individual research. As this model was intended to demonstrate the overall domain of theatrical research, the entire model is too complex for the purposes of this study. It is therefore necessary to delimit the process and to investigate the elements that make up the overall process.

One of these elements is addressed in his earlier work where Hauptfleisch (1978) investigates the play as a method of communication. In this study, Hauptfleisch (1978: 26) is concerned with the meaning shared in the theatrical encounter. He explains that:

*the meaning of a play is the product of the total effect achieved by a controlled transaction which involves all the cues (verbal, non-verbal, situational) provided by the author through the 'play-in-performance'. The*

play-in-performance thus becomes a communicative act, within a specific temporal and spatial setting, between communicators with specific individual and group characteristics, specific role-relations, and certain conventional and shared assumptions (original emphasis).

Hauptfleisch (1978) visually illustrates his reasoning as follows:

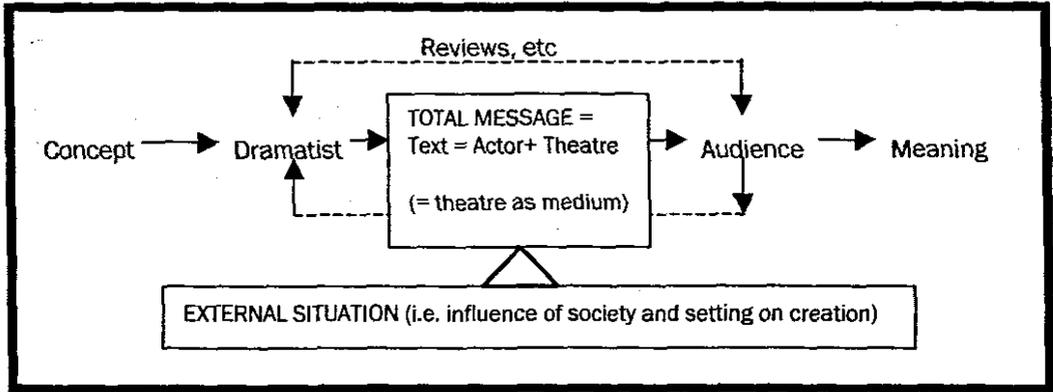


Fig 5.3 Hauptfleisch Model of Theatre

In this model, Hauptfleisch (1978: 26-27) suggests that communication between the dramatist and the audience takes place by means of the 'total message' consisting of the textual and theatrical elements. The play in production constructs the medium. For Hauptfleisch, 'feedback' takes place in two ways. It occurs directly between audience and dramatist by means of reviews, box office returns and book sales. Indirectly, it occurs through the audience response in the theatre itself. The concept includes the story, incident or myth being communicated as well as the text, both verbal (dialogue, narrative, song) and non-verbal (theme, plot structure, character, rhythm, symbols, choreography, subtext). The internal situation is the physical theatre building and the stage. It includes the technical qualities and facilities, the atmosphere, reputation, the stage/audience relationships, traditions and comforts etc. The actor represents certain verbal elements (such as improvised dialogue) and non-verbal elements (such as timing, voice, gesture, movement, make-up, wardrobe, lighting, set, props, music, dance spectacle, style). The external situation consists of elements including society, country, age, theatrical tradition and environmental circumstances.

Hauptfleisch (1978: 24) believes that theatre is transactional. He argues that the 'total message' is shaped by the audience's influence as they act as a "homogenous group of interacting individuals". He furthermore states that this influence is not only exerted on the communicator (the performer), but also on the audience's own receptivity to the message. Hauptfleisch (1978: 24) argues that the awareness of the audience is an essential part of theatrical work. Knowledge of its role is essential in the understanding of its effect in the communicative process.

Hauptfleisch (1978: 88) illustrates the transaction between the performer and the audience as follows:

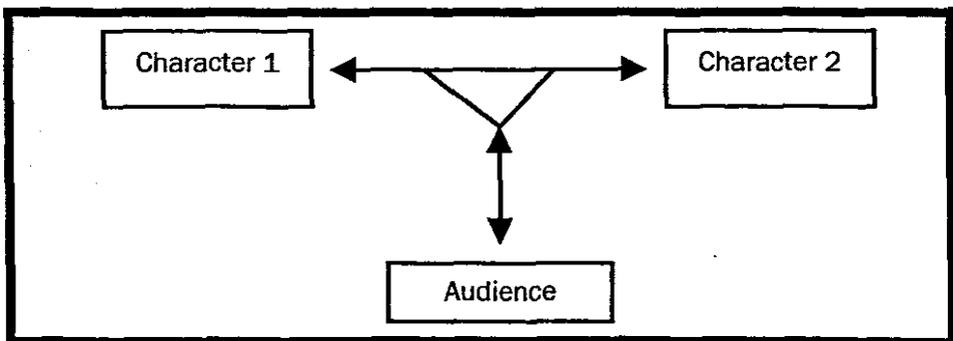


Fig 5.4: Hauptfleisch's Model of the Transaction Between Performer and Audience

This model represents a direct bi-directional communication channel between the characters in the theatrical event. The audience interacts with the channel and not with the characters directly. Hauptfleisch cites Kennedy (1983:11) who proposes this form of transaction between audience and characters. Hauptfleisch (1997: 88-89, 100) debates whether practitioners are able to circumvent the artificiality of the theatrical event. He believes that if the characters are able to interact with the audience directly then:

the world on the stage is a self-sufficient and closed community, with its own conventions for interaction, and this includes linguistic conventions. The relationship between that world and the one inside – and outside – the auditorium is thus circumstantial rather than direct and/or inevitable.

### 5.3.2.1 Critique of Hauptfleisch Models

Hauptfleisch (1978) created his Model of Theatre by “reinstating the general model of human communication” (Hauptfleisch 1978: 25). This model is therefore uni-directional, moving from dramatist to audience. Central to this model is Hauptfleisch’s (1978) concept of the ‘Total message’ influenced by McLuhan’s (1964) observation of ‘the medium is the message’. The researcher does not dispute the importance of the actor<sup>1</sup> in the medium. He accepts that the actor is an “iconic sign *par excellence*: a real human being who has become a sign for a human being” (original emphasis) (Esslin 1987: 56). However, in the Negotiated Dramaturgy the practitioners<sup>2</sup> role in the Negotiated Dramaturgy is larger than that proposed by Hauptfleisch (1978). He or she is not only a performer but must function as a facilitator during the pre-production forums. The practitioner is the mediator of the message. He or she interprets, shapes, selects, edits, emphasises and de-emphasises information that constructs the overall message. This includes what type of character he or she will play and what that character will say and do. This functioning removes the practitioner from the ‘total message’.

The practitioner relies on the stakeholders to contribute to the concept and to the creation of the dramaturgy. Hauptfleisch (1978) has acknowledged a link between the audience and the dramatist. The ‘indirect feedback’ reflects the audience’s response in the theatre and does not reflect their participation in the creation of the concept and dramaturgy. Hauptfleisch’s (1978) ‘external feedback’ has little effect on the Negotiated Dramaturgy as box-office returns, and critics’ reviews do not have the same impact as they would in ‘traditional’ theatre. The audience number has been established at the beginning of the campaign and it has no direct bearing on the overall financial profit of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. Similarly, the production is not reliant on good reviews (in a newspaper or on the radio) to attract people to come and see the production. Word-of-mouth is relevant as it may assist with encouraging stakeholders to attend the pre-production forums and encourage stakeholders to attend performances, particularly if there is more than one performance of the dramaturgy. The case study had two performances of the dramaturgy. The Negotiated Dramaturgy has a ‘feedback’ stage (see chapter 2) where the overall campaign is evaluated. The criteria for this evaluation include

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<sup>1</sup> This is the ‘traditional’ concept of the actor as used by Hauptfleisch.

<sup>2</sup> Practitioner here refers to professional people who work with the Negotiated Dramaturgy

aesthetic and functional effectiveness.

Hauptfleisch (1978) recognises the importance of the *external situation* on the 'total message'. He acknowledges the role that society, environment, theatrical tradition and demographics play in the perception of the message. These elements are also important and have bearing on the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

Hauptfleisch (1978) includes a direct 'feedback' channel between the audience and the actors. This channel can be analysed by looking at Hauptfleisch's (1997) model of the transaction between performer and audience. This model does not show any direct communication between the characters and the audience. However, in the Negotiated Dramaturgy the characters do directly communicate with the audience during the in-role forum. Hauptfleisch's (1997) comments about the 'artificiality of the theatre enterprise' are valid however, in the Negotiated Dramaturgy the stakeholders have been an active part of the process from the beginning. They have established the objective, created the characters and the scenarios and suggested possible denouements to these. They are part of the 'artificiality' and therefore are able to communicate directly with the characters on stage. The researcher agrees with Hauptfleisch's argument that the world of the stage is not a self-sufficient and closed community as would be suggested by direct communication between the characters and the audience. This emphasises the fact that Hauptfleisch's (1997) model is not a suitable representation of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. This model does not represent the communication that takes place in the pre-production forums.

As with Pfister's (1988) models, the Hauptfleisch (1978; 1997) models are not suited to the entire process of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. While they may in part represent sections of the process they fall short in representing the process in its entirety. One can argue that the Negotiated Dramaturgy is a communicative process that uses theatre as well as other mediums to communicate. It is therefore inappropriate to use theatrical models to represent the entire process. The study needs to turn to general communication models.

#### 5.4 Establishing Ideal Criteria

The Negotiated Dramaturgy is a form of Industrial Theatre and therefore it is:

A communication process that uses drama, drama techniques and theatre as a voluntary approach to educating, training, uplifting and informing stakeholders with the specific intention of maintaining or changing the stakeholders' attitude to the organisation for whom they work. (Own definition of Industrial Theatre –see Chapter 1)

The communication model chosen to represent the Negotiated Dramaturgy should reflect the strong developmental stance favoured by this approach. Using models that represent developmental communication thus seems more appropriate.

Essential then to this context is the establishment of a dynamic two-way communication channel. Everybody involved in the process should be able to communicate with everybody else on equal footing. It is therefore important that this 'feedback' is an essential component of this communication as it provides a source of information about how the stakeholders heard, interpreted, and responded to the message.

If the participants are to communicate openly and freely, they need to consider each other as unique individuals. Therefore, the model should reflect the individual history, society and culture of both the communicators and recipients and place these within a broader, societal and international context.

As the successful reception of the message is important to the Negotiated Dramaturgy, the model should clearly represent the medium as the central part of the process. The model should reflect that the message can be housed in different mediums made up of different codes. Having established these ideal criteria the study can now investigate two models.

5.5 Models of Communication and Development

5.5.1 Marchant's Triangulate Model

Marchant (1988:59) believes that communication is more than just the transmission of information from sender to receiver using one directional flow. His view is that the emphasis should be on the users' needs. Marchant argues that an understanding of the user group is more important than the technical expertise and hardware resources (Marchant 1988: 59; Mersham et al. 1995: 53). Marchant (1988: 58) believes that analysing all the key stakeholders and understanding how they communicate is essential for strategic planning. Communication must be seen as "the relationship between participants in an exchange of information" (original emphasis) (Marchant 1988: 58).

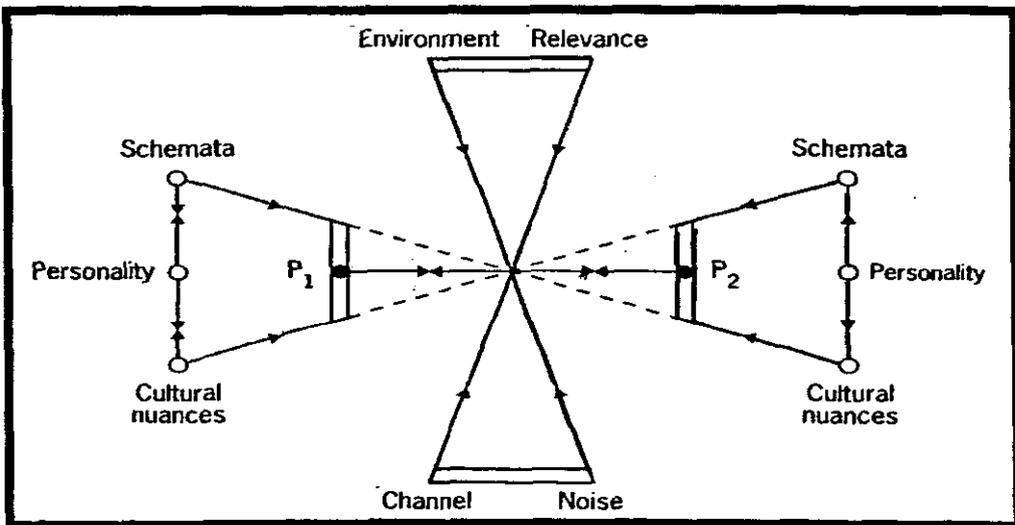


Fig 5.5 Marchant's Triangulate Model

Marchant (1988: 58-60) describes his model as follows:

It breaks away from the view of communication as a one-way process. The participants (P<sub>1</sub> and P<sub>2</sub>) are seen as *co-managers* of communication rather than senders and receivers. The lines linking the apices of the participant's

triangles are left indefinite or hatched in order to indicate the *reciprocity* involved in 'other orientated' awareness of the interactional process. The 'internal' environment or perceptual field forms the base of the triangle. Meaning is derived from the personalities involved – as a result of interaction between schemata and tradition – so that a movement towards a shared culture can emerge. Thus people can engage in a creative process which is based on such a situational awareness. Indeed, only in such conditions can sub-threshold effects operate and create triggers for action which may result in the formulation of new ideas.

The basis of the opposing two triangles comprise the 'external' perceptual fields involving both the nature and the transmission of the message. In the upper triangle the environment refers specifically to the *ecological* dimensions – situation, conditions and time. Above all, it is the relevance of the message that determines attention. The lower triangle refers specifically to transmission problems – channel selection and noise factors. An awareness and understanding of the encoding and decoding devices used by participants affect both channel credibility and the rate of message interchange. Seeing that the model is intended for informal oral communication both semantic and non-verbal noise factors would operate.

The model configuration, that is the blades of a propeller, emphasises the dynamic rather than the static nature of communication. The process is ongoing and in a continual state of flux (original emphasis)

The three components of the triangulate model are the participants, the situation and the problem. Merchant's view was that by stressing the need of the participants to appreciate their relationships, they would strive for communication that is more effective (Marchant 1988: 60).

### 5.5.1.1 Critique of Marchant's Model

Marchant intended this model to be used for informal oral communication. This model does not refer to the message or the medium that carries it and the codes that construct it. In the Negotiated Dramaturgy, this is an essential element as the practitioners deliberately choose codes and construct a medium that will improve the effectiveness of, and enhance the communication. The practitioners function as mediators of the message. The fact that the Negotiated Dramaturgy makes use of more than one medium (verbal, theatrical, signage, written) further emphasises the importance of having the message and the medium represented in the model.

While Marchant's (1988) model emphasises the importance of the individual's 'external perceptual fields' in which he includes schemata, cultural nuances and personality, it does not contextualise the process within a greater context. Globalisation has led to organisations having to consider themselves in broader terms. Marchant (1988) does not stress the importance of the broader cultural, societal and international context of the communication process. Therefore, this study prefers Mersham's (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) graphic communication model for development, which considers the factors omitted from Marchant's model.

### 5.5.2 The Mersham Graphic Communication Model for Development

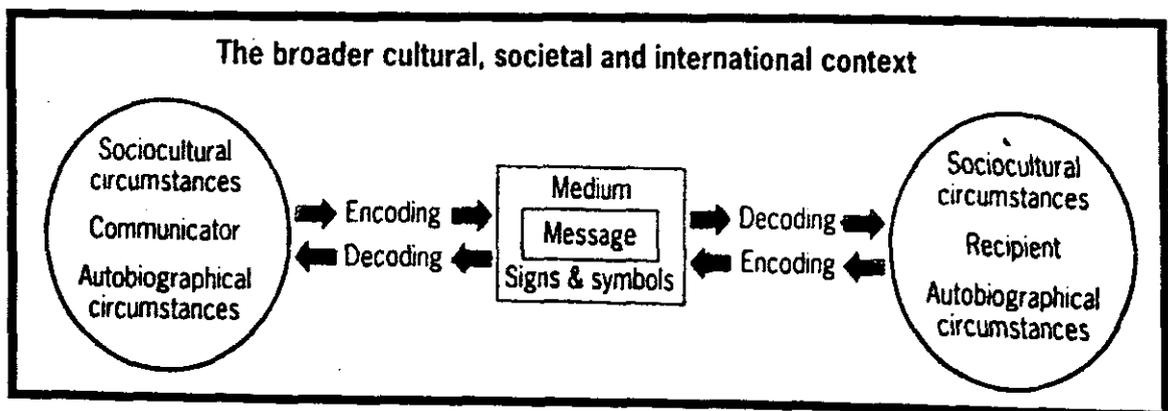


Fig 3.2 The Mersham Graphic Communication Model for Development

### 5.5.2.1 The Communicator

Typically, scholars refer to corporate communication practitioners as the source of the communication and the ones who are responsible for choosing the message (Huebsch 1986: 6; Rensburg 1996: 80; Verwey 1996: 67). Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995) argues that in the corporate communication context the communicator 'exchanges roles' and initially becomes a recipient or a 'listening post' for messages originating from stakeholders such as employees. In this particular context, the purpose of the communication emanates from the stakeholders.

### 5.5.2.2 The Recipient

The recipients are actively involved in the process of creating and sharing of a message (Huebsch 1986: 7). In this model, the context of the communicator and the recipient is identical. This study has already defined the communicator as everyone involved in the process. If this conclusion can be reached by deduction, then the recipient is also everyone involved in the process. The context of the communicator is then identical to that of the recipient. Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) demonstrates these identical contexts in his model.

### 5.5.2.3 The Message

Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995:55) argues that the medium is a message receptacle or that which provides the platform for the signs, symbols and codes of meaning to be conveyed. He adds that each medium has its own set of encoding possibilities and structures. In this regard Mersham is influenced by McLuhan's (1964) observation that the "medium is the message". McLuhan (1964) states that what is said is influenced by the medium through which it is said. The particular attributes of any medium help to determine the meaning of the communication and therefore no communication is neutral.

Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) argues that the communicator must have skills in encoding messages in the mother tongue of the communication partners as well as skills in the technology and techniques of the medium in question. Similarly, the model implies that all partners need to have the requisite skills in decoding the mediated message.

He argues that signs and symbols are devoid of meaning in themselves. They only receive meaning if the source gives them specific meaning and if the recipient sees a specific meaning in them. The meaning of a sign depends not only on personal interpretation but also on collective agreement that may change across culture, space and time (Mersham et al. 1995: 55-56).

Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995: 56) believes that the recipient's interpretation can never be wholly objective. Regardless of how impartial his or her attitude to the message may be. Communication does not end once the message is expressed and encoded in the medium. The process is only completed once the message has been received and interpreted.

The recipient's active participation in the communication process should be encouraged and recognised. The interpretation process may be robust enough to transform the message into the recipients 'own' message when it is re-expressed (Mersham et al. 1995: 56). Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995: 56) believes that too much emphasis is placed on the so-called "effect" of the message upon the recipient. He therefore, argues that it is important for the communicator to take active steps in encouraging the recipient to manifest his or her interpretation through a medium with which all the participants are comfortable. This makes it possible for the understanding or meaning attached to the original meaning to be evaluated.

#### 5.5.2.4 The Broader Cultural, Societal and International Context

As with Marchant (1988: 58) who suggested 'co-managers of communication', Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995:55) argues for communication equality. He argues for recognising the 'equality of roles' of the communicator and the recipient in the traditional communicator-message-recipient (C-M-R) model approach (cf. Shannon and Weaver 1949; Schramm 1954) (see chapter 3).

A *sin qua non* for "communication equality" (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) is placing the communicator within his or her broader context. Mersham (1995: 55) refers to this broader context as the sociocultural and autobiographical circumstances as opposed to Marchant's

(1988: 58) schemata, personality and cultural nuances. Mersham (Mersham 1995: 57) believes that individual circumstances must be recognised. He states that regardless of commonalities that link people in social structure, no two lives are the same in terms of individual experience. He therefore encircles the communicator and recipient with sociocultural and autobiographical circumstances.

The sociocultural and autobiographical (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) circumstances influence the perception and credibility of the communicators and their target messages. The knowledge of these circumstances establishes a definite context for the communication process. Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) stresses the importance of the way in which the communicator manifests his or her ideas. In order to transfer thoughts, information, feelings and attitudes, the communicator needs to manifest these in a form that is easily decodable. The model also suggests consciously monitoring the interpretations that are attached to messages by communication partners preventing them from remaining inner thoughts that the communicator assumes have been shared.

Mersham's (Mersham et al. 1995: 56) model also points to the importance of considering the broader societal circumstances in which the communication interaction takes place. This is illustrated graphically by the spheres surrounding both the communicator and recipient and the box around the triptych of the communicator, message and the recipient to represent the broad cultural, societal and international context. He believes that the international context is an important aspect of communication. The lifting of sanctions and acceptance of South Africa and its peoples exposes them to far more stimuli and factors that can effect the way in which individual South Africans interpret and re-express messages.

### 5.5.3 Critique of the Mersham Model

Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995) contextualises the basic elements of communication (the communication triptych - see 3.2) within the broader cultural, societal and international context. His belief that since the lifting of sanctions and the end of Apartheid, that South Africa has become part of the international community is supported by this researcher. It is important for organisations to re-align their positions in the height of the new context in which they find themselves. Organisations are constantly attempting to improve their productivity so

that they may be world players. Many Industrial Theatre campaigns are intended for this purpose. For example, the researcher conducted a campaign at Richards Bay Coal Terminal (the largest and most productive in the world) where the stakeholders were made aware of their role in the international business community.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy encourages the stakeholders to become part of the process. Their contribution is encouraged at every stage of the process (see chapter 2 for a description of the various stages of the Negotiated Dramaturgy). They are responsible for establishing the objectives and proposing ways in which these objectives can be realised. The stakeholders are also responsible for creating characters and a storyline. In the dramaturgy they are encouraged to respond to the scenarios presented to them. In this direct communication with the practitioners they suggest possible solutions to the problems dramatised. They also take part in 'feedback' conducted at the end of the campaign. In order for this to take place effectively, they must be empowered as communicators sharing ideas, suggestions and comments with the other participants. Mersham's (1995) model clearly represents this, and how that the communicator and the recipient have equal status within the process. He also shows that these roles are easily reversed showing the communicator and the recipient both encode and decode the signs and symbols that construct the message.

For Mersham (Mersham et al. 1995), the message is central to the process. He acknowledges the importance of the medium in communication and represents this by showing that the message is housed in it and that the medium is constructed of different signs and codes. This is true of the Negotiated Dramaturgy whose strength lies in the fact that it makes use of an all-encompassing interactive medium. Although the medium differs in the pre-production forum from the dramaturgy and from these to the 'feedback' stage, it is still the central part of each section and therefore the entire process.

Besides assisting with creating 'communication equality', by acknowledging the individual's sociocultural and autobiographical circumstances the participants are able to overcome potential barriers to communication. They can plan their communication to suit the individual. Although at times this is difficult to implement, stakeholders are encouraged to do this.

Experience shows that such communication (considering the sociocultural and autobiographical circumstances of both the communicator and recipient) increases as the process proceeds. It becomes one of the 'rules' of the process which the practitioners facilitate.

Mersham (1995) fails to represent 'noise' or factors that function as physical barriers to effective communication. The dramaturgy may be hampered by the physical surroundings where it is performed. This includes bad acoustics and sightlines. In the case study, the dramaturgy was performed in a theatre. The practitioners had only to deal with the 'noise' that the stakeholders made during the performance. However, the communication process may be influenced by other physical problems. For example, the researcher conducted a campaign where the dramaturgy was performed in a tent next to the din of a generator. In another example, the dramaturgy was presented outside, under trees, next to the noisy plant. The researcher has also had experience of working during the pre-production forum in a venue situated in or next to the canteen. Although the practitioners try to eliminate this type of 'noise' they are often assured by the organisation that certain venues are ideal, only to find out later that they are not.

Despite this omission, the Mersham model is applicable to every stage of the Negotiated Dramaturgy as well as being applicable to the entire process. Mersham intended this as a heuristic model and therefore it can be adapted to represent the communication process of the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined theatre studies, which looks at theatre as communication. It then analysed two models presented, respectively, by Pfister and Hauptfleisch that reflect the theatrical process. Having established their unsuitability, the researcher proposed ideal criteria for model to represent. The chapter analysed models by Marchant and Mersham, proposing the Mersham model as the ideal model to represent the communication process of the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

Having established a communication environment for the Negotiated Dramaturgy, the study will now focus on the case study that set out to test this environment.

# CHAPTER 6: THE CASE STUDY

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the case study implemented by the researcher and proposes using Fourie's (1988) *Communication by Objectives* to structure the communication. This chapter furthermore discusses every stage in detail and finally evaluates the effectiveness of the case study.

## 6.2 Introduction to Case Study

Following discussions between the researcher and the director of the department Physical Planning and Works (PP&W) at the University of Zululand, Mr M.T. Smythe, it was decided to implement an Industrial Theatre case study at the University. The PP&W department had recently identified the need to improve the working conditions of its workforce. As part of these improvements, the department identified the need for the creation of a safer working environment. This need was the stimulus for the Industrial Theatre project documented in this chapter. The maintenance and cleaning section at this institution is undergoing a process of transformation and the stakeholders (management and labourers) believed that they needed to establish an effective method of communication that could assist with addressing their objectives. These communication objectives provided an adequate challenge to the researcher as well as a practical situation in which to execute the case study.

The practitioners performed the dramaturgy twice, once on October 30, 1998 and the second time on November 6, 1998 (see video - Appendix B). The first audience consisted of the cleaning staff, while the second audience consisted of the artisans and the gardeners. Although the basic structures of the dramaturgy are the same, it was adapted for the particular audience. The dramaturgy addressed workplace safety, the attitude of the staff to it and to their work in general.

During the first performance, the practitioners focused more on scenes applicable to the work situation of cleaners than on the artisans' work environment. The in-role facilitator increased this emphasis through the extension of the dramaturgy. In the second performance, the emphasis and dramaturgy shifted its focus to the tradesmen and gardeners. The second production included an impromptu vox pop to establish the immediate reaction of the stakeholder to the dramaturgy.

### 6.2.1 Communication by Objectives

The communication process of the Negotiated Dramaturgy is objectives driven. All the stakeholders and the practitioners are responsible for analysing the context and creating objectives that empower and facilitate development through effective communication. Corporate communication is communicator centred (see chapter 4). This means that the onus is on the communicator to share of the meaning of the message effectively. The study applies Fourie's (1988) system of *Communication by Objectives* as a basis for the development of the communication objectives.

Fourie's (1988) classical work gives a clear and precise approach to conducting a communication campaign. As Fourie (1988) contends in the introduction to his book, other approaches may have less stages but the possibility of failure is increased with every stage omitted. His approach, which gives a detailed analysis of every step in the process, limits the possibility of failure of the communication campaign. This approach is also applicable to all forms of communication. Industrial Theatre is a new field with little documentation regarding operational procedures and approaches. The researcher therefore believed that it was essential to use an approach that has been repeatedly tested and proven successful. The case study therefore uses Fourie's (1988) *Communication by Objectives*. Another reason for choosing this approach was Fourie's (1988) built-in control system that enables the practitioner to evaluate the approach at every stage. This increases the possibility for a successful campaign. The researcher also found that this approach gave the Negotiated Dramaturgy credibility in the eyes of many corporate communication professionals.

Fourie (1988) lists twenty-one steps applicable to the planning and implementation of a successful communication programme. The Negotiated Dramaturgy reduces the steps from twenty-one to fourteen. These steps provide a guide to consolidating a dramaturgy, taking into account all the pre production forums and the in-role forums. This study analyses Fourie's (1988) steps in detail, contextualising and adapting them to the Negotiated Dramaturgy process in the context of Mersham's (Mersham et al. 1995: 55) communication model (see section 5. 5.2).

### 6.3 Step 1: Identify the Communication Needs

The practitioners conducted a series of eighteen one-on-one discussions between members of the workforce and themselves. The practitioners then conducted eight small group workshops (pre-production forums) between themselves and the participants to establish the basic needs. This approach often placed members of the organisation with completely different work roles in the

same task group, encouraging them to interact openly on issues in a way that was previously non-existent. For example, a plumber interacted with a member of senior management on an equal footing. The pre-production forums deliberately seated management next to workers. Each stakeholder had the same rights and privileges regardless of their role and status. The practitioners were careful not to allow the forums to become one-sided affairs with management talking and everybody else listening, or the union representative talking and everybody else listening.

All people have a basic need to communicate and without this need, communication does not occur. Therefore, scholars can trace the communication process back to this basic need in an attempt to understand the process more effectively. This applies to Industrial Theatre where the practitioners directly address these needs in their role as facilitators. The practitioners searched for specific communication needs through a three-stepped approach (Fourie 1988:1; Merham and Skinner 1999: 41; Rensburg 1996: 57). These three steps are:

- 1) Identifying the area of universal needs
- 2) Relating the area of universal needs to general communication needs
- 3) Identifying the specific communication need

The participants identified the following universal needs:

#### 6.3.1 Survival Needs

With high levels of unemployment in the Zululand area and the looming threat of retrenchment and outsourcing, the individuals expressed the need to keep their jobs and to perform their work as effectively as possible. Having a job is vital to their survival. An individual's survival needs are of prime importance, govern his functioning, and generally relate to his or her physical and mental wellbeing.

#### 6.3.2 Safety Needs.

An important need identified by the stakeholders is to maintain safety in the workplace. An accident could easily result in loss of income and impact on the quality of life of the individual. This in turn would influence the individual's survival needs.

### 6.3.3      General Communication Needs

The General communication needs fall into six categories which have no specific hierarchy. The six categories are:

- 1) Information needs, which in this context refer to factual knowledge. This need appeals to the individual's desire to increase his or her knowledge. During the process, it became clear that management required the workforce to have more information regarding safety in the workplace. The workforce expressed a need to share safety information with stakeholders in different trades, in order to share a common pool of knowledge regarding safety. For example, the electricians believed it essential that the cleaning staff were aware of the dangers of working with electricity.
  
- 2) Emotional needs include the individual's desire to have others respect him or her and to respect others. The manner in which they communicate this need varies according to culture, age and gender. Younger workers in particular, felt the need to be respected and treated as valuable members of the workforce. They felt that the fact that they were qualified in their particular trades made them just as competent as their older colleagues.

The negotiated dramaturgy dealt with the issue of respecting one's fellow workers whether they are on the same level or not. The inclusive nature of the negotiated dramaturgy also satisfied this need. As all the stakeholders were part of the process, there had to be a high level of respect in order for the process to be successful.

- 3) People require entertainment to relax and divert their minds. However, it is recognised that serious messages can be delivered effectively in an entertaining way (Fourie 1988: 5; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 47). This need to convey information in an entertaining manner gave rise to the concept 'infotainment' which is also the basic precept of Industrial Theatre. This need is usually satisfied after working hours and is considered a recreational activity. Industrial Theatre satisfies this need within the working environment.

- 4) The fourth category relates to motivational needs. Three sources of motivational needs became evident during the process of stakeholder communication. Firstly, management wanted Industrial Theatre to motivate workers to be more productive and to work more safely in the workplace.

Secondly, workers themselves identified the need to motivate themselves to improve their working environment (what is often referred to as "self actualisation") (Fourie 1988: 3; Johnson and Johnson 1991: 419; Mersham et al. 1995: 27).

Thirdly, the role that the practitioners (in-role facilitators and the practitioner) play in the communication context is expressed in their need to motivate others. By engaging all stakeholders in the process, in-role facilitators and practitioners are demonstrating a desire to motivate while creating motivation among all the stakeholders.

- 5) The fifth category includes aesthetic needs, which are satisfied through art in the broader sense. As theatre falls within this broad categorisation, the dramaturgy part of the process satisfies this need. In-role practitioners' aesthetic needs include the creation of 'roles', to act, perform and participate in 'the creation of theatre'. This need also includes taking aesthetic decisions on elements such as costumes, props and sets - the pictorial codes (see section 3.5.2.8). Workers suggested the content of the various scenes and areas of conflict, conflict resolution and dénouement within those scenes. For example, one pre-production forum suggested that a scene should focus on the correct use of a stepladder (scene two - see Appendix B). They suggested the incorrect way in which to climb the stepladder and the possible dangers of using the stepladder in that way. They also suggested showing the problems of trying to work while being intoxicated. The workforce suggested showing the dangers that such behaviour creates for their colleagues.
- 6) The sixth category comprises ideological needs. Although the question of ideology is possibly the most contested subject in the human sciences (Williams 1976: 153-157), the author uses the simple definition of ideology as a belief system. The negotiation stages of the Industrial Theatre process encourage the

stakeholders to volunteer their most important beliefs. The major ideological need identified by all the stakeholders could be summarised as follows: All stakeholders are an integral part of the organisation and therefore should play an active role in decision-making. In the pre-production forums workers actively discussed and decided upon the 'best' situations to be dramatised by the practitioners.

#### 6.3.4 Specific Communication Needs

According to Fourie (1988:6), the professional communicator should endeavour to isolate the specific communication needs he or she will deal with. From the discussion above (section.6.3.3), these may be summarised as follows:

- 1) The need for the workforce to work in a safe environment where the possibility of personal injury is minimal.
- 2) The need for more information regarding workplace safety.
- 3) The need for mutual respect amongst fellow workers.
- 4) The need to be entertained while being informed of the issues.
- 5) The need for greater teamwork.
- 6) The need for improving motivation.
- 7) The need to participate in the creation of theatre.
- 8) The need to express one's belief system.

#### 6.4 Step 2: Formulate the Objectives

Fourie (1988: 16) defines an objective by saying that it:

refers to the end-result of a communication and can be defined as a *condition*, an *action*, or an *object* which will satisfy the need or needs of the communicator (original emphasis).

The practitioner must formulate these objectives in a positive way that accommodates measurement of success (Fourie 1988: 22; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 50). Using verbs to formulate the objectives helps to achieve this by specifying the result.

Fourie (1988: 18-21), Mersham and Skinner (1999: 50-52) list verbs that are important when formulating objectives. These are: *persuade, motivate, create, bring about, change, replace, retain, keep, conserve, accelerate, intensify, strengthen, enlarge, improve, retard, slow down, cool, weaken, destroy, mislead, tempt, acquire, find, win, procure, obtain, give, donate, contribute,*

*inform*, and *entertain*. These verbs provide the practitioners with a means of assisting in the planning and implementation of their communication.

The objectives decided on by the stakeholders were:

- 1) To *motivate* workers to be more productive by strengthening their work ethic.
- 2) To *motivate* workers to have respect for each other.
- 3) To *strengthen* the concept of the importance of teamwork.
- 4) To *persuade* the stakeholders to have a positive attitude towards the organisation.
- 5) To *replace* negative attitudes towards safety requirements.
- 6) To *create* an awareness of safety in the work place.
- 7) To *create* an awareness of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- 8) To *improve* the usage of the PPE.
- 9) To *persuade* workers not to come to work intoxicated.
- 10) To *inform* workers about the safe and effective usage of a stepladder.
- 11) To *encourage* workers to clean up their sites after completing a job.
- 12) To *motivate* workers to focus their attention on the job at hand.
- 13) To *encourage* the stakeholders to avoid fashionable clothing and apparel which interfere with their ability to do their job safely and effectively (e.g. long nails that prevent a cleaner from holding a mop or broom properly).
- 14) To *create* an awareness of the dangers of working with strong chemicals.
- 15) To *create* an awareness of the dangers of electricity.
- 16) To *encourage* a positive relationship between supervisors and their staff.
- 17) To *encourage* supervisors to treat all the staff equally and not to have favourites.

### 6.5 Step 3: Formulate the Message

Having identified the communication needs, the researcher needs to review the actual communication messages and the way in which they are presented and derived. The researcher paid particular attention to the development of messages within the dramatic structure.

The practitioners followed Fourie's (1988: 15) argument that the fewer the messages shared at one time, the more effective the communication will be. Therefore, they structured the dramaturgy to focus on specific messages in discrete, stand-alone scenes in which the practitioners addressed the messages in detail (see section 6.6).

### 6.5.1 Time Frames

Objectives are meaningless unless linked to a timeframe (Fourie 1988: 18; Mersham and Skinner 1999: 52). The three scales include long-term, medium-term and short-term objectives. Short-term objectives are those which should be realised first, followed closely by the medium- and long-term objectives. The classification of the objective is dependent on the nature of the subject, the complexity of the circumstances and the characteristics of the recipients. When used in this way, short-, medium- and long-term objectives become a series of individual, though related, sub-goals with the final objective as a guiding force to keep the in-role facilitator and practitioners on the right course.

By allocating a specific timeframe to an objective, the practitioners were able to determine its bearing in the dramaturgy. The stakeholders allocated the timeframes to the objectives in the pre-production forums.

The stakeholders linked the stated objectives of the case study as follows:

Timeframe	Objectives
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To replace negative attitudes towards safety requirements</li> <li>To create an awareness of safety in the work place</li> <li>To create an awareness of personal protective equipment (PPE)</li> <li>To improve the usage of the PPE</li> <li>To persuade workers not to come to work intoxicated</li> <li>To inform workers about the safe and effective usage of a stepladder</li> <li>To encourage workers to clean up their sites after completing a job</li> <li>To motivate workers to focus their attention on the job at hand</li> <li>To encourage the stakeholders to avoid allowing fashion or vanity trends to interfere with their ability to do their job</li> <li>To create an awareness of the dangers of working with strong chemicals</li> <li>To create an awareness of the dangers of electricity</li> </ul>
Medium term	To encourage supervisors to treat all the staff equally and not have favourites
Long term	To motivate workers to be more productive by strengthening their work ethic

	<p>To motivate workers to have respect for each other</p> <p>To strengthen the concept of the importance of teamwork</p> <p>To persuade the stakeholders to have a positive attitude towards the organisation</p> <p>To encourage a positive relationship between supervisors and their staff</p>
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Table 6.1: Timeframes of Objectives

6.5.2 The Relationship between the Communication Objectives and the Dramaturgy

Fourie's (1988: 21) discussion on operational characteristics and in particular, the use of a verb to identify them (see section 5.3) is comparable to any basic approach to acting. As Stanislavski describes in *An Actor Prepares*, and *Creating a Role*:

Every objective must carry in itself the germs of action. ...You should not try to express the meaning of your objective in terms of a noun... but... always employ a verb ... . This objective engenders outbursts of desires for the purposes of creative aspiration. ...It is important that an actor's objectives be in accordance with his capabilities. ... An actor should know how to distinguish among the qualities of objectives avoiding the irrelevant ones and establishing those appropriate to his part (Stanislavski 1990: 103).

Out of these objectives and 'in accordance with his capabilities', the communicator is obliged to formulate his requirements. This formulation occurs within the parameters of 'honesty', 'measurability' and 'attainability' (Fourie 1988: 27).

The notion of 'alternatives' is vital to the forum approach to the dramaturgy. As already stated, the practitioner has no idea of the suggestions or points that the stakeholder may raise during the in-role forum. However, he or she should be prepared for any suggestion by reviewing the possible and probable 'alternatives' to the objectives. The small group forums and the ongoing dyadic communication established these 'alternatives'. In one example, the in-role forum delivered many different suggestions concerning the behaviour of the 'drunken carpenter' in the second scene. They then evaluated the effectiveness of each suggestion, positively dismissing those that would not suit this situation. Nevertheless, the practitioner still had to prepare himself for the possibility of yet another differing set of suggestions from the active audience.

The possibility of recognising and role-playing every possible variation is very small. Each communicator brings his or her own autobiographical circumstances to the process, establishing, as many 'alternatives' as there are participants. The practitioners must then retain a notion of 'flexibility' while still being able to evaluate the contributions, choosing to react to certain ones while rejecting others. The action of rejecting a suggestion is important as the practitioner or in-role facilitator should empower the individual regardless of whether his or her suggestion was accepted. The stakeholders should get a sense that the suggestion was valuable, but that it did not satisfy the current situation. The practitioner could also let the stakeholders know that their suggestion was quite difficult to role-play in the current context and therefore, he or she is unable to use it. At no time should the stakeholders feel that their suggestion was worthless as this destroys the empowerment process so necessary in the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

#### 6.6 Step 4: Determine the Profitability

Communication is costly and it is therefore important for the communicators to demonstrate their objectives within the required budgetary constraints (Fourie 1988: 31; Rensburg 1996: 58). Fourie (1988: 28) lists money, personnel, machines, material, time and effort as the factors that determine profitability.

##### 6.6.1 Money

The case study operated on a very small budget. This was one of the advantages of doing this project 'in-house' using expertise and resources available within the university. As the researcher received the mandate for the project near the end of the year, the department of Physical Planning and Works had already allocated and spent most of their budget. Mr Smythe, the Director of Physical Planning and Works at the University, and the researcher agreed to keep the cost down as much as possible.

##### 6.6.2 Personnel

Industrial Theatre uses highly skilled practitioners. This usually makes Industrial Theatre expensive. This expenditure varies in accordance with the type of project and the number of practitioners used in a project. The reputation of the practitioners would also affect the payment that they would require. Six recently graduated practitioners could comfortably ask for approximately R2000.00 each for the project, R12 000 in total. However, as they were still students and this formed part of their course, they gave their services free to the project. The maintenance and cleaning staff earn between R1500 and R2200 per month. They are required to work a forty-four hour week, with twenty-two working days per month. That equals 8.8 hours a

day, and 193.6 hours a month. The hourly costs of the workers' labour ranges from R7.75 to R11.36 per hour.

Table 6.2 calculates the total person hours and costs associated with the project:

No of Forums	No of People	Range of Salary per hour	Expenditure (on per hour basis)
18	2*	R7.75/6<R11.36/6	R23.24<R34.07
8	7*	R7.75<R11.36	R372.00<R545.28
Total			R395.24<R579.35

\* One person is the facilitator for whom there is no charge

Table 6.2 Cost of Pre-Production Forums

Table 6.3 lists the cost of the dramaturgy as follows:

	No of People	Range of Salary	Expenditure
	169	R7.75<R11.36	R1309.75<R1919.84
	63	R7.75<R11.36	R488.25<R715.68
Total	232		R1798.00<R2635.52

Table 6.3: Cost of Dramaturgy

Table 6.4 lists the cost of the 'feedback' as follows:

Feedback Sessions	Range of Salary	Total
112	R7.75/6<R11.36/6	R144.67<R212.05

Table 6.4 Cost of the 'Feedback'

A maximum of ten minutes (see chapter 7) was spent on the 'feedback', therefore the 'range of salary' is divided by six.

### 6.6.3 Machines

The only machine used in the project was an electric drill that the practitioners never switched on or used. For the purposes of the dramaturgy, the researcher managed to get a broken drill from PP&W without cost.

### 6.6.4 Material

Expenditure in the category of material was for the costumes needed for the dramaturgy. The costs of costumes are itemised below. A further expense was a videocassette for the video camera and 35mm film for a stills camera to allow the researcher to document the process. Table 6.5 lists the expenses.

Item	Expenditure (Rounded off)
Man's overall	2 for R65
Woman's overall	2 for R50
Safety Boots	R140
Wellington Boots	R55
Idlers	R60
Hardhats	R30
Gloves	R18
Goggles	R30
Masks	R25 for a pack of 10
Video cassette and 35mm film	R55
Total	R528

Table 6.5: Materials Expenditure.

### 6.6.5 Time

The time associated with this project was eight weeks. The time spent was longer than anticipated as both the researcher and the practitioners had to balance the time spent on the project with their other university commitments. The management of PP&W requested that the performance of the dramaturgy occur once the university term had ended. This extended the overall time span of the project. The researcher would ideally envisage an overall time of four weeks for such a project.

### 6.6.6 Total Cost of the Project

The total cost of the project is obtained by totalling 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5

Table 6.6 indicates the total cost of the project as follows:

Item	Cost	Actual Cost of Project
Practitioners	R12 000	R0.00
Machines	R0.00	R0.00
Materials	R528.00	R528.00
Time: pre-production forums	R395.24<R579.35	R395.24<R579.35
Time: dramaturgy	R1798.00<R2635.52	R1798.00<R2635.52
Time: Feedback	R144.67<R212.05	R144.67<R212.05
Totals	R14364.91<R15954.92	R2364.91<R3954.92

Table 6.6: Total Cost of Project

Budgeting is standard in theatrical procedures as producers and administrators establish the production budgets well in advance of the rehearsal and design period of a production. The director, designer and performers are accustomed to working within these constraints, effectively applying this principle.

### 6.7 Step 5: Gather the Communication Elements

In Industrial Theatre, this is the important process of gathering the information about the objectives (see section 6.4) so that the practitioner can create the dramaturgy. It was also important for messages to be clearly stated throughout the various scenes. The practitioners gathered the information during the eighteen site visits and from the pre-production forums. They then set about improvising around those situations, creating a dramaturgy.

For example, in scene two (see section 6.15.2 and Appendix B) when dealing with the objective to *persuade workers not to come to work intoxicated*, the practitioner had to look at the best possible way to achieve that outcome. In this example they demonstrated the physical dangers of intoxication for the workers. They did this by making one of the characters in the scene drunk and showing him struggling to do his job. For example, the practitioner showed how difficult it is to climb a stepladder while intoxicated, resulting in him falling off the stepladder. They also had to

show how his co-workers struggled to work with him under these conditions. While dealing with this objective in the storyline, the practitioners were able to link up with another objective. The storyline addressed the question of personal injury caused by intoxication as well as the question of consequent injury to co-workers. Each time they added an objective they had to ask the questions: How do we demonstrate the consequences if the objective is not met? Does the current story achieve that outcome?

This storyline scene also addresses the objective given, which *is to persuade workers to be more productive by strengthening their work ethic*. After further improvisations, they were able to bring another objective into this scene. The practitioners saw a natural linkage with the objective aims *to motivate workers to have respect for one another*. This scene also managed to deal with the objective: to *inform* workers about the safe and effective usage of a stepladder.

While the practitioners worked with the objectives, they constantly had to test the effectiveness of what they were portraying. In following the structure of the negotiated dramaturgy (see chapter 2) they had to create the possibility for the in-role forum to address the issues raised by the objectives listed in section 6.4.

#### 6.8 Step 6: Analyse the Destination/Communicators

Fourie (1988) divides this process into two steps: he states that one should analyse the communicator and then analyse the recipients. However, this study has already argued (see section 5.5.2.1) that in the Negotiated Dramaturgy the communicator "exchanges roles" and becomes the recipient for the messages. The Mersham model (see section 5.5.2) argues for "communication equality", therefore the role of communicator in Industrial Theatre is not limited to the practitioner or the in-role facilitator but applies to all participants involved in the process. Similarly, all stakeholders involved in the project are the recipients (see section 5.5.2.2). With the Negotiated Dramaturgy using the Mersham model (see section 5.5.2) as its basis, the communicators are always encouraged to consider their own sociocultural circumstances and those of the recipients when they communicate. This allows the study to group these categories together and not separate them as Fourie has.

However, in the pre-production stages one can argue that the stakeholders function more as the communicators with the practitioner as the destination. In the dramaturgy, on the other hand, the practitioners function more as the communicators and the stakeholders as the recipients.

## 6.9 Step 7: Determine the Circumstances

The circumstances here refer to the locations and facilities for the pre-production forums and performance space. In site-specific locations, this might be the factory floor or the canteen. In the case study, these locations were the PP&W boardroom, the University theatre and site-specific locations on campus. In terms of establishing the blocking and the pictorial codes for the dramaturgy, it is essential for the practitioners to know the space in which they are performing. The seating arrangements as well as the possibility of entrances and exits are also of vital importance. They must conceptualise the dramaturgy so that it is able to operate within the physical confines of the performance space. Other factors such as the brightness of the performance space also play a major role in the dramaturgy and it is essential that the practitioners determine these.

Turning to the pre-production forums, Fourie (1988: 64-69) lists many factors that determine the circumstances of the communication. These factors include: status, lighting, ventilation, furniture, disturbances, competition, facilities for audio-visual aids, the recipient's health and state of mind as well as general receptiveness. In the pre-production stage of the process, the practitioners decide on whether to use small group or dyadic communication. Factors such as lighting, ventilation, furniture, disturbances, the recipient's health and state of mind are usually out of the hands of the practitioners. This is because the pre-production forums and interviews occur in the workplace, putting such decisions in the hands of the workers whom they are facilitating. The pre-production forums took place in the boardroom, where seating and adequate lighting, effective ventilation and air-conditioning were not problematic. This also limited the disturbances. The one-on-one interviews took place on site, so that the practitioner could get an accurate account of the working conditions and methods used by the stakeholders.

The spatial situation was important. As the dramaturgy involved the university employees, the production took place on the campus. The PP&W management suggested the theatre as the performance venue. Performing the dramaturgy in this venue made the blocking of the dramaturgy easier as fixed seating areas and a large stage were available. This also solved the issue of dressing rooms or backstage areas usually required for theatrical productions. Use of the theatre also gave control over disturbances and provided adequate ventilation and air-conditioning. The context of the theatre had to be firmly established. The performance space enhances the perception of the link between fact and fiction. The setting reflected the work situation. Existing lighting facilities in the theatre resolved any problems that could possibly arise concerning effective lighting. The fluorescent "working lights" in the theatre were ineffectual in

the sense that they did not provide enough light. All agreed to use the stage lights as the source of illumination. Their usage would simplify illumination, increasing the sense of the theatrical while still enhancing the theatre as a site-specific venue.

#### 6.10 Step 8: Timing of the Communication

Management together with the researcher established that this project would launch the newly envisaged programme of creating a safer working environment for all its employers. The initial meeting between Mr Smythe and the researcher determined the duration for the project. In this initial meeting, a period of six weeks was established for the duration of the campaign. However, it took two weeks longer to complete. This occurred because the researcher's teaching schedule did not allow enough time for work to be spent on the case study.

There was one pre-production forum a week for the first two weeks. These were held on Wednesday afternoons. For the next three weeks, there were two pre-production forums (totalling eight pre-production forums in all). These were conducted on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Week six had no pre-production forums. The dramaturgy was presented in weeks seven and eight. Management suggested that the pre-production forums take place at 14H00 in the afternoons as they believed that it was in this period that the worker's productivity dropped naturally and so it would be least costly. However, this natural lull also seemed to effect their participation in the pre-production forums. Ideally, the pre-production forum should be held in the mornings when the stakeholders are fresh. The researcher established a time limit of sixty minutes for the pre-production forums. This prevented the pre-production forums from dragging on and affecting productivity. The site-specific one-on-one interviews were limited to a maximum of ten minutes and were all conducted in the morning before lunch as this was the period when productivity was at its highest.

Management scheduled the first performance for 10H30 on the last Friday of the month. This was the day that the workers received their wages and so the workers work a half-day. Productivity is very low in the morning leading up to the early closing, which was perfect timing for the presentation of the dramaturgy. However, the second performance was scheduled to be held a week later, at 13H30. This timing was not as successful as most of the workers chose to ignore it, preferring to skip the process and return home early. The researcher allocated an approximate time of forty-five minutes for the dramaturgy. This time limit was chosen in order to create an overall time span of one hour for the dramaturgy. This includes assembling for, and dispersing

after, the production. The researcher also felt that a forty-five minute period was ideal for holding the stakeholders' attention without them becoming too distracted.

#### 6.11 Step 9: Determine the Approach

According to Fourie (1988: 66), it is essential that the communicators determine the most effective approach for their communication. Fourie (1988: 67-71) lists the following approaches to communication: serious, humorous, rational, emotional and combined. This project chose to use a humorous approach for the dramaturgy. The comic elements allowed for dramatic irony and other dramatic techniques to flourish. The stakeholders achieved their need for entertainment in a light-hearted but sincere manner. The comedy also created a less formal approach that put the stakeholder at ease. This enabled the stakeholders to relax and feel freer to participate. This study discusses the choice of dramatic codes in detail in the chapter on the negotiated dramaturgy (see chapter 2).

#### 6.12 Step 10: Determine the Tempo

The demographics (*sex, age, nationality, occupation, education, income, social, political and religious affiliations*) of the stakeholders were vital in determining the tempo. The dramaturgy used code switching between English and isiZulu and thus reflected a slower tempo than if a single language was used. In the dramaturgy, the practitioner and the in-role facilitator repeated certain issues in the other language code, slowing the tempo. In the case study, the majority of the audience had Zulu as their first language; the management's first language was predominantly English.

Among the dramatic codes, it was the non-verbal type that directly determined the tempo. The desired blocking had a direct influence on the tempo. The practitioners and in-role facilitator manipulated their movements for effect. For example, during the first presentation of the dramaturgy, the stakeholders responded raucously when Grace started mopping the floor (see Appendix B). Both Rose and Grace used this moment to the full, making it longer and responding to the applause and the laughter of the stakeholders. This added improvisation helped to stress the objective of *to avoid allowing fashion or vanity trends to interfere with their ability to do the job* (see section 6.5). It is important, however, that the chosen tempo should enhance the overall effectiveness of Industrial Theatre. While using moments to good effect, it is also important that they should not delay other moments by spending too much time on one issue. During the second presentation of dramaturgy (see Appendix B), the in-role facilitator spent too much time dealing with the objectives of the cleaning staff. While these were important, the audience consisted of

artisans and gardeners and they started to get bored. Tempo-rhythm is also a helpful tool which assists the practitioners in attaining clear verbal communication (Baker 1996) among the practitioners.

### 6.13 Step 11: Structure the Communication

The study sets out to investigate an effective structure for the Negotiated Dramaturgy. Chapter 2 discusses this structure in detail. Five distinct areas were identified in the process: initial meeting, pre-production forums, rehearsal and research, dramaturgy, and 'feedback'. All five are essential parts of the process. The pre-production forums allow for the effective formulation of the dramaturgy, which when presented allows for the necessary 'feedback' and evaluation of the project through the in-role forum and the final evaluation stage. This structure is vital in attaining the goals of equity and facilitating the empowerment of the stakeholder to communicate freely and openly.

### 6.14 Step 12: Select the Codes & Select the Media

The researcher needed to investigate critically the codes for both the pre-production forums and the dramaturgy, choosing which codes and media best suited these parts of the communication process. The pre-production forums required less planning, but code selection was vitally important, specifically language and the use of non-verbal codes that facilitated and enabled interaction - thus establishing the need for active research into the objectives of the communication process (see section.3.5.2 on codes).

#### 6.14.1 The Pre-Production Forum

The pre-production forums are concerned with facilitation rather than with acting. The verbal codes used in the forums were English and isiZulu.

#### 6.14.2 Code Switching

The code switching used in the Negotiated Dramaturgy was one of the project's most important resources. In the context of this study, it facilitated the effectiveness of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. It was necessary as most of the management were White and Indian and their first language was English. Some of the artisans were also white with English being their first language. The few White managers whose first language was Afrikaans were quite comfortable and confident about communicating in English and did not want Afrikaans added to the process. There were no Afrikaans speaking artisans or cleaners. The majority of the cleaners and artisans

were Zulu. The Negotiated Dramaturgy had to be conducted in English and isiZulu so that all the stakeholders could participate in the process.

Code switching is the use of two languages interchangeably (Valdes-Fallis, 1977). Gumperz (1982) describes code switching as discourse exchanges that form a single unitary interactional whole. The practitioners should have some degree of competence in the two languages, even if they are not bilingual. The practitioners used code-switching to achieve two goals: to fill a linguistic/conceptual gap and/or for other multiple communicative purposes (Gysels, 1992). The following example from the dramaturgy demonstrates how the practitioners switched between English and isiZulu while they were performing the dramaturgy.

*Kwaze kwamnandi ukuba lapha* It's great to be here...*Ake nishaye izandla...*clap your hands...*Let me get assurance, do you feel safe where you are, are you sure, there is nothing that is distracting or pinching you where you are seated...Ake ngithole isiqiniseko, akukho okukuphazamisayo, okukuncinzayo lapho ohlezi khona? Ubani-lo osijwayela kabi...*Who is this circus reject...*Angithi usho njalo, mama...*That's what you are saying, mamma.

*(Ihlombe....Clap your hands)*

*Kumnandi ukuba yimi-it is great to be me...Wenza into oyithandayo, uqala la uthanda khona...*You do as you like, starting anywhere...

*Nizonobona Abantu abapana nani-ke...you'll see people just like you..."*

*(see video – Appendix B).*

However, the practitioners conducted the one-on-one interviews in isiZulu while the small group forums used both languages, with English being the predominant language.

### 6.14.3. Kinesics

Ideally the practitioners' body language (see section 3.5.2.2) should always convey a positive message and encourage all participants to communicate. The practitioners achieved this most of the time. However, their inexperience showed at times. This was particularly evident in the beginning of the process. As the process proceeded, they became more adept in this regard. In hindsight, more time should have been spent preparing the practitioners so that they functioned effectively throughout the process.

The practitioners functioned as a channel for reciprocal mediated communication and used kinesic strategies to achieve this. They based their functioning on the kinesic method (Egan 1976: 97) explained below. This method facilitated optimal interaction. For example, a practitioner always faced the person in the pre-production forum that he or she spoke with, in a square-on stance. He or she kept mobile so that each member of the group received the same treatment. It was therefore important that he or she positioned the stakeholders in a way that made it possible and comfortable for them (the practitioners) to maintain this kinesic style. The practitioners adopted an open posture. They resisted crossing their arms and legs' thereby remaining non-defensive. This open posture is a sign that they are open to what the other person is saying, while also being open to communicate in a non-threatening way. The practitioner leant slightly towards the person whom he or she was addressing. This is a sign of availability, presence or involvement. They maintained good eye contact as they spoke to the participants. However, in a cross-cultural context this has different value. For example, in the Zulu and most South African cultures, people consider looking somebody (particularly of a higher status) in the eye as a sign of disrespect. The practitioner should be able to address his or her stakeholder in a manner that is culturally appropriate. In the case study, the practitioner and the stakeholder were predominantly of rural Zulu extraction. In the situation where the practitioner interacted with the English-speaking stakeholders, they looked them directly in the eyes, reinforcing the perception that they were free and approachable. The practitioners constantly created the impression of being relaxed, enabling an environment free of tension between them and the stakeholder. However, the practitioners did not appear too relaxed, as this could have created the incorrect perception of being uninterested in the forum.

#### 6.14.4 Haptics

The haptics or tactile communication (see section 3.5.2.4) used in the pre-production forum is also culturally determined. For example, the elementary firm-gripped handshake favoured by the White male population could cause offence to an uninitiated Black member among the stakeholders. On the other hand, a White member might regard his or her fellow participants who greet him or her with a limp, triple-grip handshake, as a weak person. The practitioners adjusted their handshakes accordingly. However, the limp three-staged handshake has become the norm among workers at the university and everybody uses it as a sign of greeting.

Most cultures rigidly regulate touching (see section 6.14.3.3) through complicated cultural conventions (Forgas 1985: 167). These examples, although well known to scholars of intercultural communication, are vital in the Industrial Theatre context. An inappropriate touch

may place a participant in an uneasy situation and thus disempower the communicator, thereby thwarting his or her continued active role in the process. Touch is positive when used appropriately. If used reciprocally, it indicates solidarity among the group (Cathcart et al. 1996: 238). The practitioners were very much aware of whom they were talking to and what was culturally accepted. They refrained from touching the White and Indian stakeholders, except for the handshake. For the practitioners their communication with the Black stakeholders was natural and easier as the practitioners were also Black. The researcher was conscious of these conventions and strictly obeyed them.

#### 6.14.5 Proxemics

The Black South Africans' far intimate zone (see section 3.5.2.3) is more accessible than that of their White counterparts. Often, during a discussion, one might observe two people holding hands. In White culture, two men holding hands is deemed highly unsuitable, while holding hands in Black culture is acceptable. The practitioners needed to be aware of these conventions while using the different zones as part of their functioning as facilitators. Managing the different zones advantageously assisted with the facilitation of the pre-production forum process.

#### 6.14.6 Codes of the Dramaturgy

The selected medium in this process was a theatrical one. As in other media, it is constructed of various codes which determine its effectiveness. The chosen codes are the building blocks that create this medium. The choice of dramatic codes shaped the dramaturgy, while the selection of verbal codes was equally vital.

The non-verbal and pictorial aspects of the dramaturgy (see section 3.5.2.8) were important visual codes that played a primary role in the constructing of meaning. The blocking of the dramaturgy was also essential for creating meaning. The blocking focused on such codes as facial expression, gestures, posture, locomotion, parakinesics, kinesics, haptics, the body as icon and proxemics. Included in the blocking were also the tempo-rhythm, intonation and articulation of the practitioners and the in-role facilitator.

The visual aspect of the production was just as important as the acting itself. The practitioners were constantly aware of the messages that the space, their costumes and the signage shared. An important part of the pre-production process was the construction of the iconic meaning.

#### 6.14.7 Pictorial Codes

These codes were vital as they created the setting that allowed the stakeholder to:

immediately take in the environment in which the event will occur. The atmosphere of the theatre building has a great deal to do with the audience's mood in approaching a performance, not only creating expectations about the event to come but conditioning the experience once it gets under way. ...The theatre experience does not occur in a visual vacuum. Spectators sit in the theatre, their eyes open, watching what unfolds before them.... but always present are the visual images of scenery, costumes and lighting-transformations of colour and shape which add a significant ingredient to the total mixture of theatre (Wilson 1991: 303).

Wilson describes the importance of the pictorial codes for the more traditional forms of theatre. However, the dramaturgy stage of the Negotiated Dramaturgy is theatre and therefore uses these codes in the same context with the same importance as in the traditional context. One traditionally divides the creators of these codes into three areas: the scenic designer, the costume designer and the lighting designer. During the creation of the dramaturgy through the rehearsal period, the practitioners and the in-role facilitator gathered information from the "given circumstances" (Stanislavski 1937: 51) created in the pre-production forum. They then decided how to enhance the overall pictorial status of the dramaturgy.

The physical location of the production is an essential element in enhancing these codes. The case study was fortunate in that it was performed in the university theatre, whereas other Industrial Theatre productions could be performed in site-specific venues like a factory floor or the workers' canteen. The practitioners and the in-role facilitator must add to the setting, manipulating it to enhance their objectives. Part of this manipulation is situated in the creation of a venue that allows interaction between the stakeholder and the practitioners and the in-role facilitator. The stakeholder must have access to the performance space, and the practitioners must have access to where the stakeholder is seated. The University's thrust stage at ground level made this possible.

In the case study, the setting was the university theatre. The scattering of rostra, chairs and artefacts from departmental productions suggested that the theatre was being repaired and not being used for a 'performance'. The practitioners created the sense that this venue was akin to anywhere on the campus where the stakeholder would work. From this setting, the stakeholder

could identify the theatre as being an ordinary place of work. Visually, upon entering the theatre, the stakeholder could begin to associate with the situation and prepare for the dramaturgy.

The production used the signage associated with safety (for example, “wet floors” and “hard hat area”) to define the perimeter of the performance area. The practitioners chose this approach, as the structure of the dramaturgy did not incorporate signage. The signs contributed to the impression that this was a working area. Two of the signs were precautionary signs for wet floors, however they were not in the correct format and could not be used as warning signs. The researcher believed that the initial impression that the signs evoked in the stakeholder could start an impromptu discussion among themselves before the production started. Their positioning would then be very important. The researcher situated the two ‘careful, wet floor’ signs in front of the seating, while the ‘danger workman overhead sign’ adorned the back of the performance space, positioning the ‘no flame sign’ in front of the third set of seating. Stakeholders did not fill this area. The black curtain surround and black floor cloth were additional visual signs reminding the stakeholders that they were involved in a theatrical process, thereby reinforcing their perceptual balance between the site-specific location and the theatrical.

The choice of costume in the dramaturgy is of vital importance for both the creation of meaning and the contextualisation of the action. Costume is an essential part of the theatre, as explained in the following extract:

we are effected by the more subtle aspects of costume: the psychological use of colour and texture, the careful underlining of plot points (Holt 1988: 7).

The practitioners attempted to create effective representations of the workers. Their goal was to create characters that the stakeholders could easily recognise. They successfully achieved this as a large percentage of the stakeholders effectively identified the characters (see section 7.3.3). Costume is part of the practitioner’s devices, helping them to create their characters. Every item of their clothing sends signals to the stakeholder while immediately showing them where the action is set. This places the dramaturgy within its sociocultural context (Holt 1988: 7). The choice of clothes helps immeasurably as the audience can accurately identify the characters and their roles, statuses and positions in the organisation. Often in the Negotiated Dramaturgy the costumes are symbolic of the characters that the practitioners are portraying. It is essential that these symbolic items (icons) should transfer the implied meaning.

For example, the in-role facilitator playing 'Captain Safety' was an overstatement of the theme. His costume consisted of as much safety garments and items as possible. He wore the correct safety boots, a blue University of Zululand overall, a helmet, safety goggles, ear-mufflers, rubber gloves, and a face mask (see Figure 6.1).

The character of Mkwazi wore casual clothes, an ordinary pair of old trousers, a T-shirt and sandals. Shomi wore a blue University of Zululand overall with the University of Zululand insignia on the left breast pocket and trainers (see Figure 6.2). Rose wore a light blue cleaner's overall and wellington boots. Her head was also covered. Grace wore the required light blue cleaner's overall, and regulation 'Idlers' (see Figure 6.3). The Supervisor wore casual clothes under a white supervisor's overall (see Figure 6.4).

The use of lighting is an important element in the creation of the dramaturgy. Light is often associated with clarity, warmth and security, whereas darkness is associated with rest, coldness, unpredictability and tension. Scholars consider light a non-verbal code of content (du Plooy 1996: 119). In most site-specific locations, the opportunity to use theatre lighting does not present itself. However, the researcher had the opportunity to use the advanced lighting system of the theatre. The researcher decided to use only one state and not to create a complex lighting plot.



Fig 6.1: The in-role facilitator in full safety gear.

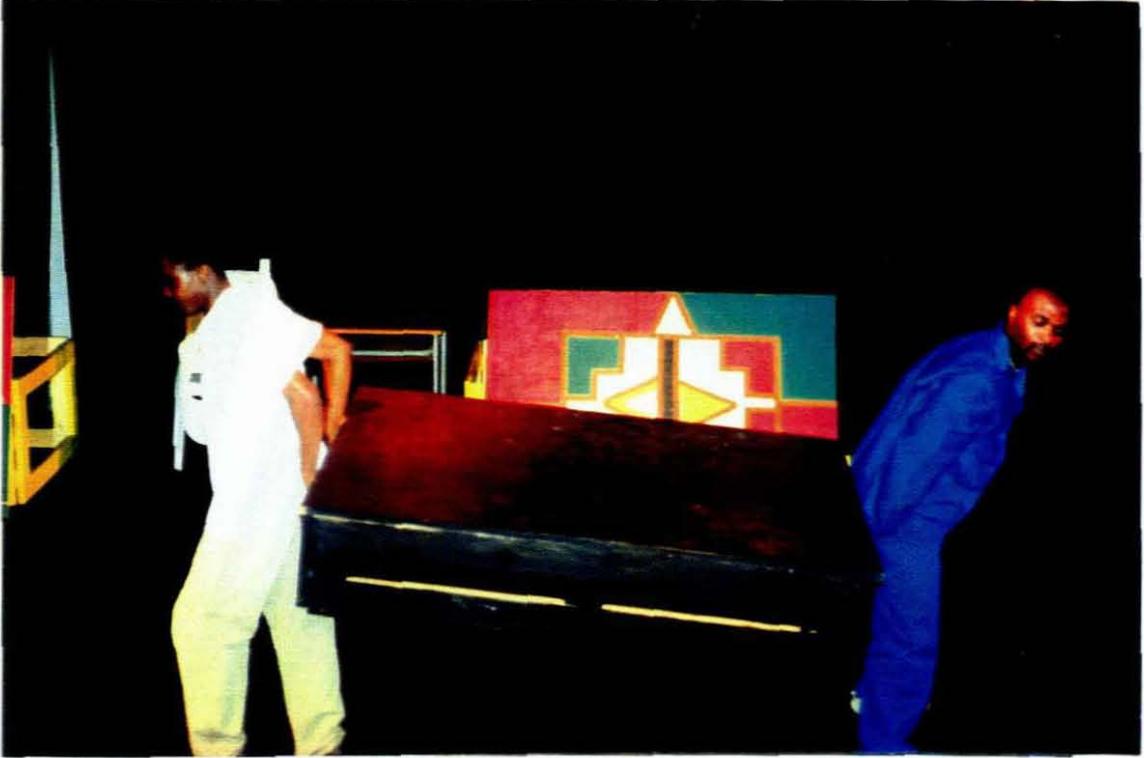


Fig 6.2: Shomi has the correct PPE (personal protective equipment) except for the shoes, while Mkwanzi is dressed in casual clothes



Fig 6.3: Grace and Rose in their overalls and regulation footwear. Notice signage for hardhats in the background.



Fig 6.4: The Supervisor in her overall.

#### 6.14.8 Verbal and Non-verbal Codes

Section 6.14.2 discusses the use of verbal codes within the context of code switching. It is argued that performance in a multilingual and bilingual society like South Africa should make use of code switching (see section 6.14.2). Industrial Theatre is often performed for multilingual and multicultural audiences, although some campaigns may be aimed at stakeholders who all speak the same language. Although the case study used code switching, the researcher has completed other campaigns that used only English or only isiZulu. It is important that the verbal codes selected reflect the stakeholder's language.

The choice of words and gestures are very important as they have specific cultural meanings. It is essential that the words and gestures chosen are appropriate. They should not offend in any way and they should show the correct respect owed to a particular person. The choice of words in the case study was very specific and much time was spent identifying (in)appropriate words for the Negotiated Dramaturgy. For example, the following quotation shows the use of the term "mamma" which is a sign of respect for an elder woman in the Zulu community.

Who is this circus reject...*Angithi usho njalo, mama...*that's what you are saying, mamma (See Video -Appendix B).

#### 6.14.9 The Non-verbal Communication of the Dramaturgy

In the rehearsal stage the practitioners create a dramaturgy that effectively shares the messages and discusses the objectives established in the pre-production forums. It reinforces the factual messages and objectives through the fictional dramaturgy. The scenario created must therefore represent their functioning in everyday life. The director and the practitioners (re)present identifiable events. The rehearsal process (see section 6.6) systematically works with addressing all the non-verbal communication elements, adding them to the visual representation and giving it meaning. The blocking of the production serves two functions, the first to allow identification and the second to reinforce the message. Systematically working through the various forms of non-verbal communication demonstrated by the specific characters in the dramaturgy explains this concept effectively.

The blocking process involves encoding the non-verbal codes of kinesics, proxemics, haptics and paralanguage. The dramaturgy's purpose is to contextualise the objectives and display them in such a way that they inform the stakeholder. This should be achieved while creating a basis for a

critical reception and inspiring an informed debate on possible approaches to fulfilling their needs (as discussed in section 6.3). The effectiveness of the characters and of the working environment stresses the importance of the effective representation of the daily techniques into the extra-daily techniques. Barba (1995: 15) explains extra-daily technique as follows:

One might think that this is due to the performers' "power" acquired through years and years of experience and work, to a technical quality. But a 'technique' is a particular use of the body. The body is used in a substantially different way in daily life than in performance situations. In the daily context, body technique is conditioned by culture, social status, profession. But in performance, there exists a different body technique. It is therefore possible to distinguish between a daily technique and an extra-daily technique.

The daily techniques of the stakeholder are culturally determined, with different cultures determining different body techniques. This also extends into the status, role and position of the represented individual. In the case study, the practitioner accurately portrayed the functioning of the stakeholder in his or her particular work role. However, when performing, they need to adjust their 'technique' to communicate more effectively. The practitioner's entire body needed to communicate the objectives of the process. Certain daily techniques create blocks that affect the practitioner's performance and his ability to communicate effectively. For example, a carpenter slouched over his or her toolbox creates an effective image of the carpenter at work, but this body usage restricts the practitioner's vocal potential. Therefore, the practitioner needs to open the shoulders, align the head and neck so that his or her vocal power is increased. Barba (1995: 16) states that:

Daily body techniques are used to communicate; techniques of virtuosity are used to amaze. Extra-daily techniques on the other hand lead to information. They literally *put* the body *into form*, rendering it artificial/artistic but *believable*. Herein lies the essential difference which separates extra-daily techniques from those which merely transform the body into the 'incredible' body of the acrobat and the virtuoso (original emphasis).

A close study of the stakeholder in the workplace assists the practitioners with the daily technique that they require. The rehearsal period allows them to alter this technique, transforming it from daily to extra-daily. Included in this performance code are the kinesics, proxemics, haptics and paralanguage of the dramaturgy. The practitioners manipulate each one of these codes to generate accurately the greatest amount of meaning possible. Wilson (1991: 131) says that in the rehearsal period, the director must make certain that the practitioners are realising the

intention of the objectives and alternatives put forward by the stakeholder. This would include contextualising the play within the appropriate sociocultural and autobiographical circumstances (Mersham et al. 1995: 55-57). Having effectively established the codes that effect the performance, the rehearsal stage focuses on establishing the effective pictorial codes as well. An example of the verbal and non-verbal codes used in the dramaturgy is available on the Video (Appendix B). Scenes 2, 4 and 6 demonstrate the non-verbal codes of the practitioners in character while scenes 1,3,5 and 7 demonstrate those of the in-role facilitator.

### 6.15 Step 13: Deliver the Communication

The dramaturgy, including the in-role forum, is the crown of the entire communication procedure. All the forums and interviews are forged together in the dramaturgy. The practitioners obtain instant 'feedback' through the in-role forum and through vox pops. This procedure allows for instant evaluation of the success that the practitioner had in bringing and sharing the message. It provides him/or the opportunity to repeat the objectives thereby making the message clearer.

The following is a detailed synopsis of the core dramaturgy. It highlights the changeless areas of the dramaturgy. The exact script and performance dramaturgy is available on the video (Appendix B) filmed at both performances. As discussed earlier (see section 6.2) each performance differed as the practitioner improvised around the core dramaturgy. These improvisations were deliberate as it created a dynamic channel of communication between the stakeholders and the practitioners.

#### 6.15.1 Scene One

The production begins with the in-role facilitator welcoming the stakeholders to the theatre. (Figure 6.5 shows the in-role facilitator addressing the audience.) He proceeds to inform them of the dramaturgy's process and establishes the fact that this is theatre, involving imaginary characters. He asks them to attempt to identify themselves in the fictional characters presented. During his first scene, he asks them to observe consciously and actively the happenings on the performance space. He establishes the setting through preparing the stakeholder for the dramaturgy. The practitioners then enter in-role and perform scene two.

#### 6.15.2 Scene Two:

The second scene introduces the stakeholders to two carpenters, one young (Shomi), the other (Mkwanazi) much older. The older character is drunk and therefore is unable to perform his work effectively. He is aware of the supervision patterns and tries to do as little work as possible. He

does not have the correct PPE and therefore is endangering himself. The other character is a young, recently-qualified person who takes his work seriously and shows pride in his work. He is unhappy about his elder colleague's attitude, as he respects the old man and wishes to learn more from him. The first part of this scene shows how they are unable to work as a team due to Mkwanazi being drunk (see Figure 6.6). The younger man has had his safety boots stolen and is therefore wearing ordinary training shoes. The older man openly admits to selling his overalls for cash in order to buy more alcohol. He also admits to giving his shoes to his son as fashion apparel.

Despite his drunken state, the older man still wishes to climb the stepladder and complete the requisitioned job. His drunken state prevents him from being able to climb the ladder. His unsuccessful attempt at climbing the stepladder highlights the danger of coming to work when in a state of intoxication (see Figure 6.7- 6.9).

After a number of failed attempts, he gives up and allows his younger colleague the opportunity to climb the stepladder (see Figure 6.10). As a sign of respect, the younger man asks his partner to see if they are working in the correct place. While the younger man works, he accidentally drops some sawdust into the eyes of the older man who is standing directly underneath him. This causes the old man to react and he steps under the ladder causing it to sway and almost fall. While doing this, the old man drops the nails that he has in his hand and proceeds to step on them. In the second performance, the old man drops the hammer on his foot. He reacts to this by lying on the floor screaming not knowing which part of his body requires more sympathy, his foot or his eyes.

The younger man then runs off to get water for the old man to rinse his eyes. As he returns, he trips over the toolbox and the drill left in the centre of their work area. He throws the entire bucket of water over his colleague. At this stage the in-role facilitator enters and begins the first in-role forum of the production.



Fig 6.5: The in-role facilitator addressing the active-audience.

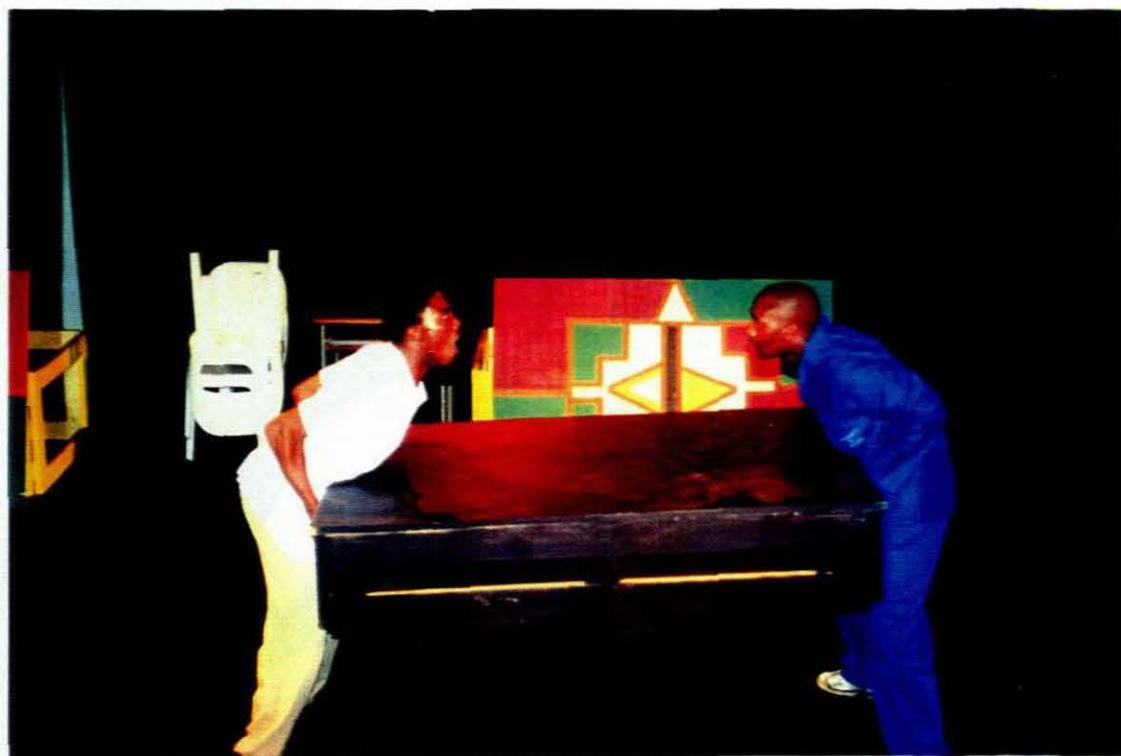


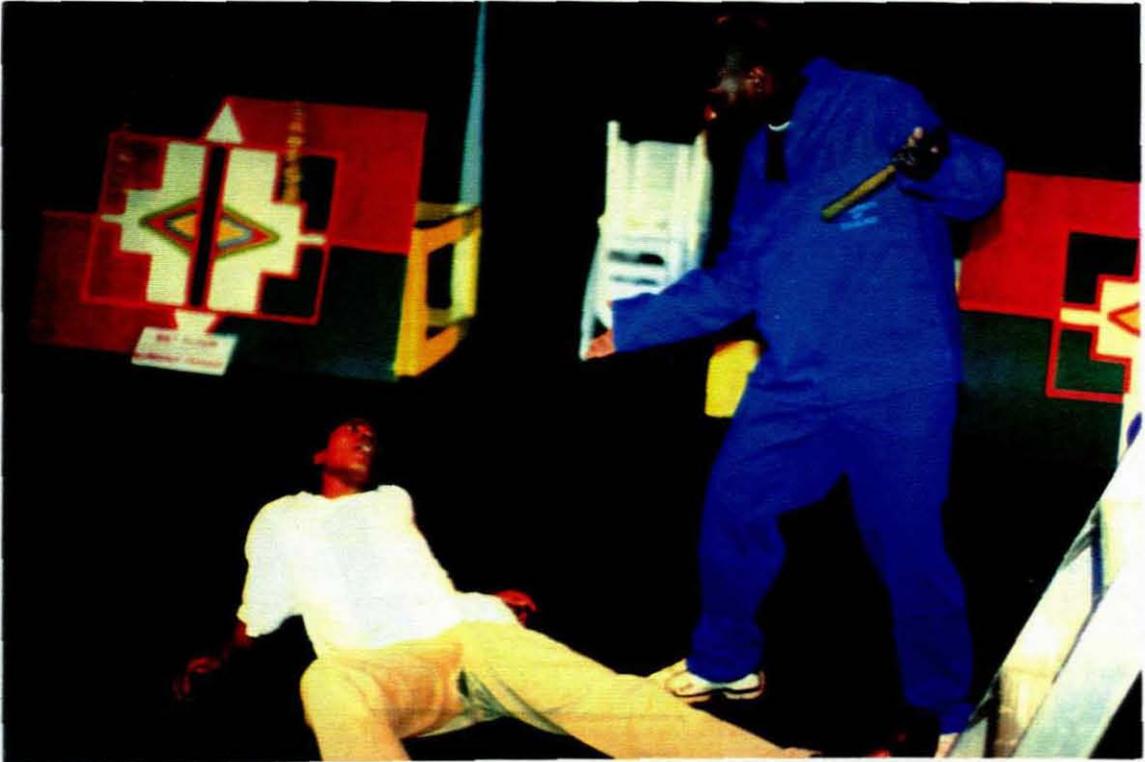
Fig 6.6 Mkwazi and Shomi are unable to work as a team due to Mkwazi being drunk.



Fig 6.7: Mkwanzazi insisting on climbing the step ladder.



Fig 6.8 Mkwanazi attempting to climb the ladder.



**Fig 6.9: Mkwanzazi falls off the ladder.**



Fig 6.10: Shomi climbs the step ladder and continues his job.

### 6.15.3 Scene Three

The in-role facilitator points out the mistakes made by the practitioners and asks the stakeholder to address them. He asks the stakeholders to suggest the correct manner of doing the work. If necessary, the practitioner will answer questions in-role. This prevents the suggestions from being seen as totally unrealistic. It encourages the stakeholder to deal with the issues at hand and to find viable solutions for them; they are discouraged from 'waving a magic wand' that will solve the problem. After having identified the mistakes and solutions arrived at inductively, the in-role facilitator then sets the stage for scene four, where the two cleaners introduce themselves.

### 6.15.4 Scene Four

This scene concentrates on the cleaning staff. The characters are two cleaners, one who is glamorous with long fingernails and bedecked with jewellery, named Grace (see Figure 6.11). The other is more down-to-earth and her name is Rose (see Figure 6.12). She has the correct PPE except for the gloves. Grace refuses to sweep as she has a sinus problem and this obliges Rose to sweep while Grace begins to mop. The fact that Grace does not have boots and is wearing 'Idlers' causes her to slip and slide. She falls twice during this scene.

The improvised verbal repartee that takes place in this scene demonstrates the necessity of concentration while working. The conversation distracts the two characters and they do not notice the hazards that are in their way. These hazards are the stepladder, nails and electrical extension cable from the previous scene.

Grace refuses to remove the stepladder and the nails and suggests that they work around the ladder and just sweep the nails away. While she is working with the mop, she opts to add stripper to the water. Without the protective equipment, she refuses to wring the mop and insists that Rose wring the mop. Doing this Rose burns her hands and inhales the fumes given off by the stripper agent. The next time Grace asks her to squeeze the mop, Rose refuses. Grace then gets very upset and she deliberately tips over the bucket of water. The water runs towards the electrical cable. Rose notices this and picks up the cable that gives her an electric shock. Grace, seeing that Rose is in trouble, grabs Rose and she, in turn, is shocked by the electric current (see Figure 6.13). At this stage, the in-role facilitator enters again and the next in-role forum of the dramaturgy takes place.



Fig 6.11: Grace

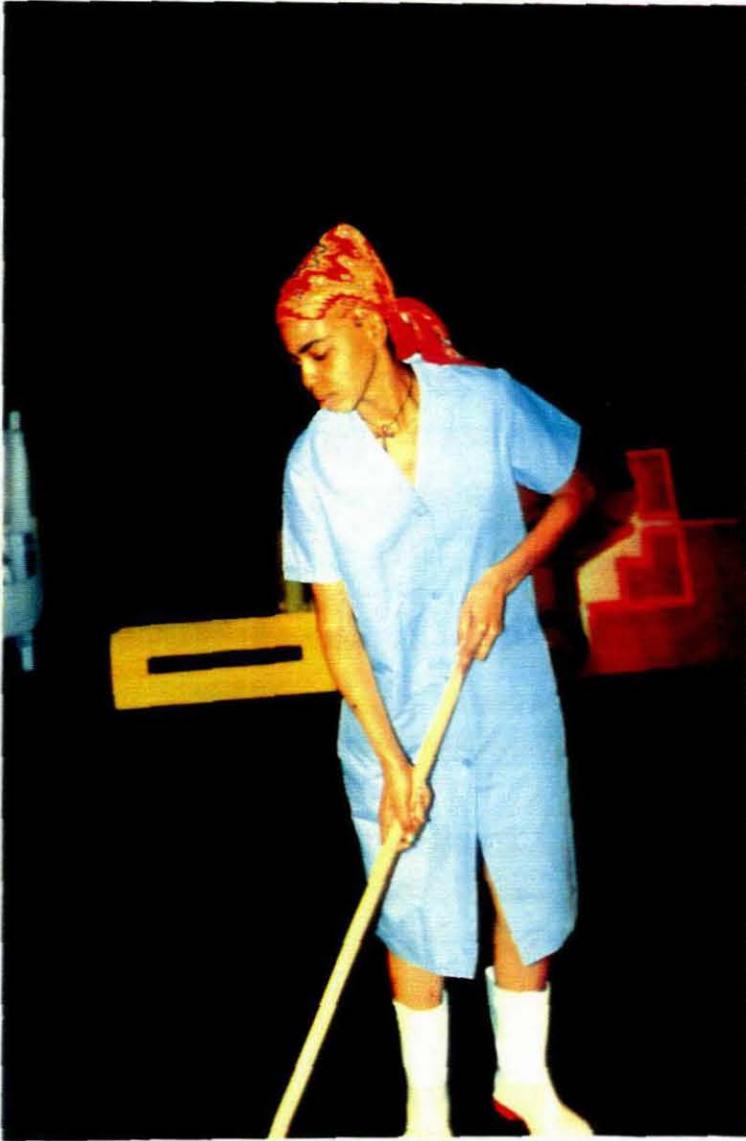


Fig 6.12: Rose

#### 6.15.5      Scene Five

The in-role facilitator elicits possible suggestions from the stakeholders in forums. The practitioner again responds in-role, emphasising the importance of safety. Again, the in-role facilitator requests the stakeholder to make viable suggestions and not only to suggest simplistic solutions to the problem. If needs be, the practitioners are prepared to re-enact a scene on demand. Once this forum is complete, the in-role facilitator returns the practitioners to the electrical accident scene in the play. This gives rise to the next scene.

#### 6.15.6      Scene Six

In scene six, the supervisor enters and switches off the plug as both characters sink to the floor. The supervisor promptly begins to accuse Rose of all wrongdoing. She clearly takes sides with Grace and is clearly not neutral. Grace takes advantage of this situation by blaming Rose for the accident (see Figure 6. 14). The supervisor points out the mistakes made in the previous scene by the evidence left on the performance space. She does this by accusing Rose of not working correctly. The scene ends with the supervisor escorting Grace off the stage (see Figure 6.15).

#### 6.15.7      Scene Seven

At this stage, the in-role facilitator enters again to initiate the forum. Through this dramaturgy, the stakeholders contribute by defining what was incorrect in the portrayal and by giving suggestions as how to correct these faults. The practitioners remain in-role to keep the forum structured.

The in-role facilitator then calls all the practitioners onto the stage involving them in the process of recapping the points highlighted by the stakeholder. After the final forum, the in-role facilitator introduces the practitioners to the stakeholders. Before they leave the performance space they exit on the slogan “Be careful, be safe, never sorry” repeated in isiZulu.



Fig 6.13: Rose and Grace get electrocuted.



Fig 6.14: Rose, the supervisor and Grace argue about the electrocution.



Fig 6.15: The supervisor leads Grace off the stage.

#### 6.16 Step 14: Evaluate the Effectiveness

One needs to investigate the overall effectiveness of the process. This final evaluation addresses the entire process from the initial meetings, through the pre-production forums to the dramaturgy and the in-role forums. This evaluation usually takes place after a period of three to six months after the performance of the dramaturgy. This tests the effectiveness after the fact and establishes whether the stakeholders are implementing the suggestions arising from the objectives and whether the objectives are fulfilled after this specific period. Some form of research is required, either by means of questionnaires or through site-specific evaluations of the objectives. Organisations will generally require evaluation of the intervention. It is also important if the process is an ongoing procedure. The stakeholders usually set the time frame for the evaluation of the process, although it is important to establish whether the process was beneficial to all the parties. From this final evaluation, the future use of Industrial Theatre is established. The participants may discuss further objectives or consider the issues arising from the present objectives in more detail, using the current project as a starting point for the dramaturgy. Research results are discussed in chapter seven.

#### 6.17 Critique of Case Study

An essential part of any case study is a critical examination of the successes and failures of the entire campaign. This provides the researcher the opportunity to evaluate the campaign's effectiveness. The researcher's critique of this case study is based on notes made during and after the process. He has also conducted a number of other Industrial Theatre campaigns since this one. These campaigns provide an interesting benchmark for evaluating the case study. The following observations deserve mention:

- 1) Conducting the case study at the end of an academic year had a deleterious effect upon the effectiveness of the Negotiated Dramaturgy as a whole. The researcher's teaching commitments at this stage (the end of the second semester) were quite taxing. This meant that the researcher spent less time on the project than he would have liked. Ideally, the amount of (group) pre-production forums should have been doubled (from eight to sixteen). This would have enabled more intense discussion on the objectives and hopefully increased the success of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. In addition, he was unable to supervise the practitioners to the extent that he would have liked.

- 2) A further problem with conducting the case study at the end of the year was that departmental budgets were virtually depleted. Although a conscious decision was taken to keep the costs down to an absolute minimum, a larger budget would have greatly assisted in enhancing the dramaturgy. For example, this would have helped to enhance the pictorial codes used in the dramaturgy as the budget did not allow for the purchase of proper signs.
- 3) A more intensive training programme concentrating on the skills of facilitation should have been conducted before the start of the campaign. The practitioners were nervous and a little insecure at the beginning of the campaign (the first week). This was remedied immediately and they managed to facilitate the groups with much more ease and success.
- 4) This case study consisted of two presentations of the dramaturgy. The first audience consisted of the cleaning staff, while the second audience consisted of the artisans and the gardeners. The dramaturgy was slightly adjusted to suit the different audience. The campaign would have had a greater impact if two different dramaturgies were created. Each of these dramaturgies would still have addressed all the objectives. This would mean that the artisans and gardeners would have a full dramaturgy related to their particular working environment and likewise, the cleaners would have an entire dramaturgy related to their working environment. Creating different dramaturgies for different sections of the workforce has been greatly successful in subsequent campaigns conducted by the researcher.
- 5) The Negotiated Dramaturgy totally ignored the gardeners. Their participation in the pre-production forum was minimal due to no representation. Therefore, they do not feature in the dramaturgy except for being welcomed at the beginning.
- 6) The staging of the dramaturgy was not as effective as it could have been. The positioning of the stepladder on centre stage meant that most of the action took place close to the audience seated directly in front of the stage. This meant that the practitioners seated on the sides (stage left and stage right) were looking at the backs of the practitioners. Ideally, the ladder should have been situated up stage, near the back curtain. The practitioners could then open up to the audience

on all three sides. In spite of these problems, however, the in-role facilitator managed to engage the audience on all three sides.

- 7) The practitioners should have been more conscious of the stakeholders (audience) during the dramaturgy. Often they continued speaking while the stakeholders were laughing or speaking. The practitioners should have paused and waited for the laughter to subside before they continued. As it was important for the dialogue to be fully heard, it was unfortunate that noisy stakeholders rendered certain parts inaudible.
- 8) During the in-role forums, the practitioners tended to sit down and watch the in-role facilitator. They should have remained standing and encouraged more participation by working with the in-role facilitator. This might have helped to draw more stakeholders into the process. The results from Question 9 of the questionnaire established that fifty-eight percent wanted to participate in the in-role forum. However, the results from Question 8 established that only fourteen percent actually participated (see Appendix 1 and section 7.2.8; 7.2.9). A team approach such as this has been successful in other campaigns conducted by the researcher.
- 9) The researcher should have incorporated the signage into the dramaturgy in a more comprehensive manner than that. The characters' dialogue should have referred to it directly. The characters could have explained what the relevant signs meant. This could have been achieved if there were two separate dramaturgies (see point 4). Safety-related signage was briefly discussed in one pre-production forum. The campaign should have been more intertextual instead of solely concentrating on the dramaturgy. Industrial Theatre campaigns should be seen as an integral part of a total communication campaign and not as something extra and non-related. The researcher now conducts campaigns where the dramaturgy relates to training booklets, corporate prospectuses, signage, posters, adverts (radio, television and print) and company web pages.

## 6.18 Conclusion

This chapter describes the case study used to test whether Negotiated Dramaturgy can form part of corporate communication activities. It simplifies Fourie's approach by reducing his twenty-one steps to fourteen. The researcher related each step to the Negotiated Dramaturgy, giving a description of how they worked in the case study. The chapter ends with an overall critique of the process. Having ascertained the researcher's critique of the process this study now needs to look at the opinions expressed by the stakeholders.

# CHAPTER 7:

## FINDINGS

### 7.1 Introduction

The negotiated dramaturgy approach to Industrial Theatre has an in-built system that constantly allows it to investigate its effectiveness. The pre-production forums create an environment where the stakeholders feel empowered to discuss and debate the objectives that they established for the campaign. Only once all the participants in the forum are happy with the particular objectives as well as the 'alternatives', are the objectives given to the practitioner to use as the basis of the dramaturgy. The structure allows further opportunity for the practitioner to re-direct the objectives to the stakeholders for further clarification if necessary. The concept of the negotiated dramaturgy (see chapter 2) creates an opportunity for continual 'feedback', as the process is reliant on the stakeholders for their input in generating the dramaturgy. To some extent, therefore, the built-in 'feedback' mechanism of the negotiated dramaturgy collects information and responds to it by using a variety of communicative interactions over a sustained period of time.

However, the practitioners should carry out a final evaluation of the project after the dramaturgy is completed and the stakeholders have returned to their respective working environments. This chapter deals with this evaluation.

### 7.2 The Questionnaire

A questionnaire was created to evaluate the responses of participants to the negotiated dramaturgy after it had been completed. The questionnaire aimed to ascertain the stakeholders' reaction to the dramaturgy and then at establishing whether the Negotiated Dramaturgy could form part of corporate communication activities.

The population of the case study consisted of the cleaning, gardening and maintenance staff of the University of Zululand who attended the pre-production forums and the dramaturgy.

Two hundred and thirty-two people attended the dramaturgy out of a possible three hundred employed in these sections. The right-sizing process to which the staff at this institution were being subjected to at this time, made interviewing all two hundred and thirty two stakeholders

impossible. The researcher settled for a random sample of fifty per cent of the stakeholders who had been involved in the dramaturgy. The researcher selected staff from cleaning, gardening and maintenance services to form this sample.

The researcher administered the questionnaires after a period of six months, believing that this period would aptly test whether the respondents could remember the theme, characters and objectives presented in the dramaturgy. The dramaturgy was presented on October 30, and November 6, 1998. The questionnaires were administered on April 14,15 and 16, 1999.

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to 116 respondents. He also discussed the results with the stakeholders, allowing him to establish further 'feedback' on the project. This also meant that each questionnaire was returned.

#### 7.2.1 Question 1: - Do you remember the Industrial Theatre project held last year?

Research shows (Mersham et. al. 1995:148) that many established forms of corporate communication lack impact. Managers, for example, claim that memos remain unread or not acted upon and that corporate messages of importance to management may not be accorded the same importance by employees, and, as a result, are quickly forgotten. The researcher set the first question to determine whether the dramaturgy made enough of an impact that the stakeholders could remember it.

One hundred per cent of the respondents answered "yes" to this question. This response supports the proposition that Industrial Theatre has a relatively high level of impact when it is compared to other media or mediated forms of communication (Mersham 1995: 171).

#### 7.2.2: Question 2: - Do you remember the topic of the play?

This question follows upon the first question to establish the extent of the impact made by the dramaturgy. If the stakeholders could remember the topic of the play one could conclude that the impact of the dramaturgy was quite profound.

Ninety-six per cent of the respondents answered "yes" to this question. The fact that so many of the respondents remembered the topic suggests that the Negotiated Dramaturgy made a significant impact on the stakeholders. One can deduce that the impact that Industrial Theatre has on the stakeholders makes it a memorable form of corporate communication.

### 7.2.3 Question 3: - Do you think the characters were accurate representations?

Question 3 attempted to establish the perceived accuracy by the stakeholders, of the characters in relation to their role in the organisation. Higher levels of accuracy enable higher levels of identification, which in turn further assist with the 'ownership of the process'.

Ninety-two per cent perceived the characters to be accurate representations. This high percentage return is due to the pre-production forum stage of the negotiated dramaturgy. It is in this stage that the practitioners use the descriptions volunteered by the stakeholders as the "given circumstances" for their characterisation. This result proves again the importance of this stage in the negotiated dramaturgy.

### 7.2.4 Question 4: - Could you identify with the characters presented on stage?

This question set out to determine whether the stakeholders could identify with the characters presented in the dramaturgy. The practitioners base their characters on the information given them by the stakeholders during the pre-production forums and from their own observations. They then create a typical character that represents the type of person employed in the organisation. The identification of the characters by the stakeholders is an important part of the Industrial Theatre process as it facilitates the sharing of the messages of the campaign. It furthermore assists the practitioners to achieve the objectives of the campaign (see sections 6.4 and 6.5 for a description of the messages and objectives). The ability of the stakeholders to identify themselves in the dramaturgy encourages their involvement in the in-role forum. It also creates empathy for a character, which in turn will create a greater involvement in the process.

Ninety per cent of the respondents identified with the characters, indicating that the characters were accurate representations of the workforce.

### 7.2.5 Question 5: - Who was your favourite character?

This question followed upon the previous question. Since respondents overwhelmingly claim that they identify with the characters, the next step is to establish which character evoked the greatest levels of identification. This is important since each character signifies a particular attitude, position and behavioural type in the industrial context. In summary, they are as follows:

- Grace: member of cleaning staff, not committed to work, lazy, manipulative, self-serving.
- Rose: member of cleaning staff, hard working, honest, takes pride in her work.

- Shomi: carpenter, new to company, hard working, takes pride in his work, honest.
- Mkwanzazi: carpenter, been with company for 40 years, drunkard, low work ethic, no interest in his job.
- Supervisor: higher status, has favourites in the workforce, unable to motivate or manage staff effectively.

The fact that they were able to name and remember the characters six months after the project testifies to the impact that the characters had on the stakeholders. Questions 1 and 2 established that the dramaturgy's impact on the stakeholders made this a memorable form of corporate communication. The fact that the stakeholders could remember the characters strengthens this argument, showing that they could remember specific details of the dramaturgy.

Certain conclusions may be drawn from the results relating to the popularity of the characters.

Grace was the most approved of and popular character. Sixty-eight per cent named this character as their favourite. There are also two interpretations of this finding that may not necessarily be mutually exclusive.

The response might imply that the stakeholders have a low work ethic, are rebellious towards management and do not hold personal safety in the workplace and the safety of their colleagues in high regard. This finding is of concern to the management of Physical Planning and Works (PP&W).

On the other hand, it must be pointed out that Grace is also a humorous character and therefore endeared herself to participants within the dramatic frame.

Fourteen per cent of respondents favoured Rose. It may be argued that this represents less than significant support for the values signified by the character of Rose. However, it should be remembered, that within the dramatic frame, Rose is the dramatic foil for the humour of Grace.

Shomi was less liked, with ten per cent choosing him. As with the character of Rose, the respondents showed little support for the values shown by Shomi. His most observable value was his enthusiasm for the job and the organisation. The low percentage of identification for this value may be ascribed to the overall low morale due to the threat of rightsizing and outsourcing of this department, and of the lack of salary increment for the calendar year 1998.

Mkwanazi had an eight- per cent approval rating. Although low, this result is positive in that it shows that very few of the stakeholders identified with the negative values demonstrated by Mkwanazi. His comic foil for the character of Shomi can be responsible for some of his support. It can be argued that most of the stakeholders appreciate the importance of sobriety in the workplace, and the functional uses of personal protective equipment.

The supervisor character received no support. One may argue that this is in response to the negative characterisation of this character. This character did not demonstrate any characteristics that could evoke a positive response from the respondents. She represented everything that supervisors should not be.

The fact that the 'negative' characters received more support than the 'positive' characters can be attributed to problems with the dramaturgy. These problems concern the text, characterisation and staging. In an attempt to highlight the incorrect operational procedures and inappropriate attitudes, the 'negative' characters were stronger than the 'positive' ones. Grace and Shomi were the dominant characters in the scene, while Rose and Mkwanazi acted as their comic foils. Their dialogue and actions were funnier than that of Rose and Mkwanazi. While this successfully highlighted the problems, it drew the stakeholders' focus away from Rose and Mkwanazi and made identifying the correct operational procedures and appropriate attitudes very difficult. The dramaturgy could have been more successful if the two sets of characters were equally powerful and amusing. This equality would have intensified the dramatic tension in each scene. This, in turn, would have made the dramaturgy more powerful. It might also have encouraged greater participation in the in-role forums (see 7.2.8).

The lack of response shown for the supervisor character could lead one to argue that this shows little leadership potential or desire among the respondents. This argument is worrying to the management of PP&W. It could also be attributed to the uncertainty that the stakeholders felt at that stage. The threat of retrenchment was looming and so the focus was on job security and not on career advancement. Subsequently (a year later), three hundred PP&W staff members have been retrenched and the various services in-sourced. In discussion with these workers, it was established that they believe that their supervisors did not do enough to save their jobs. The supervisors have been retained to supervise the new contract workers employed by the university.

7.2.6 Question 6: - Do you think the situation they created is viable? Could that really happen?

Similar to Question 4, this question attempts to test the success of the pre-production forums as effective vehicles for creating a storyline for the dramaturgy. This question also allows the researcher to investigate the success achieved by the dramaturgy in dramatising this storyline. A "yes" response of ninety per cent suggests that the practitioners successfully achieved this. This argues, firstly, that the pre-production forum is fundamental to the Industrial Theatre process, and secondly, that the respondents could identify with the situation, thereby increasing the probability of the overall success of the project.

7.2.7 Question 7: - Do you think that the Forum discussed the issues effectively?

This question sets out to determine the success of the in-role forum. Ninety per cent of the respondents answered "yes" to this question. One can argue from this result that an effective in-role forum is an important part of the communication process (chapter 3 argues this) and should be incorporated into an Industrial Theatre programme. In terms of the case study, this result proves that the in-role facilitator conducted the in-role forum effectively, and that it greatly assisted with the sharing of the message and in achieving the outcomes of the objectives.

7.2.8 Question 8: - Did you participate in the forum?

This question attempts to establish the percentage of people who actually used the in-role forum as a vehicle to express their views. Although this approach promotes an atmosphere where all stakeholders can share information constantly, in practice this is a little more difficult. Only fourteen per cent actively participated in the forum.

The reasons why people chose not to participate are as numerous and varied as there are audience members. However, most of the responsibility for this could lie with the facilitation technique used in the in-role forum. Section 6.17 has already identified the shortcomings of the approach used and suggested possible ways to remedy this. Added to this, the process of the dramaturgy was never clearly explained to the stakeholders. While the stakeholders were told during the pre-production forums that they would discuss the plays that they saw, they were unaware that this discussion would take place in the format that it did. Many of the respondents expected that a separate discussion would be scheduled after the dramaturgy was presented. These stakeholders might not have contributed to the in-role forums believing that they could contribute later.

Section 7.2.5 has suggested that a stronger dramaturgy might have encouraged more stakeholders to participate in the in-role forums.

#### 7.2.9 Question 9: - If not, did you want to participate in the forum?

Question 9 establishes that fifty-eight per cent of the respondents did want to participate in the forum. This reflects positively on the process and on the in-role forum. The fact that more than half of the respondents wanted to make use of this opportunity, shows that the forum is an important part of the negotiated dramaturgy and is justifiably incorporated into the structure of Industrial Theatre.

The Negotiated Dramaturgy provides many opportunities for the stakeholders to discuss issues. The stakeholders are actively involved in the creation process of the dramaturgy. During the pre-production forums, they are able to debate issues regarding the characterisation and storyline. In this approach, they need not wait for the dramaturgy to address these concerns. This is where this approach differs slightly from Boal's (1992) Forum Theatre.

#### 7.2.10 Question 10: - Do you think this is a good way of dealing with issues concerning work?

Question 10 determines the respondents' attitude towards the effectiveness of the Negotiated Dramaturgy in dealing with work-related issues. If this medium is to be successful, it is important that the stakeholders believe in its effectiveness as a form of corporate communication. Ninety-two per cent believed that Industrial Theatre is a good way of dealing with issues. One can argue that Industrial Theatre's handling of work place issues makes it a viable alternative method of corporate communication.

#### 7.2.11 Question 11: - Would you like to deal with all issues in this way?

Question 11 establishes to what extent the respondents would like to use Industrial Theatre to deal with a variety of issues. Eighty-six per cent answered "yes" to this question. One can argue that this result shows that not only did Industrial Theatre have a favourable impact on the respondents, but that they believe that it is an important communication medium that can be applied to any organisational issue.

7.2.12 Question 12: - Do you feel you actually had a say in what was happening regarding your work?

This question inquires whether the respondents felt that the issues raised in the Negotiated Dramaturgy were directly related to their 'real life' work. It ascertains whether they felt that their suggestions made during the entire process could be implemented into the workplace. The stakeholders should not view the Negotiated Dramaturgy as an exercise in futility. One hundred per cent answered "yes" to this question. In further discussion with the respondents, they admitted to recalling things that were said during the Negotiated Dramaturgy and implementing them in their everyday operations. This answer establishes that the Negotiated Dramaturgy can form an effective part of corporate communication activities.

7.2.13 Question 13: - Do you think that this is a good way of communicating with management or with the workers?

Question 13 tests whether the respondents believed that this was an effective way of communicating with stakeholders in different roles, levels and statuses. Ninety per cent believed the medium to be a success in this respect. This result suggests that this process establishes an open communication channel that encourages workers and management to communicate freely.

7.2.14 Question 14: - Do you think that this is a good way of communicating with your fellow colleagues regarding work issues?

Question 14 establishes the extent to which the respondents believed that they were able to communicate freely within their particular role, status and level. Ninety per cent of the stakeholders believed that they were able to communicate freely. This argues for the negotiated dramaturgy as an effective tool of internal corporate communication.

7.2.15 Question 15: - How are you informed of issues at present?

This question allows the researcher to compare the different approaches used in the organisation, while attempting to discover the extent to which the stakeholders are aware of the communication channels available to them. The following information was derived from the respondents' answers.

At present supervisors and management pass down information verbally. Issues are raised at departmental meetings and the resolutions or notices are disseminated via shop stewards and supervisors to the workforce. The flow of information is usually downward and the scope for upward communication is very limited. The supervisors each had a large span of control making

communication with each stakeholder difficult. The workforce, at this stage, has no vehicle for expression. Management encourages the workers to come to them with grievances or problems. However, the supervisors prefer the staff in their sections to approach them first before speaking to management. The workers have lack of faith in the supervisors and choose not to approach them, keeping quiet. This means that the channel of communication is blocked and management is rarely made aware of the thoughts and feeling of the workers.

7.2.16 Question 16: - Which do you think is more effective: Industrial Theatre or existing forms of communication?

This final question gives the respondents the opportunity to express their opinion on which approach is more effective. Ninety-three per cent felt that Industrial Theatre is more effective. This result proves the value of Industrial Theatre in the eyes of the stakeholders and of the success of this particular project.

7.2.17 Any comment you would like to make?

The questionnaire gave the opportunity for the respondents to comment in an open-ended fashion. The researcher wanted to allow the respondents the opportunity to comment on the process, giving their impressions of it. The researcher believed that if the opportunity was given to them in an open-ended way, they would be free to express themselves. This was the final question of the questionnaire. Thirty-eight respondents used this opportunity. Most comments comprised simple answers such as "it was nice", or "I enjoyed it", and after probing most declined to comment. The reason they gave was that they had very little extra to add to their responses to the questionnaire. The few comments volunteered by the workers, however, are worth noting.

For example, fifteen respondents believed that they, alone, were responsible for finding the solution to their problems.

Others believed that this project did well in establishing a mechanism for this type of involvement. They were pleased with the manner in which it allowed the individual to confront his/her supervisors on issues effecting them.

Female employees commented on the importance of the opportunity to confront their male counterparts on issues which they found difficult under normal circumstances. The stakeholders consisted mainly of women and this issue as well as the opportunity to communicate was important to them.

### 7.3 The Results

The following table (7.1) represents a summary of the responses to the questionnaire:

QUESTION NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO ANSWERED 'YES'	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO ANSWERED 'NO'
1	100	0
2	96	4
3	92	8
4	90	10
6	90	10
7	90	10
8	14	86
9	58	42
10	92	8
11	86	14
12	100	0
13	90	10
14	90	10

Table 1: Responses to yes/no questions of questionnaire

The following Table (7.2) shows the results to question five.

SHOMI	MKWANAZI	ROSE	GRACE
10%	8%	14%	68%

Table 2:Response to question five of questionnaire

#### 7.4 Conclusion

This questionnaire determined that the process of the negotiated dramaturgy was effective and that this project achieved its stated goals. In terms of management effectively communicating their concerns about safety in the workplace, it was successful. With regards to involving the stakeholders in the process, the project was successful. As far as creating a two-way open channel of communication, success was achieved. Finally, the cleaners, labourers and artisans believed that this project was a success and wished to see more important issues handled in this way, with this approach being used more often. One can deduce from these results that Industrial Theatre can form part of corporate communication activities.

# CHAPTER 8

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 8.1 The Research Objective Revisited

This study examines whether the Negotiated Dramaturgy can form part of corporate communication activities.

The residual effects of Apartheid are manifested in any sociocultural or socio-economic study conducted in South Africa. Therefore, entrenched in this research problem were five sub-problems that needed investigation in order to understand the role of Industrial Theatre more clearly. The sub-problems are:

- The historical problem
- The literacy problem
- The credibility problem
- The problem of the traditional adversarial relationship
- The communication media

The Negotiated Dramaturgy is a form of Industrial Theatre and therefore it is essential to define it. People use the term "Industrial Theatre" as an umbrella term to describe any form of theatre that has anything to do with industry or takes place in an industrial setting. However, for the purposes of this study, this definition is too simplistic and non-engaging. This study believes that Industrial Theatre has a specific and important role within the corporate sector. Industrial Theatre is therefore defined as:

*A communication process that uses drama, drama techniques and theatre as a voluntary approach to educating, training, uplifting and informing stakeholders with the specific intention of maintaining or changing the stakeholders' attitude to the organisation for whom they work.*

### 8.2 The Negotiated Dramaturgy

This study begins by describing the Negotiated Dramaturgy. This description begins with a look at the broad theoretical influences that have determined the process. These theoretical influences begin with an overview of negotiation before considering the general theories of Bertolt Brecht and

Jerzy Grotowski. The study then explains how Participatory Learning and Action and Community Drama have influenced the Negotiated Dramaturgy. The Negotiated Dramaturgy has five stages namely: initial meeting, pre-production forum, rehearsals and research, dramaturgy and 'feedback'. The study discusses the role that the theories of theatre practitioners such as Boal, Brecht and Hauptfleisch have had on the structure of the process.

### 8.3 Communication Theory

Chapter 3 looks at Communication Theory. It begins by explaining the importance of information and systems theory to the communication process. The study examines how the various schools of thought view the communication process. The first school deals with theories of signs and language. These theorists have a semiotic perspective of communication and are concerned with signs, codes and their role in the construction of meaning. Another school is concerned with the theories of message production. These theorists are concerned with state and trait processes, communication apprehension, communication style and process theories. A third school is concerned with theories of message reception. This school looks at the theories of message production and message reception, stating that they are integrally connected and can not be divorced from another. They are concerned with what the recipients do with the messages and how they do it. The theory addresses three accomplishments, namely, interpreting, organising and judging. A fourth school is concerned with theories of symbolic interactionism, narrative and dramatism. The Chicago school and the theories of Goffman and Burke are highlighted in this school. Theories of social and cultural reality form another school. In this school, the study highlights the social construction of the self and the social construction of emotion. It also deals with rules of social action, language and culture, and elaborated and restricted codes. The chapter ends this overview of communication theory with a look at the theories of experience and interpretation. In this school, phenomenology and hermeneutics are discussed.

### 8.4 The Corporate Communication Environment

The study found that the new political order in South Africa has compelled organisations to re-examine their operational procedure. Issues of transparency, inclusiveness and ownership have become everyday concepts that organisations have to grapple with, while still striving for optimum productivity resulting in maximum profit. As corporate communication plays an integral part in facilitating and increasing an organisation's productivity while addressing these important issues, organisations continually strive to improve communication with all their stakeholders.

It then became necessary to examine the role of Industrial Theatre within the corporate communication environment. Industrial Theatre has a specific function, that of facilitating and enabling communication within an organisation. It functions as a two-way medium that empowers the stakeholders through direct communication between all involved in an organisation, at a level, and in an environment designed solely for communication purposes. It attempts to negate the communication problems associated with authority-based channels by allowing the practitioners the opportunity to design and adapt a negotiated dramaturgy that ignores rigid authority-based lines of communication. The Negotiated Dramaturgy is an open communication system that can then only exist within democratic societies as it functions to eliminate any barriers between truth and the stakeholders.

### 8.5                    Communication Models

While chapter three looked at communication models in general, chapter five examines models that represent the process of the Negotiated Dramaturgy. The chapter begins by looking at the Prague Circle and its descendants. It analyses two models developed by Pfister and Hauptfleisch respectively. The study argued that these models are only concerned with a part of the process and not the process as a whole. Even in this respect, they do not accurately represent this communication process. Two further models are analysed that take into account the entire process. These models are the Marchant model and the Mersham model. The study argues that the Mersham model best represents the communication process of the Negotiated Dramaturgy.

### 8.6                    The Case Study

The case study was a practical test of the theoretical principles discussed in the study. The case study used Fourie's (1988) *Communication by objectives* as the foundation to the process. Fourie (1988) lists twenty-one steps for planning and implementing a successful communication programme. The Negotiated Dramaturgy reduced the steps from twenty-one to fourteen. Each of these fourteen steps is discussed in detail while documenting the process. The Negotiated Dramaturgy culminates in the presentation of the dramaturgy. In the case study, the dramaturgy was performed twice, once on October 30, 1998 and the second time on November 6, 1998. The first audience consisted of the cleaning staff, while the second audience consisted of the artisans and the gardeners. The dramaturgies were altered to suit the particular audiences. The chapter ends with a self-critique of the process.

## 8.7 Evaluation

The evaluation of the project showed overwhelming support for the process. It also highlighted the potential of the Negotiated Dramaturgy as corporate communication. One of the problems encountered by the researcher was the unavailability of the stakeholders six months later when the researcher administered the questionnaires. The population was small enough (232) for the researcher to contact each stakeholder individually. Due to downsizing of staff (through retrenchment and early retirement), the researcher was only able to administer the questionnaire to 116 people.

Ideally, a second Industrial Theatre project would entrench the methodology of this approach to communication, and allow the stakeholders to participate in the process with prior knowledge, and without the air of uncertainty that usually accompanies possible retrenchment. Eighteen months after the case study was conducted three hundred PP&W employees had been retrenched. The manner in which this was conducted created a very tense and uncertain environment on the campus. Services were in-sourced and there was a severe lack of knowledge associated with this process. The skills associated with forming small co-operatives to handle the offering of these services were also lacking. An Industrial Theatre campaign would have been ideal to address the issues of retrenchment and in-sourcing.

## 8.8 Recommendations

- On the financial side, accurate research into the profitability of Industrial Theatre is essential. The case study was abnormally inexpensive due to the availability of nearly all the resources. Investigation of this aspect of the process and coupling it with time, effort and productivity would provide a more accurate result as to the financial profitability of Industrial Theatre.
- Concerning further research into Industrial Theatre as a whole, it is found that certain areas and applications warrant investigation. One such area that scholars need to address, is Industrial Theatre as effective advertising and marketing tool.
- This study suggests that Industrial Theatre may also be suited to creating an environment conducive to the process of collective bargaining, a specialised form of corporate communication. Future research in this area is needed.

- In an approach designed for staff training and development, the practitioners should ideally spend more time in the pre-production forums working with the stakeholders. This would allow them more opportunity to empower the formerly disenfranchised, equipping them with the necessary skills to make them more productive within the organisation. This approach would be more grounded in Theatre for Development than in Corporate Communication. Such an approach deserves further research.
- Research into the different approaches of Industrial Theatre is needed. Certain practitioners prefer simple person-centred approaches, whereas others prefer high-tech multi-media approaches. The envisaged research should investigate the impact that these different approaches have on the overall success of Industrial Theatre campaigns. Such research should also investigate the changing role of the practitioner in these different approaches.

This study will add to the volume of research being conducted into Industrial Theatre at present and assist in advancing the status of Industrial Theatre as a reputable form of corporate communication within South Africa and the world. At present, Industrial Theatre is showing all the attributes of an emerging form of communication, both positive and negative. Further research and a more detailed understanding of the process should establish Industrial Theatre as a powerful and effective form of communication.

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