

ADVANCING THEORY IN LANGUAGE, COMMUNICATION, AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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As the preceding parts demonstrate, it is difficult to understate the magnitude of Howie Giles' influence on our understanding of language, communication, and intergroup relations. His scholarship has addressed a range of theoretical issues related to language, from why we see intra-individual variation in speech styles (i.e., speech accommodation) to the role of groups' relative societal status (and beliefs about that) in language transmission and survival across generations (i.e., ethnolinguistic vitality). Within the field of communication, communication accommodation theory (CAT) offers one of the most comprehensive frameworks available to explain what happens when people interact with one another as both individuals and as members of social groups. Finally, Howie's work on intergenerational communication—which frames such encounters as intergroup in nature, and has drawn on CAT to explain the dynamics that result—has provided insight into both how intergenerational interaction can become problematic and how this can be ameliorated.

Howie's research also spans an impressive range of contexts. While his early work on accommodation focused on face-to-face conversations between speakers of different dialects, CAT has now been applied to domains as diverse as police-civilian interaction, doctor-doctor and doctor-patient interactions, and lawyers' courtroom communication (to name just a few). In this work, we see a symbiotic relationship between theory and research in context: Howie's theoretical work has helped us understand the interactional dynamics in these contexts, offering novel insights and explanations for people's lived experiences. However, the features and dynamics of these contexts have also informed the development of theory. Trying to understand the nature of situated, context-specific interactions has catalyzed the development of new models and satellite theories by both Howie and other researchers drawing on his work (e.g., the communication

predicament model of aging; models for police–civilian interaction; models of gay male sexual communication). As the chapters in this volume highlight, Howie never forgets that he is addressing phenomena that happen in the real world, and that this real world needs our attention, as scholars and practitioners.

The opening chapter of this book summarizes three major, overlapping themes in the content of Howie’s work: accommodation, intergenerational relations, and language. These themes are readily visible in the content of each section of the book, which address culture and language (Noels, Clément, Collins, & MacIntyre), intergroup communication (Rakić and Maass), intergenerational communication (Hummert), interpersonal accommodation (Zhang and Pitts), and institutional accommodation (Watson and Soliz). While we look back and celebrate his accomplishments, we also look ahead to his legacy. As the preceding chapters have shown, there is a clear developmental trajectory to Howie’s work, with new concepts, theoretical relationships, and models progressively building on foundations established in earlier stages. In line with this, it is only natural for us to consider his past scholarship and to reflect on future directions in the research areas he has pioneered and cultivated. In this chapter, we will first look to the future, presenting the outlines of a novel theoretical perspective on intergroup communication that emphasizes key themes from Howie’s scholarship, including language, identity, and dynamic communication adaptation. Then, we will reflect on Howie’s work and what we can and should learn from it. In doing this, we will conclude the chapter by drawing out a set of principles for conducting research, based on Howie’s own research and on the tremendous influence he has had on students and colleagues.

A New Perspective for Intergroup Communication

This volume has captured the state of the art around Howie Giles’ work. It is important now to turn to future directions for research in a sub-field he helped create: intergroup communication. Although research in intergroup communication is almost always grounded in theory (e.g., CAT, social identity theory, self-categorization theory, intergroup contact theory: Rakić & Maass, this volume) there is no singular or unified *theory of intergroup communication*. In recent years, Howie and his colleagues have proposed several *principles of intergroup communication* (e.g., Abeyta & Giles, 2017; Dragojevic & Giles, 2014a; Giles, 2012; Hogg & Giles, 2012) as initial steps toward a more general framework in this area. We build on these and related principles (see also Dragojevic, Giles, & Watson, 2013; Stohl, Giles, & Maass, 2016) to offer a novel—and, we hope, theoretically and empirically fruitful—perspective on intergroup communication.

We begin with a step back for a brief observation on the history and origins of research on this topic. Intergroup communication sits at the intersection of two broader areas of study, *intergroup relations* and *communication*, and these fields have quite different conceptual emphases that intergroup communication scholars must

connect. In fact, most theoretical frameworks used by intergroup communication researchers have their roots in social psychology (e.g., Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987; for a discussion of this, see Reid, 2012). These theories have been powerful and productive tools, but their content and foci reflect their origins: most emphasize individual cognitions and psychological states over communication and behavior in interaction. While much scholarship in communication, language, and social psychology readily acknowledges that communication happens in a dyad (or larger set of people), the vast majority of our research and theorizing focuses on the individual as the unit of analysis.

We propose that, to more completely understand and appreciate the dynamics of intergroup *communication*, we should give more serious consideration to the *interactive dyad* (or larger *interactive unit*). With this, we propose a shift in emphasis from the individual to the *set* of individuals communicating, and a corresponding shift in focus from static states (e.g., specific cognitions or behaviors) to dynamic processes. To build a case for this perspective, we first present a series of observations about the nature of communication, language, and social identity, drawing on the aforementioned principles by Howie and colleagues, as well as other research. Then, we highlight the potential contributions of this new perspective, and offer some novel predictions about intergroup interaction and dynamics that we derive from it.

Observations on Communication and Intergroup Dynamics

O1. Communication is inherently at least dyadic. From our perspective, communication always involves at least two people. Etymologically, *communicate* draws from the same Latin root as “community” or “commune”; it literally means, “to make common.” When people communicate successfully, they are making ideas “common,” or shared, between them (Gasiorek & Aune, 2017). People create this shared understanding through interaction. Put another way, communication is by definition a shared, social, and (minimally) *dyadic* phenomenon. Communication is not something that a single individual can accomplish alone.

O2. Communication is dynamic. Communication is a process. As such, it is ongoing and constantly changing, both within and across interactions. In a given interaction, interlocutors are interdependent and influence one another. Each turn in a conversation is linked to both the previous and the next turn; each utterance or move in an interaction functions both as a response and as an invitation to further response. Across interactions, people can also shift, adapt, and change how they engage with each other; larger patterns of change in communication behavior are also evident across the lifespan. This highlights the need to emphasize (and carefully study) *ongoing behavior* within and across interactions, not just outcomes that follow from a single conversation or encounter.

O3. Adaptation is a fundamental feature of human communication.

In interaction, interlocutors adapt to one another, consciously and unconsciously. This is a primary assertion of CAT (though the theory, of course, has much more to it; see Zhang & Pitts, this volume). That people adjust their behavior for each other has also been observed and discussed by a range of theoretical frameworks from a number of disciplines (for a recent review, see Gasiorek, 2016). Such adjustments regulate both understanding and social relationships (Dragojevic, Gasiorek, & Giles, 2016). In the context of intergroup communication specifically, the nature of interlocutors' adaptations often depends on how they categorize themselves and each other in terms of social group memberships (e.g., Dragojevic & Giles, 2014a; cf. Turner et al., 1987).

O4. Context and communication are mutually constitutive. Communication is situated within a physical and social context. The social context of an interaction includes the current, past, and potential future of the relationship between interactants, and this relationship has both interpersonal and intergroup dimensions (Dragojevic & Giles, 2014a). Participants draw on information from the physical and social context to create understanding and meaning (e.g., by making inferences about the content of utterances; Clark, 1996; Holtgraves, 2002; Scott-Phillips, 2015)—that is, to communicate successfully. However, communication—which often takes the form of language use—also contributes to the creation of social context. Both what is said (content) and how it is said (style) can make an interaction more or less interpersonal or intergroup in nature. Communication can also make a particular group membership or social identity salient at any given moment (see below), and in so doing change the social context of the interaction. In some cases, language may even be used to create groups or identities that did not exist before (Beukeboom & Burgers, 2017). Thus, while context plays an important role in constituting communication, so does communication in constituting context.

O5. Language and communication are both antecedents and outcomes of group salience. As self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987) and process models of language attitudes (e.g., Dragojevic & Giles, 2014b) posit, language is often a basis for social categorization. In other words, linguistic style and language use can make particular social identities salient in interaction: as such, they are antecedents, or causes, of group salience. Once those social identities are salient, and people in an interaction are categorized accordingly, however, these categorizations also shape interactants' language and communication. As CAT posits, people can adapt language use to assert their own social identities, or to adapt to the (perceived) characteristics of others' social groups. Models like the communication predicament of aging model or the age stereotypes in interaction model, for example, describe how this can occur in intergenerational interactions (for an overview, see Hummert, this volume). Thus, language and communication are outcomes of group salience as well.

O6. Social group memberships are multiple, and social identity in context is dynamic. Every person has multiple social identities (e.g., Giles, 2012;

Kang & Bodenhausen, 2015). However, not all of these identities are relevant or influential all of the time. Which ones are salient—and therefore, which social categories influence a given interaction at a particular moment—are a product of the immediate situation and social context. As noted just above, communication plays a critical role in creating and shaping social context, and it is possible for social context to change rapidly as a result of what is said and how it is said. Thus, social identity is dynamic in nature, and language can function as a means by which we catalyze shifts (intentionally or unintentionally) between different social identities in a single social interaction.

07. Intergroup communication is a situated, multi-level event.

There are multiple, simultaneous levels at which we can analyze a communicative exchange between people (see Figure 52.1a). First, in line with much classic social psychological theorizing, we can consider the individual. Individuals have internal (i.e., invisible) cognitions and psychological states; they also engage in external (i.e., visible) verbal and nonverbal behaviors. As CAT posits (e.g., Dragojevic et al., 2016; Zhang & Pitts, this volume), individuals come to an interaction with previous beliefs, attitudes, values, and past experiences. They also come with goals that they consciously or unconsciously seek to accomplish (as discussed in Wilson, this volume). All these psychological factors can influence how they perceive and respond to other individuals' behavior in interaction. Individuals also come to an interaction with a repertoire of possible behaviors they know how to enact, which have been developed and cultivated over a lifespan of social experiences (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Pitts & Harwood, 2015). How individuals behave in interaction depends on the content of this repertoire (and is accordingly dynamic, as this repertoire changes with new experiences).

Second, we can consider the dyad as a unit. It should be noted that we are using the term “dyad” for parsimony; we acknowledge that three or more people may constitute an interactive unit (for further discussion of this issue as it relates to CAT, see Dragojevic, this volume; Lin, this volume). As discussed above, communication is fundamentally interactive and dyadic; while each person contributes to it, interactants are interdependent, and successful communication is a collaborative, shared accomplishment, not an individual one (e.g., Clark, 1996).

Third, we can consider the immediate social and physical context of an interaction. People draw on both the physical and social context of an interaction to create understanding—that is, to communicate in the most basic sense of the word. People also use contextual information as a basis for evaluating the appropriateness of each other's utterances and, by extension, forming impressions of each other as individuals and as group members.

Fourth, and finally, we can consider the broader cultural and sociohistorical context of an interaction. As social collectives, groups have histories, cultures, and norms (Giles, 2012; Hogg & Giles, 2012). People look to this broader context

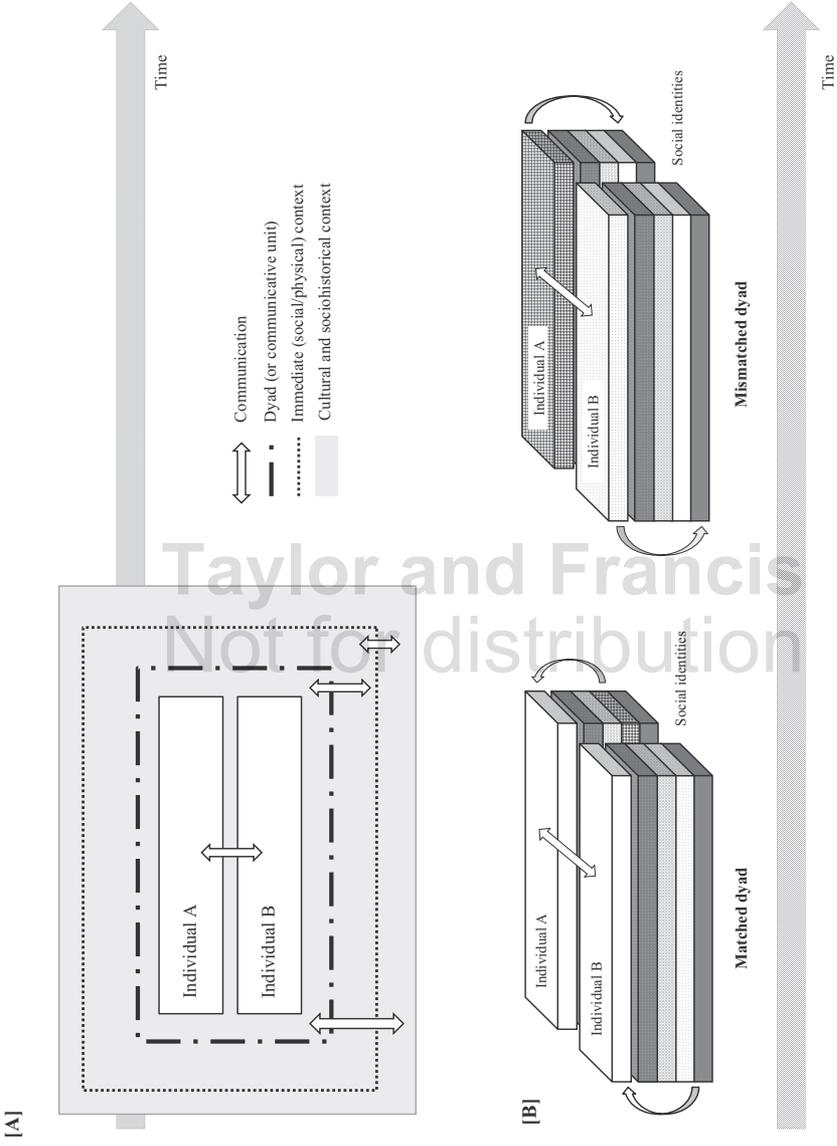


FIGURE 52.1 Intergroup communication is a situated, multi-level event: (a) communication mediates between levels; (b) “matched” and “mismatched” dyads in terms of social identity, as a function of communication.

to guide their own behavior as well as their interpretations of others' behavior (i.e., what is appropriate, acceptable, or reasonable). As CAT posits, this broader context can also contribute to people's initial orientations to, and social evaluations of, each other.

Communication affects each of these levels, and mediates between levels. At the individual level, communication is the means by which we are exposed to information that ultimately shapes (and becomes) our attitudes, values, and beliefs (e.g., about different groups). Additionally, individuals' verbal and nonverbal behaviors provide a means by which communication occurs. Communicating, as a process, creates an interactive unit; when two people communicate effectively, they become entrained at multiple levels (i.e., behaviorally, cognitively, neurologically; Hasson, Ghazanfar, Galantucci, Garrod, & Keysers, 2012; Pickering & Garrod, 2004). At the next level, the way in which people in the dyad (or interactive unit) communicate—the language choice(s) they make, whether they converge or diverge—is a function of the social context, and specifically the social identities that are activated at a given point in time. As discussed above, the salience of different identities is, itself, often a product of communication (i.e., talking in particular ways, or about particular topics, can make salient different group memberships), and is accordingly dynamic. Finally, the broader cultural and sociohistorical context typically informs or determines features of the more immediate physical and social context. This broader cultural context can also influence individuals' cognitions and behavioral choices (through, e.g., norms; Hogg & Giles, 2012), and individuals' responses to others' choices, which in turn influence the communicative dynamic of a dyad. The creation and institutionalization of this broader culture is itself the product of communication, collectively and across time (Bourhis, Sioufi, & Sachdev, 2012; Giles, 2012).

Emphasizing the Dyad

We propose that the level of the dyad (or interactive unit) deserves more attention in intergroup communication research, particularly given the dyadic and dynamic nature of communication. Emphasizing that communication is an interdependent process that unfolds over time highlights the need to consider not just what each interactant thinks and does as an individual (which has been a traditional focus of social psychological research), but how interactants contribute to a larger dynamic or pattern of interaction that can be more than the sum of its parts. Conceptually and operationally, this perspective proposes that we “zoom out” or step back, shifting our focus to sequences of behavior, rather than individual actions, and to joint cognition, rather than individual thoughts. To accomplish this methodologically, we need research designs and analytic tools that support and enable sequential analysis of conversations (e.g., Gnisci, this volume). We also need statistical approaches that account for interdependence (e.g., actor-partner

interdependence model; Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006); multiple, nested levels of analysis (e.g., multi-level modeling; Heck & Thomas, 2015); and/or multiple time points (e.g., time series or autoregressive models).

Shifting our focus to the level of the dyad also offers a novel view of social identity in interaction. In terms of composition, we can think of dyads as being either *matched* or *mismatched*. In matched dyads, individuals share a salient social identity – in other words, they are members of the same group, and see each other as ingroup members (e.g., gender: two men or two women). In mismatched dyads, in contrast, individuals do not share a salient social identity; they are members of different groups, and thus see each other as outgroup members (e.g., gender: a man and a woman). Because people have multiple social identities, the same dyad can be “matched” and “mismatched” with respect to different identities (see Figure 52.1b). Thus, the composition of the dyad, in terms of social group memberships, is a function of group salience at a given point in time, and is potentially dynamic.

Based on research on intergroup dynamics, we can make several predictions about the psychological experiences and outcomes of matched versus mismatched dyads. Specifically, we would expect that matched dyads would experience higher levels of mutual liking and solidarity than mismatched dyads. We would also expect greater mutual understanding, greater processing fluency, and less time needed to reach a state of understanding in matched dyads compared to mismatched dyads. We expect this because matched dyads should have more extensive common ground (as members of the same community; Holtgraves, 2002) and a greater degree of overlap in their perspectives and knowledge than mismatched dyads (e.g., Greenaway, Peters, Haslam & Bingley, 2016). To the extent that matched dyads have more overlap in their perspectives, and more common ground, we would also anticipate that matched dyads would experience higher mutual agreement on stereotype content (e.g., prototypical characteristics and qualities of group members) for salient groups than would mismatched dyads. Matched dyads would also be more likely to experience confirmation and reinforcement of their current stereotypes and values during and as a result of interaction, because these stereotypes and values are shared to a greater degree within matched dyads compared to mismatched dyads.

We can also make some predictions about the *behavior* of matched versus mismatched dyads. As we would expect individuals in matched dyads to converge to a greater extent than those in mismatched dyads, we should see less variance in language use in matched dyads (treating the dyad as the unit of analysis), reflecting a higher degree of shared language use by members of the dyad. We might also expect to see more rapid and fluent exchanges, fewer interrogations and requests for clarification (see Aune, Levine, Park, Asada, & Banas, 2005), and less nonverbal behavior reflecting confusion and/or anxiety (e.g., Trawalter & Richeson, 2008).

Collectively, these predictions suggest that matched dyads may have more immediately positive experiences in interaction, in large part because of their more extensive common ground and higher degree of shared perspective. However, they also offer little potential for changing the status quo of intergroup relations, because their interactions are likely to reinforce, rather than challenge, existing stereotypes and beliefs. In this respect, mismatched dyads present an important opportunity: as instances of intergroup contact (between people with a lower degree of overlap in perspectives), they offer potential for learning about an outgroup, prejudice reduction, and attitude change (Brown & Hewstone, 2005). However, these opportunities are also accompanied by the potential for more negative interactional experiences (at least, compared to those experienced by matched dyads).

In addressing this issue, we see an important role for language. As discussed above, because people have multiple social identities, the same dyad can be “matched” and “mismatched” with respect to different identities—indeed, a fully matched dyad would be extremely rare. Because language (and, more broadly, communication) can activate and make salient different social identities, and in doing so change the social context of an interaction, language provides a means to “toggle” the composition of a dyad—that is, to shift its (psychological) composition from matched to mismatched or vice versa. We propose that this, and the dynamic nature of interaction more broadly, could offer an opportunity: if language could be used to strategically “toggle” between perceived dyadic compositions, we might be able to take advantage of the mutual liking and rapport that a matched dyad experiences, in conjunction with the opportunity for intergroup contact and attitude change that a mismatched dyad affords. For instance, a dyad might initially focus on a shared social identity and establish a positive interactional baseline, using language markers of their shared ingroup (e.g., style, word choice). They might then be able to “toggle” to a mismatched state—using language and communication to make salient a social identity they do not share—and be able to engage and interact more positively and/or productively than they would have otherwise (and see Pettigrew, 1998, for a similar argument focused on long-term relationships rather than within individual interactions). Similarly, a contentious or difficult interaction in a mismatched dyad might be improved by making salient a shared identity, “toggling” the dyad to a matched state. This kind of shift is crucial in some types of interactions. For example, when health professionals and patients interact, it is beneficial for them to establish a shared relationship, so that they can then take full advantage of their (intergroup) positions as disease experts and illness experience experts (see Watson & Soliz, this volume).

As we propose drawing on shared identities to ameliorate interactions and intergroup relations, this suggestion could be seen as a communicative extension of the *common ingroup identity model* (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2008; Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993). Specifically, we add an emphasis

on the role of language and communication as a means for making salient a common ingroup identity, and the observation that shifts in focal identity (i.e., to or from a common ingroup) can occur dynamically in interaction. We also highlight that the dyad, rather than the individual, may be an important unit of analysis if we want to examine the effects of a *common* ingroup identity.

There are, however, important caveats to the potential benefits we outline here. Perhaps most importantly, members of a dyad may have sufficiently different perspectives or goals (e.g., Bergsieker, Shelton, & Richeson, 2010) that they do not want to think about themselves in terms of a shared identity (e.g., Brewer, 1991). In this case, we would see mismatched dyads remain mismatched across time; attempts by one individual to toggle to a matched state via language would likely be rejected (i.e., met with divergence, emphasizing distinctive group identities). A dyadic perspective highlights that creating a functional sense of common identity (i.e., a matched dyad) requires the cooperation and buy-in of both parties.

It is also important to underscore that mismatched dyads are not inherently problematic, and that matched dyads present their own challenges to improving intergroup relations. As noted above, mismatched dyads offer the greatest potential for changing intergroup attitudes, because they provide opportunities for intergroup contact in which people recognize each other as outgroup members. As theory and research on intergroup contact shows, group salience is an important factor in contact effects. Positive experiences with a person are more likely to be generalized to positive attitudes toward that person's group when he or she is viewed as a member of that group (Brown & Hewstone, 2005). If individuals can easily switch from viewing someone as an outgroup member to seeing the person as an ingroup member (i.e., move from being a seeing themselves as a mismatched dyad to a matched one), then the positive experiences they do have might ultimately be attributed to their matched status, rather than contribute to shifting views related to their mismatched identity or identities. Finally, there might be situations in which it is beneficial for one member of a dyad to view the interaction in terms of shared identities (i.e., as matched) and hence operate with lower anxiety, while the other understands it as intergroup (i.e., as mismatched) and hence operates with a high level of awareness of the different identities at play. Only a dyadic perspective allows consideration of such complexities.

Although still embryonic, we hope this perspective can offer researchers new ways to think about communication and intergroup relations. In particular, and in the spirit of Howie's work, we hope the ideas outlined here can serve as a stepping stone that helps to further our collective understanding of the interplay between dynamic communication adaptation, language, and identity.

Reflections on a Research Career

We now turn our attention to Howie's research career, and what we can and should learn from it. To borrow a well-worn phrase, today's scholars of

language, communication, and intergroup relations are standing on the shoulders of a giant—and we can see further for it. As the book so far has largely summarized the content of Howie’s contributions to research and theory in these areas, we focus here instead on what his career can tell us about the process of engaging in research, theory-building, and scholarship writ large. In these reflections, we draw not only on Howie’s academic record, but also our collective experiences with him as a colleague and mentor.

Lessons to Be Drawn From Howie’s Research (or *The HG Principles of Research*)

1. Challenge assumptions. A major theme in Howie’s work is not passively accepting widely held beliefs. His early work in speech accommodation challenged (then) prevailing notions about style shifting and the meaning of intra-individual speech variation. His cross-cultural work on intergenerational communication challenged notions that experiences of aging are more positive in the East than the West. His more recent work on successful aging has challenged (and continues to challenge) negative perceptions of aging, and prejudice towards older adults.

2. Observe and engage with the world, for art (research) imitates life. As noted above, the developmental trajectory of Howie’s work highlights how real-world contexts and theory can dynamically inform each other. Inspiration for Howie’s research and theorizing draws on real-world events and situations: his work teaches us that looking around the world, observing what we see, and asking, “Why does this happen?” can be a fruitful beginning to a scholarly journey. Similarly, his work illustrates the power of taking theory and applying it to real-world situations to provide new insights (e.g., accommodation in police-civilian encounters, or hospital and healthcare contexts).

3. Make a model (or some principles). As the many theories, satellite theories, and models developed over his career attest, Howie understands and appreciates the power of an organizing framework (and see Giles, this volume, for additional models). Indeed, anyone who has worked with Howie has likely experienced his insistence on trying to draw together and represent key points in this way. (And look, here we are, doing it!) While sometimes intimidating—particularly when one is a first-year graduate student—the value of this process is undeniable. Creating models promotes structured thinking; it teaches us to consolidate and organize our ideas, and to draw out key insights and generalizations. It helps us understand where we are, and what we know, but also helps identify the gaps, which tell us where to go next. The theories and models Howie and his co-authors have constructed over his career have been important tools for organizing the programs of research he has undertaken. In doing this, Howie has never neglected existing theory; rather, he has made serious efforts (which is rare in our fields) to incorporate it into his own models.

4. Never stop iterating. Howie's career also clearly demonstrates that a scholar's work is never done. Creating a model helps us solidify and organize what we know at a given point in time, but models and theories are never finished products; they can also be revised, extended, and improved. CAT began as a relatively simple set of propositions around speech style convergence; today, it is one of the most comprehensive theories of interpersonal and intergroup communication adjustment (and, indeed, some would argue, the process of communication itself) in any discipline. Howie's work also highlights how the application of theory to real-world contexts can inform theory development: when the theory and the reality we observe don't quite match, it's time to reconsider our models (or theory), and amend them accordingly.

5. Make the world a better place. While real-world experiences and contexts serve as important sources of scholarly inspiration and feedback, they are also real places, with real people, and real problems to solve. As several of the chapters in this book underscore, an important theme across Howie's career was the translation of his work to real-world settings, and corresponding efforts to improve those settings through the application of theory and research. This is also visible in the tremendous number of hours he has spent as a volunteer police officer with the Santa Barbara Police Department (and his recent formalized role as their Director of Volunteer Services, following his official retirement from the University of California, Santa Barbara). These undertakings also reflect his personal and professional commitment to justice, fairness, and social equality as core values.

6. Love what you do. Last, but certainly not least, anyone who knows Howie can attest to his passion for what he does, and the positive energy he brings to his endeavors. While he certainly appreciates—and, appropriately, celebrates—what he achieves, it is the journey and not the destination that has driven his accomplishments. His enthusiasm for new ideas, interesting thoughts, and novel perspectives is palpable in interactions with him, be they face-to-face conversations or emails exchanged across many time zones. In his work on successful aging, Howie has argued that having *zest for life* is an important component of aging well (Giles, Davis, Gasiorek, & Giles, 2013). This zest is apparent in all Howie does, and serves as a reminder of the importance, and power, of “love of the game.”

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have sketched out a perspective on intergroup communication that takes as its starting point the interactive dyad or group. In one sense, this approach is obvious, as everyone knows that all communication is between people. In terms of research, however, this perspective has tended to be neglected. We suspect this is because it is logistically difficult, and because the meta-methodology of the fields that contribute to research on intergroup communication (mainly

social psychology and communication) has not generally accommodated dyadic data very well. That situation is changing now. New, automated ways of observing and analyzing behavior, including text mining, computerized text analysis, and big data approaches, allow researchers to test hypotheses and models that have heretofore been out of range. Statistical modeling techniques are also increasingly sophisticated, allowing researchers to accurately represent complex data and designs in ways that were not possible before. Our hope is that this book will generate research that uses these new tools and methods to examine dyadic communication in sophisticated detail. This would be the natural next step in the research tradition that Howie Giles has pioneered.

The perspective we develop in this chapter also accommodates a type of theorizing that Howie has long advocated—general theories that take adequate account of context. There has long been a debate between scholars (often from social psychology) who aim for simple, elegant, and universal accounts of behavior, and other scholars (many from sociolinguistics) who propose that each context is unique and needs its own theories. Theories in intergroup communication, if they are to be useful and comprehensive, must be both universal and specific, and be both simultaneously. CAT is one of the few theories even to attempt this task. The price is complexity, and this is no doubt part of the reason for Howie's model-making and iterative stance on research. The preliminary model we present here (see Figure 52.1) is put forward in this spirit, and offers a new angle on the tenets of CAT. We hope it will prove useful in generating research and theory.

We hope you have enjoyed this book, and that we have done justice to the enormous contribution that Howie Giles has made to our field. We also hope that our and your own research will continue the traditions that he has started and nurtured for more than four decades, so that they last for many more decades to come.

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