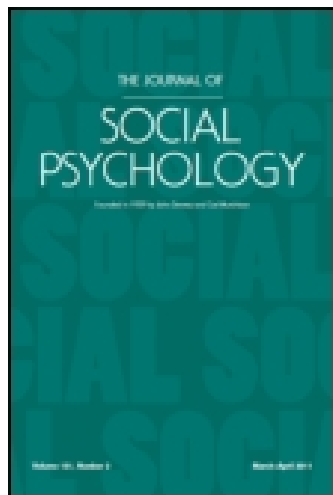


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DELEGATE COMMUNICATION AS AN INDEX OF GROUP TENSION*

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A. INTRODUCTION

This study applied two systems of content analysis to the speeches made by the Soviet delegation to the General Assembly of the League of Nations. Bugental's (4) content analytical method was designed for clinical psychology. Bales' (1) categories were developed for small group research. When both systems are used together, deeper insights into social behavior result.

B. PROCEDURE

Bugental's system has six categories:

1. *Self*. This category consists of statements of the "I am . . ." type. For example, "We (Russia) represent here a new state. . ."

2. *Self-on-self*. This category contains statements in which the effect of one aspect of the self upon another aspect of the self is described. For example, ". . . this (development) on territories where, before the Soviet regime, all nationalities except the dominating Russian were being stamped out . . ."

3. *Self-on-not-self*. This category describes the manner in which the self affects that which is not part of the self. For example, ". . . the Soviet Union has abstained from any intervention in the negotiations of the Czechoslovak government . . ."

4. *Not-self-on-self*. This category includes all statements concerning the effects of others upon one's self. For example, "Even after the most extreme forms of intervention in the affairs of our state were over, the hostility of the outer world continued to be manifest . . ."

5. *Not-self-on-not-self*. This category contains statements in which one referent, other than the self, relates to another. For example, "The League of Nations has not carried out its obligations to these states."

6. *Not-self*. This category is composed of descriptions of referents not explicitly related to the self or to another referent. For example, "The aggressor states have grown immensely during the last three years."

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We defined the "self" to include statements in which the self referred to was Russia or the Soviet government, the speaker himself, and the League of Nations when the speaker identified himself or his nation with the League.

Bales' system employs 12 categories, the last six of which are the negative aspects of these presented below.

1. *Shows solidarity*; raises other's status, gives help, rewards.
2. *Shows tension release*; jokes, laughs, shows satisfaction.
3. *Agrees*; passively accepts, understands, concurs.
4. *Gives suggestion*; direction, implies autonomy for others.
5. *Gives opinion*; evaluates, analyses, shows feeling.
6. *Gives orientation*; informs, repeats, clarifies, confirms.

Thirteen speeches were analyzed. They include all the speeches made by the Soviet delegation from the Fifteenth through the Nineteenth Meetings of the General Assembly of the League of Nations. The speeches were studied in English translation. The unit of analysis was the simple sentence.

Each speech was considered separately. For each speech the units (simple sentences) were placed in Bugental's categories and then in Bales'. A Pearson product-moment correlation of the coder's first and second sortings of the data, occurring four months apart, indicated a reliability coefficient of .93.

C. RESULTS

The frequencies of response in each category for every speech with all other speeches were intercorrelated according to both systems of analysis. Inspection of these intercorrelations suggested that there were two distinct patterns in each system of content analysis.

In order to test the differences between patterns we converted the raw frequencies in each category to percentages. These percentages were summed within each category and the t test applied to the means.

Bugental's categories yield two patterns, *A* and *B*, with one speech external to both. Pattern *A* represents a higher frequency of self-on-not-self statements than Pattern *B*. Both patterns have low frequencies of self and self-on-self statements. The number of not-self-on-self statements is also low for these Soviet speeches.

The speeches in Pattern *A* are substantively similar. They include general speeches upon the Soviet Union's entrance into the League, comments on the over-all work of the League, very little mention of the aggressiveness of other nations, and little direct disagreement. These speeches wrestle with the effects of the Soviet Union upon situations outside Russia. They re-

iterate Russian proposals which were made upon the Soviet Union's admission to the League.

Speeches in Pattern *B* are also similar among themselves. They were made, with but one exception, after Russia had been in the League for two years. They contain statements about nations outside the Soviet Union and the manners in which such nations relate to each other. The speeches are antagonistic. Other nations' actions and intentions are challenged. Dissatisfaction is expressed with both the members of the League and with the

TABLE 1
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MEAN PERCENTAGES OF THE PATTERNS OF
SPEECHES IN EACH SYSTEM OF CONTENT ANALYSIS

Bugental's categories	Mean percentages		<i>t</i> Ratio	Level of significance
	Pattern A	Pattern B		
Self	.06	.04	1.38	
Self-Self	.06	.03	.86	
Self-Not-Self	.43	.22	3.34	.01
Not-Self-Self	.11	.13	.40	
Not-Self-Not-Self	.19	.29	2.46	.05
Not-Self	.16	.29	2.79	.02
Bales' categories	Mean percentages		<i>t</i> Ratio	Level of significance
	Pattern C	Pattern D		
Solidarity	.02	.02	.53	
Tension Release	.03	.02	.28	
Agrees	.02	.05	2.11	.05
Suggests	.04	.02	.37	
Gives Opinion	.44	.30	2.00	
Gives Orientation	.18	.40	4.93	.001
Asks Orientation	.00	.12	.00	
Asks Opinion	.02	.03	.04	
Asks Suggestion	.00	.00	.37	
Disagrees	.03	.00	1.66	
Shows Tension	.02	.06	.88	
Shows Antagonism	.19	.05	2.18	.05

League's own functioning. Speeches in Pattern *B* were made when the world was embroiled in the Spanish Civil War, the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, and the Japanese invasion of China. At the same time, the Soviet Union was undergoing its political purges.

Upon further examination it was discovered that the speech which fell into neither Patterns *A* or *B* of the Bugental system was the only one of the 13 studied which was delivered by a delegate other than M. Litvinov or M. Potemkine. This suggests that these categories distinguish among individual delegates representing the same nation.

Bales' categories also detect two patterns of speeches. Pattern *D* has a

higher frequency of agreements and statements giving orientation and fewer instances showing antagonism than Pattern *C*.

Antagonistic statements were made by the Soviet Union upon entry into the League. After a quiescent period, antagonism recurs in later speeches. After having "given orientation" the delegates turned more directly toward "giving opinion" and "showing antagonism." But Patterns *C* and *D* do not differ as distinctly in content as do *A* and *B*.

D. DISCUSSION

Bugental's categories afford one major problem: what may be taken as "self" and "other?" Our classification was quite utilitarian and held up well enough upon retrial. A more extensive system, however, might include the following: the self (I, we); the situation or problem (it); the other (you); and the others (he, they). It may prove fruitful to relate such categories as these to a theory of leadership as outlined by Benne (3) or Grace (5). For political research, any one of these categories may have to be subdivided. For instance: the self (I, we), the Soviet government, the people of, the representative of, etc. It might be important to test the hypothesis that these are equivalent selves.

The high frequency in one of Bales' categories, "gives opinion," is corroborated by the author himself. To discard his category and/or to force the data into more dynamic categories might reduce the reliability of the system while it distorted the reality of the situation. Barker's (2) recent research in psychological ecology confirms the mundanity of daily behavior. Our problem as social psychologists is to understand this very normality and not concentrate upon the infrequent, if exciting, extremes in behavior.

Analyses which were made by dividing the speeches into thirds and fifths indicated no significant differences within or between the categories in either system.

We might summarize by saying that when the Soviet Union entered the League of Nations, during a period of relative domestic and world accord, its delegates' speeches contained more self references and statements of orientation than after the Soviet Union had been a member of the League for two years. In that interim period, the calm at home and abroad had been shattered. With these changing events the speeches of the Soviet Union's delegation contained significantly more references to other nations' actions as well as more antagonistic statements and opinions.

E. CONCLUSIONS

Changes in the tension of a group may be determined by analyzing the communication of its representatives.

If we grant this assumption, then the following hypotheses are suggested by this study.

1. The more recently a group has entered an organization, the more frequent will be self references and/or statements of orientation by that group's delegates.

2. Frequent statements about other groups (infrequent self references), suggest greater tension within or upon the group.

3. Frequent statements of antagonism and/or opinion suggest greater tension within or upon the group.

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