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Interactional Synchrony: A Fundamental Condition for Communication

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter pays attention to the intention of communicating with regard to inducing an immediate interaction between two parties. This intention is not only that of an addresser, but also that of an addressee. This is distinct from the intention to transfer particular information or the intention to draw a particular reaction from others. The latter forms of intentions are attributed only to the addresser and, as such, should be examined only in another, subsequent, phase of communication.

In the following discussion I intend to examine how people adjust and regulate their behavior when they find themselves placed in a situation where they intend to establish and develop communication, or in contrast, intend to discontinue or disregard communication. The inducement of immediate interaction is the necessary condition for communication. Inducement can occur in two ways: one way is to establish a single focus of attention which participants can share; the other is the mutual agreement of the participants to communicate. In order to consider this, I shall use two ethnographic instances. The San and Turkana peoples that I will compare can in some ways be considered polar examples that are mutually contrasting.

To induce some form of interaction is itself regarded as the goal of communication. In a courtesy exchange of greetings, to borrow Malinowski's term, the aims of "phatic communion" [MALINOWSKI 1949] can be observed. After discussing the San and Turkana, I will consider communication that is conducted with the aim of inducing such communion. This will be exemplified by participants involved in a) the parade of a traditional Japanese festival, and b) the musical performance of the Japanese traditional art of *Noh*.

In this type of communication, the intention of the participant to communicate to others is considered an indispensable condition. This intention is restricted only to the inducement of some form of interaction and, therefore, other intentions that can be distinguished from it (e.g. the intention to transmit certain information to another person or the intention of gaining a certain reaction from another) will not be examined here.

In viewing 'communication' as a transfer of information, the information

received must, as much as possible, be the same as that which was intended to be transferred. In the study of 'non-verbal communication', however, researchers face many instances in which one receives information or a message that is unintended by the sender. Extending the definition of communication to include its non-verbal aspect, they accordingly pay special attention to cases where the same information is transmitted to all or at least a statistically high proportion of recipients. In this respect, at the extreme, the actual intention of the sender to communicate might be considered irrelevant to the communicative function of behavior.

In many cases of bodily communication, the sender's intention to transfer some particular piece of information is either vague or even absent. However, if the interactional process induced by a particular aim irrelevant to communication is also considered to be communication, there remains the question of just what criteria distinguish communication from other phenomena.

Furthermore, in discussions about the nature of communication, the addressee's intention to take part in communication tends to be ignored. Because the addressee's attention seems to be regarded as an indispensable premise for entering into communication, the condition of whether or not the addressee intends to communicate is not examined. In real life, however, it is not always easy to draw the attention of a partner in order to conduct immediate interaction. Attracting attention may be considered the first step towards intentional communication. One who intends to communicate must catch a partner's attention and subsequently involve him in some kind of interaction.

Civil inattention [GOFFMAN 1963] and other mechanisms of avoiding contacts with others are an important part of everyday social life. My earlier research as a primatologist convinced me that this is true even for non-human primates. Among Japanese monkeys that live in social groups, the phenomena of avoidance mechanisms that include spacing out and retreating from dominant individuals are essential for maintaining the orderly social structure [MORI 1977]. Among Anubis baboons, the approach-retreat interaction is the most reliable index of the dominant-subordinate relationship [ROWELL 1966]. I believe this relationship to be the most important basis for organization among non-human primate societies.

To paraphrase Goffman, civil inattention in human social communication is an interpersonal ritual that reduces social contacts in public places to the minimum, as well as inhibiting violation of informational preserve. This 'ritual' is a significant form of unfocused interaction that immediately precedes focused interaction between two or more persons. Before proceeding to focused interaction, mutual glances first play a special role.

> The more clearly individuals are obliged to refrain from staring directly at others, the more effectively will they be able to attach special significance to a stare, in this case, a request for an encounter. The rule of civil inattention thus makes possible, and "fits" with, the clearance function given to looks into others' eyes [GOFFMAN 1963: 95].

At this phase of communication either an addresser or an addressee is concerned

with whether or not to participate in some form of immediate interaction.

EXTREME METHODS OF INDUCING IMMEDIATE INTERACTION

A partner's non-attention, whether pretended or not, is the first hurdle that someone who intends to communicate must clear. The addresser attempts to involve the addressee in immediate interaction, but the addressee may sometimes refuse the proposal. In every society, there are conventional thresholds which prevent imprudent overtures from occurring. The addressee, on the other hand, has to keep in mind a kind of implicit contract that obliges him to make himself available for immediate interaction. Individuals on common ground are thus required to regulate their behavior according to culturally defined rights and obligations when initiating contacts and responding to overtures.

In this section I intend to analyze this kind of behavioral regulation using two examples. The first example concerns the San people (Bushmen) in the central part of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, Botswana. The second concerns the Turkana people in the northwestern part of the Turkana territory, in northwestern Kenya. Field research on these two peoples has been undertaken by several scholars, including myself. Anthropological studies of the San in this area were conducted by Tanaka [1976, 1980], Silberbauer [1972, 1981], and Sugawara [1984, 1988, see this volume]. Intensive studies among the Turkana in this area have been carried out by Itani [1980, 1982], and Ohta [1982, 1984, 1987].

The San live in a very arid area where they subsist by hunting and gathering. The Turkana, who are Eastern-Nilotic speakers, live in a semi-desert area and are dependent upon the products of livestock such as cattle, camels, goats, sheep, and donkeys.

Hesitation to Act upon Others

The hesitation that is observable during interactions among the San that involve some type of object being handed to a person provides an interesting point for discussion. The San never hand over an object directly to the recipient, but stop mid-way between the actors involved.

Take, for example, an instance I observed where a woman stepped forwards to hand a cooking pot to her mother-in-law of senior years. The latter stretched out her hand, while remaining seated, still unable to reach the pot. The old woman then, with difficulty, raised herself up and took a step forward. Finally, the two women stretched themselves out towards each other as far as they possibly could and the pot at last changed hands.

When an attempt is made to hand an object to someone who does not seem to notice, the giver will wait until he gets some kind of reaction. Note yet another observed instance. When a man, in the middle of his work, had the intention of passing over a tool he no longer needed, he held it out in his left hand in the direction of his friend, who was at a distance from him, while continuing his work with

his right hand. This tended to give the impression that he gave little heed to his intention to pass over the tool. I have frequently observed this type of situation, especially during pipe sharing and group work activities.

In the case of the recipient, an indifferent manner may also be displayed, especially when the recipient is offered something he desires. The following are examples of this. (1) An old man accepted a cup of hot tea and placed it in the palm of his hand and the giver, concerned, asked him if it was too hot. (2) A woman, who had come to get medicine, opened her mouth to receive it as though she was hesitant to take the medicine by her own hand. These examples seem to indicate that the San actually have the intention to make their passive role apparent in interaction, even when they are the recipient. In my dealings with the San, I became aware that when handing them such things as food, cigarettes etc., after an initial offer, it was expected that I once again further extend my hand towards them in offering.

The following are more examples of the behavior the San employ when receiving things they actually desire. Just before stretching out their hands, they sometimes clap a single time. They seem to be attempting to make their surprise at the offer as obvious as possible. The following is an illustration of this 'surprise'. A woman who was having her meal abruptly dropped her spoon on her dish making a loud sound when she was offered more. Yet another old man, who was offered a cup of tea, dropped a small musical instrument (played by twanging the metal parts with the fingers) he was holding to the ground, as if to indicate that he was startled and that this act was totally involuntary.

Although such behavior displayed by the receivers might be interpreted as a shrewd act, engineered in a way to give the people nearby the impression that the recipient acquired objects because of the giver's spontaneity, such acts may also be interpreted as the counter behavior which corresponds to that of the giver, in an effort to obscure the giver's overtures. The focus of the behavior, on both sides, is on the anticipations of the other's moves rather than the intention to cause an effect in the other. It can be assumed that such behavior is not related to shrewdness and the calculated tactics of individuals but, in fact, are cultural conventions for social interaction. This point becomes evident when such behavior is contrasted with the examples of behavior, associated with the above types of interaction, to be found among the Turkana.

The Turkana people act upon others without any hesitation, and do not follow any conspicuous manners associated with the giving and receiving of objects. They sometimes try to obtain an addressee's attention by pushing, poking, or shaking the addressee's body with their hands or with the wooden sticks and clubs that every man always carries. They attempt to attract his attention even when he is talking with another person, and may even repeat the addressee's name until he responds. The Turkana aim at drawing the partner's attention, regardless of whether it is convenient for the partner at that time, and willfully attempt to lead the course of interaction. The partner, however, usually accepts the above initiated actions without complaint—no matter how rude they may seem.

Neglect of Proposals for Interaction: The Case of the San

The proponent's tendency not to signal overt signs for the initiation of interaction allows more room for the partner's inattention. Among the San this is intensified to the point where the proponent tends to act in a sufficiently tentative and ambiguous manner that, if his proposal is in fact neglected, allows him to act as though no initiation had been intended in the first place.

This type of behavior is prominent in the taking of turns in speaking during conversation. The San do not call other people by their given names but by a common noun, *d//oko* (adult man or elder one). A man who wanted to join a group of men who were about to depart for the borehole repeatedly uttered *d//oko* in a faint voice to attract the attention of the person who had been with him previously but had subsequently left to visit another hut. The result was that the caller could only wait until the other man returned at his own convenience. In another case, a mother who wanted her daughter to help her, monotonously repeated the child's name more than ten times in a calm voice before the child actually replied. In fact, in between the calls, the child actually went out the hut to take a look at her mother, but as the mother did not notice her, the child retreated back into the hut.

Among the San, it is common to find people who are either immersed in their own work or off in their own world during a gathering where people are indulging in an animated conversation. The San sometimes ignore even speech directed to them by a person nearby. They demonstrate this passivity through a variety of reactions. For example, they may stare blankly and unmovingly for a long time in any direction other than that of the speaker. The following is an instance of the above that I witnessed during my time in the field. In a hut two men were intimately engaged in a conversation apart from the rest of the people there. At one point, one of the men crept out through the entrance and continued to stare outside intently for a lengthy period of time, seeming as though he had heard something curious. During the course of this event, the other continued to speak, oblivious of his partner's action. Then after the partner returned, the ignored speaker likewise chose to ignore the speech of the partner who had ignored him.

The neglect of the other is also demonstrated by complete change in the topic of conversation. More conspicuously, the conversation may actually be directed to a different third party. The following is an illustration of this point. A man asked his younger brother about the money he had received, but instead of answering the question, the younger brother gave a startled cry directed toward some people he was watching who were chasing a donkey. After this, he proceeded to talk about the donkey with a third person nearby. The elder brother asked once more about the money, but was ignored yet again as the conversation between the younger brother and the third party continued. The interesting point to note here is that these utterances did not overlap but happened successively, just as in an ordinary conversation. This indicates that, in fact, the younger brother was actually listening to his older brother.

In extreme cases, the partner may be completely ignored while a conversation is started anew with a third person despite the fact that the partner is still in the midst of his conversation. The following is a typical illustration of this. An old man had just finished complaining bitterly about his friend. Just as the partner started a counter to him, the old man turned around and spoke in a loud voice to a passer-by. The partner, greatly embarrassed by the loss of attention, rolled his eyes left to right to express his discontent. Nevertheless, he did not cease speaking. He soon found another person to speak to and went on talking to him as if nothing had happened.

Frequent Overlapping of Utterances

A point to be noted in the above episode is the fact that the ignored speaker never ceases to speak. In other words, he also disregards the reactions of the person with whom he has proposed interaction. The mutual disregard of each other's utterance by the parties concerned inevitably results in an overlap of utterances. Even in a dialogue, the overlapping of utterances may occur. When a woman continued to tell a long story to spite another woman, the latter began to speak in a suppressed voice and averted her eyes. The former carried on speaking and thus a prolonged overlap developed.

For us, the fundamental rule of conversation is one person at a time speaks. This rule compels one not to speak until the other has finished. The San, however, seem to think that the speaker must allow the addressee to behave as he likes. On this point, therefore, the speaker must not cease from speaking simply because the addressee has begun to speak. Beginning an act of speech is not an act based on the premise of the addressee's silence.

As a consequence, there are frequent occasions of utterance overlap in a circle of people conducting a conversation. When part of the audience stops listening to the speaker and begins to speak, an utterance overlap inevitably occurs. It may also occur in the following situation. In a gathering, when a shared experience of a number of the members of the group becomes the topic of conversation, utterance overlaps may take over almost all the conversation. Whenever I asked questions the answers to which were obvious to the San, I did not receive just one answer but a deluge of answers from all those present. In this case, there is a particular nuance associated with the utterance overlap. In a sense, the speakers are competing with each other for listeners. They are all on an equal footing and, thus, compete on the basis of the degree of details in their depiction and the skillfulness of their narration.

There are more cases of these utterance overlaps with other diverse nuances. One extreme case is the overlap of utterances in a heated dispute, an occurrence which rarely takes place among the San. This is a man-to-man direct exchange of utterances and is an expression of overt hostility, an expression that seems common enough to us. But such extreme cases are rare, and hostility and dissatisfaction tend to be expressed in more covert forms. When an old man complained about his

son's way of working, the son made an apology in a lower voice: an act conducted within the context of overlapping utterances. This can be regarded as a delicate device for expression of a counter opinion directed towards a respected person.

Another extreme case is where the utterance overlap occurs between two people of the same party, the utterances of which are directed towards another complementary party of two people. For instance, two young men and two young women were chatting together. At one point, the two women played the part of speakers while the two men played the part of listeners. When the two men spoke, the women stopped talking. The transitions from one turn to another were very smooth, yet each turn constantly consisted of lengthy overlapping utterances by the two men or by the two women. They seemed to demonstrate a cooperative relationship through the sharing of turns.

In a like manner, additional or complementary remarks are sometimes made. At a judicial gathering, one of the observers overlapped his speech, in a manner most modest, with that of his friend's testimony; an act which was regarded as a favor to the friend. Even an overlap which might appear to be competitive may, in fact, be cooperative at least in the first place. It is therefore not always clear whether an utterance overlap is meant to be competitive or cooperative.

Suspension of a Proposal as Something Provisional

Among the San, even though a speaker may disregard any counter-speech by others, whether or not others are listening to him is, of course, important to him. When he begins to speak, he tries to secure at least one listener. This is, however, a troublesome task among the San, because anyone may, at any time, start to speak, as illustrated in the above episodes. Hence, at the same time, the speaker must be ready for a situation in which a person whom he intends to address neglects his speech. In such a situation he must try to make his intention to address a particular person obscure. The individuals who are speaking often shift their eyes from one person to another in the audience. If a member of the audience were perhaps to fix his gaze upon a speaker, he would periodically meet the glance of the speaker, but this glance would soon be directed elsewhere.

Even if this procedure were to be an effective way of dealing with the fact that the partner being spoken to is ignoring the speaker, there is no possible way of hiding the fact that the speaker is actually speaking. Therefore, this cannot be considered in any way to be a final solution to the speaker's problem. From then on, the ignored speaker must worry about the aggravated situation where no one at all will lend an ear to his words. In sum, in the context of communication among the San, a speech-act is, in itself, ineffective for the initiating of interaction. The speaker has no choice but to wait for the other person's positive response. Although the speech-act openly functions as a presentation of what is intended to be transferred to others, this act is not formally acknowledged as a proposal of immediate interaction until an agreement is finally approved openly by the addressee.

It is thus the addressee who holds the key to immediate interaction. He is con-

cerned with whether or not he appear to be listening, irrespective of whether he actually is or not. The addressee sometimes exaggerates the degree of his attention by earnestly nodding to the speaker, to the extent that he nods repeatedly and automatically. He also echoes the speaker's words, anticipating the last word of the sentence which he utters almost simultaneously with the speaker. On the other hand, there are various gestures indicating non-attention which have already been described above.

This is not the case only for a speech-act, but is also applicable to every proposal for contact with others. This kind of proposal can be suspended at any time as something provisional, although it may not be intended for it to be totally abandoned. While keeping the possibility of initiation of immediate interaction alive, this proposal is extended to others. One could persist in his proposal as long as he cares to, although he might sometime or other abandon it of his own accord if he fails to get a positive response from others.

Such a manner of regulating behaviors among the San typically appears in the greetings interaction described by Sugawara [1988]. Sugawara analyzed diverse processes of greeting interactions in the common situation where someone enters a scene already occupied by one or more persons. One of the most essential features he pointed out was that the visitor "is met by the residents with the neglect of his appearance" [1988: 198–199]. In another excerpt he said, "the conspicuous feature of this process, looking most curious to the non-San observer, is that the visitor silently approaching the scene behaves as if he were an 'invisible man', and whether he speaks or not, the residents behave as if they had not perceived his appearance" [1988: 207].

In such circumstances, common to all the San examples referred to in this section, all participants in a gathering focus their attention on one aspect of communication; that is, the establishment of mutual agreement to bring about some immediate interaction. This aspect may be regarded as a kind of "metacommunication" which serves to establish, omit, prolong, or discontinue communication. This can be clearly distinguished from the process of exchanging information related to specified issue.

Aside from this, the participants are at the same time concerned with another aspect of communication: a then-and-there realization of mutual agreement about a certain issue. In the greeting situation, a visitor and the others in a gathering are concerned with whether or not to greet each other.

As Sugawara notes, the decision to greet each other corresponds with such variables as the participants' age, sex and social distance (a term used here in its wider sense to include the meaning of a distant kinship relationship, etc.). Sugawara has summarized the situation as follows. "Greeting is very likely to occur between any 2 adult men who meet with each other not so frequently, and have a relatively distant kinship relationship with each other" [1988: 196–197]. Therefore, greeting is the manifestation of recognizing the relationship between the two men. On the other hand, "the 'superfluous' greeting addressed to the inappropriate party

causes a joking interaction accompanied by physical contact" [1988: 200].

As a consequence, in the situation where individuals can no longer pretend that they do not notice a proposal of contact, they must be concerned with another "meta" level of communication, namely communication concerning the relationship between the participants (cf. [BATESON 1972: 178]). This kind of metacommunication becomes obvious especially when an overt proposal of contact is totally abandoned. For example, when two men developed a long overlap of utterances, it became obvious that all the people present were listening to one of the speakers. The neglected speaker focused on a particular person and then eagerly talked to him, but the listener did not accept the proposal for interaction and after a lengthy period, the neglected one fell silent and finally left the gathering.

The Turkana Way of Inducing Immediate Interaction

As mentioned above, the Turkana people try to draw an addressee's attention regardless of the latter's convenience at the initial stage of communication. Their willful behavior aimed at leading the course of interaction is very consistent. This behavior is typically observable in situations where one requests or begs another for something.

P. H. Gulliver has referred to the Turkana's begging behavior in the opening chapter of his voluminous ethnography on the Turkana:

> As he grows up the youth must learn to demand and obtain his rights and privileges and to protect his interests—for no-one else will do it for him. He will be constantly begged for all he has by friends and acquaintances—his beads, his tobacco, his animals, etc.,—and must know when to give, how much and how to deal with continual begging that is inherent in Turkana social life. [GULLIVER 1951: 7].

At the beginning of the 'begging interaction', the Turkana overtly demand something of others. Other conspicuous aspects of their methods to induce this kind of interaction can be detected in the utterances heard in this situation. They often demand an immediate answer, as in the case of demanding a decision between two or more possible choices designated by them. A woman living in the neighboring hamlet asked me to buy a cooking pot; I made the apology that I had not enough money to do so and therefore declined. After repeating her demand several times, she suddenly said, "There are two kinds of people. One is the kind who gives the object asked for at once, and the other is the kind of person who puts it off until tomorrow. Which are you?"

In various situations, the Turkana frequently ask, "Is it good or bad?" The answer to this kind of question is obvious to both the speaker and the addressee. Typically in the begging interaction, they say, "Is 'to beg others for something' good or bad?" In this manner, they strictly limit the possibility of the addressee's responses and make the latter's attention focus on their own need.

The Turkana also try to induce the addressee to participate in an interaction by

"arousing their partner's emotion." When I sometimes refused their demands, they often said, "How selfish you are!" It was not rare for the one begging to express anger or aggression in the course of their begging. One day a man, very familiar to me, brought his wife and demanded sugar from me for his wife. When I again refused, he almost flew into a rage and loudly claimed that even though he was a good friend of mine and thus begging me for the sugar, I was too mean to give it to him. In such situations they sometimes became so totally absorbed in their emotion that they no longer have any regard for their appearance. This manner of behavior may consequently force an addressee into interaction.

There is another method which the Turkana use to lead the course of interaction in order to make it accord to their own will. When an addressee expresses a concern independent of the addresser's will, the Turkana try to force the former to revise or withdraw his utterance. Once, while negotiating with a sheep trader, I declared that I would not buy above a particular price. I was quickly reproved by the people around us, who insisted that I must reconsider awarding the bargained price offered by the trader. In a like manner, an employee of mine reprimanded me for not being concerned with her request for a pay raise after I refused her with the explanation that my financial reserves were almost non-existent and therefore I could not afford to give her a raise.

These manners are entirely different from those of the San. Among the Turkana, it seems that individuals have no choice but to pay attention to the utterances directed at them. Their refusal may sometimes be reprimanded only because it does no fall within the context proposed by the speaker. Consequently, the addressee is obliged to participate in an interaction which is conducted almost totally within the context of the addresser's concern.

This behavior, however, is distinguished from that which actually compels others to do something. For the Turkana, it seems that no one can compel another to do anything. At one time two school boys were sitting on the rear of the car in which we were about to depart for a long trip. Despite insistent request by the driver and other passengers to get down, our requests fell on deaf ears and we were unable to get them off the car. Also, whenever I went to the nearby town by car, there were the odd few who persisted in riding along, without my consent, all the way to town.

When one is begged, it is possible to refuse. (Ohta Itaru has outlined some Turkana standards of expressing a refusal [OHTA 1986].) One must learn not only when to give but also when to refuse in order to protect one's own interests. Actual refusal, however, is yet a delicate matter. In the context of reciprocal assistance among the Turkana, a refusal can be regarded as the refusal of a mutually close relationship because the premise stands that one should not beg from a stranger but should beg from a friend.

There is of course a need to further examine the way of reciprocity of the Turkana, but here I would like to limit myself to discussion of the following point. One more characteristic to be observed in this kind of interaction among the

Turkana is that the two sides involved in a begging interaction are actually both prepared to participate in and complete the interaction. Peculiar to this interaction is the fact that both sides consistently proceed according to the intention of the initiator. The most basic premise underlying these matters is that one never neglects an initiative for contact from others. Their responses to my prolonged silence, as they earnestly begged from me, illustrated this premise very clearly. Looking flustered, they implored me to utter something—even a refusal would do. It seemed, therefore, that I had violated, what is for them, the most fundamental convention for bringing about immediate interaction.

The striking contrasts between the San and the Turkana ways of inducing immediate interaction may be summarized as follows:

(1) The San can neglect an initiation, whereas the Turkana are obliged to attend to it.
(2) While among the San an addresser only waits for the addressee to agree, the Turkana, throughout the course of interaction, aim at persuading the addressee to react cooperatively.
(3) While the San try to advance the course of interaction by encouraging mutual agreement within the level of metacommunication, the Turkana, within their frame of interaction, try to facilitate mutual communication by establishing a more precise focus of attention on the speech in progress.

INTERACTION AIMED AT PROPAGATING ITSELF: *NEBUTA* AND *NOH*

The preceding explanations dealt with various examples of interaction aimed at yielding certain outcomes. The San examples were regarded as concerned with whether proposals to make contact with others will obtain the others' agreement or not. The Turkana examples concentrated upon the problem of whether or not they will proceed towards the goal designated by the initiator. However, participants in these interactions are not merely players whose concern is only simply the result of a number of possible outcomes. If the San are unable to obtain an audience they will leave the circle of conversation. Among the Turkana, refusal of a begging proposal may possibly be regarded as a rejection of close relationship between the participants. It is therefore quite feasible to suggest that both the San and the Turkana are also concerned with the matter of relationships between the participants.

The above forms of interaction are inevitably concerned with communication related to personal relationships. This kind of communication cannot be organized in the form of a sequence of questions followed by explicit answers. Both participants must delicately regulate their behavior which subsequently reflects their attitudes to the relationship concerned. In other words, they conduct and complete a particular course of interaction that, in itself, guarantees mutual confirmation of the relationship.

In this section, the focus of analysis is on interaction which is aimed at pro-

pagating itself. The goal of communication within this type of activity is to induce some form of interaction-in-itself. Like the interactions already commented on, this form of communication is concerned with matters of relationships between participants.

It is possible to engage in an activity that is free from any social obligation or motivation derived from how the activity benefits an individual. Play is an example of this. In a sense, this kind of interaction is aimed at propagating itself irrespective of its immediate outcomes. In such activity, however, each participant does not aim only at setting up an habitual form of the interaction, but also pays attention to the experience gained in the course of interaction. He aims repeatedly at reconfirming the experience. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi [1975], analyzing the activities aimed at "enjoyment", has proposed the idea of the experience of "flow", an experience of intense absorption. He concludes that self-propagating activity is the result of the desire to attain this experience.

Here, I will extend this conceptual framework for analyzing such activities as play and other ways of attaining enjoyment. These activities can be categorized as ones precisely concerned with the matter of relationships between self and others, or with the relationship between self and environment [BATESON 1972: 412–413]. The latter relationship is concerned with solitary behavior, and the former with social interaction. Both of these activities can be regarded as being self-propagating in the sense that each participant concentrates his attention on the actual experience involved within the activity. What is here called 'experience' becomes the basis for the reconfirmation of the relationship concerned.

'Group Excitement' in the Festival

The following data are from field research on the *nebuta* festival in Hirosaki, northeastern Japan, conducted during 1984 and 1985 [KITAMURA 1986]. In this festival, fifty to sixty groups, mostly from the residential quarters, enter the parade which proceeds along the main street of the city. Every year, the hundred to three hundred attendants of each group, over half of whom are children, parade the floats which they have built with their own hands. Unlike many other festivals, in the *nebuta* festival they do not dance, but simply walk about and shout conventional rhythmic cries such as "*ya-a-ya-do-o*" in time with each of the group's musical accompaniment, which usually consists of traditional Japanese drums and flutes.

I will concentrate upon the phenomenon of 'group excitement', or excitement based on the common enjoyment of a certain behavior by a group, which is spontaneously produced during this procession. People often claim that they experience something in this group atmosphere that they express with the word *ittaikan*—the feeling of 'oneness'. It is believed that 'group excitement' reaches its peak when a feeling of *ittaikan* is experienced by each member.

To analyze the mechanisms that produce this kind of 'group excitement', I have paid attention to the following particular characteristics of this festival:

(1) The wide difference in the level of 'group excitement' among the participating groups. (2) The two kinds of drums used in this procession: one is slung across the shoulder and carried by the player, and the other is placed on a cart and pulled by other people.

The drum carried is a traditional instrument which, in recent years, has tended to become more and more neglected by the groups who participate in the festival. One of the few groups which still utilize this drum is one on which I conducted field research. It is composed of long time inhabitants of a quarter who pride themselves in their use of the traditional drum. Other researchers and I who observed and participated in this study are of the opinion that this particular group's procession was prominent for its high level of 'group excitement'. I have made comparisons between the processions using carried drums and those using pulled drums. I believe that the contrasting features of these two types of groups will shed light on the mechanisms that produce 'group excitement'.

Using VTRs and a stop watch, the drum tempo of each participating group was measured and a comparison made between the two types of drums. The results were as follow (see Kitamura [1989] for details): (1) Wide variations in tempo among the groups using the pulled drums were detected, while only slight differences among those using the carried drums were apparent. (2) The tempo of the pulled drums was generally slow. (However, this is not a characteristic that is to be attributed to any feature of the drum itself.)

These two kinds of drums are marked by the difference in the manner of use that determines their general tempo. The carried drum shakes while the carrier strides, and, consequently, the carrier must play it in accordance with the rhythm of his stride. In other words, the drum tempo is regulated by the player's walking pace. In contrast to this, the pulled drum is steady, and the player himself must keep pace with the drum. As the player must keep within beating distance of the drum, his stride is dictated by the movement of the cart. Due to the cart stopping and speeding up etc., the player tends to stray from the natural rhythm of his walking stride. Therefore the pace of the player's stride can be said to have no influence on the drum tempo itself.

These differences clearly explain why the pulled drums have a wider variation in tempo. The decision of the tempo of the pulled drum must be attributed to the player's conscious control. This also explains a second result: the player's preference for a slow tempo. However, the issue here is not the actual tempo preference but the effect that the arbitrary tempo, directed by the player, has of restraining the rest of the group's pace of progress and their cries. In the procession with the pulled drum, the arbitrary tempo directed by the player restrains the other's strides and utterances of cries.

The tempo of the carried drum is subject to the player's stride which is in close harmony with the entire procession of the group. Although that tempo affects the others' activities, it has already, in fact, been affected by them in the first place. There is a circular feedback process through which the synchronization of all the ac-

tivities in the whole group is achieved. Such synchronization is in contrast to that of the rigid cadence of military marching. I propose that the synchronization with other's activities by a one-sided controlling factor will not produce 'group excitement'.

From the above discussion it can be concluded that it is precisely interactional synchrony, based on circular feedback, that generates 'group excitement'. It may culminate in creating *ittaikan*, the feeling of oneness, in every member. Hence, it would be difficult for this feedback to operate under the conditions which are created by the use of a pulled drum.

Interactional Synchrony in a Different Form

I would like to further the discussion of the concept of interactional synchrony by analyzing the interaction of vocal and instrumental elements in the *Noh* theater, as described by Fujita Takanori [1988].

The instrumental elements in the *Noh* theater consist of three types of percussion—*taiko* (drum), *ootsuzumi* (hand drum) and *kotsuzumi* (tabor)—and a single flute, *nookan*. The vocal part is performed by *utaite* who neither sings nor recites but, rather, 'wails' the *uta* (form of song). Music in the *Noh* play can be broadly classified into two parts; *noru* and *norazu*, both of which are based on the term *nori*. *Nori* is understood in the vernacular as meaning the elated state of a person, caused by participation in an activity conducted with others. This state may sometimes be created in the *noru* part of the *Noh* play when the performers' playing is in concert.

The conspicuous features of this interaction are summarized as follows. (1) In the *noru* period, performers share a temporal order prescribed by a sequence of pulses of equal interval. (2) Each instrument, however, follows its own norm different from the others' in the grouping of sequential pulses, in the starting point of the unit, and in the manner of starting (see Fujita [1987] for a more detailed description). (3) There is a rule that each instrument player must not intentionally correspond with another's performance to the sacrifice of its own. It is hence possible that the performance of another instrument is neglected or opposed. (4) This state is then further intensified by the arrangement of *norazu*—which is based on the non-sharing of a sequential pulse—being placed before *noru*.

The whole performance should be regarded in its totality, as an overlap of independent performances. Nevertheless, even in a small way, performers do share the temporal order in *noru*, where it is possible to affect each other. In this part each instrument tries to draw the others into its own flow of pulse. Such interaction may sometimes culminate in a state of synchronization in the sequential pulses, although each instrument player never intends to correspond with the others.

Nori, in the *Noh* theater, is created through this process of one instrument affecting another. In other words, it is interactional synchrony that generates the *nori* in *Noh*, just as it creates the 'group excitement' in the *nebuta* festival. Moreover, the *nori* indicates not only a personal experience but also a kind of

group atmosphere. As Fujita has pointed out, *nori* itself is what guarantees the coexistence of heterogeneous parts of musical performance in the *Noh* theater [1988: 144]. *Nori* in the *Noh* theater and 'group excitement' in the *nebuta* festival can thus be said to share similar characteristics.

There is, however, a significant difference between these two phenomena. The pariticipants in the *Noh* musical performance consciously try to maintain their independent standpoints, while those in the festival procession do not. In the latter case, the participants willingly involve themselves in the positive feedback process, while in the *Noh* case a performer never intends to correspond with another. That is, the case of *Noh* emphasizes the independence of participants in interaction, while the case of the festival experience emphasizes the reciprocal affecting of activity. Both manners of activity can, however, cause interactional synchrony. (This is to be distinguished from the synchronization achieved among participants' activities caused by a one-sided controlling factor.)

DISCUSSION

The body, in the immediate presence of others, is an agent acting on, and reacting to, others as well as one that transmits information about itself. In activities of 'communication', the body as an acting agent requires another body which is capable of reacting cooperatively. At that time, the body as a reacting agent may sometimes cling to its independence by neglecting or opposing the action. While the initiator appeals to the openness of the other, the recipient requires an acknowledgement of his independence from the other. I place the problem of initiating an encounter and bringing about any kind of immediate interaction in this context.

Interactional synchrony is usually attributed to an innate ability of the body and to the unconscious use of this ability. It may be spontaneously produced in communicative interaction. This synchrony can be thought of as providing the foundation for communication in face-to-face interaction. Nevertheless, actions upon others with the intention of conducting communication do not necessarily lead to interactional synchrony. Synchrony can not be produced without another body's positive attitude toward the instigation of communication. This point can be related to the implicit contract that obliges individuals to keep themselves available for an encounter. The Turkana way of inducing immediate interaction seems to emphasize the demand for openness on the part of the addressee. It can be regarded as a cultural device meant for the avoidance of discommunication.

However, interactional synchrony must be distinguished from synchronization of activity which is caused by a one-sided controlling factor. Therefore, commuication based on interactional synchrony must be considered apart from the process where one actor forces another or where one actor is forced to obey another. This point can be related to the conventional thresholds which act to prevent imprudent overtures. The San way of conducting communication seems to emphasize the ad-

dresser's regard for an addressee's spontaneity. This is a cultural device for the avoidance of pseudo-communication.

Interactionally, synchronic communication may be achieved in the two ways. One is to induce an immediate interaction based on the premise of mutual openness among participants; the other is based on the premise of mutual acknowledgment of individual independence. The procession in the *nebuta* festival is an example of the former while the musical performance in the *Noh* theater is an example of the latter. Both interactions spontaneously create each participant's particular experience: either *ittaikan* or *nori.*

These particular experiences can be created in the special context in which participants are free from restrictions such as social obligation or motivation based on the possible benefits to be acquired by their behavior. These contexts may be thought of as devices that guarantee synchronization with the other's activity which is due to neither one-sided control nor to the abandonment of individual independence.

Interactional synchrony, however, can be achieved outside this special context. It may occur in ordinary interactions. The method employed by the Turkana can be regarded as a helpful device that enables the addresser to take the lead in interactional synchrony, while the San way can be regarded as a device which aids the addressee's lead. Although the matter of interactional synchrony did not come to the fore in the interactions among the San and Turkana peoples, it is implied that they do, in fact, look forward to it.

Among the Turkana, matters of establishing and maintaining friendship are one of the greatest concerns in their social life. Their ideal notion of a friend is one who freely gives and receives. It is quite clear that their main theme in communicative interaction is the establishment of mutual openness which guarantees the mutual confirmation of close relationships.

Among the San, on the other hand, immediate interaction essentially takes the form of the instigator waiting for the reactions of others. Not only do the San allow the addressee to neglect the instigator's initiating acts, but they also allow the addresser to behave as if he had not actually addressed anyone at all. At such a time, it seems that each participant is anxious about violating the other's independence. When interacting, his main concern is to solicit the other's spontaneous reaction which, in turn, complements his own action. Accumulated explicit acknowledgment of his actions may result in the confirmation of his identity as it is complemented by the other. This process is guaranteed only if the premise of mutual acknowledgment of individual independence is extant.

Although these two cultural traditions adopt two completely contrasting ways of communication, their essential concerns are common: they are concerned with matters on the 'meta' level of communication, namely communication about the relationship between participants. Moreover, these concerns can be detected in every cultural tradition. However, this kind of communication can not be achieved directly simply through a transfer of some particular information. It is, in a strict

sense, only interactional synchrony within the process of communication that guarantees a mutual confirmation of the relationship concerned. It can thus be said that interactional synchrony is a fundamental condition for communication.

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