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ABSTRACT

Noting that humans do not deal very well with differences despite thousands of years of practice, this paper argues that dealing with differences is an ethical issue for the 21st century to which speech communication departments must respond. The first part of the paper follows R. Johannesen's recommendation that ethical issues, particularly communication ethical issues, should be examined in a three step process: (1) specifying exactly what ethical criteria, standards, or perspectives are applied; (2) justifying the reasonableness and relevancy of these standards; and (3) indicating in what respects the communication evaluated succeeds or fails in measuring up to the standards. The second part of the paper is an evaluation of communication departments' role in this issue. The third part of the paper takes Johannesen's recommendations one step further by briefly discussing how speech communication departments can make changes that will assist in dealing with differences in the classroom. A diagram presenting five models which identify diversity in the classroom is included; contains 49 references. (RS)

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Our Ethical Responsibility: Utilizing Communication Courses to Recognize and Respond to Diversity

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Running Head: ETHICS AND DIVERSITY

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Even though humans have had thousands of years of practice, we do not seem to deal very well with differences. History has shown us countless examples of global and local crises that result from perceived or real differences. In January of 1991, the world was at war -- certainly the extreme end of not being able to deal well with differences. On a local scale, college and university campuses face an increase in threats against specific racial groups (Smith, 1989). Countless ethical issues and controversies are embedded in these situations, and it is certainly beyond the scope of this paper to analyze and put forth a solution to these crises. However, these are introduced here to lead us to the point that differences are a potential breeding ground for problems, and the severity of the potential problems should place learning how to deal with differences as a number one priority in our higher educational system.

The above paragraph undoubtedly raises many questions and issues, such as: Why is dealing with differences an issue for the higher educational system? What exactly are "differences"? Do they really exist? What differences do the differences make in the educational system? And, of course, can students and teachers really be taught how to deal with differences? This paper attempts to answer these questions by arguing dealing with differences is an ethical issue for the twenty-first century to which speech communication departments across the country must respond.

Part One of this paper follows Johannesen's (1983) recommendation that ethical issues, particularly communication ethical issues, should be examined in a three step process: "(1) specifying exactly what ethical criteria, standards or perspectives we are applying, (2) justifying the reasonableness and relevancy of these standards, and (3) indicating in what respects the communication evaluated succeeds or fails in measuring up to the standards" (p.9). Part Two is an evaluation of communication departments' role in this issue. In Part Three, I have taken Johannesen's recommendations one step further by briefly discussing about how we can begin to make changes that will assist in dealing with differences in the classroom.

Part One

Specifying The Ethical Criteria

The general issue, as laid out in the introduction, is: Should teaching how to deal with differences be made a number one priority in the higher educational system? The answer is yes, given the highly ethical nature of the issue. This section details alternatives for determining the ethicality of issues and reveals that all strongly support this issue's ethical nature.

Clearly there are differences in the perspectives[1], but the relevant point here is their common component. Each of the seven perspectives outlined by Johannesen (1983) addresses a respect for differences. This commonality is outlined below:

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[1] Johannesen at times appears to use "perspectives" and "standards" interchangeably (p.9). He also refers to standards as the underlying issues of the perspectives (p.99). Finally, in each of the perspectives, Johannesen seems to indicate that there are underlying forces for the perspective. These underlying forces could be construed to be the standards or world views of those who hold these perspectives. As a result of the interplay between these words, it appears they are inextricable, and as such, it is not important for this discussion to discriminate between the two.

Political Perspective.

This perspective focuses on the need for democratic debate, and as Johannesen (1983) emphasizes, is applicable to any public policy (p.11) Since higher education is a public service[2], it is a public policy and therefore this perspective is applicable here. Wallace (1955) explains that a fundamental component of this perspective is the respect for the dignity and worth of the individual. The worth or dignity is not dependent upon each individual having the same value system. Rather, what is valued is each individual's contribution to the debate. This is accomplished by respecting dissent through the encouragement of diversity of opinion (Wallace, 1955).

Human Nature Perspective.

According to Johannesen, the underlying assumption of this perspective is "...that uniquely human attributes should be enhanced, thereby promoting fulfillment of maximum individual potential" (1983, p.29) In this perspective, the ideal speech situation is one in which participants have an equal opportunity to initiate and continue communication acts. Furthermore, according to the symbol-using approach, communication is ethical to the extent that it satisfies the need for mutual understanding and encourages equality in terms of mutual control and influence

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[2] For the sake of narrowing the scope, this paper deals only with public higher education.

(Wieman and Walter, 1957). What is important in this perspective is that the communication is focused on the individuals involved in an interaction and more importantly, what they are encouraged to contribute in terms of their uniqueness, as well as what they receive from the interaction.

Dialogical Perspective.

This perspective concentrates on differences of individuals in two ways: 1) In the fundamental belief set forth by Buber that the self is created through interactions, and 2) In the belief that a basic element of the dialogue is "experiencing the other side" (p.47, Johannesen, 1983). In addition, the guidelines for applying dialogical standards explicitly emphasize "appreciation of individual differences and uniqueness" (Makay and Brown, 1972, p.27, cited in Johannesen, 1983, pp.64-65).

Situational Perspective.

By the nature of this approach, which is to evaluate situations according to the specifics of the situation, individual differences must inherently be taken into account.

Religious Perspective.

Despite obvious differences in religious orientations, a common thread appears in their ethical codes: Treat individuals with respect (Jensen, 1992). This does not inherently mean treat individuals the same, rather what is implied is that in order to pay respect, the individual and his or her uniqueness should be taken into account.

Utilitarian Perspective.

What is ethical in this perspective is what brings the greatest good for the greatest number of people. If all people are not the same, then we cannot assume what is good for one is good for all. Thus, in order to be the most ethical from a utilitarian perspective, individual differences within a group must be taken into account to determine what is the best for all.

Legal Perspective.

From a "pure" legal perspective, one could argue that what is legal is ethical (Johannesen, 1983). The reverse is also true -- what is illegal is unethical. Given the credo that education in public institutions is mandated to be available to all -- according to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 and Executive Order 11246 (Affirmative Action Pamphlet, 1990) -- discriminatory practices are clearly illegal. Furthermore, the issue of not providing equal opportunity *to express oneself in the classroom* -- because of differences in opinion -- has historically been a legal issue for instructors and students (O'Neil, 1966). This trend persists as we continue to debate academic freedom, political correctness and the meaning of a liberal arts education on college campuses (Berman, 1992).

This brief review of the perspectives reveals that the degree to which an interaction is ethical is determined in part by the extent to which opportunities exist to communicate individual differences, as well as the degree to which respect is given to those individual differences. Anderson (1984) summarized this well in his discussion on communication ethics: "... communication is a clear embodiment of mutual respect and self-respect by the people involved" (p.226). Thus, it is clear that all of the perspectives apply to this issue, and as such, serve to make this issue of dealing with differences a highly ethical issue.

It is important to note that the idea of paying respect to differences is not an imposition of one system over another, rather this respect for differences is something inherent in each of the systems -- at least in their ideal forms. Thus, regardless of an individual's personal perspective, dealing with differences appears to be of vital necessity in order to carry out an ethical interaction.

Reasonableness and Relevancy of These Standards

With some fear of stating the obvious, I believe the reasonableness of my approach should be clear given that all of the ethical perspectives apply to the issues of dealing with differences. In addition, the relevancy is clear from the fact that all the perspectives have a common component in their belief that dealing with differences is inherent in ethical human interaction.

Evaluating the Communication

In order to conduct the valuative component -- the third and final step in Johannesen's process of examining ethical issues -- it is necessary to first define differences and then secondly, explain the impact of the differences in higher education.

Definition of Differences.

Up to this point, the term "differences" has purposely been left undefined, because once labels are placed on the differences of groups or individuals involved, the issue often turns into a discussion about the particular needs of that group (Banks, 1991; Banks, 1989; Cummins, 1986; Locust, 1988) and the purpose of the first section was to draw attention to the general issue -- not specific needs. However, in order to move towards the goal of learning what to do, it is necessary at this point to have a better understanding of "differences."

The common term for referring to differences is "diversity." The following explains the common use of the term, the problems associated with it, and proposes a new definition and approach to the term. At first glance, it may appear to be easier to actually introduce a new term rather than work through a new definition. However, since the academic and general public are just now becoming accustomed to the word, the timing is right for a new definition, rather than an entirely new word.

A content analysis of administrative speeches, notices of upcoming workshops and conferences, as well as general discussions about "what's new" on the campus would undoubtedly reveal a high occurrence of the term "diversity". This was not the case as little as two or three years ago. Whether the motivation is political correctness or a genuine concern for the human spirit, a movement on university campuses is emerging to recognize, understand and include the diversity of the community in all activities connected with a university system.

What is this diversity? Technically, diversity is simply difference or variety (Guralnik, 1984). Practically speaking, diversity is a complex occurrence, often referring to a deviance from the norm. This deviance outlook is apparent from how it is commonly used: 1) "We need to include diversity in study abroad" (Read: we want to have students who have not *normally* participated to now experience study abroad). 2) "We want to include diversity on this committee" (Read: we want to have people who are not *normally* represented on the committee to participate at this time). In these instances, diversity is often referring to factors of age, gender, ethnic and racial backgrounds, part-time, and differently-abled students, faculty and staff (Smith, 1989).

Although representation of various groups can serve as an avenue for incorporating a variety of individuals into a system, we should proceed with caution with this approach to diversity for two reasons. First, this approach can lead to ignoring the enormous amount of variance that currently exists on the campus. Second, the attitude of deviance from the norm is threatening in that it can be interpreted as something is wrong with the diverse -- or deviant -- individual. Obviously, if something is wrong with the individual, the solution can be interpreted to lie with changing the individual. The problems with focusing the change on the individual are addressed in the section "Differences Make a Difference." Diversity should not refer to deviance from some norm, but a much broader phenomenon: cultural diversity.

The term cultural diversity incorporates Singer's (1985) notion of culture and perception. Because all individuals have biological and experiential differences, all individuals have different perceptions, and therefore, no two individuals perceive the "external world exactly identically" (p.63). However, individuals who do have similar experiences will have more similar perceptions and thus will share cultures. The emphasis is on how cultures and individuals are similar and different in terms of perceptions. Although diversity can be recognized and labeled according to specific groups, the purpose is not to define difference from the cultural norm because no cultural norm exists: each has different and valid interpretations of reality.

By defining differences through an explanation of diversity, we are left with an understanding that varying perceptions exist, rather than a hard-fast rule which could be used to quickly identify who or what is diverse. Although this definition, or lack of it, can be criticized for being "slippery," I believe it appropriately reflects the phenomena of difference. The approach here is not necessarily to argue against using labels to group diversity into broader terms (e.g., Euroamerican/European, East/West, etc.); these categories have been used to gather valuable statistics and research regarding diversity. However, this paper advocates the use of labels only with the understanding that the terms do not represent deviance.

The question may remain, for some readers, as to whether or not diversity really exists. The answer is undeniably and obviously, yes. Countless groups with different life experiences are gathered together on college and university campuses. The real issue is not whether or not this diversity exists, but rather that it is *increasing*, which is clearly documented by enrollment figures.

Higher education enrollment figures from 1976 to 1984 revealed a total increase in enrollment of 11 percent (Smith, 1989). Hispanics, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and International Students reported 38, 93, and 52 percent increases in enrollment, respectively (Smith, 1989). Furthermore, colleges experienced a 28 percent increase in the enrollment of women and a 19 percent increase in part-time students (Smith, 1989).

This increase in diversity is a reflection of what is taking place beyond the campus boundaries. Banks (1991) summarized this change in terms of the expected changes in the work force: "Between 1980 and 2000, about 83 percent of new entrants to the labor force will be women, people of color, or immigrants; native white males will make up only 15 percent" (p.136).

We are in the midst of change. Or are we? Does this diversity -- or difference -- make a difference?

How the Differences Make a Difference.

We could hypothesize that differences make a difference given our definition is based on diverse perceptions. This section reveals we can do far more than hypothesize. We know the differences do make a difference in terms of learning styles, empowerment, retention rates, and evaluation of others.

The notion that different learning styles exist has been well documented (Hayes, 1989; Badini & Rosenthal, 1989). Kim and Gudykunst (1987) argue these differences are a manifestation of cultural differences because culture plays a role not just in what is said but also in mental processes. Support that cultural diversity plays a role in learning styles is well-documented by Smith (1986) in her research on the wide variance in learning styles between U.S. and Japanese students. Despite the understanding that differences exist in how students learn, rarely is anything done to accommodate these differences (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

Empowerment refers to the self-concept that results from personal interactions (Sherwin, 1992). The literature on diversity and multiculturalism reveals that rather than experiencing a sense of empowerment, students who have been typically classified as diverse -- according to age, gender, racial and ethnic groups -- feel alienated (Banks, 1991; Banks, 1989; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, 1986; Cummins, 1986; Locust, 1988). As a result, they either leave the system or do poorly (Cummins, 1988) or attempt to fully assimilate -- which requires giving up time interacting with one's native culture (Kim, 1987).

As indicated above, the differences make a difference in retention rates. Despite efforts to recruit students from diverse backgrounds, colleges and universities, on the average, have a difficult time retaining these students (Smith, 1989). Nettles (1988) reports that experts generally agree that the overall retention rates for African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans is significantly lower than retention rates for whites (cited in Smith, 1989). There are obvious ethical implications for recruiting students not served by the current environment.

Evaluation of others plays a role in interactions and current research reveals the educational environment is no exception. Collier and Powell (1990) discovered that ethnic background made a significant difference in the student's evaluation of the teacher. Moreover, studies conducted by Badini and Rosenthal (1989), revealed that expectations of student's performances, when controlled for the effect of gender, resulted in different effects. In one of the controlled studies, a lower performance was expected for women -- and was realized. Another example where differences affect evaluations is Bradley's (1991) study, in which she summarized the results as follows:

> The use of qualifying phrases only had an adverse affect... when they were used by women in the investigation. Females who advanced their arguments with tag questions and disclaimers exerted little influence and were viewed as having little knowledge and intelligence... These findings suggest that linguistic devices

> used by women in this society are devalued, not because they are inherently weak or inappropriate, but because of the lower status of their female source. (p.73).

These examples of specific research reveal that differences do make a difference in how individuals are evaluated. Although this research commonly deals with gender as the basis of differences, the basic phenomena is applicable because the bias reported is based on perceived differences. Perceived differences exist among and between all groups by the nature of diversity and thus, the potential exists for the differences to be negatively evaluated.

In summary, this section proclaims loudly that we have failed and are currently failing in the higher educational system in terms of dealing with differences. Thus, Johannesen's recommendation that the communication outcome be evaluated has sadly been realized. We now move out of the area of analysis of the ethicality of the issue and onto the overwhelming task of exploring solutions.

Part Two

The Responsibility of the Speech Communication Department

The ethical section reveals this is a communication issue: The focus of the ethical consideration is on human interaction. Since students interact in all classrooms, it has been argued the responsibility for dealing with diversity rests with the entire academic community: "All educatiors are obligated to create a supportive environment, one in which students feel important, accepted, and valued" (Branch, Brigham, Change, & Stout, 1991, p.21). I agree it is a responsibility to be shared, and yet each department is limited in its ability to respond. As this section explains, the speech communication department has the opportunity to play a special role in this issue and as such, has a great responsibility to deal with the issue.

Koester and Lustig (1991) responded to this issue by arguing pedagogical and theoretical issues require communication courses to make changes for mulicultural education. This paper has expanded upon their discussion by arguing from an ethical perspective. In addition, this particular section explains the special responsibility of the speech department is due to the content and process in communication courses.

Content.

The reference to content refers to what is being taught in communication courses.[3] One area to begin our search is with the definition and philosophical approach to communication.

Barnlund's (1962) meaning-centered communication model is one that has received widespread attention (Johannesen, 1983). The model's principles focus on communication as a process in which the interaction involves the "total personality," or the whole person (Barnlund, 1962, pp.201-204). The notion of communication as a process and as an encounter in which meaning is created is closely related to the theory of symbolic interaction (Littlejohn, 1989). As a result of the contributions of Barnlund and others involved in symbolic interaction theory, the field has moved towards viewing communication as a transactional approach. This reveals the current philosophy in our field is that it makes a difference who is involved in the transaction because they -- the individuals -- are creating the meaning.

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[3] An obvious issue of the content of communication courses is the applicability of our current theories to a diverse population. A re-evaluation of these theories is in order, but is beyond the scope of this paper.

Obviously, how each course deals with the transactional nature of communication depends upon the application of the communication -- to public speaking, interpersonal, small group, organizational or rhetoric. However, this approach to communication has a common element, regardless of the specific application. The transactional approach focuses on the power of the interaction and the ability of a communication event to affect participants.

The literature on feminist pedagogy provides insight as to what this "power" and "affect" of communication accomplishes: **Empowerment** (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule 1986; Gilligan, Ward, Taylor & Bardige, 1988; Porter, 1991; Sherwin, 1992). As discussed previously, empowerment is a key ingredient in academic success. The connection between empowerment and communication is simple and direct: It is "the idea of personal strength facilitated through interaction with others" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986, p.181).

Regardless of an individual's background, given the ethical nature of interactions as well as the definition of communication, all students should have an opportunity to participate in and develop empowerment. The reason for a strong emphasis on empowerment is that: "Students who are empowered by their school experiences develop the ability, confidence, and motivation to succeed academically" (Cummins, 1988, p.54)

In communication "terms," it is highly likely this academic success would be related to communication competence. If students feel empowered by the interaction, they could experience a reduction in the uncertainty of the situation and experience less communication apprehension (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987). This is an important connection because communication competence has repeatedly been linked to success in college in terms of GPA, personal perception of competence, and social life (Hawken, Duran, & Kelly, 1991; Hurt & Gonzalez, 1988; Rubin & Graham, 1988). This discussion and research helps us understand that empowerment, communication, and academic success are highly interrelated.

In short, communication courses provide an opportunity to learn about empowerment. The following subsection focuses on the fact that communication students have an opportunity to participate in empowerment, given the interactive nature of most of the courses. Thus, the responsibility of the department is not just the result of teaching about "process" as the content of the course -- but that students actually do "it."

Process.

In the field of communication, we are blessed with the opportunity to be teachers -- to be the people who show others how to do something, rather than to simply declare or profess knowledge about a topic. We incorporate this opportunity to teach in a variety of courses. Students often actively participate in communication activities in public speaking, interpersonal, small group, rhetoric and organizational classes as a result of the course structure and assignments (Darling, 1989). Yet we have a responsibility to do more. Because of the interactive nature of our courses, we have a special responsibility to deal with differences that exist in the classroom.

The passion for this responsibility comes from a personal experience I had in a training course on dealing with diversity in the classroom. We were presented with hypothetical scenarios representing conflicts about differences in the classroom. The first scenario is summarized as follows:

> You are teaching a biology lab course and students are assigned to work together in groups. During your office hours, a student approaches you because he is upset that another student in his lab group wore a sweatshirt with the slogan: "Homophobic and Proud of It!" What would you do in this situation?

The discussion that followed was one in which other participants expressed their frustration at feeling that they could do very little. Options discussed included: 1) asking the student not to wear the sweatshirt again; 2) providing the course with a list of what is inappropriate to wear to the classroom; and 3) changing the lab arrangements so that these two students did not have to work together in the future. Notice that none of these include a **discussion** of the issues of dealing with difference. At that moment, I realized in the speech department we have many more options about how to deal with conflicts arising from differences because we can discuss how they affect the communication process in relation to our course content.

Furthermore, because students are engaged in the interactions, they can be involved in this dialogue, as well. They can discuss, through the assistance of the instructor, how the conflict affects the communication environment. This does not necessarily require the students to speak about this publicly. They may use other learning methods, such as journals or incorporating the issue into the broader theoretical aspects of the course in their exams and papers. Yet it is important to note that the possibility does exist for a discussion or role play about how this incident affects the process of communication. This possibility, as well as the other modes of dealing with the issue, does not often exist in other departments.

It is important to emphasize here that although we have the blessing of the opportunity to deal with these types of issues, we do not necessarily have a choice -- we have a *responsibility* to address these issues because they do affect the interactions in the room. Ignoring the issue completely is disrespectful to the individuals involved, and disrespectful to the positive power of communication. Thus, this scenario exemplifies that we have an *ethical responsibility* to deal with differences in the classroom.

In addition to issues of conflict, the interactive process allows students to express themselves, providing an opportunity to develop empowerment. According to Barnlund's theory of communication, this is accomplished only when the interaction involves the whole person. As such, the communication courses on a college campus provide the students with a mechanism for discovering their own voice.

In closing this section, it is important to reiterate that the speech communication does not bear the sole responsibility for this issue. Yet as Johannesen explains, "ethical responsibility stems from a status of position we have earned or have been granted ..." and as such, we should be held "...accountable to other individuals and groups...." (1983, p.6.) We should be held accountable for teaching others how to deal with the differences in the college classroom. Our field's credo further supports this accountability as is witnessed in the Speech Communication Associations's Credo: "We accept the responsibility of cultivating precept and example, in our classrooms and in our communities, enlightened uses of communication...." (Speech Communication Association Credo). Obviously this accountability is a "reasonable" and "relevant" request given the nature of our field.

Part Three

What We Can Do To Deal With The Differences

The challenge of developing a systematic way of dealing with differences is overwhelming. Logical questions at this point appear to be: Is this an impossible task given the complexity of the problems? Moreover, do we know that differences can be dealt with? And at the heart of this issue: How do we figure out how to teach others to deal with it? Quite simply, there are no guarantees that any attempts to make changes will work. However, given the alternative -- to continue on the same path -- could have devastating results:

> Today, the failure to exercise intercultural sensitivity (dealing with differences) is not simply bad business or bad morality -- it is self-destructive. So we face a choice: overcome the legacy of our history, or lose history itself for all time (Bennett, 1986, p.27).

Thus, the belief here is that trying something is better than the silence of self-destruction.

The following sections briefly outline general training strategies, personal strategies, and answers to remaining questions. The solutions proposed are offered as building blocks in the process of learning how to deal with differences and how to teach others how to deal with differences.

Training.

Due to the complexity of this issue, it would be futile and frustrating to expect speech instructors to approach the challenge single-handedly. Therefore, one starting point is to have communication departments establish training programs for permanent faculty and temporary instructors. The focus should be on cognitive, affective, and behavioral goals: 1) *Cognitive*: To be aware of diversity, how it is manifested in the classroom, and strategies for dealing with diversity; 2) *Affective*: (a) To empathize by experiencing what it feels like to be different in the classroom and (b) To empower by knowing what it feels like to be successful at dealing with diversity in the classroom and to feel more comfortable with a variety of strategies;
3) *Behavioral*: To be able to perform a wide range of strategies for dealing with diversity.

The training needs to accommodate all levels of acceptance of diversity. A majority of individuals believe diversity exists because they have experienced it in their classrooms, but act as if all should really conform to "normative" standard in the classroom. Thus, the training needs to allow for a great deal of self-reflection and analysis of personal teaching style.

The training format could take a variety of forms. Two are recommended here:

1) **Seminar Course:**

Implement a communication department seminar course that adopts a round-table discussion format to openly address the issues. These meetings must go beyond the general introductory nature of orientation sessions by discussing alternative solutions and appropriate teaching strategies.

2) **Workshop:**

Because recognizing and responding to diversity has been the "hot topic" over the past two years, several resources exist on campus to assist in our endeavors. We could utilize these resources to organize a workshop specifically for communication instructors. Possible sources for information and trainers are: education departments, particularly instructors of multicultural education requirements; study abroad offices with program coordinators and administrators specializing in intercultural training; and organizations focused on specific cultural or interest groups.

Personal Strategies.

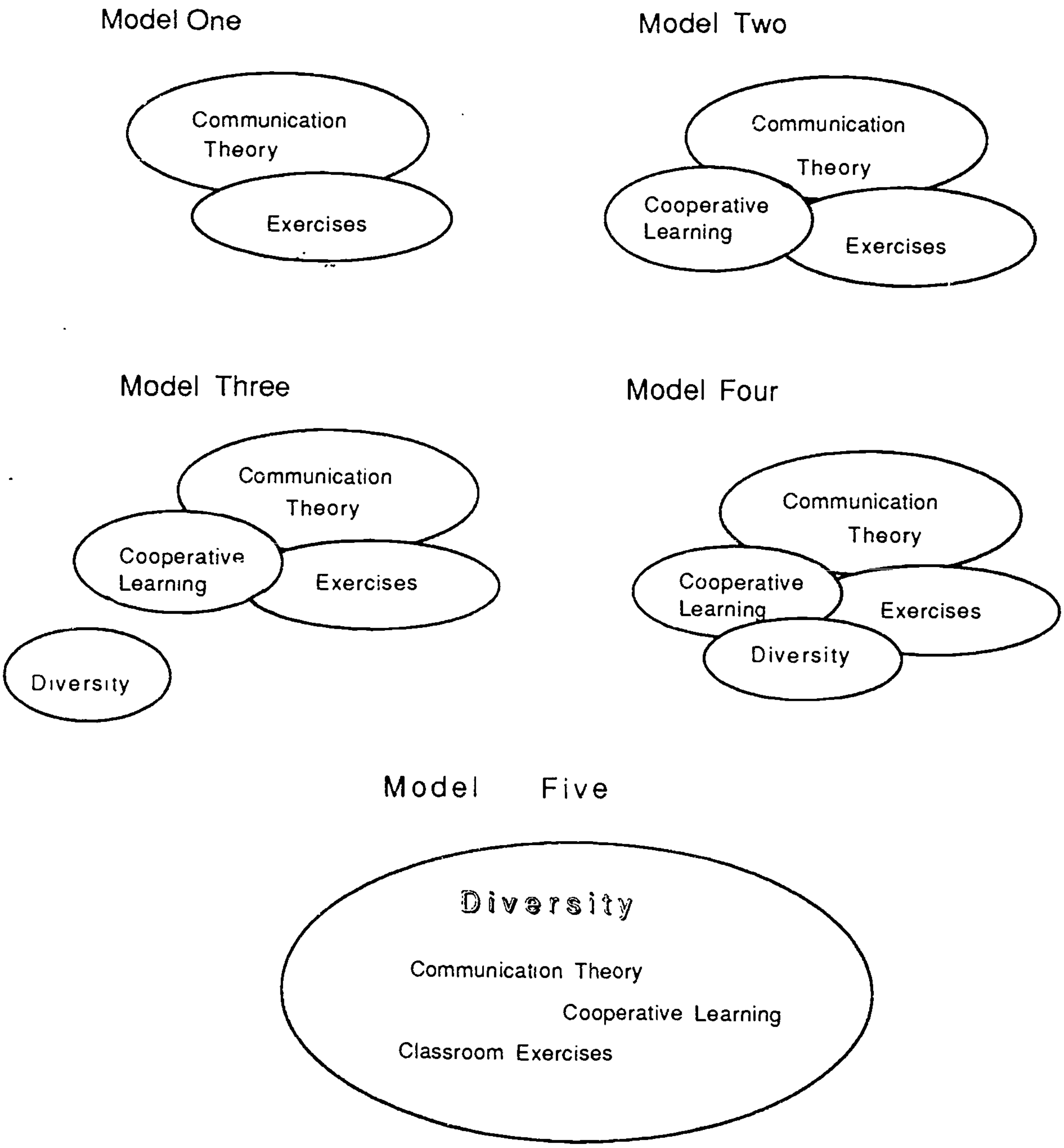
In addition to departmental training, a variety of strategies can be employed immediately at a personal level.

1) **Analyze your own classroom.**

First, determine which of the following models in Diagram One best depicts your own classroom. Ask yourself to which learning styles do you teach? Visualize the students who do well in your classes; what do they have in common with each other and with you?

Diagram One

Where is Diversity in the Classroom


Model One
Communication Theory
Exercises
Model Two
Communication Theory
Cooperative Learning
Exercises
Model Three
Communication Theory
Cooperative Learning
Exercises
Diversity
Model Four
Communication Theory
Cooperative Learning
Exercises
Diversity
Model Five
Diversity
Communication Theory
Cooperative Learning
Classroom Exercises

Model One and Model Two reflect a distinction between classroom exercises and cooperative learning. Understanding the difference between the two is vital and that their use does not automatically ensure diversity is appropriately being addressed. For example, showing a film is a classroom exercise, while having the students discuss and record their reactions in small groups is an approach to cooperative learning. These methods can be used to address diversity, but on their own, they do not inherently do so. We need to continue to learn new methods to make the most of this interaction by drawing upon educational resources: Eble (1988); Grant (1977); Gullette (1984); Hayes (1989); Johnson & Johnson (1991); McKeachie (1986); Nyquist & Wulff (1989), Roach (1991); Wlodkowski (1985), among others. We need to move beyond simply employing strategies for cooperative learning to bring us towards Model Four, in which we incorporate methods for teaching students the skills of perspective-taking.

Model Three represents a recognition of diversity without an integration of diversity into the course. A public speaking class in which the instructor publicly recognizes the standard taught is a "mainstream, Euroamerican perspective which is only one of many approaches," and does not seek to alter classroom exercises is an example of this model. Many of us feel comfortable in this stage because we have been taught these standards and feel inadequate dealing with changes. During the time it takes us to move beyond this model, we can assist our students in dealing with this model by providing explicit, written examples of the final products we expect from them.

Model Four represents an integration of diversity into the classroom activities. In these classrooms, instructors are aware of their own cultural background and teaching or learning style, and incorporate a variety of assignments to tap into the students cultural and learning styles. Students are given more than one opportunity to complete assignments and the instructor is open to accepting a variety of formats in the students' work. The minimum requirements and standards are made explicit to students.

Model Five is the incorporation of diversity into the entire classroom, including the theories taught. While some examples of this undoubtedly exist, this model probably represents future classrooms when theory "catches up" to existing diversity.

2) **Observation.**

Invite colleagues to observe classes, tape record the classroom, and observe other classes to learn about the dynamics of communication courses and "tricks of the trade."

3) **Brainstorming Possible Negative Outcomes.**

Because our fear of the unknown is one of the difficulties we face, anticipating worst-case scenarios and our reactions to them are important. For example, how will you deal with the class if you make a racist or sexist comment? Or, how will you deal with students making racist comments to each other? What are the "teachable moments" that result from these tense interactions? What communication theories and models can students learn about from these interactions? We must mentally prepare ourselves to turn the negatives into opportunities.

Remaining Questions.

When the topic of diversity in the classroom surfaces, two debates often emerge. One centers on the issue of assimilation and another on adult learning.

1. **Isn't it better to teach students how to assimilate?**

One harm of assimilation has already been introduced in this paper: alienation. However, there is possibly a long term effect occurs with potentially far more damaging results than individual alienation. If assimilation continually occurs in which one group adapts to the norms of the "mainstream," the in-group becomes more and more similar. The result is that perpetual out-group animosity remains a strong presence -- because those who have not assimilated remain very different from the in-group. We need to develop healthier models of assimilation that allow for the benefits of adaptation without these long-term consequences of continually battling those "not like us."

2. **Isn't it too late to deal with this issue in college?**

An important factor for our discussion is that we cannot shove this issue off as one belonging solely to primary and/or secondary education. If long term changes are to take place, all components of society must work together. Thus, we cannot ethically avoid this issue at the college and university level -- nor does it make sense to assume it is too late for students to learn how to deal with differences. Bebeau's (1992) research discovered that "dramatic and extensive" changes occur between the ages of twenty and thirty in basic problem solving strategies for dealing with ethical issues. Additionally, it is important, and interesting to note that contrary to popular opinion, adults are not less capable at learning than children: Research conducted by Kidd (1973) revealed that age is not a prohibitive factor in the learning until the age of 75! (Cross, 1981).

Conclusion

This paper's objective was to convince readers that learning how to deal with diversity should be a number one priority for the higher educational system and the speech communication department has the opportunity and responsibility to play a crucial role in these efforts. As was demonstrated in the "how to" section, there is much work to be done. We should look forward to this challenge of what Hill (1991) refers to as the "ethical imperative" because of the opportunity it presents:

> Ethical rhetoric (communication) has the promise of creating those kinds of communication which can help save human beings from disintegration, nourish us in the growth toward uniquely human goals, and eventually transform us into the best that we can become (adapted from Wieman & Walter, 1957, p.270).

Clearly, this would be worth the effort.

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