

COGNITIVE COMPLEXITY AND THE EFFECT OF
PERCEIVED VALENCE AND ACQUAINTANCE ON
THE ELICITATION OF PERSONAL CONSTRUCTS

by

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Utilizing the theory and methodology of George Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory, this study attempted to determine the effects of the perception of varying configurations of people upon the nature of the constructs that were used to describe those people. Of particular interest were (1) the range of application and (2) the patterns of implication of constructs that were generated from different configurations of others. Additionally, the study concerned itself with the effect of cognitive complexity upon such construing behavior. Such an undertaking would appear to be relevant to elaborating upon what is currently known of the intrapersonal communication processing system.

The study of interpersonal communication and its effects upon human relationships have been pursued within a variety of conceptual frameworks by scholars in different but related disciplines of behavioral science. It has resulted in an extension of the conceptualization of "interpersonal" communication which allows it to be integrated into a larger system which would also include "intrapersonal" and "person-to-group" communication.

Although the comparative importance of the various subsystems of this larger system may be open to question, the existence of models conceptualizing such subsystems and their interrelationships seems to indicate that researchers have found a need for gaining some understanding of them in an effort to approach a fuller understanding of

communication processes. One such subsystem which has been modeled is that of intrapersonal communication (Barker and Wiseman, 1966). Those authors say:

Patterns for handling interpersonal communication are formed on the intrapersonal level. . . . Intrapersonal communication is the base of operation for all communication--the reflection area for ideas, thoughts, and feelings, and primarily for interpersonal communication. (Wiseman and Barker, 1967, p. 8)

Other models have been developed which might be identified as intrapersonal (Barnlund, 1970; Bois, 1966; and Boulding, 1950). However, none seems to focus upon the processing of stimuli quite so precisely as does Barker and Wiseman's. Barnlund focuses upon the differential nature of stimuli; Bois upon the levels of response to stimuli; and Boulding upon the effects of stimuli. None of them truly examines what might best be termed the dynamics of the intrapersonal processing system.

Those components which give Barker and Wiseman's model its uniqueness are the post-reception processes of "discrimination" and "regrouping." They identify these processes in the following manner:

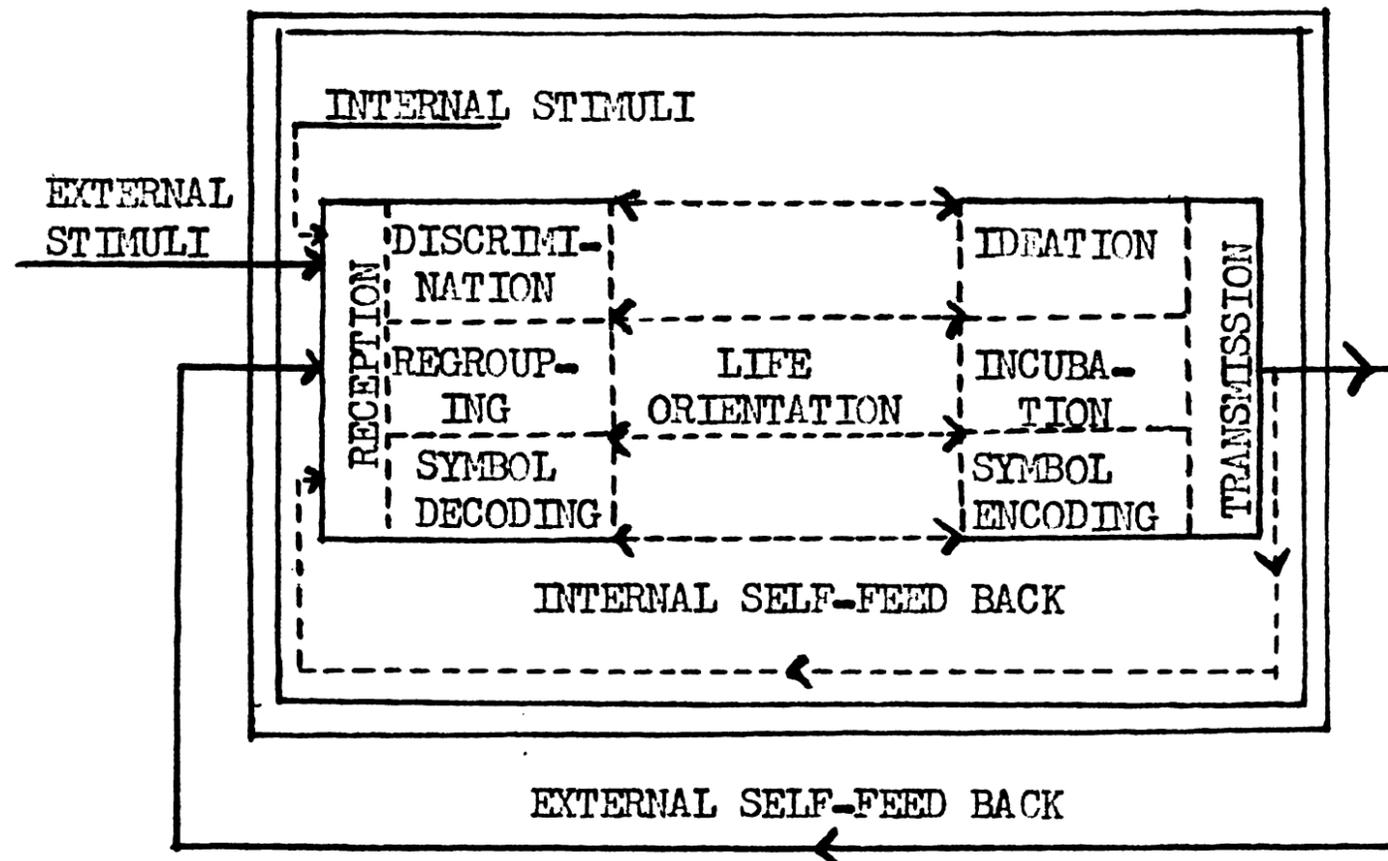
At a given instant, countless numbers of stimuli are received by the sensory organs. The stimuli appear to be classified according to their relative strength. The process through which the stimuli are screened is called "discrimination." The weaker stimuli are usually "filtered out" prior to reaching the conscious level, but even so, multiple stimuli may affect communication at any particular moment.

The process of ordering the stimuli according to their urgency or need is termed "regrouping." The regrouping process probably takes place at both subconscious and conscious levels. It places stimuli into hierarchical order which produces behavior sets for the communicator based upon the strength of the stimuli. (Barker and Wiseman, 1966, pp. 175-176)

There is within this explanation, however, the implicit assumption

INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION MODEL

Barker and Wiseman (1966)



of linear or serial processing of stimuli. It would appear, following this explanation, that any given stimulus might be placed on a continuum in a position independent of any other stimulus according to its relative strength and according to its relative urgency or need. Although one might accept the argument that discrimination and regrouping do in fact occur, the question of how those processes operate may remain open to speculation. One gains the impression of stimuli moving into the intrapersonal system in a neat, orderly fashion, one by one, and then being carefully sorted out. In addition, there is nothing in the model to determine what constitutes "strength" or "need." Indeed, it may be questionable as to whether those are the only criteria for discrimination or regrouping. If, in fact, stimuli are not processed separately, Barker and Wiseman's entire conceptualization of discrimination and regrouping may be open to severe criticism. It would seem more likely that Borden, Gregg, and Grove's (1969) approach to the individual's communication system is appropriately descriptive:

The brain, being the data-processing center for both external and internal stimuli, has an extremely difficult job. It must, if it is really effective, separate these stimuli sufficiently to keep one set from affecting the processing of the other set. Couple this with the fact that we also have memories and imaginations active in this center, and you begin to see the complexity of the human-communication process. It is not surprising that we can handle only a limited amount of information per unit of time, and that, if we are pressured to handle more, our nervous system breaks down. (p. 9)

Although possible simplistic, this discussion has two rather important implications: (1) there is an interaction of stimuli within the intrapersonal system; and (2) there are limitations on the processing

capacity of the system. There is nothing novel about either of these two implications, but little has been done to integrate them into human communication theory generally, or intrapersonal communication specifically. However, Brooks (1971) has identified six limitations on human perception: (1) selectivity, (2) experience, (3) optical illusion, (4) neurological inhibition, (5) psychological and emotional states, and (6) innate limitations and saliences. McCroskey, Larson, and Knapp (1971) have provided further insight into the workings of the intrapersonal processing system by identifying four types of selectivity: (1) exposure, the avoidance of situations which are not reinforcing (Mills, Aronson, and Robinson, 1959); (2) attention, highest for consistent stimuli and lowest for inconsistent stimuli (Gilkinson, Paulson, and Sikkink, 1955); (3) perception, seeing what is not or failing to see what is (Cooper and Jahoda, 1947; Arnold and McCroskey, 1967); and (4) recall, remembering what is reinforcing and forgetting what is not (Levine and Murphy, 1954).

Such selectivity factors have their focus in the context of interpersonal communication. Although it is evident that persons are selective of external stimuli to which they expose themselves, it is not clear how they differentiate between external stimuli when symbolizing those stimuli at the intrapersonal level. Thus, the question might be raised, if in the context of interpersonal communication persons selectively respond to external stimuli, and Barker and Wiseman would argue that this manifests itself in the discrimination process at the intrapersonal level, is there also a significant difference in symbol

response at the intrapersonal level? A theory which would appear to take such a question into account is the personal construct theory of George Kelly. Identifying a symbol response as a psychological construct, he argues that such constructs have limitations both on their range of application across events and on their interrelationships with other constructs. He has developed methodologies for the study of personal construct systems, and a discussion of the theory and methodology follow. The utilization of such a methodology may provide insight into how the symbol response to external stimuli in the interpersonal communication context may be differentiated at the intrapersonal level.

Personal Construct Theory

The study of the intrapersonal communication processing system might be approached from a variety of perspectives. One of the most useful in this respect seems to be Kelly's (1963) personal construct theory. He argues, in his Fundamental Postulate, that "a person's processes are psychologically channelized by the way in which he anticipates events." (p. 46) If this phenomenon were to be translated into a cause-effect analysis, it might be said that the anticipation of events serves as the cause and that the psychological channelizing serves as the effect. This should not, however, be confused with a stimulus-response framework, which is characterized by a focus upon the response to an event rather than the anticipation of an event. To this extent there would appear to be consistency with Allport's (1935) definition of an attitude as

. . . a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the

individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related. (Fishbein, 1967, p. 8)

There would also appear to be consistency with Doob's (1947) argument that: "An Attitude is an implicit response which is . . . anticipatory . . . in reference to patterns of overt responses." (Fishbein, 1967, p. 43) What is unique about Kelly's Fundamental Postulate, however, is its dynamic character; and it would appear that his concept of channelizing might be construed as intrapersonal communication. Kelly expands his Fundamental Postulate through eleven corollaries which explain the nature of the channelizing effect. Here, however, we will be concerned only with those corollaries which carry implications for the limitations on the processing capacity of the intrapersonal communication system and which will be relevant to the hypotheses to be developed later in this study.

First, the Construction Corollary states that "a person anticipates events by construing their replications." (p. 50) This also leaves open the possibility that an event may be difficult to anticipate because its replication cannot be construed. Bannister and Fransella (1971), in responding to Bruner's (1956) charge that personal construct theory is too "mentalistic," argue that Bruner is clinging to a cognition-emotion dualism that is not valid for personal construct theory. They go on to explain how such "emotions" as "anxiety," "hostility," "guilt," "threat," "fear," and "aggression" have been defined by Kelly in terms of personal construct theory. In terms of the Construction Corollary his definition of "anxiety" is significant: "Anxiety is the awareness that the events

with which a man is confronted lie mostly outside the range of convenience of his construct system." (p. 35) In other words, replication may be extremely difficult. This definition would imply, quite simply, that an individual's intrapersonal communication processing system responds differently to differing stimuli. The reasons for this are developed through additional corollaries.

The Dichotomy Corollary states that "a person's construction system is composed of a finite number of dichotomous constructs." (p. 59) What Kelly refers to as dichotomy is a bi-polarity for differentiating meaning, similar to Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum's (1957) semantic differential. More important here, however, is the postulation of a finite number of constructs, which has been supported by previous research to be discussed in the next section.

Not only is the number of constructs finite, but the Range Corollary also states that "a construct is convenient for the anticipation of a finite range of events only." (p. 68) Implications of this and the Dichotomy Corollary are not inconsistent with Borden, Gregg, and Grove's (1969) analysis of the collection of information in the individual's communication system. Although their analysis is from a neurological and physiological perspective, there would appear to be general agreement on the limitations of such a system. One of the specific purposes of this study, as indicated earlier, will be to explore how varying the specific patterns of external stimuli affects the range of application of the constructs that are generated to describe them.

Not only will the application of constructs be a concern of this

study, but the relationships of constructs will also be considered. Three of Kelly's corollaries appear to be relevant here. First, the structure of a construct system is set forth in the Organization Corollary:

Each person characteristically evolves, for his convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs. (p. 56)

This would appear to say that more general superordinate constructs within a construction system will subsume more specific subordinate constructs. Second, Kelly states in his Modulation Corollary that:

The variation in a person's construction system is limited by the permeability of the constructs within whose range of convenience the variants lie. (p. 77)

Put another way, construct variation is limited by the degree of variation allowed by the system. The ordinal relationships between constructs, as set forth in the Organization Corollary, may vary, but only to the extent allowed by superordinate constructs. Finally, Kelly's Fragmentation Corollary states: "A person may successively employ a variety of construction subsystems which are inferentially incompatible with each other." (p. 83) Thus, the compatibility of the total system will not necessarily be dependent upon the compatibility of the subsystems. With these corollaries Kelly has identified the structure of the construct system and the nature of the relationships within it. Implicit within them appears to be the argument that constructs may vary considerably in their implicative structure. This study will deal specifically with such variations.

It was argued earlier that the Barker-Wiseman model is not

responsive to the question of how the processes of discrimination and regrouping operate. However, if the "life orientation" of their model were to be viewed as a personal construct system and "external stimuli" were to be viewed as anticipated events, personal construct theory may add considerably to the understanding of the intrapersonal communication system. The next section will explore methodologies which have been utilized to study the personal construct system.

The Study of Personal Construct Systems

In order to study personal construct systems, Kelly (1955) devised a methodology for the elicitation of constructs and a methodology for the study of those constructs: the Role Construct Repertory Test and the Role Construct Repertory Grid.

The Role Construct Repertory Test utilizes the following procedures: A subject is given a list of role titles (Kelly included twenty-four in his original form) chosen to represent a cross-sectional sampling of those others who are important in the subject's life. The subject then fills each role with a specific person. When there is no one to fit a given role, the subject is free to select a person, not previously identified in another role position, whom the subject perceives as important in his life. The names of all persons identified are written on separate cards.

The examiner then selects three cards, places them in front of the subject, and asks the subject to suggest some important way in which two of those persons are similar and thereby different from the third. The

similarity and contrast are recorded by the examiner, and the process is repeated. Ten to twenty-five of these sorts are the common range for the administration of the test. However, Hunt (1951) utilized forty role titles and forty triads. He found that after twenty to thirty triads had been used, very few new constructs were produced. Hunt's study was performed to determine the consistency of the test in terms of percentage of construct similarity between two administrations of the test. The average consistency was sixty-nine per cent. Other similar studies found a consistency equal to or greater than Hunt's (Pederson, 1958; Fjeld and Landfield, 1961). Mitsos (1958) studied the consistency of constructs using Kelly's role titles and also using a list of friends supplied by subjects. His findings were similar to those of other consistency studies for the use of role titles, but not for the list of friends.

Kelly's construct elicitation methodology is based on several fundamental assumptions, two of which are important here: (1) that the sample of elements (role titles or whatever) is an adequate representation of the total population of the relevant elements in the person's world; and (2) that the sorting problems proposed for the subject are representative of those with which he must deal in structuring his life role. The implementation of these assumptions in elicitation methodology has a rather important implication: there is a maximization of the subject's elaboration of his construct system. This is true for two reasons: (1) he is dealing *only* with others who are "relevant" for him, and for those he should have a greater number of constructs than for others; and (2) in structuring the triadic sorts, he would most likely proceed in such a manner as to create a

configuration of two similar and one different persons for whom a personal construct is readily available. This was, of course, Kelly's intention, since he was interested in obtaining a sample of the constructs the subject used most frequently. However, if what he designed is truly a technique rather than a test, and if flexibility is allowed in its utilization, the technique should allow us to consider those conditions under which construct elicitation is inhibited as well as facilitated. If this is done, however, it may be done at the expense of violating the assumption discussed above.

Implicit within the concept of the relevant element is the notion of acquaintance with that element. If indeed a subject is confronted with a role title for which he cannot identify a person and is told to substitute someone who is "important" to him, it would seem quite likely that he would opt for a person with whom he has a relatively high degree of acquaintance. It would appear, therefore, that utilizing the original role title list will provide us with little, if any, information on how variations in the degree of acquaintance with the other person will affect intrapersonal communication processing behavior.

Second, given freedom to structure the triadic sorts as he wished, one would assume the subject would create a configuration of two similar and one dissimilar persons for which the similarity and contrast would be most apparent to him. That is, the freedom allowed the subject in Kelly's methodology precludes obtaining information about the nature of constructs generated by variations in configurations. However, by controlling not only the elements of the triadic sort, but also the two

people the subject is to consider "similar" and the one to be considered "different," significant information might be obtained regarding how the perception of varying kinds of configurations affect the nature of the constructs elicited.

The Role Construct Repertory Grid is actually an extension of the Role Construct Repertory Test previously explained. Following the elicitation of a given construct by a given triadic sort the examiner asks the subject to indicate to what other persons filling the role title positions the construct would apply. Variations on this technique have been developed, but most important to note are the general characteristics they have in common, as identified by Bannister and Fransella (1971):

1. They are concerned with eliciting the relationships for a person between sets of constructs, either in terms of construing elements (as in the Rep Test or the rank order form) or by directly comparing construct with construct (e.g. Hinkle's Impgrid, 1965).
2. The central aim is to reveal the construct patterning for a person and not to relate this patterning to some established normative data. There is no reason why normative data should not be collected for some specific purpose as in the Grid Test of Thought Disorder (Bannister and Fransella, 1966), but the individual construing system is the prime focus and the standard test form an occasionally useful venture.
3. There is no fixed form or content. It is called repertory grid technique and not test and the selection of the form and content is related to each particular problem. A grid designed to investigate how a nomadic bushman interprets his desert home would be pretty useless to a suburban commuter, even in translation, except perhaps to show that the commuter might have problems if he had to travel in the terrain of the bushman.
4. All forms are designed so that statistical tests of significance can be applied to the set of comparisons each individual has made. A basic assumption underlying the method is that the psychological relationships between any two constructs, for a given person, are reflected in the

statistical association between them when they are used as judgemental categories. (pp. 70-71)

A fundamental assumption of the present study is that the more salient constructs within one's personal construct system will have more extensive ranges of application across interpersonal contexts and will have more extensive implicative structures within the personal construct system.

Independent of elicitation and grid methodology, it would appear that individuals would differ in their responses to varying degrees of acquaintance and varying kinds of configurations within the triadic sorts. A knowledge of the relative complexity of the individual's cognitive system may to some extent account for these differences.

The following three sections will consider in more detail the importance of acquaintance, valence, and cognitive complexity as variables which might be controlled within Kelly's methodology, and hypotheses relevant to such controls will be developed.

Acquaintance

The importance of the acquaintance factor (which may be considered synonymous with "association," "familiarity," etc.) can initially be seen by considering conceptualization in the area of interpersonal perception.

Gage and Cronbach (1955) take the following position:

Understanding another person may be regarded as having two stages, which suggest two continua for classifying investigations. First the Judge must take in information, perhaps by observing the Other, or perhaps by dealing with him over a period of time; the first continuum therefore deals with the degree of acquaintance of the Judge with the Other. Second, the Judge must interpret the information in order to arrive at

predictive statements; the second continuum therefore deals with the degree of extrapolation or inference required between Input and Outtake. An experiment may be designed to make great demands on the intake process (little acquaintance) or the interpretative process (much extrapolation), or both, or neither. (pp. 412-413)

Though acquaintance may be an important factor by itself, there would also appear to be a relationship between acquaintance with another and the liking for that other which may be influential within the triadic sort. Zajonc (1968) found that increased exposure to an object increased a subject's liking for it. His experiments tend to suggest that acquaintance by itself may increase liking.

Finally, in a study of cognitive complexity Crockett (1965) affirms the significance of the acquaintance factor in developing his "frequency of interaction" hypothesis: ". . . the hypothesis that subjects will be more complex with respect to those with whom they associate most often." (p. 59)

These considerations suggest the following hypotheses:

- I. The range of application and implicative structure of constructs will be more extensive when they are generated by comparisons that include peers rather than older people.
 - A. The range of application and implicative structure of constructs will be most extensive when the constructs are generated from configurations with two peers on the construct pole, least extensive from configurations with two older persons on the construct pole, and intermediate from configurations with one peer and one older person on the construct pole.
 - B. The range of application and implicative structure of constructs will be more extensive from configurations with a peer on the contrast pole than from configurations with an older person on the contrast pole.

Confirmation of these hypotheses would suggest that within the

context of interpersonal communication, a receiver's response to a peer would be different from his response to an older person in that on the intrapersonal level the peer would elicit a symbol response which would have a greater range of application across interpersonal contexts and a more extensive interrelationship with other symbol responses which the receiver might have.

Valence

In the study cited earlier, Crockett (1965) found that:

The main effect of the valence of the other person on the number of constructs used is clearly evident . . .: in every case, Ss used more constructs to describe individuals they liked than to describe those in similar role categories whom they disliked. (p. 57)

It would therefore appear that persons are more complex for others for whom there is a positive valence. If there is a relationship between complexity and salience of constructs, this would suggest the following hypotheses:

- II. The range of application and implicative structure of constructs will be more extensive when they are generated by comparisons that include liked persons rather than disliked persons.
 - A. The range of application and implicative structure of constructs will be most extensive from configurations with two liked persons on the construct pole, least extensive from configurations with two disliked persons on the construct pole, and intermediate from configurations with one liked person and one disliked person on the construct pole.
 - B. The range of application and implicative structure of constructs will be more extensive from configurations with a liked person on the contrast pole than from configurations with a disliked person on the contrast pole.

Confirmation of these hypotheses would suggest that within the

context of interpersonal communication, a receiver's response to a liked other would be different from his response to a disliked other in that on the intrapersonal level the liked other would elicit a symbol response which would have a greater range of application across interpersonal contexts and a more extensive interrelationship with other symbol responses which the receiver might have.

Cognitive Complexity

The relationship of cognitive complexity to acquaintance and valence has previously been discussed. Of added importance is the relationship of cognitive complexity to personal construct theory. As Bonarius (1965) has noted, the concept of cognitive complexity grew out of personal construct psychology but has recently moved outside that area to develop its instruments. He has identified thirty studies which represent ten different measures of cognitive complexity.

Crockett (1965), who has developed his conceptualization of cognitive complexity through the influence of Kelly (1955), Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachey (1962), and Werner (1957), identifies a cognitive system as being relatively complex when it contains a relatively large number of elements which are integrated hierarchically by relatively extensive bonds of relationship. The determination of the relative number of constructs provides a measure of the degree of cognitive differentiation of a cognitive system, and this measure has been utilized as a measure of cognitive complexity. Bieri (1955) and Bieri and Blacker (1956) have developed measures of complexity derived

directly from the Role Construct Repertory Test. Crockett, however, has developed a measure of complexity independent of that test but controlling for differentiation of valence, sex, and age. The methodology has been described as follows:

The measure requires the S to identify eight different individuals who are known to him. Each of these people must fit one of eight different categories that are generated by the following requirements: half of the others must be older than the S and half must be his peers, half are male and half female, and half are people he likes, while half are people he dislikes. The S's task is (a) to identify these eight individuals (i.e., an older man whom he likes, a disliked older man, a liked male peer, a disliked male peer, an older female whom he likes, and so on); (b) to spend a few minutes mentally comparing and contrasting the interpersonal characteristics of these eight individuals; and then (c) to describe each individual in writing as fully as he can within a 3-minute time limit. . . . These eight categories have been chosen in order that the constructs that are elicited will not be restricted to people similar to the S, but will refer to people from a broad range of social roles.

Such a measure of complexity, being independent of the Role Construct Repertory Test, can quite obviously circumvent any problems which might arise from the construct elicitation methodology which utilizes the triadic sort or from the utilization of the Role Construct Repertory Grid.

Crockett's conceptualization of cognitive complexity suggests the following hypothesis for this study:

- III. Subjects low in complexity will demonstrate a more extensive range of application and implicative structure for the constructs they generate than will subjects high in complexity for the constructs they generate.

Confirmation of this hypothesis would suggest that within the context of interpersonal communication, the response of a low complexity

receiver would be different from the response of a high complexity receiver in that on the intrapersonal level the low complexity receiver would generate a symbol response which would have a greater range of application across interpersonal contexts and a more extensive interrelationship with other symbol responses which the receiver may have.

In summary, this study hypothesizes that the range of application and implicative structure of constructs will be more extensive (1) when they are generated by comparisons that include peers rather than older people; (2) when they are generated by comparisons that include liked persons rather than disliked persons; and (3) when they are generated by subjects low in complexity rather than by subjects high in complexity.

VALENCE CONFIGURATIONS

<u>Poles of the Triadic Sort</u>		<u>Hypothesized Nature of</u>
<u>Construct</u>	<u>Contrast</u>	<u>Elicited Constructs</u>
LL	L	Most Salience
LL	D	
LD	L	Intermediate Salience
LD	D	
DD	L	
DD	D	Least Salience

ACQUAINTANCE CONFIGURATIONS

<u>Poles of the Triadic Sort</u>		<u>Hypothesized Nature of</u>
<u>Construct</u>	<u>Contrast</u>	<u>Elicited Constructs</u>
PP	P	Most Salience
PP	O	•
PO	P	Intermediate Salience
PO	O	
OO	P	
OO	O	Least Salience

L denotes Liked other; D, Disliked other; P, Peer; and O, Older person.

CHAPTER II: PROCEDURES

In order to test the hypotheses previously identified this study utilized a 2x2x2x3x3 design. One analysis was concerned with the range of application of constructs, as measured by the Role Construct Repertory Grid, and the other was concerned with the implicative structure of constructs, as measured by the Role Construct Implication Grid. In order to elicit the constructs, subjects of pre-determined high and low cognitive complexity were presented triads utilizing all possible combinations and permutations of liked and disliked peers and older persons on the construct and contrast poles.

Subjects. Communication students at Rockhurst College were utilized as subjects in this experiment. Twelve subjects were used, each generating one score for each cell of the design. Because the subjects were divided into two groups, one of high and one of low cognitive complexity, there were six subjects per cell. The subjects ranged in age from eighteen to twenty-five years. The mean age was 21.3 years. Although the sex of the subjects was not considered as a variable in this study, it should be noted that of the twelve subjects, six were men and six were women. After the division was made between high and low complexity subjects, the balance remained: three men and three women in each group.

Instrumentation. This study necessitated the subjects' completion of four instruments: (1) the Role Category Questionnaire, for the

measure of cognitive complexity; (2) the Role Construct Repertory Test, for the elicitation of constructs; (3) the Role Construct Repertory Grid, for the measure of the range of application of constructs; and (4) the Role Construct Implication Grid, for the measure of the implicative structure of constructs. It should be noted that each of these instruments was modified in terms of the hypotheses of this study.

(1) The Role Category Questionnaire. This instrument, which was utilized as a measure of cognitive complexity, has been operationalized by Crockett (1965). This measure is essentially one of the degree of cognitive differentiation demonstrated by a subject when he is asked to describe a number of people he knows who fill different categories. In order to expedite data-gathering procedures, this study employed a four-role version of the original eight-role questionnaire described earlier. In this instrument subjects are asked to describe four peers, two males and two females, one liked and one disliked of each sex. The degree of cognitive complexity of the subject is computed by summing the characteristics attributed to the four peers. Scores thus obtained were used to determine high and low complexity groups for the study.

(2) The Role Construct Repertory Test. Subjects were asked to provide the names of twelve persons: (a) three peers whom they like; (b) three peers whom they dislike; (c) three older persons they like; and (d) three older persons they dislike. These categories replaced the traditional roles of the test. The subjects were then presented with forty triads constituting all possible combinations and permutations of the above categories with two elements on the construct pole and one

element on the contrast pole. They were then asked to select persons from the categories and to place them in the triads. For each triad they were asked to indicate how the two persons on the construct pole were similar, and different from the person on the contrast pole. All responses were coded to the specific triads which generated them.

Traditionally, the administration of this test has been on a one-to-one basis with the potential for continuous feedback to a subject's responses. Considering such a relationship a potential contaminant of the results, in that subjects might be responding to perceived experimenter expectations, the experimenter altered the administration of the test. An instrument was developed which allowed the test to be self-administered, necessitating on the part of the experimenter only preliminary instructions, occasional responses to procedural questions which arose from time to time, but allowing for no feedback to be given to any test-elicited response.

(3) The Role Construct Repertory Grid. This instrument required subjects to indicate the relationship of generated constructs to the twelve persons they had previously identified. Each subject was supplied with an individualized grid containing all the constructs which had been elicited from that subject by the Role Construct Repertory Test, and identifying, by initials, the persons used to fill the categories for the test. The subject was then asked to identify which constructs he believed to be generally applicable to which persons. The range of application of any given construct was determined by counting the number of persons to whom the subject found the construct applicable. It might

also be possible to determine the relationships of constructs to one another using this instrument, although the fourth and final instrument was determined to be more suitable for that purpose.

(4) The Role Construct Implication Grid. This instrument required subjects to indicate the relationship of generated constructs to each other. Hinkle (1965) developed this technique and used it with some sophistication. A modified version was utilized in this study. Each subject was supplied with individualized grids containing all the constructs which had been elicited from that subject by the Role Construct Repertory Test. The subject was then asked to indicate for each construct those other constructs which appeared to be consistent with it. In other words, if he was to use a given construct to describe a person, what other constructs might he also use? The implicative structure of any given construct was determined by counting the number of other constructs the subject found to be consistent with it.

Data Analysis. The data generated by the last two instruments were analyzed in two $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 3$ factorial designs with one between subjects factor: high and low levels of cognitive complexity; and repeated measures on each subject for four within subjects factors: (a) two levels of contrast acquaintance (Peer, Older person); (b) two levels of contrast valence (Liked other, Disliked other); (c) three levels of construct acquaintance (Peer-Peer, Peer-Older person, Older person-Older person); and (d) three levels of construct valence (Liked other-Liked other, Liked other-Disliked other, Disliked other-Disliked other). The data was processed through the University of Kansas Computer Center using

the ANOVAT program.

Although the 2x2x3x3 design for the four within subjects factors generates thirty-six cells, forty configurations of the acquaintance and valence variables are possible in the triadic sort. As will be noticed in the accompanying table, the four additional configurations result from the interaction of mixed valence on the construct pole with mixed acquaintance on the construct pole. For each of these four cells, each subject generated two scores. In each case the two scores were averaged, thus providing one score per subject for each of the thirty-six cells.

	(LL) L	(LD) L	(DD) L	(LL) D	(LD) D	(DD) D
(PP) P	(LP-LP) LP	(LP-DP) LP	(DP-DP) LP	(LP-LP) DP	(LP-DP) DP	(DP-DP) DP
(PO) P	(LP-LO) LP	(LP-DO) LP (LO-DP) LP	(DP-DO) LP	(LP-LO) DP	(LP-DO) DP (LO-DP) DP	(DP-DO) DP
(OO) P	(LO-LO) LP	(LO-DO) LP	(DO-DO) LP	(LO-LO) DP	(LO-DO) DP	(DO-DO) DP
(PP) O	(LP-LP) LO	(LP-DP) LO	(DP-DP) LO	(LP-LP) DO	(LP-DP) DO	(DP-DP) DO
(PO) O	(LP-LO) LO	(LP-DO) LO (LO-DP) LO	(DP-DO) LO	(LP-LO) DO	(LP-DO) DO (LO-DP) DO	(DP-DO) DO
(OO) O	(LO-LO) LO	(LO-DO) LO	(DO-DO) LO	(LO-LO) DO	(LO-DO) DO	(DO-DO) DO

L denotes Liked other; D, Disliked other; P, Peer; and O, Older person. The construct pole of each sort is enclosed in parentheses.

CONFIGURATIONS OF THE ACQUAINTANCE AND VALENCE VARIABLES IN THE TRIADIC SORT

CHAPTER III: RESULTS

The hypotheses for the study were developed in three areas: acquaintance, valence and cognitive complexity. In regard to acquaintance, it was hypothesized that the range of application and implicative structure of constructs would be more extensive when they were generated by comparisons that included peers rather than older people. That is, the range of application and implicative structure of constructs would be most extensive when generated from configurations with two peers on the construct pole, least extensive from configurations with two older persons on the construct pole, and intermediate from configurations with one peer and one older person on the construct pole. In addition, it was hypothesized that the range of application and implicative structure of constructs would be more extensive from configurations with a peer on the contrast pole than from those with an older person on the contrast pole. These hypotheses were not supported by the data, as evidenced by the lack of significant F-ratios for the main effects of acquaintance on the contrast pole and acquaintance on the construct pole in both Table 1 and Table 2.

In regard to cognitive complexity, it was hypothesized that subjects low in complexity would demonstrate a more extensive range of application and implicative structure for the constructs they generated than would subjects high in complexity for the constructs they generated. This was not supported by the data either, as evidenced by the lack of significant

Table 1. Summary of Analysis of Variance of Range of Application of Constructs Elicited from Subjects Differing in Complexity Using Triadic Sorts Differing in Acquaintance and Valence on the Construct and Contrast Poles

Source	SS	df	MS	F
<u>Total</u>	2019.667	431	4.686	
<u>Between subjects</u>	377.833	11	34.348	
Complexity (CC)	37.926	1	37.926	1.116
Error	339.907	10	33.991	
<u>Within subjects</u>	1641.833	420	3.909	
Acquaintance on the Contrast pole (A2)	0.926	1	0.926	0.562
Acquaintance on the Construct pole (A3)	16.167	2	8.083	1.684
Valence on the Contrast pole (V2)	34.454	1	34.454	3.928
Valence on the Construct pole (V3)	97.792	2	48.896	12.105****
CC x A2	1.334	1	1.334	0.810
CC x A3	10.019	2	5.009	1.044
CC x V2	3.343	1	3.343	0.381
CC x V3	9.755	2	4.877	1.207
A2 x A3	4.019	2	2.009	0.475
A2 x V2	24.084	1	24.084	6.629*
A2 x V3	8.449	2	4.225	0.928
A3 x V2	9.796	2	4.898	1.733
A3 x V3	16.417	4	4.104	0.830

**** F significant at .001 level.

* F significant at .05 level.

Table 1. (continued)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
V2 x V3	2.366	2	1.183	0.391
CC x A2 x A3	8.666	2	4.333	1.024
CC x A2 x V2	0.082	1	0.082	0.023
CC x A2 x V3	1.263	2	0.632	0.139
CC x A3 x V2	19.185	2	9.592	3.394
CC x A3 x V3	10.509	4	2.627	0.531
CC x V2 x V3	7.421	2	3.710	1.226
A2 x A3 x V2	9.500	2	4.750	2.114
A2 x A3 x V3	3.065	4	0.766	0.324
A2 x V2 x V3	1.097	2	0.548	0.341
A3 x V2 x V3	10.009	4	2.502	0.718
CC x A2 x A3 x V2	31.723	2	15.861	7.058***
CC x A2 x A3 x V3	13.029	4	3.257	1.377
CC x A2 x V2 x V3	0.376	2	0.188	0.117
CC x A3 x V2 x V3	14.843	4	3.711	1.065
A2 x A3 x V2 x V3	14.528	4	3.632	1.248
CC x A2 x A3 x V2 x V3	22.193	4	5.548	1.906
Error (CC x A2)	16.463	10	1.646	
Error (CC x A3)	95.981	20	4.799	
Error (CC x V2)	87.704	10	8.770	
Error (CC x V3)	80.787	20	4.039	

*** F significant at .005 level.

Table 1. (continued)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Error (CC x A2 x A3)	84.593	20	4.230	
Error (CC x A2 x V2)	36.333	10	3.633	
Error (CC x A2 x V3)	91.065	20	4.553	
Error (CC x A3 x V2)	56.518	20	2.826	
Error (CC x A3 x V3)	197.907	40	4.948	
Error (CC x V2 x V3)	60.546	20	3.027	
Error (CC x A2 x A3 x V2)	44.944	20	2.247	
Error (CC x A2 x A3 x V3)	94.629	40	2.366	
Error (CC x A2 x V2 x V3)	32.194	20	1.610	
Error (CC x A3 x V2 x V3)	139.315	40	3.483	
Error (CC x A2 x A3 x V2 x V3)	116.445	40	2.911	

Table 2. Summary of Analysis of Variance of Implicative Structure of Constructs Elicited from Subjects Differing in Complexity Using Triadic Sorts Differing in Acquaintance and Valence on the Construct and Contrast Poles

Source	SS	df	MS	F
<u>Total</u>	12710.435	431	29.491	
<u>Between subjects</u>	8934.991	11	812.272	
Complexity (CC)	31.148	1	31.148	0.035
Error	8903.842	10	890.384	
<u>Within subjects</u>	3775.444	420	8.989	
Acquaintance on the Contrast pole (A2)	0.750	1	0.750	0.066
Acquaintance on the Construct pole (A3)	2.018	2	1.009	0.120
Valence on the Contrast pole (V2)	0.333	1	0.333	0.020
Valence on the Construct pole (V3)	147.573	2	73.787	3.627*
CC x A2	62.260	1	62.260	5.516*
CC x A3	23.574	2	11.787	1.406
CC x V2	3.343	1	3.343	0.205
CC x V3	31.130	2	15.565	0.765
A2 x A3	24.223	2	12.111	1.399
A2 x V2	7.260	1	7.260	1.383
A2 x V3	20.223	2	10.112	1.349
A3 x V2	22.889	2	11.445	1.308
A3 x V3	55.093	4	13.773	2.220

* F significant at .05 level.

Table 2. (continued)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
V2 x V3	42.389	2	21.195	2.080
CC x A2 x A3	41.185	2	20.593	2.378
CC x A2 x V2	1.564	1	1.564	0.298
CC x A2 x V3	27.184	2	13.592	1.814
CC x A3 x V2	3.851	2	1.926	0.220
CC x A3 x V3	60.814	4	15.204	2.451
CC x V2 x V3	3.573	2	1.787	0.175
A2 x A3 x V2	10.240	2	5.120	0.614
A2 x A3 x V3	5.971	4	1.493	0.257
A2 x V2 x V3	39.684	2	19.842	2.565
A3 x V2 x V3	38.721	4	9.680	1.123
CC x A2 x A3 x V2	77.908	2	38.954	4.674**
CC x A2 x A3 x V3	17.454	4	4.364	0.751
CC x A2 x V2 x V3	4.798	2	2.399	0.310
CC x A3 x V2 x V3	70.149	4	17.537	2.035
A2 x A3 x V2 x V3	16.732	4	4.183	1.133
CC x A2 x A3 x V2 x V3	13.731	4	3.433	0.930
Error (CC x A2)	112.880	10	11.288	
Error (CC x A3)	167.686	20	8.384	
Error (CC x V2)	162.769	10	16.277	
Error (CC x V3)	406.907	20	20.345	

** F significant at .025 level.

Table 2. (continued)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Error (CC x A2 x A3)	173.203	20	8.660	
Error (CC x A2 x V2)	52.509	10	5.251	
Error (CC x A2 x V3)	149.870	20	7.494	
Error (CC x A3 x V2)	174.981	20	8.749	
Error (CC x A3 x V3)	248.118	40	6.204	
Error (CC x V2 x V3)	203.759	20	10.188	
Error (CC x A2 x A3 x V2)	166.685	20	8.334	
Error (CC x A2 x A3 x V3)	232.297	40	5.807	
Error (CC x A2 x V2 x V3)	154.686	20	7.734	
Error (CC x A3 x V2 x V3)	344.742	40	8.619	
Error (CC x A2 x A3 x V2 x V3)	147.702	40	3.693	

F-ratios for the main effect of complexity in both Table 1 and Table 2.

In regard to valence of the other person, the hypothesis that the range of application and implicative structure of constructs would be more extensive when two liked persons were on the construct pole than when two disliked persons were on the construct pole was supported on both measures. The hypothesis that the range of application and implicative structure of constructs would be more extensive from configurations with one liked person and one disliked person on the construct pole than from those with two disliked persons on the construct pole was also supported on the measure for the range of application but not on the measure for implicative structure. Significant F-ratios for the main effect of valence on the construct pole can be found in Table 1 and Table 2. Further analysis can be found in Table 3. Two other hypotheses were not supported: (a) the range of application and implicative structure of constructs was not more extensive from configurations with two liked persons on the construct pole than from those with one liked person and one disliked person on the construct pole, and (b) the range of application and implicative structure of constructs was not more extensive from configurations with a liked person on the contrast pole than from those with a disliked person on the contrast pole. The second finding is evidenced by the lack of significant F-ratios for the main effect of valence on the contrast pole in both Table 1 and Table 2.

Two significant two-way interactions were found in this study. For the range of application of constructs there was a significant

Table 3. Mean Range of Application and Implicative Structure of Constructs Generated When the Valence of Persons on the Construct Pole of the Triad Varied¹

	LL	LD	DD
Range	4.854 _a	5.083 _a	3.979
Implication	7.389 _a	6.722 _{ab}	5.958 _b

interaction between acquaintance on the contrast pole and valence on the contrast pole (Table 1: A2 x V2). For the implicative structure of constructs there was a significant interaction between complexity and acquaintance on the contrast pole (Table 2: CC x A2).

Interaction of Acquaintance on the Contrast Pole with Valence on the Contrast Pole for Range of Application. The means of this interaction are shown in Table 4. As may be seen in this table, constructs generated by triads with a disliked older person on the contrast pole had a more extensive range of application than constructs generated by triads with a liked older person on the contrast pole.

Table 4. Mean Range of Application of Constructs Generated When the Acquaintance and Valence of Persons on the Contrast Pole Varied

	Peer	Older person
Liked other	4.639 _{aA}	4.074 _a
Disliked other	4.731 _{bA}	5.111 _b

Interaction of Complexity with Acquaintance on the Contrast Pole for Implicative Structure. The means of this interaction are shown in

¹In this and subsequent tables, means in the same row with identical lower case subscripts do not differ significantly at $p < .05$ by the Bonferroni t ; in subsequent tables those in the same column with identical upper case subscripts do not differ significantly at $p < .05$.

Table 5. As may be seen in this table subjects low in complexity generated a more extensive implicative structure for constructs derived from triads with a peer on the contrast pole than did subjects high in complexity.

Table 5. Mean Implicative Structure of Constructs Generated by Groups Differing in Cognitive Complexity When the Acquaintance of Persons on the Contrast Pole Varied

	High Complexity	Low Complexity
Peer	6.000 _A	7.296 _B
Older person	6.843 _{aA}	6.620 _{aB}

Finally, two significant four-way interactions were found in this study. For both the range of application and the implicative structure of constructs there were significant interactions between complexity, acquaintance on the contrast pole, acquaintance on the construct pole, and valence on the contrast pole (Table 1 and Table 2: CC x A2 x A3 x V2). The means of these interactions are presented in Table 6 and Table 7; however, the results are too complex to be readily interpreted.

Table 6. Mean Range of Application of Constructs Generated by Groups Differing in Cognitive Complexity When the Acquaintance and Valence on the Contrast Pole and the Acquaintance on the Construct Pole Varied

		High Complexity		Low Complexity	
		Liked other	Disliked other	Liked other	Disliked other
Peer- Peer	Peer	4.389	4.667	5.222	5.222
	Older person	4.056	4.500	4.111	6.500
Peer- Older person	Peer	4.667	4.333	5.000	5.500
	Older person	4.389	3.944	4.500	5.333
Older person- Older person	Peer	4.111	3.833	4.444	4.833
	Older person	3.278	5.944	4.111	4.444

Table 7. Mean Implicative Structure of Constructs Generated by Groups Differing in Cognitive Complexity When the Acquaintance and Valence on the Contrast Pole and the Acquaintance on the Construct Pole Varied

		High Complexity		Low Complexity	
		Liked other	Disliked other	Liked other	Disliked other
Peer- Peer	Peer	5.611	6.056	8.500	7.333
	Older person	8.389	6.111	5.944	6.278
Peer- Older person	Peer	6.611	5.611	7.000	7.833
	Older person	5.333	6.611	7.389	6.500
Older person- Older person	Peer	5.556	6.556	6.000	7.111
	Older person	7.722	6.889	6.556	7.056

CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION

Although the findings of this study were not fully supportive of the hypotheses identified, they nevertheless tend to confirm the view that specific controls on the valence and acquaintance of elements in the structure of the triadic sort may significantly affect the relative range of application and the implicative structure of the constructs that are elicited. However, the character of the relationship between those specific controls and the nature of the constructs elicited is less obvious. In fact, there appears to be no readily discernible pattern to the findings which might provide a precise basis for explaining construing behavior. That being the case, any explanations tendered or conclusions drawn in this discussion must be considered as highly tentative and any argumentative stance is advanced with extreme caution. This discussion will attempt to focus on an examination of the experimental procedures utilized in the study with the hope of generating potential alternative methodologies which clarify the relevant construal processes in future research in this area.

Acquaintance

For the purposes of this study, the levels of acquaintance variables were identified in the same manner as in the research reported by Crockett (1965): peers and older persons. In that study subjects were found to use more constructs to describe peers than to describe older persons. However, the absence of a significant main effect of the

acquaintance variable in the present study suggests that the range of application and implicative structure of constructs are not significantly affected by variations in the degree of acquaintance with the persons about whom the constructs are elicited. A number of possible inferences might be drawn from this. First, it would appear that a quantitative measure of the number of constructs a subject may use to describe a given other person is not necessarily a determinant of the range of application or implicative structure of the individual constructs in that description. Second, it may well be that construing a single other in isolation elicits a wholly different kind of cognitive behavior than that elicited in the construing of a triadic comparison-contrast configuration. If the acquaintance factor truly does have no significant impact on the nature of the constructs elicited, this would appear to imply that there is no real need for role titles in the Role Construct Repertory Test, that the particular "relevant others" in the triadic sort may be of little consequence in eliciting constructs that are representative of a subject's construct system.

In terms of the discrimination process in intrapersonal communication, it would appear that varying degrees of acquaintance with external stimuli do not necessarily elicit qualitatively different construal behaviors. Although not the subject of this study, there may of course be variations in the accuracy of discriminatory behavior as a function of acquaintance, but the nature of the constructs used would not appear to vary. It may be that people use standard constructs from their repertoire to describe other people whatever their degree of acquaintance,

but that they describe those with whom they are better acquainted in a more differentiated, more precise manner.

Future research in this area would do well to measure more precisely the degree of acquaintance than has been done in this study. Although, as was indicated earlier, this study's identification of the levels of acquaintance is essentially a replication of previous research, it may well be that different, and perhaps more accurate, findings might be derived by moving away from the age dichotomy and instead utilizing scalar measures to determine more precisely degrees of acquaintance with those being described. Although the age dichotomy may have been adequate to detect differential complexity, it may not be suitable for the study of the discriminatory behavior involved in the perception of triadic comparison-contrast configurations.

Valence

The only hypotheses supported by the data were those relevant to the variables of valence: that constructs generated by triads with two liked persons on the construct pole will have a more extensive range of application and a broader implicative structure than constructs generated by triads with two disliked persons on the construct pole, and that constructs generated by triads with one liked person and one disliked person on the construct pole will have a more extensive range of application than constructs generated by triads with two disliked persons on the construct pole. Crockett (1965) found subjects to be more complex with respect to liked others than with respect to disliked others. It

would appear that not only does positive valence beget greater complexity than negative valence, but that in construing a triadic comparison-contrast configuration uniform positive valence on the construct pole also generates constructs with a more extensive range of application and a broader implicative structure than does uniform negative valence.

The absence of significant differences for valence on the contrast pole would seem to suggest that the salience of valence is anchored in the construct pole, in drawing similarities rather than in discerning differences. Furthermore, for the range of application of constructs the absence of differences between uniform positive valence and mixed valence on the construct pole may suggest that when construing similarities between liked and disliked others, subjects tend to identify liked attributes of the disliked others, and are in fact behaving as they would when construing similarities between two liked others. The resulting constructs may have a more extensive range of application than those generated by configurations with two disliked persons on the construct pole because subjects more readily attribute liked characteristics to others than they do disliked characteristics. Finally, the finding that configurations of uniform positive valence generated a more extensive implicative structure than uniform negative valence may suggest that constructs elicited when construing the similarities between two liked others are either more permeable or more superordinate than those elicited when construing similarities between two disliked others. All of this would appear to **imply** that within the intrapersonal communication processing system positive stimuli evoke

responses which are more central to our experience and structurally more complex than negative stimuli. As was suggested in the previous section, more precise measurement of the valence variable may be of value. The like-dislike dichotomy may not be the best means of identifying valence levels, in that some subjects may be prone to identify a disliked person as one who is "liked less" and other subjects may identify a liked person as one who is "disliked less." That is, subjects may perceive liking as a continuum, and may tend to cluster others at one end or the other of the continuum.

Cognitive Complexity

The complexity hypothesis was not confirmed by the data. This would appear to suggest that the extent of one's personal construct system, one's cognitive complexity, is not necessarily predictive of the range of application or implicative structure of the constructs within that system. In terms of intrapersonal communication, this may imply that the complexity of one's life orientation is not a determinant of the discrimination and regrouping processes, that there may in fact be normative behaviors involved which are independent of a person's experiences.

Range and the Contrast Pole

Crockett's (1965) study of cognitive complexity, previously discussed, found that subjects were more complex with respect both to others they liked and to others they associated with most often. In this respect, it is interesting to note the construing behavior relevant to

those for whom they should be least complex: disliked older persons. Constructs generated by triads with a disliked older person on the contrast pole had a more extensive range of application than constructs generated by triads with a liked older person on the contrast pole. If the configuration for which subjects would be least complex generates the most extensive range, it would seem to follow that the configuration for which subjects would be most complex would generate the least extensive range. However, such was not the case. If any conclusions can be drawn from this interaction, it would appear that subjects are not significantly influenced by the differential valence of peers on the contrast pole, but do make significant distinctions between the valences of older persons on the contrast pole when construing the triadic sort. It may well be that a kind of polarization effect is operating at that level of acquaintance that is not present in terms of peers.

Implicative Structure, Cognitive Complexity,
and Acquaintance on the Contrast Pole

It was hypothesized that subjects low in complexity would demonstrate a more extensive implicative structure for the constructs they generate than subjects high in complexity would for the constructs they generate. This hypothesis was not supported by the data. However, it was found that subjects low in complexity demonstrated a more extensive implicative structure than those high in complexity for constructs generated by triads with a peer on the contrast pole. Why this is the case is not altogether clear. However, it may be that low

complexity subjects tend to have more peer-oriented construct systems than have high complexity subjects, and that that orientation difference becomes significant in the contrasting aspect of construing behavior. Such a conclusion should remain highly tentative until further research can more precisely identify the relationship of the complexity of a cognitive system to the nature of its acquaintance orientation.

Summary

The original impetus for the research was a concern for the elaboration of the current conceptualization of the intrapersonal communication system in terms of its processing behavior. Although the dynamics of processing behavior had previously been considered, little attention had been focused on inhibitory factors which might place limitations on such behavior. Indeed, where such factors had been considered, no evidence was to be found of conceptual integration of inhibitory factors within the process orientation.

Inasmuch as current models of the intrapersonal communication process appeared to be lacking as a means for studying the limitations on processing behavior, a more suitable conceptual framework was sought. Such a framework was found in the context of Kelly's personal construct theory, which not only assumes process but also implies specific limitations on that process. The theory's fundamental postulate and relevant corollaries were explored as they applied to this study.

Consideration was then given to the methodologies which Kelly had developed for the elicitation and study of personal constructs, the Role

Construct Repertory Test and the Role Construct Repertory Grid, with particular attention given to the assumptions underlying each. Although Kelly's intention within these methodologies was not to inhibit construct generation, nor for that matter to explore limiting factors, the methodologies nevertheless appeared to be appropriate for such exploration.

Three variables which appeared to be of central importance to the processing of interpersonal perceptions were identified as suitable for study within Kelly's methodological framework: (1) acquaintance, (2) valence, and (3) cognitive complexity. These variables and their relationships had previously been studied (Crockett, 1965) in a methodological framework different from Kelly's. Hypotheses relevant to this study were developed in each of the three areas.

In order to test the hypotheses identified, a 2x2x2x3x3 design was utilized. Data was gathered from the administration of four instruments: (1) the Role Category Questionnaire; (2) the Role Construct Repertory Test; (3) the Role Construct Repertory Grid; and (4) the Role Construct Implication Grid. For each instrument appropriate modifications were made to conform to the hypotheses being test; that is, controls were placed on the construct elicitation process, the elements of the Role Construct Repertory Grid, and the administration of the Role Construct Implication Grid.

The data analysis resulted in few significant findings. Only one main effect, one two-way interaction, and one four-way interaction were found to significant in each of the two five-factor analyses of

variance. The following findings of the study appear to be the most important: (1) constructs generated by triads with two liked persons on the construct pole had a more extensive range of application and implicative structure than constructs generated by triads with two disliked persons on the construct pole; (2) constructs generated by triads with one liked person and one disliked person on the construct pole had a more extensive range of application than constructs generated by triads with two disliked persons on the construct pole; (3) constructs generated by triads with a disliked older person on the contrast pole had a more extensive range of application than constructs generated by triads with a liked older person on the contrast pole; and (4) subjects low in complexity demonstrated a more extensive implicative structure for constructs generated by triads with a peer on the contrast pole than did subjects high in complexity.

Although the findings were not fully supportive of the hypotheses identified, they nevertheless tended to confirm the view that specific controls on the triadic sort could affect the nature of the constructs elicited.

Implications for Intrapersonal Communication

In terms of intrapersonal communication the following conclusions have been drawn: (1) that varying degrees of acquaintance with external stimuli do not necessarily elicit qualitatively different construal behaviors; (2) that positive stimuli evoke responses which are more central to our experience and structurally more complex than negative

stimuli; and (3) that the complexity of one's life orientation may not be a determinant of the discrimination and regrouping processes.

Acquaintance. The findings of the study would appear to suggest that there may be a standard repertoire of constructs from which one draws to construe external stimuli of differential acquaintance. Although such stimuli may differ in the number of constructs they evoke, there appears to be no difference in the range of application or implicative structure of those constructs. In terms of discrimination and regrouping according to relative strength and need, the findings of this study would suggest that for different levels of acquaintance no single construct would be an indicator of such strength or need of a given stimulus, as measured by that construct's range of application and implicative structure.

Valence. If the range of application and the implicative structure of a construct can be measures of the relative strength of the stimulus which evokes it, the findings of this study would appear to suggest that the valence of stimuli may determine to some extent how the discrimination process operates. Not only has previous research indicated that subjects have more constructs for positively valent others, but this study would suggest that those constructs differ from those applied to negatively valent others on measures of application and implication. Although, as argued above, there may be a standard repertoire of constructs which do not differentiate levels of acquaintance, it would appear that within that repertoire there are different kinds of constructs which differentiate levels of valence.

Complexity. Although individuals of differing levels of complexity may have differing quantities of constructs for given external stimuli, the findings of this study would suggest that those individuals do not differ on the measures of application and implication for their constructs. This would seem to suggest that differences in life orientation may not necessarily be indicative of differences in discriminatory processes.

In summary, it would appear that the discrimination and regrouping processes may involve differentiation between external stimuli in terms of the number of constructs a subject may have for a given stimulus and/or in terms of the application and implication constructs may have. Although both valence and acquaintance levels may be differentiated by the number of constructs, only the valence levels may be differentiated by the application and implication of constructs.

Applications for Interpersonal Communication. The focus of this study has been essentially intrapersonal. It has been concerned with a perceiver's mental processes. However, it is important to relate these results to processes of communication between people as well, and that is the purpose of this section.

The present analysis deals with the kinds of inferences a Perceiver (P) will make about an Other (O) as a function of (1) whether P likes or dislikes O, (2) P's degree of acquaintance with O, and (3) the complexity of P's personal construct system. The findings of this study suggest the following kinds of conclusions:

- (1) If P likes O, the symbolic responses to O (a) will have a greater

range of application to other individuals than the symbols used if P dislikes O and (b) will be more extensively related to other symbols than the symbols used if P dislikes O. This would suggest that one's inferences about a liked person will be more extensive than those about a disliked person, owing to the more extensive relationship among symbols. It would also suggest that one's images of people one likes will be more comparable to one another and less distinguished from one another than images of people one dislikes. To the extent that P's behavior toward O is at least partially determined by his inferences about O, one might expect that P's behaviors toward a liked O would manifest a higher degree of flexibility than his behaviors toward a disliked O.

(2) Whether O is a peer of P's or an older person would appear to have little relevance to either the range of application of the symbols P uses to describe O or the extensiveness of the interrelationship among those symbols. It should be added, however, that age or status differences will probably reflect aspects of P's inferences, such as the nature of the symbols elicited, that were not measured in the present study. Furthermore, P's degree of acquaintance with O--which was the variable that age differences were intended to reflect--might well produce different kinds of symbolic responses to O if the degree of acquaintance were operationalized differently.

(3) P's cognitive complexity will have little apparent effect upon either the range of application of the symbols P uses to describe O or the extensiveness of the interrelationship among those symbols. It

should be emphasized, however, that P's cognitive complexity may quite likely affect other aspects of P's symbolic response to O.

Conclusion

The primary concern of this study has lain within the focus of intrapersonal communication and the human information processing system. An attempt has been made to focus on certain factors which appear to be most important within an interlocking framework of interpersonal perception, cognitive complexity, and personal construct theory. More specifically, this research has concerned itself with the factors of valence and acquaintance as, in various comparison-contrast configurations, they affect the information processing capacity of individuals. In the future it is hopeful that there will be continued exploration of the intrapersonal communication system's processing of interpersonal stimuli in more elaborate schema, with greater specificity within the aforementioned factors, and with special attention given to the nature of cognitive complexity.

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APPENDIX A
THE ROLE CATEGORY QUESTIONNAIRE

ROLE CATEGORY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____ Date _____ Sex _____
 Age _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Our interest in this questionnaire is to learn how people describe others whom they know. We are interested in knowing, in your own terms, the characteristics which a set of individuals have--those which set one person off from another as an individual, and those characteristics which they share in common.

Our concern here is with the habits, ideas, mannerisms--in general, with the personal characteristics, rather than the physical traits--which characterize a number of different people.

In order to make sure that you are describing real people, we have set down a list of four different categories of people. In the blank space beside each category below, please write the initials, nicknames, or some other identifying symbol for a person of your acquaintance who fits into that category. Be sure to use a different person for each category.

1. A man your own age whom you like _____
2. A man your own age whom you dislike _____
3. A woman your own age whom you like _____
4. A woman your own age whom you dislike _____

Spend a few moments looking over this list, mentally comparing and contrasting the people you have in mind for each category. Think of their habits, their beliefs, their mannerisms, their relations to others, any characteristics they have which you might use to describe them to other people.

If you have any questions about the kinds of characteristics we are interested in, please ask them.

Do not turn the page until instructed to do so.

APPENDIX B

THE ROLE CONSTRUCT REPERTORY TEST

Complete this form:

(You may use initials, nicknames, or code if you wish to disguise any of the persons identified.)

I. Identify three peers whom you like (LP):

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

II. Identify three peers whom you dislike (DP):

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

III. Identify three older persons whom you like (LO):

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

IV. Identify three older persons whom you dislike (DO):

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

The purpose of this instrument is to help determine how people compare and contrast others. In order to complete it, please follow these instructions for each item:

1. Identify the categories in the item. These may be LP, DP, LO, or DO, as indicated on the form just completed.
2. From this form select one person from each of the identified categories for each position in the item. If a category is used two or all three times in an item, you will need to select two persons or all three persons from the category. Do not use a person more than once in any item.
3. Once each position in the item is filled, note that the first two positions are set apart from the third by parentheses. Now ask yourself, "In what important way are those two similar and different from the third?"
4. Having determined the answer place it on the line provided. In each case place the similarity first and the difference second. Some examples of how others have responded to particular items are: "dependable-undependable," "mature-immature," "neat-sloppy," "satisfied-dissatisfied," "wanted-unwanted," and "good-bad."

NOTE: There is no such thing as a pre-determined "right" answer for any item. The response you use for completing each item should be right for you. Please complete all items.

1.	(LP	LP)	LP	_____
2.	(LP	DP)	LP	_____
3.	(DP	DP)	LP	_____
4.	(LP	LP)	DP	_____
5.	(LP	DP)	DP	_____
6.	(DP	DP)	DP	_____
7.	(LP	LO)	LP	_____
8.	(LP	DO)	LP	_____
9.	(DP	LO)	LP	_____
10.	(DP	DO)	LP	_____
11.	(LP	LO)	DP	_____
12.	(LP	DO)	DP	_____
13.	(DP	LO)	DP	_____
14.	(DP	DO)	DP	_____
15.	(LO	LO)	LP	_____
16.	(LO	DO)	LP	_____
17.	(DO	DO)	LP	_____
18.	(LO	LO)	DP	_____
19.	(LO	DO)	DP	_____
20.	(DO	DO)	DP	_____

21.	(LP	LP)	LO	_____
22.	(LP	DP)	LO	_____
23.	(DP	DP)	LO	_____
24.	(LP	LP)	DO	_____
25.	(LP	DP)	DO	_____
26.	(DP	DP)	DO	_____
27.	(LP	LO)	LO	_____
28.	(LP	DO)	LO	_____
29.	(DP	LO)	LO	_____
30.	(DP	DO)	LO	_____
31.	(LP	LO)	DO	_____
32.	(LP	DO)	DO	_____
33.	(LO	DP)	DO	_____
34.	(DP	DO)	DO	_____
35.	(LO	LO)	LO	_____
36.	(LO	DO)	LO	_____
37.	(DO	DO)	LO	_____
38.	(LO	LO)	DO	_____
39.	(LO	DO)	DO	_____
40.	(DO	DO)	DO	_____

APPENDIX C

THE ROLE CONSTRUCT REPERTORY GRID

On the following pages you will find grids with constructs listed down the left side of the grid and the persons you identified on the previous instrument listed across the top. The purpose of this instrument is to determine how applicable the constructs are to the persons.

In each case where you determine that a construct is generally applicable to a particular person, mark an "X" in the square formed by the intersection of the construct with the person.

It is possible that a construct may not be generally applicable to any of the persons, or that for a person none of the constructs may apply. The point is, there is no minimum, no maximum, no "right" number or pattern of "X's" to be expected on these grids.

	IP-1	2	3	DP-1	2	3	LO-1	2	3	DO-1	2	3
Construct 1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
15												
16												
17												
18												
19												
20												

	LP-1	2	3	DP-1	2	3	LO-1	2	3	DO-1	2	3
Construct 21												
22												
23												
24												
25												
26												
27												
28												
29												
30												
31												
32												
33												
34												
35												
36												
37												
38												
39												
40												

APPENDIX D

THE ROLE CONSTRUCT IMPLICATION GRID

On the following pages you will find grids with constructs on both dimensions. Our purpose here is to determine the relationships of these constructs to each other

In each case where you determine that a construct would generally imply another construct or suggest the likelihood of another construct for describing a person, mark an "X" in the square formed by the intersection of the constructs.

Construct 1																				
2																				
3																				
4																				
5																				
6																				
7																				
8																				
9																				
10																				
11																				
12																				
13																				
14																				
15																				
16																				
17																				
18																				
19																				
20																				
	Construct 21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40