When Doing is Saying

From Implicit Communication

to Tacit Conventions

via Silent Agreements

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1. BIC

Behavioral Implicit Communication Theory

Usual, practical, even non-social **behaviors** **contextually used as messages** for communicating.

- **Behavior can be communication**
  without any modification or any additional signal or mark.

I will call this form of **communication without specialized symbols**:

Behavioral - Implicit Communication (BIC).

"Behavioral" because it is just simple uncodified behavior.

"Implicit" because – not being specialized and codified – its communicative character is unmarket, undisclosed, not-manifest, and thus not undeniable;

it is just an **'use'** and at most a **'destination'** not *the* shaping '**function**'.

Normally communication actions are special and specialized behaviours (like speech acts, gestures, signals, …).

1. Behavioral Implicit Communication Theory

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BIC is a **very important** notion, **never clearly focused**, and very frequently **mixed up** with other forms of communication (typically the so called "non-verbal" or "expressive" or "extra-linguistic" or "visual" communication).

It has been <u>source of a number of misunderstandings</u> and bad definitions

This ill-treated notion:

A) It is **crucial for the whole theory of social behavior**: coordination, control, social order (norms keeping) instauration, identity and membership recognition, social conventions building, cultural transmission, deception, etc.

A lot of social control and collaboration monitoring and coordination, are based on this form of communication and not on special and explicit messages (communication protocols).

B) Even <u>for the theory of linguistic communication</u> BIC theory is fundamental:
  - pragmatic inferences
  - to derive from BIC the Gricean meta-communicative character of linguistic communication;
  - meaning negotiation, etc.
  – this form of <u>emerging and spontaneous</u> communication is one of the forerunners and premise for the evolution and acquisition of language

1. Behavioral Implicit Communication Theory
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Against Watclawicz: *Damned to communicate?*

- When behavior is communication and when is not.

- Is simple understanding already communication?

A famous thesis of Palo Alto psychotherapy school was that

"It is impossible do not communicate",
     "any behaviour is communication" in social domain.
     In this view, a non-communicative behaviour is a nonsense.

This claim is too strong. It gives us a notion of communication that is useless because is non-discriminative.

In order to have communication having a "recipient" which attribute some meaning to a certain <u>sign</u> is a non-sufficient condition.

Signification Vs. Communication

- We cannot consider as communication any information/<u>sign</u> arriving from A to B,
                    unless it is <u>aimed at</u> informing B.

A <u>teleological</u> (intentional or functional) "sending" action by the source is needed.
The source has to perform a given behaviour **"in order"** the other agent interprets it in a certain way, receives the "message" and its meaning.

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Is an escaping prey "communicating" to its predator/enemy its position and move?

> Watzlawich's overgeneralization cannot avoid considering *communication* to the enemy the fact that a predator can observe the movement of the prey.
> **Although this information is certainly very relevant and informative for the enemy or predator, it is not communication.**
>
> Receiving the information is <u>functional (adaptive) for the predator</u> and for that species which have developed such ability, but it is not functional at all, it isn't adaptive for the prey:
> **"Sending" that sign is not a functional (evolutionary) goal of the prey**.

Is a pilferer informing or communicating to the guard about his presence and moves?

 The pilferer does not notice that there is a working TV camera surveillance system and thus *he does not know* that there is a guard that is following him on a screen!
OR: a pilferer escaping from the police but leaving on the ground <u>prints and traces</u> of his direction.

Are those signs (very meaningful for the police) messages to it?

"Signification" – following (Eco, 1976)

- prints on the ground are *signs* for the hunter of the passage of a deer
- smoke is the *sign* of a fire,
- some spots can mean "it is raining" (they are for Y *signs* of the fact that it is raining);.

We have here **simple processes of *signification*.**
> Notice that <u>meanings are not conventional</u> but simply based upon natural perceptual experience and inference.

Notice also that <u>the signal, the vehicle has not been manufactured on purpose for conveying this meaning</u>, it doesn't need to be "encoded" and "decoded" via some conventional artificial rule.

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The "goal" of communicating

the crucial component for the notion of communication is

the *finalistic* nature of the act of "sending" the message

ascribing intentions and mental states to any animal (like insects)?
however,
we want to coherently use the notion of animal *communication*.

Goal-Governed *Vs* Goal-Oriented Agents
Intentions *Vs* Functions

Two kinds of goal-oriented systems and behaviors,

- **the cognitive, intentional** ones (**goal-governed**),

- **the merely goal-oriented** ones
  without any internal anticipatory representation of the goal of the action, where the *teleonomic* character of the behavior is merely in its adaptive function.

The finalistic notion we need has two different meanings:
- either the message is sent *on purpose, intentionally* by X, which should be a cognitive purposive system, an intentional agent (in this case X believes and intends the result – see later);
- or, the message is *not intentional but simply functional*; the sending behavior is not deliberated but is mere goal-oriented behavior, either designed by some engineer, or selected by natural or artificial evolution, or selected by some learning.

Thus, we have <u>two basic kind of communication</u>:

- **Intentional** (or better "goal-governed") communication and
- **Functional** (or "merely goal-oriented") communication.

To be more precise BIC theory should be developed at 3 layers:

FUNCTIONAL
with several sub-type: by evolution-selection; or by design; or by reinforcement learning based on the effects (conditioned BIC)

PROTO-INTENTIONAL
based on Anticipatory classifiers (proto-intentions) thus reinforcement learning but with some anticipatory representation

INTENTIONAL
Intentional BIC presupposes an intentional stance and more precisely a "theory of mind" in the interpreter, since the message bring by the action is about the mind of the source: his intention, or emotion, or motives, or assumptions, etc.

The **definition of BIC** (<u>at the intentional level</u>) is as follows:

> *in BIC the agent (source) is performing a usual practical action β, but he also knows and lets or makes the other agent (addressee) to observe and understand such a behavior, i.e. to capture some meaning μ from that "message", because this is part of his (motivating or non motivating) goals in performing β.*

"A practical action primarily aimed to reach a <u>practical</u> goal which can *also* lead to achieve a communicative goal, without any predetermined (conventional or innate) specialized meaning".

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Why BIC is *not*

"non-verbal", "extra-linguistic" communication

BIC is not the same and has not very much to do with the so called ***non-verbal or extra-linguistic communication*** (NVC)
although NVC is through some behavior or behavioral features, and BIC is for sure non-verbal and extra-linguistic.

The few of BIC that has been identified has been actually **mixed up with** the never well defined and notion of "Non Verbal Behavior"

- **NVC could include also BIC,**

  but this is not an advantage at all

Non-verbal and extra-linguistic communication refers to specific and specialized communication systems and **codes** based on <u>facial expressions</u> and <u>postures</u>, <u>specific gestures</u>, over-segmental features of voice (intonation, pitch, etc.), etc. that communicate specific meanings by **specialized, recognizable (either conventional ex.** policeman regulating traffic **or universal** ex. emotional signals**) signals.**

BIC is not a "language". Any (verbal or non-verbal) "language" has some sort of "lexicon" i.e. a list of (learned or inborn) perceptual patterns *specialized* **as "signs"**:
where "specialized" means **either conventional and learned as sign**, or built in, designed for such a purpose (function) by natural selection, or engineering. <u>BIC does not require a specific learning or training, or transmission</u>; it simply exploits perceptual patterns of usual behavior and their recognition.

BIC is an observation-based, non-special-message-based, unconventional communication, exploiting simple side effects of acts and the natural disposition of agents to observe and interpret the behavior of the interfering others.
BIC gestures are just gestures, they are not symbolic but practical: to drink, to walk, to scratch oneself, to chew.

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They represent and mean themselves and what is *unconventionally* **inferable from them**.

1. Behavioral Implicit Communication Theory

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The Stigmergic Over-generalization

The notion of stigmergy comes from biological studies on social insects: how termites (unintentionally) coordinate themselves in the reconstruction of their nest, without sending specific and direct messages to each other. Communication works through physical work traces (stigma) and through <u>modification of the environment</u> (like when a thief leaves fake footprints in order to put the police off the scent).

> **Stigmercy is defined as "indirect communication through the environment".** (Holland and Beckers -1996)

Definition of Stigmergic communication is very weak and unprincipled.

1.
   Doesn't speaking propagate through the environment as energy? Isn't a letter or a book a physical environmental sign?

Any kind of communication exploits some environmental "channel" and some physical outcome of the act.

2.
A lot of usual communication and even linguistic messages are directed towards unknown or unspecified addressees.

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<u>The real difference:</u>

in Stigmergic communication we do not have *specialised* communicative actions, *specialised* messages (that unambiguously would be "direct" messages because would be just messages);

We just have practical behaviors (like nest building actions) and objects, that are *also* endowed with communicative functions.

In this sense communication is not "direct" (special communicative acts or objects) and is "via the environment" (i.e. via actions aimed at a physical and practical transformation of the environment).

Stigmergy as a special form of BIC

where

the addressee does not perceive the *behavior* (during its performance) but perceives other *post-hoc traces* and outcomes of it.

Perceiving behavior is *always* perceiving traces and environmental modifications due to it, it is just a matter of perception time and of duration of the trace.

Behavioral Communication step by step

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i) Just behaviour: An agent X is acting in a desert word; no other agent or intelligent creature is there, nobody observes, understands or ascribes any meaning to this behaviour β.
Neither "signification" nor a fortiori "communication" are there.

ii) Signification: An agent X is acting by its own in a word but there is **another agent Y observing it which ascribes some meaning to this behaviour** β.

There is in this case "signification" (X's behaviour has some meaning for Y, inform it of something), but there is no necessarily "communication".

> By "signification" I mean that the behaviour of X has some 'meaning', is a sign of something, means something else for Y. For example: "it is moving", "it is eating", "it is going there".

'βx means to Y that p'

> 1) (Causes (Observes Y β) (Knows/Bel Y p))

To have "communication"

> 2) (Goal X (Causes (Observes Y β) (Knows/Bel Y p)))

or even better

(Causes (Goal X (Causes (Observes Y β) (Knows/Bel Y p))) (Does X β))

which should correspond to

(In Order to (Does X β) (Causes (Observes Y β) (Knows/Bel Y p)))

(iia) X does not know   the pilferer example

If we characterise the minds of X and Y, we have that:

Y's mind (guard)
(Know Y p) - where p is "X is coming inside the building"
? (Goal Y (Know Y p))

X's mind (pilferer)
(Not (Know X (Know Y p)))
(Goal X (Not (Know Y p)))

(iib) X's awareness: "weak BIC"

Consider now that X knows about being monitored by a guard, but that he **does not care at all of it**, because he knows that the guard cannot do anything at all

Y's mind
(Know Y p) - where p is "X is coming inside the building"
? (Goal Y (Know Y p))

X's mind
(Know X (Know Y p))
(Not (Goal X (Know Y p)))) & (Not (Goal X (Not (Know Y p))))

Y's understanding is here among the known but **unintended** effects of X's behaviour. Although perhaps being an 'anticipated result' of the action it is not intended by the agent.
Neutral or indifferent unintended effects are not necessary.

- negative unintended effects.

- positive but non'motivating' uninteded effects

   side-intentions.

In our example the pilferer might be happy and laughing about the guard being alerted and powerless and angry.

Behavioral Communication step by step
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(iii) Strict BIC

The fact that Y knows that p is "co-motivating" the action.

The behaviour is both a practical action for pragmatic ends (braking the door and entering, etc.) and a "message".

- I call this "strong or strict behavioural communication", the pragmatic behaviour which <u>maintains its motivation and functionality acquires an additional purpose</u>:
                    to let/make the other know/understand that p.

(iv) meta-BIC

In BIC there are two goals/functions:

   i) the communicator's goal: X behavior has the goal or function that Y "understands", recognises, comes to believe that p

   ii) the interpreter's goal: Y has the goal/function of interpreting X's behavior in order to give it a meaning

However those goals in <u>the previous forms of BIC</u> are **independent** from one the other.

"Cooperation" is accidental; They do not really have a "common goal"
Since Y does not know that X is communicating to him through it behavior β, he has not the goal of:

                    "understanding <u>what X means</u> by β";

the real **common goal** of higher form of communication (like <u>linguistic communication</u>) on which usually X and Y cooperate for a successful communication (Meijers).

meta-BIC

- Also in **meta-BIC** (<u>without specialised messages</u>) the agent **cooperate**, and the two goals (i and ii) are complementary, convergent and <u>functional</u> one to the other.

there is a meta-communication in higher fors of communication:

BIC **META-MESSAGE:**

> *"this is communication, this is a message not just behavior; it is aimed at informing you".*

Also because of this y knows that x is communicating. Therefore he has a special form of goal (ii), the goal of caching what x is *communicating*

iib: goal y to understand what x's <u>intends</u> to communicate, to understand which is the meaning in x's mind.

(y understands/interprets x's behavior as a communicative behavior)

(Bel y (Intend x (Understand y s))) ==> (Intend y (Understand y s))

Frequently BIC has such a <u>high level</u> (Grice's way) <u>nature</u>.

For example **the act of giving** or offer is not only a practical one, but is a communicative act where x intends that y understands that she is putting something closer to y *in order* y (understanding that she intends so) takes it.

Beyond BIC:

(iv) For communication only

Let me assume now that **the behaviour β is intended and performed by X <u>only</u> for its meaning,** only for making Y know that p. There are no longer practical purposes.

Simulation

Notice that in the pilferer's scenario, that fact that the β has <u>only a communicative goal</u> means that it is **a fake action**! In fact, if β has no other goals apart from communicating to Y, Y will be deceived, the information he will derive from observing β, will be false (and β is aimed at this result). It is just a bluff.

This is true in all cases where Y should not understand that β is only aimed at communicating something to him (meta-communication; Grice).

Fingere di fingere
> **a) voglio tu capisca che sto fingendo**
> **b) e' vero ma voglio che tu creda che sto fingendo**

Ritualisation

The practical effect is irrelevant: the behaviour is ready for *ritualisation*, especially if is not for deception but for explicit communication.

Ritualisation means that β can loose all its features that are no longer useful (while were pertinent for its pragmatic function) while preserving or emphasising those features that are pertinent for its perception, recognition and signification.

<u>After ritualisation the behaviour β will be a specialised communicative act,</u> a specialised and artificial signal (generated by learning and conventions).

2. ubiquitous BIC

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DIFFERENT MEANINGS/MESSAGES

2.1 "I'm able" or "I'm willing"

The most frequent message sent by a normal behavior is very obvious (inferentially very simple, given an intentional stance in the addressee) but incredibly relevant:

> *(as you can see/constatare)* **I'm able to** *do, and/or* **I'm willing to** *do; since I actually did it (I'm doing it) and on purpose.*

Let's now explore several different uses of this crucial BIC message.

Skills demonstration in learning, examines, and tests

When A is **teaching** something to B **via examples** and observes B's behavior or product to see whether B has learned or not, then B's performance is not only aimed at producing a given practical result but is (also or mainly) aimed at showing the acquired abilities to A. This is true for any "examine" and "text": the behavior or product under examination is a BIC.

> **"where was Napoleon born?"**
> the usual presupposition of any question (the speaker does not knows the answer and wants to learn about) is violated:
> the speaker already knows the answer, he just wants to know whether the addressee knows it or not.

NB. **Also the behavior of the teacher** is a BIC; its message is: "look, this is how you should do". Usually this is also joined with expressive faces and gestures (and with words) but this is not the message I'm focussing on.

Showing, Exhibiting and Demonstrating

If showing and exibiting are intentional acts <u>they are always communication </u>acts

It is a true action not a simulation, a faked one.
    ex. Gandhi's protest

Messages to myself?

for example a defensive 'negation' ("I'm not an omosexual") supported by acting-out (courtship of many women).
It is some sort of 'objective' proof, of evidence

Warnings without words
This is a peculiar use of <u>exhibition of power</u> and dispositions that deserves special attention.

Mafia's "warning", monition. <u>The act (say: burning, biting, destroying, killing) is a true act and the harm is a very true harm</u>, but the real aim of this behavior (burning, killing, etc.) is communicative. It is aimed at intimidating, terrifying via a specific meaning or threat: "I can do this again; I could do this to you; I'm powerful and ready to act; I can even do worst than this". This meaning - the "promise" implicit in the practical act - is what really matter and what induces the addressee (that not necessarily is already the victim) to give up. The practical act is a *show down* of power and intentions; a "message" to be "understood".

The message is "if you do not learn, if you will do this again I will do even worst".

The same do nations: consider for example the repeated reaction of Sharon after terrorist attacks in Israel; <u>it is not only a revenge, it is a message</u>: "do this again and I will do this (bombing) again"; the same holds for terrorist bombs. Perhaps it would be better communicating via words and diplomacy

                        this is a horrible way of communicating.

"expressive - non verbal - communication"?
    Bombing is bombing (not particularly "expressive"), and can be unintentional
    (by mistake and accident), or intentional just for destruction and/or mere
    revenge or material prevention, but it can (*also*) be a message, possibly
    without any different features at all.

2.2 " I did it"

"Il piatto parla": "I finished it, I liked it", as the guest wish and expects.

The satisfaction of social commitments and obligations
Psychiatric patient *shows* to the nurse that he is drinking his drug
(see later)

2.3 Stigmergy in humans:
some nice example with deontic compents

Leaving the coat on the seat
"already taken, not free". This is a *sign*, deliberately used for meaning (signalling) this. It's communication. But for communicating we simply use an usual object in its usual practice: putting a beg on a seat
Since people derive from this "trace" the fact that "this seat is already in use by somebody that is momentary absent but will be back" and we know that, we use on purpose this as a BIC message.
Let's notice that:
This diffuse social practice has become a "convention

it is a nice case of <u>convention</u> whose natural and spontaneous origin is transparent since the meaning of the message remains basically un-conventional, understandable even without knowing about the convention.
The fact that we deal with a convention explains the *normative* (prescriptive) character of the message (and the reaction in case of violation).
the obstacle to use the place is not really physical, material (one could move the object) but is deontic and communicative.

Bestsellers
While buying a book (for your own plasure- we in fact leave **a strange trace** in the environment: we modify the number of selled copies. This changes the position of the book in the bestsellers list, and this is an information (intentionally sent by the publisher or by the booksellerds to the potential clients) that will be taken into account by other persons. Is communication, although your act just remains the praxtical act of buying a book, with its practical intended effect for you. You do not intend in this case to communicate anytrhing at all, but in fact in that markert your behavior has acquired such a parassitic (exploited) communicative *function*

Parking marks

A beautiful example of stigmergic communication with normative (prescriptive and permissive character) is the use of painted blue or white lines on the ground for car parking, delimiting the car area and *indicating* their disposition: either in form of a comb, or parallel to the side-walk. Those lines not are just signs and instructions: "you are allowed to park; and should park in this position", but they also have a practical and physical function.

They are not merely messages; in fact, they cannot be replaced by a simple poster illustrating the prescribed car disposition in that street.

They also have the practical function of visual reference point in the manoeuvre to be used during the act of parking.

So we put in our physical environment - for coordinating our actions - physical object that are at the same time messages: precisely like termiti, but with an additional deontic character.

Parking without marks: Prescribing by doing

FOTO

another example of *normative* stigmergic BIC

2.6 BIC Soccer:

BIC actions + Stigmergic Communication Through the Ball

2.7 Silence as communication

It is very well known that silence can be very 'eloquent'.

In general, **doing nothing, abstaining from an action, is an action**
(when is the result of a decision or of a reactive mechanism),
thus it can be – as any behavior – aimed at communicating via BIC.

The meanings of silence or passivity are innumerable, depending on
the context and on the reasons for keep silence (or doing nothing) that
the addressee can ascribe to "sender";
      for example, indifference "I'm not involved, I do not care", "I
      do not rebel", – "I do not know", etc. …..or agreement.
      (see later Tacit Agreement)

2.8 Social status and respect

Very frequent are behaviors (and their traces) as messages (intentional or
functional) of social positions and relations.
To let the other wait in beyond the door on the waiting room before ricevere him
in owns office is a message stressing respective power position ("I'm the boss
you are in a lower position"); the same meaning has letting the other standing in
front of you that are sited.
On the contrary to arredare and make decent if not luxurious (plants, pictures,
etc.) rooms for public and reception – for example in services for mental health

or for poor people - is a message of respect towards them "I recognize that you have rights and dignity; we respect you"

2.9 Imitation-BIC as convention establishment
and memetic agreement

Imitation (i.e. repeating the observed beahavior of Y – the model) has several possible BIC valences (we already saw one of them).

The condition is that Y (the model) can observe (be informed about) the imitative behavior of X.
We can consider at least the follolwing communicative goals:

   a) In **learning-theaching via imitation**. X communicate to Y "I'm trying to do like you; check it: it is correct"
   b) In **convention establishment and propagation**. "I use the same behavior as you, **I *accept*** (and spread) it as convention; **I *conform*** to it".
   c) In imitation as emulation and **identification**: "I'm trying to do like, you **I want to be and to behave like you**" you are my model, my ideal"
   d) In imitation as **membership**: "I'm trying to do like, you I want to be and to behave like you; since **I'm one of you**; I want to be accepted by you; I accept and conform to your uses (see –b)".

Let me focus a bit on the second BIC use of imitation, that is really important and probably ***the first form of memetic propagation through communication.***

X interprets the fact that Y repeats its innovation as a confirmation of its validity (good solution) and as an agreement about doing so. Then X will expect that Y will understand again its behavior next time, and that Y will use again and again it, at least in the same context and interaction.

An example: linguistic negotiation (terms, meaning, syntax, …)

Example, the creation and establishment of a new name

To name X I use the new term *bbb* (for example to call Amedeo I introduce the name "Amed") with my hearer H:

> 1. my hearer <u>understands</u> (I infer this from her answer or reaction)
> 2. my hearer <u>does not protest/discuss</u>

I interpret H's non-protesting/discussing as an implicit acceptance (at least passively and for the moment) of my use; and -more than this- of an <u>implicit behavioral communication</u> of such an acceptance (in not reacting H is *communicating* me "OK, I let you use this term")

this is some sort of **weak "implicit acceptance"** of my use of *bbb* by H. When I will use again *bbb* with H I will **expect** (believe + want) that
> - H understands again,
> - H will not protest/discuss
> - H knows about my expectations.

In **strong implicit acceptance**, H **re-uses** herself the term *bbb* (in the same occasion or later). In doing so H expects that:
> - I understand,
> - I do not protest/discuss
> - I know about these expectations.

There is now a true implicit **convention**, a tacit agreement about using *bbb* (at least between us and in similar contexts)

If somebody else listen to us in using *bbb*, or H uses *bbb* with other people, the new term is spreading around and a diffuse collective linguistic convention is establishing.

We can distinguishing **two phases**.

- One is a **tacit negotiation** and produces *weak implicit acceptance*;

- the other is **active reuse** and produces a true *convention*.

3. BIC basement of Social Order

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BIC privileged role in social order, in establishing commitments, in negotiating rules, in monitoringh correct behaviors, in enforcing laws, in letting spontaneously emerge conventions and rules of behaviors.

if there is a 'Social Contract' at the basement of society this Social Contract has been established by BIC and is just tacitly signed and renewed.

3. 1 Communication and Coordination

- **Coordination without communication**

    what is Coordination

- **Coordination through BIC**

For ex. the bilateral (but not mutual) attempt to avoid a collision while running on the same path in opposite directions, not necessarily might require a form of Negotiation.
If my goal is to let the other <u>understand</u> from what I'm doing what I believe he intend to do and what I intend to do, in order to understand if he understood me and agrees by regulating his behavior on such a basis, in this case there is an **Implicit Negotiation** _based on_ **Implicit Communication**.
(I will observe whether she is observing at me, and she observe that I'm observing if she is observing me: the game of gazes).

- **Coordination through explicit Communication**

3. BIC basement of Social Order

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Fulfilling Social Commitments and Obeying Norms as BIC

This is another kind of <u>demonstrative act</u>, not basically aimed at showing power and abilities, or good disposition, but primarily intended to show that one have done the _expected_ action. Thus the performance of β is also aimed at informing that β has been performed! This is especially important when the expectation of X's act is based on _obligations_ impinging on X, and Y is monitoring X's non-violation of his duty. Either X is respecting a prohibition, or executing an order, or keeping a promise.
A second order meaning of the act can also be: "I'm a respectful guy; I'm obedient; I'm trustworthy", but this inferential meaning is reached trough the first meaning "I'm respecting, obeying, keeping promises".

A **Social-Commitment** of x to y of doing β, in order to be really (socially) fulfilled, requires <u>not only that agent x performs the promised action β, but also that the agent y knows this</u>.
Thus, when x is performing β in order to keep his promise and fulfil his commitment to y, <u>he also intends that y becomes to know this</u>.

- **(if there are no explicit and specific messages)** _any act of S-Commitment fulfilment is also an implicit communication act about that fulfilment._

   Notice that **what is important for exchange relationships or for social conformity, is not that x really performed β, but that y (or the group) believes so**.

3.5 Fulfilling Social Commitments and Obeying Norms as BIC

Behavioural communication in norms obedience and convention conformity

One of the functions of norm obedience is <u>the confirmation of the norm itself, of the normative authority</u> of the group, and of conformity in general
 thus **one of the functions of norm obeying behaviours is that of informing the others about norm obedience**.
At least at the functional level x's behaviour is *implicit behavioural communication.*

Frequently, x either is aware of this function and collaborates on this, thus he intends to inform the others about his respect of norms, or he is worrying about social <u>monitoring</u> and sanctions or seeking for social approval, and he *wants the others see and realise that he is obeying the norms.*
In both cases, his conform behaviour is also **an *intentional* behavioural/implicit communication** to the others.

Of course, x can also **simulate** his respect of the norms, while hiddenly violates them. .

In conformity to **conventions** the behaviour is less intentional (Lewis' restriction)
conformity to convention is more routinary and automatic; they are our habits, they do no require a conscious decision. Thus, although clearly there is <u>an informative aim</u> of this behaviour (since the whole convention is based on mutual assumptions and expectation about the others' conformity), this aim is usually a <u>function</u> of the behaviour not an intention; it becomes an intention in cases that I want that people notice that I'm following that convention.

At the collective level.

When I respect a norm I pay some costs for the commons and immediately I move from my mental attitude of norm addressee (which recognized and acknowledge the norm and its authority, and decided to conform to it) while adopting the mental set of the norm issuer and controller (Conte and Castelfranchi, 1995):

> *I wants the others to respect the norm, pay their own costs and contribution to the commons.*

While doing so I'm **reissuing** the norm, **prescribing** a behavior to the others and **checking** their behavior (expectation).

Thus the meaning of my act is twofold:

- "I obey, you have not to sanction me";

- "Do as I do, norms must be respected".
_____
As an example of the second behavioral message let me propose

Socrates' drinking the poison

although his friends and fellows were him to escape him to escape. Socrates wants to <u>drink in order to teach</u> us and his fellows that norms (although iniquitous) must be respected:

> **the content of the message, the conveyed meaning of the act is its motivation, its reason**. No semon could be more eloquent than his act?

_____

Also <u>the act of violating a norm can be a communicative act</u>, either intentional or even functionally.

the "**provocative**" attitudes of adolescents

3. BIC basement of Social Order

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BIC in establishing Commitments

One can characterize the ***principle of implicit committing*** as follows:

IF

there is mutual knowledge between *x* and *y* about an *expectation* of *y* about an action of *x* (where an *expectation* is a *believe* about a future state or action <u>plus</u> a *goal* about the same state or action);
and
x intends to do that action also because he knows about *y* 's expectation;
and
x does not explicitly deny his intention, does not contradict *y* 's expectation;

THEN

x implicitly takes a S-Commitment to *y* for that action;
y is entitled by default to consider *x* S-Committed to her.

At the same time by relying on x and by letting x believe so and believe that he is committed to y, y is implicitly accepting x's commitment, and agreeing about it.

On both side <u>tacit communication</u> is enough.

However this "understanding" among the agents is necessary and intended.

S-Commitments always requires communication (although not explicit).

3. BIC basement of Social Order
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IMPLICIT AGREEMENT in *Exchange*

In exchange the agent have at least **two common goals**:

   - one is that of negotiating -during the negotiation phase- and trying to rich an agreement some deal;
   - the other is that of exchanging (after the negotiation phase) (if both are sincere)

In fact **any agreement is an agreement for cooperation** (in a broad sense); any agreement is aimed at a goal-adoption and if successful produces a common goal (the agreed one). Relative to this goal the agent cooperate also in exchange. This cooperation is -of course- subordinated to the selfish and private motives of the two actors.

•   the agreement about the specific deal is achieved explicitly,
•   **the agreement about having an exchange and negotiating** is   usually just a **tacit agreement**.

It is based on the following inferential steps and on some *implicit behavioral communication* moves.

> If I ask/propose to B
> "would you sell me x for 5000 lira?"
> that <u>implicitly also means</u> and communicates "I conditionally intend to buy x" and "I'm willing to negotiate with you, if it is the case".
>
> From B answers "1000 lira!"
>   <u>since</u>
>   if B would not intent to negotiate,
>   - either he did not respond to my offer, or
>   - he had explicitly rejected not only the specific deal but my offer to buy ("I do not sell x")
>
>   <u>since</u>
>   B did not refuse, since he counter-offer,
>
>   I can infer that:
>   he is negotiating and intends to negotiate, and ascribes me the intention to negotiate;

_____

implicitly he complies with my intention to negotiate; there is an, *implicit agreement* (I know that he knows that I know...) and we are now cooperating in negotiation.

3. BIC basement of Social Order
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"Qui Tacet Consentire Videtur"

Tacit Agreements in _Conventions_

Inaction and implicit communication in _tacit consent -1_

- <u>I believe that you know that I'm doing</u> (intend to do) β (that you see and understand what I'm doing), i.e. my behaviour is _implicit communication that_ I'm doing β

- I believe that <u>you could oppose</u> to this (either practically, by stopping me or creating obstacles, or expressing your opposition, disagreement, etc. or even strongly -if you have the authority for this- by prohibiting me of doing β);

- I believe that <u>if you were against my doing β you will oppose</u> to this by some action and communication, while if you do not oppose, if you omit to oppose to my action this mean that you agree that I do it, or at least that you weakly **permit** me, let me to do it.

Tacit Agreements in *Conventions*

Inaction and implicit communication in *tacit consent –2*

- I believe that you believe that I believe all this and that I'm seeking for a sign of your attitude (i.e. that I'm "reading" your behaviour -action or inaction- as a sign and communication of your attitude of agreement or disagreement)

- You know all this and you decide of say/doing nothing and letting me doing. You know that your inaction is interpreted by me as a assent/consent. Since you decide of not preventing such an interpretation, your inaction is an implicit communication of your assent: you take the responsibility for my interpretation.

Tacit agreement are based on a lot of common knowledge or at least of shared beliefs

but also on *two basic implicit communication acts*:

- **x's "proposal"** (or request of consent): by starting doing b (and checking that y is checking) x intents to implicitly inform y that he intends to do b and that he is seeking for y's agreement;

- **y's "agreement"** (or permission/consent): by not-opposing y intends to implicitly inform x that she agrees with his doing b.

4. BIC basement of Institutional Order
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"Count As", Institutional Actions, Empowerment as Based on BICommunication

True Institutional Empowerment (the *Count-As* empowerment) is different from interpersonal empowerment.

***The compliance of a third party is strictly necessary*: the public, the people involved in the institution.**

The efficacy of the conventional institutional act in fact presupposes a tacit agreement or consensus of people in front of it.

> People (P) must **recognize** X's act as a special one and <u>acting on such a basis</u>; actually is this that gives the act its special effect. If X's action Ax counts as action Ai of the institution Ist, people must act "as if" Ai has happened.

This means that
> any performance of a 'count as', institutional act is necessarily a BIC communication act **to the participants and the 'public', aimed at informing them that a 'count as' act has been accomplished and must be taken into account as such.**

It is a sort of self-realizing expectation: since and until people expect that Ax counts as Ai, it counts as Ai. They must (conditionally) believe or at least "accept" (Meijers, 2002) that this is true and that the others believe/accept as they do and will act accordingly.

The effectiveness of the count-as effect passes through the minds and the consequential behavior of people.

Thanks to P compliance X is really empowered

P obviously do not recognize this role; they are simply believed to acknowledge what already exists, but in fact they are creating it thanks to this acknowledgment.

_____

Any Count-as effect (convention) and *any true institutional empowerment is due to a collective acceptance* **of the fact, and to a** *diffuse* **or to** *collective intention* **of acting accordingly** (Tuomela, 1999, 2002).

People empowering the institution (the Leviathan)

the fact that one respects the authority, decides not to oppose and rebel to it, the fact that one surrenders to its symbolic force, etc.

> *makes* **it an "authority"**

the fact that one accepts the conventional and artificial effects of the institutional actions, *gives* them such an effect.

And this behavior is spreading (as a message and as a behavior) and self-confirming:

> **since one does A, others do the same,** and *vice versa.*

The more people acknowledge the authority and follow the institutional prescriptions the more the institution becomes strong and has *Power* over the individuals.

In a sense, it is the arrested guy who - by surrendering not to the agent's private strength but to his institutional force - gives to the policeman (by giving to the institution, and vice-versa) such a force.

In a sense, he is surrendering to his own alienated force/power (Marx).
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However, not the whole social (and societal) reality is "acceptance"-based, a collective construction; the conventional result of some explicit and organizational, or diffused and tacit agreement and pact.

Part of social reality is merely emerging and self-organizing in an "objective" way;

it is *given*, independent of human awareness, decision and even acceptance.

the importance of

BIC

in social interaction and phenomena

- **coordination**;

- **monitoring** or surveillance;

- **teachnig** and learning;

- **commitment** satisfaction (for example in exchange);

- **norm obedience**; thus in "organisation";

- **deception** through behavioral communication (ex. bluff and simulation);

- tacit "**negotiation**" about meaning, syntax, etc. in linguistic interaction;

- tacit creation of expectations and **entitlements**; till

- the formation of true **conventions** and of *tacit agreements* for delegation, exchange or cooperation.