MODELS OF COMMUNICATION IN A MILITARY ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract: The world of an organizational culture speaks the language habits of those who assume it, in a self-labelling process, but when two cultures are overlaid in the same organization, new models of communication emerge, in an endeavor of common task solving and shared group interests. The present paper showcases models of communication in a military institution where a number of civilians work along to solve tasks or build understanding within working hours. The way they communicate, from verbal to non-verbal impacts the way people react and it is all due to the different cultures individuals come from.

Keywords: communication, organizational culture, model, military

1. Introduction

The main purpose of activity in an educational military environment is that of sharing knowledge, building skills, training and building interoperability. To this end, communication is the most important factor that both unites the two and makes them act efficiently to form competences and develop understanding necessary for effective mission accomplishment or theatre of operation deployment. A difference yet is that communication used for educational purposes is not the same with the communication used for commanding troops mainly because the goals are different, the parties involved are dissimilar and the time management varies from one task to the other, not to mention the information exchange. To communicate in order to educate involves not only verbal but also non-verbal, emotional and personal aspects, while ordering troops to train or accomplish tasks is a matter of go-not go expression, in a concise and non-emotional manner. In performing these two goal oriented tasks, two cultures come together, military and civilian. In this combination, communication and the culture it manifests itself through impact the relationships among individuals, as bearers of cognitive and practical experience. Communication build culture and culture is reflected in communication, all due to language selection. As Seen by Lotman (1977), effective communication especially when more cultures interact relies on a common code of reference, an idea highlighted as well by Strauss (2005) who mentions some rules that are to be respected when more cultures meet and different languages are spoken. Moreover, Eco (1996) connects referential culture to the way language is used as being both a system of communication and of signification, same language giving rise to different interpretations when decoded in two different cultures, since communication is seen as a channel of both language and metalanguage that complements the meaning. The main point is that communication contributes to building cultures by differentiating manners of expression and labeling individuals, in a richer or simpler way- appealing to verbal cues or appealing to both verbal and nonverbal elements to render a more complex information. In return, cultures lay prints on the way people communicate with each other in society or in an organization and differences that are not cared for may give rise to serious misunderstandings, malfunctioning in

activities management or even alter social or working relationships. Drawing awareness on the way people communicate within an organization, what patterns they use to accomplish tasks is even more important especially when two cultures meet within the same organization and coexist in order to cover common macro-goals.

2. The Military and The Civilian – one organization, two cultures, two languages and a half

Communication both connects people with common objectives but it can also bring mistrust and may disfavor serious endeavors, especially when the institution under lens is a mixt organization, hosting employees formed and developed in two different worlds, the military and the civilian, resulting in a military stratified organization that benefits from various behaviors and power status, often in balance with a flexible, forward thinking democratic and civilian organization. They say that Cranfield Conference (2003) blurred the borders between the military and the civilians yet simultaneously the comparison between the two types of cultures has gained momentum. The war in Iraq is a clear example of how the two cultures can become conflictual one to another. On the other hand, some people say the differences between civilians and the military are more than welcomed, while others highlight and reinforce them, insisting on the important roles the military play for the society. Thus, the cultural differences between the two types of organizations are not necessarily dangerous for democracy and they need to function in a way to serve both society and theatre of operations wherever the latter might be (Hillen, 1999) since they are, sociologically speaking, goal oriented cultural systems. The problems arise when disruptive imbalances between visions and ways to address, to connect and to work together are a factor that may impede a linear task accomplishment. To differentiate the two, the military organizations, however, are specialized on using threat and collective violence, concentrating over the inter-social macro-violence, while the civilians are more peaceful and emotionally oriented.

2.1 The Organizational Culture

In a nutshell, if we compare the two cultures for a better representation and understanding, we can notice all in the chart below:

MILITARY CULTURE (COMMAND AND CONTROL OPERATION MODEL)	**NON-MILITARY CULTURE** (COLLABORATIVE MODEL)
- Hierarchical, vertical structure - Clearly cut rules of conduct - Defined roles, ranks and status - Consistency in action across organization - Clearly defined career progression - Relevant information is sent from higher echelons downwards - The skill to initiate is limited hierarchically (Snider, 1999)	- Matrix organizational structure - Less consistency than in the military - More implied/ understood rules of conduct - Flexible / more ambiguous roles of status - Variations across teams - Less defined career progression - Civilian culture imposes civilian values in the organization - Clear differences from the orderly military structure (the non-military are less structured) - The chain of command in the civilian may not be clear since there may be more than one leader in the matrix

Figure 1-*military versus civilian culture (Zulean, 2005)*

At a close critical observation of the chart, the following emerge:

- While the military have a clear chain of command that determines their working relationships and teamwork as well as communication that is linear and hierarchical, the civilians have a matrix organizational structure that imprints a network structure of labor which allows communication in all directions and from all directions, horizontally and only on executive level. All the network is reported to higher echelons in single vertical points (direct hierarchical superior on the chain of command)
- If the military have clearly cut rule of conduct and patterned thinking in drill formation, civilians think outside the box, in an open-mindedness and breaking rules with the scope of innovation and creativity. Conversely, military people are forbidden creativity except for the hierarchical approval-based one, while innovation and initiation are not permitted, unless carefully planned. If the civilians have more flexible working relationships, democratic and multi-led, with fluid roles for leadership, the military are more rigid, their relationships are all regulated by doctrines and any disregard bears various degrees of consequences, based on the level of apprehension. The military leadership roles are rule-based determined and exceptions from that are scarcely made, while the civilian leadership is networked based, merit and assessment –based and more subjective

In another vein, research has shown that the post-communist countries have identified common differences between the former and the western countries in terms of the military-civilian relationships including lack of civilian experts in defense and, conversely, lack of military experts in societal security issues, resulting in an uneven distribution of the two categories inside mixt organizations as well. More than that, if the environment undergoing analysis is educational, discrepancies can be highlighted between military and civilian students as well. Among these, while the military students are predominantly materialistic, pragmatic and

target oriented, the civilian students are post-materialistic, favoring liberal values and public involvement in the decision making process. The role of patriotism, the role of discipline in education, the foreign and security politics goals are seen differently inside the two categories. Values like patriotism and country's defense are seen as natural for the military while the civilians look more at international relationships, mobility and multimodal politics.

In this context, any disruption might cause barriers in communication since communication is one of the important skills for professional competence, especially in higher echelons activities. Disruptions always arise, however, out of miscommunication issues between the military and civilians in relation to military rules imposed to the civilians. Where a military culture is dominant including the leadership, the top-down approach considers that the civilian culture needs to be agglutinated by the military, the emotional intelligence should be reduced to zero and the pride and prejudice issues, if existent, should be minimized. What is noticeable and connected to this is that while a lot of research is being carried out for Civilian-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) operations during humanitarian missions, the interactions between the military and the civilians in the working environment are left untouched.

Consequently, one of the solutions that would contribute to an efficient and effective task solving medium is analyzing the way people communicate in the stratified military-civilian organization, understanding that they come from two different cultures and bearing in mind each other's traits. Future work should consider communicative solutions to render effective exchange of information for both worlds.

2.2 Building form and meaning in the military communication process

The aspects we choose to look at are the way models of communication manifest themselves in such an organization, considering the differences between the two layered worlds. In other words, the differences between cultural values among the military and the civilians create big gaps in communication- the more integrated in the society the military are, the more obvious the difference between the civilian and the military ways of thinking are, as a perfect argument for the military organization and its structure which refer back to Schopenhauer- every individual lives in a different world though they all inhabit the same environment where communication is extremely controlled. Speaking about the military, one refers to its communication process as the Great Silent Man, coming from the 16th century, to hint at the military regulation system. It was in 1972 when the general military status established that military people may have their own opinions or beliefs but these can only be expressed outside work, obeying the rule of the military conduct.

As far as written and oral expressions are concerned, advantages of verbal expression in the military are speed and freedom of expression (of what complies with the rules of conduct and can be expressed publicly) due to loss of trace. The downside of all this is improvisation, sloppiness, exaggeration, emotion, dare. Written communication on the other hand, allows text elaboration in form and content, yet it takes time, as written texts leave traces, may be used as proof and therefore need careful preparation to resist time, to provide reflection and reserve.

Nonverbal communication is also present in military organizations in facial expressivity- attention, boredom, irritation, caution, scarcely manifested and extremely carefully controlled, similar to body movement- tensed or relaxed, gesture – head movement, hands, voice- sigh, interrogation, appearance, silence, carefully managed and controlled, based on rules of conduct, hierarchy and context. To extract examples and build models of interaction and communication between the two cultures, to observe manifestations, the author chooses to place under lens an

educational institution where both civilian and military cooperate in order to accomplish common goals, i.e teaching, training and instruction for both military and civilian students.
Thus, looking at the communication process from a functional point of view, one notices the following:

- The phatic function is active among interlocutors of the same branch, in a more complex approach when relationships are established in solving common tasks or when support is given for others, whereas in a military - civilian interaction, complexity is reduced to at least half. This is so, because most military address the civilians with orders to be followed and accomplished, they do not establish cooperating democratic relationships, but hierarchical, subordinated ones. The phatic function is thus downsized, half developed and unidirectional. The status relationship poses problems as the civilian may feel restrictions to rules of communication that they may not agree with and thus freedom of expression may be altered. The referential function in a military to civilian communication may suffer distortions also based on the differences between the two cultures, and because the civilians may not be familiar with the procedures and rules that the military coordinate their messages with. The persuasive function employed in a military-civilian exchange of information is a co-native function that tailor-orients the message for the receiver in order to stir a reaction- answer. For this purpose, strong command, ordering verbs are used. This is the language military higher echelons employ to address the civilians in performing tasks.
- On the other hand, the metalinguistic and the poetic functions are present only in civilian statements to regulate communication and act on two levels, informational and interpersonal, relational. Power relationships such as adaptation and adjustment reports developed inside the process of communication act when interlocutors from the two cultures, military and civilian are in a communicative relationship.

All in all, military language is integrating, outspoken, unique and mandatory. In a perpetual cooperation to solve tasks inside the organization, military linguistic stereotypes have penetrated civilian common language. Whereas the military dialogues are rigged in between elevation and the mundane, the interoperability common endeavor and training the Euro-Atlantic military offensive brings modernity, reform and language issues- higher status or jargon, abbreviations and a combination of languages, Romanian-English in our case, all stereotypes of the superior and subordinate relationship. The common language needs to be adapted and devoid of defiant emphasis.

In addition to this, more problems are posed when technology intervenes in command, when higher echelon leaders develop communication through the use of technological devices. Conflicts inside hierarchical relationships appear. Beyond the communication patterns applicable in the military, there is the specialized technologically enhanced communication. Using technology, superiors can, from their offices, hundreds of miles away, counter command and dismiss orders previously taken by subordinates placed in the theatre of operations. Technology provides a multiple simultaneous use of non-tactical means to communicate- email, FB chat, Excel, PowerPoint, doubling or tripling information and producing confusion. The message can be very well distributed for the military audience, whereas for the civilians it can bring signals of distortion. To avoid all this and be effective, military communication needs to have feedback and contain the following distinct stages- stimulus, attention, filtration and interaction complete, an element that is common to the civilian communication process. Feedback shows if the message has been understood. Unfortunately, many military leaders fear feedback though others believe

they need it. Lack of feedback means lack of reaction both for the military and for the civilians. However, while the military leaders may fear feedback lest they should find out about the forcefulness of order and command, imposed on subordinates and regulated by military rules, compared to an empathetic communication mainly developed inside civilian communities, the civilians' lack of reaction assimilated with lack of feedback triggers a more extended dialogue and conversation into questioning about the reasons conducive to the situation. Military people are allowed no questioning over issues in a strictly regulated hierarchical dialogue.

2.3 Factors influencing communication

Working climate inside the mixed, stratified military- civilian organization is as important as in any organization. An anxious working environment will develop a defensive behavior of the group, unlike the ones which can use feedback through a constant support from the leadership. On the other hand, there are two types of groups inside military organizations- aggregate (a casual group of people running possibly same activities but not with the same purpose) and functional groups (more people that interact willingly). The aggregate groups are seen at institutional level, in macro structures, while the functional groups are seen at micro-structural level. In the military organizations, groups act as intermediary between individuals and society and influence the people through values accepted and through behavioral standards of the group one belongs to. When it comes to communication, the military leader will consider the group characteristics to tailor his message for- structure, cohesion, composition, dimension and role. Both for interpersonal and group communication, the military leader can influence the quality of communication as an initiator, as a coordinator of communication process (sender) as a receiver as well. However, hindrances may appear in the communication process due to a number of factors:

- Insufficient documentation- the sender may not have all the information the group has and either there is a lack of common referentiality in the meaning negotiation or the message is not compliant with the group needs
- Trend to turn dialogue into monologue- the sender is self-absorbed in exposing own's ideas or there may be a position abuse or power status in meaning negotiation. Sometimes it may simply be the lack of common reference between the sender and receiver and this might result in a unidirectional message.
- Stereotypes in sending information – stereotypes may not be a common denominator for the sender and the receiver and thus message decoding can be interfered.
- Using an inappropriate language with the person who negotiates the message- barriers in communication of emotional nature can also distort the meaning
- Using raised voice or showing irritability can result in inadequate paralanguage which may lose audience
- Lack of attention or inability in dialogue control- may lead to distortion of meaning due to slips of decoding in receiver's reference. The sender may miss the slips and become unable to render a proper answer to continue dialogue. The control power fades and either third parties might intervene or overall meaning may be compromised.

Apart from all these, as a receiver, the military leader can negatively influence the communication due to interlocutor's lack of respect, limited concentration capacity, the myth

that subordinates can only have bad ideas, the inappropriate intervention of other members of the group into discussion or resilience towards new ideas.

After all, the military people can influence the process of communication both as a sender and as a receiver due to the fluidity of the communication process and the mobility of roles one has in a group, in society. Subjective deficiencies are to be counted as well, existent due to security needs or the lack of involvement into organization's activities, or even due to lack of attention. The difficulty in mastering and controlling the communication process according to coordination needs are a result of imperfection in the message semantics corroborated with people's trend to perceive and interpret communication subjectively, through lenses of needs and goals, under the influence of feelings and own emotional states.

3. Models of communication in a military-civilian stratified organization

In order to avoid all the miscommunication situations in a stratified organization due to the clash of cultures, the military and civilian culture, models of communication are to be brought under scrutiny, to be understood and to make people aware and be able to differentiate which are the ones functional in an organization where differences cannot be blurred due to mentalities and due to history, due to differences of perception and goals the two cultures meet.

The most relevant and important communication models are:

The **Aristotle** (300 BC) model focuses on thesender, the message, the occasion or context of the speech and the receiver (mass communication) effect. Aristotel's model is a linear model where the speaker is the most important element and the receiver is passive, therefore there is a one-way model, from the sender to the receiver, very well exemplified in the military leadership speech. The genuine Aristotle model of communication is based on a three mode of persuasion triangle- logos, pathos and ethos. *Ethos* is given by authority gained with experience or study or proven track of record- the military leader. Ethos is the most sensitive one, being easily affected in an image hit, in a framing, to happen in lower levels of a military organization, in a horizontal interaction among peers. *Pathos* is the emotional side which is not part of military communication. The military people refrain from expressing emotion in their communication due to the pragmatic and effective nature of the message. In common circumstances the speaker appeals to receiver's emotional side to convince him on the ideas exposed with humor, visual materials that evoke strong emotions, intonation and tempo of speech, to render enthusiasm or anxiety. Ultimately, *logos* connect to the facts, statements and arguments that support the ideas. Logos is the communication core valid both in the military and civilian message production but differences are to be mentioned between the two contexts: In logos, the context, the counter-arguments and evidences are important, as well as avoidance of generalization. Rhetorical strategies like repetition and re-stirring of discussion support vision and goals and bring amplification. Not all these mentioned are applicable to both areas even when they coexist in the same organization. Thus, the military communication does not make use of repetition and amplification while, on the contrary, civilian communication does not avoid generalization, appeals to repetition and re-stirring of discussion, to generate amplification of a topic. These few differences are but some to bring miscommunication between the military and civilians inside the same organization.

An interactive model, **Schramm**'s (1954), gives importance to the impact the message has on the receiver. This model can easily be applied to civilian communication patterns while it has no relevance for the military communication. The military feedback is pragmatic and action-oriented. The military feedback is actually mission accomplishment. The impact of the message

for a military is reflected in the success of task accomplishment. The amplitude of communication impact for a civilian interlocutor gives, however, rise to other messages and actions, concerted. It implies expertise as well as the phatic function in a common field with symbolic interactions.

The **White** (1992) model looks at thinking, symbolizing, expressing, transmitting, receiving, decoding, reacting or feeding back and monitoring. Therefore, this model looks at the way information is selected to be put into a certain selection of symbolic representation, channel and context of representation, but it also looks at the impact the message has, manifested as feedback and monitoring of conversation. What is more, this model predicts the decisional outcomes by exerting a complex approach to messages from its inception to its manifestation back, as a cyclic process. It is circular and continuous and has no beginning or end. This model is applicable to both the military and civilian communication irrespective of the direction the communication process is delivered, top-down, bottom -up or cross-structures, the approach to message construction and delivery is the same and lays accent on the same elements, from selection to delivery and back to effects produced.

Barnlund (2008) on the other hand, provides the transactional model that highlights the field of expertise the sender and receiver should have and which should be different, to enhance an information exchange. Moreover, there is a transaction between the sender's and receiver's role, taking turns, in a constructionist approach. This model is not functional in the military civilian stratified organization due to stereotypes and preconceived behaviors. The military exchange expertise horizontally and only in their groups, there is no exchange of expertise vertically in a stratified organization, since the civilians are situated on the inferior strata and are not allowed to exchange expertise vertically with higher military echelons. The stratified organization exchanges expertise horizontally, the verticality is meant for execution only.

Having looked at the functional fabrication of the message and at the discrete manifestation this triggers to be delivered and to produce effect, we shall now bring forward *the geometrical distribution of the way people communicate* in a stratified organization like the one this paper is focused on.

The military system runs various types of communication based on the geometrical directions the message travels from the sender to the receiver- the star communication, the circle communication (where each military is a doer, e receiver and a transmitter simultaneously) , the Y communication, the diagonal communication (some are transmitters and others are centralizers), centralized communication (all communicate to a single one who controls and makes decisions to then communicate them to others)

The ***star communication***presupposes that the leader is situated in the centre and equally distant are all the other members of the community that interact with the centre. This is to be seen in the commander of the organization since here all members can communicate with the centre and this is mutually reversible. However, like in a star, the sides do not interact with one another as if they were unaware of the others' existence. This is applicable to a big organization where structures report to the commander but do not interact horizontally with one another, similar to more departments of more faculties in one university. The leader communicates with them all but they may not even know one another. Less problems arise and distortion of information is low, while feedback is quick and simultaneous.

The ***circle communication*** presupposes a leader and hierarchies. However, contrary to the star communication model, the leader can only talk to the people situated next to him, left and right, his subordinates. If lower hierarchical subordinates need to talk to the leader, this is

done respecting the chain of command (higher echelons leading to the commander). The message flows in one direction only and passes through all members that serve the higher echelon up to the commander. This can be performed from the lowest ranking personnel that need to communicate to the commander- the chain of command will pass the problem upwards. This is not functional for the stratified organization in focus since the civilians are more dynamic and need a quick solution to their problem, most usually skipping the chain of command to reach the decisional level. The circle communication method takes time. The circle of communication functions horizontally, i.e. on one stratum of organizational level. Besides, civilians' decision making process is multi-directional and accomplishment oriented, irrespective of the steps taken. In other words, civilians concentrate more on solving the problem as fast as possible while the military concentrate more on the procedures to be followed in solving a problem. Barriers may occur in the intersection of these two approaches, therefore leadership communication as an adjacent model needs to intervene in this case. A need-to-do basis priority is given in these situations either to speed of action or accuracy of procedures.

Chain communicationpattern works similarly with the circle pattern allowing people to communicate only by following the chain of command. The difference is that the message in the circle can reach all members of the group horizontally, for the structures on the same level, even though in a slowly manner, whereas the message in the chain model the information goes top-down or bottom up, therefore penetrating various hierarchical structures, cutting through from management to execution level. Both chain and circle pattern provide one way communication process. The problem with these models is that the message may be distorted in its way from the initiator to the last receiver, to alternate versions. Feedback can also be distorted in its turn.

The ***Y communication*** model can be applicable to middle management level, since this model presupposes the existence of subgroups led by a leader (seen as departments led by the dean if the organization is an educational one) In each subgroups people communicate based on chain model. In the educational organization under lens the subgroups contain both military and civilian members and they all communicate horizontally, i.e. in a circle. They all communicate equally with the leader who sends the message hierarchically to middle management, i.e. to the Y leader.

The administrative structures inside each faculty communicates in circles with the teaching staff of all departments and in a Y structure with the students (the leader being the manager of the administrative issues) If the organization under lens is an educational institution with more faculties, where administrative personnel is both civilian and military and the teaching staff is both civilian and military yet with military leaders, then we can state that circle model is applicable inside departments, chain model functions from department to commander, but also star model, from the department leaders to the commander, while at the dean level the Y structure is applicable. Faculties and the leading structures in the university communicate with the commander based on star model.

The ***network communication*** pattern implies prescriptive information, top-down or in circles, in star or in Y, such as procedures shared by leaders to his subordinates or descriptive, bottom-up, from subordinates to their leaders, with reports on tasks accomplished. In a network anyone communicates with anyone, mostly applicable for civilian or corporate, democratic organizations. The military hierarchy does not approve of such a communication model due to procedures to be followed on chain of command hierarchy and the way the organizational structures report to one another. A stratified military and civilian organization like the one in focus may partially allow network communication model function at times with common

complex endeavor, university level approach (teams for evaluation or groups of representatives at top management level to solve temporary issues) Therefore, the network model is functional based on need-to-do basis in the stratified military-civilian organization, communicating to various extent and in an inordinate types of interventions like questions, orders, commands, appreciation, answer.

In terms of addressing among the interlocutors, the accent falls on the educational or administrative or even management role each has in the conversation. If military ranks intervene, they only bring barriers in communication, even though not visible at all times, since a military ranks is the signal of power status, bringing lack of arguments to the superiors and impatience towards execution to the subordinates. Barriers that may arise apply in the chain of command, from subordinates to the superiors and manifest themselves in grammar mistakes, defensive style manifested in superiority certainty as opposed to a supportive style manifested in spontaneity, understanding, flexibility. Barriers in communication might appear in uncertain logic, grammar mistakes, defensive style (evaluation, control, superiority certainty) vs supportive style (description, orientation, spontaneity, sympathy, understanding, equality, flexibility) which may lead to polarization of perception or defensive perception. Miscommunication may arise and thus task accomplishment and work effectiveness are compromised due to the above mentioned barriers.

4. Conclusions

Drawing awareness on the way people communicate within an organization, what patterns they use to accomplish tasks is important especially when two cultures meet within the same organization and coexist in order to cover common macro-goals. To differentiate the two, the military organizations, however, are specialized on using threat and collective violence, concentrating over the inter-social macro-violence, while the civilians are more peaceful and emotionally oriented.

- The phatic function is active among interlocutors of the same branch, in a more complex approach when relationships are established in solving common tasks or when support is given for others, whereas in a military - civilian interaction, complexity is reduced to at least half. This is so, because most military address the civilians with orders to be followed and accomplished, they do not establish cooperating democratic relationships, but hierarchical, subordinated ones. The phatic function is thus downsized, half developed and unidirectional. The status relationship poses problems as the civilian may feel restrictions to rules of communication that they may not agree with and thus freedom of expression may be altered. The referential function in a military to civilian communication may suffer distortions also based on the differences between the two cultures, and because the civilians may not be familiar with the procedures and rules that the military coordinate their messages with. The persuasive function employed in a military-civilian exchange of information is a co-native function that tailor-orients the message for the receiver in order to stir a reaction- answer. For this purpose, strong command, ordering verbs are used. This is the language military higher echelons employ to address the civilians in performing tasks.
- On the other hand, the metalinguistic and the poetic functions are present only in civilian statements to regulate communication and act on two levels, informational and interpersonal, relational. Power relationships such as adaptation and adjustment reports developed inside the process of communication act when interlocutors from the two cultures, military and civilian are in a communicative relationship.

- the military communication does not make use of repetition and amplification while, on the contrary, civilian communication does not avoid generalization, appeals to repetition and re-stirring of discussion, to generate amplification of a topic. These few differences are but some to bring miscommunication between the military and civilians inside the same organization. Thus, hindrances may appear in the communication process due to a number of factors:
- Insufficient documentation- the sender may not have all the information the group has and either there is a lack of common referrentiality in the meaning negotiation or the message is not compliant with the group needs
- Trend to turn dialogue into monologue- the sender is self-absorbed in exposing own's ideas or there may be a position abuse or power status in meaning negotiation. Sometimes it may simply be the lack of common reference between the sender and receiver and this might result in a unidirectional message.
- Stereotypes in sending information – stereotypes may not be a common denominator for the sender and the receiver and thus message decoding can be interfered.
- Using an inappropriate language with the person who negotiates the message- barriers in communication of emotional nature can also distort the meaning
- Using raised voice or showing irritability can result in inadequate paralanguage which may lose audience
- Lack of attention or inability in dialogue control- may lead to distortion of meaning due to slips of decoding in receiver's reference. The sender may miss the slips and become unable to render a proper answer to continue dialogue. The control power fades and either third parties might intervene or overall meaning may be compromised.
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- The military feedback is pragmatic and action-oriented. The military feedback is actually mission accomplishment. The impact of the message for a military is reflected in the success of task accomplishment. The amplitude of communication impact for a civilian interlocutor gives, however, rise to other messages and actions, concerted. It implies expertise as well as the phatic function in a common field with symbolic interactions.
- The transactional model is not functional in the military civilian stratified organization due to stereotypes and preconceived behaviors. The military exchange expertise horizontally and only in their groups, there is no exchange of expertise vertically in a stratified organization, since the civilians are situated on the inferior strata and are not allowed to exchange expertise vertically with higher military echelons. The stratified organization exchanges expertise horizontally, the verticality is meant for execution only.

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