Journalism and Mass Communication, Sept.-Oct. 2024, Vol. 14, No. 5, 307-316
doi: doi: 10.17265/2160-6579/2024.05.005

Leadership: A Discursive Communication Approach

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One of the main challenges facing many governmental and non-governmental agencies in many parts of the world is to provide transformative leadership from a discursive communication approach to address the political, economic, and social challenges to development. From the onset, I must say that leadership is a term that has received different and varying definitions in today's literature from both leadership psychology and lately discursive leadership approach—meaning that there is no one definition that is considered classical. This article is an attempt illustrating how the discursive approach operates. Indeed, the role of communication in the leadership process can be looked at in different ways. The purpose of this article is to address the role of discursive communication in leadership and the challenges associated with leadership that does not apply discursive communication approaches, and how these challenges are managed to bring about development.

Keywords: role of communication, discursive communication, leadership psychology, social challenges,

Definitions: Traditional and Communication Centered

From the onset, I must say that leadership is a term that has received different and varying definitions in today's literature from both leadership psychology and lately discursive leadership approach—meaning that there is no one definition that is considered classical. The definitions that I am going to present here situate leadership from the traditional perspective and then later on I will compare and contrast them with those that are communication centered. To begin with, Northouse (2004) points out that the following components can be identified as central to the phenomenon of leadership, namely: (a) Leadership is a process, (b) leadership involves influence, (c) leadership occurs within a group context, and (d) leadership involves goal attainment. Thus, based on those components, Northouse defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3).

Northouse (2004) argues that defining leadership as a process means that it is not a trait or characteristic that resides in the leader, but is a transactional event that occurs between the leader and his or her followers. He goes on to say "process" implies that a leader affects and is affected by followers. It emphasizes that leadership is not a linear, one-way event but rather an interactive event (p. 3). In the same vein, Fairhurst (2007) argues that leadership is a process of influence and meaning management among actors that advances a task or goal. Leadership involves influence component means that it is concerned with how the leader affects followers. Influence is the sine qua non of leadership. Without influence, leadership does not exist (Northouse, 2004, p. 3). Slightly Fairhurst's definition brings in an aspect of communication, that is, "meaning management" which is missing in Northouse's definition. Fairhurst (2007) points out that leadership, as influence and meaning management, need not be performed by only one individual appointed to a given role; it may shift and distribute

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itself among several organizational members. Northouse (2004, p. 3) argues that leadership occurs in groups. Groups are the context in which leadership takes place. Leadership involves influencing a group of individuals who have a common goal. The group that he talks about can be a small task group, a community group, or a large group encompassing an entire organization. Northouse (2004, p. 3) further observes, "Leadership includes attention to goals". This means that leadership has to do with directing a group of individuals toward accomplishing some task or end. Thus, leaders direct their energies toward individuals who are trying to achieve something together. For that reason, leadership occurs and has its effects in contexts where individuals are moving toward a goal. The goal is the group driving force. In other words, leadership is the art of influencing followers towards achieving a common goal. Vroom and Jago (2007) define leadership as a "process of motivating people to work together collaboratively to accomplish great things" (p. 18). According to Northouse (2009, pp. 1-2), despite these many definitions of leadership, a number of concepts are recognized by most people as accurately reflecting what it is to be a leader. These concepts are: Leadership is a trait; leadership is an ability; leadership is a skill; leadership is a behavior; and leadership is a relationship. To summarize, Northouse (2009) says,

> The meaning of leadership is complex and includes many dimensions. For some people, leadership is a trait or ability, for others it is a skill or behavior, and for still others leadership is a relationship. In reality, leadership probably includes components of all of these dimensions. Each dimension explains a facet of leadership. (p. 4)

To me, leadership is the transformational credibility and capacity of men and women in institutions, communities, regions, nations, and international settings to influence people emotionally, intellectually, relationally, and willfully toward shared vision, purpose, mission, goals, objectives, and activities.

Defining leadership from the communication perspective, the authors tend to show that what the leader does is influenced and delivered through the communication process, a facet that is missing in the traditional definitions. That process is not mentioned. The *how* of leadership is brought out clearly in these definitions. In an attempt to define leadership, Fairhurst (2007) observes that the definition she prefers for leadership is the simple one by Robinson (2001) which states: "Leadership is exercised when ideas expressed in talk or actions are recognized by others as capable of progressing tasks or problems which are important to them" (p. 93). On the other hand, Hackman and Johnson (2009) define leadership as "human (symbolic) communication, which modifies the attitudes and behaviors of others to meet shared group goals and needs" (p. 11). Hackman and Johnson (2009) assert, "Leadership effectiveness depends on our willingness to interact with others and on developing effective communication skills. Those who engage in skilful communication are more likely to influence others" (p. 21). To situate leadership more closely to communication, drawing from Fairhurst (2007), Barge and Fairhurst (2008) observe, "we view leadership as a co-created, performative, contextual, and attributional process where the ideas articulated in talk or action are recognized by others as progressing tasks that are important to them" (p. 232). That means, leadership is a co-created process between the leader and the followers. In other words, leadership is for not for the leader alone, but should be co-created between him or her and the followers. That's how it ought to be.

Leaders: Functions That Make a Difference

According to Northouse (2004), "Leaders are the people who engage in leadership, and those individuals toward whom leadership is directed are referred to as followers" (p. 3). Thus, both leaders and followers are involved together in the leadership process, and both need each other. Yukl (1998) argues that when we think of

leaders, we recall times of turbulence, conflict, innovation, and change. That's the image the concept of a leader connotes. Northouse (2004) observes, "Although leaders and followers are closely linked, it is the leader who often initiates the relationship, creates the communication linkages, and carries the burden for maintaining the relationship" (p. 3). The two—leader and follower—cannot do without the other. Leaders and followers need to be understood in relation to each other (Hollander, 1992). They are in the leadership relationship together, two sides of the same coin (Rost, 1991).

Outstanding leaders enable followers to become leaders themselves. Followership expert Kelley (1992) sums up the work of followers and leaders this way:

> In reality followership and leadership are two separate concepts, two separate roles … Neither role corners the market on brains, motivation, talent, or action. Either role can result in an award-winning performance or a flop. The greatest successes require that the people in both roles turn in top-rate performances. We must have great leaders and great followers. (p. 41)

Looked at from that perspective of a relationship, leaders perform certain functions for the relationship to continue.

Hackman and Johnson (2009, p. 6) point out that leadership shares all of the features of human communication. First, leaders use symbols to create reality. Leaders use language, stories, and rituals to create distinctive group cultures. Second, leaders communicate about the past, present, and future. They engage in evaluation, analysis, and goal setting. Thus, effective leaders create a desirable vision outlining what the group should be like in the future. Third, leaders make conscious use of symbols to reach their goals. Leaders create an agenda by establishing direction and communicating long-range views of the big picture. This process involves developing a desirable and attainable goal for the future, otherwise known as a vision (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 13). In addition, leaders mobilize others by aligning people. Alignment focuses on integration, teamwork, and commitment. They also execute their agenda by motivating and inspiring. This process focuses on empowerment, expansion, and creativity. More importantly, leaders exert a greater degree of influence and take more responsibility for the overall direction of the group. Followers, on the other hand, are more involved in implementing plans and carrying out the work.

The presence of a shared and meaningful vision is a central component of effective leadership. They are always alert. Thus, Hackman and Johnson (2004, p. 23) point out that successful leaders are experts in processing cues from the environment. They attend to current events, to the activities of other groups and organizations, and to their own group norms and cultures, as well as to the physical environment. Most importantly, they solicit feedback from others. That brings the aspect of listening—listening that accurately interprets verbal and nonverbal messages. In the same light, effective leaders are skilled at sharing and responding to emotions. For example, they know how to communicate affection, liking, and excitement to followers. In addition, they know how to channel their emotions in order to achieve their objectives and to maintain friendly group relations (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 27). Looking at the above definitions, I would define leaders as men and women who have the credibility, capacity, and commitment to influence people around them toward higher standards of values, vision, and action whether in a group as small as a family, community or as large as an international forum.

Leadership Communication: General and Discursive Approaches

In this section, I will first focus on the general communication styles and then contrast their perspective of communication in leadership with discursive leadership approach. The most effective leadership communication style, according to Black and McCause (1964) cited by Hackman and Johnson (2009, p. 56) is *team management*

(9,9). Similarly, Miller (2009) argues that when evaluating leaders in terms of their "concern for production" and "concern for people", the most effective leadership style is a team management style that maximizes both of these goals. Implementation of the 9,9 style in organizational contexts is associated with increased productivity and profitability, increased frequency of communication, and improved leader-follower relations.

According to House and Terence Mitchell, cited by Hackman and Johnson (2009, p. 82), the ability to motivate followers is influenced by a leader's communication style as well as by certain situational factors. Four communication styles are identified, namely: (1) directive leadership, which involves procedure-related communication behavior that includes planning and organizing, task coordination, policy setting, and other forms of specific guidance; (2) supportive leadership, which deals with interpersonal communication focusing on concerns for the needs and well-being of followers and the facilitation of a desirable climate for interaction; (3) participative leadership, which involves communication designed to solicit opinions and ideas from followers for the purpose of involving followers in decision making; and (4) achievement-oriented leadership, which involves communication focusing on goal attainment and accomplishment, emphasizing the achievement of excellence by demonstrating confidence in the ability of followers to achieve their goals. These four communication styles are comparable to the three leadership communication styles: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire. Out of the three, the democratic leader is the best because he or she engages in supportive communication that facilitates interaction between leaders and followers. The leader adopting the democratic communication style encourages follower involvement and participation in the determination of goals and procedures (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 42). Also democratic leaders assume that followers are capable of making informed decisions and do not feel intimidated by the suggestions from the followers but believe that the contributions of others improve the overall quality of decision making. However, the only negative element with democratic leadership is that it can become mired in lengthy debate over policy, procedures, and strategies.

Authoritarian leadership is effective in terms of output (particularly when the leader directly supervises behavior) but generally ineffective in enhancing follower satisfaction and commitment. The laissez-faire style on the other hand can be effective when it represents guided freedom or when it is used with highly knowledgeable and motivated experts. In many situations, the costs associated with the authoritarian and laissez-faire styles of leadership can seriously hamper a leader's effectiveness (Hackman & Johnson, 2009, p. 48). It makes sense that communication is the medium through which leadership occurs. Thus, without communication to aid the behavior of leaders in interpreting the environment or move them toward their final destination, leadership cannot occur. Therefore, communication is the primary mechanism through which leadership takes place.

The most significant task of senior leaders, according to Goleman, Boyatzis, and Mckee (2002), is to foster a positive emotional climate. They introduce the term "primal leadership" to describe how effective leaders create or "prime" good feelings in followers. Creating a positive emotional climate brings out the best in leaders and followers alike, an effect called resonance. Hackman and Johnson (2009) argue, "the benefits of resonance include more optimism about reaching objectives, increased creativity, greater cooperation, and sustained focus on the task, all of which contribute to higher profits and growth" (p. 27).

Another significant concept in this discourse is emergent leadership. This type of leadership is not assigned by position, but rather it emerges over a period of time through communication. Fisher (1974) cited by Northouse (2004, pp. 5-6) observes that some of the positive communication behaviors that account for successful leader emergence include being verbally involved, being informed, seeking others' opinions, initiating new ideas, and being firm but not rigid. Northouse (2004) argues in addition to communication behaviors, researchers have also

found that personality plays a role in leadership emergence. He further observed, "those individuals who were more dominant, more intelligent, and more confident about their own performance (general self-efficacy) were more frequently identified as leaders by other members of their task group" (p. 5). That perspective looks at communication in leadership from that angle. In contrast, the discursive approach tends to situate communication in practical ways that leadership operates. Fairhurst (2007, p. 5) argues that discursive approaches to leadership tend to focus on how leadership is achieved or "brought off" in discourse—just as Shotter (1993) portrays managers as practical authors, calling attention to their everyday language use, the performative role of language, and the centrality of language to processes of organizing. She goes on to point out that drawing from ethnomethodology, Knights and Willmott (1992) cast leadership as a practical accomplishment where a social order may be experienced as routine and unproblematic, but is really a precarious, reflexive accomplishment. On the other hand, Barge and Fairhurst (2008, p. 227) argue that much as organizations are now being cast as discursive constructions (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004), leadership is also being viewed as a discursive construction and a legitimate alternative to leadership psychology's individualistic hold on all things leadership. They go on to argue, "Communication leadership is a lived and experienced social activity in which persons-in-conversation, action, meaning, and context are dynamically interrelated" (p. 228). The argument is that organizational actors operate in communication and through discourse. And that is why Barge and Fairhurst (2008) observe, "Leadership actors co-create their subjectivities—personal and professional identities, relationships, communities, and cultures—in communication through linguistic and embodied performances" (p. 228). Fairhurst (2007, p. 15) points out that discourse analysts want to know how a text functions pragmatically, how leadership is brought off in some here-and-now moment of localized interaction. She goes on to observe that in complementary fashion, discourse analysts ask: What kind of leadership are we talking about and how have the forces of history and culture shaped it? These are pertinent questions that a leader need to look at. This argument is further developed by the *systemic constructionist approach*. Barge and Fairhurst (2008, p. 230) argue that a systemic constructionist approach grounds the development of a practical theory of leadership in the lived experience and social practices of persons in conversation. They also go on to point out that their development of a systemic constructionist approach is guided by three interrelated questions. And I would say, these are the questions that governmental and non-governmental agency leaders need to respond to: (1) How is leadership performed? (2) What counts as leadership? And (3) what are the consequences of particular leadership constructions? This approach to leadership tends to integrate systemic thinking with social constructionism—an idea that misses out in many leadership constructions. The term "systemic constructionism" focuses our attention on the coordination of meaning and action within human systems and how language invites, creates, and sustains particular patterns of coordination and discourages others (Barge & Fairhurst, 2008, p. 232).

Barge and Fairhurst (2008, p. 236) suggest that a systemic constructionist account of leadership requires practical theorists to focus on three key discursive practices: (1) sensemaking, (2) positioning, and (3) play. These three tools inform systemic constructionist leadership analyses. In a nutshell, constructionist practical theory conceptualizes leadership as a dynamic evolutionary process that gives close attention to the living unity of persons, communication, action, meaning, and context. Thus, by paying close attention to these interconnections as well as the key processes of sensemaking, positioning, and play, a systemic constructionist practical theory is able to study communication as lived experience and makes it possible to explore the moment-by-by moment lived dynamics of leadership actors (Barge & Fairhurst, 2008, p. 244). For that reason, organization leaders as

actors should acknowledge their role in creating the situation they engage in and recognize that situation as a dynamic one in the way they introduce new material. In other words, leaders must constantly enact their relationships to their followers—and that is to achieve through communication. In that regard, which leadership theory is best suited to that argument? That question forms the basis of my argument in a later section of this paper.

Interestingly and true to my assessment, Fairhurst (2007) makes the observation which I agree with that discursive leadership and leadership psychology are thus usefully conceived as complementary discourses or alternative ways of talking and knowing about leadership. However, my only point of correction is that leadership psychology does not bring out how communication is co-created and constructed by the leader and his or her followers. This is the only missing link. In addition, Fairhurst (2007, p. ix) points out clearly that discursive leadership and leadership psychology differ on both ontological and epistemological grounds. In a nutshell, leadership psychology has been on a quest to understand the essence of leadership, whether it be found in the individual leader, the situation, or some combination thereof (Grint, 2000). By contrast, discursive leadership rejects essences because leadership is an attribution and, very likely, a contested one at that. Influenced by the linguistic turn in philosophy, we ask instead that both perspectives be seen as alternative ways of knowing, talking about, and justifying leadership (Deetz, 1996; Rorty, 1982). Neither is right or wrong. The main distinction, Hostein and Gubrium (2000) cited in Fairhurst (2007, pp. 10-11) argue, is that leadership psychology relies on a Western conception of human beings as unitary, coherent, and autonomous individuals, whose "selves" are separable from society, whereas Giddens (1979) similarly cited in Fairhurst (2007, p. 11) argues that for most forms of discursive leadership, society and the individual are inseparable. That to me is bottom-line of leadership where they are not seen as separate from their followers, but as members of one team.

Role of Communication in Leadership

To begin with, the role of communication in the leadership process can be looked at in different ways. Miller (2009, p. 191) argues that it is important, for example, to look at what is said—the content of communication. Of course, the appropriate content of communication will vary from situation to situation, but research does give us some ideas about what effective leaders say. For example, she goes on to state that several studies have demonstrated that leaders who use "visionary" content in their communication are more effective than those who use more pragmatic content. Further, Miller (2009) points out that, Martin Luther King's "I have a Dream" speech would not have been as effective in motivating citizens if the content had merely listed "ten steps toward racial equality" (p. 191). However, more important than what is said (content), though, is how it is said. The how of the message communication includes its delivery. For example, experimental studies have indicated that strong delivery styles (e.g., eye contact, appropriate use of facial expressions and gestures, increased vocal variety) led to higher ratings of leadership effectiveness (Awamleh & Gargner, 1999; Gardner, 2003; Holladay & Coombs, 1993, cited in Miller, 2009, pp. 191-192). What these findings suggest is that people could be trained to be more effective through careful attention to nonverbal behaviors. To emphasize the role of communication in leadership, Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) argue,

> Effective leaders present the world with images that grab our attention and interest. They use language in ways that allow us to see leadership not only as big decisions but as a series of moments in which images build upon each other to help us construct a reality to which we must then respond. (p. 1)

The value of commitment of communication is lived out in practice when leadership actors treat aspects of a human system as "made" rather than "found" and when researchers focus on the co-construction of identities and subjectivities within leadership (Barge & Fairhurst, 2008, p. 234). Fairhurst and Sarr see leadership as a "language game", and they argue that the most essential skill for this game is the ability to frame. Framing is a way of managing meaning in which one or more aspects of the subject at hand are selected or highlighted over other aspects (Miller, 2009, p. 192). This notion underscores the fact that leadership is not about events or situations, but is, instead, a process of managing meaning. The importance of communication in leadership is more pronounced in transformational leadership theory. This is so because the combination of individualized attention and charismatic leadership emphasizes the creative function of communication. By function, the transformational leader must assess the unique qualities of a situation and then select from a large repertoire of communication skills, rather than rely on a pre-determined set of such techniques. In fact, the ability to compose a message that is not only clear but also visionary and inspiring requires a sophisticated use of communication skills. The success of a leader depends largely on his or her ability to create novel communication messages that are designed for particular individuals, at a particular place, and at a given time. Fairhurst (2007) observes, "discursive approaches allow leadership to surface in myriad forms, whether it is street gang credibility, role-modeling heroism, or legitimate authority" (p. 5).

Leadership is about taking the risk of managing meaning. We assume a leadership role; indeed, we become leaders, through our ability to decipher and communicate meaning out of complex and confusing situations. Our communications actually do the work of leadership; our talk is the resource we use to get others to act (Gronn, 1983, cited in Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996, p. 2). Further, Fairhurst and Sarr (1996, p. 2 citing Pondy, 1978, pp. 94-95) point out that leaders' effectiveness lies in their "ability to make activity meaningful" for others; leaders "give others a sense of understanding what they are doing". Also,

> If in addition, the leader can put [the meaning of behavior] into words, then the meaning of what the group is doing becomes a social fact … This dual capacity … to make sense of things and to put them into language meaningful to large numbers of people gives the person who has it enormous leverage.

And that leverage, argues Fairhurst, is what distinguishes true leaders. And given the dynamic environment under which leaders operate, to be effective, a leader must understand how to function as manager of meaning (Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996, p. 3). According to Fairhurst and Sarr (1996), there are three key components of framing. These are language, thought, and forethought. Language is the most apparent component of the skill. The thought component refers to the internal framing we must do before we can frame for others. And forethought is the secret ingredient that prepares us for on-the-spot framing.

Alexander (1969, cited in Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996, p. 7) points out that our language choices are critical to the management of meaning through framing. Framing creates understanding, in part, because of how language works naturally. Fairhurst and Sarr go on to suggest the following ways language works for us: Language helps in focusing, especially on aspects of situations that are abstract and only vaguely sense at first; language helps us classify and put things in categories; because our memory works through associations, language helps us remember and retrieve information, and finally; through metaphoric language, we can understand one thing in terms of another's properties, and so cross-fertilize our impressions.

Communication is key to a leader's job. In the same vein, effective leaders at any level must communicate spontaneously—anytime, anywhere. They must know how to handle a wide range of people and situations in

split-second moments of opportunity, when there is no time for carefully scripted speeches—only time to break into the conversation and frame (Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996, p. 10). What a lesson for governmental and non-governmental agency leaders who construct and communicate developmental and interaction messages! They go on to argue that there are four conclusions can be drawn about powerful framing in action. These are: (1) Framing increases the chances of achieving goals; (2) framing requires initiative; (3) framing is for everybody; and (4) framing opportunities are everywhere. Effective framers know the perspective of their audience and takes seriously the question, "For whom am I managing meaning?" This is not just asking, "What's the situation?", but, "What's their situation?" In addition, Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) observe that in considering the perspective of others, we must ask at least the following questions: What are their mental models and are they aware of them? What situations and beliefs create their models? And how firmly are those models held? To respond to these questions, Fairhurst and Sarr assert that to truly consider the other's perspective requires us to have a high level of flexibility and to take the initiative.

Fairhurst and Sarr (1996, cited in Miller, 2009, p. 192) argue that effective leaders begin the framing process by having a clear understanding of their own view of reality and their own goals for the organization and for communication. That is, effective leaders know where they are and know where they want to go. In addition, effective leaders are those who pay attention to the context, recognizing times and situations in which there are opportunities for shaping meaning or when there are constraints that will hamper the framing process. By leading through framing, Fairhurst and Sarr (1996, pp. 19-20) argue that when our framing is full of meaning and influential, the opportunity to lead presents itself in several ways. For example, we can create understanding, which is the basis for action, we can enable belief in one constructed frame to prevail over another, and we can perform many functions of leaders. They go on to say, "We can, for instance, frame in order to explain, to gain attention and interest, to influence and inspire, and to promote identification with the organization".

To underscore the importance of framing in leadership, Fairhurst and Sarr (1996, p. 20) put it succinctly that framing skills are fundamental to our ability to communicate. Just as we can tighten our writing skills, increase our vocabularies, polish our public speaking, or refine our interpersonal skills, we can develop and fine-tune our ability to frame. Effective leaders use language in ways that manage meaning in powerful and appropriate ways. As Fairhurst and Sarr (1996, p. 100) state, "Just as an artist works from a palette of colors to paint a picture, the leader who manages meaning works from a vocabulary of words and symbols to help construct a frame in the mind of the listener". Miller (2009) point out that the use of language in framing can involve a variety of communicative "tools" that can help others see the world in the way you want them to see it. These tools include: metaphors, jargon/catchphrases, contrast, spin, and stories. The value for these tools is that they point to a variety of ways that effective leaders can shape their messages to form valued relationships with others and help them see the world in a particular way. And we must be as leaders and more so leaders of government and non-governmental agencies, for framing is the resource we use to lead others to act. Framing is also key to how others view us and how effective we can be. Bottom-line, an effective leader is an effective framer of messages that create effective communication.

Critique: Missing Gaps and Way-Forward

While there is plenty of literature especially from the leadership psychology's perspective explaining the potential contribution of leadership and leaders in an organization, future research needs to focus more on discursive leadership approaches because the aspect of communication and how it is co-created and constructed

are not well articulated. Although there is a lot of clamor for transformational leadership as the best leadership style, communication plays a key role in the way the leader communicates and implements strategic organizational goals with the followers. Communication provides the synergy. Also from literature, it is true as Bryman (1996) cited in Fairhurst (2007, p. 13) puts it more bluntly: "Leadership theory and research have been remarkably and surprisingly uncoupled from the more general field in which they are located" (p. 289).

In transformational leadership, there seems to be no division of labor, and therefore, leadership would work well as a more distributed phenomenon and hero-anointing tendencies of this type would be put to check. There is also a strong individualism and overstatement associated with the heroic capabilities of charismatic and transformational leaders—that is why at times they lead their followers to do the extreme—Hitler is a good case in point. To a very large extent, Fairhurst (2006) cited in Fairhurst (2007, p. 13) argues that in leadership psychology, leadership is seen as a phenomenon embodied in persons, not as an organizing process grounded in task accomplishment. Hero worship would end if the leadership is seen as embodied in the organizing process where the leader and the followers play equal roles. Yes, the leader should lead from the front, but also should let the followers make contributions in the process. That would end the individualism and leader-centrism of leadership psychology that results in rather unsophisticated leader-follower dualism in which leaders are superior to the followers, followers depend on leaders, and leadership consists of doing something to, for, and on behalf of others. That "doing for" is what creates the sense of heroism in transformational/charismatic leaders and they end up becoming dictators. But if checked early, the benefits outweigh the costs.

On the other hand, in recent years, trait and style approaches have fallen into disfavor, as many scholars and practitioners are uncomfortable with the notion of a set list of specific characteristics that defines all leaders. Further, these approaches suggest that a particular leader will be effective across all situations and all followers, and this does not fit well with either research or experience. Thus, the idea of having one "ideal" type of leader is contrary to much of our experience in which leaders work in different ways with different people. My overall recommendation is that any future communication leadership research needs to look at both the leadership psychology approach and the discursive leadership approach and try to see which leadership aspects can be borrowed from each because the two are alternative ways of looking at leadership and the only difference is the perspective one looks at it. Discursive leadership lays a lot of emphasis on language and how messages a constructed whereas leadership psychology is more on how leadership is done—the process. Also I find discussion on the importance of feedback missing in traditional psychology discourses. Its importance is brought out clearly by Bateson (1972) cited in Barge and Fairhurst (2008, p. 231) where he argues that human beings exist in a world of interlocking sequences of action, or circuits of interaction, which over time become guided by relational rules. The concept of circuitry draws attention to the importance of feedback within human systems. Feedback completes the communication process. How will leaders know that they have communicated unless they get feedback from their followers?

Conclusion

Leadership communication framework fits very well in the leadership framework that this article is concerned with. Leadership without communication is no leadership at all. Discursive approach is very relevant to my argument in this article because of its situation and emphasis of language use in co-creating and constructing messages. The theory that underscores the importance and power of communication in creating new ways of thinking and organizing collective behavior is transformational theory. Transformational leadership

emphasizes the fact that transformational leadership is a fundamental tool, particularly in the concept of getting others to buy into necessary changes in the environment, such as workplaces, communities, and government institutions. The role of communication in this theory is evident in what the leader does. One reason this style of leadership is a true development is its goal emphasis. The question is: How can leaders of governmental and non-governmental agencies in East African region focus their leadership to address goals that will bring higher good to all and foster future peaceful co-existence and development? Any leader taking up this model must continue to be an effective communicator and inspiring presence, one who leads by example and is responsible for motivating others. Through charisma, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation, transformational leaders have great potential to promote performance beyond expectations and to effect enormous changes within individuals, organizations, and nations. In other words, the governmental and non-governmental agency leaders need to be effective communicators. It appears to be a form of leadership well suited to these current times characterized by uncertainty and societal instability in East African region. However, as we have seen from historical examples such as the horrors of dictators who came to power as transformational leaders, such Hitler, Robert Mugabe, among others, there are some risks associated with this form of leadership, particularly with respect to *idealized influence*. The capacity for individual and organizational transformation must be accompanied by moral responsibility, for transformational leaders shape powerful social and institutional cultures which may either be liberating or oppressive. Very importantly, leaders of governmental and non-governmental agencies need to know how to use language and the role it plays in constructing reality through the management of meaning—and this will be made clear when they master the concept of "framing" as a measure of meaning management. In simple terms, leaders need to be effective communicators.

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